Global Discourses
and Local Culture/s of Practice:
A study of policy and practice in secondary
teacher education in Fiji

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Given that education is widely perceived as imperative to social development and transformation, this thesis examines the discourses surrounding the particular role teacher education might have in this objective. Of particular interest is the extent to which historical and current socio-economic global imperatives combine to influence how initial secondary teacher education in Fiji might be reinterpreting and/or reconstructing dominant paradigms of teacher education. The study asks questions about the role of teacher education in the reproduction and transformation of these dominant paradigms, with pedagogy contextualised in social and political boundaries, hence the interest in ideology and the underlying assumptions that drive teacher education. An examination is made of the interface between the processes of teacher education policy and practice at the level of local culture/s of practice and its associated discourses. The major research question asks: To what extent do globally defined discourses surrounding education impact on the local culture/s of teacher education practice in the Fiji context? The fieldwork explores the major discourses of practice evident in the way that secondary teacher education is organised and implemented in Fiji, and considers whether these discourses signify a particular paradigm of teacher education.

The findings note that firstly, the current discourses underpinning the organisation and practice of teacher education in Fiji, tend to suggest the dominance of techno-rational approaches in the form of discourses of ‘routinised practice’. The second major set of findings indicates ‘competing approaches and visions about teacher education’. Whilst teacher professionalism is high on the agenda of those closely involved with teacher education in Fiji, there are, however, indications that any humanistic developments in teacher education that support a more critical pedagogy may well become submerged and therefore change becomes less likely. The reproduction of dominant discourses of teacher education will support the maintenance of the status quo, unless there is a clear and full articulation of the contradictions between the competing discourses surrounding paradigms of teacher education. This articulation points to the important role of agency in any transformative process. The thesis concludes by arguing that the intersection of local and global discourses impacts in profound ways on teacher education, suggesting significant implications for educational policy and its implementation in Fiji.
DECLARATION

I confirm that this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted for publication anywhere else.

Katarina Tuinamuana
1 May 2002
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDU
Curriculum Development Unit

E&P
Education and Psychology

LL
Language and Literature

FATEP
Fiji-Australia Teacher Education Project

FCAE
Fiji College of Advanced Education

FTA
Fijian Teachers’ Association

FTU
Fiji Teachers’ Union

GOF
Government of Fiji

MoE
Ministry of Education

PMS
Performance Management System

PSC
Public Service Commission

SAPs
Structural Adjustment Policies

TP
Teaching Practicum

USP
University of the South Pacific

UNESCO
United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation
INTRODUCTION
The Importance of Context

It is not uncommon for references to be made to the pivotal role that the teacher has in the education process. These references come from a variety of sources – academics, government agencies, the media, and the general community. The important role of teachers is not being questioned in this thesis. Teachers remain a significant part of the teaching-learning process, and the potential for change in both education and society hinges somewhat on the quality of the teaching profession, and logically on the preparation they receive through teacher education institutions.

However, two caveats are added to this discussion: one, teachers should not be seen as having prime responsibility for the problems associated with education. Secondly, teacher education ought to be firmly placed in its social context, so as to take into consideration forces of both a micro as well as a macro nature. Teacher education is sometimes envisaged as being primarily about the training of teachers ‘to fit’ the requirements of the schooling system, and to do this in an unproblematic way. The common-sense assumption is that this is what teachers are supposed to do – teach within the defined context. This perspective, however important at a basic functional level, tends to displace the critical importance of the broader social context in educational discussion. Education is a complex process that is perhaps the most contested of public policies in modern-day societies (Samoff 1996). Teacher education is no less complex a process.
The fundamental premise of this thesis is that teacher education is a socially constructed phenomenon. Systems of teacher education are viewed as social institutions that develop within particular historical contexts in response to concerns of both a national and international nature, with the line between the two becoming blurred as issues of globalisation of knowledge become increasingly dominant. In particular, the interest is in current trends towards a globalising of understandings about teacher education, the notion of a literacy/ies of teacher education and the discourses that produce these. The intention is to look beyond the view that teaching is apolitical and thus, neutral. Teacher education institutions, like schools, are created not out of thin air or in a vacuum but within particular socio-historical contexts that embody particular types of social relations.

The construction of a ‘reality’ of teacher education therefore lies in the perceptions that are held, and in the underlying ideology that supports these perceptions. An examination of underlying ideology will assist in the deconstruction of common-sense assumptions regarding issues relevant to teacher education. In this way, serious consideration is given to the critical role of teacher education in society, and the best ways to effect this role. Moreover, analysing these understandings within socio-economic, political frameworks will further enhance the process of critical interrogation. Thus, the role of the teacher, the functions of schooling and the role of teacher education are analysed from the perspective of patterns of belief that underpin them, and this analysis is situated within a socio-political framework. Methodologically, this involves a move from an interpretive approach based primarily on perceptions, to a critical one where the interpretation is located in the social relations of a broader socio-economic context.

The major research questions therefore ask: To what extent do globally defined discourses surrounding education impact on the local culture/s of teacher education practice in the Fiji
setting? What are the major discourses of practice evident in the way that secondary teacher education is organised and implemented in Fiji, and do these discourses signify a particular paradigm of teacher education?

These questions are important for two main reasons. Firstly, the context of education has changed significantly over the last decade, and in today's more globalised world, it is no longer possible to ignore the effects of global macro socio-economic changes on both schooling and teacher education systems. The growing influence of economic globalisation has meant that boundaries between nation states are becoming increasingly blurred. With the growth of a modern information and communications technology, these economic effects have extended to the rapid transmission of cultural messages across borders. Thus, discussions of teacher education will benefit from a more globally contextualised understanding of education.

Secondly, within the area of teacher education, there is an urgent need to address questions of epistemology and the conceptual framework within which research findings are understood. Teacher education is in a state of flux worldwide, with criticisms being made of its function and relevance. Emanating from these is strong debate about the particular forms that it should take. There are questions as to the relationship between theory and practice; the role of teacher education in the reproduction and reconstruction of society; the situating of teacher education within notions of a global economy and the consequent questions about the validity of a technorational approach in response to market forces. These questions have significant implications for policy and practice in teacher education, and a proactive stance by educationists on these questions will provide a counter debate to dominant neo-liberal concerns of the market. Further, most research reports advocate a reform of teacher education, and it is apparent that for any
meaningful change to take place, research needs to be conducted at both the macro and micro level to ensure a useful contextualisation.

Much of the current research surrounding teacher education has tended to focus on the ‘Learning to Teach’ paradigm (Doyle 1985 and 1990). Although this is a valuable area of concern, there are inherent difficulties with some facets of it, and if research on teacher education is to have more wide-ranging value, it must move beyond fragmented interpretations of teacher education. These fragmented interpretations may inadvertently support a functionalist view of education, and thus support the status quo. Wideen et al. (1998) in their review of 93 empirical studies on learning to teach conclude that

…these and other findings portray the beginning teacher as the central problem in education. The solution proposed by most researchers is to have pre-service teachers reflect more on their practice, to employ teaching practices more consistent with constructivism….We believe that these approaches, however important, will do little to improve teacher education within its current structure….other features of a larger system must be recognised as equally significant, and addressed, if research and practice in teacher education are to be improved (Wideen et al. 1998:168).

These writers advocate what they call an ‘ecological approach’, suggesting that research on teacher learning should consider a linking to the social and cultural conditions of teaching; an examination of the role of the teacher educator and; the influence of teaching by academic subject matter personnel. This approach is certainly very useful but what is also needed is an examination of the question of ideology within larger social, political and economic frameworks. In a ‘periphery’ country like Fiji, this should also include a consideration of global socio-economic developments and how these might impact on teacher education.
Furthermore, previous research done on secondary education in Fiji also suggests that the role of the teacher can be enhanced by other factors. For example, Tavola (1991) points to institutional factors as being of importance as well:

Although professionalisation of the teaching force has had many positive effects on education in Fiji, the research on which this study is based suggests that while qualified teachers are certainly necessary, they are not sufficient in themselves to improve and equalise the quality of schooling in the country…. Teachers in Fiji are deeply affected by the school leadership, management, and resulting ethos (Tavola 1991:138).

Thus the question of how teachers learn to teach and how they take their learning out into the school system is a highly complex one. The discussions in this thesis are based on both macro and micro concerns, however, the thesis gradually moves towards a microanalysis of how the issue of paradigms is played out in pedagogical concerns by both teacher-educators and student-teachers. Consequently, the focus is not only on teacher education in broad structural terms. Although this in itself is of crucial importance, the argument extends to uncovering the complex interplay between those societal structures that impinge on education processes, and on cultures of teacher education practice. This is done illustratively with a case study of initial secondary teacher education in Fiji. The approach taken to this case study analysis is rooted in the area of critical pedagogy, with the definition of pedagogy being one that extends beyond the act of teaching in the form of particular methods and strategies. Rather, as necessitated by the critical social constructionist basis of the arguments in this thesis, pedagogy will be defined as used by Giroux (1992) who suggests that it should be understood as

... a configuration of textual, verbal, and visual practices that seek to engage the processes through which people understand themselves and the ways in which they engage with others and their environment. It recognises that the symbolic presentations that take place in various spheres of cultural production in society manifest contested and unequal power relations…. Pedagogy is implicated in the construction and organisation of knowledge, desires, values, and social practices (Giroux1992:3).
This theoretical approach informs how the analysis of the complex interactions between structures and human agency is carried out. The focus on human agency here reflects the need to move beyond an overly deterministic view of the relationship between education and society. Consequently, the approach taken to analysing the problem outlined above can be said to be a holistic one. This holistic approach underpins the entire thesis, both in terms of the need to move between macro and microanalyses, and in the way knowledge itself is conceptualised. It is argued that the compartmentalisation of knowledge is an artificial process that reflects dominant concerns about what is to count as valid and important in our societies. The issue of knowledge will become important when discussing paradigms of teacher education in more specific terms.

A recent edition of the *Journal of Teacher education* focused on the theme, “Teacher Education: An International Perspective”. The editorial for this issue opened with the words:

All is not well with teacher education. A deep crisis in teacher education exists in England, Wales and the United States, a crisis requiring understanding for future development to be democratically responsive to social needs. Teacher education, bound up with larger scale debates and struggles about the fundamental functions of the education system, is on centre stage (Schnur and Golby 1995:11).

Dramatic though the words may appear, they do reflect the general perception that is held about teacher education, not only in the countries mentioned but also in many other parts of the world including the Pacific. Dealing with a ‘crisis’ such as this one means moving beyond a fragmented view of the act of teaching. This thesis attempts to add to the debate on teacher education that encompasses wider discussions about the place of teacher education in society. For very compelling reasons, teacher preparation must be viewed as more than just a technical preparation for practice. This does not in any way detract from the importance of issues of
‘practice’ but recognises that practice must be located in broader societal contexts if it is to have any real transformatory power.

The thesis discussion of the above issues is organised as follows. Chapter one analyses the macro socio-economic forces that impact on perceptions of teacher education, primarily through the global influence of international agencies such as the World Bank. It argues that these influences promote a growing primacy of the techno-rational discourse in teacher education. The chapter locates teacher education and the notion of ‘development’ within a political and ideological framework and argues that teacher education is not a value-free, neutral enterprise, but should be contextualised as a social institution that has an historical background and a social location.

Chapter two considers how the global discourses analysed in chapter one might formally structure particular ways of looking at teacher education. These ‘ways of looking’ at teacher education are organised by a set of paradigms that emerge from the theorising of Carr and Kemmis (1986) on the purposes of education. A Habermasian framework is used as a heuristic device to categorise teacher education under three headings: the technical, the practical, and the emancipatory. These categories extend into fairly stylised accounts of teacher education, thus the emphasis on their heuristic value for this thesis. It is argued that the culture/s of practice within teacher education, and the implications that these might suggest for both educational and societal change, are negotiated within and across understandings of teacher education in terms of paradigms as discussed above. It is further argued that within particular institutional arrangements, part of the process of actually becoming a teacher is further mediated by what is termed the ‘socialisation’ of teachers. The chapter also looks at the ‘indigenisation’ model as a
way to draw attention to teacher education contexts on the periphery of the mainstream western and Anglo-Saxon world.

The next two chapters deal more specifically with issues relevant to a case study of Fiji. The chapters move from the global to the local. Chapter three locates Fiji firstly in a global setting, then in a South Pacific regional context. It examines how the changing macro-economic global context might be influencing local contexts of educational policy development in Fiji, analysing what is termed the ‘economising’ of the educational policy setting in response to global pressures. A number of policy documents are reviewed and analysed here. Chapter four further adds to the contextual understanding with a discussion of historical factors that are pertinent to the current study of teacher education in Fiji. Some of these historical factors, in particular those related to a British colonial legacy, pose specific internal constraints on the contemporary educational setting. The chapter ends in the present with an analysis of current practice as it has evolved out of the colonial experience, and delineates the major research question arising out of the discussion of the theoretical and substantive issues.

In chapter 5, the research design is outlined. First the research questions are elaborated. These questions attempt to link the global with the local in their formulation. A qualitative case study approach is used, as the research questions dictate a need to gain a rich text of contextual understanding of secondary teacher education in Fiji. The conceptual framework used to structure the research design is the critical interpretive approach, and this approach is expanded upon in this chapter. Finally, a description of fieldwork processes in Fiji is provided, accompanied by an explanation of the particular methods of data collection employed, and this is interspersed with a discussion of data analysis techniques.
Two chapters outlining and analysing the findings that emerge from the research study then follow. Chapter six presents the analysis of the first set of findings. These findings point to the dominance of technocratic approaches in the form of a discourse of ‘routinised practice’. This discourse was evident in three areas: firstly, in aspects of teacher education practice; secondly in the issue of ‘ownership’; and thirdly, in the micro-politics and institutional constraints that impacted on how effectively the institutions considered themselves able to participate in teacher education development. The second major set of findings is presented in chapter seven, and is placed under the category of ‘competing approaches and visions about teacher education’. These findings indicate that teacher professionalism is high on the agenda of those closely involved with teacher education in Fiji. There are, however, indications that any humanistic developments in teacher education that support a more critical pedagogy may well become submerged in current cultures of practice, and therefore change becomes less likely. This suggests a possibility of stasis and the maintenance of the status quo, unless there is a clearer and fuller articulation of the contradictions between the competing discourses surrounding paradigms of teacher education. Herein lies the possibility of change.

The thesis concludes by arguing that the intersection of local and global discourses impacts in profound ways on teacher education, suggesting significant implications for educational policy and its implementation in Fiji.
SECTION 1
CHAPTER 1

Global Discourses and Teacher Education

The growing global neo-liberal economy has had a widely acknowledged influence on national education systems worldwide particularly through an increase in privatisation and market driven reforms. The impact of macro socio-economic forces and processes on issues to do with teachers and teacher education has been discussed and researched widely.¹ This thesis emerges out of an understanding of these global influences on education, and provides an analysis from within an interpretive perspective. As used here, this perspective is concerned with the ‘reading’ of human practices, events and situations in an attempt to bring about understanding. Thus, there is a concern with how language is used to shape reality. This linguistic emphasis moves away from the view that the way things ‘are’, shapes the way in which they are perceived. Rather, it is argued that it is through a study of the language that is used to define the way things ‘are’, that our perceptions of reality emerge (Crottey, 1998). These perceptions take expression in the many ‘texts’ of understanding which are produced in society.

Further, the current study adds a critical slant to this view of interpretivism by contextualising the texts firmly in the setting within which interpretation occurs, questioning the societal relationships that such texts support. Thus, there is an emphasis on the social as well as the historical. It is argued here that the impact of socio-economic macro concerns permeates in complex ways into the way that people think and discourse about education, what it is for, and the best way that it can be organised in our various societies. It is in the

¹ For example see: Dale (1997); Elliot (1999); Smyth et al. (2000); Smyth (1997); Whitty (1997); and Woods & Jeffrey (1996).
interpretation and critical analysis of the ‘texts’ as they are ‘discoursed’ within social interactions that this research on teacher education is based.²

Internationally there is a developing primacy of a techno-rational discourse in teacher education. This chapter will argue this issue, by delineating those factors that have contributed to producing what might be termed a dominant ‘literacy’ of teacher education. It will analyse the role of international agencies in defining educational agendas, and will show that this factor contributes significantly to the construction of a mainstream discourse in teacher education. The case study to follow will examine to what extent these globalised understandings are evident in local cultures of teacher education policy and practice in the Fiji setting, and will consider what the implications might be for educational change and social development.

At one level, the global transmission of cultural concepts about education takes place through the globalising process of international educational reform. In the editorial to a special edition of *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Elliot refers to this point:

… the imperatives which stem from a world of markets will encourage the borrowing of concepts and models of teaching and teaching development from those countries who appear to succeed in meeting such imperatives. Ideas are now globally mobilised and their trajectory tends to be from the north and the west to the south and the east. In the process they may be resisted, critiqued or reinterpreted/reconstructed as a basis for conceptualising reforms in particular local/national contexts (Elliot 1999:134).

This special edition of *Teaching and Teacher Education* commissioned a number of case studies of the processes of educational reform in ‘developing’ countries on the assumption that “although teacher education reform is a global phenomenon and therefore driven, at least in part, by global imperatives, the way it shapes up in both policy and practice will differ according to particular local/national contexts” (Elliot, 1999:134).

² Critical interpretivism is discussed further in chapters 2 and 5.
The effect of global imperatives on educational processes is analysed here at the level of reform, and in relation to the problems of translating policy into practice in particular local and national contexts. Although this is a very important theme in international educational policy and practice, there is a further issue to which research must draw attention. It will be argued that the globally transmitted cultural messages include messages about education, what it is for, and what it means to be a teacher in a rapidly evolving society. Thus these globalising concerns are infecting the very meaning of what it means to be a teacher, permeating policy and the curriculum at fundamental levels in an ideological sense. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Cultural concepts and discourses about education are transported around the world in a number of ways, with one of the most significant modes being via the work of international agencies such as the World Bank (and its subsidiaries) and UNESCO. The growth of globalisation along with the deepening inter-relatedness of economic systems has meant that international agencies are now, more than ever before, taking a global perspective of education and its role in development issues worldwide. In particular, these agencies work with ‘developing’ countries at various degrees of influence to define both funding and professional educational directions that individual countries are encouraged to take in order to remain part of the global world economy. The role of international agencies, in particular that of the World Bank and UNESCO, is therefore important in defining global agendas in education. They have a direct role to play in educational policy formulation and policy transfer from the mainstream western world to those countries at various edges of the periphery. An examination of their policies regarding higher education therefore becomes central to any subsequent analysis of teacher education.

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3 United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organisation. See Jones (1992) for an overview of World Bank financing of education, and Jones (1999); Mundy (1999); and Watson (1999) for discussions on UNESCO’s history and possible directions that it might take in the current socio-economic environment.
In a major study of World Bank operations within the Education Sector, Jones (1992) spent twelve months full-time at the World Bank headquarters in Washington DC researching this area. The published result is an explanation of Bank policies in education, focusing on the historical emergence of Bank views, policies and financing criteria for education. Jones has this to say about the relationship between the World Bank and global education:

The World Bank lies at the centre of the major changes in global education of our time. Its financial power and influence have helped shape the economic and social policies of many governments, including policies that affect education. It has been an influential proponent of the rapid expansion of formal education systems around the world, and has financed much of that expansion. It has been instrumental in forging those policies that see education as a precursor to modernisation. It has served as a major purveyor of western ideas about how education and the economy are, or should be, connected (1992:xiv).

It is important here to note the contribution that international agencies like the World Bank make to education in defining the framework within which countries dependent on multilateral and other forms of international assistance are integrated into a globalising culture of a technocratic approach to education in general, and for the purposes of this study, to teacher education in Fiji. Fiji lies in the South Pacific Ocean and is categorised by the World Bank as being in the East Asia/Pacific group. The Commonwealth Secretariat classifies Fiji as a 'Small State' because of its population (less than two million). The size of these small states is often identified as contributing to a set of economic problems peculiar to countries considered ‘dependent’ but ‘developing’ at the same time. A World Bank Regional Economic Report on the Pacific Islands in 1998, expressed its disappointment in the economic performance of the Pacific Member Countries (PMCs) of the World Bank:

During the 1980s, the PMCs had invested an average of 29% of GDP in their economies, but economic growth remained stubbornly low at 2% a year.... State-led development has been disappointing in terms of sustainable economic growth, and
in the PMCs, per capita real GDP growth has been much lower than in the Caribbean, African, and Indian Ocean.\footnote{Internet Source: www.worldbank.org or more specifically: www.wbln0018.worldbank.org/eap/eap.nsf/f2de2a7d692dfab1852567c90077d4cf/efc16ef1cc404551852567f100526623?OpenDocument}

Bacchus (1987) in describing the socio-economic context of these states suggests a number of characteristics that limit economic growth in World Bank terms:

- The limited population base restricts internal markets.
- An 'openness' or vulnerability of their economies, which is related to the dependence on a limited range of products and markets.
- High public expenditure with the provision and administration of public services tending to be more costly than in larger nation states.
- Distance costs - particularly for countries in the South Pacific Ocean who, unlike their counterparts in the Caribbean, do not have proximity to large, high-income American markets.

These factors, accompanied by a narrow resource base and a heavy dependence on external trade, increase the dependency of countries like Fiji on the international banks. Thus there is an increasing integration of small and periphery states into wider markets, and, as discussed earlier, the integration extends to other sectors including education. Having been integrated into an international economic order, small island states in the Pacific depend heavily on aid and multilateral assistance to function at levels acceptable to international financial institutions. Most of the major education projects in the Pacific have been supported via a dependence on foreign assistance. For example, in 1970, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in conjunction with UNESCO initiated a major reform of the Fiji Junior Secondary School Curriculum. More recently, the Australian government in 1992 entered a bilateral agreement with Fiji for funding of the secondary teacher education
programme at the Fiji College of Advanced Education (FCAE). This project, known as the Fiji Australia Teacher Education Project (FATEP), lasted from 1992 until 1995$^5$.

The definition of educational agendas by international agencies such as the World Bank and UNESCO has extended from a direct influence on policy formulation to what is a major argument of this thesis. This argument states that there is the possibility of a permeation of dominant global discourses on education that will affect perceptions about what education, and subsequently teacher education, is for, and the best way to effect these aims. This permeation extends beyond education to society in understandings about social development and growth. Indeed, social development and its relationship with education becomes a key issue. The implications for teacher education of these globally defined discourses, via the work of international organisations, are embedded in a number of reports produced by UNESCO and the World Bank.

In 1995, the World Bank published *Priorities and Strategies for Education*, the first major review of its work in education since 1980. Although titled a review it might be seen as an attempt to influence educational policy in ‘developing’ countries. The report, in its identification of six strategies offered to educational policy makers, implies that Bank funding would depend on the implementation of these reforms. In the words of the World Bank:

Six reforms, taken together, will go a long way toward enabling low and middle-income countries to meet the challenges in access, equity, quality, and pace of reform that they face today. These reforms are: a higher priority for education; attention to outcomes; concentration of efficient public investment on basic education, coupled with more reliance on household financing for higher education; attention to equity; household involvement in the education system; and autonomous institutions that will permit the flexible combination of instructional inputs (World Bank, 1995:89).

$^5$ This project is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.
As might be expected, the World Bank Review received widespread commentary, with the *International Journal of Educational Development* devoting an entire issue in 1996 to its discussion. Joel Samoff (1996) and Jon Lauglo (1996) provide a critique of the review, effectively questioning the technocratic rationalistic assumptions underlying much of the Bank's assertions. Samoff (1996:253) sums up what is a major criticism of the World Bank’s approach to education:

> Although the focus of this document is on priorities and strategies for education, the education that appears here is all mechanics and no soul, more a complex industrial machine than an organic human enterprise.

Lauglo (1996) explains how the World Bank Review builds into its analysis an assumption about education which is technically biased and which is selective in the sources that it refers to in order to support its pre-determined policy. The Bank’s concern with issues of a technocratic nature is evident in its definition of factors that ought to determine education priorities. These are economic analysis, standard setting, and measurement of the attainment of standards.

This focus on the technocratic aspect is quite clearly expressed in the Bank’s preference for the use of the ‘rate of return’ tool of analysis to determine educational priorities:

> While governments determine priorities for many reasons, economic analysis of education – in particular rate of return analysis – is a diagnostic tool with which to start the process of setting priorities… (World Bank 1995:94)

This orthodox tool of economic analysis mirrors a traditional cost-benefit study of education where investment in education is evaluated based on an analysis of the social return that it ‘produces’. The main argument against this tool of analysis is that social rates of return on investment in education are not easily ‘measured’ in this orthodox manner, as they tend to treat education as a singular ‘product’ rather than a broader process. This emphasis on the
economics may be to the detriment of more humanistic concerns to do with broader social issues. There is an indication that the Bank’s stand on education is one where education is to be “understood as the acquisition of skills and attitudes needed for economic growth and the expansion of knowledge. Together they produce many societal benefits, broadly termed development” (Samoff 1996:252).

The Word Bank’s technocratic focus extends to its more specific suggestions about issues related to teacher education. As an example, Lauglo (1996:226) makes the following comments about the view that the Bank offers about teachers and teaching:

> Amongst the inputs required for learning, the Review gives pride of place to a 'teacher who knows the subject'. The Review notes that a sound general education is an important prerequisite for becoming a teacher and it seems to assume that skills in how to teach are best developed in the context of application itself…. Thus, a craft model of how teaching skills are best acquired is favoured.

It is argued that a focus on a craft model indicates a preference for technocratic approaches to education.

*Priorities and Strategies for Education* was written in 1995, a time when the World Bank attention focused on Basic Education as its main thrust of educational policy work with the ‘developing’ regions of the world. This focus seems, however, to have shifted in recent years to the arena of Higher Education. This is a very interesting development and it is important to consider the assumptions behind such a move in policy direction. This move from Basic to Higher Education is encapsulated in a report published by the World Bank in 2000. It is entitled *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise* and was produced by *The Task Force on Higher Education and Society*, a body made up of fourteen members from thirteen different countries. It is important to examine this document here, partly because it was convened by the World Bank and UNESCO, but more so because it
indicates some of the assumptions driving current interest in higher education by international organisations.

Jobbins (2000) calls the report an ‘independent’ one that had the effective endorsement of the World Bank. However, in so far as the Task Force was convened by the World Bank and UNESCO, it is difficult to assess to what extent the report is actually an independent one. In fact, it is hardly surprising that the Bank’s president, James Wolfensohn, states that “The findings of the independent task force closely match World Bank policy” (Jobbins 2000).6

The Task Force bases its recommendations on what are defined as the ‘new realities’ of higher education in ‘developing’ regions: expansion, differentiation, and the knowledge revolution (World Bank, 2000:16). Expansion refers to the increased demand for higher education, differentiation is a term used to describe the proliferation of new types of institutions and providers, and the knowledge revolution suggests that the economy now requires a new set of human skills that higher education needs to provide. The following extracts from the report summarise its main themes:

The Task Force on Higher Education was convened by the World Bank and UNESCO to bring together experts from 13 countries for the purpose of exploring the future of higher education in the developing world. Based on research and intensive discussion conducted over a two-year period, the Task Force concluded that, without more and better higher education, developing countries will find it increasingly difficult to benefit from the global knowledge-based economy (p.9).

Some readers will be surprised that we spend this time reiterating arguments for the importance of higher education. After all, education is associated with better skills, higher productivity and enhanced human capacity to improve the quality of human life. Education at all levels is needed if economies are to climb from subsistence farming, through an economy based on manufacturing, to participation in the global knowledge economy (p. 16).

Participation in the knowledge economy requires a new set of human skills (p.17).

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6 Furthermore, Mamphela Ramphele, co-chair of the Task Force and previously vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, became the World Bank’s managing director for human resources soon after the publication of the Peril and Promise report.
The new realities do not supersede the traditional goals of higher education. Democracy, for instance, has spread at the same time as the knowledge revolution has gathered pace. Taken together, the new realities and traditional goals provide a powerful public-interest argument for developing higher education (p. 20).

Knowledge has become a springboard for economic growth and development, making the promotion of a culture that supports its creation and dissemination a vital task (p. 35).

Developing countries are left with a formidable task - expanding their higher education systems and improving quality, all within continuing budgetary constraints (p. 36).

Although in many ways this report indicates a shift towards a more socially responsible and humanistic approach to education and its location in society, there are a number of assumptions contained within the report that suggest a continued focus on a human capital view of education. The ‘traditional’ democracy-related goals are overshadowed in the report by the overall emphasis on the need for ‘developing’ countries to use higher education to fulfil the requirements of the new knowledge economy. This is the basic thrust of the report. The report suggests that the ‘knowledge revolution’ is part of the structural change that is happening in industrial nations and that in order to be part of the global system, ‘developing’ countries need to participate actively in a higher education for the new economy.

It would seem that the World Bank is harnessing higher education and placing its own technocratic slant on it in order to maintain a global economic system, that could be seen as a continuation of various exploitative forms of colonial imperialism and economic dependency. Furthermore, many writers have questioned the role of a global organisation of the economy, and its relation to poverty reduction. Kaplinsky (1999:106) of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex notes:

Much of the world’s population, particularly those with influence over the political process, has gained as openness has grown. However, there is compelling evidence that the benefits of globalisation have not been spread evenly, and that openness has been associated with growing unequalisation and, in many cases, an increase in the incidence of poverty.
Some of the arguments made in the World Bank Higher Education Report tend to ignore the enormous inequalities in wealth both across nations and within the wealthier nations of the western world. An example of this is evident in the following extract where higher education in the form of skill development for the knowledge economy is promoted:

Participation in the knowledge economy requires a new set of human skills. People need to have higher qualifications and to be capable of greater intellectual independence…. Without improved human capital, countries will fall behind and experience intellectual and economic marginalisation. The result will be continuing, if not rising, poverty (World Bank 2000:17-18).

Although there might be some validity to these claims, the extract simplifies the issue of poverty when it suggests that higher education in the form of human capital development can combat poverty. As indicated above, there are indications that the process of globalisation, and the dominance of the new global economy has in itself contributed to some aspects of current world poverty.

Furthermore, there is a sense from a reading of the report that higher education is being encouraged as a way to integrate ‘developing’ nations into a globalised economy, and that if this is done then many of the problems of ‘developing’ countries may well disappear. Again, this assumption reduces the complexities of the situations within which ‘developing’ countries find themselves.

A useful way to illustrate the particular influence of international agencies on education in Fiji is through an analysis of the initiative of the recently deposed Labour/People's Coalition Party (PCP) to review the entire education system in Fiji\(^7\). The PCP set up the “Education for All: Fiji Islands Education Commission 2000"\(^8\) in 1999. This was a widely publicised

\(^7\) See postscript to chapter 3 for a discussion of recent political developments in Fiji.
\(^8\) See Appendix 1. Hereafter will be referred to as the *Education Commission 2000*. 
and carefully planned venture. Under the military-backed interim administration, established after the coup d’etat of 2000, the work of the commission came to a standstill, but it was an important development in that the previous government recognised the pivotal role of education in society.

The first official mention of the Education Commission 2000 was made in the contents of a Fiji government press release dated 21 June 1999:

The setting up of an Education Commission to undertake a comprehensive review of Fiji’s education system was one of our major policy planks in the General Election. We are moving quickly on this. Yesterday (22 June 1999), the Cabinet approved in principle a recommendation from the Minister for Education, Pratap Chand, to have an Education Commission of six people, including at least two to be drawn from overseas. The Minister has also recommended a draft Terms of Reference. The Commission is to examine and review the Fiji education system taking into account recent educational developments both locally and globally, and anticipated educational changes and future national, needs, attitudes and circumstances of Fiji.

The Minister has been authorised to further develop these Terms of Reference with educational specialists at the University of the South Pacific, the two teachers unions and other organisations directly involved in the provision of education and training.

Approaches will be made to overseas funding organisations for possible grant assistance towards the cost of the education review.

The last comprehensive education review in Fiji was by the Education Commission in 1969. The previous Government had conducted an in-house review and this was incorporated in a document called Education 2020. This will be referred to the Commission as resource material. The Minister for Education is to report back to Cabinet in early August for final approval for the Commission to proceed (Government of Fiji, 1999).

The setting up of the Education Commission 2000 was an important milestone in Fiji. It attracted much media attention, and the education fraternity was keenly interested in the outcome and the government response to the commission's final recommendations. These were to be ready in 6 months' time after public consultation began. The Minister of Education in the deposed government, Mr Pratap Chand, stated that there would be no political barriers to implementation of the Commissions recommendations. A survey of newspaper reports over that period indicated that the public took an active interest in
*Education Commission 2000* as, at that time, there seemed to be much dissatisfaction with arrangements for education, and in particular, formal schooling.

A reading of the Terms of Reference for the *Education Commission 2000* reveals a number of interesting points:

- A view of education as a means of meeting the need for “high quality and innovative human resources”.
- An assumed link between education and economy issues via globalisation and competition. Education is seen as important as Fiji is entering the “globalised and more competitive economy of the 21st century”. A focus on the view that the formal education system needs to change in order to “meet the challenges that the country is likely to face in an increasing globalised and competitive economy”.
- An emphasis on the role of education in not only contributing to “economic development” but also to the “moral, social, and cultural development of the nation”.
- Education is seen as being equal to schooling. Assumes that Education in this form can/should contribute to increased understanding between cultural/ethnic/racial groups in the country.
- Education is seen as being of national as well as of individual importance, Thus ALL members of society should take an active interest in it.
- A concern with the double role of education as contributing to both personal futures of children and concurrently to the “economic, moral, social and cultural development of the nation”.
- An assumption that a new and improved education system will “allow Fiji Islanders to develop economically while also preserving the key elements of the cultural heritage and the value systems of this nation” (Government of Fiji 2000a:17).
The wide range of directives evident in the Terms of Reference suggests that *Education Commission 2000* was quite ambitious in its aims. The general message seemed to be: Let us sit down and consider/assess/improve our education system, for through education we can become better integrated into a world economic order and then solve many if not most of our society's problems. This view of education is not a unique one - it forms the basis of an optimistic, liberal view of what education can do for society. This liberal view of education is quite often employed in the rhetoric of western-style democracies, in public pronouncements and texts about the relationship between education and the wider society. It is an optimism that does not always trickle down into the day to day experiences that a major portion of society has with education.

This optimistic liberal view of education and society is also a major thrust in much of the work of UNESCO. The *Fiji Education Commission 2000* document draws on much of the language and substance of the Delors Report, “Learning: the Treasure Within” (UNESCO, 1996), and heads its Terms of Reference with the UNESCO slogan of ‘Education for All’. In his 23-page introduction, Jaques Delors, Chair of the Commission, outlines seven ‘tensions’ that must be overcome if we are to ‘create a better world, by contributing to sustainable development, mutual understanding among peoples and a renewal of practical democracy’ (UNESCO 1996:14-15). These tensions are: the global and the local; the universal and the individual; tradition and modernity; long term and short term considerations; need for competition and concern for equality of opportunity; the extraordinary expansion of knowledge and of human being's capacity to assimilate it; and the spiritual and the material (UNESCO 1996:15-16). The thrust of Delor's work suggests that Education has a major role to play in dealing with these tensions that need to be eased if a ‘better world’ is to be created.
This same philosophy also seems to underlie the optimism of the *Fiji Education Commission 2000* document. In fact, the terms of reference make direct reference to the UNESCO report:

The UNESCO International Commission on Education for the 21st century has recently released its landmark report titled ‘Learning: The Treasure Within’. This report and other reviews have pointed to the clear and urgent need to fundamentally reorient national educational systems to meet the emerging national, regional and global challenges (Government of Fiji, 2000a:17).

From this preliminary analysis of the *Education Commission 2000* terms of reference document, it would seem that the Fijian government was hopeful of gathering enough information to be able to put into place wide-sweeping reforms to the education system. There is an optimistic view of the role that education can play in meeting the defined ‘needs’ of Fiji society. Indeed, education does have a link in with society, but one can question the amount of influence education can actually have on its own and whether it should be expected to take responsibility for society's perceived problems. The appointment of the Education Commission was certainly long over due, and there was substantial expertise represented on the panel. However, it is important to separate the rhetoric from the substance, and to take a more realistic view of the relationship between education and society within the particular context of the Fiji situation. It is also necessary to situate the education system within broader socio-political and economic contexts, and to consider what role social reform can play alongside any proposed educational reform.

Furthermore, some lessons can be learnt from the passage of the UNESCO International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, 1996. Criticisms have been made of the report as being too ‘high flown’ in its rhetoric, and lacking in depth in its analysis. The three million dollars spent on the Commission was seen by some commentators as a wasted opportunity to make a more useful contribution to educational debates.
A widely quoted source of information of early education in Fiji is Francis Mangubhai's Fiji chapter in *Schooling in the Pacific Islands* edited by Thomas and Postlethwaite (1984). He identified three issues of concern to educators at that time: One was the issue of fair access to schooling for a multiracial population, the second, also related to access, was the provision of schooling to all the islands in the group, and the third was related to curriculum development and how to devise curricula which fulfilled “personal ambitions” of students as well as “meeting the nation's changing needs for trained manpower” (Mangubhai 1984:168).

A reading of the *Education Commission 2000* document indicates that these remain as perceived issues today. What has emerged as a stated ‘new’ issue is that of Fiji's entry into the “globalised and more competitive economy” of the 21st century. As suggested by the discussions above, this entry into a globalised setting has affected the way in which education is organised and perceived. This is evident in the discourses surrounding the *Education Commission 2000* project, as well as in the general focus on a technocratic approach to education.

The focus of the World Bank Report on Higher Education (2000) as a way to prepare the ‘developing’ world to participate (whether equally or unequally) in the new economy, and in particular, the exhortation to focus on the new human capital needs of a knowledge economy, indicate the ‘technocratic discourse’ referred to earlier in this chapter. Part of this discourse, and possibly one of the major developments of the last century, has been in the coining of ‘the knowledge economy’. This phrase has become so intertwined with the notion of a globalised economy that the language associated with education within a knowledge economy has taken on the technocratic language of the economist. The following extract from *A Primer on the Knowledge Economy* prepared by the Centre for Strategic Economic

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9 For example, see Watson, 1999.
Studies at Australia’s Victoria University illustrates this point quite clearly. Under the sub-heading, *Knowledge, education and skills* the authors introduce into educational discourse a significant amount of economic-based language:

The trend to new strategies and structures referred to variously as ‘lean production’, the ‘knowledge-based firm’, the ‘high performance organisation’ or the ‘learning organisation’ is altering the internal structure of organisations and placing new emphasis on the use of teams, a high degree of task integration, decentralised decision making, continuous innovation, organisational learning and the blurring of sites of innovation and production. This is, in turn, transforming workplaces and placing new demands on workers and management.

Policies will need to focus on the development of human capital, the development and nurturing of an entrepreneurial climate, and the promotion of broad access to skills and competencies – especially the capability to learn. This will include: providing broad-based formal education, establishing incentives for firms and individuals to engage in continuous training and life-long learning, and improving the matching of labour supply and demand.

What flexible organisations need most from education systems is not so much investment in the production of skilled but narrowly defined specialists, or a lot of investment in vocational training; but much more investment in the production of people with broad-based problem solving skills and with the social and interpersonal communication skills required for teamwork, along with the skills and attitudes required for flexibility (Houghton and Sheehan, 2000:35).

The changing economic global context has thus introduced new words with which to ‘discourse’ education. It is suggested here that there is now a specialised language associated with the transferral of educational ideas across borders, and that this language has become a global-speak on education. The language reflects concerns dominant to a ‘modernising’ agenda, and resonates with the techno-rational discourse referred to above. International agencies such as the World Bank have firmly incorporated discourses of the economic good into the education sector. When it becomes the main driving force to develop higher education, questions should be raised, particularly when it is not clear that the economic benefits will accrue equally to all sections of society. The role of higher education, and within this teacher education, it is argued, should not become part of a technicist discourse,
as this would result in the displacement of the more critical roles of higher education in society. Rowland\textsuperscript{10} (2001) makes clear reference to this in the following extract:

\begin{quote}
Critique and contestation are essential features of a democratic educational process. Life in universities, however, is characterised more by a culture of compliance than by one of rational debate. A previous minister for higher education said, at a public lecture a year ago, that the function of university learning was to meet the skills shortage in the global market. This view, stated as if it were fact and common-sense, portrays the university as the compliant servant of the marketplace. Here, as in most government pronouncements, the critical functions of university work go largely unacknowledged (Rowland 2001).
\end{quote}

It may be argued that the important words in the above extract are ‘fact and common-sense’. It is the argument of this thesis that many of our assumptions about the relationship of education to social development have become so much a part of our common understandings that we do not sufficiently question exactly what education is for. Thus if the dominant discourse is one of techno-rationality then this will seem to take on an aura of acceptability, encouraging the compliance that Rowland refers to above.

The acceptance of dominant discourses surrounding, for example, the ‘economising’ of education as discussed above, can be seen to be closely intertwined with processes involving ideology. The notion of ideology is an important one for this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, it will be argued that the theoretical assumptions underpinning paradigms of teacher education to be discussed in chapter three, are based on ideological tenets that are socially located. Secondly, it is important here to consider both structural issues related to wider socio-economic concerns, as well those surrounding the micro aspects of teacher education as they become manifest in, for example, the agency of teacher-educators in their interactions with policy documents. Ideology becomes important here in an analysis of social ‘action’ as it might interact with factors of a broader nature. Apple (1990) promotes the complementation of an economic analysis with such an ideological one:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} Professor of Higher Education at University College, London.
Furthermore, we must complement an economic analysis with an approach that leans more heavily on a cultural and ideological orientation if we are completely to understand the complex ways social, economic, and political tensions and contradictions are ‘mediated’ in the concrete practices of educators as they go about their business in schools. The focus then should be also be on the ideological and cultural mediations which exist between the material conditions of an unequal society and the formation of the consciousness of the individuals in that society (Apple 1990:2).

An approach which acknowledges ideology, consequently acknowledges the complexities involved in studying any aspect of the social sciences. Ideology pervades all aspects of teacher education. It is evident in the paradigm driving the process, the ideologies held by teacher educators, what is actually taught, the uptake on the part of teachers themselves, and in practice in schools. The use of the concept of ideology in this study is not a theoretical one that analyses social theory on ideology. This thesis is, primarily, a study of teacher education. It examines teacher education using ideology as a lens of analysis. It will not enter the wide and varied debates on ideology; rather the emphasis is on an interrogation of processes of teacher education using ideology as a theoretical heuristic device.

There are many discussions on the issue of ideology and whether, for example, it should be seen as a neutral concept or as a negative concept. Heywood (1997) in searching for an inclusive definition of ideology suggests that it must be neutral:

An inclusive definition of ‘ideology’ (one that applies to all political traditions) must therefore be neutral: it must reject the notion that ideologies are ‘good’ or ‘bad’, true or false, liberating or oppressive. This is the virtue of the modern, social-scientific meaning of the term, which treats ideology as an action-oriented belief system, an interrelated set of ideas that in some way guides or inspires political action (Heywood 1997:41).

It can be argued however, that this approach to the use of the word ideology is restrictive in that it focuses on identifying political standpoint in terms of major systems of political thought. Furthermore, in studies of teachers and teacher education, defining ideology in
‘neutral’ terms denies the ‘political’ nature of education, and the fact that schools have a propensity to promote particular types of interests. This idea is expressed further by Beyer (1984):

The domain of education is not neutral. In taking an uncritical, apolitical, ‘neutral’ view of such commonplace activities - in seeing political and ideological questions as irrelevant to the concerns of future teachers - we tacitly encourage and transmit the values that lie behind them. As technicist approaches to teacher preparation avoid critical engagement with large issues, they tacitly support the political and ideological interests schools tend to promote (Beyer 1984:176).

Therefore, taking ideology into everyday experience would be a more useful position for discussions related to teacher education. This perspective on teacher education is one based on the view of epistemology espoused in the area of critical theory. It derives in part from the theoretical treatise in the sociology of knowledge presented by Berger and Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) but more predominantly, from perspectives within the field of critical theory as have developed out of a long tradition of critique of social order.

Critical theory tends to add a more normative slant to discussions on ideology, and provides a more expansive view. Gibson (1986) suggests the following definition:

Ideology is one of the most elastic and elusive concepts in all social theory. Critical theorists do not reserve ‘ideology’ to describe major systems of political or religious belief (communism, Christianity and so forth). Rather they stress its very ordinariness, its familiarity, its manifestation in the taken-for-granted assumptions of family, classroom, workplace and friendship relations. It examines the common-sense assumptions and everyday language of those familiar settings, showing how such common sense serves to maintain certain interests at the expense of others. Critical theory shows how ‘common-sense’ distorts and conceals true interests, thereby fostering injustice by preventing certain groups and individuals from gaining greater control over their own lives (Gibson 1986:11).

This more coherent view of ideology brings in the concept of ‘common-sense’ as being important to a view of ideology. This is important in the study of education because much of
what happens in this sphere tends to be accepted as ‘natural’, ‘normal’, and not to be unduly questioned. Consequently, the acceptance of the economic basis of educational reforms by teachers might be interpreted as part of the continuing process of desensitisation to the wider socio-economic influences on schooling. Also, as stated earlier by Rowland (2001), the promotion of a view of higher education as being primarily about meeting the skills shortage in the global market, is now being promoted as if it were fact and common-sense, an indication of how firmly embedded the technocratic ideology has become.

A major piece of research carried out in the area of teacher education and ideology is that by Margaret Wilkin at the University of Cambridge. She examines the dialogue between ideology and culture in teacher education in the United Kingdom, and focuses specifically on government legislation and policy, asking how “the teacher training system in the United Kingdom has been used for the purposes of ideological promotion during the last thirty years” (Wilkin 1996:4). Her thesis is based on the understanding that

> the initial teacher training system might seem to be a suitable target for any government bent on political dominance, since control of this particular social institution might provide access to the hearts and minds of the next generation. If it were possible to persuade tutors engaged in the training of teachers and their students to subscribe to the principles espoused by the governing elite – whatever these might be – then they might in turn influence the views of their pupils accordingly. In this way the teacher training system would act as a vehicle for ideological socialisation with far reaching societal effects (Wilkin 1996:3).

Wilkin looks at specific government policy and documentation in her research and concludes that the ideology imposed via government policy on teacher education programmes and practice does impose a type of hegemony on the profession. However, the response from the profession would suggest a more interactive dialogue between government policy and those involved in its implementation.

This is interesting research, but it is argued that the issues would need to be approached rather differently in a context like Fiji. The historical analysis of Fiji's colonial and neo-colonial context is necessary as these settings would offer a markedly different set of
interactions from those outlined in Wilkin's work. Furthermore, it has been noted that Fiji is a country on the periphery of the global economic and academic system and this factor would add its own peculiarities to any analysis of teacher education. Finally, although Wilkin's work does look at how ideological battles are played out in the curriculum, her interpretation of ideology tends to follow the conceptualisation of ideology suggested by Heywood (1997) as discussed above. The current work in this doctoral study conceptualises ideology as being largely inherent in the everyday taken-for-granted assumptions about education and society.

The writing of Thompson (1990) on ideology and culture adds a further dimension to the conceptualisation of ideology. He develops a position in the discussion of a critical conception of ideology where he argues that the concept of ideology cannot be easily stripped of its negative and critical sense in the Marxist tradition as this would be ignoring the very type of problems that the idea of ideology initially intended to draw attention to. He defines these thus:

In reformulating the concept of ideology, I seek to refocus this concept on a cluster of problems concerning the interrelations of meaning and power. I shall argue that the concept of ideology can be used to refer to the ways in which meaning serves, in particular circumstances, to establish and sustain relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical - what I shall call ‘relations of domination’. Ideology, broadly speaking, is meaning in the service of power (Thompson 1990:7).

Thompson's discussion of ideology takes us beyond the primary Marxist concern with issues of class, which is identified as only one form of domination. Moving beyond this requires that we use the concept of ideology to examine other areas such as what he refers to as “the structured social relations between men and women, between one ethnic group and another,

11 This analysis will follow in chapter 3.
or between hegemonic nation-states and those nation-states located on the margins of a global system” (Thompson 1990:58).

As will become evident in this study, this view is very useful, especially if one combines it with the discussions about education and society. Moving beyond an economic-based deterministic view of education also suggests that we need to consider class issues as only one of the many factors contributing to the complex world of the teacher and teacher education. Fiji is a nation state located on the ‘margins of the global system’, so it is in this sense, as suggested by Thompson, that the concept of ideology will be used. Further, issues of gender and ethnicity, although not entirely central to this particular piece of research, remain pivotal to an understanding of the role of teacher education in any society, with ethnicity widely perceived to be of crucial current importance in Fiji.

Moving ideology into a discussion of education as it is located in society raises the important question of education for what? The developing primacy of a techno-rational approach to teacher education, and the growing imposition of economic concerns (along with the accompanying economic discourse) to define educational aims, posits this question in a crucial position within this study.

Education for what? This question interrogates beliefs and assumptions about the nature and purposes of education and teacher education as contextualised within a social, economic, political setting. Although schools are not the main focus of this thesis, issues surrounding the function of schooling are a crucial part of the discussion. Teachers are at the forefront of action, and an understanding of the conversations taking place around the issue of education for what? directly impinges on the work of teachers and their own role in the educational arena.
A useful analysis of the relationship of education to society is presented by the social reproduction perspective, which suggests that education reproduces dominant social relations. Thus, it acts as a legitimating force for inequalities in society. The work of Bowles and Gintis (1976) in the United States is possibly the most well-known in this area. They argue that schools in a capitalist society reproduce the values and attitudes that are needed for the young to be economically productive in society. Bowles and Gintis set up a correspondence between social relations in schools with hierarchical divisions of labour in capitalist systems suggesting that the function of schools is to prepare the young for this oppressive role through the form of the system rather than simply through the formal content of the curriculum. This is facilitated through the hidden curriculum via the promotion of attitudes such as obedience, punctuality and respect for authority.

