Exploring Home and School Factors Affecting the
Performance of Form7 Fijian Students

by

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Requirements for the Degree of

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

Statement by Author

I hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my very own and where I have used the thoughts and works of others I have clearly indicated this.

Maikeli Tokalauvere (S86506320)

Statement by Supervisors

We hereby confirm that the work contained in this thesis is the work of Maikeli Tokalauvere unless otherwise stated. The thesis does not contain material that has already been used to any substantial extent for a comparable purpose.

Associate Professor Akhilanand Sharma

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ABSTRACT

This study explored various Home and School Factors affecting the academic performance of Fijian students in Form 7. It briefly sketched the history of education in Fiji, from the early missionaries, through the British Colonial Administration period to the present day post-independence Fiji, highlighting their influence on formal education in Fiji. It also dwelled on the Fijian culture with its traditional obligations and values and the failure of the Fiji Government's affirmative actions in achieving its targets for the Centres of Excellence, designated by the Ministry Of Education. Political interference and different policies by successive governments have not improved but rather seen as detrimental to the performance of Fijian students in Form 7.

Quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilised to identify the problem of home and school factors affecting the academic performance of students in Form 7. Archival records from the Examination Section of the Ministry of Education were collected to identify the high and low performing schools. Questionnaires were then distributed to Form 7 Fijian students while structured interviews were carried out with Form 7 stakeholders, which included principals, heads of departments, senior education officers and teacher union representatives. Observations and talanoa sessions were also used to complement the gaps in the questionnaires from students and the structured interviews for the stakeholders.

The study and findings are in two parts; the first consists of the Home Factors and the second part relates to School Factors. The adherence (and non-adherence) by schools to the Form 7 students' intake-policy was a key factor associated with the poor academic performance of Fijian students in Form 7. All Fijian-managed schools ignored the Ministry of Education intake-policy, while all Indian-managed schools on the other hand, adhered strictly to the Ministry's intake-policy and as a result, achieved comparatively excellent results over the past five years surveyed in this study.
Fijian home culture, environment and orientation were also seen as contributing to the poor performance of Fijian students. The level of education of parents, parents’ aspirations and orientations and home culture determine the ability of students to succeed in schools. The other variables affecting performance of Fijian students in Form 7 were the irrelevant and outdated colonial curriculum, the lack of expert teachers in Form 7 and the ineffective leadership of school principals in Fijian-managed schools. Similarly, quality staff developments, continuous improvement of instructions and collaboration amongst staff are needed. In evaluating how successful a school is, the following factors came out strongly: (i) student's intake policy, (ii) students' attendance, (iii) school sizes and class sizes, (iv) recorded quality instructions by teachers, (v) leadership of principals, (vi) school culture, (vii) professional development, inclusitivity and (viii) the use of technology.

While the quality of marks in all the Indian-managed secondary schools steadily increased, the quality of marks in Fijian-managed secondary schools continued to decrease. This research, urges stakeholders in education like the Ministry of Education, other government ministries, community, parents, teachers, police, universities, schools and students to act now by collaborating and talking about solutions recommended during PTA meetings, board meetings, village and district meetings and school pocket meetings.

Based on these findings, the study recommends policies and ways and means to improve the quality passes amongst Form 7 Fijian students. Further, some possible areas for further research are also suggested.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**ACRONYMS**

ACS  Adi Cakobau School  
ACT  American College Testing Program  
CDU  Curriculum Development Unit  
EI  Emotional Intelligence  
EO  Education Officer  
FAB  Fijian Affairs Board  
FALD  Foundation Areas of Learning and Development  
FJC  Fiji Junior Certificate Examination  
FSLCE  Fiji School Leaving Certificate Examination  
FSFE  Fiji Seventh Form Examination  
F7  Form 7  
HIV  Human Immunodeficiency Virus  
HODs  Heads of Departments  
HP schools  High Performing schools  
IT  Information Technology  
KLAs  Key Learning Areas  
KWL  Know What to Learn  
LP schools  Low Performing schools  
LPS  Lau Provincial School  
MLOs  Major Learning Outcomes  
MOE  Ministry of Education  
NAEP  National Assessment of Educational Progress  
NASSP  National Association of Secondary School Principals  
NCF  National Curriculum Framework  
NPEC  National Postsecondary Education Cooperative  
NTC  Nasinu Teachers College  
PEO  Principal Education Officer  
PTA  Parents Teachers Association  
QVS  Queen Victoria School  
RKS  Ratu Kadavulevu School  
SDL  Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua  
SEB  Socio-economic Background  
SEO  Senior Education Officer  
SES  Socio-economic Status
SQ3R  Survey Question Read Recite Review
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USP University of the South Pacific
WEAC Wisconsin Education Association Council
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

- A Brief History of Formal Education in Fiji
- Fijian Culture, Obligations and Education Initiatives
- Justification for the Choice of Topic

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces three key elements pertaining to this research. First, it presents a brief historical sketch of formal education in Fiji, from the early missionaries through the British Colony era until the present day post-independence Fiji. The historical outline is important to this study because it establishes the early European influence. As shown in Table 1, the landmark years with time intervals over which new arrivals or changes occur have impacted on and shaped Fiji’s education system as seen today.

Table 1: Timeline on Early European Contact and Fiji Education Key Developments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GENERAL - Trade and Governance</th>
<th>EDUCATION - Key Developments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1804 - Sandalwood trade.</td>
<td>1835 - Missionaries arrived in Lakeba.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1820 - Beeche-de-mer trade.</td>
<td>1854 - Cakobau converts to Christianity.</td>
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<td>1822 - European settlement in Levuka established.</td>
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<td>1874 - Deed of Cession; Fiji a British colony.</td>
<td>1907 - Queen Victoria School.</td>
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<td>1879 - Arrival of indentured labourers from India</td>
<td>1908 - Lau Provincial School.</td>
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<td>1882 - Capital moved from Levuka to Suva.</td>
<td>1921 - North Provincial School (14 yrs after QVS.)</td>
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<td>1904 — Legislative Council reconstituted with nominated as well as elected members.</td>
<td>1942 — Practical curriculum in Provincial schools</td>
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<td>1940 - Native Land Trust Board established.</td>
<td>1947 - Northern, Eastern and Southern Provincial schools amalgamated and moved to Lodoni.</td>
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<td>1964 - Member system introduced with Council members overseeing government depts.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1970 - Fiji Independence (96 years after Cession).</td>
<td>1983 - $3.5 million annually for Fijian Education.</td>
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<td>1992 - $2.6 million for establishing Form 7.</td>
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<td>2001 - Affirmative action: Education blue print.</td>
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The second part concerns indigenous Fijian culture and Government’s efforts to educate Fijian students through various initiatives, including the affirmative action outlined in Parliament (of Fiji) Act No. 5 of 2001. Thirdly, justifications are provided for undertaking this study, its relevance, the research questions posed and their underlying objectives.
1.1 FORMAL EDUCATION IN FIJI

1.1.1 Education by the Early Missionaries and Colonial Administration (1835-1970)

This discussion on the formal education introduced by the early missionaries and education by the colonial administration looks at the underlying intention and primary motives of the two providers and the effects these have on their choice of (i) curriculum, (ii) method of instruction and language of instruction, (iii) assessment procedures, and the degree to which these choices catered for the needs of students and the wider community. These factors are compared to the education system that evolved to the present day Fiji.

Formal education in Fiji was first established in 1835 in the Lau Group by the Methodist Church missionaries. The education they administered was motivated by their desire to convert the natives from their pagan ways, and primarily, to spread Christianity. As the Bible was translated and printed in the Fijian language, the missionaries taught the natives to read, understand and to follow the teachings of the Bible. The curriculum included reading, writing, character education and other important basic life skills (Mangubhai, 1984). Missionary schools established throughout Fiji. There were no 'drop-outs' or 'push-outs', as prevalent in schools today, because in this early system, every student fitted in, and contributed to the community at the end of their education. The curriculum was seen to actually enhance the lives of the people.

Fiji became a British Colony in 1874, 50 years after the first European settled in Levuka; and this was almost 40 years after the arrival of missionaries. Queen Victoria School (QVS) was first set up in Nasinu in 1907 and the Lau Provincial School (LPS) at Vatuloa in Tubou, Lakeba in 1908. The LPS headmaster was recruited from Britain, through the advice of the missionaries. The few successful students later joined QVS.

The Provincial School Northern, in Vanua Levu which was established 13 years later in 1921 is still running today as Bucalevu High School. The Provincial School Southern,
established in Sawani later became a girls’ school and was renamed Adi Cakobau School (ACS). The Provincial School Western was closed and the students moved to Lodoni in Tailevu, to allow for the construction of an airfield for the United States Army, during the World War 1. In 1942, 30 years after the Provincial Schools were set up, Fijian leaders recognised the need for a more practical curriculum. The Provincial Schools in the three confederacies were then tasked with training Fijians in farming techniques, leadership skills, survival skills, religion and the Fijian culture.

In 1947, the Provincial Schools in the Southern, Northern, and Eastern districts amalgamated into the present Ratu Kadavulevu School (RKS). Successful students from the provincial schools later moved to QVS but the majority returned home and became successful farmers in their villagers. Despite this show of success, those trained by the missionaries were still regarded as being more successful (Stephens, 1944).

QVS was first established in Nasinu in 1907, and then later relocated to the present site in Tailevu. The school was for the express purpose of teaching in English and the adoption of European way of life including its ideas, values and habits. Unfortunately, there were mass failures for the Fijians who were educated under this system (Stephens, ibid). At QVS, the education was highly academic (Lal, 1984).

The colonial administration catered only for a selected few, unlike the missionaries and Provincial Schools, which catered for everyone and had a more balanced and relevant curriculum. The colonial education system promoted class segregation. QVS (Vuli ni Turaga) was established specifically for the exclusive education of Fijian chiefs.

Today’s education system still draws on curriculum, pedagogies and assessment from overseas. The Forms 6 and 7 History curriculum, for example, has not changed much since 1988, and the content still reflects the New Zealand and British influence.
1.1.2 Education in post-Independence (1970 onwards) Fiji

Teachers recruited from New Zealand and Australia (former British colonies) continued to work in Fiji after Independence. Fiji’s school curriculum was pro-Western in its orientation, pedagogies and assessment (Mangubhai, 1984). In the New Zealand curriculum, teaching and assessment were first adopted to select appropriate candidates. This resulted in mass failures (Thaman, 1999). It was then localised in 1988 but teachers still depend on New Zealand textbooks.

Cabinet allocated $3.5 million annually, from 1984 to 1988, to further develop Fijian education (Fijian Education Committee, 1988). The upgrade in Fijian education involved two areas: (i) school development by upgrading buildings and facilities and resources in rural areas, and (ii) scholarships for tertiary studies in areas where Fijians were seen to be lagging behind, such as commerce, science and technology.

Towards the end of the first phase of the project, it was realized that provinces like Ra, Serua, Namosi and Ba were not well represented because they did not have enough candidates for the scholarships. The fund also concentrated on secondary and tertiary level where mismanagement needed to be controlled during the second stage. The fund appeared superficial because the quality of education did not improve significantly (Puamau, 1999).

In 1982, Nasinu Teachers College (NTC) was converted to cater for first year foundation and diploma students who received government scholarship for the University of the South Pacific (USP). The rationale used was that first year USP students, particularly Fijians, should perform better academically if they were given close supervision and assistance. In 1984, special tutors were provided for students who had difficulties in English, Mathematics, Chemistry, Geography, Biology and Physics. In the period 1984-1987, a significant number of Fijians still failed the USP Foundation Science Programme compared to Indians and less than 50 percent of Fijians in this programme qualified for
degree studies in any one year. The performance of students at Foundation level, especially
in the Foundation Science did not show any significant improvement (Puamau, ibid).

The decision in 1983 to close down NTC was political because many of the lecturers there
were unionists and strong supporters of the newly formed Labour Party, opposing the
government at that time. However, the excuse used, of improving the quality of education
for the Fijian Foundation students in the science field did not work out.

In 1992, government provided $2.6 million to develop Form 7 schools. Most of the schools
that benefited were Indian committee schools, except Nasinu Secondary School with a
predominantly Form 7 Fijian student enrolment. There was also a big difference in the
resources available due to the government 1992 and 1993 grant to Form 7 schools.

In 2004, 180 scholarships went to Fijian students. 35 students enrolled in Fijian managed
schools while 145 enrolled in other schools. As a result, Fijian schools received only
$110,880 while non-Fijian schools receive $505,120 (Ministry of Education, 2004). This
discrepancy in funds allocation prompted many Fijian schools to enroll many students in
Form 7 without meeting the recommended minimum entry marks. Many Fijian schools
also breached the recommended teacher student ratio of 1:30. The resources in many of
these Fijian run schools were not fit to start Form 7. These contributed to the poor quality
of pass rate in the Fiji Seventh Form Examination (FSFE) in many Fijian managed schools.

1.1.3 Curriculum Development and Reform

Remnants from the early Colonial school system, that screened out a majority of students
and selected only a few as civil servants is very much prevalent today. The Curriculum
Development Unit (CDU) in the Ministry of Education (MOE) is in the process of
implementing an outcome-based curriculum, with funding and consultancy from Australia.
In 2003, the CDU undertook an extensive curriculum mapping exercise with the following issues reported: (i) subjects were too heavily content-based; (ii) a number of subjects repeated content at different levels and across subjects; (iii) there were gaps in some disciplines, inadequate sequencing and the scoping of content from the lower to higher levels.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) was also set up to provide a better foundation for curriculum development and direction in the next ten years (NCF, MOE, 2007).

Two important objectives from this curriculum reform spell out the major learning outcomes (MLOs) students are expected to achieve in the process of education. It also identified six Foundation Areas of Learning and Development (FALD) and seven Key Learning Areas (KLAs) for the primary and secondary years of schooling, each of which contains the KLA subjects (MOE, 2007). The stakeholders were not involved in the initial stages of curriculum planning but were only consulted midway in the process. The consultants for the new Fiji curriculum have the content, pedagogies and assessment methods drawn heavily from their Australia experiences.

1.1.4 Form 7 Enrolment Criteria and Form 7 Fijian Students' Performance

In an unpublished paper, 'Factors Affecting the Performance of Fijian Schools', Puamau (1999) reported a comparatively small number of Form 7 Fijian students with low pass rates, compared to other ethnic groups.

This problem was aggravated when the Ministry turned a 'blind eye' on its intake policy and allowed Fijian schools to enroll Form 7 students with below 250 marks out of 400 marks. As a result, the quality of marks in the Form 7 Fijian managed schools deteriorated while the Form 7 marks in Indian managed schools showed improvement. This decline in performance prompted the Chief Education Officer Secondary to advise all school
Principals that students with less than 230 marks in the Fiji School Leaving Certificate Examination (FSLCE) would not be allowed to sit the FSFE in 2007. Some Principals in Fijian managed schools still ignored the Ministry's directive. These are the very schools that produced poor results in the FSFE.

