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**The Fijian Diploma of Nursing Curriculum:
An indigenous case study of a curriculum change**

A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Nursing

at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand

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2011



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This thesis explores an educational change process in Fiji and used a case study methodology to examine the introduction of the 2004 Diploma of Nursing programme in the Fiji School of Nursing. The three-year competency based curriculum was developed and funded by the Australian government through the Fiji Health Sector Improvement Project (FHSIP) with limited participation of the local teachers at the Fiji School of Nursing. Many problems beset the programme, beginning with its rushed implementation at the end of an academic year and the incompleteness of the curriculum document. Teachers questioned the quality and nature of the competency based curriculum, and the absence of many supportive networks and resources to facilitate curriculum change. The majority of the staff did not understand the competency-based nature of the curriculum and its requirements.

Using the *vanua* indigenous research framework and Fullan's educational change theory to guide and inform the case study, qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were employed, including documentary analysis, participant observations and interviews. Talanoa, a culturally appropriate method of data collection for Pasifika people was used in both individual and group interviews. The research found indigenous nurses continue to be colonised and made to reproduce western ideologies and nursing values, perpetuated by the use of external educational aid and expertise. The execution of the curriculum project and the decision-making flowed from the Ministry of Health down to the Fiji School of Nursing, without consultation with the school's staff, reflecting the former colonial administration where such a top-down approach was acceptable. Neo-colonialism is therefore regarded as the dominant paradigm where indigenous nursing leaders emulated the dominant behaviour of their former colonisers on their fellow indigenous subordinates. Moreover, it is argued here that foreign-influenced curricula continued to produce nurses who are not adequately prepared to care for the indigenous Fijians, and contributed to the attrition of Fijian nurses to countries whose values underpin the curriculum.

Dedication

To my dear mother, Adi Ela Walesi Volavola who patiently supported me throughout my years away from my family and was called to rest shortly before my Oral Examination, this thesis is dedicated to her memory.

Acknowledgement

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose for them” (Romans 8:28)

I wish to first of all acknowledge the hand of Almighty God who has made everything possible for me and this thesis is a testament to His Glory. Many people, organisations and institutions contributed to the completion of this work and they deserve to be acknowledged in this thesis.

My supervisors Professor Julie Boddy of Massey University Turitea campus and Associate Professor Denise Wilson, formerly of Massey University (Albany campus) and now of Auckland University of Technology have worked hard to keep me on track and kept the midnight oil burning during those lonely nights in the Social Science Tower. I thank God for your lives and I will be always grateful for your professionalism, kindness and your counsel rendered freely during the past three years at Massey. I am grateful to the staff of the School of Health Sciences for all the support and friendly advices. I especially wish to thank Bert Teekman for providing me a sounding board to bounce off ideas and curriculum issues in the first year of my enrolment. Dr Regina Pernice deserves special acknowledgement for having the ‘time’ to sit and listen and critique my English in the midst of a busy academic teaching load. My warmest appreciation also goes to the staff at Turitea campus for the support and friendship that blossomed over the years at Massey. I wish to mention especially Professor Steve La Grow, Professor Jennie Carrier, Dr Susan Phibbs, Associate Professor Cheryl Benn, Dr Gretchen Good, Ann Flintoff, Claire Minton, Stacey Wilson, Dr Martin Wood, Jeanette Wirangi, Nancy Braithwaite and Rebecca Knell. I would like to thank Dr Stephen Neville, Helen Chan, Alison Parrett and the staff at Albany campus for making my stay in the North Shore one of the best and memorable in New Zealand. My appreciation also goes to the library staff at Massey University especially Nicola McCarthy and Chris Good for being so helpful and always patient with my many problems with Endnote!

Professor Tai Black, Dr Maureen Holdaway, Dr Hope Tupara, Julia Taiapa and the staff of the School of Maori Studies made sure I found my footing in New Zealand and 'The Hill' was always home away from home. I pray that one day God will provide me with the opportunity to reciprocate the warmth and hospitality rendered so freely during my sojourn in New Zealand.

Alma Mater Professor Nancy J. Kinross has been and always will be a part of my academic journey. I also respectfully acknowledge with fond memories the lives of two close friends and mentors who have been called to eternal rest before the completion of this thesis. The late Marion Pybus and Dr Margaret Idour will always be remembered for their contributions towards my professional and academic development. My mentors Adi Litia Setitaia and Mrs Salaseini Tora are gratefully acknowledged for the inspiration to give nursing and Fiji nurses my best and this thesis is a testimony to that commitment.