This stress on the economic role of education implies a deterministic role of education that is criticised by other theorists who suggest that the relationship between education and the economy is perhaps far more complex. Apple (1990), for example, suggests that the outcomes of education described by Bowles and Gintis can also be created by schools. As discussed earlier, Apple (1990) suggests that a cultural and ideological perspective will act to complement a view that sees the economic as directly determining social relations.

This perspective brings us closer to a view of education that sees possibilities within a complex inter-relationship of the economic and the cultural. Reproduction theory can thus be seen as overly pessimistic as it reduces the potential role of human freedom in education. The insertion of human agency here acknowledges the complexities surrounding education and schooling, and an outstanding example of the theorising in this area is in the adaptation of Antonio Gramsci's work. Raymond Williams, in discussing the value of Gramsci's theorising, suggests that his contribution to discussions is in the concepts of hegemony and ideology:
It is Gramsci's great contribution to have emphasised hegemony, and also to have understood it at a depth which is, I think, rare. For hegemony 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 puts it, even constitutes the limit of common-sense for most people under its 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. For if ideology were merely some abstract imposed notion, if our social and political and cultural ideas and assumptions and habits were merely the result of specific manipulation, of a kind of overt training which might be simply ended or withdrawn, then the society would be very much easier to move and to change than in practice it has been or is. This notion of hegemony as deeply saturating the consciousness of a society seems to be fundamental.\[It\] emphasis the facts of domination.\[If what we learn were merely an imposed ideology, or if it were only the isolable meanings and practices of the ruling class, or a section of the ruling class, occupying merely the top of our minds, it would be - and one would be glad - a very much easier thing to overthrow (Williams 1976:204-205).

This insightful understanding of ideology perhaps contributes to an explanation of why change in education is so difficult to achieve. If, as Williams points out, ideology was to be understood only its weak sense, then change would be far easier to attain. Using Gramsci’s view of ideology as being saturated within experience underlies the complexities of the relationship between education and society. Thus, an understanding of teacher education and its role in bringing about change in education and wider societal concerns is enhanced by a study of teacher education as ideology in this ‘strong’ sense. Furthermore, discussions of ideology in education should not invoke a ‘conspiracy theory’ hysteria that indicts the ‘ruling class’ for all the weaknesses in our education systems. As Williams implies above, this view is far too simplistic.

The insertion of human agency into reproduction theory, and the resulting cultural perspective as suggested by Apple (1990) above, locates education in a language of transformative possibilities. The transformative potential of education thus lies in a language of possibility. However, the responsibility of transformation and change must not be restricted to the schooling system in an idealised sense. Situating educational concerns in
wider social settings assumes a working from within the system - and this is indeed a
valuable part of the optimism of the transformative role of education. But as will become
clearer with the use of the Fiji case study, the role that education can play is still severely
limited by wider influences on social and cultural formation. A critical approach to teacher
education must be accompanied by a continuing concern with issues of social justice in the
wider community, signifying a more coherent approach to social change.

The extensive work carried out by Smyth et.al. (2000) in Australia is one example of the
useful type of research that is being carried out using this theoretical framework as a guide.
Smyth outlines the basis of this work:

Unravelling the connections between social structures, ideological forces, and the
marginalisation of teachers as active agents in the definition and control of the work
of teaching requires a socially critical view. A socially critical view in research, not
only aims to uncover how forms of organisation and dominant practices are
oppressive, in restricting human agency, but aims to give some hope of how reified
social conditions can be dismantled. The narrative account produced in this project
sets out to be critical and empowering through its capacity for ideology critique,
while enriching in its goals of transformative possibility. It is an example of socially
responsible narrative, or ‘critical story telling’, where the values and interests
undergirding certain discourses, practices, and institutional arrangements found in
today’s schools are placed under scrutiny (Smyth 2000:69-70).

The location of teacher education in a wider societal context using the concept of ideology
as ’saturation’ is crucial. Portraying teacher education as ‘neutral’ and ‘apolitical’ allows
dominant technicist approaches to education to remain powerfully influential. As Smyth
suggests:

If you believe that schooling plays a role in the formation of our society, then it
follows that it is essential to support the struggle to sustain a socially critical
educator’s sensibility in schools (Smyth 2000:189).

The belief that education has some sort of power to transform society might be criticised as
an unrealistic legacy of liberal ideals. However, as Bacchus (1990) suggests, “…it is the
vision of its emancipatory possibilities which those involved in education for development need to re-kindle, if they are not to become just highly skilled technical experts who have no concern for the outcomes of their work”. A significant implication of global economic developments lies in the impact of what Stephen Ball (1999) and Thomas Popkewitz (1998) both refer to as the ‘soul of the teacher’. In a paper entitled “Global Trends in Educational Reform and the Struggle for the Soul of the Teacher” Ball states:

What I want to argue is that the global trends of education policy which are currently in play have the effect not simply of reforming teachers and reforming education but they are bringing about profound shifts in the meaning of education, the role, purpose and values of the teacher and teaching - they are changing “what it means to be a teacher” and “what it means to be educated” (1999:2-3).

Moving beyond the view of the teacher as a technical expert suggests a concern with what might be termed the ‘soul’ of the teacher.

In conclusion, it has been argued here that global socio-economic discourses have the potential to impact on the ways in which teacher education is organised and perceived. The argument is that the most dominant ideology informing much of how teacher education is perceived today is the technocratic one, which has its foundation in positivistic views of knowledge. Smyth (1987) writes about the dangers of a technocratic view of education:

The emphasis has been upon the economic rationalisation of educational systems, with the requirements that teachers attend to the business management canons of ‘standardisation’, ‘efficiency’, and ‘effectiveness’. This push has been aided and abetted by the educational technocrats who, through their reports, have provided a form of ideological control.... The problem with the technocratic view of education and teaching is that the emphasis on ‘excellence’, ‘quality’, ‘efficiency’, and ‘effectiveness’ brings severely into question the kind of intellectual and moral leadership necessary to enable children to be educated.... The kind of imperatives that emerge as important are: the reduction and standardisation of knowledge; the measurement of attainment against arbitrarily determined objectives and standards; and the allocation of teaching resources so as to maximise output.... As long as technocrats are allowed to co-opt and domesticate educational thinking and discourse within an outcomes-oriented managerialist ideology, then educational debate will be restricted to a concern about a sterile measuring of results against objectives. The bigger questions about the nature of the ‘educational good’ will continue to go unanswered (Smyth 1987:161-164).
These issues will be addressed within the current study, as contextualised within a broad understanding of global socio-economic concerns, and within a conceptualisation of ideology as ‘saturation’. It has been argued that international agencies such as the World Bank have a direct role to play in policy transfer from the mainstream western world to those countries at various edges of the periphery. Research studies within this area have tended to focus on macro levels of analysis. This current study tries to address this ‘impact’ of globalising discourses at the more micro and fundamental levels of questions about teacher education as contextualised in broad-based understandings of society. This approach looks beyond the economic imperative. It is acknowledged however that economic imperatives do drive issues related to educational policy and practice, but it is in a critical interpretive understanding of the contexts and construction of teacher education that a less deterministic view becomes useful.

An important way in which the ‘bigger picture’ can be examined at the practitioner level is to consider how global discourses about education and development might structure particular ways of looking at teacher education. It is to this topic of paradigms of teacher education that we now turn in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 2
Paradigms of Teacher Education

Let us explore the idea of education becoming dominated by economic concerns. I am arguing that, in the 1990s, the main function of education is the service of the economy. I would further argue that this emphasis follows from agreement among the nation states of the developed world that they must serve the new, transformed capitalism that has emerged from the crises of the 1970s and now seeks to operate globally through flexible, post-Fordist regimes. Low competitiveness in economies is assumed to be connected to inflexible, old-fashioned forms of education, in the protection of which teachers were heavily implicated. These changes have enormous implications for all ‘public’ services, and for the design of educational institutions (Ozga 2000:24).

Introduction
The previous chapter locates education in its ideological setting, and discusses the major discourses surrounding development and the role of education in society. These themes act as a backdrop to the major argument that will be presented in this chapter: that is, internationally, there is a growing tendency towards the development of techno-rational paradigms of teacher education. This technocratic discourse in teacher education runs parallel with current dominant human-capital views of the role of education in society.¹

The modernisation prescription for development would support ‘common-sense’ views about what education is for. These views are inherent in a technical-functionalist theory of education that posits a direct link between education and economic growth. Education is seen as a way to equip students with the necessary skills required for economic growth through technological

¹ There are a number of alternative cultural discourses relating to development, and subsequently education, that signify a ‘turn’ in development theory (for example, see Munck & O’Hearn, 1999). However, these remain periphery discourses.
development, and thus investment in ‘human capital’, through education, ensures economic growth. Human Capital theory flourished in the context of changes after World War II, encouraging greater investments in education. Education came to be seen as an essential factor for economic development and, in the period of intense optimism following the war, education was seen as a way to prepare human resources to fit into the given system. Furthermore, if logically extended, modernisation theory sees education as being a way to ‘civilise’ people to ensure that they become ‘modern’ individuals.

For the purposes of this current research study, the implications of this understanding of issues to do with development and education lie in the contributions that they make to debates about what teacher education is for. The modernisation theory along with human capital theory, would tend to support a techno-rationalist view of education, and the corresponding role of teachers and teacher-education would also be couched in these terms. At the other end of the spectrum, a view of development that is more holistic in terms of moving beyond a primary focus on the economic would tend to take a more socially-based view of teacher education drawing in issues of culture and politics as suggested by Fagan (1999). In ‘developing’ countries with recent histories of colonial dependence, analysis is closely tied in with issues of dependency on global forces of both an economic and cultural nature and on specific internal constraints and responses. Local contexts have evolved as newly independent states grapple with a complex colonial legacy of circumstances within the neo-colonial society. The case study for this thesis will explore how these internal factors combine within such a neo-colonial context.

This chapter will now examine how these globalising discourses about education, as discussed in chapter one, might contribute to structuring particular ways of looking at teacher education.
These ways of looking at teacher education are organised by paradigms, and by the epistemological assumptions underpinning each of these paradigms.

**Epistemology and Teacher Education**

‘The specific viewpoints from which we can apprehend reality as such in anyway whatsoever’ are an orientation ‘toward technical control’, or an orientation ‘toward mutual understanding’, or an orientation ‘toward emancipation’.²

This study takes the view that teacher education is a socially constructed phenomenon. Systems of teacher education are social institutions that develop within particular historical contexts in response to developments at both a national and international level, with the line between the two becoming increasingly blurred as issues of globalisation of knowledge become increasingly dominant.

This perspective on teacher education is based on the view of epistemology espoused within critical theory. It derives in part from the theoretical treatise in the sociology of knowledge presented by Berger and Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality (1966)*, but more predominantly from perspectives within the field of critical theory as developed out of a long tradition of critique of social order. Critical theory is a large and varied body of thought, and in this chapter it will be linked in with epistemology, as the area of knowledge is one which will also become important in later discussions.

Beliefs and assumptions about the nature and functions of teacher preparation can be analysed via a set of paradigms within which to situate these understandings. These paradigms are structured according to the view of epistemology that each subscribes to. Epistemologies, or theories of knowledge, have to do with the question of how meaning is made of the world or, in other words, the processes by which ‘truth’ is defined for and within particular contexts. A clearer link can be made here between the conceptualisation of teacher education in terms of paradigms, and the question of underlying epistemological assumptions underpinning these paradigms. Carr and Kemmis (1986) use the Habermasian categories of knowledge-constitutive interests in their own theorising about the purposes of education. They use the thinking of Habermas to develop a critical approach on which to base a theory of educational knowledge. Habermas' view that different kinds of knowledge are shaped by the particular human interest that they serve is also useful for framing a further discussion on teacher education and paradigms. Habermas identifies three interests that constitute human knowledge: the Technical, Practical and Emancipatory interests. Each of these will be used here to explain the structure of the three major paradigms of teacher education that this study will address.

**The Technical Interest**

The technical interest sees knowledge acquisition as facilitating our control over natural objects. Knowledge is useful for scientific explanation, and therefore has useful application in technical terms. It thus has its own usefulness but is not the only type of legitimate knowledge, and should not be elevated as such. This interest is supported by a technocratic ideology that has its foundation in positivistic views of knowledge. The development of modern notions of knowledge in the western world can be traced back to the scientific revolution of the sixteenth century, the age of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century and the industrial revolution in the
late eighteenth century. It was during this period of modernity in the western world that the
nineteenth century academic custodians of how knowledge should be defined developed the idea
of the scientific method and notions of rationality, objectivity and science. Scientific knowledge
challenged philosophical beliefs as the source of social knowledge, using scientific ideas of
explanation, prediction and control. Consequently, the positivistic paradigm associated with the
natural scientific approach was linked with notions of progress and liberation from metaphysical
and theological claims (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Much of the original appeal of positivism has
faded and today, the term is decontextualised from its historical roots and contrasted with
alternative approaches. Interpretivism, critical theory, feminist theory and the postcritiques have
all evolved a substantial body of theory and research addressing the issue of knowledge and
conceptions of reality. Even so, positivism is far from dead and this paradigm, along with the
technicist interest that it supports, still governs the theoretical framework of many teacher
education programmes.

Teacher education programs in many university and college settings have tended to adopt a
technical-rationalist view of knowledge that suggests that through ‘objective’, controlled,
positivistic-based research on issues of teaching and learning we can arrive at propositional
statements about teaching. If one extends this argument to consider the role of the teacher, the
work of a teacher might be defined as that of an ‘implementer’ of these research-based
propositions. This view of research and knowledge is closely linked to the process-product
tradition of research. According to this approach

… an adequate study of effectiveness must relate measures of classroom performance
(processes) to objective measures of outcomes (products)…. The ultimate hope of this
kind of analysis is a list of classroom conditions or characteristics known to affect the
outcomes of teaching (Doyle 1990:12).
This tradition gained importance in the 1960s and the emphasis on research in teacher preparation was on carrying out controlled research both in correlational-type research, and in experimental methods. Each new piece of research built on previous research in a cumulative fashion. Previous research was considered inadequate in defining ‘good’ practice. Good teaching was usually defined in technicist terms that suggest a concern with identifying and changing teacher behaviour to enhance student learning as the following excerpt suggests:

Careful attention to the methodology of studying the effects of teachers’ behaviours on students’ achievements would be rewarded by a better understanding of what behaviours made teachers effective in promoting student learning (Tom and Valli 1990:374).

The main problem with this view of knowledge, and the research that attempts to support it, is that it underplays the importance of social context and is reductionist and fragmentary in its explanation of the process of learning to teach. The implicit theory underpinning this view suggests that the university provides the theory, skills and knowledge about teaching; the school provides the field setting where such knowledge is applied; and the beginning teacher provides the effort to integrate it all (Britzman 1986; Tom & Valli 1990; Zeichner & Gore 1990). This fragmentation of the process of teaching and teacher preparation certainly facilitates research of the process-product type, but, as has been argued, is simplistic in its understanding of teacher education. The type of research that is produced adds to the understanding of various isolated aspects of teaching (such as the topic of classroom questioning techniques). It does not, however, provide a holistic understanding of teacher education necessary to analyse the complexity of processes involved in being and becoming a teacher.

Deborah Britzman (1986) in her research on *Cultural Myths in the Making of a Teacher: Biography and Social Structure in Teacher education*, suggests that when the social context of
education is ignored, as it is in this positivistic paradigm, “the social problem of becoming a teacher is reduced to an individual struggle” (1986:442). Teacher education is a complex process. Immediate and automatic integration of various facets of the preparation process do not ‘naturally’ come together in a technically rationalised style.

In spite of the fact that this traditional techno-rationalist paradigm of teacher education has come under attack as being positivistic and untenable in its theoretical assumptions, it still underpins many teacher education programmes worldwide. Wideen, Mayer-Smith and Moon (1998:133), in their critical analysis of the research on learning to teach examined 93 empirical studies in this area. They found that “most of the beginning teachers who participated in the studies we reviewed were enrolled in programs based on this model”3. The findings of this research paradigm have historically met with considerable acceptance by mainstream academia; they have been converted into applications for teachers to follow and have been adopted in numerous programs of pre-service and in-service education.4 This approach to teacher education tends to promote a technical view of education (Doyle, 1990).

This view is embodied in what Elliot (1993b) sees as a type of teacher education based on the basic principle of rationalism:

… namely, that good practice transcends the biased and prejudiced practical cultures of everyday living when it is derived from a theoretical understanding of educational values and principles. This principle entails that good practice consists of consciously applying theory, and indeed is derived from it (Elliot 1993b:16).

3 That is, the traditional positivistic model.
Britzman’s (1986) research study on teacher preparation points to other issues that add further complexity to the processes involved in becoming a teacher:

I argue that the underlying values which coalesce in one’s institutional biography, if unexamined, propel the cultural reproduction of authoritarian teaching practices and naturalise the contexts which generate such a cycle…. Prospective teachers enter teacher education with practical theories about the work and stance of teachers. Grounded in their student perspectives, constructed from their prolonged experience of compulsory classroom life, their view of the teacher’s work is incomplete insofar as it is simplified to mere classroom performance. Yet this partial view is a significant factor in shaping prospective teachers’ desires for a practical training experience. The problem, however, is not so much their desire for practical methods as it is their understanding, usually legitimated by vocational models of teacher education, of methods as ends rather than means. The “methods as ends” model of teaching reduces the complexity of pedagogical activity to a technical solution (1986:443).

The view of teacher education contained within this analysis indicates that an understanding of teacher education based on the technical interest is thoroughly inadequate. A view of knowledge that sees teacher education as the manipulation of variables to produce desired outcomes does little to enhance understandings of the processes involved in becoming a teacher.

The Practical Interest

Habermas’ second category has to do with the ‘Practical interest’. The practical interest is concerned with the human sciences and the way in which social actors perceive themselves and their situation. The concern is thus with interpretive understandings. The concept ‘practical’ is used because of the “crucial importance to human beings of securing and developing mutual understanding in the everyday conduct of life” (Crotty 1998:143). In the field of teacher

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4 For example, an interesting analysis of this issue is found in: Beyer (1987).
education, this practical interest of interpretative understanding is linked to the ‘reflective practitioner’ movement and the personalistic paradigm of teacher education as discussed by Zeichner (1983).

The notion of a 'reflective' practitioner has received much attention since the publication of Donald Schon's work in this area (for example, 1983) and it has become one of the most popular buzzwords associated with teacher education. In fact, it might be correct to say the term itself has become overused such that it has lost much of its original meaning. It can thus be quite easily applied to technicist models of education (for example, when teachers are encouraged to reflect on the skills that they employ in a particular lesson). Even so, a considerable body of literature has accumulated in this area, most of it favourable.

Theoretically, reflection in teacher education encourages teachers to come to some sort of self-understanding about themselves as teachers, including a consideration of their own motivations and personal theories of teaching. If accompanied by a critical mode of thinking, reflection can enhance an understanding of the constraints imposed by a technicist ideology.

However, the reflective model in action does have the potential to act against emancipatory interests, and several writers have expressed their reservations about its desirability as an ideal to which teachers are encouraged to aspire. David Carr (1995) bemoans the reduction of the idea of reflection to a functional technicist view of applied theory. John Halliday (1998) says that teacher educators have, understandably, "seized upon" the reflective model in their bid to do something "emancipatory and authentic in the face of hostility towards theory, moral deliberation and contextuality in teaching practice" (p.598). However, he cautions that
"reflective practice all too easily serves as a vehicle for self-disclosure which actually coheres with the technicist bias of many courses of teacher education" (p.597).

Thus, it would seem that however laudable the theoretical basis of the reflective model is, in practice, there is the danger that a dominant technicist ideology will reduce it to carefully 'objectified' behaviour that can be assessed and measured.

The reflective practitioner movement is reflected in the massive amount of work done on teacher learning. For example, Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon (1998) in their review of 93 empirical studies on learning to teach conclude that

…these and other findings portray the beginning teacher as the central problem in education. The solution proposed by most researchers is to have preservice teachers reflect more on their practice, to employ teaching practices more consistent with constructivism….We believe that these approaches, however important, will do little to improve teacher education within its current structure….other features of a larger system must be recognised as equally significant, and addressed, if research and practice in teacher education are to be improved (p. 168).

Research on teacher learning tends to place responsibility on teachers for educational success. On its own this may not be such a bad thing but an over-emphasis on the role of the teacher in the education process can divert attention away from the real structural problems that are deeply embedded in social, political and economic inequalities (Halliday, 1998).

The research on teacher learning has an interesting history part of which has to do with the search for a theoretical and conceptual input into education research. The influence of psychology, and initially at least, behavioural approaches to the field, meant that in the 1970s
and 1980s, psychology had considerable influence on educational research. In tracing the
development of themes in teacher education research, Walter Doyle says

Psychology brought to education, theoretical knowledge about learning, motivation,
personality, and intelligence….introduced tools of measurement, experimentation, and
statistical analysis and replaced philosophy and ideology with the authority of science
(Doyle 1990:10).

During this era, there was a concern with defining expected learner outcomes, measurement, and
the development of context-free generalisations, an approach which based its theory on
positivistic assumptions. Since then, educational applications of psychological approaches to the
issue of teacher learning have tended to take on a more interpretive stance, placing emphasis on
personal reflection and personal stories. This approach tends to be far more humanistic and
cognisant of multiple realities and personal experiences than the positivistic one. In essence, it
might be said that interpretive understandings associated with teacher education give teachers a
voice in the research endeavour, and in the process of becoming a teacher.

If taken to an extreme, however, a number of problems can be identified with this view. David
Hartley articulates some of these problems thus:

The difficulty with a reflective pedagogy informed by constructivism, is that these
'constructions' of reality - these 'stories' or 'personal narratives' - are all very interesting
at the descriptive level, but they amount to little more than making us aware of our
common-sense assumptions and constructs about teaching. Their strength is that they
have practical relevance, that they are grounded in everyday situations, and that they
render problematic that which hitherto had been habitual. But the 'everyday situations' -
the teacher, the child, the school, the classroom, the curriculum - are themselves
constructions. They are not 'givens' in any natural sense; they only appear so (1993:85).
It is suggested then that there is a danger that some reflective forms of teacher education may inadvertently disempower teachers by placing excessive emphasis on the role of teachers as individuals struggling to ‘deliver’ the curriculum. Critical forms of reflective teacher education do exist in many educational faculties, and many teacher-educators would indicate that they do encourage a critical form of reflection in their classes. However, as Wideen et al. (1998) discovered in their review of 98 empirical studies of learning to teach, innovative efforts involving what might be considered to be more progressive forms of teacher education, are usually inserted into more traditional positivist-based approaches. The possible enriching effects of these more progressive interpretive-based approaches are then “nullified by the structural fragmentation and competing agendas that typify traditional programs of teacher education” (Wideen et al. 1998:133).

In the following excerpt, Smyth et al. (2000:62) refer specifically to the limitations associated with an interpretivist approach to research. However, their comments can be translated to a critique of an understanding of teacher education based solely on the practical interest:

However, only to interpret the research narrative or report in terms of the psychological schema of the individual, parallels the central inadequacy of the interpretivist research paradigm where perception and meaning are explained in terms purely of their setting, and the influences of wider social structures are ignored. For the interpretation of the report to be grounded in criteria for judgement about its validity, the vicarious experience of the reader needs also to be informed by an understanding of the broader dialectical relationships between structural forces and human agency at work in the setting.

**The Emancipatory Interest**

Habermas’ third category of knowledge-constitutive interest is that which is oriented towards an emancipatory interest. It extends beyond subjective meanings to an emancipatory knowledge
that does not accept reality as given (as per positivism) but sees the nature of social life as being problematic and contested. Habermas' emancipatory interest is of particular value to an approach based on critical theory, and ties in well with Zeichner's (1983) inquiry-oriented paradigm classification. Emancipatory understandings of knowledge recognise ways in which the daily concerns of education which Hartley (1993:85) refers to - the teacher, the child, the school, the classroom, the curriculum - are not givens but are socially constructed within particular social contexts, whether local or global. A broader understanding of the issues to do with teaching and teacher education is therefore gained from an understanding of social context.

Beyer (1987:30) suggests that a teacher education curriculum committed to the idea of the importance of social context would include a number of orienting principles:

- A movement away from an excessively psychologised perspective, replacing this with one more responsive to philosophical, historical, social, and moral possibilities.
- A movement away from the view that current practice provides the parameters of education, to one where these boundaries are seen as socially constructed and capable of being challenged and modified.

As discussed above, traditional models of teacher education based on positivistic assumptions have tended to separate theory from practice in a contrived division of labour between universities and schools, and place immense pressure on pre-service teachers to provide the individual effort to integrate the theory, skills and knowledge supposedly developed separately in the university setting. The notion of teacher empowerment implied within this understanding of teacher education, actually acts to disempower beginning teachers when they find that they are not able to ‘apply’ much of what they have learnt in the university setting. The processes
involved in becoming a teacher are considerably complex, and to reduce teacher education to the
direct application of ‘scientifically’ derived theories of learning and teaching is to ignore the
socially situated nature of education, and educational institutions.

Furthermore, in many countries, there has been a tendency to ‘de-intellectualise’ the work of
teachers, further reducing the emancipatory potential of education. For example, Elliot (1993b),
well known in the United Kingdom for his work in teacher education, identifies the ‘social-
market’ view of teacher education as a production/consumption system. He sees this view as
being prevalent in the economic sphere of Western democracies and, in the application to
teacher education:

…the outcomes of professional learning are construed as quantifiable products which
 can be clearly pre-specified in tangible and concrete form…. If teacher-educators have a
role in this scenario it is in a purely service function, for which they must compete
against other training agencies. Professional development expertise from the ‘social
market’ perspective is transferred from higher education to senior staff in schools…. Basically teacher trainers from higher education become part-time technical operatives
of a training technology which is designed and managed by schools…. The most
articulate working out of the implications of this perspective for the future of teacher
education in this country…. underpins the Governments Licensed Teacher Scheme, the
DES interest in competency-based teacher education and the increasing involvement of
the NCVQ in matters of teacher training (Elliot 1993b:17).

The indication here is that the work of educators in the current dominant marketised view of the
economy is being reduced to that of technician. As has been suggested earlier, this conservative
stance reduces education to the delivery of labour, and supports the human capital view of
education. The needs of the economy are elevated above all else, and the important issues of

5 As indicated in the work of a number of writers including Smyth, Popkewitz, Ball, Giroux, Beyer.
ethics and democratic processes, for example, tend to be sidelined in dominating discourses on teacher education. Currently in-vogue terms like the *critical reflective practitioner* are appropriated from their meaningful origins, and inserted into programmes that, in the main, demonstrate a technocratic approach to education. The emphasis is then placed on the role of the teacher, as an individual, to bring about changes that the new slogans embody. In the periphery countries, these terms are imported into education systems without due attention being paid to contexts of implementation, and a significant amount of faith tends to be placed in the ‘new’ ideas.

Consequently, there also develops a discourse about teacher empowerment. However, teachers are often limited by factors that affect their capabilities and performance. Furthermore, the importation of vogue ideas about teacher education, whether it is to do with competency-based teacher education or something else, must consider issues of context if there is to be any significant change in the empowering nature of education.

Therefore, it might be said that, empowerment can in itself be as vacuous a term as *reflective practitioner*, or *quality management*. These notions are semantically indisputable. A teacher education programme would not set out to consciously work against quality, for example. Furthermore, as Halliday indicates in his writing about reflective practice:

> A central problem with the use of a term that can mean and lead to so many things … is that the term comes to mean and lead to just about any type of thinking and writing (1998:598).

Consequently, if empowerment is to have any real meaning within teacher education, there is a need for the term to be re-defined within particular contexts of teacher education and schooling.
This process will include attention being paid to a dialogic process of empowerment that integrates narrowly defined notions of schooling with larger societal issues.

Thomas Popkewitz, in writing about professionalisation in teaching and teacher education comments on reform slogans that currently dominate discussion in the field, for example, action research, collaboration, professional development schools, and reflective teaching. He suggests that what is obscured are the historical conditions in which systems of ideas are developed, and the complex sets of debates and tensions that underlie the production of knowledge and power:

But to view the reform proposals as objective, disinterested plans for action is to obscure their social significance and political implications. The current public discourse is not simply a formal mechanism for describing events but is part of their context serving to align loyalty and social solidarity with particular values and social interests (1994:1).

Thus, although the framework suggested by Carr and Kemmis (1986) provides a useful device within which to organise the epistemologies underpinning various approaches to teacher education, it is used here only as a heuristic device. It is useful in that it identifies the interest-laden nature of knowledge construction, and contributes to the argument that knowledge is socially constructed. However, in the sense that the three knowledge-constitutive interests are used here as categories, they are therefore stylised accounts of what in reality may be far more complex and nuanced interactions.

**Corresponding paradigms of teacher education**

The three knowledge-constitutive interests that Carr and Kemmis (1986) identify in their use of a Habermasian framework, can be theoretically extended to identify a corresponding set of paradigms of teacher education. These are labelled here as the techno-rational, reflective and
critical paradigms. For the purposes of this doctoral study, and as indicated above, these paradigms are used here as a heuristic tool. They are necessarily artificial categories, and in the application of paradigms to particular models of teacher education, there is significant overlap between one paradigm and another. Furthermore, it is perhaps more realistic to look at the relationship amongst the three as one involving a ‘dialectical tension’ rather than that of directly competing ‘all or nothing’ categories. It should be feasible now to provide a historically based discussion of the development of dominant models of teacher education. However, because of the tendency on the part of educational writers and theorists to use varying categories of models, it will not be possible to identify a single movement of development of models of teacher education. Furthermore, as will become clear in the case study on Fiji, it can be quite difficult to categorise teacher education practice according to a particular model of teacher education.6 However, it is possible to think about teacher education practice as being underpinned by a set of paradigms denoting particular interests as discussed above. The factors that limit the intended purpose of these paradigms along with those that make complex the process of becoming a teacher will vary from one context to the next.

As a way to draw attention to teacher education contexts on the periphery of the mainstream western and Anglo-Saxon world, it is now necessary to consider what is often referred to as the ‘indigenisation’ of teacher education.

6 An historical discussion of the development of teacher education in Fiji is contained in chapter 3.
The ‘Indigenisation’ model

The transfer of dominant models of teacher education into the periphery began, in Fiji’s case, as a significant part of the colonisation process. Over the years however, Fiji has increasingly adapted these dominant forms of teacher education to fulfil what might be perceived as Fiji’s own special needs for education. One way that this has been done is through what is referred to as the ‘indigenisation’ of knowledge. This is an area of education that is problematic. Hettne (1990:111) for example says that

If indigenisation refers to the process in which transplanted ideas and institutions are more or less radically modified by the receivers to suit their own specific situation, it is not always clear to what extent this implies intellectual emancipation or new forms of dominance. The debate on indigenisation in the 1970s was undoubtedly a promising start, but before the takeoff the debate was somehow nipped in the bud. One reason was based on the assumed existence of more or less homogenous cultures. In many cases, this proved to be an erroneous assumption. The nation state has been fundamentally challenged in different ways. The major trend during the 1980s has not been indigenisation but globalisation.

Focussing on indigenous knowledge and indigenous forms of education can indicate positive developments for periphery regions. Nevertheless, it is important that the ideology supporting the drive for promoting local knowledge be constantly questioned. Thus the important questions are: what local knowledge, whose local knowledge, and why local knowledge (ie. for what purposes)?

The issue of the trans-national transfer of knowledge is also an important one here and not simply because there is some validity to the issues brought up by those who would always establish a ‘pro-local’ standpoint with regards to educational matters. What is of far more interest is the position that is taken in these discussions vis-à-vis the drawbacks associated with
an essentialist view of the issues. Edward Said (1994) argues against the reduction of the notion of ‘indigenousness’ to an ‘essential’ idea of what it means ‘to be’, suggesting that

...in post-colonial states, the liabilities of such essences as the Celtic spirit, negritude, or Islam are clear: They have much to do not only with the native manipulators, who also use them to cover up contemporary faults, corruptions, tyrannies, but also with the embattled imperial contexts out of which they came and in which they were felt to be necessary (p.16).

Thus, the notion of indigenousness should be seen as being contested. It is not an ideal state by any means, but has in recent moments become very much a political tool used by those in positions of power for their own ends. To the credit of those involved in indigenous forms of education, there are strong professional and cultural motivations for a concern with indigenousness, but this is still a highly controversial and complex area of educational policy and practice.

The socially constructed and contested nature of notions of ‘indigenousness’ is further suggested in the following extract from an article aptly entitled The Future of our Past. In this article, Epeli Hau’ofa, Professor and Director of the Centre for Pacific Arts and Culture at the University of the South Pacific writes about indigenous values held by Pacific Islanders before the arrival of the western world:

The recording and communication of ideas, of customary laws, genealogies, historical events, and rights and obligations of all kinds were very flexible, creative and highly politicised. Truth was, and still is to a large extent, negotiable. The idea that Pacific Islanders were slaves to the dictates of their cultures is a myth; islanders were in fact masters of their cultures – they manipulated them at will.... So every group had its

7 As an example, note comments in postscript to chapter 3 on the political crisis in Fiji.
expert orators, spokesmen and other liars to tell, and if possible force through, their versions of the truth (1985:157-158).

This view of how reality was defined for early Pacific Islanders provides a useful indication of the manipulations of culture constructions. Therefore when embarking on an ‘indigenisation’ of teacher education it is crucial to maintain a position that views culture as socially constructed, contested, and ideological.

Therefore, when considering the notion of an ‘indigenisation’ of teacher education, the issue of importance is not about whether the developing world should take on categories and understandings of knowledge classification evident in dominant universal discourses (even if these do actually exist). This would be reducing the discussion to a juxtaposition of the ‘western’ with the ‘indigenous’ and, as has been demonstrated above, over-simplifies what is a highly complex issue. Assigning labels to countries and individuals, and institutions based on their alignment/origin is, again, dealing with the issues in reductionist terms.

Bray (1993:338) in an article about education, neo-colonialism and dependency in the South Pacific writes:

Some foreign advisors are sensitive to the cultures of the South Pacific countries, but many are not. Perhaps even more disquieting, many of the indigenous curriculum developers are also insensitive to the South Pacific cultures. Many were trained in western countries, during which time they absorbed the dominant cultures of the west, and some have become severely detached from their own roots.

Although Bray’s article does suggest some of the subtleties in the debates surrounding the issues, there is a tendency in some of the arguments to reduce concepts of ‘western’ and ‘local’
to essentialist levels of understanding, as is evident in the above quote. It is very difficult to separate what is ‘western culture’ from what is ‘indigenous culture’, and where the two terms are set up in opposition to each other, there is an unstated assumption of homogeneity across a national consciousness. As suggested above, this assumption tends towards the reductionist and the essentialist.

Other writers have written more specifically about the trans-national transfer of knowledge. O’Donoghue (1994) convincingly makes the arguments for a context-sensitive approach to teacher education in Papua New Guinea. However, there are a number of assumptions made in the article that can be challenged. There needs to be a questioning of the use of the notion of ‘culture’ and whether by this is meant ‘traditions’ or ‘customs’, or a more contemporary view of what the word implies. In addition, does ‘culture’ imply a homogenous essentialist perception? O’Donoghue writes about the ‘failure’ of innovations but does not adequately question what criteria are used to conclude that an innovation is a failure, and what ‘failure’ in itself actually means. The concern for ‘contextual realities’ might also imply an unconscious concern with maintaining social relations the way that they are, or working within the boundaries of society as it exists in the status quo.

Questioning underlying assumptions involves looking carefully at what is suggested by terms such as ‘traditional’ and ‘culture’. Epeli Hau'ofa (1984) writes:

> What seems problematic for many people, islanders and interested outsiders alike, is the survival of the so-called traditional cultures. Programmes have been mounted in the islands, funded largely by international organisations, for the preservation of traditional cultures. I must confess that I am baffled by this concern with culture preservation. If we take it that 'culture' means the totality of the way of life of a given population at any time, and that this way of life is subject to alteration as its environment changes, then I do not see why the cultures of ex-colonial peoples should be singled out for preservation, or for that matter, for much concern about their survival. In view of this,
one cannot help but suspect that underlying the seemingly humane concern with the preservation of the traditions of the islands of the South Pacific, and indeed of the Third World in general, are some rather insidious motives including keeping sections of communities contented with their relative poverty and oppression (1985).

This might be a useful starting point for examining underlying assumptions behind a drive for any type of ‘indigenousness’. The notion itself is not problematic. It is the motives, and the assumptions behind these motives that need to be deconstructed.

The relevance of the above discussion on the idea of ‘indigenisation’ of education to this current study lies in its relation to the definition of the purposes of education, and subsequently teacher education. An indigenisation of education for the purposes of making relevant what might be seen as a foreign set of ideas, is a seemingly proper course of action to take in educational policy development. However, the issue of what is indigenous and what is not indigenous, as well as that of the particular ideology inherent in the promotion of indigenous ideas, are crucial. Furthermore, the focus on technicist issues to the detriment of issues of social justice might also be an area that becomes entangled in issues of ‘local’ knowledge. Bacchus, in commenting on the technicist diversions in which many developing countries participate says

Currently much of the time spent by educators in the developing countries has been directed at trying to come up with answers about how curriculum reform can best be achieved, the correct balance between academic and practical subjects, and the instructional strategies which are likely to increase certain learning outcomes. Ignoring the issue of the emancipatory possibilities of education seemed to have left these curriculum developers grappling with the more technical and more peripheral issues in education in the LDCs (less developed countries) (1990:299).

Therefore, although it might be conceivable to argue that the notion of an indigenous education should form the framework of a teacher education philosophy underpinning teacher preparation programmes in periphery regions, an assessment would need to be made of how this form of
education would unfold in practice. Simply using indigenousness as a guiding framework without considering how it might be a social construction is an inadequate basis on which to organise a teacher education programme. As will become clearer in the case study of Fiji, the indigenous question is a significant one.

This chapter has thus far examined how current understandings about globalised macroeconomic developments might structure particular ways of looking at teacher education. These ways of ‘looking’ at teacher education are defined here using a Habermasian framework of knowledge-constitutive interests. Out of these categories emerge three paradigms of teacher education: the techno-rational, the reflective and the critical paradigms. Then it was noted that identifying particular models of teacher education as might be suggested by practice was not feasible as the actual models in use depended on the particular context of practice. However, bearing in mind that the case study for this current study examines teacher education policy and practice context in a periphery nation, some time was spent on outlining important issues to do with what is termed the ‘indigenisation’ of teacher education. This will become an important issue in the Fiji case study.

There now remains the need to suggest a platform to facilitate an analysis of local cultures of practice as contextualised within the notion of epistemologically and ideologically structured paradigms of teacher education. It is suggested here that this platform can be best provided using the notion of teacher socialisation. The next and final major section of this chapter will therefore now turn to provide a review of some of the understandings surrounding socialisation processes as part of teacher education.
The Socialising Effects of Teacher education

The culture/s of practice within teacher education, and the implications that these might suggest for both educational and societal change, might be seen to be negotiated within and across understandings of teacher education in terms of paradigms as discussed above. The technicist, practical and emancipatory orientations inherent within particular ways of looking at teacher education thus provide the backcloth to which the dynamic processes involved in being and becoming a teacher are played out.

This theoretical understanding of teacher education as being negotiated within and across epistemologically defined paradigms now needs to be more closely integrated with the arena of practice. The example of Fiji will provide a case study of teacher education that will explore the extent to which actual culture/s of practice are mediated by these theoretical paradigms of teacher education. Before the case study can be presented, however, a platform for creating a link between the theory and the case study needs to be established. This platform will be created here via an examination of the process of socialisation in teacher education.

Within particular institutional arrangements, part of the process of actually becoming a teacher are further mediated by what is termed the ‘socialisation’ of teachers. This section examines some of the debates surrounding teacher socialisation, drawing upon previous research done in this, and other related areas. The intent is to demonstrate that the discourses of practice that define local culture/s of teacher education might be mediated within a process of socialisation within teacher education.

The framework for this discussion is based on the notion of teacher socialisation as discussed by Zeichner and Gore (1990). They acknowledge that the use of socialisation as a concept has come
under attack as allowing a functionalist perspective on social understanding to dominate – the claim is often made that the concept of socialisation is too often approached from a functionalist perspective that has its roots in positivistic assumptions. However, Zeichner and Gore’s caveat to the discussion is that their own emphasis is on a “critical view of socialisation that depicts the socialisation process as contradictory and dialectical, as collective as well as individual, and as situated within the broader context of institutions, society, culture, and history” (p.343). Thus, as indicated above, the process of socialisation is used here as a way to examine further the issue of paradigms of teacher education as they might be evident in the cultures of teacher education practice.

As part of the socialisation process, the way in which student-teachers engage with the teacher education programme is substantially informed by two broad sets of factors. These are firstly, their own personal and institutional biographies that they bring with them into the teacher education process, and secondly, the impact of the teacher education programme on this biography. Their understandings of what it means to be a teacher are largely informed by these two factors. Once out in the schools, teachers then become part of a third influencing factor – the culture of the school setting itself.

In the main, this thesis has as its focus the intersection of issues to do with teacher education as understood within notions of influential paradigms. However, because of its importance to an understanding of teacher education, a brief mention will be made of the influence of the life experiences that student teachers have before they enter the teacher education program. The work of Deborah Britzman (1986) in this area is enlightening. Britzman in her article, ‘Cultural Myths in the Making of a Teacher: Biography and Social Structure in Teacher Education’ writes
about the immense influence that ‘institutional biographies’ bring to bear upon the teacher education process:

We have all played a role opposite teachers for a large part of our lives. It is taken for granted that we all know what a teacher is and does. Prospective teachers, then, bring to their teacher education more than their desire to teach. They bring their institutional biographies – the cumulative experience of school lives – which, in turn, inform their knowledge of the student’s world, of school structure, and of curriculum. ... But the dominant model of teacher education as vocational training does not address the hidden significance of biography in the making of a teacher, particularly as it is lived during student teaching...I argue that the underlying values which coalesce in one’s institutional biography, if unexamined, propel the cultural reproduction of authoritarian teaching practices and naturalise the contexts which generate such a cycle (p. 443).

Britzman (1986), through her research, found that a number of myths evolved as part of student learning. For example, the myth that ‘Everything Depends on the Teacher’ emerges from an implicit understanding by both teacher and student alike that unless the teacher establishes control there will be no learning, and, if the teacher does not control the students, the students will control the teacher. This power struggle equates learning with control (1986:449). Thus, when ‘everything depends on the teacher’, the teacher will focus on maintaining control in the classroom. Consequently, the cultural myth that ‘everything depends on the teacher’ compels the teacher to exert institutional authority (1986:450).

Dan Lortie (1975) in his work entitled ‘Schoolteacher’, now considered a classic in the sociology of teaching, refers to this institutional biography as an ‘apprenticeship of observation’. This refers to the thousands of hours spent by teachers as pupils themselves. According to Lortie, as discussed by Zeichner and Gore (1990):

Teacher socialisation occurs largely through the internalisation of teaching models during the time spent as pupils in close contact with teachers….the activation of this
latent culture during formal training and later school experience is a major influence in shaping teachers’ conceptions of the teaching role and role performance. Formal teacher education is viewed as having little ability to alter the cumulative effects of this anticipatory socialisation (p.332).

The influence of biographical histories thus has a significant impact on how much of the teacher education programme is taken on by student teachers. Of equal significance however, are the institutions themselves and how they influence student teachers’ incoming beliefs and attitudes. Zeichner and Gore (1990) classify the components in pre-service teacher education programmes that have potential influence on student teachers. These are

- General education and academic specialisation courses, completed outside schools, departments, and colleges of education
- Methods and foundations courses, usually completed within education units
- Field-based experiences, usually completed in school classrooms

To these, they add the influence of ‘extra-curricular’ activities as part of the student teachers’ participation in the general activities of the university or teachers’ college in which the programme is housed (1991:336). As with the research on institutional biographies, much of the research on teacher education programmes has shown that teacher education actually has minimal impact on student teachers’ beliefs and practice.

What is interesting here is the literature on the hidden curriculum of the teacher education programme:

According to Bartholemew (1988) and others such as Giroux (1980), and Ginsburg (1988), Popkewitz (1985), the real impact of pre-service preparation lies in these images of teacher, learner, knowledge, and curriculum, which are subtly communicated to
prospective teachers through the covert processes of the hidden curriculum of teacher education programs. Thus, despite the existence of many studies suggesting that teacher education courses have a low socializing impact, one must be cautious in accepting their findings….Clearly, more direct study of the formal and hidden curriculum of teacher education courses and of the ways in which the messages of these courses are received and interpreted by students is needed (Zeichner and Gore, 1990:338).

The work of Bartholomew (1991) in analysing other aspects of the hidden curriculum concludes that:

Despite the fact that teacher education programs encourage students to use liberal slogans in places other than the university, the facts of socialisation within the university (eg. the separation of theory and practice) encourage the development of objectivist conceptions of knowledge, fragmented views of curriculum, and views of learners as passive recipients of officially approved knowledge (as cited in Zeichner and Gore, 1990:338).

The interest in this case study of secondary teacher education in Fiji therefore, while acknowledging previous studies on personal biographies of student-teachers, and those which conclude that teacher education programmes have very little impact on their beliefs and subsequent practice, will be in what might be called the hidden curriculum. This case study moves beyond positivistic assumptions about learning to teach which separate theory from practice, and which fragment the entire teacher education process into the university programme, the school setting and the individual effort needed by the teacher to integrate it all.

The hidden curriculum will be studied here by looking at teacher education in Fiji at two levels. Firstly, a study is made of the components of teacher education as defined by Zeichner and Gore (1990). Secondly, an analysis is made of the discourses of practice evident in how participants in the teacher education process dialogue about their experiences. Within the second level, an attempt is made to look at the personal ideologies of teacher education personnel.
Teacher educators’ ideological discourses make up what Tisher (1990) refers to as the ‘filter effects’ of a teacher education programme. In a qualitative study of teacher educators’ ideological discourses, Grundy and Hatton (1995) found that

A number of ideologies…inform the work of the teacher educators who participated in the study. While multiple ideologies are discernible, the social orientation tends towards conservatism rather than transformation ….Consequently it is likely that many programs are shaped by the unexamined, implicit influence of teacher educators’ ideologies (p.7, 23).

Thus, the examination of both the overt and the filtering effects of the process of teacher education within the teacher education institutions responsible for the preparation of secondary school teachers will help to place teacher education within a paradigmatic framework.

The overarching concern in the case study is with the situating of teacher education within an ideological framework in order to depart from a view of teacher education as ‘neutral’. In this way the transformative possibilities of teacher education will be explored, and at very broad levels at least, this will be contrasted with what is seen to be a dominant approach to education based on a technocratic philosophy.

**Conclusion: Linking Paradigms to Global Discourses**

One may argue that there is little doubt about the important role that teacher education has to play in society. Although much of the research on teacher education indicates that it appears to have a limited impact on the entering beliefs and attitudes of student-teachers, there is also a body of research that promotes an understanding of teacher education in terms of the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum is impossible to research from within positivistic, objectivist
approaches. However, an approach which views teacher education as socially constructed might produce a set of clearer understandings through an examination of discourses of practice. These discourses of practice are mediated within and across paradigms of teacher education via the process of socialisation.

The global trends outlined in chapter one of this thesis suggest that the meanings attached to ‘being’ a teacher, and the role of teacher education in the construction of these ideas, are undergoing a significant shift. There is a growing tendency towards a technocratic view of education that imposes on our understandings of the processes of being and becoming a teacher. Also emerging from the above discussion on paradigms of teacher education is the primacy of the linking of theory with practice. As has been seen from the discussion of the technicist models, an artificial linking of practice to theory denies the importance of context.

An increased recognition of changing global factors that might impact on the way that teacher education is seen and can be best practised in various settings might also improve our understandings about teacher education processes. The growing imposition of global discourses on local cultures of practice produces a set of factors that now need to be acknowledged and taken into consideration by policy makers and practitioners alike. The global discourses surrounding issues of development and education would suggest that there is now a need to take cognisance of a more global platform of teacher education within an understanding of current local realities. The various discourses of development that encompass more than just the human capital development of human labour also need greater acknowledgement.

In conclusion, the following extract from a statement produced at an international colloquium on teacher education suggests a way forward for research in this area:
Teacher education generally now seems to be at the mercy of large-scale forces of ideological convictions or economic imperatives. Against the power and drive of these forces we seem not to have a clearly articulated view as to what counts as best professional preparation for teaching nor how to enunciate arguments that will defend what we see and know to be good professional practice. Hence the need for further and continuing research. It will help us delineate and defend what we see as good practice, what professional preparation and effective professional practice means and, above all, how in teaching this differs from the training necessary - and laudable - in other professions. It will help us too to identify, define and characterise the institutions in which such processes are best delivered and assessed. To do this seems to me to be a pre-requisite for grounding teacher education in soundly-based theoretical and practical programs, in appropriate institutions and contexts, and for enhancing and securing the status and reputation of the teaching profession - as indeed we must if the best hopes of the economists are to be realised and if our hopes of rebutting and redirecting some of their crassest motives are to gain credibility and a point of purchase (Aspin 1992:12).

There is thus a need for research on teacher education to take into consideration the current changing global context, and to document how this might be impinging on and/or interacting with local cultures of practice. As a way to achieve this, the current study takes Fiji as a case study of teacher education as contextualised within broader global imperatives. The next chapter will now provide an update on the current policy and practice situation within education, by locating Fiji in a global and regional context. This will be followed by chapter four which outlines those historical factors that become important in an understanding of current practice in teacher education.
CHAPTER 3
Fiji: Current Policy Context

The Brazilian smiled. ‘In Portuguese the word ‘politica’ means both policy and politics’. For her … policy was synonymous with … politics.1

Introduction
In this study, the analysis of educational issues is closely tied in with issues of dependency on global forces of both an economic and cultural nature. This chapter examines how the current changing macroeconomic global context, as identified in chapter one of this study, might be influencing local contexts of educational policy development in Fiji. It will look in particular at Fiji’s integration into a global economy and the ‘economising’ of the educational policy context in response to this trend. These crucial issues are examined in relation to the recent development of three new policy documents by the Fiji MoE: Education Fiji 2020; The Strategic Plan 2000 – 2002; and the 2001 Corporate Plan. Finally, the progress of the “Education For All: Fiji Education Review Commission” is analysed and this analysis will exemplify the idea that policy processes do not occur in a vacuum, but are part of wider societal developments.