At the USP, students with below 250 marks entering the Foundation program have to re-sit subjects they did not do well in, before proceeding with the degree program. In 2007, the USP Foundation courses were only through Distance Flexible Learning, although many prefer the full time augmented Foundation program.

In 2008, the interim government approved the establishment of an interim Form 7 Centre at the Nasinu Advanced College of Education with an initial intake of 140 students with A, B or C passes in the FSLCE (Sukanaivalu, 2007). Similar to the decision in 1983, this is a political move against the Form 7 centres previously set up by the SDL government. The unions have opposed this move because there are inadequate resources for the new centre.

The MOE has organised a pool of Form 7 teachers and a principal to administer the centre but these teachers are reluctant to teach at the College because of the low quality of students' enrolled and also the lack of basic resources like textbooks. The author strongly feels that change of policies by different governments to serve their own agendas have not helped the performance of Fijian students, particularly those in Form 7. Many of the policies made by different governments concerning Form 7 are set up to serve their own agendas. This is why the performance of Fijian students in Form 7 continues to deteriorate.

Many of the policies were not strictly followed by schools but the MOE is ineffective in checking student intakes since students with less than 230 marks in FSLCE still sit the FSFE. Therefore breaching the intake-policy is one of the key factors that contribute to the continued poor results of Form 7 Fijian students. Further, it limits their chances of getting scholarships and progressing into higher tertiary institutions locally and abroad.
1.2 FIJIAN CULTURE, OBLIGATIONS AND EDUCATION INITIATIVES

1.2.1 Fijian Culture, Values and Obligations

The average Fijian values land (vanua) and religion (lotu) and places them on higher priority than education. The size of churches and village halls dwarf other buildings both in the rural and urban settlements. Fijians always get together to either fundraise for a church, village hall or other functions (solevu) such as funerals and weddings rather than for education projects (Speed, 1999). The lotu (church leaders) and vanua (chiefs) rarely call parents to discuss Fijian education. These two institutions, from personal experience over the decades, use the Fijian social structure to raise funds and promote their status in the community. For instance, in raising funds for a church hall, the church leaders will often rely on the three confederacies: Kubuna; Burebasaga; and Tovata. The Lotu and Vanua institutions have not used the same social structures effectively to help narrow the education gap between Fijians and other races.

Fijians do not necessarily value things in the same priority as other races. Studies have shown that the two main ethnic groups, Fijians and Indians, value education differently, and various socio-economic, cultural, structural, institutional, psychological factors have been linked to these differences (Nabobo, 1996; Tavola, 1990; Nabuka, 1983; Kishor, 1983; Tierney, 1971). For Fijians, lotu (church obligations) and vanua (clan, village and district obligations) often come first. The Fijians need to seriously reorganise their priorities in order to improve their achievements in education.

1.2.2 Fijian Students and Affirmative Action

The affirmative action policy began in the mid 1970s as a strategically intervention on the part of predominantly Fijian governments to provide educational opportunities to Fijians. Fijian development now is at a crisis point and unless the affirmative action policy targets this deplorable status quo, the above mentioned disparity will continue to exist (Samisoni, 2007). The education gap is defined as any kind of disparity that currently exists between
Fijians and other ethnic groups in relation to access to education, the nature of teaching resources and learning resources available in schools and the performance of students in external examinations (MOE, 1988).

The government's affirmative action policy for Form 7 Fijian students is a genuine attempt to address the disadvantages they face. Non-Fijian schools, mainly Indians, still receive by far the largest portion of education funding (MOE, 2006). The underachievement of Fijian students in school compared to other ethnic groups has been a persistent problem since the 1910s (Stephens, 1944).

The government provided a Fijian Education Fund to cover scholarships ($4.7 million), supplementary assistance to Fijian schools, and research into Fijian education issues. This affirmative action initiative has not shown any significant transformation for the indigenous community. Rather the outcomes have been mixed (Puamau, 1999). One of the positive outcomes has been the production of well qualified Fijians at tertiary level who are now in various senior positions in government and USP (Speed, 1999).

The affirmative action programme catered for indigenous Fijians and Rotumans to narrow the socio-economic gaps with other ethnic groups. In 2000, part of the blueprint on Fijian education was the Centre of Excellence Programme. In 2002, the Special Education Unit provided three Fijian schools a grant of $300,000 each but they failed to produce quality results. Four more secondary schools were identified in 2003 (Rayawa, 2006).

Many see the Affirmative Action as a disappointing failure because it only assisted a few prominent government schools, especially those already well-off. Sowell (2004) reported that studies of affirmative programs around the world including Nigeria, India, Malaysia and the United States showed that such programs have at best a negligible impact on the groups they are intended to assist.
In Fiji, this failure has been blamed on the high turnover of Principals, a lot of extra curricular activities, poor discipline and performance of teachers, poor students' attitudes and poor management. The failure to reach the benchmarks set for the Centres of Excellence was due to the inadequacy of leaders in these schools (Rayawa, 2006). On the other hand, non-government schools which also are in desperate need of government assistance, suffered silently.

To avoid such unfortunate practice, Bainimarama, the current Interim Prime Minister (2007) promised to eradicate all forms of discrimination from government ministries and departments, especially policies that are ethnicity biased. However, many feel that affirmative action policy should continue but it should target the disadvantaged rural schools that desperately need immediate assistance.

The four government schools chosen as Centres of Excellence were widely criticized because most of the funds were either mismanaged or used in the maintenance of old buildings. The examination results in the FSFE in these schools did not show any significant improvement. Therefore, the Centres of Excellence initiative failed to upgrade the quality of Fijian education.

1.2.3 The prevailing problem of under-achievement of Fijian students in education

The under-achievement of Fijian students in all aspects of education, the high dropout rates at various stages of schooling and the plight of rural Fijian schools, have remained a problem for successive Governments (Subramani, 1985). The vast education gap between Fijians and Indians has been a major concern since independence in 1970. This education outcome imbalance has been a preoccupation of most predominantly Fijian post-colonial governments (Alliance 1970-1987; Interim 1987-1994; SVT 1994-1999; SDL 2006-2007) and since the 1970s, has been the subject of many reported studies (Tierney 1971; Kallam et al 1980; Kishor 1981, 1983; Elley & Mangubhai 1981; Puamau 1999; Dakuidreketi 1995; Nabobo 2006). One can clearly see that the problems confronting the education of
Fijian students, particularly their poor performances at the upper secondary and tertiary levels, have been at the forefront of political rhetoric and academic research and no doubt this would continue the new millennium (Puamau, 1999)

Getting a quality pass (250 or more marks) in FSEFE amongst Form 7 Fijian students compared to their Indian counterparts has always been poor. In 2006, for example, the ratio was 1:4 for Grade 1 and as previously noted, this has always been the trend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2006 (Ratio)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fijians</td>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>139</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>185</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
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</table>


Roughly 50% of students from Indian managed schools score over 250 marks (out of a total of 400 marks) while less than 10% of Fijian students in Fijian managed schools score over 250 marks (MOE, 2005). The lack of quality passes in the FSFE is a concern for stakeholders, and is the primary motivation for undertaking this research to determine some of the contributing factors.

The Fijian Education Board meets regularly to discuss issues regarding low passes, poor grades and the high dropout rate of Fijian students, with lower numbers reaching higher education (MOE, 2005). Poor grades generally limit a student's chance for higher education because the Fijian Affairs Scholarships only offer full awards to students with above B grades in all external examinations to study locally or abroad. If the problem of poor grades and poor performance is not addressed, then more Fijian students especially in the rural areas will be excluded from quality education and the new technological and information revolution. This will only serve to further widen the education gap between Fijian students and other groups in the country (MOE, 2000).
1.3 JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE CHOICE OF TOPIC

1.3.1 Significance of the Study

Education enables individuals and society to make an all round participation in the developmental process, by acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes. Education is one of the effective means to the alleviation of poverty (Miller, 1998). Low level formal education has been closely linked with employment in mostly low wage earning jobs. Although having a high school or college education does not guarantee a well-paid job, good quality education is one of the significant undertakings an individual can do to avoid being poor. Higher levels of education narrow the income gap across gender and racial lines. Given the personal interest and concern regarding the general poor performance of Fijian students in examinations, despite the vast amount of funding and effort provided by government, this study undertakes to examine the factors that cause the on-going generally poor performance of indigenous Fijian students in Form 7. This study is important owing to the fact that since the establishment of Form 7, there has been little study so far on this issue, although a study by Dakuidreketi (1995) looked at the academic performance of Fijian students in the Foundation Programme at USP.

Secondly, it appeared on the surface that the Form 7 pass rate is steadily increasing but the quality of passes by most Fijian students had been definitely declining compared to students from most Indian managed secondary schools. Quality passes are required for scholarships to tertiary institutions. Furthermore, those with quality marks will have better chances of excelling in tertiary institutions and getting better-paid jobs.

1.3.2 Research Questions

Questions on the home and school factors, contributing to the quality pass for Form 7 Fijian students form the basis for this research. These questions were directed at senior education officers, teacher unions, school Principals, teachers, parents, and students.
Home Factors:

1. To what extent do factors such as home-environment, home-culture and orientation affect the quality of performance of students?

School Factors:

2. To what extent do school factors like curriculum, teaching and assessment affect the quality of performance of students?

3. How do the styles and quality leadership of Principals affect the quality of performance of students?

4. How do students' learning environment of Form 7 Fijian students affect their performance?

5. To what extent do the school community support and the parental involvement affect the academic performance of Form 7 Fijian students?

6. What are some of the policies required at the government and school levels to improve the quality of performance of Fijian Form 7 students?

1.3.3 Objectives of the research

This study sets out to establish:

1. Students' opinion on how factors such as home environment, home culture and orientation affect their academic performance in Form 7.

2. Stakeholders' perceptions of school factors, such as the school curriculum, student learning support, community support, leadership and management and Government support affect students' performance.

3. The learning-environment that affects the performance of Form 7 Fijian students.

4. How communities can best address the problems of Form 7 Fijian students.

5. The leadership and management factors that affect the performance of Fijian students in Form 7.
6. The Government's policies and programmes that might address the current problems of the performance of Form 7 Fijian students.

1.3.4 Delimitations and Limitations of the study

The present study should add several important findings to the relevant international literature, although there are some delimitations and limitations. The first delimitation is that it studied only the home and school factors. The author believes that these are the two critical factors that affect the academic performance of Form 7 Fijian students.

The first limitation of the study is the setting, Suva City. A representative sample has been used to draw descriptive or inferential conclusion about the whole Form 7 throughout Fiji. However, this concentration is necessary because Suva has the most number of schools and the largest number of Form 7 student population compared to other centres in Fiji. It also means that no rural school was involved in this study.

A second limitation to this study is that academics did not participate in the structured interviews. Most of the academics approached opted not to participate as they have not taught Form 7. They recommended that principals and HODs were the best stakeholders to participate in this research.

1.3.5 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one covers the background of education during the period prior to and after independence, the nature and statement of the problem, aims and objectives of, and the rationale for conducting the study. In chapter two, the relevant body of literature on the 'home and school factors affecting the academic achievement of students' is reviewed and the conceptual framework of the study is identified. Chapter three presents the research methodology used in the study. It also discusses the data gathering approaches. Questionnaires from students and interviews from the major stakeholders in education are discussed and analyzed in chapter four. Chapter
five finally draws conclusions, presents recommendations and suggests opportunities for future research.

### 1.4.0. DEFINITION OF TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Academic Performance</strong></th>
<th>how well students perform in the FSFE.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiji Seventh Form Examination (FSFE)</strong>:</td>
<td>an examination taken by Fiji students after the twelfth year of education or after sixth form at secondary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fijian schools</strong></td>
<td>schools with Fijian management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fijian students</strong></td>
<td>Fiji indigenous students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Performing schools</strong></td>
<td>urban schools that had a 90-100 per cent pass rate in FSFE in 2004. Over 50% score over 250 marks for the last 3-5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Factors</strong></td>
<td>refers to home-environment, home-culture and orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indian schools</strong></td>
<td>schools with Indian management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Performing schools</strong></td>
<td>urban schools that have poor quality passes in FSFE. Less than 10% of the Fijian F7 students scored over 250 marks for the last 3-5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pass</strong></td>
<td>200 to 249 marks (out of 400) in the FSFE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality Pass</strong></td>
<td>250 marks and above, out of 400.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Factors</strong></td>
<td>Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment Support, Student learning Support, Community Support, Leadership and Management and Government Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholders</strong></td>
<td>Education Officers; Principals; teachers; parents; students; employers' representatives; and heads of departments in schools.</td>
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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0.1 Introduction

This chapter is organised into three sections. The first section introduces the research conceptual framework, followed by a review of the literature on home factors such as home-environment, home-culture and orientation and the third section looks at school factors such as: teaching, learning, assessment support, student support, community and leadership support.

Figure 1: Academic Performance as a Product of School and Home Factors

The conceptual framework is adapted from a study of school excellence in Australia by Hopkins (2003). The school factors above consist of core support factors, student, community leadership and government support. The home factors consist of home environment, home culture and orientation. Students' performances in schools are largely determined by the characteristics of students, types of homes and types of schools.
2.0.2 Factors Affecting Students' Performances

Baba (1979), Dakuidreketi (1995) and Puamau (1999) reported a number of factors contributing to the achievement and underachievement of Fijian students. These include socio-economic, political, cultural, institutional, structural and psychological. The cultural factors include home background, gender, student, vanua, church, cultural conflicts, and the community. The institutional factors include leadership qualities, management styles, quality of teaching and the provision and quality of school resources. And the psychological factors concern attitude to schooling, interest and motivation.

Williams (1982) observed that many Fijian students 'at risk' come from low-income families where standards of housing, water supply, roads and physical facilities are among the worst. He also reported that many Fijian parents, particularly those in rural areas do not earn a regular income to enable them to provide financial assistance for the school or to raise sufficient funds to assist in the purchase of books, school resources and/or to build a library or laboratory. Many Fijian parents cannot meet the heavy school levies on textbooks, sports equipment, and building projects.

Lumelume and Moore (1991), Veramu (1990), and Elley and Mangubhai (1981) highlighted the importance of reading and flooding the students' environment with high interest reading books. Nabuka (1983) observed that Indian students have more storybooks and textbooks available to them than their Fijian counterparts and this, he concluded, may be responsible in part for their better academic results. He reported that Fijian schools have poorer libraries, science equipment and school facilities than those of Indian schools.