To my fellow *Pacificans* at Massey, Professor Sitaleki Finau, Associate Professor Rukmani Gounder, Dr Winifereti Nainoca, Sunlou Liuvaie, Sesimani Havea and Litea Meo-Sewabu, *vinaka vakalevu* for all the support and encouragement for the past three years.

Organisations and institutions

I wish to acknowledge the contribution and support of the following organisations and institutions for their contribution to my programme. The Ministry of I Taukei Affairs for the two-year scholarship and research funds which provided me the support that I needed at the right time of my study. I therefore record my most sincere gratitude to the then Permanent Secretary Ratu Meli Bainimarama and the scholarship committee; Mrs Seruwaia Hong Tiy, Ratu Semi Seruvakula, Mrs Leba Mataitini and the scholarship officers at Knolly Street for the help and support over the past three years.

I thank the former Permanent Secretary for Health Dr Lepani Waqatakirewa and Ministry of Health Research Committee for facilitating and supporting my research in Fiji and the Fiji School of Nursing Faculty who formed the principle participants to this study. I also wish to thank most sincerely the divisional nursing managers from CWM hospital, Northern Health, Lautoka hospital, Sigatoka hospital and Nadi hospital for

their parts in facilitating my data collection from their sites. I am indebted to the students and the graduates of the 2004 Diploma of Nursing programme who participated in my study. The clinical preceptors both in the hospitals as well as in the health centres are acknowledged for their assistance and for their willingness to be part of my research. The TISI Sangam School of Nursing Director Mr Kavekini Neidiri and staff also deserve special mention for their willingness to participate and contribute to this study.

Fijian community New Zealand

I wish to acknowledge the support of the All Nations Christian Fellowship in Fiji and New Zealand especially the General Superintendent Rev. Epeli Ratabacaca, Rev. Viliame Rokoqica, Rev. Ilaitia Tagituimua, Talatala Waisea Kadawa and Talatala Jone Tubui Ravulo. The Broadway Methodist Church, the Fijian community in Palmerston North and Mrs Asenaca Chapelle and family are also acknowledged for their fellowship and support throughout the period of my candidature.

Family

I wish to acknowledge my family at *Cuvu, Nadroga* for the never-ending support and encouragement towards my study. Financial support from *Nakuruvarua* and the *Nahina* Trust made a lot of difference and provided much needed support for me during my years at Massey. To my sisters and brothers, thank you for your support and prayers.

This thesis would not have been possible without the sacrifice and support provided by my husband Dr Sitiveni Vudiniabola and my three children Samanunu, Caginitoba and Etika. You patiently endured the many years of my absence from home, the silent tears and frustrations of an absent mother and wife, this thesis is for you.

Glossary of Fijian words

B

Bula: Greeting, literally means 'life' or 'health'

Bure: House mainly for the men

I

I dola ni cakacaka: Ceremony to mark the commencement of work, project

I Sevusevu: Yaqona ceremony to present visitors or guests or relatives to ask permission to enter village or to work in a Fijian community or household.

K

Kabekabe: food gifting in the Nadroga dialect

Kalou: God/Supernatural deity

Kalou Vu: Ancestral spirit

Kaukauwa: Strong or powerful

M

Mamaqi: Stinginess

Mataqali: Clan

T

Ta'ita'i: food gifting (in the dialect of Udu)

Tekiteki: Decorative flower behind the ear or the on hair

Tiko I bure: Initiation of young boys through circumcision after which they can live in the 'bure' like adults.

Tokatoka: sub-clan

Turaga: Chief

V

Vale:	Dwelling house
Vakaturaga:	Chiefly demeanour or chief like manners
Vanua:	Land, Government or people
Veidokai:	Respectful
Veinanumi:	Considerate of others
Veirokorokovi:	Humility /mutually respectful towards others
Veivakaturagataki :	To accord respectful gestures towards others
Viti:	Fijian for Fiji

Y

Yaqona:	Kava or traditional drink made from the root or stem of the Piper Methysticum
Yavu:	Raised foundation of earth mound of a house
Yavusa:	Tribe, largest patrilineal grouping of families related by blood; may also be referred to as the vanua or government.

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