Fiji in a global context
A discussion of educational policy in Fiji must be prefaced firstly by an examination of overall state policy. There are now increasingly closely defined links established between wider macro-economic policies and those of the education sector in national systems throughout the world. As has been noted in chapter 1, these links are fermented in discourses about the role of education in
social and economic development. Furthermore, it was also noted that there is currently a tendency towards a globalising notion of what education is and what it should achieve. In economic terms, the globally current trend in ‘developing’ countries is towards the implementation of structural adjustment policies (SAPs). SAPs were adopted throughout the world beginning in the mid 1980s, a time during which major financial institutions such as the World Bank moved from a focus on project-based lending to one of policy-based lending. Commentators have suggested that the Bank has “abandoned its role as a development bank to become a policy-making institution that intervenes in the internal affairs of countries” (Ugarteche 1997:201).

According to Woodward (1992), SAPs are generally characterised by a number of policy directives: trade reform is encouraged through, for example, the reduction of export taxes; reformation of tax systems in line with neo-liberal principles; market deregulation including the removal of price controls; improving the financial position of public enterprises with a strong tendency towards privatisation; reformation of the financial system, for example, by relaxing restrictions imposed on banks by the government; actively making the economy more open to foreign investment, for example, by simplifying bureaucratic procedures.

Fiji is not exempt from the influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank directives, and is now integrated with the global policies that are encouraged by these institutions and their subsidiaries. In 1998, for example, the Executive Board of the IMF in summarising the Article IV consultation with Fiji\(^2\) announced that

2 Under Article IV of the IMF’s Articles of Agreement, the IMF holds bilateral discussions with members, usually every year. A staff team visits the country, collects economic and financial information, and
The Fiji economy continues to maintain macroeconomic stability and has benefited from several reform programs in the 1990s. However, GDP growth has been low, averaging less than 2 percent per annum in 1991–97…. The economic downturn has intensified as the drought—now believed to be among the worst in Fiji’s recent history—continued through 1998 and the Asian crisis further dampened tourist arrivals. The government has also made only limited headway on key structural issues that are hampering investment…. The Fiji government has made significant progress on public enterprise reforms since the passage of the enabling legislation in 1997. Reforms of radio broadcasting and partial divestiture of the national airline have been completed, while further progress continue to be made in the forestry industry, telecommunications, energy, civil aviation, water, and ports (International Monetary Fund, 1998).

In the IMF Executive Board Assessment of Fiji’s performance, the Fund’s directors noted that, in spite of Fiji’s achievements in a number of areas, key structural reforms had not been adequately put in place:

They stressed that the 1999 budget formulation would be crucial in setting the pace for the next few years. In particular, they underscored the need to curtail discretionary and unproductive spending and to reduce the public sector wage bill…. Directors believed that the adverse effects of the unfavourable global environment and the negative weather-related shocks on output in the immediate future could be tempered by removing fundamental structural impediments in the economy. In this light, they urged the authorities to implement a credible structural reform agenda as soon as possible. Key reform measures included the renewal of land leases, the removal of the uncertainty regarding labour laws, the reduction of the public sector by accelerating privatisation, and the deregulation of the real and financial sectors (International Monetary Fund, 1998).

Moreover, the following newspaper report clearly illustrates the pressure on Fiji to conform to principles of neo-liberalism and the accompanying SAPs, and the inevitable integration of Fiji discusses with officials the country's economic developments and policies. On return to headquarters, the staff prepares a report, which forms the basis for discussion by the Executive Board. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Managing Director, as Chairman of the Board, summarises the views of directors, and this summary is transmitted to the country's authorities.
into a global economy. The article is entitled “Government policies worry US”, and reports on comments made by the American Ambassador to Fiji, Osman Siddique, while addressing the 28th annual conference of the Fiji Institute of Accountants at the Sheraton Resort in Fiji.

The American government has concerns about certain decisions taken by the Fiji government regarding economic and commercial policies. “Fiji is very much part of the international marketplace. Like it or not decisions here have an impact elsewhere. I probably don’t need to point out that the consequences of such decisions may be significant, and possibly negative for Fiji”. [Siddique] was concerned that the innovative feature of bond financing, which is a normal practice in the United States and other developed economies, for funding major projects, was cited as one of the reasons for deciding against the American bid in the mahogany deal. He said an effective government works with local business and international trading partners to craft dynamic and vibrant economic relationships. “Government’s role should facilitate and encourage entrepreneurship and not frustrate business…. As a general rule the less interference by government the better. Intervention by government distorts the market and frustrates normal business activity… Government also has an important role in ensuring that markets are open, unrestricted and permit the free flow of labour, service, and information…. By recognising the different roles played by government and business, many societies are successfully negotiating the transition from planned to more market based economies.”

There are other indications, however, that after its election victory in 1999, the Fiji Labour Party/People’s Coalition, under Mahendra Chaudry was in the process of implementing the SAPs typical of those promoted by the IMF and the World Bank. For example, in spite of its labour-friendly manifesto, the Coalition seemed to be under pressure to conform to directives from the IMF to promote ‘wage restraint’ and the ‘need to curtail discretionary and unproductive spending and to reduce the public sector wage bill’. The new government soon experienced labour difficulties as the following report suggests:

4 It should be noted that these comments were made in relation to the policies of the Labour/People’s Coalition government. Six days later, the government was deposed at gunpoint in an armed takeover of Parliament.
Promising to stem worsening mass unemployment and poverty, the Labour/People’s Coalition was swept into office in May 1999 in a landslide vote against the 1987 military coup leader, Sitiveni Rabuka. But it soon demonstrated its commitment to satisfying the demands of business. After objections from Australian and Asian-owned garment employers, who pay their workers an average of just F$60 (US$30) a week, the government backed away from its promised poverty-line minimum wage of F$120 (US$60) a week. Instead the Labour leaders proposed tripartite discussions with employers and unions to agree on a “liveable wage”.

Before it was removed, Chaudhry’s government had already come into conflict with sections of the working class. One of its last acts before Speight’s coup was to denounce and threaten legal action against striking nurses. Faced with chronic understaffing and a flight of nurses overseas, the country’s 1,300 nurses had demanded an annual starting salary of F$13,000 (US$6,711), an increase of F$4,000. After four months of failed negotiations between their union leaders and the Chaudhry government, the nurses walked out on strike on May 12. Chaudhry and his ministers slandered the strikers as being part of a politically-orchestrated move by Rabuka’s Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei (SVT) party to bring the government to its knees. The government declared the strike illegal and organised strikebreakers. After two-and-a-half days the nurses returned to work with only a small pay increase (Head, 2000).

There are numerous criticisms of the IMF’s economic programme. In a letter to members of the United States Congress, which was widely circulated on the Internet, a number of concerned individuals5 initiated a protest against the IMF policies. Quoting the “disastrous impact of IMF-imposed policies on workers’ rights, environmental protection, and economic growth and development; the crushing debt repayment burden of poor countries as a result of IMF policies; and the continuing secrecy of IMF operations”6, the writers sought the denial of increased US

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5 The initiators of this letter were named as: Walden Bello, Co-director, Focus on the Global South, Bangkok, and Professor of Sociology and Public Administration, University of the Philippines; Carlos Heredia, Congressman, Mexico; Dennis Brutus, Jubilee 2000 Africa; Noam Chomsky, Professor of Linguistics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

6 http://www.jca.apc.org/asia-apec/msg00151.html
Congress funding for IMF expansion. The letter outlines a number of problems with the policies promoted by the IMF:

- Economic Growth and Development: The IMF’s overwhelming preference for high interest rates and fiscal austerity, even in the absence of any economic justification, has caused unnecessary recessions, reduced growth, hindered economic development, and increased poverty throughout the world. There is now a consensus among economists that the IMF’s recent intervention in the Asian financial crisis actually worsened its impact.

- Labour: IMF policies undermine the livelihood of working families. IMF policies have mandated mass layoffs and changes in labour law to facilitate or encourage mass layoffs, as happened recently in South Korea. IMF policies regularly force countries to lower wages, or often undermine efforts by governments to raise wages -- as, for example, in Haiti in recent years.

- Environment: IMF policies encourage and frequently require the lowering of environmental standards and the reckless exploitation of natural resources in debtor countries. The export of natural resources to earn hard currency to pay foreign debts under IMF mandates damages the environment while providing no benefit to poor and working people in debtor countries.

- Debt: IMF and World Bank policies have forced poor countries to make foreign debt service a higher priority than basic human needs. The World Bank claims that it is "sustainable" for countries like Mozambique to pay a quarter of their export earnings on debt service. Yet after World War II, Germany was not required to pay more than 3.5% of its export earnings on debt service. Poor countries today need a ceiling on debt service similar to the one Germany had. According to UN statistics, if Mozambique were allowed to spend half of the money on health care and education which it is now spending on debt service, it would save the lives of 100,000 children per year.

- Openness of IMF operations: IMF policies which affect the lives of a billion people are negotiated in secret, with key conditions not released to the public. The people who bear the burden of these policies often do not even have access to the agreements which have been negotiated.

Thus, there are weighty questions raised as to whether SAPs have had any overall benefit in the ‘developing nations’. Even where economic growth has been recorded in statistical terms, there are questions about whether integration into a neo-liberal system contributes in any significant way to the reduction of poverty and income inequality. These issues are still of concern to policy
makers in many ‘developing’ countries including Fiji (Prasad 1998). The assumption that
economic growth at the national level will result in a ‘trickle down effect’ to the poorer sections
of the community is debatable. The faith in the power of the market to allocate resources
efficiently is increasingly being questioned in many ‘developing’ regions. For example, Potts
and Mutambirwa (1998) report on research into the effects of SAPs on rural and urban areas in
Zimbabwe and find that the impact of SAPs extend from the urban area into the rural area with
basic items being perceived as luxuries. Other researchers point to the increasing incidence of
unemployment, gender disparity, poverty, and a general increase in social inequalities. It is
sometimes suggested that there is no clear relationship of determinacy between social
inequalities and economic reforms, however it is quite apparent that the overall level of poverty
in ‘developing’ countries has increased in recent times (Prasad 1998).

Fiji in a regional context
Education in Fiji is closely linked with developments in the neighbouring countries of Australia
and New Zealand. The close regional links emerged out of the colonial experience to an
integration in almost all facets of life. In terms of the economy, it is widely felt that there exists

a single regional economy upon which emerged a South Pacific Society, the privileged
groups of which share a single dominant culture with increasingly marginalised local
sub-cultures shared by the poorer classes. The regional society is emerging from the
process of decolonisation which, contrary to stated intentions, has integrated the Pacific
islands into the Australian/New Zealand economy and society to the extent that the
islands cannot or will not disentangle themselves (Hau’ofa 1987:1).

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Fiji is one of the largest and most populous nations in the South Pacific region served by the University of the South Pacific (USP). It is considered the ‘hub’ of the South Pacific and wields a significant influence with other smaller nations in the region, especially with annual regional heads of state’s meetings such as the South Pacific Forum. In terms of economic relations with the ‘superpowers’ of the wider region, Australia and New Zealand, there are strong links in almost all economic areas: trade and industry, financial institutions, transport and communications and the tourist industry. It is inevitable that developments in Australia and New Zealand will in one way or another affect the Fiji context. This is of great interest both in terms of direct influence and in terms of how Fiji responds to this influence. The complexities in the regional context are amplified by the new social networks created by the regional economy. Hau’ofa (1987), for example, suggests that a regional class system has developed out of this regional economy:

The privileged classes share a single dominant regional culture with the underprivileged maintaining sub-cultures related to the dominant one through ties of patronage and growing inequality. These localised sub-cultures are modified versions of indigenous cultures that existed before capitalist penetration of the South Pacific…. It is the privileged who can afford to tell the poor to preserve their traditions (p.4).

Furthermore, a number of South Pacific regional forums have recently come under attack for promoting a model of development that is considered unsustainable at the level of human impact. For example, a 1998 GATT media watchdog media release\(^8\) criticised New Zealand’s role in the imposition of a free market model in the Pacific region. The media comment was

\(^8\) General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs Watchdog Media Release available at: www.asiapac.org.fj/cafePacific/resources/aspac/gatt.html
released in relation to the Heads of Government’s annual meeting at the ‘South Pacific Forum’ held in the Federated States of Micronesia:

The South Pacific Forum provides yet another opportunity to goad Pacific peoples and governments into getting "their house in order" according to a kit-set model of export-oriented, market-driven growth and a narrow set of economic theories which hold that economic growth is the be-all and end-all of development," says Aziz Choudry, a GATT Watchdog spokesperson. "Forum Leaders and Ministers meetings have increasingly focussed on an economic agenda already promoted throughout the region by World Bank/IMF structural adjustment programmes, Asian Development Bank loan conditionalities, free trade arrangements like the World Trade Organisation and APEC (which only a minority of Pacific Island nations have joined), and pressure from donor countries like New Zealand and Australia which explicitly links future aid commitments to undertakings by governments of recipient countries to pursue further economic reforms to open up their economies and decrease government size and expenditure. The latest economic blueprint for the region sees Forum Island Countries having little input into the development of macroeconomic policies which they are supposed to accept," said Mr Choudry.

That these new policies are of doubtful long term benefit is evident in a number of local factors that the adjustment policies tend to ignore, such as what Choudry refers to as the structural causes of their economic, social and environmental problems, and the strengths of traditional lifestyles, values, resource use and social support systems. There is also criticism of the fact that many so-called educational aid programmes actually result in a significant percentage of the aid returning to the donor countries in the form of education and consultancy fees:

Certainly in education, there is not enough consultation regarding the nature and appropriateness of development aid: we have too many consultants who have little or no experience of our island cultures, especially the economic realities of people from extended families who receive low incomes; the disproportionate amount of aid money going to these donor consultants leaves little in direct assistance to the education sector of the island country concerned (Thaman 1993b:7).

In fact, research conducted by Luteru (1993) found a significant mismatch between the development needs and priorities of Pacific Island Countries, and the aid policies and practices
of Australia and New Zealand. For Australia in particular, this is hardly surprising considering that since the mid 1980s, that country has put in place a policy shift away from a broadly humanitarian perspective towards one that “emphasised the achievement of Australia’s own political, economic and strategic interests” (Luteru 1993:294).

The nature of the SAPs, the growing importance of the regional economy, and the accompanying emphasis on the principles of neo-liberalism affect education in a number of significant ways. The most visible influence has been one of intervention in the supply of teaching personnel, transferral of curricula from the centre to the periphery, sharing of examinations and the growth in the number of consultancies carried out. However, the underlying influence can be better articulated in terms of the role of education in being a tool for integration into the wider regional and global economy, and social context. Other notable effects have been in the reduction in government expenditure relative to other initiatives of the economy, and a new concern with accountability measures. In most ‘developing’ countries, these cuts have tended to affect the essential social services such as health, education and welfare facilities. This issue is a major one, but is not the main emphasis of this thesis, so the ensuing discussion will be limited to a single relevant factor for the Fiji case study. This is the changing policy scene as far as the management of education is concerned, commonly referred to in the literature as the ‘new managerialism’.

**The New Managerialism**

The ‘new managerialism’ is a form of management that emphasises efficiency and effectiveness using techniques and values appropriated from the business sector. Ball (1998:123) suggests that in practice, there is an “insertion of the theories and techniques of business management and the ‘cult of excellence’ into public sector institutions”.
There is very little doubt that the ‘new managerialism’ has become a part of the way in which education is discoursed within institutions and at local, national and global policy levels. Loughlin (2002:20) discusses some of the ‘new’ language associated with the quality reforms introduced in the United Kingdom. He very aptly entitles his article with the words: “Assurance, effectiveness, ownership, empowerment, autonomy, dynamic, learning curves, a continuum of quality-awareness, self-actualisation and enhancement … whatever that means”. In writing about current practice in the UK, Loughlin says:

Over several years, the public sector in the United Kingdom has been subjected to a series of ‘quality reforms’. Large sums of money have been spent forming monitoring agencies and requiring workers in education and the health service to ‘demonstrate quality’ in their practices. This typically involves learning to redescribe their practices in a bizarre managerial language, incorporating its ‘technical terms’ into documents that form an audit trail – a cross-referenced, jargon-riddled paper chain to be perused by managers in their own organisations and, in the event of official inspection, by employees of the monitoring agencies. This process is labelled ‘accountability’. When an organisation is accountable in this sense, ‘quality’ is deemed to be ‘assured’ (Loughlin 2002:20).

Loughlin is critical of the culture of ‘perpetual linguistic innovation’ evident within contemporary management practice suggesting that, firstly this new terminology is inadequately explained by its promoters, except in superficial and circular ways, and secondly, that the purpose of the new jargon is really to deliver support for existing government policies.

Moreover, the new managerialism is seen as a way to devolve responsibility (ie. power), at a very superficial level, to schools and practitioners. Thus, in this situation practitioners might attain a sense of ‘empowerment’, whereas in reality the real control and power remains at centralised locations. Hartley (1997:48) outlines the UK experience with the new managerialism:
How can the costs of the welfare state be pruned so that both professionals and clients lend their approval to the cuts? The preferred solution is to assign control of strategy to government, but to devolve to institutions and to individuals the control over tactics which will implement that strategy. Funding now follows performance, as a reward; hitherto funding preceded performance as an investment.

In this sense, within the new management, there is now a ‘new’ form of employee involvement, in what Ball (1998:123) calls the cultivation of ‘corporate culture’…. a development which is “deeply paradoxical. On the one hand, they represent a move away from Taylorist, ‘low trust’ methods of employee control. Managerial responsibilities are delegated and initiative and problem solving are highly valued. On the other hand, new forms of surveillance and self-monitoring are put in place, e.g. appraisal systems, target setting, and output comparisons” (ibid.).

Thus the new managerialism, replete with its own jargon, seems to be functioning in support of a neo-liberal economic agenda in its appropriation of the technicist language typically used in the business sector. The following example, from Australia, quite vividly demonstrates this issue:

… there has been an increasingly ‘taken-for-granted’ assumption that managerial principles and entrepreneurial strategies are the means to revitalise schooling. Indeed, the language – one of the central components of an ideology – of educational reform is heavily infused with terms derived directly from the business sector. There is an overall perception – often expressed as ‘just common sense – that schools should be more like businesses … even to the extent, as recently advocated by the Minister in New South Wales, of allowing corporate advertising on school uniforms (Cocklin 1992:246).

The increasing colonisation of education policy on a global basis by economic policy imperatives is also symbolised by the widespread use of concepts such as the ‘learning society’ and the ‘knowledge-based economy’ (Ball 1998:122). That Fiji is not exempt from this new
direction is evident in the directions that she is now taking in matters to do with educational policy. The next section will illustrate this point further.

The New Managerialism in Fiji

National policy making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work. Most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs, that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and, ultimately re-creation in contexts of practice (Ball 1998:126).

Fiji is currently going through an unprecedented phase of educational policy document production, with the ‘new-style’ policy documents now gaining a unique currency of authority and prestige. This phase began at the beginning of 1999, when the Ministry of Education developed a strategic plan to “provide greater focus and direction on educational planning in government” (Kotobalavu 2000:i). This plan was called the “Education Fiji 2020 Strategic Plan”, and was developed during the reign of the newly elected Labour/PCP. It was later superseded by a flurry of documentation production in the form of the “Strategic Plan 2000 – 2002”, and the “2001 Corporate Plan: Putting the ‘Strategic Plan 2000 – 2002’ into Action”.

There are very clear links between the new policy documents and the macroeconomic policies that successive governments in Fiji have been pursuing since the onslaught of neo-liberal ideals. It is evident that the preparation of the new set of planning documents was initiated by the economic requirements set up within the Ministry of Finance. In a section on ‘Internal Outputs’ the 2001 Ministry of Education Corporate Plan lists as the number 1 output, “Prepare Corporate Plan”. The quality of this Plan is to be assessed in terms of how far it complies with the
“requirements of (the) Public Service Act and (the) Finance Management Act” (Fiji MoE 2001c:37).9

What is of significance in this situation is how the push for policy formulation seems to be coming from outside of the education sector. This of course is not a phenomenon restricted to Fiji’s situation. Furthermore, there is some feeling in the education sector that the Ministry of Education might not have perhaps acted on its own accord in following the new managerial trend if there had not been an impetus from the Finance Ministry for development of the new plans. An academic member of staff at the Fiji College of Advanced Education (FCAE) commented on these developments tying them in with the reforms that Fiji is currently undergoing:

It’s all tied up with these public sector reforms that we are inheriting, or borrowing from Australia. And it’s all tied up with Performance Management Systems where you have to have a Vision mission, you have to have a strategic plan, and your annual plans and all that. If it weren’t for that I don’t think that the ministry would ever dream that that’s the way they’d like to go. That’s a very recent thing and only because they’ve been forced to be able to think ahead. Otherwise they’re very reactive and never proactive.10

It will be useful at this point to analyse some of this ‘new managerial-style’ policy development.

**Education Fiji 2020**

Education Fiji 2020 denotes the beginning of an increased focus on planning at all levels of education, providing a framework for strategic and management planning which will ensure that the efforts of all partners in education are integrated for the benefit of our students, the community and the nation. This analysis identified a number of changes and challenges which were the starting point for developing the objectives and planned outcomes for education to the year 2020. The outcomes describe the desired features of

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9 See appendix 2 for the pertinent sections of the Fiji Public Finance Management Act.
10 Coded as Staff member C2.
education by the year 2020 and give us reference points from which we can measure our success (Fiji MoE 1999:2).

Almost at the outset, “Education Fiji 2020” uses the language typical of the discourse of the ‘new managerialism’. Furthermore, there are strong tendencies towards a behaviouristic perspective, with an emphasis on outcomes and measurement. After an introduction to the ‘tradition of education in Fiji’ and an examination of ‘changes and challenges’, the 2020 document goes on to discuss 10 objectives for planning in education to the year 2020. Each of these objectives is followed by a set of ‘desired outcomes’, which are to act as sources of measurement of achievement of these objectives. Both the objectives and the outcomes are replete with the exhortation to develop ‘quality’ and ‘excellence’. Objective 5 states “To establish standards, monitor, account for and seek continuous improvement in the performance of our learners, our staff and our education system”. It buttresses this economic terminology with appeals to the ‘participatory’ nature of education with objective 10, which states “To increase educational participation at all levels, encouraging a learning culture with community recognition of the importance and value of education and training throughout life”. These two objectives taken together aptly illustrate Hartley’s point about the two sets of vocabulary evident in the new managerialism:

Before us, therefore, is the discourse of the new managerialism. It comprises two sets of vocabulary, the one replete with the industrial metaphors of the rationally structured machine, the other suffused with the appeals to empowerment and ownership. The former is the discourse for strategy; the latter for tactics. Somehow, we, the professionals … are meant to mix these two contradictory vocabularies in our minds, as if they are of a piece, devoid of contradiction, logically coherent. In our attempt to bring their contradictory logics together, we are left with confusion and not a little cynicism. It just does not feel right. And it does not feel empowering (Hartley 1997:48).
Furthermore, “Education 2020” contains a separate section on ‘Planning in Education’, where it is indicated that “Schools will now also be required to develop 3 year strategic plans which outline their plans for renewal and development against the relevant objectives and outcomes outlined in Education Fiji 2020”. The diagram that appears overleaf is taken from the document and sets out a planning structure which 

…. promotes self-management and decision-making at the local level and encourages choice, diversity and excellence. Working towards common essential outcomes, specific goals and strategies for their achievement will be identified and developed at each level of education in response to local needs and available resources (Fiji MoE 1999:33).

There is a sense here of a ‘limited’ devolution. Schools are being encouraged to set up their own plans, but it is quite clear that these have to be done within the parameters set up by the central authority. Hartley (1997:48) refers to this problem in a distinction between ownership of the ‘means’ rather than the all-important ownership of the ‘ends’:

Thus it is that concepts such as grant maintained schools and local management of schools both suggest a kind of power to the professional and to the consumer. The professional is thereby said to have a stake, to have a sense of ownership, even to be emancipated. But any ownership is only of tactics – of the means, not the strategic ends. The ends are for others to decide. Their decisions are wrapped up in the bureaucratic discourse of specifications, performance criteria, articulations and national guidelines.

The fact that these pronouncements actually turn out to be relatively lacking in meaning is evident in the type of language employed by the new policy. The ultimate aim of the new policy is to ensure efficiency, cutting back of funds, and a gearing of schooling towards the needs of the local and global determinants of the economy. In Fiji’s case, there is embedded within this major discourse an appeal to the more humanistic aspects of education, aptly illustrating Hartley’s earlier comments on the two contradictory sets of vocabulary evident in the new managerialism (Hartley 1997:48).
Strategic Plan 2000 – 2002

This document is the first 3 year Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Education and Technology aligned to the blueprint for educational development in the Fiji Islands; ‘Education Fiji 2020’. It outlines the Ministry’s mid-range plans for renewal and development which will support achievement of the priority objectives and planned outcomes outlined in ‘Education Fiji 2020’…. We are setting standards and targets for the performance of our organisation and of education generally, which we will monitor, measure and report upon (Fiji MoE 2000:1).

The alignment of the language use with other nations in the world who are following a new managerialism based on neo-liberal pressures is singularly remarkable. In expanding upon the role of planning in schools, the 2001 Corporate Plan states:

This planning structure promotes self-management and decision-making at the local level and encourages choice, diversity and excellence. Working towards common essential outcomes, specific strategies for their achievement can be identified and developed at each level of education in response to local needs and available resources (Fiji MoE 2001:15).11

The use of the word ‘choice’ is particularly interesting. It is unclear as to what type of ‘choice’ is being referred to here. The large majority of parents in Fiji do not have many options in selection of schools for their children. Most schools are over subscribed, and parents join a waiting list to get their children places at schools where there might be vacancies. In rural communities, there is sometimes just the one local school, and often children have to walk long distances from their homes to reach school each morning. There is no notion of ‘choice’ in these circumstances.

11 Note the repetition of the language from the “Education Fiji 2020” document.
2001 Corporate Plan

The Ministry of Education is declaring 2001 as the Year of Breakthrough… We have analysed our inputs, outputs and desired outcomes for the Year 2000 and have mapped out in this Plan a more decisive and focused pathway for education in Fiji in 2001. Our primary focus is to realise set accountabilities and targets in partnership with our stakeholders (Fiji MoE 2001:1).

The managerialist language continues into this 3rd major policy document produced by the Fiji MoE in line with the requirements of the Fiji Finance Management Act (See appendix 2). The focus in this particular document is in the ministry outputs for 2001. In its review of the 2000 outputs there are 11 pages of a tabulated assessment of ‘delivery’ of outputs, with a separate column for “If Not, Why?” cases. There is a strong tendency towards a ‘ticking off’ of achievements with the inclusion of a separate entry each for items such as

- Payment of Salary
- Payment of Accounts
- Payment of Government Grants
- FNPF\textsuperscript{12} Payment
- Key-in transactions
- Issue of Revenue and Trust Fund Receipts.

Although these are extreme examples of the more technical aspects of the outputs, what is of interest here is that seemingly obvious matters such as these are tabulated alongside more professional matters such as

- Provision of teaching services
- Provision of pre-service teaching services

\textsuperscript{12} The Fiji National Provident Fund
• Strengthening of Fijian Education

• Conduct research when necessary on above issues and use finding as basis of advice.

The development of the three new policy documents “Education Fiji 2020”; Strategic Plan 2000-2002; and the 2001 Corporate Plan is an important moment for Fiji. Their production is indicative of a strong centralised attempt to take a more proactive stance on matters to do with education. However, as has been suggested above there are a number of matters of concern that need to be noted. Firstly, the fact that the directives for this policy development emerge from the finance sector should not be seen as an unimportant issue. The dictates of the financial sector through a wider culture of cost cutting, downgrading, ‘objective’ measurement, and monitoring and ‘accountability’ should be noted for its effects on educational and other social institutions in the country. Secondly, there is a need to separate the professional matters from the more mundane technical matters in a consideration of what is called ‘outputs’. Education is primarily a human endeavour and designing policy for its own sake considerably denies this factor. Thirdly, it is clear that the language of the new managerialism has emerged in the new policy documents, and there are indications that much of this language is imported from the economic sector. Again, a view of education as an overtly technicist endeavour induces a tendency towards a ‘meaninglessness’ and a decontextualisation of policy matters.

The above discussion on the current policy context that Fiji finds herself indicates that there is a definite appropriation of business discourse in the new documents. In an important sense, the defining of education thus through these policy discourses, and the “economising of education means that economic interests dominate content and process in education, and that in turn
requires that what counts as knowledge is redefined, for practitioners as well as pupils (Ozga 2000:56). Consequently, the new educational discourses that are now emerging out of the broader macro socio-economic context, might be said to have the potential to contribute to the construction of a new and developing reality of education in Fiji. That this knowledge and reality is largely defined in what might be identified as bordering on a ‘meaning deficient’ new managerial style is a crucial matter for debate (Loughlin 2002). However, it has become apparent that the emergence of a technical form of rationality in educational policy documents is part of a general global tendency towards the ‘economising of education’ that Ozga (2000) refers to above.

The next section of this chapter turns to an important development in Fiji’s educational history. This is the “Education For All: Fiji Education Review Commission 2000” initiative. It is important that this initiative is discussed here for a number of reasons. Firstly, this is the first government-initiated review of Fiji’s education system in thirty-one years. The recommendations that emerge from the Review act as plans for a reform of the education system. Secondly, an analysis of the processes of review and consultation will support a major theme of this study, and that is educational policy and practice processes cannot be understood as neutral, free-standing activities, but are part of wider societal developments.

Education For All: The Fiji Education Review Commission

The current educational policy context in Fiji can be described as one of unprecedented flux. This runs parallel with the series of upheavals and on-going political, legal and constitutional

13 Note that this particular output was listed as ‘not delivered’ and in the ‘If Not, Why’ column the following explanation was given: ‘Specific personnel, topics, funds have to be identified’.
crises that the country is experiencing.\textsuperscript{14} The following personal experience from a staff member at the University of the South Pacific presenting an academic paper in the UK (Clifford 2001:3) underlines the difficulties that Fiji has experienced, and the problems associated with working in this situation:

In the [last] eighteen months I have experienced a civilian coup, a military take-over, an army mutiny, lived under curfews with heavily armed military road blocks throughout the city and the countryside and villager road blocks that were non-negotiable ie you passed through only at their convenience, and have seen parts of the city razed to the ground by fire. There have been periods of little electricity, intermittent water supply and food shortages. There have been break-outs from medium and high security prisons and summary torture and murder of a prisoner and army personnel. There has been increasing crime, violence and unemployment and we have seen the beginning of the movement of, potentially, 11,000 Indo-Fijian families off the sugar cane farms into a society that has no infrastructure to support them (Singh, 2000; anon 2000). I have spent three months at work as a physical presence to discourage the threatened arson and looting of the university. I have seen fear in the eyes of colleagues and knew that others had received death threats. The police are now widely distrusted and the justice system is breaking down (Tuwere, 2001a; 2000b).

Since the armed take-over of Parliament in 2000, the period during which the research for this thesis was carried out, Fiji has been ‘led’ successively by the military, a military-appointed regime, and since September 2001, an elected government. During the period of fieldwork (October 2000 to May 2001), Fiji was governed by an interim administration. As might be expected, many of the policy directions instituted by the Labour/People’s Coalition after their victory in the 1999 elections were either shelved or discontinued after the armed take-over in 2000. In fact, many of those interviewed in relation to policy matters prefaced their comments with phrases such as “Well it all depends on who our new government will be”.

This state of unrest and national uncertainty manifested itself quite significantly in the education sector. Schools and universities were closed for long periods, and there was obvious personal

\textsuperscript{14} See postscript to this chapter for a fuller description of these issues.
anguish and poverty that many sections of the community experienced, and are continuing to experience. The local newspaper reports were replete with instances of children having to give up school because of the poverty and uncertainty induced by the political crisis. In an interview reported in Fiji’s Daily Post newspaper, the head of Fiji’s ‘Save the Children Fund’, Irshad Ali, stated that, in the aftermath of the 2000 coup

At least 5000 were not attending school – even the bus fare was too much for many families to afford in the economic slump that has reigned since the coup. Unemployment is widespread with 8000 people out of jobs in the formal sector and an unknown number of jobs gone in the informal sector…. In Suva [the capital city] the number of street kids was growing and it was not uncommon to see children scavenging (“Charity’s plea for coup’s child victims”. The Fiji Daily Post, 20 October 2000).

At the national educational policy level, a major initiative instigated by the deposed People’s Coalition government had to be shelved as a direct consequence of the 2000 coup. This initiative was the proposed review of the education system. An Education Commission was established in 1999 to review the entire education system, and to make recommendations for reform. The Commission was headed by Professor Kazim Bacchus of Canada. There were five commission members: one New Zealander, one Australian and three locals. The Commission began their work in January 2000 with consultations at the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other government departments. The second phase covered the period of March to May 2000, during which time the Commission received both written and oral submissions from individuals, groups and organisations. In total, more than seven hundred submissions were made (Government of Fiji, 2000b:iii). The coup d’etat of May 19th 2000, however, severely disrupted the Commission’s work. Visits to a number of provinces and schools had to be cancelled, and the writing up phase was delayed considerably. Furthermore, as a direct result of the coup, Fiji travel
advisories were imposed by Australia and New Zealand, limiting travel to Fiji by two of the Commissioners. Moreover, that there were considerable irreconcilable differences of opinion amongst the Commission members is indicated in the following quotation from the Foreword to the Report, written by the Secretary/Manager of the Commission Secretariat:

Professor Bacchus decided for personal reasons that he would no longer be able to come back to Fiji. There were suggestions for the Commission to meet for two to three weeks either in Australia or New Zealand to finalise its report. The Commission’s budget could not accommodate that. In any case, in my view, it was clearly unacceptable for a Commission on Fiji to hold its final and most important meeting in an overseas location, when it was perfectly safe for such a meeting to be held in Fiji. Finally, it was also clear from the views of individual Commission members that there were a number of specific issues on which it was unlikely that they would be able to reach a consensus. In view of the above, and in consultation with the Ministry of Education, it was decided that the best approach would be for the Commission to change its status to a Panel. Its report would, therefore, be a report of a Panel of individual contributors (Kotobalavu 2000:iii).

Thus, what started out as a carefully conceived and thoroughly planned endeavour quickly degenerated in the light of the political uncertainties established by the 2000 coup. Over the last decade or so, and in view of the fact that the last Review Commission was held as far back as 1969, there had been numerous calls for a new review to be carried out. The Labour party, in its election campaign during the lead up to the May 1999 General Elections, had included in its manifesto a promise to set up an independent commission to review the education system. Once the Labour/People’s Coalition came to power, the Ministry of Education was directed to draft the terms of reference that would guide the work of the Commission. These terms were drafted following extensive consultation with the public, and invoked considerable optimism in the public view, in that it suggested that finally something was going to be done about the education system.

15 Chapter 1 of the thesis contains an analysis of the Terms of Reference governing the proposed review.
After considerable, unavoidable delay, the final report of the Education Commission was published for public reading in November 2000. During the course of the review and the subsequent drafting of the report, the format of the report had to be changed from the original plan of a single Commission report. The Foreword to the November 2000 report suggests that, in view of the lack of consensus amongst the original members on a number of issues

…it was decided that the best approach would be for the Commission to change its status to a Panel. Its report would, therefore, be a report of a Panel of individual contributors. The members of the Commission/Panel agreed on the sharing of subject areas, based on each one’s professional interest and experience in education. It was also decided to draw in Dr Helen Tavola, Mr Iosefa Jo Nainima, Ms Aileen Croghan, Dr Akhila Nand Sharma and Mr Philip Taylor to assist with chapters in subject areas of their respective competencies (Kotobalavu 2000:iii-iv).

The above discussion of the progress of the work of the Fiji Education Review Commission raises a number of important issues. First, it is evident that the political upheaval and subsequent uncertainty had a detrimental effect on the work of the commission. Some commentators have suggested that the change of the membership of the commission, and its reduction to a panel seems to have affected the potential impact that the report might have had. For example, an administrator at the USP said

The report itself did not come out the way it was supposed to. It was very hotchpotch with the individual chapters…. Whoever provided material, it was dumped in, whether it was a part of the initial plan or not. So it doesn’t really interest me at all. It doesn’t say anything new. We know all these things, there is nothing new, nothing radical.\(^\text{16}\)

These comments are supported by the views of other members of both the staff at USP and the FCAE, as will be discussed in the discussion of the findings for this study. The following

\(^{16}\) Taken from interview with USP staff member coded as A1.
excerpt from an interview with a trade unionist, however, provides an example of these types of responses:

The outcome of the review was too general and gave very broad recommendations in certain chapters and mundane details in other chapters…. Given Fiji’s experience, I am not sure if the review will bring about any drastic changes at all to Fiji’s educational system…. We have had a review in the past which had recommendations that were not implemented at all.17

The original five members were reduced to four when the Chair of the Commission left in uncertain circumstances. The addition of four new members as writers might have added to the expertise represented on the Commission, but it is not certain that the conversion of the work of the Commission to a panel, represented by individuals, actually resulted in a more useful report. The other writers included one academic from the University of the South Pacific, one Physical Education lecturer at the local teachers’ college, one MoE official, and one research consultant. The research consultant later took on a significant amount of the writing of the final report.

Secondly, although the final report presents a thorough, comprehensive account of education in Fiji, there is sense that it is a report made up of single chapters rather than a unified set of recommendations. In fact, after the publication of the Report, the Ministry of Education indicated that another panel would be appointed to report on the Report, and streamline recommendations. This time, the panel would be made up entirely of Ministry of Education officials, as the following newspaper article indicates:

While the Minister of Education, Nelson Delailomaloma, appreciates the effort of the Education Commission in the publishing of a report on Fiji’s education system, he will, however, appoint a team to evaluate the report. During the launching of the report on Fiji’s education system, Mr Delailomaloma said all the recommendations in the report

17 Interviewee coded as T1.
would not be implemented. “We need to get people from the ministry to examine it very carefully and seek the advice and documents of other stakeholders,” Mr Delailomaloma said. “We need a timeframe in which to do this.” Mr Delailomaloma said the next step would be to develop a strategic action-plan on the report (“Team to Study Report”. The Fiji Times, 30 November 2000).

Thirdly, in the pre-2000 coup stages of the Commission, the then Minister of Education, Mr Pratap Chand, assured the public and the Commission members that the review would be a totally independent undertaking. In retrospect, taking into account the progress of the work of the commission, its downgrading to a panel status, and the current re-working of the published report into a separate set of recommendations, the precise nature of the independence of the review as a process of consultation and implementation is unclear. Moreover, there are some indications that the streamlined recommendations are largely in line with current government policy.18

At the present time, the Ministry of Education is working with the Report of the Commission/Panel to streamline its recommendations, as the following excerpt from an interview with a senior Ministry of Education official (M1) indicates:

The report really is an individual report now, it's not the report of the whole commission because of the time, of the factor that affected it, and the coup. So what we have done with the report is to encourage as much consultation and distribution to the community to the NGOs, and to the institutions. Their views were presented to the (Education) Forum once again. We had a whole day of discussion ... and all the different areas of this ministry, the CDU, the technical, the primary, the secondary consulted their own areas. All their teachers and associations. The senior staff at the Ministry have been meeting almost every week now to try to formulate it in such a way and so out of the recommendations of different areas. Primary, secondary, the economy and all the different sections of the report. And then we will condense it into 25 manageable objectives.
Thus the Fiji Education Review Commission certainly is an important milestone in Fiji’s educational history. The review was long overdue, with the last one having taken place 31 years previously. However, the political crisis that ensued while the Commission was sitting did not encourage a fully independent and thorough review process to take place. This is not to detract from the quality of the work that has been done by those involved in the writing up of the Report, nor from the current work being done to enhance the process of implementation. Rather, the intention is to indicate how, in Fiji, the continuing political problems impact significantly on educational policy making and consultation. It is very difficult to have a free ranging discussion of important issues within a context beset by strife, suspicion, and perceptions of social inequality.

**Conclusion**

The educational policy consultation and implementation process in Fiji has now reached unprecedented levels of intensity. Policy is being disseminated and discussed in new ways, the indication being that much of this is in the form of the new managerialism that is part of a neo-liberal discourse. This chapter has drawn out some of the contextual factors that are important to an enhanced understanding of these new policy developments. The assertion is that introducing new reform measures without recourse to a wider socio-economic and historical assessment of the major issues will inevitably reduce the designed impact of the new policy. Thus, the next chapter will now extend the socio-economic understandings about the Fiji policy context discussed above, to a consideration of the impact of historical factors. Before that, however, a Postscript is provided here as a way to summarise some of the issues surrounding the political

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18 As indicated in interviews and informal discussions with education personnel.
crisis that Fiji has been undergoing. This Postscript will add to the contextual understandings of
education in Fiji.
Postscript
A comprehensive understanding of educational issues in Fiji cannot be gained without some reference to the current political crisis. As a post-script to this chapter, and as an introduction to the next chapter, a brief discussion of some of the relevant issues will be made here.

The most significant recent political development in Fiji's current setting has been the overthrow of the democratically elected government on May 19 2000. This is not the place to look at all the political issues surrounding this political event - however, it would be ignoring a very significant set of events to not include at least a brief discussion of these political events here. The ramifications for education are quite significant, especially in terms of societal perceptions about what the role of education, and in turn, what the role of teacher education ought to be.

The events of May 19 2000 emphasised that the question of what is ‘indigenous’, in Fiji at least, is not a simplistic one. The term has been bandied about and offered by the leaders of the coup as justification for the kidnapping and overthrow of the elected government. Furthermore, the majority of the non-Fijian media focused on the May 19 political crisis in Fiji as being primarily about indigenous rights. The front man for the coup, George Speight, repeatedly asserted in his numerous press conferences with local and foreign journalists that it was against the threat of Indian domination over indigenous Fijian rights that the coup was staged. This view of events was picked up and romanticised by many foreign journalists, as well as some academics, to account for the troubles of this tiny pacific nation. That the issues are far more complex is evident in a number of critical analyses carried out by other writers.¹⁹ Tongan journalist Masina

(2000), for example, in an article entitled "The Wrongs of Indigenous Rights" asserts that the
demand for indigenous rights comes from a native ruling class platform. Braddock (2000), says
that, in actual fact, Speight does not speak for ordinary Fijians but is

exploiting the disenchantment of ethnic Fijian villagers and poor who have been hard hit
by the country's economic crisis and the IMF's policies implemented under Rabuka (ex-
prime minister and leader of the 1987 coup) and continued under Chaudry (the May 19
2000 deposed prime minister). He speaks primarily for a small segment of chiefs,
entrepreneurs and small businessmen whose interests have been threatened by the
economic changes.

An analysis of Fiji’s first coup staged in 1987 was carried out by Rory Ewins (1998) and much
of what he had to say is also relevant to Fiji's current crisis. In his analysis, Ewins surveys the
key works on the event with the aim of categorising the major explanations given for the coup.
He comes up with a framework of four categories: race, class, custom, and specific interest.
Ewins identifies the 'race' factor as being the most commonly offered explanation for the coup -
if only on the basis of media reports at that time (as happened with the 2000 coup). However, the
race explanation is considered inadequate:

Its primary academic champion, Scarr, in my view fails to make a convincing case. Scarr's acceptance of the 'myth of cultural homogeneity' leads him to presume that Rabuka [the coup leader] had the support of all Fijians.... Such a presumption is not justified. However...race was of great importance in winning tacit support for the coup from those Fijians who were wary of Indians (Ewins 1998:62).

The class factor is described as a necessary part of any coup explanation but on its own does not
fully explain the motivations of the coup-makers as these motives extended beyond a simplistic
explanation that is about the protection of 'ruling class' wealth and privilege.
Ewins (1998) suggests that the most significant factor in analysing the coup is that of ‘custom’, preferring this term to the more widely used ‘tradition’. Although other factors were important in understanding the coup, 'custom' alone is almost sufficient on its own to explain the coups and provides the best framework within which to incorporate the other factors he discusses. This idea of 'custom' is important to this current thesis, not only for analysing the political crisis that Fiji is going through, but also to create links with education processes significant to this social setting.

It will be valuable at this juncture to define some of the terms that will form part of discussions here. The terms 'culture' and 'tradition' are sometimes used interchangeably in Fiji. 'Traditional' is often used unproblematically as referring to practices of pre-European contact. However, as Ewins (1998) points out:

Fijians themselves, few of whom have a detailed knowledge of Fiji's pre-colonial history (which regrettably is not taught in most schools), are apt to consider the village practices with which they grew up as being 'traditional' even though these practices may in fact have developed within the last one or two generations. Thus there is a discrepancy between what might be considered to be 'traditional' in terms of practice, and 'traditional' in terms of ideologies about how these practices have evolved.

Within the political sphere, there is now a renaissance of interest in issues of tradition and indigenous rights. As can be appreciated, this is a complex discussion that can be interpreted in various ways. This renewed interest can be analysed at the level of rhetoric which buys into simplistic race-based explanations for Fiji’s political problems or it can be analysed at the level of underlying assumptions and ideology. The role of ‘tradition’ in Fiji is a significant one. ‘Tradition’ is generally used synonymously with culture, and there is a sense of tradition being something that has been passed on from previous generations. The idea that some forms of what counts as ‘tradition’ might actually be ‘invented’ is not widely accepted in Fijian society. The
term ‘invention of tradition’ as has been discussed, for example, by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983)

includes both ‘traditions’ actually invented, constructed and formally instituted and those emerging in a less traceable manner…. (It is) taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual and symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past (1983:1).

What should be noted here is the relationship between the use of factors of 'tradition' or 'custom' to support coup tendencies, and the corresponding placement of 'tradition' in discourses about indigenous education. According to Ewins (1998:69):

‘Tradition’, when promoted as an expression of indigenous values and independence, serves as a smokescreen to disguise moves by Fiji’s customary elite towards entrenching itself in power. Nobody really knows what level of Fijian support the post-coup regime commands.

These political issues, and the adoption of the rhetoric on indigenous rights in the discourse of the coup-makers, provides a pertinent backdrop from which to look back at Fiji's history and identify the evolution of her education systems. Furthermore, the issue of culture and politics in development raises the question of how culture, tradition, and indigenous issues are placed in development discourses. In Fiji, as suggested earlier, there is a danger that indigenous issues are being approached from an essentialist viewpoint that reduces discussions to one of ‘race’, and that uses ‘tradition’ as a smokescreen for this essentialism. This thesis derives from an understanding of the issues as outlined in this postscript in its analysis of global discourses and local cultures of teacher education. In discussing the impact of historical factors on current educational policy and practice, the next chapter is largely based on the understandings
presented in this postscript, and on the earlier discussion that centred on socio-economic understandings about the Fiji policy context.
CHAPTER 4
Fiji: Historical Context

Introduction
In developing countries with recent histories of colonial dependence, issues of dependency on global forces of both an economic and cultural nature are further mediated by specific internal constraints and responses. These internal factors have evolved as newly independent states grapple with a complex colonial legacy of circumstances within the neo-colonial society. The relationship between education and development in ‘developing’ post-colonial countries can best be understood via an analysis of colonial policy through to decolonisation and neo-colonialism. Although broad but useful generalisations can be made about these issues in the areas of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the South Pacific, this chapter will focus primarily on the area covered within the case study of this thesis, and that is Fiji as situated in the South Pacific region.

The chapter will outline the historical development of education in Fiji, and will conclude with an analysis of how this historical context affected the development of teacher education. It will be suggested that the challenges that globalising discourses of education raise are further compounded by the whole history of education in Fiji, how it has developed, and the socio-economic political climate within. The main argument will be that there are a number of historical factors that have contributed to the growth of an educational context beset by a technical rationality that has placed limitations on opportunities for change in pedagogical practice. Pedagogical practice is understood here to mean a socially structured way of teaching that reflects dominant discourses in society at large. The chapter begins with a review of historical factors.
The Colonial Legacy

Fiji consists of a group of more than 300 islands with a total land area of 18,272 square kilometres. The islands are spread out over an area of about 230,000 square kilometres in the Southwest Pacific Ocean between latitudes 15-21 degrees south, and longitudes 177-180 degrees east. Most of Fiji's inhabitants (1996 population estimate 800,500) live on the two main islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

The use of carbon dating of Lapita pottery suggests that the Fijians migrated into the Pacific from Southeast Asia via the Philippines and Indonesia about three to four thousand years ago. The colonisation of the group of 300 plus islands in 1874 brought both immediate changes and set in place structures that would manifest themselves in other forms years later. Prior to 1874, European influence came in the form of traders, sailors, beachcombers and British missionaries. Formal colonisation served to legalise this new presence in Fiji and to instigate a number of socio-cultural, economic and political changes that would have long range effects:

The internal dynamics … in South Pacific societies were abruptly and profoundly altered when the South Pacific and its societies were ‘discovered’ by Europe, and the economies were integrated into a growing world system of economic specialisation and exchange, a process that continues to this very day…. Colonialism has resulted in the structural reorganisation of virtually all societies on earth. This reorganisation changed the economies of Third World nations from largely self-sufficient and autonomous economies, into economies that produced raw materials with cheap and sometimes slave labour for the industrialising nations…. Elite, either indigenous ones now backed by the colonial process, or new elite specifically created by the colonial process, arose as intermediaries between the colonial powers and the mass of the population (Howard et al. 1983:1-2).