Kishor (1981) and Tagicakiverata (2003) identified truancy as one of the factors contributing to the underachievement of Fijian students. Similarly, Williams (2000) discussed that some of the causes of truancy may be economic, social, and cultural. Lack of money for school fees, bus fare and lunch is among the common excuse. Other students
miss school because of family, social or cultural commitments. Many children cannot relate their school subjects to their daily struggles to survive and they lack interest in school. Many children do not attend school and roam the streets during school hours.

On affirmative programs and racial inequalities in education, Puamau (1999) reported that apart from the disadvantages of location and home background, her informants identified poor attitudes towards education and the low priority placed on education as cultural factors for Fijians underachieving.

Speed (1993) argued that the traditional way of life requires that social functions such as funerals and weddings take precedence, even for the more educated ones. Puamau (1999) summarizes Speed's statement as follows:

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

She also observed that rural school committees often do not function as effectively as they should. The low priority placed on education by the parents and the community did not make conditions conducive for good teaching and learning.

Williams (1982) considered the geographical area, school type, school size, number of teachers, resources, strength of support of the school committee and parents must also be taken into account when examining the factors that affect students' performance in examinations. He further explained that an analysis of examination results against a range of school characteristics indicated that there are some links between the school's demographic profile, learning and physical resources, teacher quality, and performance.
Tierney (1971) saw the low academic achievement of the indigenous Fijians in these areas: lack of privacy in the home, lack of desire for competition due to societal preference for cooperative individuals, lack of mobility, and pressure for conformity.

Baba (1983) blamed the failure of Fijian students in Mathematics, Science and Commercial subjects to the lack of qualified teachers in these disciplines in many Fijian schools. Veramu (1990) found that Fijians had low self-esteem and their parents did not seem to be committed to their children's education.

Puamau (1999) reported the concerns of the following Senior Education Officers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officer</th>
<th>Concern</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lovodua</td>
<td>Lack of adequate educational equipment, material and resources is a major drawback in Fijian education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jitoko</td>
<td>Lack of funds in many Fijian schools is the hidden factor in comparison with other Indian managed schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nabuka</td>
<td>The quality of resources and quality of teachers matter a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meo</td>
<td>Emphasised that Fijian schools spend too much time on sports and other extra curricular activities and do not value education as the number one priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>Blamed the heavy levies from the church, too many church commitments and too much time and money that should have been invested in education.</td>
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Bole (2008) emphasised during the last Principals' Conference that among the barriers which affected children's education in Fiji were school fees, discrimination, conflict, poor school quality, poor infrastructure, lack of good teachers, child labour, health crisis such as the HIV pandemic, distance to schools and poverty.

Despite the studies outlined so far as having investigated the factors affecting the academic performance of Fijian students, as far as the author knows, little has been done to solicit and document the stakeholders' perceptions of the factors affecting students' performance in the FSFE.
2.1 HOME FACTORS:
HOME ENVIRONMENT, HOME CULTURE and ORIENTATION

2.1.1 Home Environment

According to Coleman (1966), socioeconomic indices such as parents' occupation, education level, income, and place of residence, do affect students' academic performance. Lubinski and Humphreys (1996); Ferguson et al., (1991); Capron and Duyme, (1989) showed that middle socio-economic status (SES) children have higher average IQ scores than lower SES children. In general, students in metropolitan areas (urban) show higher achievement than those outside them. Ferguson (1991) also established that parents' education level accounted for about twenty-four percent (24%) of the variance in students test scores, while SES accounts for about twenty-six percent (26%). Frymier and Gansneder (1989) reported that dysfunctional home environments, low parental expectations, ineffective parenting, language differences and high levels of mobility account for lower levels of academic achievement among lower SES students.

Jitoko (2003) sees the lack of commitment to education by parents and the general community as a major problem facing Fijian education in Fijian schools. He suggested the best way to combat quality Fijian education is by first educating Fijian parents through community education. Nabuka (1983) who compared four home background factors between Fijian and Indian students: (i) place of student's residence, (ii) number of storybooks in the home, (iii) father's/guardian's level of education, (iv) availability of text books to students and the amount of attention the family gives to the child's homework. He reported that most Indian students see education as a joint family undertaking where siblings have older brothers and sisters who are often better educated than the parents. They reside with better qualified members of the family in an informal mentor environment. In contrast, Fijians, who achieve less well in school, tend to reside mostly
with less educated parents or guardians. The education attainment level of parents is an important determinant (Davison & Kanyuka, 1990; Kadzamira & Chibwana, 1999).

Studies on the home environment and its effect on cognitive development include having observers rate how often and well, parents speak to the child, provide a variety of games and toys, avoid restriction and punishment, organize the child's space and time, provide warmth and affection, provide variety in the people with whom the child interacts (Whiteside & Bradley, 1996).

Martini (1995) also supports the view that academic success is associated with safe and quiet home environments in which adults have the time and energy to interact with children. Abuse and neglect have been identified as two home environment factors that lower cognitive ability and affect the performance of students (Perez & Widom, 1994).

2.1.2 Home Culture

Steinberg (1989), from his analysis of achievements among 20,000 teenagers in high schools, parents and teachers, believed that ethnic differences have an even greater influence on school achievement than socio economic status and school characteristics.

The home environment can have a significant impact on children both positively or negatively. The environment at home can reinforce what children learn at school. Materials and resources in the home can promote and encourage children to further learn at home. Reading materials in the home, for example, reinforces reading skills acquired at school.

Thaman (1999) noted that there is enough research to show that the closer the home culture is to the expectations of the school, the better it is for the students. The content of home culture or family educational culture includes the assumptions, norms, values, and beliefs held by the family about the intellectual work in general, school work in particular, and the conditions which foster both (Bloom, 1984; Walberg, 1984; Finn, 1989).
Walberg (1984) explored the 'alterable curriculum of the home' as the academic, occupational, aspirations of parents, adequate health and nutritional conditions, and a physical setting conducive to academic work. Given that the culture of the home differs from the culture of the school in terms of linguistic features, normative interactions, and value orientations, it is therefore the duty of parents to create a home environment that encourages learning and to see that these differences are minimised. Students tend to have higher scores, better attendance and complete homework when parents are involved.

Research today recognises the strengths of many cultures and has moved from a cultural deficit view to an appreciation of cultural differences, and changed expectations are leading to better student achievement. When instruction is compatible with cultural patterns, learning improves (Nieto, 1992). Hirschman & Wong (1991) found that cultural traits which emphasise positive values such as premium on ambition, persistence, gratification and a strong desire for intergenerational social mobility explain why Asian-Americans have a relatively high level of educational achievement.

Bankston and Zhou's (1995) found that ethnic language literacy and positive cultural characteristics actually contribute to rather than compete with the goals of traditional schooling. The solution then to the conflict between home and school culture is to have multicultural education where the teacher studies and incorporates the values of different cultures into the school curriculum and its pedagogies and assessments.

Parenting styles, either democratic or authoritarian, is influential in the students' educational process as well as in family-school relations. Castellano (1986) found that a positive family climate favors the development of well adapted, mature, stable and integrated subjects, while an unfavorable family climate promotes non adaptation, immaturity, lack of balance and insecurity. Morrow (1986) proposed that when parents of any SES support and encourage their children by reading to them, providing books and
educational toys, taking children to the library, making time and space for learning, the children tend to become better, and more enthusiastic readers.

When parents have an understanding of their child's learning style, students have significantly more positive attitudes to homework (Perkins & Milgram, 1996). When the home culture supports academic achievement, students spend more time doing homework (Bowen & Bowen, 1998). Homework can impact positively on the retention and understanding of knowledge and can improve study skills, attitudes toward school, and demonstrate that learning can take place outside of formal schooling. Students' writing scores, literacy outcomes and attitudes can improve when students engage in 'interactive homework' with family members (Epstein & Stone, 1997).

However, homework can also contribute to boredom with school if it does not engage the student in meaningful learning, because all activities remain interesting for only so long. Homework may reduce students' engagement in leisure activities that can also be important in the development of life skills (Cooper, 2001). Homework may contribute to existing social inequities as students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to complete homework. This may be due to after school chores or an absence of a quiet, well-lit location to do homework (Cooper and Valentine, 2001). Evidence also suggests that although homework has a positive impact on student achievement, too much homework or homework not completed properly appears to reduce this positive effect.

Congruence between home and school culture is a good predictor of student academic achievement. Students tend to be more successful when their home and school cultures are similar. Schools need to work with students and their families in adapting the home culture to the school culture (Trueba, 1988; Wells, 1990).

There is an ever-increasing awareness of the importance of the parents' role in the progress and educational development of their children. Schniefelbaum and Simmons (2002)
consider family background a very important weighty factor in determining the academic performance attained by the student. The closer the home culture to the school culture, the better the students would perform. This depends much on the level of education of parents to scaffold learning at home through helping students with their homework, through providing their children with educational resources, through creating a conducive learning environment, better parenting styles, creating time and space to supplement and reinforce learning going on at school.

2.1.3 Home Orientation

Orientation is the constant push from parents aiming to make students more successful in schools. The values, expectations and aspirations of such parents to motivate students have a lot of bearing on their performance. The concern of parents on student academic preparation is needed to push and guide students towards success. Most parents can successfully scaffold their students to reach greater heights through proper communication and guidance skills and proper parental styles.

Hopkins (1996) argued that parents of high-achieving students play a detrimental role in pressuring their children to achieve at unrealistically high levels or to satisfy the parents' needs. While there is empirical evidence that parent factors have a positive association with, or facilitate children's achievement, there has also been great concern that parents' unrealistic expectations create pressure and foster anxiety in children.

Social class influence is mediated by cultural level, which in turn determines family expectations, values and attitudes regarding education. The motivation to achieve rests more on parents' level of learning than on the level of income (Llorente, 1990). Some studies show that the performance of students are not due to socio-cultural or economic but is due to the affective or psychological dimension. It is the good academic preparation in
the parents, especially the mother, and a positive cultural environment that favor scholastic performance (Castejon & Perez, 1998).

In a study on academically talented students, it was found that when parents believe that high achievement is very important, they are likely to get involved. The majority of parents also believed that it was very important for their child to attend a top-level college/university (73%) and be highly successful in his/her profession (81%). It is likely that these parents will continue to be involved in their child's education (Hopkins, 2003).

The influence of home educational climate depends on the amount and type of help that children receive from the family. This is determined by elements of the family context, like the dynamic of communication and affective relationships and attitudes towards value expectations. Similarly, Machesi and Martin (2002) proved that parental expectations have a notable influence on academic results. Stevenson et al., (1986) observed that Asian mothers stress hard work and the economic benefits of school success, hold high expectations for performance, and are regularly dissatisfied with their children's level of performance. They expect children to do homework; limit television viewing and delay dating. They are much more likely to provide their children with a desk at home and mathematics and science workbooks. These parental behaviors reflected the strong education orientation in Asian American cultures, and Asian-American students' performances reflect this heritage. These kinds of parental behavior seem to support children's academic success in any cultural group.

Stevenson et al., (1990) looked at children whose cognitive patterns do not match that of the school. They usually do not perform well in academic subjects. The Chinese and Japanese mothers surpassed their American counterparts in adherence to the traditional school model, which explains the continued academic success of their children.
Jackson (1977) in his academic excellence movement amongst black children noted that the reason black children do not do well in school simply because they did not practise enough. If they practised their schoolwork as they practised basketball and other sports, they would perform equally well in academic work. Jackson called for a return to a more traditional education for black children, one that required hard work and concentration.

2.2 SCHOOL FACTORS: Curriculum, Teaching, Assessment

This section discusses some Pacific literatures on the factors affecting students in schools, including the curriculum, teaching and the assessment process, students' involvement in their own learning, leadership, management and community involvement.

2.2.1a Curriculum

Thaman (1999) highlighted that the school curriculum content is sourced from western epistemology, heavily centralized and do not place much value on indigenous epistemologies, culture and language. This then creates a discrepancy between the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum, therefore students' opportunity to learn and their academic success is affected. Teachers also suffer as they have to make idiosyncratic decisions regarding what should be covered and to what extent (Doyle, 1996).

Stevenson et al. (1992) added that this creates a considerable learning gap in the content, created by the teacher and this would continue to pose problems for teachers at the grassroot level. Many Pacific students at the receiving end may ultimately fail. Thaman (1999) noted the difference between the expectations of the students' home cultures and those of the school, particularly the irrelevant curriculum poses a big problem as it is unable to bridge the gap between school and the world outside.

In Fiji, for example, even after the curriculum was revised, New Zealand textbooks can still be found in use in Forms 6 and 7. Fiji has problems with curriculum development such as content fragmentation, lack of continuity between primary and secondary schools,
implementation issues, lack of systemic evaluation of curriculum and the impact of global changes. These are problems related specifically to the curriculum development model we adopted and our continuing dependence on foreign aid and overseas education consultants. Fiji still has Australian consultants currently working with the MOE.

A "Cultural Responsive Curriculum" (Thaman, 1999) is supposed to be authentic, child-centered and connected to the child's real life. It employs materials from the child's culture and history to illustrate principles and concepts (Martinez & Ortiz de Montellano, 1988; Chisholm et al., 1991; Dickerson, 1993; Chion-Kenney, 1994). It also develops critical thinking skills (Hilliard, 1991). A "Culturally Responsive Curriculum" often incorporates strategies that utilize cooperative learning and whole language instruction, include self-esteem building, and recognize multiple intelligences and diverse learning styles.

Thaman (1999) noted gaps in values, language and teaching/learning styles as problematic for students in higher education. Banks and Banks (1995) saw the inclusion of culture in the curriculum as a means of developing positive attitudes among different racial groups, gender, religious, physical appearances and sexual orientations. Different approaches have been used to reach out to parents and diverse groups in the community to involve them in community partnership. It is important to seek information on the cultural backgrounds of pupils to better diagnose strengths, weaknesses, and cognitive styles (Moodley, 1995).

Cummins (1996) and Willetto (1999) reported teachers' knowledge of students' language and culture fostered their academic achievement. Ladson-Billings (1994) added that this promotes students' learning by using their culture as the basis for helping students to understand themselves and others, to structure social interactions and to conceptualise knowledge. Meehan (2002) proposed a holistic and integrative curriculum where feelings, emotions, values, beliefs, behavior, aspirations and the intellect are cared for.
The curriculum in the Pacific Island schools is often inappropriate when foreign curriculum and foreign textbooks are still used. Many students in the Pacific fail examinations because the curriculum and orientation is not culturally responsive to the needs of our local students.

2.2.1b Teaching

A study by Schereens (1993) showed that teacher and classroom factors affect more of the variance in pupil achievement than other school variables but teachers have a greater influence. About 8 to 15 percent of student learning is due to schools while up to 55 percent of the variation comes from classrooms within schools. Approximately 60% percent of the variation in the performance of students lies either between schools or between classrooms, with the remaining 40 percent being due to other factors associated with students themselves or to random influences.

In order to improve the quality of contact time between teachers and students, schools need to use policies which protect instruction time e.g., attendance, tardiness, interruptions during basic skills instruction periods, etc. (Murphy & Hallinger, 1985). Marzano (2000) argued that preserving quality instruction time should be sacred to all teachers. The more quality time teachers have with students, the more chances are that students will excel.

Classrooms have been shown to be far more influential than the school itself, in determining how well children perform. It underscores the fact that learning takes place through the interaction between students and teachers and primarily through the quality of teaching that makes the difference. Teachers do make the difference. The effect of quality teaching on educational outcome is greater than that from a student's background. The qualities of teaching and teacher education appear to be more strongly related to student achievement than class sizes, overall spending levels or teacher salaries (Darling-Hammond et al, 2002). Quality teaching research has illustrated the true and full power of
the teacher to make a difference in student learning not only around the technical (factual), but around the interpretive (social) and reflective (personal) as well (Lovat & Smith, 2003). The essence of quality teaching lies in the synergy between intellectual depth, communicative competence, reflection, self-management, and self-knowing (Lovat, 2005).

Teacher quality based on education, experience, expertise and licensure is shown to be the single most significant factor contributing to student achievement. Teachers' expertise, based on licensing examinations scores, higher-level degrees, and experience has a significant proportion of the measured variance in students' reading and mathematics achievement (Ferguson, 1991; Sanders, 2001).

Schulman (1987) identified seven essential knowledge bases for teaching. These are (i) content knowledge, (ii) pedagogical knowledge, (iii) curricular knowledge, (iv) pedagogical content knowledge, (v) knowledge of students, (vi) knowledge of context, and (vii) knowledge of educational goals.

A high level of pedagogical content knowledge enables teachers to draw on their deep knowledge, to improvise, to make connections to other areas of learning and to current local and global issues and to constantly challenge and extend student learning. Teachers' deep knowledge helps build deep knowledge of their students (Anderson, 2004).

Borg et al., (1993) reported that students do better in class when the student and teacher had similar learning styles. Landbeck & Mugler (1996) shared the same view that teaching styles are important for student’s learning. Four teaching styles have been widely researched as effective in Western as well as Pacific classrooms. These include the (i) discussion approach; (ii) inquiry approach (Applebee 1996); (iii) interactive approach (Palinscar & Brown, 1984) and (iv) cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Peterson (2004) found cooperative learning with under-graduate students can lead to greater cognitive development, somewhat greater activation, and high levels of motivation,
including higher engagement, greater perceived importance of the tasks, and more optimal levels of challenge in relation to the skill.

Glickman (1991) noted that effective teachers do not use the same set of practices in every lesson. They review the previous day's lessons, state their objectives, present, demonstrate, model, check for understanding, provide guided practice, and use closure. Instead, what effective teachers need to do is to constantly reflect about their work, observe whether students are learning or not, and then adjust their practices accordingly.

Sanders (2001) criticised the traditional educator because they stress tests and term papers as their main resources for assessing student work. In contrast, teachers who use alternative assessment procedures will use a variety of assignments that might include portfolios, power point presentations, book reviews, and interviews of study participants (Travis, 1996). Delpit (2006) has several recommendations for teachers to enhance their ability to work with urban schools. Teachers should focus on teaching higher order thinking skills; teachers should use curricula that emphasise and respect home, community, and students' background; and teachers should seek to increase a sense of community in the classroom to encourage academic achievement and mitigate notions of inferiority.

Lee (1997) reported the use of diverse literature with culturally and racially diverse students, simultaneously teaching comprehension strategies as a procedure using language to scaffold information during literary interpretations. It is a strategy to initiate effective or culturally relevant instruction for African American students. Others have also described strategies for using culturally relevant pedagogy to increase student achievements.

Ladson-Billings (1995) looked at culturally relevant pedagogy in terms of: (i) students must experience academic success; (ii) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (iii) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo or the current social order. He recognised that culturally relevant
pedagogy includes various approaches within classrooms, such as linking the school and the home culture of students. Promoting culturally relevant pedagogies, using linguistic differences, cultural heritage and socio-economic status are all positive factors that teachers should consider in their pedagogies (Watkins, 2001; Wilson, 1991).

### 2.2.1c Assessment

The UNESCO Dakar Framework for Action (2000) stressed the importance of a clear definition and accurate assessment of learning outcomes (including knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) as governments work to ensure quality basic education for all. It is essential for teachers to communicate their evaluation criteria to students to avoid confusion over project expectations (Drake, 2001); to be accountable, productive and addressing quality, performances of students in assessments need to be ranked and published so that schools compete for better standards (Guskey, 2001).

Pongi (2004) believes that authorities in each country need to place strategies that promote assessment for learning instead of assessment for ranking, if the quality of education is to improve. If the emphasis is on ranking in high stake assessment, students will continue to focus their learning on what is likely to be included in the examination and parents as well as stakeholders will focus their interests on the relative ranking of students. Hopson (2003) recommended that to be inclusive in our assessment, inclusion of culturally and ethically diverse communities would advance and enrich the evaluation field.

Teaching effectively requires interplay between curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and learning outcomes. It includes teachers having high expectations of all students, having a wide range of pedagogical strategies; sound content knowledge of their subject; a broad understanding of curriculum aims and objectives, recognising student success, and providing good feedback to students (Carr et al., 2000).
Thaman (2006) suggested raising awareness among teachers of the learning styles of different cultures in the Pacific, and having a democratic cultural inclusive curriculum, teaching and assessment. Schools need to have policies, which emphasise the importance of academic achievement to students, e.g., minimum levels of achievement to participation in extracurricular activities, regular notification to parents when academic expectations aren't being met, etc. (Murphy & Hallinger, 1985).

According to Lee and Smith (1997), the ideal high school enrolls between 600 and 900 students. Studies on public, Catholic, and private non-secular schools high schools in America, found that either too small or too large a school, has a negative effect on student achievement. Schools that are too small tend to be resource poor, while too large schools are very impersonal. In both cases, achievement levels suffer. Having smaller sub-units within large high schools is a solution to low student achievement and high dropout rates.

In 1992, a study of WEAC teachers found that a typical teacher has 23 to 26 students. A significant number of teachers teach hundreds of different students during the school year and as a result, it is difficult to know their students well, to understand how their minds work, to know what motivates them, or to know their individual strengths and weaknesses. The study also reported nearly two-thirds of teachers say they would change the way they teach if they had fewer students. Among the changes cited were: (i) give students more individual attention, (ii) have more written assignments, (iii) give students more problem-solving activities and (iv) try out new ideas (Allen & Kickbusch, 1991).

Teachers need to have systems in place for regularly assessing individual students. They also need to plan and change their teaching according to what these assessments revealed about individual student needs. All teachers should be educated on assessment strategies, assessment of learning and assessment for learning (Allen & Kickbusch, ibid). For effective teaching learning and assessment to take place, a manageable number of students
of 23-30 is recommended for Form 7. Reducing class sizes from the 30's to the 20's is in the right direction. Only when the class size reduces to 15 or below are there appreciable positive benefits, (Hanushek, 1989)

2.2.2 STUDENT SUPPORT: Students' own Learning

Hattie (2003) reported that students' abilities account for about 50 percent of the variance of achievement. It is what students bring to the table that predicts achievement more than other variables. The correlation between ability and achievement is significant it is not surprising that bright students have steeper trajectories of learning than less bright students. Our role is to improve the trajectory of all students so that no one is left behind.

Anderson (2004) found that students who received better scores in high schools also perform better in college, although men had better grades than women. The same was reported by Narsey (1995) and Dakuidreketi (1995) regarding the low quality passes of Fijian students entering USP, which contributed, directly to their poor USP results.

Academic achievement and attainment influence future career choices and income. Academic achievement is particularly important for success in any society while personal education goals, commitment, values, achievement and attainment help boost self esteem (Chapell & Overton, 2002).

Poor school performance, on the other hand, leads to depression, anxiety and social stress (Zhou et al., 2003). Topping (1994) reported that sitting at the back in the classroom and absences from classes negatively affect student's performance, where an increase of one percent in absences reduces the score of the final examination by 0.043 percent.

Habte (1988) also revealed that when students develop negative attitude towards the course and/or the instructor from the beginning or before the class, his/her performance in the course will be affected.
Motivation is among the most powerful determinants of students' success or failure in school (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Sternberg & Wagner, 1994). A teacher's positive motivation links positively with that of the student (Atkinson, 2000). In general, student motivation involves "a student's willingness, need, desire and compulsion to participate in, and be successful in, the learning process." (Bomia et al, 1997, p.1). Students who are motivated "select tasks at the border of their competencies, initiate action when given the opportunity, and exert intense effort and concentration in the implementation of learning tasks. They show generally positive emotions during ongoing action, including enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity, and interest." Less motivated students, "are passive, do not try hard, and give up easily in the face of challenges" (Skinner & Belmont, 1991, pp. 3-4). Motivation and self-concept are important in students' achievements, as they initiate the subject's own involvement in learning. When a student is strongly motivated, his efforts are directed toward a specific goal, thus bringing to bear all his resources (Gonzalez, 1977). Castejon & Perez (1998) reported that self-concept directly influences the global performance of the pupil.

Based on the self-determination theory, students' motivation varies in both strength (amount) and quality (nature), and both variations predict learning, achievement, and continuation to college (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Reeve, 1996). Self determined, intrinsic motivation emerges from the learner's own needs and desires instead of outside pressures (Deci & Ryan, 1987). It is this high-quality, intrinsic, self-determined motivation that most powerfully predicts positive school-related engagement and success (Hardre, 2003; Lau & Chan, 2003; Reeve et al., 1999; Vallerand et al., 1997).

However, not all students are intrinsically motivated for all tasks so they can increase their motivation towards learning of tasks and content through internalisation, the process of increasing choice, value and ownership of learning (Reeve & Ryan, 2004; Ryan & Connell, 1989). Internalisation is promoted through the support of three characteristics:
autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Black & Deci, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Through internalisation, a student becomes increasingly self-determined.

Just as self-determination is important to student motivation, so are students’ goals. Both characteristics help explain why students engage (or fail to engage) in school-related tasks. According to achievement goal theory (Ames, 1992; Harackiewicz et al., 2002), it is not only the strength but also the nature of students’ academic goals that influence their approaches to learning opportunities and their consequent learning and achievement (Ames & Archer, 1988). Achievement goals fall into four categories: (i) learning goals, (ii) performance-approach goals, (iii) performance-avoidance goals (Maehr & Midgley, 1996), and (iv) future goals (Mensch et al., 2004).

Learning goals are when students engage for the sake of learning and personal interest, while performance goals operate when students engage (or avoid engaging) in order to impress others (or to avoid looking incompetent to others) (Ames, 1992).

Teacher-pupil relations are also affected if the teacher attributes poor performance to the student (Georgiou et al., 2002). Steinberg & Rollins (1995) found positive teacher-pupil relationships as warm, close, communicative, linked to behavioral competence and better school adjustment. Other researchers found that conflict and dependency in teacher-student relationships are related to unfavorable outcomes such as a negative school attitude, school avoidance (Birch & Ladd, 1997) and hostile aggression (Howes et al., 1994). When there is no emotional connection to a caregiver at home, supportive school experiences play a crucial role in students' adaptations. Teachers who "provide emotional support, reward competence, and promote self-esteem" (Werner, 1990, p. 110) decrease the vulnerability of high-risk students in stressful life events.

Teachers tend to express feelings of anger toward disruptive students (Durivage, 1989) and do not give predictable feedback (i.e., praise) for desirable behaviors, but consistently give
reprimands after undesired classroom behaviors. These negative patterns of interaction between teachers and students may contribute to increased conflicts and lack of understanding, thus leading to unsatisfactory relationships.

High teacher self-efficacy has been linked to a variety of positive outcomes. For example, teachers with high efficacy are more positive and responsive to students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), and show less anger about negative student behavior (Glenn, 1993). This teacher characteristics is associated with achievement (Tracz & Gibson, 1986). Teachers who promote positive classroom environments, get better relationships with students.

Levinson (1978) highlighted some of the characteristics of such relationships. As teacher, enhances the student's skills and intellectual development. As sponsor, facilitates the student's entry and advancement. As guide, welcomes the student into a new occupational and social world and acquaints him with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. As exemplar, one whom the student can emulate. He may serve as counselor in times of stress. And finally, he is a believer in the student's dream for development.

The greater the student's self-concept, the more learning strategies will be used, facilitating deep information processing (Nunez et al., 1988). Zsolnai (2002) noted that self-concept influences performance indirectly by means of its intrinsic motivation. Meeting the challenges of a demanding curriculum requires more than innate intelligence (Ngwenya, 2004). Students with higher levels of emotional intelligence (EI) had more self-efficacy, which in turn enhanced their academic performance. EI is the ability to perceive, assess and positively influence personal and others' emotions. It is a form of intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It is also having the ability to perceive and integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth (Salovey, et al, 1995).
Tsige (2001) found financial and personal problems as the most important factors affecting students' performance. The personal problems are: lack of self-confidence, feelings of loneliness, and adjustments to the situations in the college. Landbeck & Mugler (1996) also reported that Fijian foundation students enter the USP with low expectations of what is expected of them. They need speed-reading and extensive writing. The transition from high school to the university was difficult, resulting in student frustration and at times culminating in academic failure. They also found that students who started preparing for examinations only after the dates of examinations are released were found to perform less than those who started preparing since classes commenced.

Dembo & Eaton (2000) studied beliefs and cognition of independent learners and found them to be highly related to academic learning, hence the increased emphasis on how classroom context and contextual factors shape students learning and motivation. Zimmerman (2002) reported that modeling and instruction are also primary vehicles through which self-regulated skills can be taught. Self-regulation and systematic efforts to direct thoughts, feelings, and actions, toward the attainment of one's goals (Zimmerman, 2000), assumed increasing importance in the psychological and educational literatures. What began with research on self-control in therapeutic contexts has expanded to such diverse areas as education, health, sports, and careers (Bandura, 1997).