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1 See maps overleaf.
2 South Pacific Commission, Population/Demography Programme, Noumea, New Caledonia.
With Cession to Britain in 1874, and the consequent establishment of a British colonial administration, there was a need to generate revenue to support this new leadership over the newly declared nation state colony. The colonial administration decided that sugar-cane farming would be the best way to bring in cash. This decision resulted in the birth of a formal capitalist economy dependent on world market forces and exchange. Fiji began to produce sugar and export it to the world, thus began the system of exchange across national borders that would see Fiji become dependent on revenue from a limited number of export goods as she struggled to compete within a complex world economic system. During the early colonial period however, economic issues were not immediately of direct relationship to the form that education via a formal education system would take. This would come later.

The first governor of Fiji, Sir Arthur Gordon, was an instrumental figure in the setting up of a number of policies that would have far reaching effects on the newly created Fijian nation. Gordon was of the belief that Fijians were not suited to formal wage labour - they were to be protected in their village communities. So, as was the case in other parts of the world, the colonial administration decided to import foreign labour from India under a system known as Indenture.

At the end of their contracts, the Indian labourers were offered the option of remaining in Fiji and the majority of Indian labourers accepted this option. This group was later joined by other Indian merchants and businessmen who arrived as 'free settlers', and by the 1976 census the Indo-Fijian population had grown to form 49.8% of the population whereas the ethnic Fijians lagged behind forming a proportion of 44.2% (Mangubhai 1984:170).
The British colonial policy of 'Divide and Rule' contributed to a state of considerable suspicion between the indigenous Fijians and the Indo-Fijian population. This and other crucial factors would manifest themselves later in a more overt form of anti Indo-Fijian feeling unleashed in 1987 through two military coups. Other sources of tension between the Indo-Fijian and indigenous population was perceived to have originated with what some elements of the indigenous Fijian leadership saw to be the Indo-Fijian domination of the economy. It is sometimes suggested in public discussion that Sir Arthur Gordon's colonial policy of protection of the indigenous Fijian ‘traditional’ way of life has contributed to their lack of business acumen and low levels of participation at the higher ranks of the economy. In reality, the situation is far more complicated than this, with, for example, the role of transnational corporations and tensions within the indigenous 'traditional' leadership not being recognised fully in this argument. These are discussed in various analyses of the three coups that have been staged in Fiji’s contemporary setting.3

Political participation was agitated for vigorously by the Indo-Fijian population. On the other hand, through indirect rule, and the institutionalisation of the leadership provided by traditional chiefs and the separate Fijian administration set up by the colonial government, Fijians were encouraged to remain relatively passive. However, that this is not the totality of experience is evident in the ferocity of resistance by the so-called hill tribes of Fiji:

The subordination of Fiji was not exactly a smooth operation, however, as the Deed of Cession and orthodox historians would have us believe. Colonial rule was not consolidated until Fiji’s first governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, was able to subjugate the fiercely independent ‘Hill’ people of western viti levu, the Wainimala people and parts of Vanua Levu at Seaqaqa…. The so-called ‘uprising’ of the Hill people was largely a response to the increasing encroachment of European settlers along the banks of the Ba, Sigatoka and Nadi rivers. Also, they had not welcomed attempts by settlers, missionaries

3 See postscript to chapter 3.
The indigenous population and women as an entire group did not get the franchise in Fiji until 1963, whereas the Indo-Fijian male population had long since achieved this milestone in 1916. Thus, the historic lack or low level of indigenous Fijian direct participation in politics and, especially in the cash economy created a sometimes tense situation exacerbated by the fact that the Indo-Fijian population was fast out growing the indigenous Fijian population. Following on from this, the education system has in recent times been charged with the responsibility of reducing perceived inequalities between the two races (see discussion on the *Education For All Education Review Commission* in chapters 1 through 3). The situation is made more volatile by the superior performance of the Indo-Fijian population over the indigenous Fijians in both local and external school examinations. The Indo-Fijian success in education as measured by success in external examinations has been seen as being part of the desire to rise above their historical position in the sugar cane fields, so to speak (Ali 1980). Similarly, it is sometimes suggested that the protection of Fijians in their village systems, and the institutionalisation of traditional forms of leadership are factors which have contributed to the relatively low profile that Fijians seem to have had in the economic strata of society.

**Pedagogy**

“Why is it, in spite of the fact that teaching by pouring in, learning by passive absorption, are universally condemned, that they are still entrenched in practice? (Dewey 1966/1916:38)

Current pedagogical practice in Fiji schools is dominated by what Freire refers to as ‘banking education’ (Freire 1972). This is akin to a transmission mode of teaching where ‘deposits’ are
made in the student’s head by a ‘depositor’ or teacher. The transmission process is a one-way journey and students act as ‘depositories’ or ‘containers’ who then bank the deposited knowledge. When required to do so at a later moment, students retrieve the deposit and regurgitate it in the form that it was previously received. This style of schooling is based on rationalistic assumptions about what education is for, where knowledge is seen as objective and certain.4

The recent 2000 review of Fiji’s education system points out that the banking model is typical of schooling pedagogy:

> Even though most teachers in Fiji have a basic professional qualification, the teaching strategies they use often need to be updated. When the Commissioners visited schools, they observed that, in general, the ‘knowledge transmission’ mode of instruction, which stems from a ‘banking’ conception of education, was the approach to teaching most commonly used. This was often attributed to the pressures exerted on schools to achieve high pass rates in the many external examinations (Bacchus 2000:54).

The report also notes that there is a common view held by teachers in Fiji that teaching is simply a technicist task aimed essentially at raising test scores (ibid.). However, the preponderance of the banking model in Fiji schools does not detract in any way from the general dedication of teachers, and the keen interest with which most students attend to their lessons. This point is raised by many scholars who have researched education in Fiji.5 Education is perceived to be of major importance in Fiji, and it is an activity that is taken very seriously. However, it is sometimes suggested that both teachers and students are limited by a number of situational factors, including those examined by school research conducted by Muralidhar (1987). After an observation of 289 lessons, taught by 32 teachers in 34 classes he found that there was a

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4 As discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis.
mismatch between the implementation of the Basic Science curriculum in relation to its philosophy and aims. His research further discovered that some of the factors contributing to this are:

- a lack of adequate facilities, and shortage of equipment and materials
- difficulties in managing activities in the classroom
- teachers’ own attitude towards, and perceptions of activity lessons
- teachers’ lack of confidence in handling activities
- mismatch between the aim of the programme and the quality of curriculum materials
- heavy teaching loads
- pressure to complete the syllabus, and influence of examinations
- lack of leadership from Science Heads of Departments
- school administrators being insensitive to teachers’ concerns
- shortage of professional staff in the MoE leading to poor communication between curriculum designers and teachers
- absence of in-service courses and lack of support facilities for teachers

More recently conducted research supports this assertion further:

Teachers in Fiji give a general impression of dedication and professionalism…. In practice, however, theories learned in teacher-training appear to have given way to satisfying the practicalities of meeting syllabus deadlines and teaching in the most pragmatic way, given the abilities of students, the resources available, and the leadership and management of the school concerned (Tavola 1991:90).

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5 For example: see Tavola (1991); Bacchus (2000); Muralidhar (1987); Singh (1992).
Tavola’s research further points out that well trained, effective and dedicated teachers are a necessary but not sufficient factor for a successful school. Her research finds that the school leadership, management and resulting ethos are factors that add further complexity to the schooling process in Fiji (Tavola 1991:138).

The following section will now examine some of the historical factors that might have contributed to the preponderance of a banking model of education in pedagogical practice within Fiji’s education system. The argument is that these pedagogical practices are actually a construction of significant social, economic and historical forces. In order to understand the historical development of the technicist and authoritarian teaching culture in Fiji, with its emphasis on rote learning, we thus need to first look at the social context and consider how it might have contributed to the evolution of such an educational culture. The activity of teaching occurs in a societal context and cannot be analysed separately from that context.

Formal education is an imported idea in Fiji. It is a relatively new phenomenon, and is closely intertwined with historical developments through colonialism, and more recently, globalisation processes. The current forms that it takes today emerge from a combination of these external forces, aligned with efforts from within the local context to make ‘relevant’ what has largely been an externally imposed system. Thus, at the very outset, formal education was imported wholesale into Fiji as part of the colonising efforts of both the Christian missionaries, and the British imperialists. This fact is very significant for Fiji’s pedagogical history.

Furthermore, as has been discussed in chapter 2, student-teachers bring in these socially constructed approaches to pedagogy as part of their institutional biographies.
Formal education in Fiji can be traced back to the evangelising work of the early English Methodist missionaries. The first influential missionaries arrived in 1835, and they proceeded to spread the gospel by translating portions of the New Testament into Fijian using an orthography that they devised themselves (Mangubhai1984:169). This was the beginning of written language, Christianity and formal education for the Fijians. By 1900 there were mission schools in most Fijian villages offering 4 years of education, and by 1916 Methodist, Catholic, Hindu and Muslim community groups had set up schools for the Indo-Fijian population (Tavola 1991:11).

Missionary education in colonial contexts is seen as following a model based on bureaucracy and authority from a central body, with some writers suggesting that mission education actually reflected the mode of manufacturing and commerce that was pre-dominant in nineteenth century Britain (Tabulawa 1997). This model thus prepared a workforce that would occupy subordinate positions in factories and offices. In the missionary classroom then, as part of the modernising process there would be an emphasis on developing the habits of punctuality, quiet orderly work in groups, response to orders, bells and timetables, respect for authority, even tolerance for monotony, boredom, punishment (and) lack of reward… (Shipman 1971:54-55).

Tabulawa (1997) in writing about the nature of Christian religious knowledge (as promoted in colonial times) and its epistemological assumptions suggests that it was viewed as “objective, factual and unchanging” (1997:195). He goes on to suggest that “in such circumstances it is difficult for one to think of any other pedagogical style that would have best suited the teaching and learning of religious facts other than the transmission-reception pedagogical style (ibid.).
Thus, the introduction of formal education through Christian proselytising might be said to be susceptible to a close fit with the banking model of education. It produced an authoritarian model of schooling that had many of its foundational understandings in the Christian teachings of the time. Furthermore, the nature of early Christian forms of religious knowledge as being objective, factual and unchanging promoted a view of the word of God as well as the word of the teacher as being infallible. It was perhaps inevitable that within a situation such as this, early notions of education would be coloured by a closed pedagogical culture.

There is also the suggestion that early Christian modes of education might have fitted in well with existing forms of traditional forms of Fijian socialisation. According to Tavola:

The overwhelming, early response to mission schooling cannot easily be explained in terms of aspiring to social mobility as there were almost no chances for employment…. It can be argued that because schools were small and village based, with only 15 to 40 pupils, there was a fairly slight transition from the education of traditional socialisation to formal education…. Mission reports tell of missionary inspectors who toured the schools in their circuits and found children chanting lessons in unison, to the same rhythms as traditional chants (Tavola 1991:8-9).

Furthermore, it might be suggested that patriarchal and authoritarian structures of Fijian culture at the time fitted in well with Christian missionaries’ notion of schooling.

A further factor which contributes to our understanding of the development of the banking model of education in the Fiji setting is that of the very early introduction of the examination system which again, in Fiji’s case, has encouraged rote learning. From the outset, formal education in Fiji was based on foreign models, and in the case of missionary schooling, tended to tie in education with religion. The system, being a borrowed one, tended to follow the fashions of education in England and later, Australia and New Zealand. As was the case with
these countries, the examination model of education was a dominant one. The education of the local population was not an immediate priority of the colonial government. Schools were however, provided for European children in the towns of Levuka and Suva. During the early years of colonisation in Fiji, the British concentrated on developing the three R's, imparting Christian morality and theology and developing practical skills such as agriculture and basic carpentry. With the promulgation of the 1916 Educational Ordinance, it became compulsory for primary schools to teach reading, writing, speaking, arithmetic and nature study. English was also made compulsory, and was legislated as the medium of instruction from year 4 of primary schooling. Schools that did not teach the compulsory subjects were not eligible to receive government grants. The curriculum in secondary schools was determined largely by external examinations set in Britain, New Zealand and Australia (Mangubhai1984:187).

Thus today, Fiji’s schooling system is bound to a national examination system. Up until 1989, secondary examinations were imported from New Zealand. The secondary school curriculum was based almost entirely on these New Zealand designed exams, specifically the New Zealand School Certificate Exam for Year 11 and the New Zealand University Entrance Examination for Year 12. Consequently it was very difficult to bring about any changes in curriculum content, and students often found themselves learning about concepts that had a predominantly foreign cultural bias.

In a study of government policy in education in Fiji, Hopkin (1977) elaborates further on the culture of the schooling system in Fiji at that time:

Five major external examinations are spread over eight years of schooling, three of them in Forms 4, 5 and 6. Pupils normally pay fees, most schools are run by non-government
agencies, and parents and controlling authorities want good examination results; teachers are consequently pressured into adopting cramming and rote methods, which are assumed to be the best ways to prepare for examinations. Unimaginative and dull teaching practices are pursued at the upper secondary levels in an effort to cover the syllabus and 'get students through' the examinations - yet the proportion of young people who succeed in these examinations declines each year, while the number of candidates increases (1977:118).

The situation today is not much changed, and so what began as an imported system of education, gradually took on its own form as it tried to deal with issues of local context.

A third major historical influencing factor on the development of a banking model of education in Fiji is in the gradual predominance of a utilitarian view of education. In post-independence Fiji (post 1970) this factor tied in closely with the independent nation’s focus on education for human resource development. But even before independence, it was clear that education had taken on a utilitarian function. Coupled with an excessive focus on examinations, it was probably impossible for any other form of pedagogic practice, apart from the banking model, to emerge. Community expectations of education meant that parents often saw the purpose of educating their children as the attainment of a white collar job. Furthermore, vocational education is usually seen as inferior to the academic type of education offered through mainstream schooling. Education through schooling has historically been seen as a way to advance in society to become like the white colonisers who were seen as holding most of the power in society.

7 New Zealand exams had earlier replaced British ones.
A fourth factor which has contributed to the emergence and dominance of a banking model of education is that of the importation of a new set of values placed in a position of superior status to that of local values. Embedded within these new values was a derisory attitude towards local languages, and the elevation of the English language as superior. Interestingly enough, many of these values were transmitted largely through colonial forms of education. Pacific writer Albert Wendt describes the effects of a colonial system of education in the following way:

The formal education systems that were established by the colonisers in our islands all had one main feature in common: they were based on the arrogantly-mistaken assumption that the cultures of the colonisers were superior (and preferable) to ours. Education was therefore devoted to civilising us, cutting us away from the roots of our cultures, from what colonisers viewed as darkness, superstition, barbarism and savagery…Colonial education helped reduce many of us to a state of passivity, undermined our confidence and self-respect, and made many of us ashamed of our cultures (Wendt 1982:210).

The overriding effect of this imposition of values, was the subsequent elevation of a new set of values that were transmitted through the forum of the formal education system. Thus education was, at least in its early forms, an intrinsically foreign set of ideas, that was unashamedly touted as superior to those ideas that were an integral part of the societies prior to the missionary and colonial influence. When students are unable to make personal links with the content of the curriculum, it is inevitable that a mechanistic form of schooling will dominate. This lack of ownership grows until the schooling process takes on an artificial hue that demarcates it from any usefulness that it might otherwise have had.

In more contemporary terms, the imposition of values can also be viewed from the perspective of forces of globalisation in current times that might be termed the process of ‘Macdonaldisation’ (Ritzer 1998). The effects that these processes have had on society at large
and on education paint a complex picture of contemporary society. Social and cultural formation today are part of much wider influences. Thus Thaman (1993a) points out that factors impacting on indigenous cultures in the Pacific in current settings include the spread of English; technology, especially mass media; the values of individualism; self-gratification and consumerism; and the ascendancy of the market model over other politico-economic models of development (Thaman 1993a).

**Teacher Education**

Of direct relation to the development of the formal education system and its current form today, is the issue of teachers and teacher preparation. Earliest records of local teacher education are of Methodist district institutions that prepared pastor-teachers (Mangubhai 1984:171). The primary purpose of these institutions was to produce local pastors who would promote Christianity in Fijian village communities and in 1856 a central Methodist teacher-training institution was set up on the main island, Viti Levu.

The 1926 Education Commission recommended the setting up of a government teacher-training facility to train Indo-Fijian teachers, and this was established in 1929, at Natabua on the Western side of Viti Levu. Apparently, the curriculum and teaching methods were deemed inadequate - Mangubhai (1984) quotes Mayhem’s (1936:5) observation of teacher training at this facility:

>Teacher training tends to be formal and stereotyped...There is far too much copying by the students of long disquisitions on method and principle, instead of ample talk and, better still, ample demonstrations and practice.
The Stephen's report in 1944 thus recommended the replacement of the Methodist institution and the Natabua institution with one large government college and in 1947 the Nasinu Teachers' College on the outskirts of the capital, Suva, was opened. In 1958 the Catholic community set up a 3-year primary teacher education institution, Corpus Christi Teachers' College in Suva. In 1977 the government opened up another teacher training institution, Lautoka Teachers' College and the Nasinu Teachers’ College was subsequently closed in 1983 after it was felt that staffing supply for primary schools was adequate.

The 1960s and 1970s brought a strong demand for secondary education and the need for secondary teachers was filled by licensed teachers (many of whom had no university degree) or by expatriate teachers brought to Fiji under various schemes including mission programmes, the Volunteer Service Overseas (British), Volunteer Service Abroad (New Zealand), the Peace Corps (United States), and others. In 1969, for example there were 405 such expatriates in primary and secondary positions (Mangubhai 1984:191).

Schemes of co-operation and the legacy of the colonial experience are commented on in the work of Hopkin:

Another factor that inhibits more effective contribution by teachers to the improvement of the quality of education is a legacy of the colonial period. Expatriate teachers, notably those on Schemes of Co-operation with the NZ Dept of Education, played an important part in the educational systems of the region, particularly during the 1960s. Because of the combined pressures of political, economic and sociological conditions, the treatment that they received from the governments of the different countries was markedly more favourable than that meted out to the indigenous and non-European teachers. A consequence is that teachers in the South Pacific today lack professional confidence and appear unwilling to act other than under the auspices or through the machinery of their education departments. What is more, relationships between the departments and their teachers are frequently uneasy, partly because of the autocratic and paternalistic attitude adopted by departments and their officers" (Hopkin, 1977:119).
**Teacher Education Policy**

Formal policy on teacher education has traditionally been limited to a concern with numbers and human resource development. Furthermore, calls for improvement to the education system in general, have inevitably been supported by the claimed need for ‘better’ teacher preparation. “Education for Modern Fiji”, the report of the 1969 Fiji Education Commission, allocated an entire chapter to teacher education. It indicated its concern that teachers were, in the main, inadequately prepared:

> It became very evident to the Commission that in many schools, inadequately prepared teachers are providing a low quality of education in Fiji. Even though many of these teachers are conscientious, their limited knowledge makes it impossible for them to be effective (Government of Fiji 1970:30).

The Commission concluded that ‘the government should assign very high priority to the importance of teacher education’ and this became its first recommendation in this section. Furthermore, the Commission emphasised the need for teachers to be provided with a strong academic background in their subject areas, saying that ‘few teachers in Fiji seem to have this background’ (p.34). The Report promoted the need to introduce ‘appropriate attitudes’ towards teaching and learning, in that discovery learning was to be promoted above transmission modes of teaching (p.32). Long range plans included the need to expand teacher education facilities to cater for projected increase in numbers. In post-independence, there was a continued stress on the importance of teacher education, but this time the emphasis was on fulfilling the human resource development needs of the country.
The Fiji Islands Education Commission/Panel for 2000 allocated a chapter to the issue of teachers in its report. This chapter, written by Coxon (2000), identified a number of challenges that faced teacher education policy development. Foremost amongst these was the need for a clearer articulation of a teacher education policy. The report noted that many submissions to the Commission/Panel raised the need for holistic and systematic policy and planning in teacher education. The report suggests that:

Present arrangements [for holistic policy and planning in teacher education] indicate ad hoc responses to immediate needs…. The present administrative systems of the government institutions constrain the development of teacher education programmes under the control of teacher educators (Coxon 2000:401).

The Report saw this lack of government initiative and the need for an external, independent body to oversee teacher education in the country as of urgent need, recommending the immediate establishment of a Teacher Education Board. According to the report, such a board would provide autonomy to government institutions and require accountability from non-government teacher education providers.

As has been identified by numerous submissions to the 2000 Education Review Commission/Panel, there is currently no holistic formal policy as such on secondary teacher education. Teacher education is covered in Objective 4 of the document ‘Education 2020’. During the course of fieldwork for the current study, the MoE provided a number of other documents that were seen to be pertinent to a teacher education policy. These were:

- The Public Service Act 1999 – Clause 4. Public Service Values (covering honesty, integrity and other issues to do with ethics)
A document produced by the Research and Development section of the MoE entitled: ‘Education Policies and Regulations’. This document contains extracts from the Education Gazette which formalises education policy. There is an emphasis on matters of bureaucracy.

In discussions with MoE officials, they generally referred to matters of conduct when asked about a teacher education policy. There was an emphasis on the role of the teacher and the values that s/he had to display, particularly in the community.

In a draft working paper arising out of discussions and consultations on the 2000 Education Review Report, recommendations for reform in teacher education are listed under Objective 10.8 This objective is headed: “Developing and Supporting a Professional Teaching Force”. The first section looks at human resources and the planning of numbers in terms of teacher demand and supply. The MoE emphasis on numbers and human resource development is again quite evident here. According to ministry officials, the human resource element is very important as it is concerned with supplying the system with qualified teachers. There is also a section on “Incentives for Rural Teaching”. This reflects the nation’s concern with the particular problems faced by rural schools in Fiji. A third sub-objective looks at “In-service Training”. According to the MoE this was an area that needed major attention. They considered in-service training to be an outdated segment of the work of the ministry. A fourth objective considers “Teacher Training Skills for Teachers”. This includes an examination of multi grade class teaching and other specialised teaching situations. A fifth objective looks at what was termed “Professional Standards”, linked in with professional competencies. There was a suggestion for rewarding

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8 This report was considered to be ‘confidential’ and therefore cannot be cited directly. Details are taken from interviews with MoE officials.
teachers who had reached certain personal professional standards. This approach was also said to raise the public recognition of the teachers.

The MoE also recommended the establishment of a professional board for teachers. This board was most likely to be an independent board as was run in other countries. It would vet the qualifications of teachers, their standards, and their ethics, with powers of de-registration where seen as necessary. Establishing an independent board was also seen as a way to reduce the amount of time spent over confrontations between teachers' unions and the government. The ministry also indicated that this seemed to be working in New Zealand, hence the interest in introducing a similar idea in Fiji.

**Current Practice in Secondary Teacher education**

**USP**

Higher education in any formal sense was not established in Fiji until 1968 with the formation of the University of the South Pacific. At its inception it was the sole institution engaged in teacher education for senior secondary classes (Years 11-13). It now serves 12 Pacific Island nations: Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomons Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. It has 3 main campuses: the main Laucala campus in Suva, Fiji; the Samoa campus housing the School of Agriculture; and the Vanuatu campus comprising the Law School and Pacific Languages Unit. Each country has its own centre that deals with distance learning, summer school teaching, community education and general administration matters. Finance of the University comes from contributions from each of the 12 member countries based primarily on student numbers. Between them, the member countries contribute about 70% of the recurrent
income of the University, income from students is about 16%, and Australia and New Zealand provide 8%. Special projects such as the building of the new library and the establishment of a new site for the Institute of marine resources in were funded via aid donors.⁹

One of the main functions of the USP at its inception was to "meet perceived manpower training needs of the region" (Benson and Singh 1997:2). As such, a major priority was the training of secondary school teachers. The USP's School of Education began offering a 3-year Diploma of Education to meet this demand, and this programme was later supplemented by a 4-year concurrent Bachelors degree plus Graduate Certificate in Education. In 1975, an in-service BEd was introduced to offer degree status to teachers who were diploma-trained.

A major political influence on the Department's offerings was the decision taken in the 1980s by the Fiji government to stop sponsoring students for teacher education as it appeared that Fiji had produced enough teachers. It thus became necessary for the USP to rationalise its offerings. The Diploma was phased out in 1985 and the University's Education Department within the School of Humanities (previously School of Education) took on a more academic orientation offering several other programmes in addition to its teacher education emphasis.

By the 1990s however the situation had changed somewhat. The military coups of 1987 meant that large numbers of qualified teachers were leaving the country, and the Fiji government decided that the country needed to train more teachers. In 1994 the USP introduced a 3-year Bachelor of Education programme to prepare senior secondary school teachers. Along with the

⁹ Source: The University of the South Pacific Strategic Plan available online at www.usp.ac.fj
1-year Post-Graduate Certificate in Education, the BEd Secondary programme is now the USP's main teacher education programme with yearly enrolments of 200 plus students.10

The USP’s first formalised strategic plan was developed in 1999 after consultation both within the university and region wide. Secondary teacher education is listed along with four other academic areas as being seen to be ‘priority’ areas: Agriculture, Environmental management/Sustainable Development, Marine Studies and, Tourism. The strategic plan states that

In the University’s consultations with her member countries, teacher education was awarded highest priority. USP has established and continues to develop its pre and in-service programmes in teacher education as well as its professional teacher development programmes in close consultation with the ministries of education and teacher training institutions throughout the region (University of the South Pacific, n.d:5)

The strategic plan does not provide any details as to why teacher education was deemed so important. It went only so far as to say that the focus in teacher education is to be on the preparation of graduates to teach in secondary schools. One would have to unpack this statement by asking, ‘why is secondary teacher education considered so important?’ Furthermore, a reading of the USP calendar and official handbooks reveals that the focus is on explaining the general structure of each academic programme, and suggesting academic strands that can be followed. The official documents do not outline any philosophy of teacher education underpinning its programmes. Further exploration of in-house department guidelines is of course necessary. But it might be argued that, as with other developing countries around the world, the

10 See Appendix 3 for an outline of the programme.
focus in Fiji has been on filling gaps in terms of numbers, and doing this within a very limited set of resources.

**FCAE**

In 1991, the Government of Fiji produced a report in which it recommended the establishment of a Teachers’ College with the intention of providing teacher education for the secondary school system (FCAE 2001:6). The report further proposed a request to the Government of Australia for assistance with this project, and at the annual bilateral aid consultations in Fiji in August 1991, it was agreed that assistance would be provided (Nabobo 2000). The Fiji Australia Teacher Education Project (FATEP) began in October 1992, and ended in September 1995. Since then, the college has been run by the government of Fiji MoE.

The 2000 Education Review Commission/Panel Report outlines a number of issues related to the FATEP which are considered to be of importance in better understanding the teacher education context in Fiji (Coxon 2000). Firstly, at least half of the local counterparts employed by the project are no longer at the FCAE. This calls into question the sustainability and cost effectiveness of the project. A large proportion of the funding went into the costs incurred by the long-term Australian advisers, the institutional benefits of which will have been reduced by the departure of the large proportion of local counterparts. Secondly, it is argued that whilst the initial emphasis on the preparation of teachers to teach at the junior secondary school level was appropriate, there is now a need to prepare more teachers who are qualified to teach at senior levels as well. Thirdly, there is a suggestion that there was a need to establish a closer relationship between projects such as FATEP, and the local institutions that have relevant expertise in the area, such as the USP. Fourthly, it is argued that, where external assistance is
involved, there is a need to highlight the importance of local realities, and to forge a two-way relationship of learning between the ‘expatriate expert’ and the local counterpart.

In the area of pre-service teacher education, the FCAE now offers a two-year Diploma in Education programme.\textsuperscript{11} Recently, the USP has allowed the awarding of 34 cross-credits from the Diploma into programmes of study at the USP, an indication that there is now more convergence between the work of the two institutions.

In a recent policy initiative, the FCAE has developed a Strategic Plan, which largely follows the new policy documents developed since 1999 by the MoE at the central level. The plan is structured according to the objectives contained in the “Education Fiji 2020” policy document, and outlines strategies and performance indicators that it will use to achieve and assess the defined objectives.\textsuperscript{12}

A continuing constraint on further development, as indicated by senior administration at the FCAE, is the limitations imposed by inadequate funding. As an example, in an estimate put forward to the MoE for library funding in 2001, the FCAE requested F$60,000. The allocation that was provided, however, was a meagre F$4,800. These constraints applied to almost every area of funding applied for each year.

A further constraint identified by staff at the FCAE is in the professional relationship of FCAE with the MoE officials. It was felt that there were a number of impediments to the implementation of change put in place by the highly bureaucratised and authoritarian structures

\textsuperscript{11} See Appendix 3 for an outline of the programme.
evident in dealings with the MoE. There was also a tendency towards a reactionary rather than a proactive stance. In a situation like this, there was a propensity to welcome the imposition of the new strategic and corporate plan structures initiated by the government through the Ministry of Finance.

Furthermore, there was a strong indication that the most effective way for the FCAE to improve its programmes was to attain autonomy from the MoE. This arose in large part from dissatisfaction with the centralising authority and imposition of both professional and financial constraints by the MoE. There was a call for an independent review of the FCAE, in order to evaluate both its programmes and its general administrative structure. In its submission to the 2000 Fiji Education Commission/Panel, the FCAE offered two recommendations directly related to the issue of autonomy (FCAE 2000). Firstly, there was the recommendation that FCAE attains greater autonomy in managing the College in professional, administrative and financial matters. Secondly, that once complete autonomy is granted to FCAE, a Council is established which is appropriately empowered to oversee all administrative, financial and academic matters relating to the institution.

**Conclusion**

This chapter and the previous one have outlined the context in which teacher education is placed within Fijian society. In a sense, the educational situation that exists in Fiji emerges out of the way in which it was introduced to Fiji as part of colonisation. The process of introduction was instrumental and artificial. Furthermore, the importation of a largely foreign system of formal education into Fiji as part of the colonisation process is perhaps one of the most influential

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12 See Appendix 4.
forces that has ensured Fiji's integration into the international arena. The colonial legacy in education in Fiji has since taken on subtle hues in the form of a neo-colonial dependency. Throughout the neo-colonial world, attempts have been made to reform the introduced formal education system. However, as Watson (1984) points out, the basic framework of introduced systems of education tends to dominate. He suggests that this might be so for two reasons. Firstly, the contributions of the former colonial powers as well as the international agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank through financial aid, personnel and advisory commissions, have helped to perpetuate - and expand - the inherited school and university structures. Secondly, the desire of politicians and ordinary citizens for formal schooling has also helped to perpetuate school systems. Thus, even where there have been efforts to make education more ‘relevant’ to local socio-economic needs, community expectations have often meant that schooling in its more formal and academic sense has tended to dominate. Schooling has been seen to be about qualifications and job selection, and not about education in any broad sense. Thus, in a setting like Fiji, the education system was taken on via the colonial process, and has become a way to select students for jobs in society. The educative purpose, however defined, has been usually perceived to be of secondary, or at least undefined, importance.

Thus, the reproduction of dominant pedagogical practice can be located within both local and global structures. It has been seen that the way in which education was introduced to Fiji as part of colonialism was in itself an artificial, technicist form of education. It worked on an ad hoc basis, and this ad hoc quality appears to be part of current realities in teacher education practice.

An examination of the extent to which globalising issues are currently influencing local cultures of teacher education practice will provide further understandings that will be crucial for a more critical informing of educational policy and implementation processes. The fieldwork for this
study explores the extent to which globally defined discourses surrounding education impact on the local culture/s of teacher education policy and practice in the Fiji setting. The fieldwork question directly addresses the issue of local culture/s of practice: What are the major culture/s of practice evident in the way that secondary teacher education is organised and implemented in Fiji, and do these signify a particular paradigm of teacher education? These questions and the research design employed to address them are now discussed in chapter five.
SECTION 2
CHAPTER 5
Research Design and Methodology

Introduction
The earlier chapters in Section 1 of this thesis have outlined the theoretical framework used in this study, and discussed the substantive issues, in particular, as they relate to the Fiji setting.

Two areas of significance were raised. One was the increasingly globalised nature of much of teacher education practice and reform. Although local institutions and governments may appear to have autonomy in educational policy formulation and practice, international trends have had a wide-ranging impact on local systems of education. The growing global economy has had a widely acknowledged influence on national education systems worldwide with, for example, an increase in privatisation and market driven reforms. It was argued that this impact has the potential to permeate at various levels into the way that people think about education, what it is for, and the best way that it can be organised in our societies. In the current globalised climate of socio-economic and political agendas, a contextualised understanding of processes of change in teacher education would need to consider the impact of globalised discourses on local cultures of practice.

Within this globalised locating of teacher education, Section 1 of this thesis introduced a second major issue crucial to the arguments in this thesis, that of the ideological nature of education. It was argued that teacher education is not a value-free, neutral enterprise, but is contextualised as a social institution that has an historical background and a social location. As with any form of education, teacher education must be viewed as ideological, thus in this thesis teacher education
is situated within a political and ideological framework. This framework allows for the interrogation of the assumptions underlying various paradigms of teacher education. An interrogation of these assumptions is important for a clearer understanding of the important issues in teacher education policy and practice, and ultimately of the processes of change in teacher education.

Consequently, the thesis attempts to make links between the global and the local by examining two broad areas:

1. Global discourses on teacher education – what are they, where do they come from, how are they evident in terms of theoretical paradigms of teacher education?

2. Local cultures of teacher education - what are the issues for teacher education in Fiji? Is there a policy related to teacher education? What particular issues does it address? If there is a policy, who determines it? What are the interactions between policy and cultures of practice? How are paradigms of teacher education evident in cultures of practice to do with secondary teacher education?

**Research Questions**
Out of this framework, the major research question was identified:

To what extent do globally defined discourses surrounding education impact on the local culture/s of teacher education policy and practice in the Fiji setting?
The fieldwork question directly addresses the issue of local culture/s of practice: What are the major culture/s of practice evident in the way that secondary teacher education is organised and implemented in Fiji, and do these signify a particular paradigm of teacher education?

The specific fieldwork questions that addressed these issues were:

1. What assumptions about the nature and purposes of education and teacher education are embedded in how secondary teacher education is organised in Fiji? What particular form has secondary teacher education taken in Fiji?

2. What are the main discourses surrounding how teacher education personnel talk about teacher education processes, and what does this suggest about their role in the construction of a local teacher education culture/s?

3. What are the discourses expressed by final year BEd and DipEd (secondary) student-teachers, in relation to the nature and purposes of education and teacher education?

The Qualitative Case Study

The research questions dictated a need to gain a richer understanding of the context of secondary teacher education in Fiji. To achieve this, a qualitative case study approach was used. Denzin and Lincoln (1998c:3) suggest that qualitative research can be variously defined depending upon which historical ‘moment’ it occurs in. They provide a generic definition as follows:

Qualitative research is multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in
their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand.

Within the framework of qualitative research, the fieldwork study takes as a case study, secondary teacher education in Fiji. There are two institutional providers of secondary teachers in Fiji, the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Fiji College of Advanced Education (FCAE). This study looks at teacher education processes in both institutions as contextualised within broader socio-political and economic concerns.

It is suggested that case study research is particularly suited to the study of teacher education because of the obvious importance of understanding complexities and contextual factors. Yin (1994), in defining case study research says that this type of inquiry 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 1994:13).

As has been noted previously, studying teacher education in its context is seen to be of major import here. Further, the case study employed in this doctoral study is designed to illuminate understandings about the possible relationship between global discourses of education and local cultures of practice. Cohen et al. (2000:183) suggest that case studies can be gainfully used in this way:
Because case studies provide fine grain detail they can also be used to complement other, more coarsely grained – often large scale – kinds of research. Case study material in this sense can provide powerful human-scale data on macro-political decision-making, fusing theory and practice, for example the work of Ball (1990), Bowe et al. (1992) and Ball (1994a) on the impact of government policy on specific schools.

The relationship between policy and practice, and macro and micro issues is explored via an examination of local discourses of practice. Thus, this particular study is not primarily concerned with narrowly defined notions of pedagogy as relating to teachers’ skill levels, or in how well they implement what they have learnt in the teacher education programme. Rather it is interested in a contextualised understanding of educators’ own theories about teaching and learning, and how these might be evident in how they dialogue about their experiences. This is what is meant by discourses of practice.

As these discourses emerged during the fieldwork, it was possible to begin to carry out preliminary analysis of data. It is important here to stress that, as part of the qualitative research process and design, analysis of data was a continuous process. In outlining the ‘basic rules’ of qualitative analysis, Delamont (2002:171) suggests:

The most important thing is not to allow material to pile up unanalysed…. The ‘analysis’ of qualitative data is a process that continues throughout the research: it is not a separate, self-contained phase.

Although data analysis will be discussed later in this chapter, it is important to stress here that data analysis began from the very outset of the fieldwork period. Moreover, insights gained from the initial phases of the data collection period influenced later phases, and in turn, later insights interacted dialectically with earlier insights. Thus, there was a constant process of data ‘analysis’ with the researcher critically reflecting on the data, and reflexively ‘reading’ the data alongside
the theoretical work on paradigms of teacher education as has been discussed in the current work.

Within the case study, a research design employing a multi-method approach was used. These methods are outlined below in the section on fieldwork processes.

**The Conceptual Framework**

The research design for this qualitative case study of teacher education is informed by a critical interpretive approach to research. The study takes a critical social science stance in its formulation of research questions, and interpretation and analysis of data, and these are consciously linked into ideology and a contextualised view of teacher education.

This section clarifies how the critical interpretive approach to research is used in this thesis and, in the process of doing this, indicates why this approach was considered appropriate for the research study under discussion. Following the outline of the conceptual framework, this chapter will look in close detail at the particular methods employed in the field, delineating important issues that emerged out of the data collection period in Fiji.

Within the qualitative case study approach as discussed above, a critical interpretive perspective seemed to be the most appropriate one on which to base this research. In order to gain a contextualised view of teacher education processes in Fiji, the study proceeded firstly with an enquiry into the understandings that the social actors themselves have of their contexts. This interpretive understanding was then situated in an analysis of wider issues as suggested by critical interpretivism.
The critical interpretivist paradigm of research methodology produces a particular view of how social reality can be conceptualised. In theoretical terms, it is possible to contrast interpretivism with a second major underpinning to research, positivism. This contrast will be helpful in more clearly defining the approach to research that is taken in this thesis. One of the major criticisms made of positivism is that it reduces a study of a social science to that of a natural science. In particular, criticisms are made of the objectivity project that features strongly in positivistic assumptions:

Objectivity is defined by positivism as being the same as that of natural science and social life may be explained in the same way as natural phenomena…. The prediction of the behaviour of phenomena; explanation of the behaviour of the phenomena; and the pursuit of objectivity, which is defined as the researcher’s ‘detachment’ from the phenomena under investigation. The results of this method of investigation are then said to produce a set of ‘true’, precise and wide-ranging ‘laws’ of human behaviour. In fulfilling these aims, we should then be able to generalise from our observations on social phenomena to make statements about the behaviour of the populations as a whole (May, 1993:5).

A criticism of this view of objectivity would disagree with the notion that the scientific method embodied in positivism is a neutral, value-free one. In fact, Kuhn (1970) argues that knowledge does not accumulate in such an objective framework, but rather is contained within a paradigm that defines the conceptual framework within which a particular community of researchers work. Observations of reality are made from the standpoint of a particular theory that reinforces that framework and favours the retaining of the status quo as far as knowledge is concerned. Thus knowledge is not accumulated as such but is accumulated in particular paradigms.

Elaborating this view, Carr and Kemmis (1986) argue that paradigms are
informed by a whole complex of beliefs, values and assumptions. These are never made explicit in the theories produced by research, but they nevertheless structure the perceptions of researchers and shape their subsequent theorising. They enter decisions about such things as what constitutes a research problem, what kind of knowledge is considered appropriate to its solution, and how this knowledge is to be acquired. In this sense, theories are always ‘infected’ by the beliefs and values of the research community and are, therefore, always social products…. ‘Facts’ are always facts as interpreted by prior assumptions and beliefs.

This set of ideas provides the foundations for the interpretivist paradigm. Fay (1975) offers an approach to interpretivism from the viewpoint of a philosophical theory of meaning. He begins with the idea that “a large part of the vocabulary of social science is comprised of ‘action concepts’…. those terms that are used to describe ‘doings’ as opposed to ‘happenings’ so that ‘jumping’ is an action while ‘falling’ is not” (p.71). The point for social science enquiry then is that action concepts require an interpretation on the part of the observer. Actions are not just merely objective ‘facts’; rather they only gain meaning when they are ‘interpreted’. This leads Fay on to a definition of an interpretative social science as one which

attempts to uncover the sense of a given action, practice or constitutive meaning; it does this by discovering the intentions and desires of particular actors, by uncovering the rules which give point to these sets of rules or practices, by seeing how they fit into a whole structure which defines the nature and purpose of human life (p.79).

Thus, interpretivism offers an alternative model in that it views enquiry as being descriptive and interpretative as opposed to the view offered by positivism as being explanatory and predictive. The metaphor of ‘conversation’ has been used by some writers to describe the particular problems of social science research, and this is linked to the ‘hermeneutic’ character of social science. Hughes and Sharrock (1997:20) suggest that

… it is possible to argue that the problems of social sciences are much closer to the problem of attaining a reciprocal understanding in a conversation than they are like
those of the natural scientists seeking to attain exceptionless generalisations for natural phenomena. That is, the methodological problems and solutions for the social sciences are of a kind involved in comprehending difficult or obscure communications….often seen as expressing the ‘hermeneutic’ nature of the social sciences….a method of ‘understanding’…

Carr and Kemmis (1986:84) go further to point to a particular notion of ‘objectivity’ for the social sciences:

The crucial character of social reality is that it possesses an intrinsic meaning structure that is constituted and sustained through the routine interpretative activities of its individual members. The ‘objective’ character of society is not some independent reality to which individuals are somehow subject, rather society comes to possess a degree of objectivity because social actors, in the process of interpreting their social world, externalise and objectify it.

The interpretive model focuses heavily on the way that social actors perceive themselves and their situation but underplays the fact that social reality is also influenced by forces ‘external’ to the social actors. The research questions for this study require an interpretation of data that considers wider societal context. Thus, the conceptual framework adopted for this thesis extends the notion of interpretivism to what is referred to as a critical social science. Fay (1975:93-94) identifies three main features of such a science:

1. It accepts the necessity of interpretive categories in social science; … it rests on the arguments in support of the interpretive model …. It is rooted in the felt needs and sufferings of a group of people, and therefore it is absolutely necessary that the critical theorist come to understand these actors from their own point of view, at least as a first step.

2. It recognises that a great many of the actions that people perform are caused by social conditions over which they have no control, and that a great deal of what people do to one another is not the result of conscious knowledge and choice; in other words it seeks to uncover those systems of social relationships which
determine the actions of individuals and the unanticipated, though not accidental, consequences of these actions.

3. Most importantly of all, it is built on the explicit recognition that social theory is interconnected with social practice, such that what is to count as truth is partially determined by the specific ways in which scientific theory is supposed to relate to practical action.

In some senses, interpretivism is an uncritical form of study. If understood as a purely dialogic encounter, the research process remains descriptive. The critical element in research methodology sees as primary the social, political and economic forces that provide both the context, and the tools for analysis of that context in relation to the particular phenomena under study. Thus, critical interpretivism accepts that an understanding of the experiences of social actors within particular contexts is central to understanding, but this understanding must act in a dialectical relationship with the contexts within which they occur.

Critical theory thus becomes crucial in the processes of uncovering the complex interplay between societal structures and interpretive understandings as expressed by social actors. The question of how this agency relates to the broader social structures is fundamental to an understanding of social processes. Thompson (1984) suggests that the important issue is not necessarily in whether action is determined by structure or, alternatively, whether a set of actions makes up structure. Rather it is in how “action is structured in everyday contexts and how the structured features of action are, by the very performance of an action, thereby reproduced” (Thompson 1984:148).
In terms of the value of a critical theory of interpretivism to teacher education, the concept of the ‘taken-for-granted’ is a central one. Interpretation that is socially located questions what is taken for granted as ‘normal’, and inserts questions of power relations into the discussion as Cocklin (1992) suggests:

… critical theory approaches can elaborate the influence of the dominant socio-political and economic ideologies upon the values, attitudes, content and strategies being propagated in educational settings. Through examining such ideologies, critical theory provides knowledge and strategies such as those within critical pedagogy, to allow for the development of contestation and resistance and the restructuring of social contexts and relationships to promote equity and justice…. Critical theory is a ‘way of thinking’ which incorporates an explicit, analytic approach to: the study of education and its practices, how ideology is evident in the realities of the curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation and language, and to develop an understanding that the taken-for-granted beliefs are not as ‘natural’ as they appear (Cocklin 1992: 250).

A strictly formulated interpretivist approach would see the social reality as it is constructed by the social actors within that ‘world’. However, it is important to recognise that such constructions do not occur in a vacuum, free from external constraints. The critical interpretive approach researches the same world as the interpretive approach. However, critical interpretivism acknowledges these external constraints as being central to an understanding of the phenomenon under study. In terms of the study of teacher education in this thesis, these external constraints are crucial to an understanding of the interactions between macro and micro forces, and of how, in the words of Thompson (1984:148), “action is structured in everyday contexts”.
Fieldwork Processes in Fiji

The fieldwork for this study was carried out in Fiji over a period of approximately 6 months. The data collection process involved policy data collection, observation, participant observation and semi-structured interviews as these were seen as the best way to obtain the rich data required by the research questions. Because of the interest in the discourses surrounding teacher education in Fiji, and how these relate to broader global discourses, it was necessary to talk to a wide range of people involved both directly and indirectly with teacher education in Fiji. The author also engaged in informal conversations with various people.

In line with the emphasis on contextualised understandings, a brief mention should be made here of the political crisis that Fiji underwent during the research period for this doctoral study. A clear picture of the impact of the armed take-over of the democratically elected government is provided in the following text. The text is extracted from my 2000/2001 annual report to the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the sponsoring body for this doctoral study.

I have recently returned from a period of fieldwork in Fiji. The organisation and timing of my fieldwork had to be reassessed after Fiji was plunged into political crisis following the events of May 19 2000 at the Parliamentary complex in Suva. After some delay, I left for Fiji on October 19 2000, arriving Saturday October 21. By this time, schools had reopened and the University of the South Pacific, where I was to do some fieldwork, had got most of its students back.

Eleven days after my arrival, there was renewed political violence in the country. There were clashes at the Fiji Military Camp Headquarters in Suva, the entrance to which was directly opposite my parents’ home where I was then staying. A curfew was instantly imposed, and was not lifted until December 15.

Following this, there were further challenges to the legality of the military-supported Interim Government, and to the illegal abrogation of Fiji’s constitution. Fiji’s Court of Appeal declared the Interim Government illegal in a ruling handed down on March 1 2001, but the leaders of the Interim Government refused to step aside, and this has sparked a new power struggle within Fiji’s ruling elite.
As I had been here in Edinburgh during the earlier upheavals beginning May 19, this was actually my first direct experience with this round of turmoil. It was a trying time for the entire nation, and although there was a general desire for a ‘return to normalcy’ (whatever ‘normalcy’ means), there was a sense of despondency and uncertainty from many segments of the community. Also, because Fiji’s population is so small (three-quarters of a million), the chances of being either related to or of personally knowing someone who is involved in the crisis are amplified considerably. This increases the complexity of the situation at a personal level.

It was in this context that I began my fieldwork. I had missed out on the June-July 2000 Teaching Practicum as schools were still closed then. University students had to do a double set of school placement in January 2001 covering a period of six rather than three weeks. My research with teacher education students thus began in January 2001 with their placements.

After this, having gained some sense of what things were like in the schools, I continued with my research at the University of the South Pacific. I began my attachment with the other provider of secondary teacher education, the Fiji College of Advanced Education, on April 3. Throughout the period of my fieldwork I have also had interviews with key informants in the Ministry of Education and other organisations, and have collected whatever policy documents I have been able to gain access to.

The following sections will lay out in more detail the fieldwork processes in which I participated. In line with the use of a qualitative critical interpretive methodology, it will interweave the discussion of specific methods of data collection with issues of reflexivity and values in qualitative research.

**Reflexivity and values in the research process**

I returned to the Fiji teacher education context after a break of two years. I had previously worked at the University of the South Pacific as a lecturer in the faculty of education & psychology (E&P) for about 7 years, so I was not returning to an unfamiliar context. Before joining the USP, I had taught in Fiji secondary schools for 4 years. Thus, I was returning to a context that I was fairly familiar with, and this raises a number of issues to do with the location
of the researcher in the entire research process. Part of this has to do with the notion of
reflexivity, and throughout this chapter I will try to make as clear as possible the processes that I
was experiencing as a researcher working in familiar surroundings.

Reflexivity is an ambivalent term used in different ways by various writers. At one end of the
scale it is seen as a form of self-awareness in the research process:

Reflexivity recognises that researchers are inescapably part of the social world that they
are researching, and, indeed, that this social world is an already interpreted world by the
actors, undermining the notion of objective reality. Researchers are in the world and of
the world. They bring their own biographies to the research situation and participants
behave in particular ways in their presence... Highly reflexive researchers will be
acutely aware of the ways in which their selectivity, perception, background and
inductive processes and paradigms shape the research. They are research instruments
(Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:141).

If pursued too far, there is the possibility that reflexivity will induce a

nervous response and dismissals as dead-end self indulgence, narcissism, and solipsism.
Typical is Marshall Sahlins report of an apocryphal exchange ... : “But as the Fijian said
to the New Ethnographer, ‘that’s enough talking about you; let’s talk about me’ (Marcus

For our purposes here, it is merely important to acknowledge that I ventured into the field with a
close knowledge and understanding of the educational and social context. It is also necessary to
acknowledge that this understanding of the context led me to construct the particular research
questions that drive this study. The study does not however, depend on crude versions of a
positivistic notion of objectivity and truth and the assumptions contained therein regarding the
place of the self and values in research. Neither does it intend to take the notion of reflexivity to
the narcissistic levels to which Marcus (1998) refers. Nonetheless, it is important to note the
place of values in the research process.
This is done by employing those aspects of feminist epistemology that are relevant to the purposes of this thesis. Feminist thought criticises the separation of reason and emotion and rejects the notion that ‘rigorous research’ involves the separation of the researcher from the subject. This notion is viewed as a myth that disguises the ways in which the researcher is affected by the context of the research or the people who are a part of it. Janet Finch (1984), in her study of clergymen’s wives and their relationship to their husbands’ work, provides a fascinating account of these issues. Maintaining an ‘objective’, ‘value free’ stance would not have given her the insights achieved in her study. We are to varying degrees conditioned by the values that form part of our own societies and any research project needs to make these explicit at the outset. Many of the thinkers of the past were conditioned, for example, by societal views of women to ignore women altogether in the general sphere of things. However, they perhaps would not have seen their view of women as being a ‘value-judgement’, but would have accepted the dominant social views about women at that time as being ‘factual’. Locke for example, equated rights with the capacity to be reasonable, a quality that he said women did not possess. Hegel suggested that women’s subordinate position in the family was the ‘natural’ realm for their ‘ethical disposition’ (May, 1993:12). An appeal to the ‘biological’ as providing sufficient reason for social inequalities continues to be a contentious issue. The values held by such thinkers perhaps contributed to the slow start given to a consideration of gender issues in research. Thus it is only fairly recently that females as a group in society have been researched in their own right rather than having results of research on males generalised to society as a single unit.

Thus values in the research process should be acknowledged because they are there. When one begins to make normative statements about the functions of research in terms of change and
empowerment, one necessarily steps out of the view of research that sees knowledge as being value-free and objective. It would be very difficult to reconcile the two. ‘Social facts’ as such do not exist independent of the researcher or the researched.

**Selection of the study site**

There are a number of reasons for the choice of Fiji as a case study. These can be classified as instrumental reasons and academic interest. In terms of academic issues, Fiji presents a very interesting case. The contextual nature of a postcolonial setting and the increasing visibility of the work of international agencies make Fiji a particularly interesting phenomenon. Fiji is often referred to as the ‘hub’ of the South Pacific as it occupies a central and strategic space in trade and diplomatic relations. Furthermore, the research questions dictated a need to select a country on the periphery of the mainstream western world. There is also the crucial issue of a scarcity of resources, and the education system in Fiji constantly works in a situation where needs and projects have to be identified for purposes of prioritisation. Finally, the literature in the field of teacher education suggests that there are many crucial issues that need to be addressed in systems of the North, and this invites the question – what is happening in the South as far as these issues are concerned?

The instrumental reasons centre around the fact that the researcher was the main research instrument, and had extensive experience both in the area of teacher education and in Fiji. This could possibly work in two ways: one as an advantage, whereby the researcher had the necessary background understandings of the context, and had already set up a network of contacts for data collection. Secondly, as a type of ‘disadvantage’ where the researcher was too ‘close’ to the area of study, and would be too subjectively involved to collect useful data. However, as has been
argued above, this qualitative case study does not view ‘objectivity’ as it is generally understood within a positivistic paradigm of research. It does accept that the researcher is a close part of the research setting, but acknowledges this, and this acknowledgement will be made in a reflexive manner where appropriate.

**Gaining access**

The data was collected from the two institutions responsible for secondary teacher education in Fiji: the University of the South Pacific and the Fiji College of Advanced Education. In addition, interviews were carried out with a number of ministry of education officials, and teacher union representatives.

Prior to my arrival in Fiji, I had informally liaised with the faculty of education and psychology at the USP. As this was my place of employment, gaining access to the programmes and staff presented few obstacles. On the other hand, in order to gain access to the FCAE and secondary schools I had to make formal application to the Ministry of Education to gain approval to carry out my research study. Once this approval was granted, I then wrote formally to the Principal of the FCAE to gain direct access to the college and to set up a suitable time framework for the research. My work at both the college and the USP was greatly facilitated by the fact that I had established both professional and personal networks with both institutions. For example, this made it much easier to obtain teaching and policy documents from individuals within these institutions.
Gaining consent and maintaining confidentiality

In preparing for the interviews with staff, students and teachers, I distributed a questionnaire seeking basic information on the interviewee’s background. I attached a consent form seeking the interviewee’s signature and an indication of how the data was to be used. For staff and teachers, an option was provided: either of their name being kept confidential, or of their name being used freely in the thesis or in any other work arising out of the thesis. For students, the consent form indicated that, if they agreed to be part of the research study, their names would not be used in any discussion of the data. My experience with working with students in Fiji indicated that they would feel uncomfortable about having their comments attributed to them in print.

On studying the consent forms from staff and teachers, I discovered that the majority of interviewees had elected to have their names used in discussion of the data. On writing up the findings section of this thesis however, I made a decision to not use any names at all. The main reason behind this decision was in the nature of some of the information revealed during the interviews. Some of it was very sensitive, and others made direct reference to other people working in the field of teacher education in Fiji. As mentioned earlier, Fiji has a small population of about 800,000, and it did not seem entirely suitable to be able to identify from a PhD thesis, the names of particular people and their role in education processes in such a small country. In a situation such as this, it is not possible to work in isolation from other sectors, and other people in education. The small population size and the close familial links within ethnic groups, means that there is a situation where ‘everybody knows everyone else’. For education to be effective, and for research projects to gain maximum impact in educational settings like Fiji, there is a need to maintain a sense of professionalism in all interpersonal relationships.
However, where interviews were held with senior administrative personnel in established positions of public leadership, it seemed more reasonable to quote interview data by their professional job title.

**Obtaining policy documents**

The research study began with the collection of policy documents. These were sometimes quite difficult to obtain and, where available, were usually collected during interviews. Official documents are not often accessible through the Internet, and even when considered ‘public’ property, are not always readily available. This is not to say that education officers with the ministry of education were reluctant to part with copies of policy documents. On the contrary, officers with whom I held interviews and discussions were very forthcoming in their assistance with paperwork. However, educational policy formulation in the form that it exists today is a relatively new phenomenon,¹ and it is not as well organised for ready dissemination to the public as it could be. The only occasions where I was refused copies of ‘official’ documents was where these documents were classified as ‘work in progress’. If the supplier of the document was unsure of its status, I was asked to make a copy and return the original.

**Observation**

In my attempt to get a clearer idea about teacher education processes in Fiji, I spent extended periods of time at the two institutional providers of secondary teacher education in Fiji: the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Fiji College of Advanced Education (FCAE). On
arrival in Fiji, my first concern was to arrange to immerse myself in the work of teacher education. I set myself up at the USP and then made informal contact with the FCAE. During this time I used an ethnographic-type observation, and became involved in the daily activities of the institutions. This included attending meetings, classes, and involving myself in the social life of the two institutions.

In one sense, the observations that I carried out could be classified as ‘participant’ observation. I entered the case study field as an accepted member of that setting. At USP, I am a member of staff. At FCAE and the ministry of education, I am well known as a lecturer in education at USP. However, my intention was to refrain from acting as an influence on the situation that I was observing, and to reduce what is sometimes referred to as the ‘observer effect’. For example, when sitting in on classes, I chose a seat at the back, and did not express an opinion on the proceedings. In some instances, I was asked to make a comment in relation to the topic that was being discussed. To refuse would have been considered rude, however, my comments were brief, and I refrained from being overly normative. Similarly, when accompanying teacher education staff on visits to students on teaching practicum, I made it clear that my role was that of a non-assessor.

During my first few weeks with both the USP and the FCAE, I spent some time becoming part of the institutions’ daily life without carrying out any formal data collection. The purpose of this was to immerse myself within the cultures of the institutions, and also to get to know staff and students and reduce any initial novelty effect of my presence. Thus, for example, after my first week at the FCAE, students would stop staring at me and asking each other who I was and what

1 See earlier chapter on education policy in Fiji.
I was doing there. I participated in on site social-type events with staff, attending morning and afternoon tea at the college, and doing similar types of things at the university.

At the outset I distributed a brief outline of my research proposal to staff, and invited discussions or comments. This was quite often done in informal settings, and I found that my work was received with a lot of interest by staff in general. It was only after I had set up these initial ‘meeting points’ that I began to participate more actively in the work of the two institutions. I spoke to individual lecturers about their courses, obtained course outlines\(^2\), and, with their permission, attended a number of lectures and workshop classes.

Whilst at the USP I participated in the January teaching practicum for students in the BEd Secondary Teaching programme.\(^3\) This took place over a period of 3 weeks, and I was able to collect some very rich qualitative data. Participating in the USP TP served two purposes. One was to reacquaint myself with the work of the E&P faculty at the USP in providing teaching ‘practice’ to its students. The second was to spend some time with students during their teaching experience before interviewing them at a later date. The initial contact allowed me to get to know them and to ascertain what some of their concerns might be. In addition to working with student-teachers, I attached myself to four of the tutors who visited students. The purpose of the tutors’ visits to students was to provide professional and personal support, and to assess their performance during the teaching practicum.

\(^{2}\) These included assessment procedures and reading lists.
\(^{3}\) I was unable to carry out similar work with FCAE as their Teaching Practice was organised for the mid-year period.
I accompanied the four USP staff as an observer to 19 Secondary English lessons taught by USP students in 9 schools. Out of the 19 lessons observed, 8 were English Literature lessons, and 11 were English language.

During the teaching practicum, I was very careful to restrict my presence to the role of an observer. I was often asked to make comments on a student’s lesson, but pointed out that my role was not to assess, but to observe the processes of the TP. I chose to do this so that students would then feel more able to participate naturally in the interviews that would follow the TP. If at any time they were to define me as an ‘assessor’ then they would perhaps not be as open and as critically reflective in later discussions with me.

**Interviews**

After the period of TP, I scheduled a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with academic staff and final-year students. I interviewed 10 teacher education staff at the FCAE, the principal and vice-principal of the FCAE, 29 students at the FCAE, 11 teacher education staff at the USP, 13 students at the USP, and the vice-chancellor and deputy vice-chancellor of the USP. I also interviewed 8 ex-students of the USP who are now teaching in secondary schools in Fiji. I was able to speak to 6 Ministry of Education officials. In addition, I was able to have many informal discussions with a number of people either directly or indirectly involved in education, including a number of government officials.
**Sampling procedures**

As this doctoral study uses a qualitative case study approach in its research design, the major ‘sampling’ decision was, in effect, the choice of Fiji secondary teacher education as a case study. The choice of a case study approach to research, as discussed earlier, is made with an intention of providing as full a picture as possible of a local context. The emphasis is on holism and a non-fragmented position on data collection. Because of the illuminative nature of this case study research, it was felt that, as far as was practical, as many interviewees as possible should be selected from each identified sub-group of interviewee.

The English Language and Literature (LL) component of the teacher education programmes at the USP and the FCAE was selected because of professional experience on my part in English curricula issues. Additionally, over the last ten years of working in the field of education in Fiji, I had set up useful networks with personnel engaged in English curricula and academic issues. Thus, this meant that I would have the access opportunity as well as an in-depth knowledge of related professional issues. The selection of the LL component is intended only to support the objective of achieving an in-depth understanding of how the issues surrounding teacher education paradigms are played out within the Fiji context.

**Selection of LL students: USP**

There were 443 students listed as doing TP in Fiji for the January 2000 block. All the LL students were selected. From this sub-list, I then selected those students who were in their final-year of the BEd programme. Then I had to find out which school they were allocated. There were 65 LL final-year students listed in the placement list. I then had to make a decision about which ones to select.
I was restricted by the fact that I could not go to see them at schools without the visiting university supervisor. This was because my intention was to visit them as an observer rather than as an assessor. Furthermore, I also wanted to observe the interactions between the university supervisor and the students.

I thus had a choice of 14 supervising staff to work with. The following criteria provided the justification for the choice of the 4 staff with whom I would eventually work:

- Preference was for working with staff who had a high number of LL students in their allocated schools.
- A number of staff had very busy schedules, and it was impossible to make concrete arrangements to accompany staff to their allocated schools.
- It was not possible for me to visit schools outside of the main island. There were issues of expense and, because of the political crisis, personal safety that I had to consider. Thus, I opted to work with staff who were allocated schools on Fiji’s main island. This did not largely affect the quality of the data collected, as representativeness of school characteristic was not an issue for this doctoral study. My work with students during the TP was also designed to create an initial bonding period before the formal interview took place.

**Selection of LL students: FCAE**

At the FCAE, a member of staff assisted me with selection of students. In contrast to the situation at the university, where I was still considered a member of staff and therefore familiar
with the faculty administrative workings, at FCAE the academic staff went out of their way to provide me with any assistance that I needed.

The total number of students enrolled as final-year students in the secondary teaching of English diploma in education was 34. Students at the college followed a highly structured programme of study and recreation. The college has a boarding facility and, with the exception of a minute number, all students lived on the college premises under tightly supervised conditions.

Within this context it was more practical to organise group rather than individual interviews. Students had very little ‘free’ time, and special permission had to be sought from the vice-principal for students to attend the interviews. For example, during the evenings, special supervised study times were scheduled for the students. After dinner, students study in allocated classrooms with staff providing strict supervision. Thus, it was only possible to fit in group interviews, and each one of these had to be formally approved by the administration.

With the assistance of academic staff, I organised all 34 students into 7 groups of 3-5 students. Of the 34, 5 were unable to attend either because of illness, or other academic duties that required their attention.

**Selection of teacher education staff**

My interest was with working with those staff that worked in the field of teacher education. At the USP, the faculty of education and psychology does work in areas outside of teacher education, and I selected only those staff working directly in teacher education. I followed a
similar procedure at the FCAE where I interviewed 11 staff teaching on the Diploma in Secondary Education.

Selection of teachers
To broaden the picture further, 8 USP graduates were selected for interviews. These 8 had graduated from the BEd programme at USP, and had been teaching for at least 3 years. It was not possible to obtain a fuller sample of teachers, partly because of the scattered nature of location of Fiji secondary schools. It would be possible to do this with case studies of specific schools. However, as mentioned earlier, the theoretical interest in this thesis is not in schools per se, but in discourses of practice as articulated by educational personnel in the field.

Selection of CDU officers
Some time was spent at the Curriculum Development Unit in Suva talking with a number of education officers. The CDU co-ordinates and oversees all matters to do with curriculum issues in Fiji schools. Its functions include the development, monitoring and evaluating of curriculum programmes. It is also charged with liaising with other sectors of the education community in Fiji, including teacher education institutions. Consequently, it was thought important to interview some of the staff. The head of the CDU was not available for an interview, and a number of appointments had to be cancelled. Purposive sampling was used here to select three personnel directly involved with curricula in the English subject area, and with the head of secondary curriculum.
Trade Unionists

There are two teacher unions in Fiji, the Fijian Teachers’ Association (FTA) which represents mostly indigenous Fijian teachers, and the Fiji Teachers Union (FTU) which represents the majority of Indo-Fijian teachers. I was not able to secure an interview with any officers of the FTU, as the key individuals were out of the country at the time. An interview was conducted with an officer of the FTA, and with the secretary-general of the Council of Pacific Education (COPE). COPE is a regional organisation of teacher unions in the south pacific which has its headquarters in Suva, Fiji. It comprises 18 affiliates from 12 countries in the region, and is the pacific sub-regional arm of ‘Education International’ located in Brussels.

Interviewing Procedures

All formal interviews were in-depth and semi-structured. When consent was being sought, an interview schedule was distributed to potential interviewees.4

The interview in qualitative research is seen as a “social, interpersonal encounter, not merely a data collection exercise” (Cohen et al. 2000:279). I did not start conducting formal interviews in the field until I had spent 3 months in Fiji. This was to ensure that, firstly, I became a familiar part of the setting, and this would help to reduce the novelty effect that my presence might have had. I also wanted to establish myself as a researcher collecting data, rather than as an assessor making judgements about what would be shared with me in the interviews to follow. I made it quite clear, especially to students, that what was said to me during the interviews would not be used as a form of assessment. Prior to the conducting of interviews, I took special steps to

4 See Appendix 5 for interview outlines.
interact at various levels with staff and students at both the USP and the FCAE. I also answered any questions that were directed at me about my work, so that my role as an observer was made quite clear.

Furthermore, given the multi-ethnic nature of Fiji’s population, and in light of the points raised in the Postscript to chapter 3 of this thesis, it is necessary here to comment on the possible influence that my status as an ethnic Fijian teacher educator might have had on the data collection process. The fieldwork was carried out about five months after the armed take-over of Parliament in May 2000, and the interviews were held beginning February 2001. It was quite possible therefore that the interactions within the interviews might have been affected. For example, given these factors, the Indo-Fijian interviewees might have been more reticent in their contributions. However, the richness of the data gathered would suggest that this was not a major constraining factor. During the interviews, I refrained from making direct references to, or personal comments on, the political events of 2000, except where some of these might have had a direct impact on education and schooling. Where matters of an ethnic nature were raised by the interviewees, they tended to be related to the issue of tradition and culture within particular ethnic groups, and for the need to encourage more inter-ethnic understanding through education and schooling. These responses tended to cut across ethnic background of the interviewees.

The steps discussed above enhanced the quality of data that I was able to gather with staff and students. In general, I felt that both staff and students felt sufficiently relaxed during the interview process to participate thoughtfully and honestly. Students were very forthcoming and critical in their expressed views, and I was always careful to encourage rather than discourage this type of honesty. Many interviewees expressed appreciation at having the opportunity to
discuss issues that they thought were important. At the end of several of the interviews, I was
told that it had been a useful exercise in that it had helped the interviewee to think about and
articulate his/her thoughts on a number of important issues.

I also had to consider the fact that I was a female teacher educator, and to consider how this
might impact on the quality of the collected data. I found that, although all student interviewees
were forthcoming in their views, the female students of both major ethnic groupings tended to
need less prompting than the male students did. It is difficult to say whether this had anything to
do with my own gender status or, alternatively, with any generalisations that can be made about
differences in Fijian male and female participation in discussions. There is no documented
research to indicate that the second explanation might be the stronger one.

As far as was practical, interviews were conducted in a private setting. Students at the USP came
to my office to be interviewed, and I put up a ‘Do not disturb’ sign to ensure privacy. At the
FCAE, interviews were conducted in the evenings during supervised study time. Students met
with me in the library computer room for interviews. A number of interviews were held at other
locations because of factors such as the unavailability of a room. Some students at the USP
preferred to be interviewed over a cup of coffee, and so some interviews took place in a cafeteria
setting.

Most teacher educators preferred to be interviewed in their offices. Likewise, interviews with
ministry of education officials and other administrators and trade unionists were conducted in
their offices.
Group interviews were conducted with students at the FCAE. There are advantages and disadvantages to the use of group interviews. Fontana and Frey (1998:55) provide a succinct summary of these:

The group interview has the advantage of being inexpensive, data rich, flexible, stimulating to respondents, recall aiding, and cumulative and elaborative, over and above individual responses. This type of interview is not, however, without problems. The emerging group culture may interfere with individual expression, the group may be dominated by one person, the group format makes it difficult to research sensitive topics, ‘group think’ is a possible outcome, and the requirements for interviewer skills are greater because of group dynamics.

A special comment needs to be made about the group interviews with students at the FCAE. In my initial observations of the general culture of practice at the college, I gained the impression that there was a very tightly structured set of procedures to be followed by both staff and students. In fact, there were times when a ‘secondary school culture’ dominated, where school rules organised behaviour. There was a significant amount of paperwork evident in procedures. For example, a request for a change of room use from the normal timetable use had to be put in writing and kept in the appropriate file.

In contrast to what appeared to be a dominant culture of control, student participation in the interviews was, in general, characterised by a significant degree of critique and insight. There were often disagreements amongst members of each group, and students were quite happy to talk at length when probed to elaborate. The advantages that Fontana and Frey (1998) outline above were certainly evident in the group interviews that I conducted with the FCAE students.
Part of the reason behind this lively participation could lie in the small number of students in the entire cohort. In total, there were 34 students in the Diploma in Secondary Teaching (English). These students had worked together as a single group for a year, and so were quite familiar with each other. Furthermore, they all ‘knew’ that they were going to be teachers and, in contrast to the USP students that I interviewed, already possessed what might be called a teacher demeanour. In fact, during the classes that I had observed, the students and lecturers referred to each other as ‘colleagues’, and the students referred to themselves as ‘teachers’.

Consequently, during the group interviews that I conducted, I felt that these students possessed a sense of ‘teacher professionalism’ that allowed them to participate confidently and articulately in the discussion. In retrospect, the decision to use group interviews with FCAE students, although initially motivated by reasons of a practical nature, most probably resulted in an enhanced quality of data with this group.

Data Analysis
Having participated in data collection for a period of six months, I returned to Edinburgh where I studied the collected data and the preliminary analysis that had been carried out while in the field. Away from the immediate context of the ‘field’, there was an opportunity for further critical reflection on the data and the entire research process. There was also ‘space’ to reflexively reflect from a ‘distance’, both in geography and in time.

A matter that needed some reflexive thought was that of gender and ethnicity. These issues are important variables in educational research, with ethnicity in particular being of current interest in Fiji. The data analysis in this research study, although implicit in its understanding of these
concerns, did not find that gender and ethnicity emerged as separate issues. The ethnic background of interviewees tended to merge with their own concerns about the future of Fiji, and was usually evident in comments about how education and schooling could be used to alleviate some of the socio-political problems that Fiji currently faced.

Furthermore, as has been discussed above, maintaining confidentiality was of important concern in the Fiji setting. Categorising interviewees by gender and ethnicity would have increased the chances of identification. The richness of the interview data, as might be expected in case study research, also reveals some information about the identity of the interviewee. Identifying them by gender and ethnicity would have further reduced the anonymity of respondents. Presenting the data without this identification does not reduce its value. As the findings discussion and conclusion will indicate, there are a number of broad ranging issues that will benefit from further specific research, with gender and ethnic factors being important amongst these.

In continuing the reflexive process of analysis, the data was read and re-read, looking for patterns and themes to emerge, and either reconfirming earlier analysis, or looking at the same data from a different perspective. It was then organised into files.

As I read, I began to write out preliminary understandings of what the data might mean. These understandings were drafted and re-drafted as reading took place. Themes and categories were generated as this process of reading and writing continued. At the initial stages, the categories were minute and many. As the analysis progressed, I combined categories and began to consider terms that would encompass groups of ‘microdata’. During this process, the interview transcripts
were physically ‘cut and pasted’ (sometimes many times over) into these categories as they emerged.

What became obvious as I interacted with the data was that it would be far too artificial to present it as a set of responses to each interview question within each of the interview schedules that I used. This would also be laboured and antithetical to the research methodology that I have chosen to use in this project. Using the critical interpretive approach to research, I was interested in making connections between the global and the local. These findings are arrived at through a process of reflexive interpretation where the theoretical work discussed earlier in this thesis is read alongside the texts that emerged from the field. Thus there was a dialectical process of interpretation, with data and theory mutually informing and transforming one another. This form of research interpretation is a qualitative one that follows what has been defined earlier as a critical interpretive approach to research.

Out of this final dialectical process of data interpretation, two major sets of findings were established and organised. The discussion of these findings is now presented in the following two chapters.

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5 See page 149 of this thesis.
CHAPTER 6
Discussion of Findings I

Introduction
The findings that emerge from this research study fall into two major categories. Firstly, the current discourses surrounding and underpinning the way that teacher education is organised and practised in Fiji, tend to suggest the dominance of technocratic approaches in the form of a discourse of ‘routinised practice’. In one sense, this routinised practice reflects a type of ‘apathy’ that contributes to an alienation of educational practice from wider and more significant roles that education could have in society. This ‘apathy’ is not necessarily an overt one but, during the course of the fieldwork for this thesis, it became quite evident in how teacher education as a process tended to operate very narrowly in scattered specialisations and diffuse worlds. An articulated coherent cognisance of the bigger picture was rare. In addition, as this chapter will illustrate, many of the student-teachers who were interviewed seemed themselves to be disengaged, both from the programmes that they were enrolled in and from the wider educational and social system.

The second major set of findings can be placed under the category of ‘competing approaches and visions about teacher education’. Along with the dominant technocratic discourse discussed above, there is a set of ideas emerging out of what seems to be a teacher education policy and practice context beset by contradictory and competing discourses. A closer interrogation of these discourses suggests that the important issue of teacher professionalism is high on the agenda of those closely involved with teacher education in Fiji. However, there are indications that any humanistic developments in teacher education that support a more critical pedagogy might well
become submerged in the deficits of the current teacher education context in Fiji - a teacher education context defined by the type of apathy described above. This suggests a possibility of stasis and the maintenance of the status quo, unless there is a clearer and fuller articulation of the contradictions between the competing discourses surrounding paradigms of teacher education. Herein lies the possibility of change.

The second set of findings makes up the subject of chapter 7 of this thesis. The first of these two major findings will now be discussed.

The discourse of routinised practice, and the covert and sometimes overt apathy that accompanies this particular discourse, emerged in three key areas. For ease of reading, these will be briefly outlined here, and then elaborated on in the three major sections of this chapter.

The technocratic discourse of routine was evident, firstly, in various aspects of teacher education practice in the two institutions studied. ‘Practice’ is indicated here, not merely in the literal sense of what actually happens (in a classroom, for example), but also in an interpretation of what is ‘said’ and what is not ‘said’ about practice. Secondly, there is the issue of ‘ownership’. A technocratic discourse removes the ownership of learning, pedagogy and curriculum from a subjectivist and humanistic sphere, to a rationalistic and ‘objective’ one. Thus, the use of the word ‘apathy’ to describe some of the discourses encountered in this study is not intended to lay blame in any way. It is however, an attempt to search for broader understandings of a highly complex situation, that cannot be researched merely by isolating educational practice from wider societal influences. The third aspect finds its focus in the two institutions studied in this research, the FCAE and the USP. The study located a world of micro-politics and institutional constraints
that impacted on how effectively the institutions considered themselves able to participate in teacher education development. In a situation where the micro-politics and institutional constraints become burdensome, there is inevitably a certain measure of disaffection, and this imposes in significant ways on the teacher education process.

This major set of findings will now be discussed in the following three sections of this chapter. The findings will be presented as an illumination of the main discourses arising out of the research. This evidence is based on interview transcripts, fieldnotes made during observation, and relevant documentation.

1. Teacher education Practice
At the start of the school year in January 2002, I spent three weeks in secondary schools during the USP’s block of supervised Teaching Experience.¹ The three weeks spent in the schools provided me with some very rich data which, in the main, pointed to the dominance of the technocratic approach to education, and the accompanying routinised nature of practice. The following section will look in some detail at the observations and discourses arising from my work with students and tutors during the Teaching Practicum (TP), and will weave in understandings gained from the interviews that were conducted after the TP period.

The Teaching Practicum is usually considered one of the most important elements of a teacher preparation programme. In its three-year BEd (Secondary Teaching) programme, the USP allocates twelve weeks outside of term time to the TP. In 2000 it experimented with a new mode
of TP with a tri-modular scheme of six weeks per module. However, the coups which took place in that year, along with other logistical factors of organisation, made it difficult to implement this new system fully. When fieldwork was being conducted for this thesis, the faculty of education had reverted to its old model of four three-week blocks of TP conducted outside of term time. The FCAE, on the other hand, organises its TP in one single block in the middle of the year. In its two-year Diploma in education for Secondary Teaching, it allocates ten weeks of TP: five weeks in year one and five weeks in year two.

Both the USP and FCAE see the TP as being of major importance in their programmes. For FCAE in particular, the TP is considered central to its work. All the staff members interviewed during the course of this study emphasised the important role that it had to play. The following comments made by a FCAE lecturer are typical of the views held about the TP at the college:

C8   Teaching practice is very important for the students here because they will get a taste of what they will really face. Microteaching is teaching their own colleagues, so they will get the best answers. The organisation of the TP is very good. We are much better than the USP one because we are much better organised. The TP could be improved if more time was allocated to it.

Most of the staff at the USP also saw the TP as being central to the preparation of teachers. The following comments from USP lecturer 4 are typical of the views held by staff:

L4   The TP is when the students actually go out and see the reality of the classroom, to be able to put (into practice) some of the ideas that they have learnt in the lectures, and in ED250 and ED350\(^2\). And also it enables them to foresee their future environment. It links them to their future profession. There are so many things that

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1 I was unable to carry out similar work with FCAE as their Teaching Practice was organised for the mid-year period.

2 Methodology/Curriculum courses in the BEd programme.
could be improved like orientation of associate teachers which is very important. The mentor has to be experienced and who is also excited about getting our students. The three weeks… Is it enough for them to be able to put into practice all that? Is it sufficient? I still think that they need a longer duration in the school where they are really getting insight.

However, the TP component at the USP has for a long time been beset by problems, possibly reducing its assumed potential. Escalating student numbers put a significant degree of pressure on the faculty to provide extra supervisory support to students. The faculty’s Annual Report for 2000 made a special reference to this:

Having identified teacher education as one of the priority areas in the Strategic Plan, the University is reluctant to put a ceiling on admission to teacher education programmes. While we endorse this view, we do need additional staffing resources in the current triennium to cater to the increase in student numbers (The University of the South Pacific, 2000:9).

Staff members were sometimes reluctant to work during the TP period because of the out-of-term timing. This was considered a time to do one’s own research and reading, and to take annual leave. Part-time staff had to be hired to assist, and oftentimes there was uncertainty about roles and expectations. Furthermore, because two of the four blocks of TP were ‘home-based’ (ie. taking place in students’ home towns/villages), staff had to be asked to travel to other parts of the country and be based there for the entire three-week period. Students who elected to do their TP in their home countries had to be supervised, and this was added expense on the faculty.

To begin my work with students and staff at the USP, I worked with four staff members who were engaged in the supervision of teaching practice for the January 2001 TP. I accompanied

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3 The faculty of E&P.
them as an observer to nineteen Secondary English lessons taught by USP students in nine schools. Out of the nineteen lessons observed, eight were English Literature lessons, and eleven were English language.

In reflecting on the lessons that I observed, I concluded that little had changed over the last ten years in the way in which English was taught as a secondary school subject. There was a significant amount of transmission teaching, note giving, teacher dominance in discussion, and in many cases little respect for the pupils as learners. In spite of having gone through two years of university preparation, students were still, in the main, teaching English in the way that they were taught. This can be illustrated quite vividly with the way that two aspects of the English curriculum were taught by the student-teachers: Literature and Registers of Language.

In all 8 English Literature lessons that I observed, Literature was taught as a reading comprehension class. This is not unusual in English classes, as it is possibly the easiest and safest way to teach Literature. It is not, however, the best form of pedagogy to employ. This teaching technique reduces Literature study to a question-and-answer type of routine. Pupils are asked to read a chapter or section of the text, then the teacher provides a list of comprehension-type questions for pupils to answer. This continues until the text has been ‘covered’, then general practice is for the teacher to provide a set of notes (either dictated or written on the blackboard) on the themes, plot, setting, characterisation and style of the text. This is usually done as a way to prepare pupils for exams.

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4 USP is a regional university serving 12 Pacific nations.
The teacher preparation programmes have for years been trying to introduce innovative ways to approach Literature – it seems though that these moves have not resulted in any real change. There are many possible reasons for this, and as has been discussed in this thesis, documented research has pointed to a variety of factors inhibiting change in teaching practice. One of the reasons for this situation lies in the dominance of the school culture. I recorded the following field-notes after having observed six lessons:

So far, all the classes I have observed have been fairly conventional. Some talented student-teachers but no real push to introduce innovative, challenging teaching/learning. This of course could be partly due to the restrictive culture of the institution (school).

What was also revealing was the fact that, in their discussions with the students, the university supervising tutors did not comment on this aspect of the teaching at all. It was clearly evident that there were many missed opportunities for useful critique. Granted, the tutors were not English subject specialists, but suggestions could have been made based on a knowledge of generic teaching pedagogy. There was not a single instance of this in my observations. The other limiting factor was that, oftentimes, the tutor had a full day in the one school with a large number of student-teachers, and it was physically impossible to spend extended periods of quality time with each individual student.

Furthermore, there were many instances of where the student-teachers themselves were not unduly concerned about the quality of their lessons. Their prime interest seemed to be in quizzing the university tutor on what the ‘requirements’ were for passing the TP. Questions to tutors focussed on issues such as: how many lessons do I need to teach? How many lesson plans do I need to fill out? What other information do I need to include in my teaching file in order to pass the assessment? These were necessary questions of course, but it was noted that the
questions and discussion often did not go beyond this type of discourse. There was a strong focus on assessment throughout the three-week period of TP.

This fervent focus on assessment was amply illustrated during a school visit, which will be discussed here in some detail. I accompanied USP tutor 1 to a secondary school to visit a number of students including USP student 5. We sat in the classroom at the back of the room as the student-teacher took the form 6 (year 12) class through a language lesson on vocabulary. There were many things wrong with this lesson. First, it was obvious that the student had not familiarised him/herself with the lesson material. The textbook that the student used was looking at words commonly confused, such as ‘continually’ and ‘continuously’. The student taught the vocabulary as a test, having asked the students to do the language exercises as homework the night before. Thus, the lesson consisted of the teacher going through the answers with the class, asking for answers from them, and either saying ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’ in response.

There were two things amiss with this student’s presentation of the vocabulary. Firstly, there was no attempt to explain the difference in meaning between the words. Neither had the student asked the pupils to use their dictionaries to find out these differences. Secondly, the student-teacher got many of the answers wrong, even ‘mis-correcting’ pupils who offered the right answer. The class responded by looking at each other, and a few quietly murmured comments to each other. Unfortunately, the response of the student-teacher to this murmuring was to adopt an authoritarian stance, and to suddenly berate those pupils who had not completed their work. Thus, the lesson came to a standstill while the student-teacher shouted things like

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5 Based on TP field notes.
“Come on do your work!”
“And do your work quietly!”
“I will have to tell (name of associate teacher) about this!”
“And no talking!”

The next step in the tutor’s visit was to meet with the student-teacher to discuss the lesson, and the student’s other experiences in the school. I was allowed to sit in on the discussion while the USP tutor conducted the discussion. The tutor was very ‘gentle’ with the student, gradually building up to a discussion of the problems in the presented lesson, commenting on the inadequate lesson plan, the student’s unfriendly tone of voice, and the fact that this was the student’s 3rd block of teaching experience, and that s/he should have done much better.

What is interesting about this case example is the student’s own comments in this post-lesson discussion. Quoting from my research fieldnotes:

(The university tutor says): my comments on the lesson inadequacies are not written down in your formal assessment, but these are things that you need to work on for yourself.

But the student-teacher did not appear to be listening and was more interested in getting the university tutor to sign the TP completion form! Said ‘yes’ ‘yes’ ‘yes’ to everything that the USP tutor had to say, but his/her manner and response indicated that s/he was not really reflecting on what the tutor was suggesting/saying.

It has to be emphasised here that this experience was not atypical of the type of interactions that took place between tutors and students on the TP.

6 An associate teacher is the school-based supervisory teacher.
7 USP tutors will sign a TP completion form verifying that the student has successfully completed that particular block of TP so that the student can move onto the next block of TP.
The second aspect of the English curriculum that will be used here to illustrate the rather routinised, technicist approach to teacher education evident in the 3-week period of TP is that of Language Registers. A large number of students chose to teach this topic for the USP tutor’s visit. USP student 2 taught a lesson on the language of advertising for the USP tutor’s visit. The student-teacher had asked pupils to do a text analysis of a given magazine advertisement. The analysis consisted of a description of ‘linguistic’ and ‘non-linguistic’ features of the text. My fieldnotes from USP student 2’s lesson are illustrative of the routinised approach to teaching that dominated the lessons that I observed:

Inadequate analysis of texts. It seems as if pupils are just parroting off the answers without understanding what advertisements really ARE. As with other classes on language registers, this is a conservative lesson using a fairly traditional approach to teaching registers. Technically a competent lesson, but creativity, imagination could have been enhanced.

In the lesson, this student approached the advertisement as if it did not have an existence outside of the classroom exercise. Therefore, instead of looking at what the societal context of the advertisement might be, the student trawled through the advertisement with the pupils looking for examples of linguistic and non-linguistic features typical of the language of advertisements. Some of these might be: the use of comparative and superlative forms, use of slogans, and use of colourful pictures. Typically, teaching of registers is done in this way because this is how language registers are tested in exams. There was no effort made to look at the advertisement holistically or to consider, for example, subliminal messages, issues about gender roles, stereotyping and so forth.

In summary, the observations made of the January TP component of the teacher preparation programme at the USP suggested a teacher education practice subsumed by routine, and a
concern for assessment and going through the motions. The following quote from my field notes sums up the general mood of the TP:

TP seems to take on a monotonous, repetitive, artificial character. Implies that TP has become routinised, technicist and mechanical. No real serious criticism/appraisal of what is happening in schools/classrooms. So, what is the point of TP? Is there a point? What does seem to be a strong feature of the TP experience is the initiation of student-teachers into the dominant culture of English teaching.

These general impressions are borne out in more detail in the interviews that I conducted both with teacher-educators and student-teachers at USP.

In my interviews with student-teachers I asked questions about their recent experiences with the TP. I found that they were generally concerned about very practical matters to do with teaching. This is not a surprising finding and is borne out by other research studies in this area.8 Management is of considerable concern to student-teachers as evidenced in the following data:

K Did you have any worries before you went out (on TP)?

S1 Yeah a lot. (with emphasis). I was worried about how the students would .... whether they would accept me as a trainee teacher or not. I was assigned to form 1 in (name of school). First day I didn’t do any teaching. Second day when I went there, I was really nervous because there were 59 students there altogether … it was a very noisy class. So I was thinking would they ever listen to me?

K What about when you were preparing the night before or the day before, when you were preparing for a lesson. What were the things that concerned you?

S1 I was worried that … ok I was preparing this lesson plan form but I didn't know whether I would be able to finish this lesson on time. The class I took when (name of USP tutor) came to visit me that day, I think I did short story that day and we only had one period, and … I made this lesson plan for 30-35 minutes. And I was really worried whether I was going to finish it or not. Unfortunately I did not finish the conclusion part. I think that's one of the worrying things about teaching you are

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8 For example, see McNally et al. (1994).
expected to finish everything on time. But it depends on students. How they fast they can … you know.

These were the only two issues that this student mentioned in response to the question about worries that they had before going out to do TP. In fact, most of the students interviewed mentioned the classroom management issue as a major worry. The following data provides further illustration of this:

**K**  What was uppermost in your mind when you were preparing the lesson?

**S3**  first of all that discipline should be maintained by the students. What happens is that when they see a new teacher the students get … they want to misbehave … as to do something ….. they know that you won't be staying here for much longer. So they try to do something of their own. And that's quite a hindrance. And …with that we have to make sure that the students do behave in the class, and that the class is also productive.

In spite of these initial worries about TP that most of the student-teachers talked about as a point of concern before they went out to the schools, it seemed that as the period of teaching progressed most of the student-teachers settled down to ‘get on with it’ as it were. They quickly worked out what was required of them to pass the TP assessment, and then went about doing it. One of the students makes the following telling comment about how to pass the TP component:

**K**  Do students think that it's easy to pass the practicum?

**S3**  Yeah

**K**  What makes people say that?

**S3**  (pauses …)

**K**  it's ok you can be as honest as you want …

**S3**  well they just know that when they (the USP tutors) come, you prepare the lesson, and it’s just for 35, 40 minutes and, uh, you just go and teach. And just involve the students in something and that's it.
so if you were to give advice to a new student who's never been visited by a university lecturer before, what would you say. You know, like, if you were to tell the student what to do so that they can pass, what would you tell them

(laughter)

Well first of all I would tell them to write the lesson plan neatly … the first impression on the assessor…. involve the class in something and something productive that maybe ….. I would tell them, you don't go and talk there for the whole of class. Just involve the class. Because it's student oriented now. Not the teacher.

Therefore, it appears that once students overcome the initial nervousness surrounding ‘being’ a teacher they very quickly ‘pick up’ on the unwritten rules and modes of behaviour to follow. This would be fine if the actual classroom practice was noteworthy but, as has been discussed above, the classroom practice observed in this research left much to be desired. This is not to suggest that student-teachers were unaware of what good classroom practice was. During the interviews, they spoke quite confidently about this issue. For example, they were aware of what student-centred learning was and why it was important. However, they were in general not self-critical about their presented lessons. This would suggest that there was an understanding of what was required, but that between this level of understanding and a level of understanding requiring praxis there was a vacuum. Thus, the student does not feel that it is his/her responsibility to change practice, because, as has been demonstrated thus far, the dominant concern was seen to be with assessment, fulfilling requirements and ultimately passing the Teaching Practicum. Where this type of technocratic discourse is allowed to dominate, the student-teacher will not feel empowered to change the type of practice that they are doing, even if they are, in theory at least, aware of what good practice might look like.

Another student expanded further on how to pass the TP, and then provided an account of what other students did in order to obtain a pass on their classroom teaching. This student presented
one of the few notable lessons that I observed during the TP. The data is worth quoting at length as it clearly brings out how student-teachers on TP have learnt to ‘play the game’ in order to pass the assessment requirements; an indication of how routinised, and perhaps somewhat lacking in meaning the whole process has become:

K Do you think the supervisor should visit more often. Less often? Or how can the faculty improve?

S4 I think one (visit) is ok. I think one is enough you know. There is so much stress. That is the date, supervisor is coming to visit, everybody running around preparing charts and all. Sometimes you don’t (normally) take charts in the classes and all… But for the visit you prepare two, three charts.

K Was it easy for you to pass your practicum?

S4 I think it’s easy.

K What do the other students say?

S4 Yeah, nobody found any real problems with the teaching practicum.

K If you were to give advice to someone who has not done any teaching practice at all and they were to ask you now what’s the easiest way to get through this part, what advice would you give to prepare for the supervisors visit for example?

S4 Just have confidence in yourself. You need to believe in yourself and you don’t need to be scared of the supervisor … you know, some students went about preparing the lesson before (with emphasis) the supervisor came in you know like, you have a double period so supervisor is coming in third period. In the second period you prepare everybody for the lesson. I think that is a very silly thing to do. I never did it and I don’t think I am ever going to do it. Just take a chance with the supervisor. You know just take your chance, if it doesn’t go on well, the worst that can happen is he will have to come again.

K You mean to say they (teacher education students) rehearse the class?

S4 They rehearse the class. That was very silly. You know you take a new thing to the class then they’ll (pupils) pay attention, then they’ll be interested, then the supervisor can say the class was interested and that is when you can test your questioning technique with their work. You shouldn’t give them questions in advance, you shouldn’t give them the answers beforehand.

K What specific advice would you give to this person? This person you are talking about …. Who had not done the teaching practice.
S4 I would tell them to learn professionalism….

Finally, this comment from the same student seems to sum up the general tone of the TP:

S4 You have to be very careful of what you’re saying you know … Every time you say something, some people misinterpret it. If you say something like, even if you comment on the college convenience, its not flushing well, people might say alright then go ahead and get a better college or go and do your TP somewhere else you know so you have to be, you don’t say anything, you don’t criticise the college you are in, the school, you don’t criticise it even if it something is wrong with it, you know it is wrong, you just shut up and know it within yourself. Don’t come out and say it.

As indicated earlier, interviews with USP teacher education staff showed that in general, the TP was considered very important. However, many expressed doubts about the effectiveness of TP as it was currently organised. USP lecturer 3 commented on the TP as follows:

L3 It is the most depressing part, because it's the culmination of all the hard work and dedication that everybody puts into the programme. It is just simply NOT done right. And I think that that is just a historical hangover.

K From?

L3 From the early 80s I guess. When these systems which we've now got were first instituted…. And it seemed right at the time. But we've moved on a great deal and we know so much more about the nature of learning, the nature of inquiry.

K Assuming that staff here do keep up to date with what's happening, and do read. Why are we still doing the same thing …

L3 There's always the opposite of inertia. The best image I can think of is a medicine ball

K Medicine ball?

L3 One of those very heavy solid things you can hardly lift up. And change comes in and makes a sort of small dent on the ball but it just absorbs it. It's a fossilised institution.
The metaphor of a medicine ball and a fossilised institution is a useful one. It suggests a resistance to change, and as the illustrative evidence from the previous section has shown, an acceptance of the routine of practice. This is not to suggest that there is a lack of awareness of this issue amongst teacher education staff. In my informal conversations with staff, there was some frustration with what many considered to be a lack of action on the part of the faculty, and others pointed to the ‘lip-service’ that was paid to the importance of the TP in the programme. These discussions also revealed that, in the minds of many, the teacher education programme had deteriorated in quality over the years.

These findings on teacher education practice thus suggest that, in spite of what was articulated about good practice in teaching and teacher education, a techno-rational paradigm seems to dominate the culture of teacher education practice in the situations discussed. There is a growing sense of disengagement, and there is little feeling for a pedagogy that might encourage critical action at the level of policy and programme implementation. This sense of disengagement as it is manifest in a lack of ‘ownership’ of teacher education will now be expanded on further in the second section of this chapter.

2. Ownership of Teacher education
The previous section of this chapter has focussed on teacher education practice as a site for the dominant technocratic discourse at work. This section will examine a second key area that illustrates the technocratic discourse, and that is the ‘ownership’ of teacher education. This issue can be illustrated with the analogy of the car factory worker who works on one isolated part of the product and receives little intrinsic personal satisfaction from his/her labour. Similarly, if the ownership of teacher education practice becomes externalised and alienated from personal
experience then there is a sense of disengagement from practice. Practice becomes routinised and takes on a hue of artificiality and automaticity. This issue was evident in several areas.

**Becoming a Teacher**

When talking with the student-teachers, one of the first questions I asked them was what had made them decide to enter the teaching field. The answers were surprisingly candid. On the one hand there was a minority of students who were keen to become teachers as the following interview extract from FCAE indicates:

A8 I always wanted to be a teacher, in fact I used to admire my teachers. One of my uncles and aunt were both teachers. And when I used to go the village during the holidays, people respect teachers so much. So I thought if I became a teacher, people would respect me in this way.

However, the majority of students interviewed saw teaching as a second option. Teaching was often seen as something to do while waiting for ‘better’ opportunities. At other times students said that they only came in to do teaching because their parents wanted them to. Others said that they were unable to gain entry into other programmes, and that education was considered an easy option. Moreover, failing in other disciplines often meant that students moved into education, again because it was considered an easier subject to pass. The following extracts from the interview data with students, provide an illustration of the responses:

K This is your 3rd year BEd. How did you get into the teaching field?

S3 Well I was not actually prepared to go into the teaching field, I never thought I would be in teaching field. I came here to do accounting, but just because I have flopped (failed) form 7 maths I couldn't get that.
K So you came in to do a BA in accounting?

S3 Yes. And another choice I got was computer science. I did computer science at high school, but again it had a prerequisite of maths, 50%... So I had no option but to take up this (BEd).

K OK, why did you choose English then, because you're an accounting major...

S3 I was good at accounting, as well as English. My academic English was ok, much better than other subjects, so I thought I would give it a go and see what happens

K But if you had a choice … because initially you wanted to come and do accounting … you didn't want (emphasis) to teach accounting or …

S3 No, no, no

K What was it about English that drew you to choose English

S3 When I came here … I was uh ... in the offer letter (from the University) I had (was offered) business studies and then I came here to get accounting and then I called my parents, and they said, do anything in which you can get a job easily. And they told me that nowadays you don't get much jobs in the private sector, so why don't you do teaching. So I did.

K And did they suggest that you do English or did they leave the choice …

S3 In form 7 (year 13), our English teacher told us there is a shortage of English teachers in Fiji.

Here it is obvious that a teaching degree was really the last option for this student. And although the student was interested in Accounting, Business Studies and Computer Science, s/he chose English because of job market demands. Similar conclusions can be drawn from the following student’s responses:

K Can we just start with just a few questions about why it was that you became interested in teaching?

S7: Well actually I never was interested in teaching. It was actually my mum who used to force me that teaching would be a better field to get a job... I was more interested in doing management with literature and language because I was good at English and um I like English. But I didn’t like education like its something I haven’t done so I wanted to combine it with management. That was where this um
Student 7 was in her final year of the Bachelor of education programme, and assuming that s/he has not got a job elsewhere, has probably started his/her teaching career in a secondary school in Fiji.

Scholarship considerations often influence students’ choice of career. Most of the students at USP, and the majority of FCAE students, were sponsored by the Fiji government. The shortage of teachers after the 1987 coups and the subsequent mass migration of skilled and professional labour meant that the government allocated a large number of its scholarships for teacher education study. Migration continued after the year 2000 coups.

Further interview data from the FCAE exemplifies again the influence of scholarship considerations on choice of subject area:

A1 I didn't dream of becoming a teacher. I never wanted to become a teacher. FCAE was my 2nd option. I applied to go to USP but I didn't get a scholarship. So I came here instead. Both my parents are teachers, and I hate teachers. I see them come home looking tired and angry. And I think to myself, I don't want to be in this profession. I had nothing else to do for a year. And I wanted desperately to get some money. So once I got my place here (at FCAE), I just came against my will. I really wanted to study journalism at USP.
The following extract from USP provides a further example of the scholarship influence on choice of study area:

S2: Mostly it had to do with the scholarship, and then, so I thought apply for this program and I was given the scholarship so I decided OK I’ll just do this. And I thought of it as a starting block, as a stepping stone to something else.

K: To something else. What sort of other things are you interested in?

S2: Mostly I am interested in uh, I am interested in History you know, anthropology and all that and I wanted to do that but unfortunately I didn’t get the scholarship for that, my friend got it and she’s studying in Australia now.

K: So this was like your second choice?

S2: Yes. But uh I can’t say that I’m disappointed. After my teaching practice, some of the practical, I kinda found it interesting. So I think maybe I’ve made the right choice after all. Maybe I will stick to teaching.

This student presented one of the best lessons that I observed during the Teaching Practicum. S/he seemed to have an instinctive understanding of what to do with the group of pupils, and spent a significant degree of time during the class drawing out students personal experiences of ‘fear’ in order to prepare them for a Reading Comprehension exercise on this theme. What I observed during this student’s lesson was real teaching rather than the artificial type of teaching so prevalent in secondary schools. Much of this artificial educational practice was actually ‘testing’ dressed up as teaching.