Theories on self-regulation emphasise its inherent link with goals. A goal reflects one's purpose and refers to quantity, quality, or rate of performance (Locke & Latham, 1990). Goal setting involves establishing an objective to serve as the aim of one's actions. Goals are involved across the different phases of self-regulation: forethought (setting a goal and deciding on goal strategies); performance control (employing goal-directed actions and monitoring performance); and self-reflection (evaluating one's goal progress and adjusting strategies to ensure success (Zimmerman, 1998).
Peer effects are also an important factor affecting students' performance (Hattie, 2003). Peer influence on a child's development is by similar mechanisms as those used by adults: reinforcement, modeling and direct teaching and skills (Castejon & Perez, 1998). Buote, (2002) found that students failing in school are those rejected by their group-class. The common view is that peers, like families, are sources of motivation, aspirations, and direct interactions in learning. Also, peers may affect the classroom process - aiding learning through questions and answers, contributing to the pace of instruction, or hindering learning through disruptive behavior (A'la Lazear 2001).

Students are affected when parents choose the wrong neighborhood to settle in. When students live in the wrong neighborhood like housing settlements, students tend to follow the wrong group and are associated with the common problems of urbanisation such as drugs and theft. The school policies on attendance and classroom placement of students can also have great effects on student learning. The more the student absents himself from school the more likely he is going to fail (Romano, 1998).

Zimmerman (1998) found that students' performance depends on number of factors; weak peers might reduce the grade of middling or strong students. However, Bomia et al., (1997) explained that organised study groups also help increase performance.

In a study of Wisconsin's top students, All-State Academic Scholars, showed that the students have the following characteristics: (i) they have positive feelings about their school experiences; (ii) they attributed their success in school to such things as hard work, self-discipline, organisation, ability, and high motivation; (iii) they watched little television during the school week; (iv) they associated with also successful students in school; and (v) they are avid readers. These students also completed numerous courses in science and mathematics and are less likely to work during the school year. They did their work for
about 13 hours per week and their parents showed high interest and involvement in their education (Allen & Kickbusch, 1991).

Student's high self-esteem has been found to be positively related to high academic achievement. Self-esteem is the general worth a person experiences about themselves (Smith & Bertz, 1997). Others suggested that students' identification with the school more strongly influenced their academic performance than did self-esteem. Finn (1989) suggested that unless students identify with and feel valued and respected by their schools, they would disengage academically. Steele (1997) saw school identification as necessary for academic success. Racism, discrimination, economic disadvantages and gender stereotypes impact negatively on school identification, and academic performance.

During adolescence, students spend less time with their parents and more time with their friends. Since schools are social environments and the place where many friendships are formed, it is likely that peers influence academic attitudes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Students who have difficulty establishing friendships experience psychological distress, which in turn influence their academic performance.

The social group with whom students identify influences the students' educational experiences. For example, if the social group devalues education achievement, students would be more likely to adopt these values and view themselves in ways that are inconsistent with academic striving (Gardner, 1993). Crosnoe (2002) found that association with deviant friends is a best predictor of adolescent deviance. Students frequently report peer pressure as an academic and behavior problem, and will advocate for seeking positive peers as a solution to academic problems (Tucker et al., 2000). Studies on Vietnamese adolescents suggested that students who do not perform well in schools find a social niche in gangs and become involved in criminal activity (Kibria, 1993).
Steinberg et al., (1992) suggested that parents play an influential role in the lives of Asian American peers who might sometimes offset the influence of their parents. Asian American adolescents often find themselves with a limited choice of friends, due to social ethnic segregation. These peer groups tend to value academic success, a value that tends to be consistent with that of Asian American parents. However, in cases when peer pressure does not share these academic values, peer pressure tends to offset parental pressures.

Marchesi and Martin (2002) showed that the student's socio cultural level and his previous aptitudes indirectly influence the results of learning since they delimit classroom procedures. As for characteristics of the teacher, this is considered a key element for the pupil's personal and academic development, the value given from teacher to pupil and vice versa are usually reciprocal, highlighting additionally the personal relationship, they find that expectations significantly influence student results. The teachers' assessment is mediated by two variables (i) the students' intelligence, that is, the greater the intelligence, the better the academic results and the better reciprocal appreciation between teacher and student; (ii) family support for study also makes the student value his teacher more highly (Castejon & Perez, 1998). Others find positive relationship between the teacher's motivation and that of the student. Teacher-pupil relations are also mediated by the attribution of poor performance to the student (Georgiou et al., 2002).

Fraser and Beamn (1977) reported that organised study groups help improve performance. There are often different results by gender (Hornby & Atkinson, 2002); Sacerdote (2001) found that grades are higher when students have academically strong roommates.

Walters and Soyibo (1998) reported that student performance is very much dependent on their socio-economic background (SEB). High school students' level of performance is with statistically significant differences, linked to their gender, grade level, school location, school type, student type and SEB.
Academic competence refers to the students' ability to manage their study load and is used to assess if students are able to manage the study material. It also indicates whether the curriculum is interesting enough for students to enjoy their classes. Academic competence has been shown to affect students' academic performance and a student with better academic competence probably has better academic performance (Kleijn et al., 1994).

Another factor associated with students' academic performance is test competence, which refers to how students cope with the amount of study material for examinations (Topman et al., 1992). It includes difficulties with managing the amount of study material for an examination and in preparing for them.

Good strategic studying techniques may also help students achieve a high GPA. There are many efficient study techniques that could be used by students based on the learning environment (Alvermann & Moore, 1991). These study strategies include Know-Want-Learn (Ogle, 1986), Survey-Question-Read-Recite-Review (Robinson, 1970), summarizing and note-taking (Brown, 1983), using graphics (Deshler et al., 2001) and self-questioning, extensive course loads and comprehensive information, and the use of effective study strategies for academic success (Lay & Schouwenburg, 1993).

Time management skills are also important to academic success (Walker & Siebert, 1980). These skills include activities performed by students such as planning in advance, prioritising work, test preparation, and following schedules (Kirscenbaum & Perri, 1982). Higher academic performance may be achieved by balancing time management and study techniques effectively.

Test anxiety is negatively associated with academic performance (Seipp, 1991), and includes responses like worry, depression, nervousness, task irrelevant cognitions, etc, to a class of stimuli arising from an individual's experience of assessment or testing. Various stress management programs help students to improve academic performance by reducing
stress levels. Demographic variables such as students’ age, gender, ethnicity, and marital and employment status influence students’ anxiety levels (Lay & Schouwenburg, 1993).

Review sessions before examinations or assignments help students understand and appropriately apply their course material. Students who do not study well in certain subjects could be identified and special workshops conducted to help facilitate learning in academically weak students. It may be equally important to counsel students who do not use time management and study strategies (Henning et al., 1995).

The success of a student depends very much on what he brings to school from home. Aspects like motivation, self esteem, self-regulatory skills, reading and writing skills, social skills and the ability to read his peer groups. Although these skills are learnt at school and at home, the success of a student relies on the attainment of these values, skills and attitude (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Teachers need to teach students skills like time management, study skills, goal setting and life skills, for students to be successful in life.

When students fail at school, it is most often not because they are lazy or psychologically incapable, it is because they have not been taught the appropriate skills and strategies every child needs to succeed in school and in life. Bonstingl (2002) suggested that the five skills teachers need to teach students as they progress through the grades are (i) personal management, (ii) effective studying, (iii) thinking, reasoning and problem solving, (iv) graphic organization and (v) information processing.

To make a breakthrough in students’ academic results, teachers need to scaffold students in providing skills to work smarter rather than harder, by engaging students in their own learning. Students need a motivating and conducive environment. The variables that are relevant in the Fiji education setting and factors affecting the performance of Fijian students in Form 7 will be examined.
2.2.3 COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Parental and Community Involvement

Pateman (1970) reported three forms of parental participation; (i) pseudo participation, (ii) partial participation and (iii) full participation. Pseudo participation is when no real decision-making is possible. Partial participation is where individuals can influence decisions but they do not have decision-making powers. Full participation is where each stakeholder has equal decision making powers. Similarly, Sharma (1993) considered three levels of participation comprising: (i) consultation, (ii) involvement and (iii) participation.

Consultation implies a low degree of participation where the stakeholders are usually 'informed and consulted' when the person in control decides to do so. Involvement implies that parents and other members of the stakeholders have a part to play in the life of the school but the principal and teachers decide what they would do at school. Such activities include attending meetings and assisting children in their schoolwork. Participation involves active participation in decision making in the management processes such as the curriculum development, resource management, personnel appointment, school policy formulation and the teaching learning process (Sharma, ibid). Participation is mutual and an acknowledgement of the expertise in each stakeholder, including students and parents.

Anderson et al. (1996) argued that the present bureaucratic structures of the school are unlikely to change to accommodate parents in the school and system levels decision-making process. Critics of parent-school partnerships stress that equality among partners is rarely achieved (Timperly & Robinson, 2002). Tomlinson (1991) adds that schools have used the rhetoric of home-school partnerships as a mechanism to control rather than to empower parents and members of the school community. Epstein (2001) affirms that the teacher and school practices, most notably school family partnership programs, play an essential role in the promotion of parental involvement at all levels.
There is an increasing awareness of the importance of parents' role in the progress and educational development of their children. Schiefellbaum & Simmons (2002), consider family background the most important and most weighty factor in determining the academic performance attained by the student. Among the family factors of greatest influence are social class variables and the educational and family environment.

The influence of the 'family educational climate' is defined by the amount and the style of help that children receive from the family, determined by elements in the family context, like the dynamic of communication and affective relationships, attitudes towards values and expectations. Along the same lines Marchesi and Martin (2002) saw parental expectations having a notable influence on academic results, even when controlling for initial knowledge and socio-economic context. The level of family cohesion and family relationships (Buote, 2002) are capable of predicting performance.

Parenting style (democratic, authoritarian, etc) is also influential both in the students' education as well in family-school relations. Castellano (1986) demonstrated that a positive family climate favors the development of well adapted, mature, stable and integrated subjects but an unfavorable family climate promotes non adaptation, immaturity, lack of balance and insecurity.

Social support also relate strongly to school adjustment and academic achievement (Arbona, 2000). Parents play a large role in an adolescent's long-term educational plans, while peers influence daily behavior (Steinberg et al., 1992). So it is important to consider both parental and peer support with regards to adolescent academic performance.

In her review of the literature on parent involvement and student achievement, Hendrickson (1987) concludes that parent involvement improves student achievement. When parents are involved, children do better in school, and they go to better schools.
Epstein (1992) also reported that parental involvements in children's learning activities positively influence their levels of achievements and motivations to learn.

Self-efficacy also received increasing attention in educational research, primarily in studies of academic motivation and self-regulation (Pintrich & Zeidner, 2000). In this area, researchers have focused on three areas. The first explored the link between efficacy beliefs and college major and career choices (Lent & Hackett, 1987). The second suggested that efficacy beliefs of teachers are related to their instructional practices and to various student outcomes. The third reported that students' self-efficacy beliefs are correlated with their academic performances and achievements (Multon et al., 1991).

Moore & Lasky (2001) saw "best practice" for parental involvement as open, responsive, proactive, and inclusionary. The partnership model set by Epstein et al., (2001) features overlapping spheres of influence that involve the family, the school, and the community. In their research, Moore and Lasky found that the "deficit model", which keeps parents at a distance, is the norm for parent-school relationships. However, schools that reach out and open their doors, and implement practices of parents' inclusion are laying the organisation groundwork for meaningful parent-teacher partnerships. They also found that schools with strong, emotionally and intellectually supportive professional communities are more likely to embrace innovations in parental involvement (Maehr & Midgley, 1996).

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), USA, notes that parents can take many positive steps to help their children, including the following: they can encourage students to pursue advanced course work, to invest significant amounts of time in their homework, and to devote more time to reading than to television. An interest in reading and learning can be fostered by reading aloud to children; holding family discussions about reading materials, school work, and current events; and encouraging frequent trips to the library to gather more information about interesting topics (Mullis, et al., 1992).
Moore & Lasky (2001) saw that partnership through shared responsibility and shared decision making are the cornerstone of successful improvement planning. As staff work with parents to review the results of assessments and create action plans, they develop a sense of shared responsibility and determination to bring about the changes that are required. Krechevsky & Stork (2000) found that learning is strengthened in classroom communities where students are engaged in substantive conversations and collaborative tasks and where students feel connected to the school community, the local community and the wider world. Codding (2000) suggested that we need to create features of the school organisation, management and governance, structures that communicates to every member of the school community the expectation that every student is expected to reach high standards, as well as what each member of the community will be held accountable for with respect to that goal. We need to build community services and support for students outside the school so that they are able to take full advantage of extra classes and tutorials.

Fullan (2002) reported that too many schools still operate in isolation of their community. Schools need to reach out to parents, but this will require shifts of power and influence. Parents and the wider community have untapped expertise essential to the partnership. Parents are the students' first educators so schools need to develop an 'invitational' attitude towards parents and do more to help them assist their children.

Many schools involve parents in a range of innovatory ways. Most parents do not want to run the school but they do want their children to do better. There is little evidence to indicate that schools and parents have become closer. Parent involvement cannot be left to individual teachers, it must involve a school wide emphasis. Parent involvement must be seen as a crucial and alterable variable. School Boards and teachers need to take the first steps. Involving the wider community is a challenge. Treating relationships with parents and communities as powerful learning relationships is essential (Fullan, ibid).
2.2.4 School Leadership

This section considers the need to train Principals in different leadership styles, professional development, school organisational structures, school culture, after school programmes, professional learning, and inclusivity.

Principals, who create a climate of psychological safety to learn, also create a focus of discussion on student learning. The effect on learning is trickled through these attributes rather than directly (Hattie, 2003).

Today, Principals are in the hot seat, so to speak, to improve teaching and learning. They need to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives. They are expected to break the often-conflicting interests of parents, teachers, students, district office officials, unions and state agencies, and they need to be sensitive to the widening range of students (De Vita, 2005).

A shortage of well qualified principals was reported by Peterson (2002). Unfortunately, the processes and standards by which Principals are prepared, screened, selected are ill defined and lacking in rigor. Many will be certified but not qualified to effectively lead a school wide change. Professional developments of leaders include mentoring, personal reflection, educational platform development program, appreciation of alternative styles, and personal professional action planning. These programs for aspiring and practicing school administrators lead to more effective leadership in schools (Daresh, 1988; Miklos, 1998).

No particular leadership style is best, but in school situations, the following styles have been effective. The first is transformative leadership, as the ability to reach the souls of others in a fashion; raising human consciousness, building meanings and inspires human intellect, the source of power (Lee & Muller 1994; Sui & Williams, 1996; Bennis, 2003).
According to Leithwood & Jantzi (2005), effective teachers and Principals need to balance their understanding of child development and the subject. To help students meet high standards, teachers must know their students well, build lessons that scaffold learning, and create assessments that provide necessary feedback.

Noguera (2004) reported having caring relationships among teachers and students, and developing support systems for students and teachers. Mathews (2006) explained his collaborative management philosophy using the Japanese model of change: longer planning and short implementation. He said the key is when you want to make sure when you do something, you do it right, so you don't have to keep redoing things.