The response provided by student 2 above was a rarity. Most students seemed to come into the teaching field against any personal desire to do so, and there were also those who were influenced by their families to become teachers. That many new teachers do not actually ‘want’ to become teachers is thought provoking. However, as the story of student 2 shows, there is still
scope for optimism and there is also a responsibility on the education fraternity to project teaching as a profession that requires the best graduates, and for the remuneration awarded to teachers to signify the importance of their role. The issue of better engaging students with the notion of being a teacher and what it really means is important and urgent. If teaching is continued to be seen as a safe and easy option rather than a chosen professional career, then it is not surprising to find a limited sense of ‘ownership’ in the discourses emerging from the research data.

The situation described above is exacerbated by a faculty attitude that represents a lack of control over intake. This issue was raised with a senior faculty administrator:

\begin{quote}
K There are some comments on the type of students we take in to our programme that we are not being selective enough. For example, it doesn’t mean that if you have an A grade that you will necessarily be a good teacher. How can the department respond more proactively here?

A1 It’s a good point but again, on what basis do you make a selection? We can have an interview, but even then I don’t know what information we can get?

The other thing is that most of the students are sponsored by government. So if they say we want this person to go to BEd, we can’t say oh we’ll interview him then find out. We are obliged to take that person.
\end{quote}

Thus, although the faculty is aware that there is a problem concerning student selection, the suggestion is that there is little that can be done about it. This situation has continued for years and, yet, the search for a practical solution has not been seriously considered. It seems that the faculty has accepted as a ‘given’ the context in it functions. This serves to promote a form of bureaucratic inertia, and will contribute to a tendency towards routinised practice.
To continue the discussion of the technocratic discourse as evidenced in a lack of ‘ownership’ and in the alienation from meaningful participation in educational practices, this chapter now turns to focus more specifically on the issue of policy and participation.

**Policy and Participation**

The main theme that will be presented in this section is that the data points to a situation of contradiction between a set of official policy discourses and that of context-bound discourses.\(^9\) The data shows that there is very little fit between the official policy discourse and the response from those more directly involved with teacher education. As might be expected in a system where the perception is that, over the years, very little has changed in the education system, there is also a significant degree of scepticism about what the officially sanctioned policy is able to achieve at the level of implementation. Further, there is a general lack of awareness of what the policy is, and sometimes there was almost an apathy about what it might mean for future changes and developments. The dominance of a discourse of educational practice that has become routinised over the years would suggest that this lack of interest in larger issues might be part of the process of alienation which separates educational practice from any meaningful and dynamic contextualisation.

As the earlier chapters have shown, the official educational policy discourse, which has only very recently become in vogue in Fiji, is part of a wider process that has its foundations in a globalising world of markets. There is a strong emphasis on education for human capital needs, and for an approach based on ‘modernisation’. Globalisation and its effects are perceived as

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\(^9\) Context-bound is used here to refer to discourses articulated by those directly involved with teacher education on the ground.
being ‘here to stay’, and Fiji was seen as having no choice but to toe the line as it were. There are some positive outcomes of this process, for example UNESCO tends to take a more humanistic approach with an emphasis on harnessing ‘indigenous’ issues and putting these at the forefront of educational decision-making. However, as has been noted, there is the interesting question of how much of this type of UNESCO-speak is actually relevant, and how much permeates into daily practice and understandings on the ground.

In contrast to this official policy discourse, the context-bound discourse was diverse and often contradictory in its expression. This idea will be enlarged up on in the next chapter, which looks at competing approaches and visions about teacher education. What will be considered here is a number of issues related to the level of awareness of, and attitudes to official governmental, institutional and faculty policy in education. These issues are significant to this research study because they illuminate the lack of ownership and, consequently, a form of apathy that exists in context-bound discourses of teacher education in relation to policy. In trying to effect educational change through new policy formation, the mistake is often made of not including those on the ‘shop floor’ in decision making. Fullan (1991:38) suggests that the implementation of educational change involves ‘change in practice’. However, the data emerging from this research study suggests that the change that the new policy directions are designed to effect would actually make very few inroads into educational practice. In the Fiji context, this is because there is an evident gulf separating official policy discourse from context-bound discourse. The bureaucratic inertia and personal apathy that seems to dominate local culture/s of educational practice makes significant contribution to widening this space between policy and implementation.
As has been discussed previously, this inertia and apathy is not presented to lay blame at any personal level. Rather, the objective is to draw attention to this situation as it exits in a wider context of a dominant techno-rational culture of teacher education. An articulation of this point will, conversely, also assist in clarifying the possibilities that lie in a teacher education policy and practice that works, not in the form of alienation, but as a form of empowerment.

The following section will discuss in some detail the response of teacher education personnel to the issue of policy. These responses illustrate the sense of disengagement from policy issues that was evident in local cultures of teacher education practice. Before this however, it will be useful to briefly summarise the discussions in Section 1 of this thesis regarding education policy in Fiji. The current educational policy environment in Fiji is one that is very recent in its development. Within the last two years, there has been a flurry of activity surrounding the development of these new policy documents. In summary, these are the main documents produced:

**Ministry of education Documents**
- Education Fiji 2020
- Strategic Plan 2000 – 2002
- Putting ‘education Fiji 2020’ into Action
- 2001 Corporate Plan: Putting the ‘Strategic Plan 2000 – 2002’ into Action
- Blueprint for Affirmative Action on Fijian education
- CDU Annual Plan 2001

**FCAE Documents**
- FCAE Vision and Mission statement
- FCAE Strategic Plan
  (closely following education Fiji 2020 list of Objectives)

**USP Documents**
- Mission Statement
- Strategic Plan
In order to explore whether this new documentation had any resonance with practitioners and their ideas about education, the in-depth interviews with staff at the USP and the FCAE spent some time on this topic. Generally, there seemed to be a lack of awareness of the formal policy, and a slight apathy towards policy in general. Where there was an awareness of policy issues, it was usually accompanied by a strong scepticism.

The following interview extract with a lecturer in education (L1) at USP, provides some useful insight into the policy situation in Fiji:

K  Are you aware of any formal secondary teacher education policy for teachers? Anything that’s written down?

L1  Yes they have the policy for secondary education….

K  Where is this policy documented? Who writes it and how are other people made aware of the policy?

L1  At the moment it is top down approach and it is generally set in place by the Permanent Secretary, with his staff. Then of course it goes to the minister then to the cabinet then it is approved then it is sent back to the people. What I would expect to be done is that it is done from schools to divisions and then the policy is put in place. But although on paper it appears like that, it doesn’t actually happen. It is from the permanent secretary up, then down. So we DO have a policy, government has a policy, I have seen the document.

K  Do you have a copy of the document?

L1  Ah…. (Long Pause) …. Part of it is in the constitution (1997), very vague. I think it is reflected in the annual report, in the ‘Education 2020’ when they developed the policy.

This staff member was one of the few who was actually aware of the existence of the new MoE policy documents. With staff who were aware of any policy, there seemed to be some consensus in the perception that the MoE tended to focus on issues of numbers rather than quality of
teachers. When asked if they were aware of any form of secondary teacher education policy for Fiji, the Vice-Principal of the FCAE said:

Not really. I mean I just know what I’ve said of the ministry’s policy to ensure that we have an adequate number of trained people to go and teach in the junior secondary schools. That’s about it.

A senior lecturer in education (L2) at USP who has had many years experience liaising with the MoE through workshops, consultancy and research provided a fuller answer:

At the ministry level, they themselves may not have a very good idea about what kind of teachers they want. They have a very generalised idea for instance. And more on quantitative aspects than the qualitative aspects. This is not to be critical but …… “Do we have enough teachers?” is more important than, “do we have very good teachers”, do we have the teachers with these professional qualities.

The picture that emerged from interviews with teacher education staff seemed to suggest that the issue of policy at the governmental level was something that ‘they’ did, and that the focus was on quantitative matters rather than those to do with quality. There was also a strong scepticism about the relationship of policy to the real world of teaching, and the feeling was that the informal policy was far more entrenched in terms of actual practice.

As an example of this scepticism, a lecturer at the USP responded to the question ‘Are you aware of any formal teacher education policy?’ with a simple statement:

L3 No formal policy but informal policy is ‘follow the book and work to the external exam’.

This statement was not made approvingly. Furthermore, as the data from the Teaching Practice component has shown, much of the concern in both TP and actual teaching, has been with assessment.
At the institutional level, the data showed similar trends in responses from staff. At the USP, the University’s strategic plan identifies teacher education as one of its 5 academic priority areas:

In the University’s consultation with the member countries, teacher education was awarded highest priority. USP has established and continues to develop its pre- and in-service programmes in teacher education as well as its professional teacher development programmes in close consultation with the ministries of education and teacher training institutions throughout the region. The focus in teacher education is on the preparation of graduates to teach in secondary schools (University of the South Pacific, n.d.:20).

Perhaps before outlining the response of teacher educators to the strategic plan, it might be useful to include as a baseline the comments of senior management at the University on the inclusion of teacher education as one of USP’s academic priority areas in its strategic plan. As might be expected, the responses were couched in terms of the general goals of education in the region served by the University, and of the relationship of these to national development.

The vice-chancellor of the USP commented on this role of education in national development as follows:

… what is the role of education? National development. Education is there certainly to equip people, you know to be able to go out there and engage in economic, social activities and so on. All kind of things where there is a demand. Education should empower people to think for themselves, to be able to analyse situations in life and come to right conclusions about what they should do. Also, to be able to stand back and look at what decision-makers are doing, analyse what they do and either individually or in groups, make observations of what is happening. So it is really essential in as much, in terms of ensuring that the democratic process functions.

However, it is interesting to note the vice-chancellor’s response to the question of quality in teacher education. He outlines the types of mechanisms that the university was putting into place
to ensure quality in teacher education, and then suggests that the faculty of education at USP could do more to implement this policy at the level of curriculum, educational policy at national level, and in terms of working more closely with policy makers:

VC If you look at our medium term strategic plan. It is a very broad framework. It points out all these important areas in it. And it points out what we must do in terms of strategy to ensure that we achieve those broad objectives. That is not enough. What is now required and we haven’t succeeded up to now, you see. What is now required, is what they call the Support Plans.

I would expect that the people who are concerned to sit back, put their feet on the table and think ahead. In terms of the development needs of all our countries, and the role of education. What does it mean for what we are going to be doing? They already know that it is a priority area. So they sit back and they say: how many students should we be thinking of to cater for our needs? If there are X students that we will be having, what does it mean in terms of staff numbers? In terms of organisational structures within the school and the faculty? What kind of space will we be needing? What kinds of equipment, computers and so on? What kind of programmes must we now, in terms of quality programmes, should we now put in place? What kind of priorities are there?

And then for them to reduce all this in terms of operating budget expenditures, over this longer time period, we are talking about three years. In terms of education, that is not long enough. We are going into education planning or health planning we are talking about the longer term horizon. I am saying we should be looking at it in terms of 10 years.

And then in terms of your budgets, space, equipment you know, classrooms you name it. So in other words the onus is first of all on that section to address this. They are supposed to know about it. In terms of curriculum. They are supposed to be familiar with the needs, the education policies and the strategies within our own countries. And we are supposed to interact with them. They are doing it but I think they can do more. We should be able to be working with governments, to influence and formulate their educational policies and strategies. We should be able to ...

K (interrupts) Do you think this is actually happening?

VC It isn’t. It isn’t.

USP is a regional university, serving 12 member countries in the Pacific region.
Thus, the senior management at the USP is suggesting that more could be done by the faculty of education in the implementation of the emphasis placed on teacher education in USP’s medium-term strategic plan. The management sees its role as providing the structures for education to take place, and its emphasis will be on the financing of education. It appears from the above interview extract that the management is of the view that more could be done at the faculty level to ensure ‘quality’ teacher education takes place.

Having outlined the management’s stance on the strategic plan and teacher education, it will be interesting to consider the response from faculty staff in education. Was it in agreement with senior management? A senior lecturer at USP commented:

L2 over the years our faculty has done very well in teacher education…in terms of responding to the needs, to the demands of that particular time. But there has been a process of accumulation. As we didn't shed some of the things which did not fit say the current level or the future thing. We still over the years inherited some how or the other, accommodated that. So, we are not in a position yet, from a psycho-social point of view to take an honest look (at our programmes/courses) and say "this is not wanted any more" (ie. Not needed).

This reference to the inherited and static nature of much of what USP works with was reflected in comments by other teacher educators at USP. In response to a question about the strategic plan and the prioritising of teacher education, another lecturer stated that

L1 I don’t think any of us is really serious about it (the prioritising of teacher education in the strategic plan). It’s good that it is there in the strategic plan. But how much time did they (senior management) spend with us. They had meetings only with the big people, how much of it is communicated down to us?

This comment is reflective of a general attitude to the work of the faculty in relation to the university management. There was often a sense that the management worked only with a
selected few senior academics and that many of the decisions taken were not discussed adequately at the faculty level.

A third teacher educator was less than flattering about the matter, as the following exchange indicates:

L3 The Strategic plan has had an effect in that it has created a significant degree of hot air. A significant degree of (inaudible) and a significant degree of expenditure.

K Are you aware that teacher education has been prioritised?

L3 Yeah, and that's been a specific gripe of mine really. We're told that we can't get other faculties to change their timetables for instance in order to have a time set aside for teaching practice. And I've said this in meetings that things which are easily done like - you don't timetable lessons in the daytime. Or that you run courses up until a certain date and then leave some time for TP. What does this prioritising mean? Just putting in more resources or does it mean increasing the size of classes because I suspect that's actually it. Just increasing the size of classes.

At the FCAE a similar set of data emerges. At the senior administrative level, the principal of the college indicated the close links that the FCAE had with the MoE. This is not surprising since the FCAE is a government institution and is funded and run by the central management at the MoE headquarters:

K Is teacher education policy formalised in any way here?

P For the college how it all started here, the policy for teacher education institutions are formulated by the ministry. They initiate policy, of course, through the influence of the government of the day…. When the FATEP\textsuperscript{11} period came to an end, we just continued, we were trying to sustain, you know sustainability of the

\textsuperscript{11} Fiji-Australia Teacher Education Project ran from October 1992 to September 1995.
project. So now at the college the way we are running (things) here, we have a strategic plan, that we have in place. We also have a corporate plan, I mean the Ministry's corporate plan, and then this year, we have annual plans that are guidelines that we are using to keep us moving forward and moving ahead.

So in terms of policy guidelines we are going along with the major policies set by the MoE. We do not deviate but we want to make sure in what way we can help the MoE achieve the major goals and the vision of the MoE. So we have a vision statement, we have strategies, and because of that without these plans how can we justify what we are doing? Because in there we have different programmes there we are following so we can justify for budget allocation.

K Is there a section that looks specifically at the professional development needs of teachers?

P (Looking at document). We have the different objectives, what we want to achieve - the strategies, what will we do to achieve it, and then the performance indicators. These objectives is in line with the MoE. But this is internal, it is specific, it's all about teacher education. What the college is planning to do so that we produce the best quality teachers to go out and serve in secondary schools. If you look at the strategic plan it has 8 different objectives.

In many interviews with FCAE lecturing staff, the question of policy initiated considerable discussion:

K As far as you are aware what are the written policy documents that guide teacher training in Fiji?

C1 I've seen only education ones. I haven't seen any teacher training policies.

K The College has a vision statement? How widely was it discussed here at FCAE?

C1 It wasn't really discussed it came from the top (i.e. the MoE) to the administrators here and then it was brought up at the staff meeting, and it was decided that this was going to be our mission statement.

K How is it brought down to the school level?

C1 When you have meetings with the schools, reviewing of courses and all that, the mission and the statement is there. And you check what you have been practising to see whether it is in line with the statement.
K Is it a useful thing to have?

C1 I suppose it's good to have a mission statement in that you have a goal, but the only time I even know that they ever talk about it was for the Performance Management System.

K What do you think is going to come out of the Review Commission?

C1 I hope that they are going to put it into practice, but we have to wait until after elections to know what is going to happen. Whether the new government is going to take those things seriously, it was an expensive but useful exercise. The college put in a submission, there was wide consultation, it was put together, in so many meetings.

K What are some of the factors that restrict the potential for change?

C1 We don't have good governance. We have never had a good minister. We have ministers who talk about goals and visions. The government of the day has to mean it and be serious about improving education. Just paying lip service to it doesn't work.

The following interview excerpt further exemplifies the strong links that the FCAE has with the MoE, and the sense that the FCAE’s work is strongly directed and imposed by the MoE:

K Are you aware of any formal secondary teacher education policy?

C8 Not that I am aware of.

K What about guidelines. Do you get any apart from the mission statement and the strategic plan?

C8 We try to adapt to whatever the MoEs requirements are.

K But how do you know what the Ministry’s requirements are?

C8 It comes in the form of prescriptions and exams.

K What is your view of Education review commission 2000?

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12 The word ‘prescription’ is used to refer to official MoE Syllabi.
I think it's going to be shelved. Just like other commission. Because the changes we want there, for our college, I don't think they are going to do that. We want a lot of things. We want to increase our status. We want to work at the BEd level. We want to work on a semester basis. We want more resources, computers, rooms. Which we will never get.

When interviewing a senior management staff at the MoE I asked the question *How does the ministry of education direct, if it does direct, the work of the FCAE?* The response was

M1 Well we (the MoE & FCAE) have a board on which we are represented. And we (the MoE & FCAE) also have an examination board on which the senior staff sits as well…. Also we dictate in terms of the budget, we dictate in terms of the course to be run in the sense that (inaudible) dependent on the needs. For some years we have had enough language teachers for example, so we changed the enrolment to lessen the numbers in the area and move to technical vocation, if we found that there were more vacancies in that area then we will increase the number.

This comment is quite telling especially in the light of the earlier reported comments made by teacher education staff on the preponderance of issues of quantity over those of quality. Furthermore, the MoE, in its managerial role with the FCAE, seems to focus on a technical role.

My interview with the senior management at the MoE continues thus:

M1 So in a sense because it's a government institution (the FCAE) there is some direction, or control from the ministry and the way it goes. It appoints the staff, it determines the budget, the capital programmes, by capital I mean building of new facilities, and other assistance that comes with it.

K And how do you get feedback from them to you?

M1 Um ...

K In terms of the things that they … what THEY want?

M1 Like in the government system we have an annual budgeting system. So the principal and the staff if they want to put forward certain projects what they want, their needs, they have to put in their annual requests.
K What about at the level of the professional needs of teachers, or curriculum discussions. Is there a section in the ministry that deals directly with FCAE or are they sort of autonomous?

M1 They are autonomous in that, but they may consult with the CDU officers, they deal more with the professional side of things. They can choose to get somebody from the university. On that count they are more individuals, they are more on their own.

However, my own discussions with both FCAE staff and CDU staff suggested that contact between them was minimal. This was partly due to both groups of staff being overworked, and also to the fact that there were very few workable structures set up for more liaising between the FCAE and the CDU. The most positive comments about the interaction between FCAE and CDU staff indicated that, in the case of this particular section at FCAE, relationships were working well because of links forged while this staff member was a secondary school teacher. Hence, the good working relationship was based on personal reasons rather than institutional ones.

The following interview data creates a direct link between teacher education policy and the lack of interaction between the CDU and the FCAE:

K Are you aware of any formal secondary teacher education policy for Fiji? Have you ever seen anything on paper?

C3 No. With CDU by right there should have been a lot of interaction with us (on this matter). But it seems that they are in a world of their own, But only when we need help, then we go out (to them). But with them they really wouldn't seek our help. They are probably more concerned with teachers in the field, rather than teachers who are coming to the field. They are forever going out on school visits. They don't realise that if they come here (FCAE) they will make more impact.

The above discussion of data gathered from lecturing staff indicates that there is a certain degree of scepticism about the policy relationship between central policy defining bodies, and those that
participate at the level of implementation. The new policy documentation produced by the MoE through its Education 2020 policy has permeated into the FCAE via their own policy documents, as discussed by the Principal of the college. The lecturing staff themselves differ in their level of awareness, with some maintaining what might be considered to be a healthy scepticism. However, what is significant, is the existence of an overt apathy about what policy might mean for teacher education in Fiji. Although the following response was not typical of FCAE lecturers’ comments on policy related issues, it still represents a considerable segment of opinion in the college:

K Are you aware of any formal secondary teacher education policy
C4 No..... I am quite ignorant
K Do you think there might be one?
C4 There should be.
K What kinds of things do you think this policy should emphasise?
C4 I think the hours of teaching should be looked at. Some schools have one-hour periods, some have 40 minutes. Because one hour … imagine for students’ level of concentration. So such things should be standardised from the ministry.
K Did you have a chance to look at the Fiji Education Review Report?
C4 I wasn't interested.
K Is there a reason for your not being interested?
C4 I have so many things to do, like me studying, and my family, and I am running all new courses this year. I just didn't have the time to do it.
K What about from what you've read in the papers? What did you think about the way that the review was carried out?
C4 I think reports like this, there's a big hue and cry, a lot of money is put in, it's made and it's shelved, then nothing happens.
The following extract provides a further example of the lack of interest in matters pertaining to policy:

K  Do you have an opinion on the Fiji Education Review commission?
C5  Actually I haven't gone through the review. So I won't be able to comment.
K  Did your school make a contribution to the submission from here?
C5  Yes um .... Actually I'm not aware of what contributions were made…. I'm not really aware of that. It happened beginning of last year, and was mostly compiled by our head of school.

It is debatable whether the above indicated lack of interest in wider matters impacting on teacher education is due to a lack of time, or whether it is indicative of how such matters become something that educators just become accustomed to as they progress in their careers. That there is a lack of sense of ownership in the policy process is evident. Whichever way one takes the argument, it is clear that there is a developing sense of apathy in the way that policy issues are being addressed. This might be due to what some might consider to be the centralised nature of policy making in Fiji.

_The Policy-Making Process_

This final section on the issue of ‘ownership of teacher education’ will be illustrated in the data relating to the policy-making process. Some of the earlier data has shown the scepticism with which teacher education staff view the top-down approach to policy making, whether it is at the governmental level or the institutional level. There was also concern shown that the implementers of the policy did not have more of a voice in the policy making process. An
interview with one of the members of the Education Forum, a forum set up by the MoE to discuss new initiatives in education which would then be presented to the cabinet for ratification, was less than flattering about its role. An extended quote will also provide some details about the Forum’s role and membership:

**F1** From the time that I joined the education forum, 2 years now, what they do they usually bring proposals to the education forum…. And they table it at the forum and the forum discusses and if it approves that it is going to be implemented in the schools then it becomes a policy. But all those proposals come from the MoE. Then processes about how that policy is formulated is usually done in consultation with other stakeholders with the FTA (Fijian Teachers’ Union), FTU (Fiji Teachers’ Union), and the teachers then they come together, culminate at the MoE, then the education forum is the final body that discusses this policy, the pros and cons of it. And with the Ministry officials, who are there. Then if the forum approves, it becomes policy in the sense that it is going to be implemented in the schools. An example is corporal punishment and compulsory education that was proposed at one stage, but when I came into the forum they were already implementing it into the various provinces.

**K** Tell me about the education forum, how old is this body, who makes um, what is the membership, where does it come from?

**F1** Oh since I started in the MoE when I first started teaching this forum has always been there, way back in … it must have been after the colonial…maybe after the 1969 commission I’m not too sure…. It’s made up of representatives from uh … various religious organisations, from various unions, from the business community, various institutions, and uh…The membership is made on the recommendations from the various stakeholders, and it is taken to the MoE to the Minister who makes a final decision, on who’s going usually on the recommendation from the permanent secretary.

**K** So it’s a government set up

**F1** Yes it is a government set up which has to actually approve policy statements that are proposed by the MoE. But it’s supposed to be also representative of uh NGOs, business community.

**K** How often do you meet

**F1** Twice a year
The interviewee makes specific comments about the top-down nature of proceedings of the Education Forum.

F1 All this raises the question of how people are trained. It goes back to policy, from the policy ….. and you question this body really …. You know this body (the education forum) is only a rubber stamp at the moment. Because they brought to us, on the first day, I didn’t want to open my mouth. And the Minister came to re-look at the role of the education Forum. Because at the moment whether you agree or disagree to what is being proposed you just go there. In other words it is just a rubber stamp. But the proposal, where did this proposal come from? We’re not part of the initial process, where these needs come from … And you question the membership, is it the right membership for this?

K Who’s there at the moment?

F1 President of the Methodist Church, President of the Catholic (church), president of the various religious bodies, Muslim, Arya Samaj, representatives from the various provinces, Councillors (town and city), FTA, FTU, it’s a big body.

K So it’s not education-based, it’s society-based

F1 Yes of course …. Stakeholders….  

K Where does the professional input come from?

F1 From the MoE. Chaired by the Permanent Secretary.

The understandings expressed in the interview with this Education Forum member are supported by data from interviews with teacher education staff. The following interview extract, focussing on the policy making process, provides an example of this:

K …. what kinds of considerations do they take into account when they make policy? Perhaps think of something that you were involved in?

L1 Some policies came from the Education Forum members although that body is just a showpiece for the ministry people …. I personally feel that every thing comes from the Permanent Secretary (of education), they decide on something and then they do it….
K Who influences the permanent secretary now?

L1 Actually he should be influenced by the people but at the moment uh honestly it is more political decisions, it is the political masters who call the tune. The other people who call the tune is the employers.

K What do you think about that?

L1 It’s good and bad. Because they provide employment so we must train them to fit there. The bad thing is that they are money-makers, and they are going into one direction and therefore we are not able to prepare the human resource. When I say human resource, what I mean is a person who is capable of making decisions for himself, then only is he a good citizen…

Thus, there are strong implications here that the role of the Fiji Education Forum in formulating policy clearly needs to be re-assessed. If there continues to be a limited sense of dialogue between policy makers and practitioners then, as discussed earlier, the gap between official policy discourses and those of a context-bound nature will widen further. The role of the Education Forum was also critiqued in the report of the “Fiji Education Review Commission 2000”:

The Forum is required to meet three times a year but in reality it does not meet this requirement. It is an advisory body, and has no powers as such. Its role is to advise the Minister on organisation and policy matters, and any matter raised by the Permanent Secretary. Ideally, the Education Forum should fulfil the role of a ‘Think Tank’. It appears, however, that it has become a forum for stakeholders to express grievances and the Ministry of Education to defend itself (Tavola 2000:31).

As the discussion with the Education Forum member (cited above) progressed to the specific issue of teacher education, s/he talked more directly about the FCAE and the USP.13 When

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13 This interviewee also had experience working with these institutions.
questioned about the role of policy in teacher education, the interviewee makes specific comments about the FCAE and the USP:

F1 Yes but those people (FCAE and USP) are the implementers, they don’t really know how come they’re doing what they’re doing, ‘why am I doing what I’m doing? Where does this originate from? Whose idea was this, where did the process start?’.

Thus, there is an indication here that there is a need for more participation at the level of policy development. However, although this is a worthy call there is some doubt that, within current organisational structures of teacher education in Fiji, policy formulation can work in any other way. As the earlier sections of this chapter have shown, bureaucratic inertia and the strong sense of apathy evident in the technocratic way in which teacher education functions in Fiji will most likely act to hinder more effective participation. If however, the argument made in this thesis were to be taken to its logical conclusion, apathy can be harnessed and channelled into a more critical discourse of practice that is non-fragmentary in nature. This argument is extended further in the next chapter that looks specifically at the set of competing approaches and visions about teacher education that emerged from this research study.

In concluding this section on the issue of ‘ownership’ as evidenced in the area of policy and participation, it would seem that the MoE had a role in teacher education that was, in the main, limited to a concern with teacher numbers and finance. Furthermore, each of the sectors in the education fraternity seemed to act in isolation from the rest, with very limited interaction taking place. In spite of there being immense amounts of paper documentation generated by the development of new policy, there was very little meaningful and/or willing engagement with issues of what this new policy might be able to usefully do for Fiji’s education system. Rather,
the policy seemed to just ‘sit there’ on display as it were, and the main function that it has served to date has been to do with planning for future teacher requirements, and for bureaucratic functions of resource allocation. These functions are of course very important, but it is clear that further steps have not been taken to ensure a closer link between discourses of official policy and those articulated within context-bound contexts.

3. Institutional Micropolitics

The third and final aspect of the technocratic discourse that emerges from the findings is an institutional one. In one sense, this set of findings is part of the previous one to do with the ‘ownership’ of teacher education as it is manifested in policy issues, curriculum and pedagogy. The faculty of education & psychology (E&P) at USP and the FCAE, as institutions, both seem to be working in their own self-contained and compartmentalised worlds. This functions to constrain what those in the institutions feel themselves capable of achieving. At the institutional level the USP E&P faculty is constrained by its other commitments as an academic faculty within a university. FCAE seems to be constrained by its lack of autonomy as an institution, since financially and legislatively it is a state-run institution. These institutional constraints were seen to impose on the way in which the institutions are able to participate more actively in the drive for change in teacher education. Internal micro-politics, some of which had a historical origin, also added further barriers, and in the case of the USP in particular seemed to drive the morale levels of faculty to low levels.

The theme of alienation and disengagement as part of the dominant technocratic discourse becomes quite significant when it comes to an analysis of institutional interactions. Firstly, it was quite clear that, overall, both the FCAE and the faculty of education and psychology (E&P)
at USP tended to act in isolation from the wider educational and social context. It is true that at
the individual level there was far more ‘connectedness’, but, in the main, this did not work for
the faculty or for the college as a whole. For example, a small number of staff was working
closely with staff from the CDU, the curriculum arm of the MoE.

At the level of institutional function, staff at both the USP and the FCAE were quite clear about
the role that the institutions were supposed to play. It was quite apparent that the FCAE had as
its primary focus its role as a teacher training college. Throughout my period of attachment with
the college, I was constantly made aware that their primary role as an institution was to prepare
teachers for the secondary schooling system. As to be expected from a teacher training college,
there was limited focus on research, publication or matters of a purely academic nature. The
teaching staff all had teaching experience in Fiji schools, and saw themselves primarily as
teachers. As an example of how seriously the college took its role as a teacher preparation
institution, a description will be provided here of the pre-Teaching Practicum meeting that took
place during my attachment with the college. It was clear that the college took the TP quite
seriously. The meeting was attended by all Heads of Schools and began with an address by the
Vice-Principal, who outlined the importance of the TP in FCAE’s programme of teacher
education. It appeared that a significant amount of time, resources and effort was to be put into
the TP to make it a successful experience for students. I was told in informal discussion by a
staff member that if a student was not doing well on the TP, the onus was on the staff member
responsible to take whatever steps were necessary to ensure that the student progressed. This
responsibility was very clearly articulated to staff members.
In contrast to this, the faculty of E&P at the University seemed to place less importance on the TP. The pre-TP meeting was attended by only those staff members directly involved with supervision of TP, and most of the senior members of staff were absent. Partly because of the high student numbers, part-time staff were hired to assist in the TP supervision, and actually played a major role in visiting schools throughout Fiji. The other reason offered by staff (in informal discussions) for the lack of full staff participation was that the TP period, which was outside of normal semester time, was the only opportunity that staff had to do their own reading, preparation and research.

Quite clearly, one sees a contrast here between the USP and the FCAE. Criteria for promotion at the USP are based on a number of factors, but a significant number of publications in international journals is highly regarded. Over the years, the faculty of education has put forward a case to the senior management on why they have special needs in this area. The work of the faculty of education extends beyond that of a typical university-based academic one. In addition to the normal requirements of teaching, research, and publications, staff in the faculty are required to assist in TP supervision which is held for six weeks every year. They are also required to teach an inordinately large number of summer schools over the December-January period. Again, this takes away from the available time to carry out other academic functions.

Thus at some point, staff in the faculty have to make decisions about which areas are to be their priority. Oftentimes, the choice depends on the staff members’ own professional background. For example, many of the staff who teach on the psychology courses in the faculty feel that they are not qualified to assist in TP supervision, so they tend to spend more of their time on research. On the other hand, staff members who have extensive experience working in the school system,
and who see themselves as teachers, tend to feel more obliging when it comes to TP supervision. This was communicated to me by several of the education staff working during the students’ TP.

Furthermore, the conflict between an academic role as opposed to a more professional role is indicated quite clearly in the following interview data:

L6 Well I don’t know. I think you really need good people in Education. Because it’s not just supervising practicum, teaching methodology. I think you have to go beyond that. You have to really challenge the students.

But I think we have to educate this Administration. To show them the kinds of work we are doing, and why it’s important. I mean if teacher education is a priority in the strategic plan, how do we support that, and what are the things we are doing, and where is the timetable there?

I mean, I can say OK I won’t do all these things, I will go and write a paper every month. I can do it easily. But then there are so many things we are called on to do. Many informal concerns. Like people will ask us to go and give a talk here, a workshop here and so on. I think we have to do all those things. It’s very important to do.

The morale in the faculty also seemed to be affected somewhat by perceived relationships with the university management. At a USP faculty of education staff meeting that I attended, senior staff expressed disappointment on the new focus that the university seemed to be taking in its ethos of education. A staff member mentioned the new preoccupation that senior management seemed to have with global trends, the market economy, and the normal curve in assessment. There was also concern raised about the focus on international publications as guiding decisions on promotions and increments. Staff members felt that other factors, such as work in the scattered nations of the South Pacific region, should also be considered as equally important.
The faculty also felt that financially, because of their relatively high student numbers, they were paying for the deficits experienced by other academic sectors of the university.

It is not surprising that at times morale would be affected in a situation like this. However, there was more cause for concern. At the same meeting mentioned in the previous paragraph, a discussion was held on the External Adviser’s report.\textsuperscript{14} The Adviser had visited the department over a period of about 2 weeks in the year 2000. As part of the process of review, he sent the faculty a written report. The faculty was then required to prepare a response to the report, and this response would go through a number of university committees before reaching the central management.

At the faculty meeting, discussions took place on an initial draft response that had been drafted by a faculty committee specially set up to do this. This was the 2\textsuperscript{nd} visit by this particular external adviser, and what was quite striking about his report was the fact that very little seemed to have changed over the years. In my own written comments I wrote:

Many of Professor Bacchus’ comments and recommendations made in his second report on his year 2000 visit, are largely similar to those made in his report after his 1997 visit. There are varying stances that one might take on WHY this is so.\textsuperscript{15} Whichever stance is taken, I tend to think that the draft response from the department via the drafting committee is heading in the right direction in its call for

\begin{quote}
’self-analysis … vigour … urgen(cy) … holis(m) … vision … radical reorganisation … and, forging genuine partnership ….’ (quoted from the draft response).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} The USP has an External Advisory system, where once every 3 years academic departments are ‘visited’ by an external adviser who will advise on academic matters in the department. Over the years the role has changed from one of assessment to consultative professional. There is still much debate at the university over whether this form of review should continue.

\textsuperscript{15} For example, one could take the stance that the faculty has not really made any significant changes to its work over the previous 3 years. Alternatively, one could assume that the adviser had an inadequate knowledge of the faculty’s achievements.
The discussion that took place on the external adviser’s report, the draft response, and the faculty head’s re-drafting of the response was indicative of some of the unresolved issues that might be restricting the role that the faculty can play in education. First, it was quite evident that many staff members felt that there was a lack of an educational vision in the faculty, and that a radical reorganisation was needed. Informal discussions with faculty revealed a sense of being ‘rather tired of the whole affair’. As another faculty staff said, ‘we have discussed these things over and over again, and nothing ever changes’. It seemed that people knew what had to be done but the attempts at bringing about changes were usually met with limited amounts of success.

There is a suggestion here of a form of bureaucratic inertia that has been built up over time. Thus, teacher education practice is taken as a ‘given’ and any attempts at change are subsumed within this discourse of inertia. This set of findings relates to an earlier reference to the lack of change being likened to the metaphor of a medicine ball:

L3 One of those very heavy solid things you can hardly lift up. And change comes in and makes a sort of small dent on the ball but it just absorbs it. It's a fossilised institution.

This metaphor suggests that the structures of teacher education have become so static as to considerably reduce the positive impact that could possibly be made by human action. That there is a possibility for change lies in the articulation of possible routes to take by individual staff members. These are discussed in further detail in the next chapter. However, it will be useful at

\[16\] Taken from field notes.
this point to draw out some of the reasons provided by staff for the lack of change in teacher education practice.

During the interviews, many of the faculty staff did comment specifically on this inertia and lack of change in the faculty. There were a number of reasons offered by staff members for this situation. The articulation of these reasons pointed to very low levels of morale in the faculty. Firstly, there was a feeling that many in the faculty worked in their own compartmentalised specialisation, immune to the demands of the bigger picture. As an example of this attitude, a senior lecturer comments on the lack of vision in the department:

L3 In our department (USP) once we take a holistic approach and not just worry about our own little areas (things will improve).

K Do you think that our department works with a particular model? Do we have a philosophy of teacher education?

L3 I think the department should be able to clearly have a statement or vision of what kind of teachers we want to train in our BEd programme.

K Does it have that?

L3 I don’t think it has…. Somewhere along the line, there’s something not quite (right) with our preparation for our teachers. Maybe we should go back and sit and say “Ok what type of teachers do we want….”

K Are we clear in our own heads, as a department, I’m not talking about individuals, I’m quite aware that individuals are doing lots of good work in their own fields, in their own compartmentalised fields.

L3 No I don’t think we as a department are …. Yeah, we need to sit down and clearly state where we want to go. The major question that needs to be asked. How do we want our teachers … how or what kind of teachers do we want to be when they leave. And then when we answer ‘what kind of teachers’ then (we should ask) how are we going to prepare them so that our expectations, our vision… I don’t think we have really addressed that. It’s because most of us have come and we’ve inherited, we’ve come into a system that’s already in existence. And then people say, this is the way it was there .. and we keep on saying that. And we have not stopped for a while …. And when we go out on TP, the same thing … you know you got sick of making the same recommendations. (referring to interviewer’s experience with
school experience debriefing meetings where the same recommendations were made year after year).

K Why is change not happening? We have been doing this work here for the last 10, 20 years. We’re doing the same thing over and over again?

L3 I think we need to sit together and facilitate and look at this. Don’t discuss the course yet. Leave the course aside. Because I think we always end up (saying) How many courses we want, what are the requirements. Leave (emphasis) that aside. Let’s put the horse before the cart. Let’s raise that question: what do we want our student-teachers to be when they go out there? What kind of behaviour, what kind of knowledge, what kind of attitude? Once we’re able to have that, once we have a vision for the kind of teacher that we want to turn out then we will be able to (say) ok in relation to that, this is how we’re going to do it. These are the courses. But we don’t just want to narrow it down to that. We want teachers who are broad, teachers who are change agents.

These insights critique the accepted discourse that focuses on programme structures rather than programme content. If programme structures are focussed on to the detriment of content, then there is a danger that decisions about what changes to implement will be based purely on technical and logistic reasons. Suggestions for improvement at a more fundamental level will be negated on this basis.

The metaphor of the impact of attempts at change on a medicine ball (ie. very little) is further illustrated in the following comments about change:

L3 Yes. That’s why (name of staff member) gets so frustrated. When we come back (from studies) you get frustrated and afterwards you get sucked into the system again.

That’s like me. When I came back (from studies) … coming to a system, …sometimes you ask ‘what’s the point?’ Sometimes you feel like that. You know, when we go for the school experience (debriefing meeting) you say “Aw I don’t feel like going the same thing is going to come up again”.

Again, this indicates that attempts at change in a context that does not encourage change will have a severely limited and, as suggested by the above extract, depressing effect. The very high
levels of bureaucratic inertia results in a situation where there is apathy about expending any extra effort to effect change. Thus, at the end of the day, teacher educators will go about their routine tasks in a mechanistic way, that suggests an occupational rather than a professional approach to their jobs.

Further comments were made by other staff members in regards to the effect that the over-compartmentalisation had on the work of the faculty:

K What is hindering teacher education institutes from forging more genuine partnerships with schools?

L1 The bigger problem is in our own selves. In an article I read the author says there are three stages: one is unfreezing, the other one is change phase, and then re-freezing. Unfreezing means unfreezing our own attitudes, we try to prepare ourselves first. And that is what we are not able to do at the department level. What we should do here is to sit down and train ourselves, talk to one another, and prepare our groundwork. How we are going to approach the school.

K Why is it that WE don’t do this. We are talking about ourselves here.

L1 The biggest problem here is that our courses are at the moment, we do our own work. Like I teach curriculum, someone else does evaluation, and we hardly ever communicate.

Most staff members agreed that the faculty did not have a vision that could bind the department together to work in unison. The issue of teacher education philosophies and models will be discussed in further detail in chapter 7 of this thesis. However, what needs to be highlighted here is the fact that although there was agreement that compartmentalisation, a lack of vision and low morale were problems, not many staff members offered contextualised understandings for the high levels of inertia evident in local teacher education culture/s. Thus, there was sometimes a tendency to look inwards when assigning blame, a condition typical of some forms of reflective practice as discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis. What would have enhanced this type of
reflection was a more critical understanding of the issues, an understanding that takes into account the broader socio-economic and political framework of teacher education.

A second set of reasons offered by faculty staff for the lack of change in teacher education practice centred on issues of a logistic nature. The faculty’s location in a university setting means that there are practical constraints to the implementation of changes to the structure of the programmes. At a very basic level, for example, there are issues such as timetabling to consider. The Secondary BEd programme is dependent on other faculties for their subject matter input. The BEd currently offers specialisations in 12 subject areas, and changes in any aspect of the structure of the programme would impinge on other aspects.

However, it could be argued that these are logistical factors which, if approached from within a more coherent philosophy of teacher education, can be dealt with in one way or another. What some staff suggested was that there was a lack of commitment to change in teacher education. What was seen as needed in teacher education is a strong political will to actively demonstrate that there are professionally sound reasons for these changes to occur. It is argued here that, where this strong political resolve does exist, it will struggle to survive in a context that does not coherently define and critically articulate the philosophical assumptions underpinning its programmes. As the chapter on teacher education paradigms has shown, all models of teacher education are driven by theoretical assumptions. Where there is a limited effort to identify and argue a holistic position for change, there is the strong possibility that a bureaucratic inertia accompanied by personal apathy will reduce possibilities for action. This apathy and inertia has been amply illustrated in earlier sections of this chapter, and will be further exemplified in chapter 7.
Another set of findings emerging within the area of micropolitics had to do with staff relations. For example, comments from non-regional staff\(^\text{17}\) suggested a sense of ‘not belonging’. Many expatriate staff expressed this idea to me in informal discussions, but were uncomfortable about formalising it in an interview. However, the following extract from an interview with an expatriate lecturer at the USP does exemplify some of the issues that were raised:

**K** Are we being defined by factors of a global nature? Although we say that we take into consideration local relevance here and all that.

**E1** When I first arrived here, the sort of initiation speech by the assistant VC was all about making the university reflect the region and the cultures and such like. And it struck me that that's not what the university is about actually.

I think Universities are essentially global in nature anyway. Now I'm not saying that therefore they should be an adjunct to economic globalisation or whatever. I don't think universities are in that. But they are universal. Universities are universal. They surely should be reflecting the universe … the whole … the everything. Use every resource. I think that there's a tension between … this idea of the university being somehow a bastion to maintain cultures is an ideology. I don't think it's a given. I think it's something that should be debated.

**K** Do you think it's debated enough?

**E1** No I don't think it is. I think it's foistered. It's foistered on people. I felt very unwelcome when I first came to the university because I'm an outsider. The first time in 20 years of working overseas that I've ever felt unwelcome in a place.

The idea of cross-fertilisation, it's not globalisation it's not an economic sort of thing. There isn't enough debate about whether … actually … reflecting tradition, custom or whatever is a good thing. It's just: "of course it's a good thing. It must be."

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\(^{17}\) Non-regional means not of South Pacific region. The university hires many academics from the ‘west’ especially from Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the US and Canada. In addition there are now more staff members from India.
The feelings expressed in the above extract were not uncommon amongst non-regional staff.\textsuperscript{18} Thus, there were often very strong feelings expressed about being ‘outsiders’. There was sometimes a perception that expatriate staff did not have access to relevant local knowledge that many regional staff thought was necessary to be able to work effectively at the USP. This idea was mentioned by some regional staff both in informal and formal discussions.

This segregation was quite often exaggerated by having to work quite closely with other people, and by the very high turnover of staff, especially expatriate staff. Some interviewees saw this factor as contributing to the lack of change in the way that the department organised its work:

\textit{L1 … recently there was a big change in staff and we get people who come here for a while then they go. We have not been able to really cement our programmes… We have to know the context really well. And a few of us cannot do everything.}

Regional staff sometimes expressed a slight degree of resentment at how it appeared that expatriate staff just ‘came and went’ and did not take the time to understand local needs. On the other hand, conversations with expatriate staff revealed feelings of insecurity in working in a politically volatile location, as well as a general disaffection with what was often considered to be a very slow-moving system of administration.

It was not clear from the interviews whether the issue of staff relations had only fairly recently arisen. It was apparent though that there was a very high turnover of staff in the department, and a number of staff who were leaving the USP expressed disappointment with the way that matters were organised. It could be that the uncertain political situation had contributed to this situation.

\textsuperscript{18} A number of local staff also expressed similar ideas in informal conversation with me.
However, it must also be emphasised that many staff did not blame the political situation for poor working relations, as they had previously worked in professional contexts in other politically volatile regions of the world. What was often criticised was the lack of direction in the faculty, a situation exacerbated perhaps by the national political conflicts affecting stability.

It seems then that the micro-politics and institutional constraints were quite significant factors in affecting the processes of teacher education at both the USP and the FCAE. At the USP in particular, the morale appeared to be rather low, and there were significant divisions amongst staff members. Leadership was also raised as an issue of concern. Furthermore, the increasingly bureaucratic nature of both institutions seemed to detract from their professional capabilities, adding to a sense of alienation from a wider educational platform, and a more holistic approach to teacher education.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter has organised under one set of findings, three main issues: teacher education practice; ‘ownership’ of policy issues, the curriculum and pedagogy; and, micro-politics and institutional constraints. The delineation of these issues contributes to an understanding of what has emerged as a dominant technocratic discourse of routinised practice, bureaucratic inertia, and a sense of personal ‘apathy’ as defined earlier in this chapter. As discussed in the chapter on Fiji’s history of education, the origins of this technocratic discourse can be traced back to historical factors in the way that education has become a (post)colonial relic as it were. However, it is important to emphasise that the ‘new’ globalised discourses on education have found their way into the local education system. These discourses, encouraged
by the impact of global socio-economic imperatives, may act to aggravate an already educationally fragile situation.

Finally, if teacher education is to effect any changes at both the educational and the wider societal levels, then it is necessary to begin to articulate a stronger philosophy of teacher education in the institutional programmes. In spite of the dominance of a routinised, mechanistic practice that has been seen to define local culture/s of teacher education in the studied contexts, there are indications from the findings that do imply a sense of ‘possibilities’. These possibilities will be explored in the second major set of findings to which we now turn in chapter seven.
CHAPTER 7
Discussion of Findings II

Introduction

The prevalence of a routinised technocratic discourse of practice as discussed in the previous chapter does, in one sense, indicate a scenario of gloom and pessimism. However, the data also identifies a number of competing approaches and visions about teacher-education, the very existence of which hints at the possibilities for change and transformation that might lie in teacher-education. Within this, there is the consequent potential for a wider role of teacher education in society. However, as this chapter will show, these competing approaches are not harnessed in any way as to effect a holistic approach to teacher-education. On the contrary, the data points to a fragmentation and compartmentalisation of practice. There is also a tendency towards a practice encompassing an implicit theory of immediate integration: the university/college provides the theories, methods and skills; schools provide the classroom, curriculum, and students; and the student teacher provides the individual effort; all of which combine to produce the finished product of professional teacher (Britzman 1986:442). As discussed in chapter two of this thesis, this view is based on positivistic views of knowledge that ignore the social complexities involved in being and becoming a teacher, placing immense pressure on the individual teacher to bring about the changes advocated by the teacher preparation institutions.

This second major set of findings will be analysed here in two sections. Firstly, there is the issue of the perceptions surrounding whether or not there is an ‘official’ approach taken to secondary teacher-education. The interest here is in identifying whether, in the perceptions of the
participants, teacher-education in Fiji works with any overt model or philosophy. Secondly, the discussion will examine the preferred approaches to teacher-education as expressed in interviews with educational personnel. This will identify what is considered ‘important’ in local contexts. Within the second section, this chapter also looks specifically at students’ responses and will interrogate their perceptions of both the official and the preferred approaches. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of those factors that seem to limit the emancipatory possibilities of a critical pedagogy in teacher-education.

1. Perceptions of Official Practice

Teacher-education in Fiji seems to exist without an overarching philosophy. This is not necessarily a bad thing, if there is an accepted understanding that the existence of competing philosophies provides an intellectually valid context in which teacher-education can thrive. However, as earlier data discussion has shown, the high levels of fragmentation in discourses of practice would suggest that this is not the case here.

At the USP there was no obvious single model that the faculty of education used. A study of the faculty handbook did not reveal a defined philosophy nor did it refer to a particular model of teacher-education. The School of Humanities\(^1\) Annual Report makes one reference to the inclusion of teacher-education as a priority area in the University Strategic Plan thus:


> The Strategic Plan has identified teacher-education as one of the five priority areas for the University, and in response, the Department continues to focus on enhancing the quality and delivery of teacher-education programmes in collaboration with schools and teacher-education colleges in the region (University of the South Pacific, 2000:7).

\(^1\) The faculty of education is located in the School of Humanities.
There is no other documentary evidence to suggest that the department works with either a particular model or specific philosophy. This was also confirmed in interviews with staff in the faculty. What is significant here is that most of the teacher-education staff interviewed were not aware of any overriding philosophy or model with which teacher-education worked:

K Do you think that our department works with a particular model? Do we have a philosophy of teacher-education?

L4 I think the department should be able to clearly have a statement or vision of what kind of teachers we want to train in our BEd programme.

K Does it have that?