Mel Riddile of Metlife National High School, the 2006 Principal of the Year, revealed that personal touch and commitment to teamwork, collaboration and creative problem solving through listening to staff members has helped turn Stuart High School into one of the highest-performing low-income schools in the Fairfax County in the District of Columbia, U.S.A. (Mathews, 2006). Matt Wight of Apex High School, the 2008 Principal of the Year, talked about his guiding principles of a planned learning community; collaboration, using common assessments and focusing on results. To be successful, he clarified his expectations for teachers: posting the daily learning objective, high levels of student engagement and checking for understanding (Wight, 2008).

Another leadership style in schools is servant leadership. Servant leadership produces fulfilling emotional, psychological, and spiritual rewards for everyone involved. It enhances productivity, encourage creativity, and benefit the bottom line (Autry, 2004).

Real leadership begins on the inside, with your own commitment to inspire the best in others. But it's one thing to make the commitment; it's quite another to develop the skills to make that happen. If you are an executive, a manager, or someone who aspires to be in a
leadership role, you will find the servant leadership philosophy to be a valuable, refreshing, and rewarding approach to leading others (Autry, ibid).

Fullan (1991), on the six leadership styles by Goleman (2000, pp. 82-83) argued that good leaders must be able to act in different styles at different stages of a project: coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pace setting, and coaching. Goleman found the pace setting and coercive styles often caused problems; the other four were generally positive.

Sharma (1999) emphasised value based leadership through establishing trusting and caring relationships that form the basis for the development of an organisational culture, where honesty, integrity, fair mindedness, loyalty, justice, equality, freedom and autonomy find expression through everyday practices and procedures. He added that Head-teachers, Principals, teachers and parents' work are not only to provide knowledge and skills, but also education that inculcates love for work, righteousness, truth, tolerance and justice.

Unless knowledge is transformed into wisdom and wisdom into character, education becomes a wasteful process. We need authentic leaders in our schools, leaders who see 'goodness' in others; leaders who practice shared governance, leaders who are honest in their conduct, leaders who are committed to change and lifelong learning (Sharma, ibid).

The Total Behavior Leadership model (Hede, 1997, 2001) focuses not only on one style of leadership but focuses on across multiple behavioral dimensions. In order for practicing managers to maximise effectiveness, they should resist the temptation to be authoritarian in their approach and adopt a nurturing multi-style pattern of leadership. Nurturing patterns involves: collaborative decision-making, open communication, high-task-focus and high relationship-focus management, high inspiration motivation, high cooperativeness in conflict management and either high or low exchange motivation and high or low assertiveness in conflict management.
In order to boost students' academic performance, an effective leader needs to develop his staff. For example, Little (1993), proposes that teacher professional development requires growth in knowledge and skills, judgments, and contribution to a professional community.

Sustainable leadership involves the ability to understand and use language effectively to produce the results wanted. This includes the interaction between language and emotions, the interplay between language and beliefs. Strong high performance communication skills lead directly to effective leadership, accountability, team performance, communication, and trust. They include: making clearer requests of others, making clear secure promises that have intentional commitment behind them, obtaining a higher degree of fulfillment on requests you make to others, developing greater accountability in yourself, respectfully hold others accountable to their promises, improving productivity and less stress from broken promises, establish trust in new relationships, and restore trust when it has been broken, experiencing fewer breakdowns in coordinating with others, better clarification of roles in simple and complex projects, putting your learning into action (vs. learning to increase the facts and ideas you hold in your mind), taking action but not getting the results you want, effectively distinguish assessments (opinions) from assertions(facts) provide and receiving feedback in ways that are less stressful and more openly received, and moving the relationship forward (Goodell & Motzko, 2007)

Leithwood (1992) added the follo wings developing survival skills, becoming competent in the basic skills of teaching, expanding one's instructional flexibility, acquiring instructional expertise, contributing to growth of colleagues and exercising leadership and participating in decision making.

Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1992) found that effective professional development is sustained, ongoing, and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and collective problem solving around specific problems of practice.
2.2.5 Professional Development

Garmston and Wellman (1999) reported that coaching teachers in their practice is the most powerful means to increase their knowledge and improve their practice. According to Fox (2007), teachers who are provided with professional development in addition to ongoing training and support are more likely to integrate technology as part of their daily curriculum, while teachers who participate in the traditional professional development workshops are less likely to apply the knowledge in the classroom. If schools are to increase the performance of all students, all educators must experience high-quality professional learning as part of their daily work (Mizell, 2007).

Leithwood (2005), Anderson (2004) and Wahlstrom (2004) outlined three sets of core leadership practices of staff development programmes, setting clear visions directions, and high expectations and redesigning the organisational structures by creating a productive culture based on collaboration and team work.

2.2.6 Organisational Structures

McBrien and Brandt (1997) defined organisational structures with school culture and climate as the sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organisational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools are said to have a nurturing environment that recognises children and treated them as individuals; others have the feel of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school-climate. School-climate refers mostly to a school's effect on students, while school-culture refers more to the way teachers and other staff work together.

Hopkins (1996) observed that culture was often revealed through organisational structures, especially those that bear on teachers working together and defined their professional
relationships. It is through the new relationships and the content and style of talk arising from structural changes that the culture begins to shift. The organisational culture and procedures may be classified into frameworks which guide actions, and within which action occurs. They include the school's aims, policies, decision-making and consultative systems, and implementation strategies, shared understanding and clarification of different roles within the school and of whom is responsible for what, and ways of working.

The most successful schools are deliberately creating contrasting but mutually supportive structural arrangements to cope with the twin pressures of development and maintenance structures that attempt to do both usually do neither satisfactorily.

Hopkins (ibid) added that schools need to develop a school-culture that focuses on results and on getting every student to the required standards. The Taoists have a saying to the effect that water will always find its own level. This was the attitude we generally have about high school (the job of the high school) - to provide an education suited to the students' abilities and interests. The message could not be more different: All students must be educated to a high level, irrespective of ability and interest. Reaching that goal requires the undivided attention of every member of the school with an unrelenting focus on results.

Fullan (1991) confirmed that the more collaborative schools tend to have higher student achievement. This is true at the primary, middle, and high school levels. School leadership is about creating the best conditions for learning.

Bryk and Schneider (2002) added that the literature on school improvement has provided many definitions and descriptors of what a collaborative school culture looks like, the core beliefs, values, and types of artifacts that are left behind. Normally, there is a link between student achievement and the relationships among adults in a school building, specifically in the level of trust present.
Finally, Darling-Hammond et al., (2002, p.653) in their analysis of successful high schools, found that seven factors affected student achievement. The factors are: (i) small size; (ii) structures that allow for personalisation and strong relationships; (iii) carefully constructed curriculum aimed at specific proficiencies; (iv) teachers' pedagogical approaches, especially their explicit teaching of academic skills and their ability to adapt instruction to students' needs; (v) a school wide performance assessment system; (vi) the creation of flexible supports to ensure student learning; and (vii) strong teachers supported by collaboration in planning and problem solving.

MOE (2006) recommended that leadership is setting direction and goals for the school and putting in place the necessary mechanisms and strategies to achieve the intended outcomes. An effective school with an effective leader makes a significant contribution to the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, spiritual, moral and cultural growth of its students.

Normore (2001) found that clear expectations are essential to school administrators in order for effective successive planning to occur. In a study conducted in two urban districts in Ontario, USA., it was discovered that organisational structures and guiding principles have a profound effect on the effectiveness of school administrators. School administrators need to enhance the school culture so that it becomes more educative (Leithwood, 1999; Parkas & Hall, 1992). The challenge managers face is the need to develop a professional identity - 'an image of the self' as a proactive leader who can make a difference.

### 2.2.7 After School Programmes

Research indicates that the impact of quality after-school programs far exceeds the "safe haven and control" effect. Quality programs help students develop the skills they need to succeed academically, to learn to get along with others, and to develop positive attitudes toward community and school. Among the most often cited academic claims for quality after-school programs are improved school attendance and work habits, higher academic
achievement, improved attitudes toward school, higher aspirations for the future, and
reduced dropout rates (Baker & Witt, 1996; Cardenas, 1991).

The societal concern results from the realisation, for some people an astonishing discovery
that all children can learn. Another societal concern that has contributed to the growth in
after school programs involves the patterns of youth crime and youth victimisation. In a
Michigan community study (U.S. Department of Education 2001), the rate of teen crime
dropped by 40 percent when after-school programs were instituted. A Police Athletic
League after-school program in Baltimore reduced crime by 42 percent in the first year,
and many other communities are experiencing similarly improved safety patterns.

Owings and Kaplan (2001) reported that the most effective tutorial extended-day programs
involve either community tutors or peer tutors who receive monthly training. The training
sessions include preparation of materials and construction of academic games, discussion
of child and youth development concepts, and planning of concrete approaches to grouping
and time on task. Most frequently, the reading and mathematics specialists for the district
or the master secondary teachers do this training. The keys to a successful tutoring project
seem to be a positive relationship between the tutor and the student, the tutor's confident
knowledge of the subject being taught, and the varied experiences provided for the student.

2.2.8 Professional Learning

Anderson (2004) on teacher effectiveness found that teachers are by far the most profound
influence on student achievement within schools. He added that students learn best when
teachers have high expectations. All students are best supported in reaching challenging
goals when teachers have a deep knowledge of their subject or learning area, a detailed
understanding of the outcomes they expect students to achieve, when they select teaching
strategies that build on students' prior knowledge and provide structure and sequence for
learning and when they use assessment tasks that expect students to go beyond knowledge recall and simple practical tasks.

Anderson (2004) stressed that teachers must believe that all students need to be 'stretched' as well as supported and make those beliefs explicit to students, also the importance of 'pedagogical content knowledge' (the application of general pedagogy to a subject or learning area). This contradicts the general view that 'a good teacher can teach anything'. Outstanding teachers have a strong grasp of learning theory and general pedagogical principles but a distinguishing feature is their expert application of such principles to the particularities of their subject or learning area. There is a dynamic interaction between teachers' knowledge of their discipline and their knowledge of pedagogy. A high level of pedagogical content knowledge enables teachers to draw on their deep knowledge, to improvise, to make connections to other areas of learning and to current local and global issues and to constantly challenge and extend student learning. Teachers' deep knowledge help build the deep knowledge of their students.

This research supports a co-constructivist model of learning and teaching. Students do not construct their knowledge and skills in isolation from the teaching and learning context. Learning is a partnership between students and their teachers, who should not turn away from their responsibility for developing and extending their students' capacities.

Codding (2000) emphasised that it was essential to provide strong support for every staff member to acquire the professional skill and knowledge needed to succeed in his or her job. This is done by creating an environment in which the high school staff is really focused on student achievement and implementing a planning system that serves to organise the faculty as it analyzes student performance and tries to do better are very important, but will not by themselves lead to improvement if the faculty does not have the skill or knowledge needed to do a better job than they have been doing.
He added that to improve student learning and opportunity, intensive professional
development program can be offered to teachers by bringing in people from other
successful schools from around the country. For example, they can spend time with the
staff and students and help to design an advisory program. What schools can do is
determine who in the country was doing a particular thing the best. They can either
observe teachers teaching in their own schools or invite them to spend time at the school.
Schools cannot invent everything themselves. They could use what others were doing,
adapt it, and even improve upon it for their own students.

Darling and McLaughlin (1992), Fullan (1995), and Little (1993) proposed that the school
centered professional development is increasingly viewed as central to advancing the
present reform agenda. Little (ibid) advocated five areas of reforms in a school centered
professional development setting. These are in the (i) subject matter teaching, (ii) problems
of equity in diverse student populations, (iii) nature, extent and use of student assessment,
(iv) social organisation of schooling and (v) professionalisation of teaching.

Little also believed that school centred professional development requires more than down
loading resources and activities to a school site, that traditional training and coaching is no
longer adequate thus, the school workplace is both the most crucial and the most complex
of domains in which we play out the possibilities for teachers' professional development.

Sparks (1995) argued that constructivist teaching is best learned through a new model of
professional development in which teachers collaborate with peers to make sense of the
teaching/learning process in their own contexts.

However, Darling and McLaughlin (1992) felt that the focus of professional development
needed to shift from supporting teachers' acquisition of new skills and knowledge to
providing occasions for them to reflect critically on their practice and to fashion new
knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy and learners.
Daniel and Stallion (1996) found that the professional development options available in most schools were still the traditional forms of seminars, workshops, and formal higher educational courses, whereas only very few schools had begun exploring and providing other opportunities such as mentoring and encouraging teachers to be researchers. Hence the need for a method for providing follow-up or ongoing experiences so teachers can become researchers, practitioners and experts in their own fields.

2.2.9 Inclusivity

Collins (2003) defined the term as referring to a setting or activity in which individuals with all levels of ability are accepted and included with accommodations, adaptations and assistance as needed. A regular inclusive classroom is one in which the classroom is adapted (e.g. curriculum content, materials activities, and instruction delivery) to provide education to children who require education services. The classroom arrangements are also modified in any possible and reasonable ways to support learning needs of the children. Support services are brought to the student in the regular education classroom, rather than taking the student to the support services.

The ACT Department of Education (2002) viewed inclusivity in education starts with the recognition of our diversity. It is treating students as individuals rather than as a homogeneous group. It is about involving all students in classroom practices by valuing their uniqueness and what they bring to the classroom. It is about valuing their interests, experiences, abilities, insights, needs, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, learning styles and intelligences. Gardner (1993) and Grasha (1996) suggested that intelligence has many different dimensions. Students learn in different ways and at different rates. There are many ways in which they can demonstrate what they know and what they can do. Grasha defined learning styles as personal qualities that influenced a student's ability to acquire information, to interact with peers and teachers, and participate in learning experiences.
The implication of this research is that teachers need to use a repertoire of teaching strategies to cater for individual differences, including the use of information and communication technologies. They need to give students choices within the framework of agreed curriculum requirements and use assessment tools that are fair and equitable.

Poplin and Weeres's (1992) report on schooling that represents the voices of diverse students and teachers suggests that previously identified problems of schooling (e.g., lowered achievement, high dropout rates, and problems in the teaching profession) are consequences of much deeper and more fundamental problems in schools. Some of the problems identified deal with human relationships and those related to race, culture, and class. They found that when relationships in schools are poor, such as name-calling, threats of or incidents of violence, fear as well as a sense of depression and hopelessness exist.
2.3 CONCLUSION

There are many factors that can affect the performance of students at Form 7 level in Fiji, but this study is limited to studying the school and home factors. Students' abilities are first nurtured in the home.