L4 I don’t think it has

K So we are the same as the ministry\(^2\) (both laugh). We don’t have a set of professional expectations, goals that we are working towards?

L4 We have not, because if we had these, then we would streamline our courses, and the content of our courses, because at the moment there’s so much…. If we had a clear statement of ‘this is what our BEd students should be in terms of professionalism, behaviour, attitudes when they leave the school’ (USP), then we would have a model or models that would implement that kind of vision.

Another staff member expressed similar sentiments:

K Would you be able to put a name to the type of model that we work with in our department.

L3 No I wouldn't.

\(^2\) Referring to an earlier comment made by L4 that the MoE did not have a policy for professional development of teachers.
When pressed further this staff member suggested that although there was no model being used in any overt way, there was a sense that the department was based firmly in the behaviourist camp:

K Would you be able to describe it - the type of model that we work with as a department?

L3 Um. I can only go on documentary evidence, and I would say that it's a behaviourist sort of skills-based approach to teacher-education, to the practice of teaching. But it's not evolved, it hasn't been sort of thought about that way. It's merely, I'm afraid it's just a (inaudible) nothing seems to change.

K Of what?

L3 I guess in the 70s that's when the university first started doing teacher-education. Nothing's changed.

K How is the behaviourist model apparent in what we actually do?

L3 Oh these wonderful documents for the micro-teaching which are actually DATED for this period, 1976, 77. Latest one is 1984 I think.

Um but uh ….. I can't think of any other direct evidence for it. But I do get the impression that um …. No I mean I can't say, it's NOT a departmental, department-wise thing. I mean I'm trying to double guess what the HOD might say about these things. And I think he would be very very securely in the skills-based line, where you can divide up teaching in to separate sorts of areas.

K Have you ever seen anything on paper that would identify a dept philosophy?

L3 Well yeah, the Teaching Practice forms. I think they give a clear sense of what I'm suggesting. These are the forms that we have to fill out, Well we don't HAVE to. I don't use them. The funny thing is that these things are utterly unusable if you don't follow the sort of behaviourist line of teaching. But the weird thing is many of my colleagues who profess not to follow the behaviourist model are quite happy to use this form, and I can't see how they do that unless they actually agree with the premise on which the form is produced.

Thus although this staff member indicated that the faculty did not appear to have an overriding approach or model that it worked with, there was also the suggestion made that the behaviourist approach was still widely used. An examination of microteaching documents and the form used to assess students on TP confirmed these claims.
A third member of staff expressed a similar response, using the word ‘conservative’ to describe department policy. This faculty member then suggests that the models being used now are actually imported models:

K What model do you think we are using now?
L1 Um, I don’t really know, but I think it is models that we imported from outside. Because that’s how teachers were trained.
K Do you think we are still working with that now?
L1 Yeah, I think so.
K Why do you think we are still working with that when the people that introduced the model to us have changed?
L1 That’s a very difficult question. But because our circumstances are still there (the same) and theirs have changed because our academic education systems are still there (the same), our class 6 and 8 exams are still there. Our teacher training programmes are still very much the same. Our demands for exams are still there. Our assessment criteria are still the same, we haven’t changed much.

Again, there is a suggestion made here that very little has changed over the years in the way that teacher-education is organised and practised. This is a theme that extends through the findings.

When pressed to talk about a particular philosophy behind teacher-education, answers were couched in vague terms reminiscent of the type of language used in official policy documents. Interviewees tended to talk about ‘quality’ education in a non-problematic way. However, there was also some scepticism expressed about this issue, and a suggestion that not enough time was spent on debating such matters amongst staff, as the following interview extract suggests:

K What about a philosophy of education? Do you think the department has a philosophy of teacher-education? A formal one?
I think we do have a mission and the mission is that we must train quality teachers for the Pacific region and we also have a sort of philosophy that we must have good teacher-education, quality teachers so that they can tap the natural resources within the region. I have not read it very well but I think that’s the kind of mission that we have.

That is the University mission?

I’m not really sure.

What about within the department itself.

We have little things written in our handbook. I think the same kind of thing we also do – prepare quality teachers, but we do not know what we mean by quality teachers.

So are you saying it’s just rhetoric then?

Indeed…. The policy has to be made, the rules are to be made with those people who are affected by the policy. And all of us are affected by the policy but (I have) never seen any policy being discussed in the staff meeting. I haven’t seen anything that that says: “Ok today we are going to have a policy meeting for the staff”. Maybe we are rushed to finish the meeting, and then people leave one by one.

In terms of an overriding philosophy and model of teacher-education, the situation at FCAE seemed to be, in general terms, largely similar to that of USP. The College Handbook for 2001 does not identify a defined philosophy, and no direct mention is made of a particular preferred model of teacher-education. The section on the 2-year Diploma in Secondary teacher-education indicates in very general terms the aims of the programme:

The programme is designed to provide for the professional development of trainees through Education studies and school experience, and their broad intellectual and personal development through the study of their special subject areas, support courses and extra curricular activities. Through these experiences, the programme aims to produce highly competent junior secondary teachers with strong communication skills, commitment to the highest values of the teaching profession and to the service of their community (FCAE 2001:18).
The FCAE has, in line with the rest of the Public Service in Fiji, produced a Strategic Plan. The Plan is modelled largely on the MoE’s Education 2020 document. As indicated in the interview with the Principal of FCAE, the Strategic Plan for FCAE is aimed at “achieving the major goals and the vision of the MoE”. In this regard, the FCAE Strategic Plan lists a set of Principles and Values that are designed to guide the work of the college. These are extracted directly from the “Education Fiji 2020” document. However, as was noted in the previous chapter of this thesis, most practitioners did not have a sense of ‘ownership’ of these policy documents and they were perceived as something that the central MoE ‘did’. As lecturer C1 at FCAE said: “I suppose it's good to have a mission statement in that you have a goal, but the only time I even know that they ever talk about it was for the Performance Management System”.

The interviews with the staff at FCAE revealed largely similar results as those for USP. The following interview excerpt indicates a use of models based on psychological learning theories. However, there was no indication in the interview that this focus on learning theory underpinned any officially prescribed model in use. This was an atypical response from staff at FCAE in that, unlike the others, it focussed on specific learning theories to describe the models being used:

K: You have talked a lot about training teachers here and the focus on a student-centred approach to teaching. Do you think that the college has a particular model that it works with?

C9: um .... In fact our model is based on many educational psychology learning theories. But apart from that we also base our model on student-centred, on the experiences and cognitive aspects. We do emphasise behaviourist theory but mostly in management and reinforcement of learning. But our emphasis is on cognitive theory whereby you bring about the holistic development of a child. In a

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3 The FCAE Strategic Plan was also considered important in terms of the justification of the FCAE budget allocation.
4 See Appendix 4.
nutshell, our model is that the process of education should bring about the total development of a child.

The Vice-Principal expressed the following comments in response to a question on whether the college was working with a particular model:

VP No. No I don’t think so. We’re just being told by the Ministry, it’s a 3 year programme, as HOS Education, you have so many staff under you, you have this many number of courses to teach, go ahead and teach it. I suppose we’re sort of guided by the vision of producing quality teachers for the secondary school. That really might be something that is the overarching principle that guides us here. But in terms of a philosophy, I think we really need to put on our thinking caps. At the heads of schools level for instance, we need to begin to think out, you know, what should be our philosophy here.

The absence of an overriding philosophy underpinning teacher education was seen as a definite lack and an area that the college needed to address. The next interview excerpt further adds to this issue:

K Does the school adhere to a particular philosophy or model of education?

C6 I asked the HoS when I first came in, is there a philosophy that I can adhere to? The answer was no. I have been trying to establish a philosophy. We have the policy from the MoE in terms of the Values. The main objective of FCAE is to produce quality teachers. Go forward to serve is the motto.

During the interview with lecturer C8, the staff member was very sceptical about the value of the Plans that the FCAE was developing, suggesting that it tended towards the ornamental. The interview proceeded as follows:
K How would you describe the model of teacher education that the college works with?

C8 A model is not spelled out. Not that I am aware of.

K Does the college have a philosophy of education that it follows

C8 I think last year or year before last they came up with the vision and mission (laughter) followed by the PMS.

Furthermore, the following extract suggests that, in the absence of an overriding perception of a philosophy or model, some staff members tended to focus on the day to day activity that they were directly involved with:

K Does the school work with a particular model of education

C5 Yeah, we do. Actually I haven't really taught the teaching methods so far, so am not really familiar with whatever they are following.

K How would you describe the approach that your school takes to the preparation of teachers?

C5 We have a lot of micro teaching. We believe in near perfection. Training teachers to near perfection. We can't train teachers to PERFECTION. We emphasise a lot of things in theory, then we get them to use those theories that they learn in a theoretical way, to practice during microteaching. And they have a lot of workshops, presentations.

K Does the college have some sort of policy that it takes in terms of preparation and professional development?

C5 (no answer)

The interviews with faculty staff at the FCAE thus indicated that, as was the case with USP, very few of the staff at FCAE could identify a particular model that the college worked with, neither were they able to articulate a model/philosophy that was followed. In concluding this first section, it can thus be said that neither institution worked with a philosophy or a model that was
perceived to provide a theoretical underpinning to the programmes. Where there was a written set of policy-type documents, as was seen with the FCAE MoE-based set of planning documents, it was rare for any meaningful engagement with these documents to occur at the practitioner level.

These findings suggest that there is a discrepancy between what is often expected of students in preparation to become teachers and what teacher-education is able to articulate. Students are usually expected to go ‘out’ with some sort of theoretical understanding of what they are doing, but, as the data has indicated, it is very difficult to identify a particular model and philosophy that the teacher-education institutions work with. This brings into focus the question of practice and theory and whether existing practice in the institutions might perhaps just be part of ‘the way that things are done’. Thus when new policy is introduced it might be seen as yet another set of ideas to be ‘implemented’. Further, as the data shows, there is very little real engagement with the new MoE policy documents, with these documents being seen largely in terms of something that someone else ‘did’. Consequently, an important question which needs to be asked is: is there any real engagement with the notion of a theoretical underpinning to teacher education ideas or have the discourses associated with ‘being and becoming a teacher’ or of ‘being a teacher-educator’ become completely entrenched within routinised practice? Additionally, during interviews students consistently asked for more ‘practice’ and less ‘theory’ in the programme. This is not an unusual finding in research on teacher-education (Wideen et al., 1998). In the interpretation of the finding, however, it could be argued that asking for more ‘practice’ could be a way of asking for more genuine engagement with ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ a teacher. As argued by Carr and Kemmis (1986), reducing the gaps between theory and practice should be the central aim of educational theory, rather than seeing it as something that needs to be done after the theory has been produced. Furthermore, students are extremely concerned
about being able to do well in the practicum, and they consistently asked for more by way of preparation for the practicalities of classroom and school life. This is perhaps an indication of the strength of pressure brought to bear on them to be socialised into accepted practices. This puts a particular slant on being and becoming a teacher, and encourages a technicist approach to teacher preparation. Separating theory and practice within teacher education institutions actually encourages students to feel the pressure to fit in with the existing system.

Even though the institutions themselves did not have a particular approach to teacher education, it could be argued that a sense of what the institutions thought was important could be gauged from an examination of teacher educators’ articulated approaches to teacher-education. The next section will thus present an analysis of the data on personal philosophies and preferred models. Within this, the perceptions of students will also be analysed, as these will help indicate the extent to which the personal approaches were seen as part of the cultures of practice within the institutions.

2. Articulated Approaches to Teacher-Education

Most staff interviewed were able to articulate their own preferred approaches to teacher-education. On the other hand, the interviews with students indicated that they were not able to identify a clear model or approach to their development as teachers, as might be promoted by the faculty/college. This finding supports those gained from the staff interviews, as many staff tended to base their work on what seems to be largely idiosyncratic approaches. Students tended to focus on the ‘caring’ nature of the profession, suggesting a highly personalistic approach to education. Some saw themselves as part of a ‘noble’ profession – but many others did not come into the profession by choice and were ready to leave at the first available opportunity to do ‘better’ elsewhere.
At the USP it was quite clear, however, that many staff felt that their own particular approaches were not being implemented in any broad significant way. Where they were implemented, they were being done totally disengaged from any broader philosophy articulated at a more holistic level:

K How would you rather the dept organise its work? That is a question which actually asks for your own approach to teacher-education. What would you rather see happen at the department level? Would you like the department to identify a particular approach to teacher-education?

L3 Oh yes. Because it's an academic dept, because it's got prestige within the region it can have an advocacy role um because the tension is always going to be from the colonial type prescriptions that are left. And this is what the governments want the teachers to teach apparently. And more advanced notions, more up to date notions of teaching that might be put forward in a teacher training institution. I think that's the ONE thing that the university can do. And it CAN. Yeah it can advocate.

What I would suggest would be a constructivist theory of learning. I mean looking at the way that people really learn and what learning is about. I’m not saying that we don't run courses in this. There ARE courses which are thoroughly constructivist, but they happen in isolation.

This correlates with the conclusion of Wideen et al. (1998) after their review of 93 studies of learning to teach that, where innovative practice did occur its effects tended to become subsumed in the dominant pedagogical culture of the institution.

A senior lecturer talked extensively about the partnership model of teacher-education, where there was a stronger reciprocal partnership set up with the schools and community:

L1 But once we establish that partnership model of teacher-education then these good days will come, partnership is a triangle, here the teachers gain, the students gain, and the parents also gain. Because teachers learn from lecturers and we must learn from each other.
However, this partnership model, although widely discussed never really emerged at a faculty level in a theoretically articulated way. In some discussions with staff, it was also evident that there was a sense that the partnership model tended to be employed in a rather pragmatic fashion. That is, schools were brought on board merely to help deal with the rising numbers and contain the subsequent pressure on USP staff resources to effectively carry out TP supervision. Thus, it was seen as a bureaucratic rather than a professional initiative.

A number of USP faculty were not able to attach a specific name to their approach to teacher-education but they were able to describe what their practice was. The following extract provides such an example:

L6 Well again, I hope that all (members of the department) are doing this…. But my own philosophy is that uh … I want to prepare teachers who can go beyond the book, beyond the textbook in the school. Who can motivate the students to read widely. Who can ask questions in the class, encourage discussion, group activities. Not just sticking to a particular … the topics have to be covered, it’s in the syllabus. But who can use alternative approaches to teaching. There are various guides produced by the Ministry…. And we want people to look at alternatives. OK if this doesn’t work, if this is not interesting, what else can I do? Bring in something else which can be more interesting to the students.

So in other words, my approach is to create a person who is not satisfied with the day to day bookish kind of knowledge, stereotype questions etc. but who can think beyond the book, become a resource person, find information from different places, and REALLY create a spark in the class. Even if they can motivate 4 or 5 in a 40-member class, I think they have done a great job.

However, there is a danger that merely describing what one hopes to achieve without putting a clear label to the implied approach would leave an interpretation open to focussing on minute
areas of importance, and in the process, obscuring the fuller picture. The following interview extract exemplifies this point:

L6 Whatever we do in teacher-education we have to open up their minds, students. So that they become self-learners, they don’t stop after they leave the university. They see themselves as professionals, and continue to develop themselves both in their subjects as well as other related, you know, getting interested in society. Getting to know about their own country, their own cultures, understanding each other. Because you are not teaching just one subject, but it’s related to so many things in life…. the economy, bring in geography, social science, culture etc etc. So this is the kind of people we want to prepare so that they can influence their students better. They can become better thinkers, looking at themselves as professionals reflecting on their work and trying to create a kind of pressure group within their own schools and uh be more vocal in their ideas when it comes to curriculum issues, assessment issues etc.

This staff member is clearly articulating a broadly holistic, and perhaps critical, approach to teacher-education, but does not specify in any way the particular model or philosophy that underpins this approach.

A further set of responses to the question of personal/preferred approach related to the issue of an indigenous form of teacher-education. With this set of responses there seemed to be a perception that the models that Fiji was working with were largely inherited and therefore not completely suitable for local needs.

The Vice-Principal at the FCAE expressed strong views on this:

VP And I think, the way I’m (emphasis) wanting to move this place forward now is, there’s a lot to be done in terms of making the courses more practical, more relevant for the Fiji situation because of course it’s all BORROWED western theories of learning, and teaching …. All the textbooks, they’re all overseas textbooks. The courses of course I’m sure have been borrowed from um Australian tertiary institutions in terms of um we have the sociology of education courses, the teaching courses and maybe some psychology courses. Just look at that in terms of
education, we have a major disciplinary focus that um that is um the model we would find in Australia.

So I’m really thinking we really need to begin to move towards um trying to (pause) The word I’d like to use in inverted commas is to “indigenise” our courses, every single course. So that the basic theme or the basic foundations of all the courses is what all the different cultural groups know about their cultural systems first. Building up on this. So we start off with what they know first and building up (inaudible)…. we really need to be more pro-active and start doing something about making sure that we can say that we own the education system. It’s a borrowed one. You know, and whatever we do here in terms of the subject majors for instance, it’s just (pause) preparing them, preparing our teachers to go and teach something that is foreign to our students. So it’s really a direction that I want us to be moving forward with very shortly, very soon. I need to just sort of sit back and think about how I’m going to approach all the different staff members here about that. But we really need to begin to do something about making the content of learning that we are dishing out to our students something that we can call our own.

A senior lecturer at the USP clearly echoed these sentiments:

L5 There is an implicit philosophy of education in the Department as I see it and it has to do with excellence in teaching and learning by providing programmes that are relevant and meaningful to students (in a learning environment that is culturally democratic). The bracketed bit is my personal educational philosophy and is not necessarily that of the Department’s…. Over the past twenty years or so, I have been theorising my own teaching and learning and trying to develop culturally appropriate educational metaphors and concepts.

The response of students to the question of a model or particular approach that the faculty took to teacher-education will help to indicate whether these staff-articulated approaches were actually part of the culture/s of practice. One of the students interviewed at the USP saw the indigenisation issue as being a central part of the programme:

K Can you detect or identify any underlying philosophies that the department seems to promote about teaching or about education?
S1 Yeah, I think it is about uh the whole indigenous thing …. They still regard this aspect about the teacher not being questioned ….

K In what way?

S1 Their approach is different. Look at, for example lecturer X (a non-pacific staff member). And look at lecturer Y (a Pacific lecturer who promotes indigenous education) they are two very different people. It comes to approach. You always have to watch what you are saying, and lecturer Y is very conservative, so are her/his views. When it comes to lecturer X s/he is the liberal kind. So you find it more easy to discuss your views with lecturer X, and if you say you don’t agree s/he is OK with it. So then you start talking and there is a discussion. But when you go into that lecturer Y’s office, you go in scared, you come out scared.

This is an example of a student interpreting an approach to education in a very tangible way. This student understands that some lecturers promote the indigenisation of education as a viable theory, but the student sees its value in directly practical ways. The excerpt above indicates that, for the student, indigenous forms of education are associated with respect for authority, and perhaps for an exercise of that authority in students’ experiences.

During student interviews at the FCAE, there was intense discussion of what was perceived to be the traditional culture. In the following interview excerpt, the student shares a number of insights related to the notion of respect, authority, and bringing about change in classroom pedagogy:

K Why else do you think that when you actually go out into the schools no changes are made?

A4 I think it's the teachers that are to be blamed. They are not standing up for the principles that they have been taught. They go out there and they just follow suit.

K Is it easy or hard to go against the authority?
A4: It's hard.

K: Why is that?

A4: Because of the tradition. Respect. There is a great conflict here. On the one hand as the teacher, you want to teach your students to maintain what is important in their culture. Because it helps people to be socially controlled within the classroom too, and learning in the classroom could be more disciplined in some senses. On the other hand, you want to do away with the cultural impact on the teacher that stops him from speaking out, from telling the truth.

K: Are these kinds of things covered in whatever cultural programmes you have?

A4: Education lecturers they cover these things. The content of the teacher training programme here is really good for teachers. But the fact is, teachers forget because of the time constraints. After some time they just forget it all. The system here is no different from the secondary school system. The learners here are just concentrating on the exam, to graduate. How to solve that? I don't know.

K: Who do you think benefits from an emphasis on culture? On these aspects of culture?

A4: Those in authority. They maintain that respect at the top. And they still could have that authority. And the relationship is maintained. They cannot be overstepped at any time.

A number of other student interviews focussed on the different perspectives on culture:

A8: Our education courses they do discuss these things about culture. But usually the lecturers here, they just put a lot of emphasis on traditional culture. Like most of the time when they speak, we can tell from their point of view that they prefer the traditional respect thing in the culture. They don't really encourage you or say: ‘sometimes we have to stand up and say this’. They usually put a lot of emphasis on traditional aspects.

K: And what do you think of that?

A8: I don't think it's really good. Like they should say: ‘sometimes you need to speak up’. You can't always stick to these culture and traditions.
These comments are also reflected in a set of field notes made by the researcher during observations of classes at FCAE:

One of the things that I noticed about the group discussions was that the questions that were supplied by the student-teachers leading the discussion, seemed to reflect apparently dominant or perhaps fashionable concerns with the maintenance or preservation of culture. I cannot help but think about the effects that the events of last year have had in terms of the renaissance in views on ethno-nationalist traditional culture, and therefore how it is imperative now more than ever to provide students with a language of critique, where they can critique dominant discourses around them. Whatever they may be. Whether it is to do with culture, traditional culture or any other issues for that matter.

The lecturer’s focus on the preservation of culture was also quite evident. Moral values were clearly subsumed under religious values. The examples of moral values given were e.g. the breakdown of family structure, divorce, coming from broken homes. Students listened attentively and it was unclear whether they agreed or not with the lecturer. Perhaps more encouragement could have been given for discussion of alternative views?

When students were queried about indigenous education at USP, many of them indicated that it was not something that stood out in their experiences. Discussions tended to focus on individual courses that they had done as the next extract shows:

S2 its not really clear to me but what I got was they want us to be really well informed before we go out there to teach. They really want us to have a wide range of knowledge about how the ideas in education came into being. That’s why we have to study all these theories. I mean its good that we have that background but like I told you from ED253 I can’t remember half of what I studied so the question of subject matter and content, maybe they should cut it down or something I don’t know…. But the uh its been relevant, some of it. You know, its not useless because otherwise why would we be given it? But I don’t really find the education ones very inspiring…. You know even up to this day, I can’t remember half of what I learnt in ED253, even three quarters. Its like I just did that course and studied it for that semester because I needed to do it and pass it and after that I just forgot about it. But my LL courses, I remember most of them from the 100 level. And the Education (courses) its just the ED153 and ED151.

K What about the section on Indigenous theories?
S2 Indigenous theories? I can’t remember, unfortunately, sorry.

This response came from a student who, on the whole, tended to make thoughtful and insightful comments during the interview. S/he also presented an outstanding lesson during the TP.

Another USP student suggested that the department’s focus was on getting students familiar with what they were going to teach out in the schools:

S3 Well here (USP) they do involve us in group work and that’s the main characteristic of the course. Previously the teacher came to the class and she just talked in front of the classes and wrote the notes and she just went away. Now what they are saying is that the students … let the students talk amongst themselves, put them into groups. And that’s the main thing I’ve learnt from you know, after two years of being here. They should give more of that sort of strategies so that we can become better teachers. That’s the only thing, you know, that the more students are involved, the more they'll learn.

But then its not actually proved, because some students perform better when they're doing individual work.

……

K You've talked a little bit about student centred learning. What is it apart from that, in addition to that, that you think this department tries to push in terms of its philosophy about education?

S3 I’m doing Poetry, with lecturer Z and s/he's not very interested in what the content is when do our presentations. S/he wants pronunciation to be correct. S/he goes on pronunciation. At the end of the presentation s/he'll just tell you - you've pronounced this word wrong, you've pronounced that word wrong. I don't know why, s/he just emphasises pronunciation.

K What about in your preparation to go and do your teaching practice, you have your teaching practice orientation meeting with the co-ordinator of the teaching practice? What kinds of things were emphasised, if you can remember.

S3 That we act professional. We are part of the school, we just think of ourselves as being actual teachers, not really (inaudible) for two or three weeks. And also that we should help out the teachers in any way, supervising for the teachers in any of

5 Name withheld for this thesis
the classes. And also maintaining our discipline, because most of our students they
don't .... they want to get involved with the girls, boys especially. We were told to
keep our distance, student-teacher like that. And that's basically what they told us.
This student saw the teacher-education programme at the University as being there to quite
literally prepare them for the classroom realities. S/he also saw the student-centred approach as
being important in the programme.

The sense of fragmentation evident in responses from teacher educators at USP, and in
discussions with students, was less overt in the interviews with FCAE teacher educators. As has
been discussed above, it was evident that FCAE staff were not aware of any single philosophy or
model that underpinned their work at the college. This was in spite of the fact that many made
casual references to the college’s mission and strategic plan that emanated from the MoE 2020
document. The interview responses did not indicate any emphatic engagement with these
centralised policy texts as providing a theory or model of teacher-education. However, what was
interesting is that, when asked to state their own approach to teacher-education, and to identify
what type of teacher Fiji needs, the answers were all largely similar. As presented above, this
was not the case with the USP teacher-education staff response, which was more fragmentary.
The responses from FCAE staff largely centred on a humanistic perspective that isolates a
personalistic approach to education. It was not a social humanistic view that considered wider
societal structures: the emphasis was definitely on the role of the individual teacher in bringing
about change. A reading of a sample of these responses together will accentuate this significant
issue:

Excerpt 1:

    K      What kinds of teachers do you think we should be preparing for Fiji's needs?
    C5     Actually .... I believe in dedicated teachers. We have to know our work, so we
            must train our teachers in such a way that they know their work. Through
practicum they learn these things well. I would love to see dedicated teachers in the classroom, it can only be there through counselling. And uh ... teachers should be punctual....

K  What is a good teacher?

C5  Must be punctual, responsible, knowledgeable, respectful, understanding. Um. have a good approach. Good student relationship. Good community communication. Basically they have to be the Mr Right for the community and in the eyes of the student. Otherwise, they will fall in the eyes of the students. Good role models.

Excerpt 2:

K  What type of teacher do you think we should be preparing for Fiji's needs?

C8  I think we should prepare intelligent, mature and responsible teachers, who are able to go to the system and either fit into the system, or adapt to the system. And be able to produce results. Teach the children to be able to adapt themselves in life. Not necessarily passing exams. That's not ... You could say that's MY philosophy. My philosophy is for them to go out into the field and be able to survive. To learn about life.

Excerpt 3:

K  Can you describe the model or approach to education that you use?

C1  Here we try and train students to be well versed not only in the content but in the skills that help teach the content. that contextualises the content and makes it applicable to the surroundings. We help them to develop the skills that make learning interesting. That makes the students ENJOY the subject. We teach them so many innovative skills. And it's very student centred and all that. We give them a wide selection of methods to use.

K  What type of teacher do you think we need in Fiji?

C1  We need committed people, we have very few of them around. Just take the intake into this college. The kind of characters we have, the kinds of personalities we get. It's not the best. I'm not saying that we should have the best. But I mean in the past teachers were real role models. They played by the rules, by the book, and they were dedicated. It's the commitment and the dedication that is missing in most of our young trainees we have here today.

K  Why do you think that is the case?
C1 Because they are not here because they want to be here in the first place. Some of them have admitted that. They stand up and say: ‘it's an afterthought, a second choice. I wanted to do other things’. It's the way they've been moulded and brought up to think. That this is a thankless underpaid job. Which is true.

K Do you think teacher education has a bigger role in society than just preparing teachers?

C1 As teacher educators we train the teachers, the teachers mould the young minds. So whether we like it or not, morals and ethics come in, professionalism comes in. And we ourselves apart from the skills and the content, which is all the technicalities of being a teacher trainee. We have to be role models. Whether we like it or not that is all part of the profession. And if we are not the best role models of a teacher, then no wonder. And given what is happening around Fiji today, we've lost all the very good teachers. They've gone.

K In your opinion what is a good teacher?

F One that works hard, is dedicated and is always ahead, a planner and organiser. And a general good all-rounder. Can take part in any other extra curricular activities. And doesn't see problems as problems but as challenges.

Excerpt 4:

C4 We have our focus on teacher training and basically that is emphasised in the staff meeting. In the department, we follow that.

K Any particular aspect of teacher training?

C4 I think our trainees should be morally quite good and focus on teaching. More to do with training. That they should be a good product when they go to school. Not only in terms of content and methodology, but as a person, character and everything.

K What is the ideal teacher that we are looking at preparing.

C4 One it's the character that should be very good, and how they present themselves in the schools. On the other hand, they should be able to contextualise their teaching. What's the word we use for that? Get the materials. Be resourceful with what is around you and be able to provide the materials to the students especially in the rural areas. Be a provider. And not just be stuck with the text that has been given by the CDU. You as a teacher improvise, and contextualise the teaching.

K Do you think teacher education has a bigger role to play in society?

C4 Definitely. The teachers are supposed to be the role models. And they should really be ... like the status of teachers is going down now because of the behaviour
now, drunkenness, misbehaving in the society, beating students. The way we train our trainees here and when they go back they can re-introduce the status that the teacher once had.

K So you think that is the role that teacher education has to play in society?

C4 Yes.

Excerpt 5:

C6 My own philosophy: I embody moral values, where moral values is part and parcel of the way that I teach. If I am teaching and I see that somebody is misbehaving I digress, I do not just let it happen. It was my duty to put up a list of moral values for the FCAE.

K What type of teacher should we be trying to produce?

C6 A wholesome teacher. Not just academic, but who knows about the values, and who has been living those values. I want to bring this compassion, this understanding to them in the way that I relate to them. I believe one of the main causes of this disintegration of society is the lack of moral values. When the missionaries came they came with those values, and along the way we thought it was unimportant. It is [mistakenly] thought that people who teach moral values are very conservative traditional people.

Excerpt 6:

K What type of teacher do you think we should be preparing for Fiji's needs?

C7 Students who are able to have social skills. And knowledge of those things that enable them to become good citizens. Apart from passing exams which is what most institutions are looking forward to -- passing people. Having a certificate, having a diploma.

K What is a good citizen?

C7 To be able to live and cooperate with the neighbours. Being good examples at the workplace. Being an honest student. An honest person. Hardworking. Giving his best.

The six excerpts from lecturing staff at the college thus indicate an overlap of ideas in terms of what was considered important in teacher preparation. The teacher was seen as a role model for
the younger generation. In this respect, it was seen as crucial that teachers exhibit what were often termed ‘good’ moral values. These included such qualities as: honesty, integrity, being a hard worker, commitment, co-operation. These words were used repeatedly in interviews and informal discussions with staff. In fact, there was a very strong sense that they themselves as teacher educators needed to set a ‘good’ example to the teachers trainees. This aspect of their work was considered critical to the preparation of ‘good’ teachers.

If the overall philosophy of the college is not overtly stated in a policy document, then it might be possible to consider that it is from the culture of the daily working of the college that this emphasis on ‘teacher as embodying moral values’, and ‘teacher as role model’ emerges. This is evident from a number of observations made at the college. The college culture reflects that of a typical Fiji secondary school. There is considerable respect for authority, and the hierarchical divisions are fairly clear. The students are closely monitored, and this is made easier by the fact that the majority of FCAE students live on campus as boarders. They lead a tightly regimented lifestyle, with any deviations from the regular programme having to be applied for in writing and noted in the student’s folder. The large majority of staff members of the college see this situation as desirable as the following interview excerpts indicate:

**K**  What are the strengths of FCAE in terms of how you prepare your teachers?

**C3**  We are able to talk to students individually, in the sense that they all stay together in the community we make more impact in the classroom as well as outside. So we are not only training them to be better teachers, we are also training them to be better persons in the community.

This excerpt also reinforces the emphasis placed on teacher education at FCAE as being about the preparation of the whole person. Furthermore, in an interview with FCAE lecturer C1, a
frank discussion was held about the close supervision and control of students that was typical at FCAE. Lecturer C1 indicated that this type of supervision was consciously carried out at FCAE as a continuation of the type of control exerted over the students when they were secondary students:

C1 Here they are still very strictly monitored. It has to take a while for them to adapt. This should be the place where they should be free to make their own choices, and have a bit more freedom. It doesn't work that way! We are too scared to give them too much freedom.

K What are we scared of?

C1 I don't know. We think they might not perform, or they might not finish the course.

The principal of the college provided further insight into this matter:

P I was telling you about the culture of this college. This is an institution where we train teachers. Nothing else. So the environment is right. It is the environment that affects their behaviour. When something odd happens then students know that there will be an assembly. In that assembly I go back to these key points. Where we look at the behaviour, where we look at the role of teachers, if you want to become a role model. All these things are not only emphasised, revised, and go over these things with the students, not only in the assembly. I do remind residential staff to go over this in their family get together. And we cover this in our own cultural (ethnic) groups. So we have got all these avenues. It's the environment, and the support services from people living on campus. There is a dress code, manners maketh man….

And the activities we have here at the college, you'll find that all these things that we're offering here it's a training avenue. Like culture. Where they look at the moral values, the complete person. Religious activities that they involve themselves in. Sporting activities. All these things make these people grow, apart from their academic work, and they interact more. All these things are directly related with their roles when they go out to the schools.

The college view and my personal view is that we of course encourage interaction. Open mindedness. In the classroom we would like them to participate.

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6 Residential staff organise social functions at their homes with a group of students that has been allocated to them. This is their ‘family get together’ time.
It's no longer the old method of chalk talk. The college is a strong advocator in the opening up, getting away from the traditional method.

But I tell the students we need to have some rules and regulations, to govern yourself and provide security. But you know you have your freedom. We give them the freedom if they exercise the freedom and they follow the rules and it's OK. But many of them if you give them the freedom, then some of them they abuse it. And if we don't have rules and regulations, then we're in trouble. Because some of these students, I tell you, they are really smart. If we don't spell out the rules they can manipulate you. So we have to be smarter than students.

But what I hate to see is students to move around in fear. They should be given freedom. And you have to show them that you love them that you care for them, there you are ever-willing to help them out.

So it would seem that at the FCAE there is a strong humanistic culture. Teacher development is seen primarily as the development of teachers as role models in society. As role models teachers are expected to embody a particular set of moral values. At times it would appear that this culture is authoritarian, but most of the staff at the college see this aspect of education as necessary. Even so, some staff members did note the limitations of imposing too many external constraints on students as the next excerpt illustrates:

C8 There are advantages and disadvantages to the way we treat students here. We supervise them really closely we want them to learn to get whatever we are teaching them. The methods, learn them and be able to relate them to school. The disadvantage is that they are not able to do a lot of independent work themselves. If we leave them alone, it'll be like goats getting out of the gate. They'll find a little bit of difficulty outside, but we do try to train them for that. But that's where the passing comes in. Ours is 100% pass, at USP it doesn't matter. They pass or fail it's their problem. Here they pass or fail it's our problem.

K What about in terms of the kind of culture we are encouraging?

C8 Well I think it's good for the students you know? When they go out, they are supposed to be disciplined. Do their work on time. That's a good thing. The bad thing there for the teachers would be like, they may think, they'll be looking for someone to guide them, maybe the Heads of Departments: you do this you do that. Very little independent work. But they may overcome that.
Moreover, what is also very significant with this setting is that the culture of ‘teacher as role model embodying moral values’ was strongly evident in the understandings displayed by students. The interviews with students at FCAE revealed a maturity of thought and a general sense of commitment to teaching that was rare in interviews with students at USP. That they had been encouraged to look upon themselves as teachers was evident in a several areas. For example, in the classes that I observed, the students and lecturers referred to themselves as colleagues. Students referred to themselves as teachers. Regular reference was made to their future roles as teachers, and how they would take their learning out to the classroom. Without a doubt, students were there to learn how to be teachers. Therefore, it is not surprising that the dominant cultures reflecting what it means to be a teacher should be absorbed in one way or another by students. In a positive sense, this produced a group of self-assured professionals who were clear about their future roles as had been identified for them by the culture of the teachers’ college. On another level, however, there was considerable critique of the culture of the college by some of the students as the following excerpts illustrate:

**Excerpt 1:**

K  What else would you like to see changed at FCAE. That's one – the content – it's too heavy, for the time that you have. If you were going to teach for 5 years and come back here as a lecturer. What kinds of changes would you make here?

A12  The way they treat us? When we come in they say, you're going to be teachers so you should act as adults. But the way they treat us here is worse than secondary school students. How we dress and how we socialise. If they are telling us to act like adults then they should treat us like adults. And also these night tutorials. If they expect us to learn then they shouldn't force us into learning. It's like we are preconditioned to these things. Just after dinner you go like, half an hour rest, then you have to go for prep. (night tutorials). If you don't you go and see the vice principal. So they are forcing us into learning.

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7 See Appendix 4 for copy of the ‘College Rules’.
Excerpt 2:

K Can you point out anything that you would like to see changed here (FCAE) or improved?

A6 We are still treated as students here. Which I think is not right. We should be treated more like trainees or more like teachers so that we are able to build a self-concept here that we ARE teachers. The tutors often treat us like students in Form 5 or form 7. That really disturbs us at times.

Excerpt 3:

A4 I feel they are more worried about the pass rate, and who will graduate out of those scholarship students. They are trying to impress someone, I don't know who. Rather than really training that good teacher that will survive out there. I feel that if they want to have real teachers, then they better give us more responsibility. We have got to LEARN to be responsible. Do our assignments at our own time. No curfew hours. If we fail at our own risk, good. Then we were not supposed to make good teachers if we can't stand on our own feet and be responsible.

I feel that the lecturers are OK but what's going on here is more plastic. They are making plastic teachers here. We grow up pretending to be real teachers.

When I heard of night tutorials, I was happy because we will have TUTORIALS. Ok the lecturer will be there. I could go there when I need something, and go there and then discuss. Maybe if I don't want to go then I don't go. But then it's one and a half hours. What can you do in this time? Take some time to settle in. You're sitting with your closest friends. And then if you actually do anything worthwhile, but most of the time we don't know. Attendance is compulsory.

If you don't attend you get a memo, and that goes into your folder. Then they say, how can you become a good teacher, you're not punctual, plus you are not there. This is a training ground, they should let you be yourself. And if you don't prove yourself, don't be a teacher.

Actually the real work is done after night tutorial. We get back to our rooms, and stay up till morning. Do they expect me to sit up till 4 in the morning? Assignments are always exactly the same, tutorials are always exactly the same, workshops are always exactly the same. Whatever questions they asked last year, they ask this year. You'll be lucky if they change it....

A real teacher out there, no matter how much strategy you teach them, they'll end up teaching the way they were taught. So if I'm being tortured to pass here, I'll train my students to do the same.
This level of insight was profoundly interesting. That some of the students could discuss their programme with a meta-language of analysis might be seen as indicative of an engagement with the programme, albeit in a negative sense. It is apparent that this student has learnt to work with the system, and will get out of it what is possible within the constraints imposed by what is perceived to be a negative culture of control. It is not clear what other less aware, and less articulate, students will gain.

This chapter has thus far discussed two major themes emerging out of the findings. The first theme is related to the perceptions that are held about what the official line is in teacher education. Neither the USP nor the FCAE promotes a single, officially sanctioned approach to teacher education. Lecturers at both the USP and the FCAE could not identify any policy documents produced by either institution as a guideline for the professional development of teachers. Nor were students able to clearly identify a particular approach to teacher education. At the FCAE, the mission statement and strategic plan, modelled largely on the MoE Education Fiji 2020 document, provided an overall policy guideline for the work of the college\(^8\). However, this policy document was rarely mentioned by staff members in interviews, and where it was, there was considerable scepticism about its direct worth. At the USP the university management, after consultations with sponsoring countries, has prioritised teacher education. Again, however, this prioritisation was perceived by staff as something with which the administrators concerned themselves.

\(^{8}\) See Appendix 4.
In terms of staff members’ own articulated approach to teacher education, there was a significant difference between data collected from each of the two institutions. At the FCAE, there was a clearly defined, almost caricatured, culture of practice. The primary function of the FCAE is seen as the preparation of teachers. The dominant culture of practice promoted a view of teacher education as the preparation of teachers as ‘role models embodying good moral values’. This philosophy reflected a humanistic and personalistic view of the role of teacher education. However, there was no strong indication that the approach was based on a socially humanistic view that encompassed the influence of wider social structures. Instead, there was a tendency to place responsibility on the role of the teacher as an individual to effect changes in the education system, and consequently in society. This ties in closely with Habermas’ Practical Interest and the corresponding reflective paradigm of teacher education as has been discussed in chapter two of this thesis. Although the phrase ‘reflective teaching’ was not widely brought up in discussions and interviews, there was a definite emphasis on the role of the individual teacher in going ‘out’ to the system and bringing together the theory, skills and knowledge that is seen to be acquired in the college setting. Teachers who were able to be ‘strong’ and implement the new student-centred strategies of teaching espoused in the college were set up as an example.

Our trainees when they go to the school system, they say that when they try out new methods teachers laugh. New products! The teachers have a good laugh. Those new teachers who do get embarrassed, they just shove the charts and everything away and start with the textbook. Those who are strong enough to carry on they do well.

During interviews, however, some staff did accept that there is considerable authoritarian control from the more conservative elements in schools to deter change from taking place. This ties in well with the work of Britzman (1986) who identifies a number of myths that abound within the processes of learning to become a teacher. Two are discussed here:
Myth I: Everything Depends on the Teacher

Both teachers and students implicitly understand two rules governing the hidden tensions of classroom life: unless the teacher establishes control there will be no learning, and, if the teacher does not control the students, the students will control the teacher. This power struggle...equates learning with control.... Isolation thus creates a strong pressure to replace students' real learning with social control.... When everything depends on the teacher, the teacher’s role is confined to controlling the situation. Consequently, the cultural myth that everything depends on the teacher compels the teacher to exert institutional authority.

Myth 2: The Teacher as Expert

The fear most commonly articulated by prospective teachers is that they will never know enough to teach. Behind this fear is the cultural expectation that teachers must be certain in their knowledge.... Many student teachers, then, tend to approach the problem of knowing, not as an intellectual challenge, but as a function of accumulating classroom experience. Acquiring classroom experience and therefore becoming an “expert” becomes the key to controlling knowledge and imposing it on students as a means for classroom control.... (Britzman 1986:449 – 450).

Furthermore, as other research has found⁹, the culture of the school setting has been shown to inhibit the application of new ideas gained during the initial teacher preparation process. Both staff and students alluded to this fact when discussing factors impeding change in pedagogic practice.

The culture of practice was further enhanced by the very nature of the college setting. There appeared to be a strong solidarity amongst staff, and morale was generally healthy. One gained a sense of commitment and energy to the task at hand. During the fieldwork attachment at the FCAE, I was provided a desk in the School of Social Science, and was able to observe first hand the type of interactions that took place amongst staff. There was a high level of professionalism,

⁹ For example: Goodman (1985); Zeichner and Gore (1990).
and the staff worked very well together. A staff member commented on staff relations as follows:

C10 That's one of the things I like about this college we interact very closely with each other and are able to share ideas relatively easily. I feel the interaction is very healthy here. There are no clique groups in the staff. I think I can say that this is an institution where we are quite professional. There will be talking about people, but then the same person who brings up the topic will say, I'm gossiping here. Then he or she stops straight away. We have almost got the right mixture of people.

What is also interesting is how this culture of practice evident at the FCAE found its way into students’ perceptions about teaching. As the data presented in this chapter has shown, the students at FCAE referred repeatedly to their future roles as teachers in society. They were aware that the college staff promoted this view, even if was not part of any overriding philosophy presented at the college. It was part of the culture of staff and the students had clearly taken on these understandings.

However, it was also clear that students did not see this view of teaching as unproblematic. There was a clear contradiction between what might be seen as the dominant culture acting at one level and the critique of this culture firstly by students, and to a lesser extent by staff. For example, many students indicated that they felt they were being treated like secondary school students and that supervision was too severe. So although they could recite at will the main aspects of their learning programmes that they knew were important to their lecturers, some of them were also clearly sceptical of the whole process in which they were engaged. In these cases, engagement was, in its deepest sense, pragmatic. It might be argued that this type of engagement reflects a technocratic approach to teacher-education. There is a rationalising of experience in a very technical style where, in spite of the awareness of the weaknesses of the
system, the participants remain ‘engaged’ nonetheless. The ramifications of this type of engagement are poignantly expressed in the following interview quote:

A4 I feel that the lecturers are OK but what's going on here is more plastic. They are making plastic teachers here. We grow up pretending to be real teachers…. A real teacher out there, no matter how much strategy you teach them, they'll end up teaching the way they were taught. So if I'm being tortured to pass here, I'll train my students to do the same.

As the data discussion has indicated, a number of staff expressed some disquiet about some of these aspects, but the questioning of the system tended to remain embedded within an acceptance of the central culture of practice at the college.

In terms of a clear culture of practice, the situation at USP was a little different. First, there was less of an emphasis on teacher education as the major role of the faculty. Staff generally saw their roles as academics working within a faculty of education. Those who had extensive experience in the teaching field tended to place teacher education higher on the agenda. Furthermore, promotion at USP is based on a range of criteria, including research and refereed publications, and good teaching was but one of these. Therefore, unlike the FCAE, the cultural base was, in a sense, wider.

The staff presented a wide range of ideas on what their preferred approach to teacher-education was. There was no all-encompassing focus on any one particular aspect of the teacher preparation process. Staff talked about a constructivist view of learning, a partnership model with schools, the use of competencies, a ‘culturally sensitive’ philosophy, and the development of critical and lateral thinkers. However, there was limited interaction and professional exchange amongst academic staff, and there was a tendency to work on one’s own projects in isolation.
Furthermore, a number of factors were suggested as responsible for the low morale in the faculty, and the political uncertainties in Fiji seemed to contribute to a worsening of the situation here. The TP was criticised by many staff as in need of a revamp, and there was a feeling that the faculty needed to intensify its commitment to teacher education in general.

This fragmented culture of practice seemed to extend itself to USP students’ perceptions of their own preparation as teachers. They were in the main, unable to identify an overriding approach to education offered by the faculty. When prompted to talk about a possible set of ideas promoted by the faculty of education at USP, students tended to focus on minute aspects of individual courses that they had taken as part of the BEd programme. There was no sense of a holistic approach to teaching. When prompted to talk about particular aspects of the programme that the researcher was aware as being emphasised by faculty, students tended to retreat into a non-engaged technical assessment of individual courses. Thus there were contradictions in what lecturers talked about in terms of their own approaches, and what was actually achieved as evident in students’ perceptions of the value of these approaches. Moreover, students were less confident than their FCAE counterparts about their role as teachers, and discoursed primarily as students isolated in a set of 21 separate and individual courses.¹⁰ There was very little sense of a commitment to the teaching profession. This continues the theme of fragmentation evident in the findings for his thesis.

Out of these findings about perceptions of official practice, articulated approaches to teacher education by staff, responses by students, and the encompassing culture/s of practice that ensue, the next section will now examine what the data indicates about the issue of change in education.

¹⁰ The BEd secondary programme is made up of 21 courses.
The dominance of a technocratic approach, and especially at FCAE, a culture of practice based on a personalistic paradigm, is not without contestation. That the teacher education context in Fiji is a highly complex one is evident from the data presented above. To expect transformation to happen within such a context requires an acknowledgement of this complexity, and a closer analysis of the issue of change.

**Possibilities for Transformation**

The issue of change is of central concern to a view of education that is interested in the empowerment of teachers to participate in processes of change at both the level of schooling and pedagogic practice, and in terms of issues of wider social significance. As has been discussed in chapter 2, Habermas’ emancipatory interest ties in the need to maintain an emancipatory framework with the project of social action for change. The corresponding model of teacher-education emerging out of this knowledge-constitutive interest was identified as the critical model.

The perceptions emerging out of the data viewed change at two levels. First was the concern with pedagogic change, and the second was the translation of this pedagogic change into wider societal transformation.

A major subject of discussion during the interviews was the controlling effect of examinations in Fiji. All forty-two students interviewed for this study cited the issue of exams when discussing change in education. The data for the teacher education staff at the two institutions was largely similar: there was a keen perception that Fiji placed excessive emphasis on exams. That this may well be the reality is reflected in a number of recent cases of suicide over failure in secondary
school exams. In an article entitled “Exam Failure Triggers Suicide”, The Fiji Times newspaper reported on one such incident:

A fourth former killed herself after she failed her Fiji Junior Secondary Certificate for the second time. (The student), 16, of Waiqele, Labasa, drank half a glass of the weed-killer paraquat on New Year’s Eve after she found out that she had failed the exam…. Her mother said that she refused to eat after the results were announced…. (she) had not wanted to face the world and was ashamed of what relatives and friends would say about her failure (The Fiji Times, 5/01/00).

It has only been very recently that the MoE has ceased its practice of publishing exam results in the national newspapers. The community would eagerly sift through the pages of the newspapers looking for names of students whom they knew had sat the exams for that year. It was impossible to remain anonymous in a situation like this.

The exam-oriented nature of the education system was seen by most students as its major weakness. This perception is documented in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1:

K What factors inhibit change talking place?

A6 Our school system is SO exam oriented that teachers don't have time for other activities. They just want to finish their syllabus and after that they just want to prepare students for exams. Every time you talk to them, they are talking in terms of exams, exams, exams: 'I will finish my syllabus by the end of the 2nd term, and the whole of 3rd term I will spend on revision revision revision". That's why they are not enthusiastic. I mean they don't feel like being creative because they know this is what the emphasis is, this is what is coming in the exams, so why should I go out of my way to prepare charts, why should I brainstorm the students. So why don't I just teach this and prepare them for the exams.

Excerpt 2:
S4 The education system is very exam oriented. And when the teacher’s teaching, he says: “this (topic) is very important. Every year we have a question on this (in the exam). Look at last year’s paper, the year before last year’s paper, this question came. The form was changed but this question came so you must learn it”.

So they use the word ‘learn’, which is such a big word, but (for them) that simply means to feed it in, keep it there, pass it on when the time comes. They spoil the education system by making it so exam oriented.

K: Why do you think it’s remained exam oriented even though so many people have done research on it, even though the department, the Ministry of Education says it is trying to cut down on this. Why do you think the country is still tied to an exam-oriented education system?

S4 I think it has got to do with the same old conservative view, they are scared.

K: Where does this conservative view come from?

S4 I think it comes from all those people who are sitting up there who make a decision.

K: For example?

S4 Big stomachs, grey hair.

K: In the government?

S4 Yes. I think they like it that way because maybe they feel more powerful with the way things are because they have made it that way. And because they know it that way and you feel more powerful, more authoritative when you know something. So if they start changing things, they will have to change with the whole of the system. They are scared. They just want to keep it that way and feel more powerful about it.

K: Ok so in that case its going to take a long time before our education system will change then?

S4 Yes its going to take a long time, I think so.

Excerpt 3:

S2 When I was in school I thought that the curriculum was very exam oriented. I mean I still think that because everything that we have to do is always towards the exam…. In fact…. by the time you graduate from high school you’ve sat five external exams, that’s a lot. And also because they eliminate the students from a very young age. Like if someone fails their class eight and you know
how kids can be cruel and tease and say ‘oh you failed you’re going to repeat’ and then some kids just won’t want to come back to school you know.

This assessment of Fiji’s main educational weakness was thus extended to a number of issues, but mainly to what was often termed the ‘mind set’ of the MoE. The situation was seen to be exacerbated by the lack of resources made available to schools, and the outdated materials provided by the CDU. The following excerpt from an FCAE lecturer provides further data on this aspect of the education system in connection with the issue of change:

C1 Education in Fiji is such that it is so exam oriented. Everyone is teaching towards passing the exams. Teachers are rushing to cover the syllabus and the prescription. And it becomes notes and rote learning for the students. And it's not good. That's not the way to do things. We know that. So on paper it looks very good: writing a prescription (syllabus) with all the integrated strategies written on it. But in reality it's not practised.

Now FCAE has tried to change that. And it seems like it is not working. Because the actions of the ministry has made it seem like exams are more important. Even though they SAY otherwise.

Like they put up in their divisional offices, exam results for schools. And that's enough to... It comes from the top. The top people have to change the way they think and the way that they do things. Because they say something, and they do something else. That moulds the whole society.

Now we have been told that we are going to change forms 3 and 4 to continuous assessment. We have been told that last year. It's going to be a big job. But it has to be done, and it has to start somewhere. That is a whole shift of thinking not only for the MoE but for the community. The community has been so moulded to think that their children have to pass exams and get a piece of paper to be able to have openings to jobs and to get further education.

So we have to shift the way of thinking. Not only of the schools and the administrators, but the stakeholders as well. The parents, the employers. It's a whole lot of work, but there's no harm in starting now.

The issue of the ‘mind-set’ of the MoE was reiterated in a number of interviews. As has been discussed in other data presented in this and the previous chapter, there was a sense on the part
of educational practitioners that policy making was something that the MoE did, and that
decision making was largely centralised. This perception extended to a view of the central MoE
as an outdated, bureaucratic system, with a ‘mind-set’ that resisted change:

C2 … the people at the ministry…. have this mindset…. They were not in a position
to consider any suggestions for change that we might come up with….. they
don’t have a research culture there, they don’t value other people’s input. So
people come to meetings there with the feeling that they can’t really express
their views. They’re just there to rubber stamp whatever it is that the (senior
administration) want.

This interviewee went on to talk about an atmosphere of ‘fear and intimidation’ that was evident
in his/her dealings with senior administrators. It should be pointed out that the interviewee was
her/himself a senior member of staff who has had many years experience working in education
in Fiji, and within government circles. The interview continues:

C2 So if you have that kind of thing right from the top leadership position in the
MoE, it’ll filter through all the other sectors…. The 3rd thing related to that is
how the ministry is just so reactive and not proactive. They are SO busy with the
day to day running of the ministry, that they quite forget that their most
important role is to plan ahead and plan the necessary changes that are needed in
the next couple of years, the next decade or whatever.

A further significant factor which was perceived as limiting the possibilities for change in
pedagogical practice is that presented by what is seen as a restrictive school culture. The
following interview excerpts from teacher educators illustrate this point:

Excerpt 1:

C1 The thing is when they go out to the schools, they go out full of enthusiasm, and
keenness. Then along the way somehow or other the skills are no longer put in
place. They become part of the old way of doing things in the school. They
become part of the school culture. And that has been the feedback from the students. And we've also noticed that. Like when we meet with them later on. They go there with so much energy, then they get bogged down with all the little problems, and then they tend to fall back to teaching the old way. Teacher, chalk, blackboard, and notes.

Excerpt 2:

K You’ve done a lot of work with teachers in the schools yourself. What are some of the factors that contribute to this lack of change?

L6 Well uh it is just finding the path of least resistance. That’s the usual thing.

Excerpt 3:

C8 New teachers eventually fall into the bog of the system. If they do something new, sometimes they are criticised, sometimes they feel shy. To fit into the system, they have to follow the same branch.

Excerpt 4:

K What restricts teachers from applying what they have learnt here when they go out in the schools?

C3 One is the Heads of Departments, because if someone comes out and tries new ideas they say, this one here is a trouble maker. The other one is the WILL that they should have. They should go ahead and implement it. The result will indicate to their HoD and to their principal that this method works. But because they are usually isolated, this person wouldn't really have the courage to stand up and implement. In the end he will probably try for the first two years, but in the end he will go with the flow.

K So what do you think we can do as teacher educators?

C3 We can emphasis that they are the ones who will be in charge of the students within that period. They have to do it slowly. Because what we always tell them is when you go to a new school you should look at the school culture, because you cannot just go in and bulldoze your way through. Then slowly implement the change. Then slowly you will work your way around. Otherwise if you just go in and bulldoze your way through you make a lot of enemies.
As data collection progressed, it became very interesting that a number of comments were made about the restrictive culture of the teacher-education institutions themselves. At the USP, there was considerable critique of the programme by members of staff. As previously noted, the culture of practice at the USP was dominated primarily by a strong fragmentation in terms of both staff and student experience. Unlike the situation at FCAE, excessive control was not a significant issue at USP. Rather, there was a sense of being in ‘limbo’ with work being carried out at largely individual levels. In speaking to individuals, it was clear that each person had a number of useful projects and ideas in progress, and that a lot of interest was maintained in the teaching culture. However, there was some evidence of a lack of committed interaction across individuals and groups within the department. This might have been due to the wide range of responsibilities that the department had in the separation of its academic, professional and administrative roles. However, it was also clear that the faculty did not work with a holistic theoretical underpinning to its programmes of teacher-education, as was also reflected in student responses during interviews.

Staff at the USP made largely similar comments to staff at the FCAE when it came to dissecting the problematic issue of change. There were references to the focus on exams, the lack of resources, and the difficulties with policy direction being largely centralised and imposed. The issue of how the faculty could itself contribute to educational change was discussed in relation to the need for a coherent policy direction within the faculty:

L4 I think we need to sit together and facilitate change and look at this. Don’t discuss the course yet. Leave the course aside. Because I think we always end up saying How many courses we want, what are the requirements. LEAVE that aside. Let’s put the horse before the cart. Let’s raise that question: WHAT DO WE WANT
OUR STUDENT TEACHERS TO BE WHEN THEY GO OUT THERE Once we’re able to have that, once we have a vision for the kind of teacher that we want to turn out then we will be able to say: OK in relation to that, this is how we’re going to do it. These are the courses. But we don’t just want to narrow it down to that. We want teachers who are broad, teachers who are change agents.

There is certainly an implication here that what this lecturer is proposing should happen, is not currently taking place. Hence, this is a suggestion from the staff member for a more proactive stance in bringing about an improvement in its teacher preparation. This suggestion was also made by several other lecturing staff in the faculty. In this regard, the culture of fragmentation in the faculty at USP was further raised in relation to what was termed the ‘fossilised’ nature of the faculty, where a comparison was made between the institution and a medicine ball:

L3 Change comes in and makes a small dent on the ball, but it just absorbs it.

This section will conclude with an examination of the significance of the role of ‘culture’ as it is seen to affect change. In this study, both students and lecturers brought up the issue of ‘culture’ saying that it was important that the cultural backgrounds of students needed to be kept in mind when talking about education. However, when probed, many repeatedly said that culture also acted as an inhibiting force to change. Interviewees moved from talking about culture in terms of the culture of institutions, to culture in term of ‘indigenous’ form of culture, as previously quoted data has shown, and as the following interview excerpts will also indicate. This set of very insightful comments explored the culture of the teacher training institutions, and in the case of FCAE, there was a reflective concern with what might be an excessive authoritarianism that effected on the ability of teachers to be part of the change process. On the part of the students, it was also a disempowering experience to be treated without independence, and in the case of
USP to work within a context lacking in clear pedagogical theory related to critical praxis. This first set of excerpts comes from interviews with teacher educators at FCAE:

**Excerpt 1:**

**K** How can the Diploma in Secondary Education be improved?

**C8** If we had access to more things like more computers, more books. Out of ten books we ask for we get one. That doesn’t allow us a very wide scope.

**K** Let's assume you had all the resources you need. What else would you like to see done to improve the kind of work that you do here?

**C8** The first thing I would like to change is the ministry policy of 100% pass. And the method of teaching itself. At the moment it's all restrictive. They HAVE to be at the library, they HAVE to be here, they HAVE to be there. We HAVE to be there and they HAVE to be there. I would like to give them more freedom. More freedom to choose.

**K** Why do you think that's important?

**C8** Some of them come straight from secondary institutions. Then they have that kind of set up again here. Study and restrictions. And then to cram them into a 3-term heavily structured course. What is going to come out is that students are not doing very well in all those subjects. They are just going for a pass. Lecturers have the idea that students need to pass, even if they haven't done the content very well. I have talked to some of them about the content. Sometimes when they do the TP, sometimes they do it just for the sake of being observed and being analysed for a pass, for a mark. But when they go to reality, it’s sort of substandard. But then there are students who stand out well, from here and out there.

**K** Do you think there's some contradiction then, in what you expect of them, and then the way that they are treated here?

**C8** I think more freedom would mean more ideas, better ideas. And independence of learning and teaching. Here they are more dependent, very dependent. They want everything from us.

**Excerpt 2:**

**K** How does the college view its students? What is your view of the way that the college organises its student life?
C10 I have really mixed feelings. I feel that we are policing them too much. I feel they are adults to make up their own mind. If they fail that's their funeral. We are just continuing the legacy that we have built up from the colonial period into the education system to the present. You know coercing people. Where there's an external force to make us toe the line. At one stage we decided not to call them to night tutorials. We were just going to leave them. You know what happened? Most Fijian students failed. Quickly, the Permanent Secretary told us bring back the old system

So I think it is the fault of the system. We have been led to believe that there has to be an external force to make us toe the line. I feel discipline has to be in-built.

K Can the college achieve that?

C10 We can. In terms of what the students bring in with them from their home cultures. No I think we have to go back further. I keep telling myself it's community education. We can do that if the Fijian community. I say Fijian community, because normally it's the Fijian students. If the Indian students can do it, I can't see why...

K Do you see a difference between Fijian and Indian students?

C10 I see a LOT of difference, sadly. With the Indian students, their urge to work is inside. I find with the Fijian students I have to push. If I don't push, the very likely person to fail first are the Fijian students that I'm supposed to push and I didn't push.

So I feel we must go back to the home. To the Fijian community itself. Home upbringing where you teach independent learning. Right from home. We should allow them in primary classrooms to do a lot more independent learning which they don't do. They are so used to being supervised. When they come to USP you'll find a lot of Fijian students failing. I think it goes right back to our culture, and the way that we have been made to think about ourselves.

That there was an awareness of these issues on the part of some segments of the student community is evident in their interview responses. These comments, as related to the authoritarian culture of the college, and the corresponding aspects of their own ‘traditional’ cultures, have been previously cited in this chapter. As noted, the level of critique and insight was outstanding.
As has been discussed in the postscript to chapter 3, the words ‘culture’, ‘tradition’ and ‘custom’ are sometimes used interchangeably in Fiji. When the word culture is used in a general conversation, people are usually referring to its definition in the traditional sense. Hau’ofa (1985) is critical of the use of the word ‘culture’ in this sense:

What seems problematic for many people, islanders and interested outsiders alike, is the survival of the so-called traditional cultures. Programmes have been mounted in the islands, funded largely by international organisations, for the preservation of traditional cultures. I must confess that I am baffled by this concern with culture preservation. If we take it that 'culture' means the totality of the way of life of a given population at any time, and that this way of life is subject to alteration as its environment changes, then I do not see why the cultures of ex-colonial peoples should be singled out for preservation, or for that matter, for much concern about their survival (1985:152).

He then goes on to indicate that if by ‘traditional’ is meant purely indigenous, then there are very few things in the Pacific Islands today that could be labelled ‘traditional’. He continues that in fact, the current aristocratic (chiefly leadership) systems of Fiji are a creation of the nineteenth century, yet these are still considered ‘traditional’ (1985:153). Hau’ofa goes on to make a crucial point about the practice of these traditional aspects of the ‘culture’:

The degree of indigenousness of particular traditions held by a people varies, according to the extant interests of different classes and other divisions within the society. In the internal politics of … Fiji … the leaders often emphasise the indigenous aristocratic elements of their leadership tradition because it is in their interests that this should be so…. Furthermore, the rural dwellers, who are generally poor, are more likely to practise indigenous aspects of traditions than the culturally alienated, urban-based elite whose adherence to things indigenous is often more professed and idealistic than practical (Hau’ofa 1985:154).

In addition, the communal nature of Fijian society makes it very difficult for students to stand out as individuals, and there is a strong culture of public humiliation of children who make mistakes in the classroom as well as in the community at large. Children then tend to grow up
feeling cloistered by a community that, at one level mollycoddles them, but then at another level
tends to demand a certain degree of subservience to various form of authority.

These aspects of Fijian ‘custom’ become important for this thesis when considering what was perceived to be more deep seated forms of opposition to change. A number of comments that delved into the restrictive culture of schools have been presented above. Furthermore, as other research around the world has shown, pedagogical change introduced in teacher preparation programmes is often cancelled out by the restrictive culture of the schools (Houston, 1990; Britzman, 1986; Zeichner and Gore, 1990). The data for this current study suggests that Fiji faces a similar experience. As has been noted, some of the comments on the institutional culture relate directly to what is perceived in Fiji to be ‘traditional culture’. Thus, there is in evidence here a deep seated contradiction between what is sometimes termed ‘traditional culture’, the culture of institutions and the desire for change in educational practice in Fiji. The following interview excerpt aptly sums up the contradictions felt by many of the students who participated in this study:

K When you are going to enter the classroom and be teachers, are you going to be aware of these things, to encourage your students to speak up and question?
A4 That's a big conflict too. Because you want to teach them moral values. Which is part of their culture. Yet you also still have to tell them to speak out. These things contradict themselves.

Conclusion

It is evident that there is considerable commitment to education in Fiji, and that teacher educators interviewed for this study have clearly articulated views on their roles in this area. Within this context, and as suggested by the findings of this study, there is ample space for
refining current approaches to teacher education. This process would effect a more social humanistic approach based on a pedagogy that merges theory and practice in a context-sensitive culture of critique. The personalistic paradigm that was seen to be a significant part of cultures of teacher-education practice in Fiji is inadequate in understanding the processes in becoming a teacher. The research reported on here indicates the contradictions that arise. On the one hand, there is the emphasis on ‘traditional’ culture, on the self, and on the ‘teacher as role model embodying moral values’ aspect of teaching. On the other, there is the desire to move out of a traditional mode to encourage critical thinking, to effect changes, and to transform society. A pessimistic interpretation would see the two discourses as irreconcilable and nothing more. A more optimistic reading will consider the level of commitment and expertise that is evident in Fiji’s educational setting. That there are articulated approaches to teacher-education based on sound theoretical principles is sufficient for more dialogue on transformation to continue to take place.

It is evident that the institutional cultures, as detailed within this study, present challenges that need to be addressed and debated. In line with this dialogue, a clearly articulated philosophy of teacher-education will emerge quite without prompting. In the absence of this debate, there is a strong probability that practice will become ‘bogged down’ with the technical rationality evident in the new policy documents as discussed in section one of this thesis.

This technical rationality might suffice for bureaucratic planning and budgeting purposes. As many of the interviews with educational administrators have indicated, funding through budget allocation is of major concern. The FCAE is currently working under severe budget constraints, and have presented a case for more autonomy from the MoE.
Furthermore, the critique and interpretation of educational policy documents, and the translation of these into the institutions must be done proactively with a clearly defined theoretical base. At USP, there seems to be a severe fragmentation of teacher-education practice. Consequently, a number of faculty staff members have expressed the need for an educational philosophy to be dialogued. This philosophy would contribute to a reduction in the gap between theory and practice in the form of a critical praxis (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). At FCAE, there is a strong personalistic culture of practice, however this is not uncontested. There are indications that FCAE students tend to engage with the programme at a pragmatic level, and do not completely buy into the dominant culture of practice. There are, of course, questions about what will happen when these new teachers enter a school system where the culture tends to be even more exam-focused and authoritarian. A number of interviews with both staff and students thus indicate the need for a meaningful consideration of a critical approach to teacher education, which promotes the constructed and contested nature of reality.

Finally, teachers who have been educated in a culture that focuses on narrowly prescribed roles, however significant those roles might be, will inevitably interact with education in a simple technocratic style. It should not be surprising that the focus will be on examinations and the type of learning defined in Freire’s ‘banking’ model of education. The situation will be the same for those teachers who are part of a fragmented culture of practice, where the engagement becomes part of a routinised and, consequently, alienating experience. A critical form of pedagogy is interested in engaging teachers with a view of society that accepts its constructed nature, and which moves beyond a technocratic form of pedagogy that restricts both our understanding of education, and our hopes for wider social development and transformation.
CHAPTER 8
Conclusions

It has been noted that teacher education in Fiji appears to be operating at two levels: an overt formalisation of programmes that provides a veneer of organisation and structure, and also at the deeper level where the discourses of practice suggest a far more complex web of activity. In spite of the dominance of a routinised, mechanistic practice that was seen to define local culture/s of teacher education in the contexts researched for this thesis, there are indications from the findings that imply a sense of ‘possibilities’. Indeed, it is within this sense of what is ‘possible’ that, it is argued, the value of this thesis resides.

The findings have indicated that both students and teacher-educators, in many cases, articulate a somewhat sceptical view of the practice in which they are involved. Practice, indeed, is not uniform, and their scepticism is evident in a variety of ways. This has been discussed in detail in chapters six and seven. It is argued that those forms of scepticism may well be part of a context of hope in teacher education, even in a small state such as Fiji, which one might have thought would be impacted upon greatly by macro-global economic forces.

This sense of possibilities emerges from an understanding of teacher education as a dialectic relationship between structure and agency. It is argued that an overly deterministic view of teacher education which emphasises the economic over ideological and cultural concerns is incomplete in its understanding. The critical interpretivist approach provides the framework within which the complex interplay between societal structures and interpretive understandings as expressed by social actors are uncovered and analysed. The question of how this agency
relates to the broader social structures is fundamental to an understanding of teacher education processes. The writing of Thompson (1984) was used to suggest that the important issue is not necessarily in whether action is determined by structure or, alternatively, whether a set of actions makes up structure. Rather it is in how “action is structured in everyday contexts and how the structured features of action are, by the very performance of an action, thereby reproduced” (Thompson 1984:148).

Critical interpretivism, as used here, is based on a socially constructed view of teacher education. The ‘facts’ of teacher education, as they are seen and perceived by members of society, do not ‘speak for themselves’. It was argued that an interpretive approach is inadequate for the critical intentions of the study as embodied in the research questions, thus, the need for critical theory. This approach is used at all levels of the research study: in the selection of research questions, the research design and methodology, and the analysis and interpretation of findings.

This theoretical framework was also used to examine the substantive area of research addressed in the thesis, that of teacher education in both ‘local’ and ‘global’ contexts. It was argued that internationally there is a developing primacy of a techno-rational discourse in teacher education, and a dominant ‘literacy’ of teacher education was seen to be embedded in current discourses. The definition of educational agendas by international agencies such as the World Bank has extended from a direct influence on policy formulation in concrete terms to an influence on deep-seated perceptions about teacher education and its role within higher education and wider society. These perceptions relate to our understandings about what education, and subsequently teacher education is for and the best way to effect these aims.
A critical understanding of this permeation of dominant discourses requires an ideological view of reality. Ideology is used in this thesis to show that an understanding of teacher education is inadequately derived from a research methodology that is limited to an examination of ‘perceptions’ of reality at an individual level. Many of our understandings about teacher education are now viewed as ‘fact’ and ‘common-sense’. In fact, many of these assumptions have become so much a part of our common understandings that we do not sufficiently question exactly what education is for. Thus there is a vague notion of education being important for social development, but it is argued that this sometimes becomes so embedded in our view of education that we do not question in what way this is actually the case. As Rowland (2001) has noted:

Critique and contestation are essential features of a democratic educational process. Life in universities, however, is characterised more by a culture of compliance than by one of rational debate. A previous minister for higher education said, at a public lecture a year ago, that the function of university learning was to meet the skills shortage in the global market. This view, stated as if it were fact and common-sense, portrays the university as the compliant servant of the marketplace. Here, as in most government pronouncements, the critical functions of university work go largely unacknowledged (Rowland 2001).

Ideology is understood in this thesis in the saturated sense, as discussed by Raymond Williams (1976) in his adaptation of the work of Gramsci. In writing about hegemony, Williams points out that

This notion of hegemony as deeply saturating the consciousness of society seems to be fundamental…. [It] emphasises the facts of domination…. If what we learn were merely an imposed ideology, or if it were only the isolable meanings and practices of the ruling class, or a section of the ruling class, occupying merely the top of our minds, it would be - and one would be glad - a very much easier thing to overthrow (Williams 1976:205).
As has been discussed, this view of ideology brings into closer focus the role of human agency - praxis - in educational processes.

As part of the exploration of the purposes of teacher education within a critical interpretive framework, the study explores a number of paradigms of teacher education. These paradigms emerge out of, firstly, the structure of the dominant global discourses that pervade current educational discussion, and the ‘economising’ of the educational agenda and educational discourse (as discussed in chapter one). They further emerge out of the theorising of Carr and Kemmis (1986) who use the ideas of Habermas to define a set of three knowledge-constitutive interests which might define knowledge as it is used in education. Thus, reality is defined for individuals needs and interests in three ways: the technical, the practical and the emancipatory. Chapter two of this thesis identifies three corresponding paradigms of teacher education: the techno-rational, the reflective and the critical. These paradigms were used in this study as a heuristic device, and the relationship amongst the three was seen as involving a ‘dialectical tension’ rather than that of directly competing ‘all or nothing’ categories.

Section two of the thesis discusses these macro understandings in the Fiji context, and examines their nuancing through the practice of teacher education. Within the theoretical and substantive framework summarised above, the study examined in close detail the secondary teacher education system in Fiji. The fieldwork examined the major discourses of teachers’ practices evident in the way that secondary teacher education is organised and implemented in Fiji: it questioned the extent to which these discourses signify a particular paradigm of teacher education. Using a qualitative multi-method case study approach, the field research focused upon the two institutional providers of secondary teachers in Fiji, the University of the South
Pacific (USP) and the Fiji College of Advanced Education (FCAE). The aim was to discover what relations exist between global discourses of education and current cultures of local practice. This relationship was explored via an examination of local discourses of practice. Thus, this particular study was interested in a contextualised understanding of the educators’ own theories about teaching and learning, and how these might be evident in the dialogue developed about their experiences. This is what is meant by ‘discourses of practice’.

In summarising the thesis thus far: section one presented the argument that global forces impact on local cultures of practice; section two has explored the resonance of that debate in the context of Fiji. The main finding is that the techno-rational approach to teaching, as it is manifest in the Fiji setting, is not necessarily an inviolable paradigm of oppression. Rather, action by students and teachers to nuance the paradigm and indeed, interweave understandings from other paradigms in teacher education become not only possible, but inevitable. In this way, one might argue that teacher education is indeed a transformative practice. It draws on global structures and paradigms, but through human intervention and agency, meanings can become transformative.

Thus, whilst it is clear that current educational policy developments are structured by global socio-economic concerns, there is far less evidence of a globalising convergence in the actual details of educational practice. It was found that the preponderance of the technocratic approach to teacher education is mediated by the local complexities of teacher education in Fiji. Indeed, the processes of ‘becoming’ a teacher appear to be highly automated where there was a pragmatic form of engagement with the notion of ‘being’ a teacher. This pragmatism evidenced itself in the high levels of self-awareness that students had about the processes of which they were a part.
The data also indicated a set of ‘competing approaches and visions about teacher education’. Whilst teacher professionalism is high on the agenda of those closely involved with teacher education in Fiji, there are, however, indications that any humanistic developments in teacher education that support a more socially critical pedagogy may well become submerged, and therefore change becomes less likely. The reproduction of dominant discourses of teacher education will support the maintenance of the status quo, unless there is a clear and full articulation of the contradictions between the competing discourses surrounding paradigms of teacher education. This articulation points to the important role of agency in any transformative process.

Consequently, there are two areas identified in the findings that impact upon the possibilities of agency and, thus, may limit the potential for change. The first of these is to do with policy matters. It has become apparent that the emergence of a technical form of rationality in educational policy documents is part of a general global tendency towards the ‘economising of education’. This is what Ozga (2000) refers to. In Fiji, the educational discourses, now emerging out of the broader macro socio-economic context, might be said to have the potential to contribute to the construction of a ‘new’ reality of education in Fiji, one that perpetuates the techno-rational assumptions underlying much of the new current policy directions. This will aggravate an already difficult situation. If accepted uncritically, the new globalising discourses surrounding technocratic forms of education will provide the ideological underpinnings to proposed reform movements. This study finds that education in Fiji is already dominated by the technocratic ideology, which has developed as part of the history of the introduction of education to Fiji of education. The effects of a technocratic ideology are exacerbated by issues to do with resources, and with the difficulties of working in a multilingual society that has inherited
English as a medium of instruction but which has yet to fully develop an ability to communicate using English for academic purposes adequately. Thus, if the new policy proceeds to underpin the introduction of educational reforms into Fiji, as they are being introduced elsewhere in the world, the particular problems surrounding education become masked in policy innovations.

Furthermore, it has been seen that the direction for new policy documentation comes from the finance sector. Education is a human endeavour and the technocratic input, although important in some respects, must not be allowed to impose an ideological orientation that veers towards a technical form of rationality. The data indicated that, in the main, teacher-educators did not express any sense of meaningful engagement with the new policy, or with policy matters in general. There was a limited sense of ‘ownership’ brought about in part by the lack of participation in policy processes. Where ‘apathy’ was evident, it emerged from a lack of ownership and meaningful engagement with the processes of educational policy.

Moreover, the various sectors of education in Fiji tended to work in isolation with, for example, a limited holistic interaction between the teacher education institutions and the CDU. Where interaction did take place, it was facilitated largely by individuals who, on their own volition, had established personal contacts: but even so, interaction was limited to the more practical aspects of their work. Additionally, the data pointed to a general perception of the MoE as being overly bureaucratic and resistant to change. There is clearly a need for more communication between the different sectors of education, and an acceptance of each other’s expertise. Again, this points to the importance of agency within broader structural processes.

There is an implication here that teacher education, and education in general, might need to develop a more holistic mode of interaction so as to enhance the processes of policy
development and implementation. There was strong indication in the interviews with teacher-educators that their institutions should take a more proactive stance in these matters.

The second set of factors impacting on ‘agency’ and limiting the possibilities for change has to do with teacher education practice. The data suggests the need for a clearly articulated philosophical and theoretical direction in this area. Ilon (2000) emphasises the importance of such a proactive role in education:

As concerned, committed educational leaders, we must seize the moment to place education in a proactive role that can influence global dynamics…. Our biggest barrier will be the relinquishing of our loyalties to ideologies that require us to react rather than to be shapers of economic knowledge. If we are unwilling or unable to rapidly adapt to the dynamics of a knowledge-based economy, we may forgo our chance to become proactive agents of change. Fields far less capable of developing our diverse and contextually-driven productive capacities may well influence the design of education. The possibility for a radically improved future will be diminished (Ilon 2000:276-281).

At the USP, the lack of a clearly articulated underpinning to educational practice might have contributed to the highly fragmented nature of students’ views of their learning. As compared to the FCAE, students in general did not see themselves as teachers, and offered largely fragmented accounts of their experiences in teacher education. They will thus go out to the schools ‘automated’ by their preparation, but without meaningful engagement. The FCAE culture of practice produces a slightly different set of perceptions. There was a strong emphasis on the personalistic, and on the preparation of the teacher as a role model who embodies moral values. This culture was so strong at the college, it was sometimes caricatured. Even so, at the level of human agency, there was contestation of this dominant culture. There was a clear contradiction between what might be seen as the dominant culture acting at one level and the critique of this culture firstly by students, and to a lesser extent by staff. So although students could recite at
will the main aspects of their learning programmes that they knew were important to their lecturers, some of them were also clearly sceptical of the whole process in which they were engaged. In these cases, engagement was, in its deepest sense, pragmatic. It might be argued that this type of engagement reflects a technocratic approach to teacher education, in that there is a rationalising of experience in a very technical style where, in spite of the awareness of the weaknesses of the system, the participants remain ‘engaged’ nonetheless.

Consequently, it is evident that both students at USP and those at FCAE have learnt how to ‘play the game’ as it were, or to ‘play’ at being teachers. They participate mechanically in the collective understandings of the institutions, but many of them are fully aware of what is going on. Students were, in effect, ‘street wise’. For example, at USP they quickly worked out what was required of them to pass the TP assessment and then went about doing it. Furthermore, the interview response was often pragmatic in this regard: they too just want to pass their exams, and get a job. A society which sees the knowledge economy, and the requisite ‘training’ required for this new economy, as being of paramount importance, will do little by way of elevating the professional status of its teachers. And as the data on reasons for wanting to become a teacher has indicated, the teaching profession will continue to recruit youngsters who would rather be somewhere else.

Thus, it was identified in the thesis, that the dominant ‘banking’ culture embodied in examination-oriented, automated and routinised teaching has the potential to be reproduced and perpetuated, whereas a reflective approach to teacher education may be appropriated and interpreted in a technocratic manner. This severely limits the role that scepticism towards current practice might produce.
The data shows, in fact, that participants were re-interpreting their experiences with the technorational cultures of practice in quite automated ways. When students go out to schools after their preparation they take with them what they have gained from the cultures of practice, rather than what is being overtly promoted in any formalised sense. As the findings have indicated, the culture of practice, as a hidden curriculum, tends to emphasise the ‘banking’ model of education. Students are primarily concerned about fulfilling the requirements, and passing the assessment. The models of teacher education, as promoted in their training environment, tend not to have a major impact on their understandings, and most students expressed a significant scepticism about their learning.

Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 2, that understanding is further perpetuated by the culture of the schools, which is dominated by the banking model of education. So in spite of the fact that in the college and university, teaching staff are generally averse to a banking model along with its underlying technocratic assumptions, in reality, this is what students tend to take on from the institutional culture of practice. However, it is very important to note that a major finding of this study is that students are not unaware of these contradictions. The unfortunate aspect of this situation is that they seem to have accepted the reality as simply reflective of ‘the way things are’.

That the reflective paradigm is inadequate for understanding the processes in becoming a teacher is illustrated by a further contradiction that emerges from this study. There appears to be an irony in the demand that teachers be concerned about social issues related to human capital development and culture in a situation where they are effectively being trained to maintain the status quo. On the one hand, there is an emphasis on ‘traditional’ culture, on the self, and on the
role model aspect of teaching. On the other, there is the expressed desire to move out of a ‘traditional’ mode of operation in order to encourage critical thinking, to effect changes, and ultimately to change society. Education, and improved teacher education, will not on its own necessarily bring about social development and transformation.

There is a possibility of this happening, however, as this study indicates, education does not always work as planned. Firstly, there are other social reforms that need to be carried out if education is to work alongside these other institutions to bring about social transformation. Secondly, educational policy is inadequately developed, and teacher education in Fiji does not have an overt driving philosophy. Thirdly, the ideal of policy is not having the intended outcomes. Policy documents seem to suggest that education can do much for society, and that the individual benefits of education can translate easily to a wider societal benefit. This would be a good thing if it were realistic. However, the reality of the cultures of practice, as this research study has found out, shows that this is currently a misplaced optimism about education.

Thus, where there is an acceptance of the underlying economic basis of educational reforms by teachers, it might be interpreted as being part of the continuing process of desensitisation to the wider socio-economic influences on schooling. Also, as stated earlier by Rowland (2001), the promotion of a view of higher education as being primarily about meeting the skills shortage in the global market, is now being promoted as if it were fact and common-sense, an indication of how firmly embedded the technocratic ideology has become.

Consequently, there is a need to make more explicit what is an implicit understanding in much of teacher education in Fiji. This implicit understanding should be harnessed so as to promote a more critical pedagogy. Students are well aware of the artificial nature of the situation that they
are in, and have worked out ways to ‘play the game’. This is a negative form of engagement that does not produce desired change. This form of engagement with the teacher education programme will contribute to the repetitive cycle of training and teaching that embodies a technical rationality, and which separates theory and practice as discussed by Britzman (1986). It ties in well with the notion of ideology as being something that is embedded in people’s consciousness. As Raymond Williams (1976) points out, ideology is saturated in the consciousness. In order to bring about change, this view of ideology will become useful in developing strategies to engage the ‘consciousness’ in a more critical manner. That there remains some possibility of this happening is evident from the previous discussion. Thus, the inadequacies of the technocratic and personalistic paradigms on their own to explain the current situation in Fiji is evident. These paradigms need to be frameworked by a ideological and socially located paradigm that places the issue of transformation more visibly in its remit, and that works from the understandings and perceptions that educators have about their own practice.

In some senses, this thesis has been an exploratory one. It set out to try to make sense of the global and local issues which combine to impact on the policy and practice of teacher education in local contexts. The case study of Fiji has shown that global forces impacting on teacher education are mediated by local contextual factors, included within which is the central role of human agency. This does not in any way make negligible the effects of macro socio-economic forces of a global nature, but suggests that the way in which these global forces work internationally are largely dependent on issues of a contextual nature. These issues point to the crucial role of a critical form of agency, where the scepticism encountered in discussions with both teacher education staff and students might be channelled into a critical pedagogy of transformation.
There now emerges from the discussion an indication of further research that could be undertaken in other localised settings. In this way, a broader framework could be established for an interpretation of the impact of global and macro socio-economic forces on local systems of teacher education. A second set of research studies within the Fiji context would also contribute to this framework of interpretation. These studies would work from the understandings produced in this thesis to focus on more specific aspects of the context of teacher education policy and practice. For example, the data collected for this study has pointed to the contradictions surrounding the use of the terms ‘culture’, ‘custom’ and ‘tradition’ in educational settings, and it is important that further research analysing the ideological construction of these terms be carried out here.

Finally, the emphasis in this thesis on the broader social humanistic aspects of education, and the role that teacher education plays here, does not ignore the economic base. It is accepted that education should make a major contribution to the creation of wealth in society, and that indeed human resource development is of general importance. Yet, it needs to be emphasised that education is really about far more than just the human capital needs of society, and that

… public institutions like education have commitments beyond those of the economy and efficiency and the profit and loss ledger; that it must help students develop constructive and critical voices; that it must empower a level of participation greater than that required purely for economic purposes; that it must help the next adult generation to vocalise and search for ways of creating the good society, [and] that it must be concerned with issues of equality and social justice…. (Bottery 2000:2).
The implications of this study, as discussed above, add to the debate on the role of education, and more specifically teacher education, within society. The findings of this research study show that the policy-practice context in Fiji is shaped by a complex interplay of local and global factors, and within this, the dialectic of structure and agency. It is hoped that these findings will inform future policy development considerations and discussions.
APPENDIX 2:
Fiji Public Finance Management Act Extracts

(Source: Government of Fiji, 1999b:93-95 and 122-123)
APPENDIX 3:
Teacher Education Programme Outlines

1. Bachelor of Education Secondary
   Offered by the University of the South Pacific

2. Diploma in Education
   Offered by the Fiji College of Advanced Education
APPENDIX 4:
FCAE Supplementary Documents

1. FCAE strategic plan
2. FCAE rules for students
APPENDIX 5
Interview outlines

1. USP/FCAE students
2. USP Teacher educators
3. FCAE teacher educators
4. Teachers
5. USP administration
6. Ministry of Education
7. Curriculum Development Unit/MoE
8. Trade Unionists
Figure 1: Planning in Education

Figure 2: Map of the Fiji Islands

Source: http://www.sidsnet.org/pacific/usp/~gisunit/pacatlas/Cframes/fiji/info.htm
Figure 3: Map of Fiji in the Pacific Islands


Landbeck R. and Mugler F. (1994) *Approaches to Study and Conceptions of Learning of Students at the University of the South Pacific*. Suva: Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, USP.


University of the South Pacific (2000b) *The School of Humanities Handbook 2000.* Suva: USP.

University of the South Pacific (n.d.) *USP Strategic Plan: Planning for the 4th decade.* Suva: USP.


Newspapers: *Fiji Times, Fiji Sun,* and *Fiji Daily Post*. References to particular articles made within thesis text.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW OUTLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>USP/FCAE STUDENTS</td>
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There are seven categories of questions that I will be asking you to think about for our discussion. Within each category, I have listed examples of the types of questions that I am interested in. There are no wrong or right answers. I am interested in your experiences and in your opinions.

1. **Yourself**
   - Tell me about your experiences with teachers as a school student. Can you remember any teachers that you think were ‘good’ teachers?
   - How did you get into the teaching field?

2. **Teaching Practicum**
   - Can you talk about some of the worries that you had while you were out at the school? Are there any incidents that stand out as being significant?

3. **Perceptions of self as a teacher**
   - Do you see yourself as a ‘teacher’? In Fiji society, does being a teacher have any special meaning for you? What are some of the roles that you will play as a teacher?

4. **Teacher education**
   - Are teachers ‘made’ or ‘born’? What do you think is the best way to prepare ‘good’ teachers?
   - What kind of knowledge have you gained here at FCAE/USP about becoming a ‘good’ teacher? What aspects are given special emphasis?
   - How can the programme here at FCAE/USP be improved upon?

5. **Education and society**
   - Why do you think education/schooling is important in Fiji?
   - What do you think is wrong with our education system in Fiji?

6. **The English Curriculum**
   - Why should English as a subject be included in the school curriculum?
   - What is your view about the way in which English as a subject is currently taught in schools?
   - Will you try to make changes when you become a full time teacher? Why are these changes necessary?

7. **Education and Change**
   - Is there a relationship between education and change? What factors inhibit change and what factors encourage change?

Thank you for your participation. The information gathered in this interview will be kept confidential. Where data is quoted, your name will not be used.
INTERVIEW OUTLINE:
TEACHER EDUCATORS USP

• The questions listed within each category serve as examples of the types of issues of interest. The interview is a semi-structured one, and there will be flexibility in its progression.
• Your views on some of these issues might already be documented in written form (such as journal articles, written versions of speeches, lecture notes), and I would be grateful for a copy of these where available.

1. Biography
• How long have you been involved in teacher education, both in Fiji and elsewhere? What significant changes have you noted in teacher education over this period of time?

2. Teacher Education and Policy
• Are you aware of any formal secondary teacher-education policy for Fiji (or any other regional country)?
• At USP, how useful are policy-related documents such as its Mission Statement and Strategic Plan? As far as you are aware, has the existence of these documents impacted in any significant way on the work of the department?
• What are the external/local forces and issues driving policy development processes in education at USP? How is policy defined for the USP? What is the role of funding?

3. USP’s role in teacher education
• Please outline your current responsibilities at USP.
• Is the University a suitable home for teacher education?
• How would you describe the model of pre-service teacher education that the USP works with in its Pre-Service Teacher Education programmes? What factors have influenced the development of this type of model of teacher education?
• Do you think the department has some sort of overriding philosophy of education? (does it need one?) Where does this philosophy come from? Is this philosophy translated into practice in the way in which it is intended?

4. Your approach to education
• How does this (previous question) tie in with your own approach to education?
• What type of teacher should USP prepare for Fiji’s needs?
• In your opinion, do you think that this institution is succeeding in this role? How could the USP improve its work? What factors impede USP’s potential role in education?
• At a general level, what kinds of changes do you think teacher education has the potential to bring about? How does USP as a higher education institution try to bring about these changes?
• How successful do you think the pre-service teacher education programmes here at USP have been in encouraging and bringing about change?
5. **Your specialist role in teacher education within USP**
   - For subject specialists: What is your view about the way in which your subject area (eg. English) is currently taught in schools? What types of changes are you trying to bring about through your work here? How successful do you think you are? What factors might be inhibiting change?
   - For education specialists: (Similar to previous)
   - Is the theory-practice dichotomy an issue for you? How so?

6. **The Teaching Practicum (TP)**
   - How much importance does the department attach to the TP? What function does the TP play in the preparation of secondary school teachers for Fiji? How successful do you think the TP has been over the years? What improvements can be made?
   - What factors prevent your student teachers from implementing new ideas when they are out on TP?

7. **The Fiji Education Review Commission**
   - If you have had a chance to look at the work of the commission: what is your view of (a) how the whole review process was organised, (b) the outcomes of the review, (c) the changes that might happen as a result of the review, and (d) the specific implications of the review for teacher education.

8. **USP and other institutions**
   - Does your work at USP bring you into contact with other sections of the community (both education and non-education based) in Fiji? (eg. The Ministry of Education, CDU, FCAE, schools, sporting bodies, religious organisations). What is the nature of this contact?

9. **Other Issues**
   - What are ‘the’ issues in teacher education as far you are concerned?

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Thank you for your participation. The information gathered in this interview will be used only as you have indicated in your signed consent form.
INTERVIEW OUTLINE:
FCAE TEACHER EDUCATORS

There are eight categories of questions that I will be asking you to think about for our discussion. The questions listed within each category serve only as examples of the types of issues of interest. The interview itself is a semi-structured one, and there will be flexibility in the progression of the interview.

**Biography**
- How long have you been involved in teacher education, both in Fiji and elsewhere? What significant changes have you noted in teacher education over this period of time?

**Teacher Education and Policy**
- Are you aware of any formal secondary teacher education policy for Fiji? How is policy defined for the FCAE? What is the role of funding?
- How is/should education policy (be) related to broader national development policy? What prioritisation should take place for Fiji’s needs?

**FCAE’s role in education**
- How would you describe the model of pre-service teacher education that the FCAE works with in its 2-year Diploma in Education programme? What factors have influenced the development of this type of model of teacher education?
- Do you think the institution has some sort of overriding philosophy of education? Where does this philosophy come from?
- How does this tie in with your own approach to education in general, and initial teacher education specifically? What should the role of initial teacher education be? What type of teacher should FCAE prepare for Fiji’s needs?
- In your opinion, do you think that this institution is succeeding in this role? How could the FCAE improve its work? What factors impede FCAE’s potential role in education?
- At a general level, what kinds of changes do you think teacher education has the potential to bring about? How does FCAE as a teacher education institution try to bring about these changes?
- How successful do you think the Diploma in Education here at the FCAE has been in encouraging and bringing about change?

**Your specialist role in teacher education within FCAE**
- For subject specialists: What is your view about the way in which your subject area (eg. English) is currently taught in secondary schools? What types of changes are you trying to effect through your work at the college? How successful are you? What factors might be inhibiting change?
- For education specialists: (similar to previous)
- Is the theory-practice dichotomy an issue for you? How so?

**The Teaching Practicum (TP)**
- How much importance does the college attach to the TP? What function does the TP play in the preparation of secondary school teachers for Fiji? How successful do you think the TP has been over the years? What improvements can be made?
• What factors prevent your student teachers from implementing new ideas when they are out on TP?

**The Fiji Education Review Commission**
• If you have had a chance to look at the work of the commission: what is your view of (a) how the whole review process was organised, (b) the outcomes of the review, (c) the changes that might happen as a result of the review, and (d) the specific implications of the review for teacher education.

**FCAE and other institutions**
• How closely do you, through your work at the FCAE, work with other sections of the community (both education and non-education) in Fiji? (eg. The Ministry of Education, CDU, USP, schools, sporting bodies, religious organisations). What is the nature of this relationship?

**Other Issues**
• What are ‘the’ issues in teacher education as far you are concerned? (cover those not emphasised in the interview)

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**Thank you for your participation. The information gathered in this interview will used only as you have indicated in your signed consent form.**

Your views on some of these issues might already be documented in written form (such as journal articles, written versions of speeches, lecture notes), and I would be grateful for a copy of these where available.
There are six categories of questions that I will be asking you to think about for our discussion. Within each category, I have listed some examples of the types of questions that I am interested in. There are no wrong or right answers. I am interested in your experiences and in your opinions.

**Yourself**
- How did you get into the teaching field?
- Please outline your current responsibilities at your current school. What have been some of the significant influences on you as a teacher?

**Specific questions on English Curriculum**
- How long have you taught English? How do you feel about it? How do students generally respond to English classes? What difficulties do they have with the subject?
- Does English as a subject have a special role to play in the school curriculum? Why should English as a subject be included in the school curriculum?
- What is your view about the way in which English as a subject is generally taught in schools?
- What changes have you tried to make over the years? Why were these changes necessary?
- How successful were you in bringing about changes? What factors inhibit change in English teaching and learning at the secondary level?

**Perceptions of self as a teacher**
- What should the role of a teacher be? What does it mean to be a teacher for you personally?
- In Fiji society, does being a teacher have any special meaning for you?

**Teacher education**
- What can you remember about the teacher education programme at USP?
- Are teachers ‘made’ or ‘born’? What do you think is the best way to prepare ‘good’ teachers?

**Education and society**
- Why do you think education/schooling is important in Fiji?
- What do you think is wrong with our education system in Fiji?

**Education and Change**
- Is there a relationship between education and change? What factors inhibit change and what factors encourage change?

**Other Issues**
- What are ‘the’ issues in the teaching of English as far you are concerned? (cover those not emphasised in the interview)

Thank you for your participation. The information gathered in this interview will be kept confidential. Where data is quoted, names will not be used.
INTERVIEW OUTLINE
University Administration

1. In its Strategic Plan, the USP identifies Teacher Education as one of its 5 academic priority areas. Can you provide some history to this. What mechanisms does the university and more specifically, the university administration, have in place for following up this prioritisation?

2. What are the external as opposed to local forces and considerations currently driving policy development processes in education at USP? How significant do you think the forces of globalisation are on the work of the University in education?

3. In your opinion, what should be the link between education policy and broader national development policy? Does Fiji have any special needs that require attention?

4. Education, through schooling, is today widely perceived as imperative to social development and transformation. What is your view here? At societal level, what kinds of changes do you think teacher education has the potential to bring about?

5. Is there an ‘ideal teacher type’ that you think the university should be preparing for Fiji’s needs?

6. If you have had a chance to look at the work of the Fiji Education 2000 Review Commission: what is your view of (a) how the whole review process was organised, (b) the outcomes of the review, (c) the changes that might happen as a result of the review, and (d) the specific implications of the review for USP.

Thank you

Your views on some of these issues might already be documented in written form (such as journal papers and speech texts), and I would be grateful for a copy of these where they are available.
INTERVIEW OUTLINE
MoE

- Is there an ‘ideal teacher type’ that you think we should be preparing for Fiji’s needs?

- Please outline current teacher-education policy for Fiji. Are there policy guidelines governing teacher professional development? Is this policy formalised in any way?

- How is this type of policy developed? What are the external as opposed to local forces and considerations currently driving teacher-related policy development processes? How significant do you think the forces of economic globalisation are on education processes here?

- What kinds of changes do you think teacher education has the potential to bring about in Fiji?

- Now that the report of the Fiji Education 2000 Review Commission/Panel is complete, what follow-up mechanisms has/is the Education ministry put/putting in place?

Thank you

Your views on some of these issues might already be documented in written form (such as speech texts), and I would be grateful for a copy of these where they are available
INTERVIEW OUTLINE
CDU/MoE

- Please outline the type of work you are involved in on a day-to-day basis.

- Is there an ‘ideal teacher type’ that you think we should be preparing for Fiji’s needs? (Please comment both in general terms and for your school-subject area.)

- Are you aware of current teacher-education policy for Fiji? Are there policy guidelines governing teacher professional development? Is this policy formalised in any way? How is this type of policy developed?

- What kinds of changes do you think teacher education has the potential to bring about in Fiji?

- If you have had a chance to look at the work of the Education Review Commission 2000: what is your view of (a) how the whole review process was organised, (b) the outcomes of the review, (c) the changes that might happen as a result of the review, and (d) the specific implications of the review for your own work.

Thank you

Your views on some of these issues might already be documented in written form (such as speech texts and other papers), and I would be grateful for a copy of these where they are available
INTERVIEW OUTLINE
Trade Unionists

- Please outline the type of work you are currently involved in.

- Education, through schooling, is today widely perceived as imperative to social development and transformation. What is your view here? At societal level, what kinds of changes do you think teacher education has the potential to bring about in Fiji?

- Are you aware of any current teacher-education policy for Fiji? Is this policy formalised in any way? Are there guidelines governing teacher professional development? Is there an ‘ideal teacher type’ that you think we should be preparing for Fiji’s needs?

- What has been your organisation’s role in teacher-related policy discussions? What are the external as opposed to local forces and considerations currently driving teacher-related policy development processes? How significant do you think the forces of economic globalisation are on education processes here?

- In your opinion, what should be the link between education policy and broader national development policy? Does Fiji have any special needs that require attention?

- If you have had a chance to look at the work of the Fiji Education 2000 Review Commission: what is your view of (a) how the whole review process was organised, (b) the outcomes of the review, (c) the changes that might happen as a result of the review, and (d) the specific implications of the review for your own work.

Thank you

Your views on some of these issues might already be documented in written form (such as speech texts), and I would be grateful for a copy of these where they are available