Teachers account for the other variables for students' achievement. An effective school needs to find space and time to professionally develop its staff to be experts in their own fields. There needs to be more professional development on curriculum, teaching and assessment, more specifically on instructions and providing effective feedback in order to boost students' academic performance. The school culture of caring, planning and collaboration need to be reemphasised. Peers, schools and principals account for the remaining factors (Hattie, 2003).

Teachers need to update themselves professionally. This is not so as many of our Fijian schools do not have access to internet connections. As a result, the quality of Fijian student's academic performances is affected. Further, homes of Fijian students are not very supportive because many Fijians value lotu and vanua as first priority. Student's abilities and intelligence are not nurtured well in many Fijian homes. Fijian students attend the same school with peers of the same caliber, same schools with inadequate facilities and Principals who are not well qualified. These are the main home and school factors affecting the performance of Fijian students in Form 7.

The next chapter outlines the research methodology the author uses in gathering, analysing and reporting data.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology for examining the problem explored through the literature in Chapter 2 and the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The data obtained on the identified problem provided a better understanding and insight on the factors at play and offer some plausible answers to the questions raised.

A brief outline is given on the use of questionnaires and structured interview, supported by the participant observation and informal discussion to establish the home and school factors affecting the performance of students in Form 7. It also includes the determination of a suitable population sample, instruments used and treatment of the data gathered.

3.1 Research Methodology and Procedures

The data collected for the study came from the following sources: (i) archival records from the Ministry of Education; (ii) Form 7 students' questionnaires; (iii) structured interviews from a sample of 30 stakeholders; (iv) participant observations; and (v) the follow-up talanoa (semi-formal discussion) with stakeholders. Officials consulted include education officers; school principals, department heads and the teacher unions.

A comparative analysis of exam results for the three years (2002 - 2004) from various schools was done to gauge their performance relative to the national average. Of the 10 schools selected for the study, the 5 referred to as high performing schools, had participants scoring 250 marks or above in the FSLC examination while the 5 considered low performing schools, had participants with below 250 marks in the FSLC Examination.

3.1.1 Accessibility

Permission to undertake the study in schools was given by the Permanent Secretary for Education. He allowed the researcher to visit the respective schools and the necessary details were then worked out.
Preliminary visits were made to the schools to explain, in detail, the purpose of the study and what it entailed. This was done to particularly secure the assistance of the principals in accessing students and teaching staff. Also, approval was necessary for the follow-up visits to the schools during the duration of the study.

A total of 140 questionnaires were distributed to students in the five high-performing schools and another 140 questionnaires to students in the selected low-performing schools. The students were asked to fill and return the questionnaires during school hours. There were 130 male and 150 female participants in total, with their age ranges from 18-19 years. The questionnaires were collected from the Principals and the Vice Principals a week after distribution.

### 3.1.2 Research Ethics

Research ethics was strictly followed and voluntary participation was adhered to. All participants were guaranteed that their names would remain confidential, and names would neither appear in the questionnaires nor in reporting the collected data.

### 3.1.3 Interview as a Research Tool

According to Ryen (2002), the interview is an attempt to circumvent the power of the researcher in an effort to get more authentic and truer respondent accounts. Briggs (2002) described the interview as a technology to (re) invent subjectivities and social patterns that conform to, and confirm, dominant view of social reality.

An appropriate research method, such as the structured interview, was conducted during this study. This instrument was chosen because it was the most suitable and valid method of surveying and documenting stakeholders' perceptions.

A total of 30 stakeholders were interviewed to solicit their perceptions on the school factors influencing the academic performance of Fijian students. The researcher initially
interviewed school principals and heads of departments before proceeding to education officers and teacher union representatives. Each interview lasted 30 minutes to an hour. The interview transcripts were later filed separately for later analysis.

The structured interview was conducted according to steps 1 - 5 below and the proper interview protocol was followed. Plummer (1983) emphasised the importance of empathy and 'non-possessive warmth' on the part of the interviewer.

The Interview Sequence:

1. An information sheet about the researcher was given to the officers to be interviewed, outlining the topic and subtopics that would be covered during the interview. A consent form to participate in the study was given to each participant and to indicate that they consented, by signing the form.

2. The interview began with the introduction of the interviewer, welcoming and thanking the interviewee for taking part. When the respondent was at ease, the interviewer outlined the purpose of the study, the importance of his views and experiences, the assurance of confidentiality and the permission to record.

3. Interpersonal skills observed by the interviewers were pleasant and polite, friendly and interested, showing empathy, maintaining control of the interviewee, probing gently but incisively and presenting a measure of experience and authority.

4. Ethical standards of the study were maintained through assurance of confidentiality. Respondents did not feel that they had been the subjects of a painful inquisition. They never went away angry or upset. If respondents got angry or tearful, they were helped to regain their composure (Mewse, 2006).

5. All interviewees were thanked at the conclusion of the interview.
3.1.4 The Pilot Study

The aims of the pilot study were to refine the structured interview questions by providing a wide range of alternative responses and to check the basic aspects of the design and procedure. The second purpose was to allow the researchers to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instruments. Questions and methods, which appear to be vague and difficult to administer, were noted and improved. In addition, the logistics of the whole data collection process were reviewed to ensure that the best procedure was adopted.

For instance, if everyone answered the question in the same way, then it was dropped because it was deemed redundant. If a question was poorly worded, this became clear during the pilot study and was rephrased. This was a trial run of the study conducted on a smaller sample, which were be used to improve the final version of the study (Carter, 1997).

An interview schedule for stakeholders on those school factors that contribute to the examination performance of Fijian students in Form 7 was used and the structured interview questions were piloted twice. Firstly, two high schools in the Nasinu area, outside of Suva city, were selected. Since these schools were away from the Suva city locality, they ensured no interference with the main study in the city.

The first pilot study at the selected Nasinu schools was not quite satisfactory so some corrections were required for the much improved questions. The second pilot interview had very few necessary corrections. Five F7 teachers were interviewed, including a principal from a high performing school and five F7 teachers including a principal from a low performing school.

There was a mix of questions in the interview schedule due to the need to study the school factors of low performing and high performing schools. Most of the questions were normative in natures. Some were descriptive and a few were impact in nature. The
descriptive questions provide descriptive information about specific conditions of a program or activity. The normative questions compared observed outcomes to an expected level of performance. The impact questions looked at the cause and effect (Fowler, 1988). The normative questions used were intended to find out whether the observed outcomes could be attributed to the operated performance or activity.

Again, it was only after the pilot interview that some questions were found to be totally irrelevant and had to be omitted. This study was also greatly assisted by the Principals, Vice Principals and teachers who offered insightful suggestions, apart from their answers to the pilot interview. It was these suggestions and those by the HODs that helped fine tune the interview questions.

In the study of school factors, teachers were found to be the best participants. Academics from the USP were approached, but later dropped because most were reluctant to be interviewed, not having taught at the F7 level. This may be seen as a limitation, given the assumption on university expertise. However, most of the academics agree that principals and HODs in schools with F7 experience were the best stakeholders who can provide accurate data to the research questions, since they either teach or directly deal with F7.

3.2 Justification for the Research Method

The choice of a mixed research approach is on the basis that using several methods to explore an issue increases the depth and accuracy of the findings. One of the popular forms of triangulation is to mix the interview with observation, where observations help fill out those accounts given in interviews and vice versa (Hannan, 2007).

The study was conducted over three school terms during which the author carried observations of the ten schools including the two pilot schools. These observations totalled 60 separate visits, ranging in length, with the longest being almost the whole day (6 hours). The visits involved observations on classroom teachings, school assemblies and different
styles of fundraising, entry and exit of teachers and the overall school culture which were not addressed in the questionnaires and structured interviews.

The talanoa or informal discussions with school principals, HODs, education officers and teacher union representatives after school hours during grog sessions supplement the information not available during school hours when the stakeholders were busy.

Talanoa, as described by Schmidt (1988), Tavola (1990), Sharma (2000) and Vaioleti (2003) literally means a face-to-face conversation, either formal or informal, practised by Pacific Islanders such as ethnic Fijians, as it stems from their culture in which oratory and verbal negotiation have deep traditional roots.

3.2.1 Form 7 Results for Low and High Performing Schools (2002-2004)

Data from the Ministry of Education provided the reference for determining and selecting the low and high performing schools. Table 3 shows the percentage of students with a quality pass, i.e. scoring above 250 marks in the Form Seven examination, for Low Performing (LP) schools (LP1 to 6) and High Performing (HP) schools (HP1 to 8).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Percentage of students obtaining a quality pass (above 250 marks) for years 2002, 2003 and 2004.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LP Schools</strong></td>
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<td>LP1</td>
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<td>LP3</td>
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<td>LP4</td>
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<td>LP5</td>
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<td>LP6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HP Schools</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>HP1</td>
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<td>HP2</td>
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<tr>
<td>HP7</td>
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<td>HP8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The sample size by the schools investigated constituted of over 70 percent of the F7 schools in Suva, the largest district with F7s in Fiji. This number, according to Gay and Airasian (2003) advised that if the population size is around 500, then at least 50 percent of that population should be sampled.

The sample size of stakeholders comprised of more than 50 percent of the principals and HODs in the Suva district. Additionally, more than 50 percent of the teacher unions were represented, including the senior officials from the MOE.

3.2.2 Developing the Instruments for the Study

The instruments for the study were devised in response to the research questions in Chapter 1. Data gained in the varied academic settings of the stakeholders assisted in understanding the patterns of academic participation and the meanings and relationships between the school and home. Data were gathered from the following sources: quantitative data from questionnaire and qualitative data from archival research, structured interview, participant observations and informal discussions.

3.2.2a Questionnaire

Questionnaire is seen as time and cost effective as they provide the potential to include many more respondents than would be possible through interviews (Oppenheim, 1992). Secondly, it is regarded as more efficient for the identification of underlying patterns than other qualitative and ethnographic methods (Bryman, 1988). The research questionnaire was developed from a similar study (Dakuidreketi, 2003) on the performance of the Foundation Program students at the USP since the university Foundation Program is equivalent to the high school F7, except that the two programs are administered in totally different settings.

The questionnaire for students surveyed their home environments, individual characteristics, education background and future aspirations. The structured interview for
stakeholders was particularly directed at answering the questions on school and home factors affecting the performance of students. The structured interview looked at the home factors, curriculum, teaching and learning support, students' support, leadership support, community support and government support.

3.2.2b Structured Interview

The structured interview questions were drawn from the local context and the excellent school model by Hopkins (2003). The questions were designed to have at least six to seven responses that are easy to analyse. Responses on each question varied depending on the area covered in each topic. The researcher had to be thoroughly familiar with the interview schedule before starting.

(i) A pilot sample from two secondary schools in the Nasinu area were selected and tested for their comprehension by explaining the questions back in their own words,

(ii) The same pilot sample was also used to test comprehension of particular questions which possibly lacked relevance, were ambiguous or had difficult wording,

(iii) The questions were then amended in the light of Stages 1 and 2.

(iv) With a new sub sample, the revised explanation and all questions were tested for comprehension. A complete run through of the entire interview schedule, with any changes still possible at this point.

(v) From the new sub sample, the interview schedule was used to establish whether the questions the researcher was getting were the ones relevant to the study. This stage moved from testing for comprehension to relevant data collection,

(vi) It was important to know what each question was meant to tap into and if it was difficult to get relevant material, or probe further. Probes for example are non-committal encouragements to extend answers using eye contact, glance, and repetition of the answer, gentle queries needed to be non-directive.
Prompts, which suggested possible answers to the interviewees, were only used if they were deployed consistently to all (Break, 1995).

Face to face interview in the stakeholders’ own setting was used in this study. The researcher visited the interviewees' workplaces and interviewed them. The visits lasted from 30 minutes to one hour.

### 3.2.3 Population Size and Suitability of the Sample

The quality of a piece of research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of the methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sample strategy that has been adopted (Morrison, 2000).

The samples were determined by taking into account the following key factors: the sample size, the representativeness; the parameters of the sample; access to the sample; and the sampling strategy to use. Quantitative samples tend to be purposeful, rather than random, according to Kuzez (1992) and Morse (1989).

Two sampling methods, namely, the cluster sampling and purposeful sampling, were used. Firstly, the researcher used cluster sampling. It was used because the population in Form 7 was widely dispersed throughout Fiji. Suva City was selected. Eventually, 10 schools were decided on where five represented the High Performing schools and five represented the Low Performing schools. Gay and Airasian (2003) recommended the following guidelines for selecting the sample size, as summarized in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 100</td>
<td>Survey all</td>
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<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>50% (250)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>20% (200)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Above 5,000</td>
<td>400</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Where (i) small populations (fewer than a 100 people or units) are involved, there is little point in sampling and the entire population was surveyed; (ii) if the population size was around 500 then 50 percent of the population was considered adequate; (iii) if the population size was around 1,000, 20 percent was to be sampled; (iv) beyond a certain level, at around 5,000 units or more, the population size was almost irrelevant and a sample size of 400 was considered adequate.

In 2006, there were 540 Fijian Form 7 students in the schools in the Suva City and accordingly, 280 participants, predominantly Fijian students, were used as the sample size.

The students' ages range was between 18 and 19 years. The high and low performing schools were determined from the average of their FSFE results in 2002 to 2004. There were 30 stakeholders who participated in this study comprising 10 principals; 10 HODs and form teachers; 5 senior education officers and 5 representatives from the two teacher unions.

3.2.4 Data Collection

Plummer (1983) draws our attention to the importance of empathy and 'non-possessive warmth' on the part of the interviewer. Empathy is the ability to see the world through the other's eyes, sensitivity to current feelings and the verbal facility to communicate this understanding in a language attuned to the client's current being. Non possessive warmth is used to describe sensitivity, friendliness and consideration on the part of the researcher.

An information sheet was given to officers being interviewed outlining the topic and subtopics of what will be covered during the interview. A consent form requesting permission to conduct the study was also given to each participant where each was required to give his/her consent by signing the form.
The interview began with the introduction of the interviewer, welcoming and thanking the interviewees for taking part. When the respondent was at ease, the interviewer then outlined the purpose of the study, the importance of her views and experiences, the assurance of confidentiality and the permission to record.

Interpersonal skills, as observed by the interviewer, was pleasant and polite, friendly and interested, showing empathy, maintaining control of the interviewee, probing gently but incisively and presenting a measure of experience and authority. Ethical practice was maintained through assurance of confidentiality, respondents did not feel that they were being subjected to personal inquisition, respondents never went away angry or upset.

The distribution and collection of questionnaire took only one week while the structured interview took more than three months. This was a limitation to the study as the piloting and refining the structured interview questions took more than one month. Many unnecessary parts which were irrelevant to certain stakeholders were therefore, dropped. It consumed time and energy because many of the stakeholders had very busy schedules.

3.2.5 Treatment of Data

The MS Excel software possesses more than 80 built-in statistical functions which would evaluate advanced analysis facilities such as linear and multiple regression, hypothesis testing, histogram plotting and graphing options including pie and bar graphs, the most widely used graphs (Kirkup, 2002). Observations and informal discussions through talanoa and grog sessions supplemented the data collected.

A limitation that the researcher tried to overcome was the need to integrate quantitative and qualitative data and how research findings through different methods may be integrated. The literature review helped to solve these limitations. Both were applied and addressed with equal care and specificity to answer the research questions.
3.3: Conclusion

This chapter briefly discussed the mixed methods approach of using interview, questionnaire, observation, and documentary evidence that was used to study the factors affecting the performance of Fijian students at Form 7 level. The researcher believed that the tools would yield findings that would explain adequately the problems pertaining to the performance of the Fijian students at Form 7 level.

The main tools used were questionnaires for the Fijian Form 7 students around Suva City area and the structured interview for the stakeholders, consisting of education officers, union representatives, principals and HODs in schools. Observations and informal discussions were used to provide additional information that was not available through other data collecting approaches.

The next chapter presents the analysis of the results and the report on findings of the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

AND

THE REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This study looked at various factors prevailing in the home and in the schools that contributed to the general low quality performance of Fijian students in Form 7.

4.1 HOME FACTORS

The Home-Factors consist of the Environment, Culture and Orientation.

4.1.1 Home Environment

Results in Figure 1A show that 80 percent of the principals and HODs in the High Performing (HP) schools considered the home environment a major factor on students' performance, with 60 percent of union officials and 40 percent for the MOE concur. Students also agreed on home environment being a key contributing factor in students' performance.

Figure 1A: Home Environment Factors

In Figure 1B, 60 percent of the principals showed that parents' education level is a contributing home factor. Most students in the Low Performing (LP) schools come from poor housing settlements, mostly with parents of low education backgrounds. They do not have the means to pay for their children's education, compared to well off parents who normally send their children to the HP schools.
Eighty percent of the students reported that having to live with poor relatives adversely affected their performance. Relatives of students in LP schools have low expectations and aspirations on their students' education. With hardly any money for school essentials, resources like the internet, newspapers, and magazines were out of the question. The socio-economic level, as a contributor to students' poor performance, was quite evident. Eighty percent of the HODs believe that resources like library books, newspapers and internet, if available to students, should improve performance of students in LP schools.

80% of the principals in the HP schools attributed the students' quality pass to individual ability and being bright, while 80 percent of the Education Officers and Teacher Unions in high performing schools thought that students do well because they have resources and their parents were able to organise study space and time, study groups and special tutoring. Parents' levels of education also correlated with student's better performance. Forty percent of the students felt that parent organised peer tutorials and study groups were helpful in improving their results.
Summary on Home Environment

- Students in LP schools do not perform academically well as students in HP schools due to the low socio economic status of most parents. Many students live with their relatives compared to students in the HP schools.
- Parents in HP schools have better resources to boost students' academic performance
- In the HP schools, time and space are better organised and the data available show that students in these schools produced better results.

4.1.2 Home Culture

Sixty percent of the education officers and HODs in the low performing schools agreed that parents need to know the school culture well in order to help their child with accommodating techniques. This study found that there is a strong mismatch between the school culture and the home culture in low performing schools. Eighty percent of the principals and 60% of the parents in LP schools believe that Fijian students need to prioritise their schoolwork over other leisure activities. Many Fijian students, similar to their parents, give schoolwork little attention while sports and recreational activities are enjoyed. Eighty percent of the principals in the HP schools suggested that Fijian parents should value education and doing homework more and helping children with their studies.

Eighty percent of the HODs in the HP schools are convinced that Fijian students need to prioritise schoolwork above other activities. Like their parents, social and religious obligations come first, sports second and education most often the last priority. Sixty percent of the parents in HP schools also agree that parents need to organise students' space and time at home if there children are to excel in education.
KEY: 1. Parents should speak the language used in schools, at home
2. Parents study the school culture and help through accommodating techniques
3. Social organization - the conflict between the community and school culture
4. Fijian parents value homework time and help students in their homework
5. Fijian cultural and religious activities help students to succeed at school
6. Fijian students need to prioritise schoolwork over other more leisure activities
7. Fijian homes very much encourage their children in the use of space and time

Summary on Home Culture:

- The quality performance of students in the HP schools reflected their parents’ better education and their abilities to organise their children's space and time at home and having tutors for their children. These activities seem to bridge the gap between home culture and the school culture.
• Students in HP schools spend more hours studying compared to LP schools. Education must come first in the Fijian homes for students to get quality marks. Students need mentors in order to stay on track.

4.1.3 Orientation

Figure 3A: Orientations on students by stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your view on Fijian parents' orientation towards the success of their students in Form 7?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HODs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY:** 1. Parents do not stress hard and economic benefits of schooling to students  
2. Parents do not hold high expectations for performance amongst students  
3. Parents do not limit television and dating at home  
4. Parents do not provide students with a study desk and chair at home  
5. Parents view academic achievement as the most important thing in their lives  
6. Parents often stress hard work and economic benefits of schooling  
7. Parents discuss career paths with students.

Figures 3A and 3B had 80 percent of the principals in the LP schools reported that Fijian parents do not stress hard work and the benefits of schooling to students. Eighty percent of the principals and 60 percent of the education officers in LP schools revealed that Fijian parents do not hold high expectations on the performance of their children. This is why the quality of marks is not improving amongst many Fijian students.

Eighty percent of the students also confirmed that their parents do not provide the basic study facilities and a more conducive learning environment at home, such as furniture like a chair and desk to study. Sixty percent of the HODs in the LP schools believe that Fijian parents do not restrict their children from watching television and dating.
Although 80 percent of the students in LP schools discussed their career paths with their parents, there is low parental expectation that their students will produce quality marks. Parents of HP schools had high expectations of their students and their students fulfilled these high expectations by getting quality marks.

**Figure 3B: Orientations on students by stakeholders 2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your view on Fijian parents’ orientation towards the success of their students in Form 7?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**Summary on Orientations:**

- Students in LP schools do not have a desk and chair at home for their schoolwork.
- Because parents are generally poor, support for the education of their children are very limited, a key contributing factor to the poor school results of Fijian students.
- Parents need to spend more quality time with their children at home.
- Some parents do not have that crucial high expectations and career aspirations for their children, which is why the quality of marks for the majority of Form 7 Fijian students has not improved.
- Fijian parents must emphasise, not only hard work but having high expectations and aspirations too, if their children are to excel academically.
4.2 **SCHOOL FACTORS**

The following five key variables were investigated under school factors:

4.2.1 **Core Support** - (a) Curriculum, (b) Teaching and (c) Assessment

4.2.2 **Student Support** - Student involvement in own learning, Study groups, Peer groups, Student environment and Student achievement

4.2.3 **Community Support** - Parental support and Community involvement

4.2.4 **Leadership and Management Support** - Data, Organisational Structure, Inclusivity, School Culture Appraisal, School Plan and Evaluation

4.2.5 **Government Support** - Policies and Programmes

4.2.1a **CORE SUPPORT - I Curriculum** - Teaching - Assessment.

**Figure 4: Curriculum Development**

Who and what should be involved in designing the national or school curriculum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>HODs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY:**
1. It should involve the Curriculum Development Unit only
2. It should include parents and community contributions and ‘grassroots’ level.
3. Satisfy the philosophical and national education purposes of schools.
4. Provide practical education experiences.
5. Consider culture, customs and traditions, both of the country and the region.
6. Involve experts from overseas.
7. Involve stakeholders; teachers, academics, teacher unions, religious groups.

From Figure 4 on Curriculum Design, 80 percent of those principals in both the HP and LP schools believe that when designing a national curriculum the philosophy and educational purposes (original intent) of the school and of the MOE must be addressed first.

Eighty percent of the HODs in both HP and LP schools believe that it should take into consideration the culture, customs and traditions, both of the country and the region. At
present, the author believes the problem stems from the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) getting overseas consultants, through the donor countries, to develop the curriculum. Despite their expertise and good intentions, they tend to be biased towards their own systems and not necessarily cultural inclusive.

In designing the school curriculum, the author also believes that stakeholders like academics, teacher unions, religious groups and subject teachers in the areas concerned need to be initially involved. It should also consider parents and community contributions. The Pacific region is rich in its diverse cultural and ethnic differences, and this needs to be considered when designing an inclusive curriculum.

Summary on Curriculum Design:

- A 'top-down' curriculum design approach, without consulting major stakeholders often fail to go well with teachers teaching it and students learning it.
- Form 7 teachers in particularly a representative from each district, are not usually involved in designing the curriculum, a reason why the low quality performance of Fijian students in Form 7 are not improving but declining.

4.2.1b. CORE SUPPORT: Curriculum - Teaching - Assessment.

Given that it is desired for students to pass well in both internal and the external exams, 60 percent of principals in the HP schools believe that teachers should strictly follow the prescriptions. Sixty percent of the HODs indicated that they often devise their own styles to suit the learner. However, 60 percent of the principals in LP schools said that teachers often stray from the prescription which is either too difficult for the students or fail to meet the interest of some students. All the HODs in LP schools admitted trying as far as possible to adapt their teaching towards the learners needs.
Fiji's education system is said to be heavily examination-driven, where teachers often follow the curriculum strictly because they have to write exam blueprints from the prescriptions for their internal and external exams. These prescriptions are often borrowed from overseas, so teachers at the grass roots level, especially in remote rural schools cannot identify themselves with the western alien curriculum and prescriptions.

Teachers rely heavily on textbooks for teaching, which are totally alien to the students' culture. This leads to the mass failure of students as the textbooks used are meant for first language learners in English. The textbooks and the teacher who are teaching are from
different backgrounds, an inevitable mismatch. Further, many schools do not monitor the teaching gap in schools. The teaching gap is the lost of class time during teaching due to class interruptions, late arrivals of teachers, announcements and other unnecessary and unplanned disturbances. HP schools believe that while class time lost during teaching is detrimental, it is nonetheless monitored well.

In the HP schools, 60 percent of the Principals confirmed that it was well monitored and there had been some improvements shown. Eighty percent of the HODs agreed that class interruptions needed to be reduced and minimized. Eighty percent of the principals found the teaching gap detrimental. Similarly, 60 percent of the HODs felt that teaching time was not monitored and it was getting worse. To maximise learning, contact hours between the teachers and students needed to be maximised. Form captains often monitor this, by recording teachers' arrivals and departing times from classrooms.

To master concepts in each lesson, teachers need to maximise their contact time with students. Teachers and students movements need to be checked by administrators so that the teachers and students are inside the classroom during the right times.

Summary on the Teaching Gap:

- Teaching gap occurs when the curriculum teachers use in the classroom is totally different in content from the ones who designed them from the centre (CDU).
- All schools should design their period attendance register so that it monitors both staff and students arrival and departures inside the classroom.
- In order to have quality marks, teachers need to maximise contact times with students in the classroom.
- When teachers fail to understand the curriculum and when students fail to grasp what is taught in the classrooms, we call this the learning gap.
To maximise teacher and student contact times, engagement time in the classroom needs to be maximised. Interruptions to classes like announcements and taking attendance must be minimised.

4.2.1c. CORE SUPPORT: Curriculum - Teaching Methods - Assessment.

Figures 6A and 6B show that 80 percent of the principals in HP schools and 60 percent in LP schools found interactive teaching as the best teaching method to use. 60 percent of the HODs voted it second and concept teaching, the third best teaching method.

**Figure 6A: HP schools - Teaching Methods**

![Figure 6A: HP schools - Teaching Methods](image)

**Figure 6B: LP schools - Teaching Methods**

![Figure 6B: LP schools - Teaching Methods](image)

Despite other teaching strategies, interactive teaching, cooperative group teaching methods allow for immediate feedback and promote interactions between the teachers and students.
They also allow the teacher to use low to high order questioning techniques in order to monitor students' learning process.

**Summary on Teaching Methods:**

- The best teaching methods allow teachers and students to interact in the classroom. The quality of feedback from students allows teachers to scaffold teaching strategies that enable students to achieve the learning outcomes.
- Stakeholders agreed on interactive teaching being the best method, with group work as the second and concept teaching as the third best option.
- Qualified and experienced teachers are needed in Form 7 classrooms if students are to excel. Pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and knowledge of individual students' differences are needed by teachers in Fijian Form 7 classrooms.
- This study established that all Indian managed schools have expert teachers in the Commerce and Science subjects while Fijian schools focused on teachers whose subjects cannot guarantee employment and a successful career. There is an oversupply of Arts teachers instead of Science and Commerce in Fijian schools.
- There is an urgent need for graduate teachers in Commercial Studies and Basic Science for Forms 3 and 4 in all Fijian schools. The Ministry should step in and provide in-service at the USP for Science and Commerce teachers.

**4.2.1d. Core Support: Curriculum - Teaching - Assessment.**

This study on assessment compared the prevalence of the assessment of students' goals with those of the school's goals. Figure 7A indicated that HP schools frequently evaluate students' goals. 80 percent of the principals and 60 percent of the HODs' confirm evaluating students' goals against the goals of the school and department. On the other hand, 60 percent in LP schools indicated that their schools do not evaluate school goals with departmental goals. A further 40 percent in LP schools believed that they do not know
the school goals because the school hardly sets goal for students and departments and there is no evaluation of school goals.

**Figure 7A: HP schools - Evaluation of Students' Goals**

![Diagram showing evaluation frequency of school goals vs students and departments goals for principals and HODs.]

**Key:**
1. Hardly
2. Seldom.
3. Often.
4. I don't know
5. Sometimes.
6. Always.

**Figure 7B: LP schools - Evaluation of Students' Goals**

![Diagram showing evaluation frequency of school goals vs students and departments goals for principals and HODs.]

Sixty percent of the principals in LP schools admitted that they hardly evaluate students and HODs' goals. Sixty percent also admitted that they seldom evaluate students' goals against the school goals. The low quality marks for students in LP schools correspond with the schools' principals failure to set school goals and evaluate students', teachers' and departments' goals. These schools failed to monitor goal setting at all levels. According to the general vision and mission of schools, Goal-Setting is the principal's responsibility. This study noted that in LP schools, only the Ministry's vision and mission statements were displayed, and not the schools'.
Sixty percent of HODs in the LP schools felt that the principals are not strict and persistent enough in the collaborative setting of targets in each department. Likewise, both the Ministry's vision and mission, and the schools' vision and missions are not stressed enough during HODs meetings and the teachers suffer from the lack of direction from principals.

Students were affected the most due to the lack of clear vision and mission by the principals in LP schools. The opposite is true in HP schools. Here the vision and mission statements of the school are displayed and stressed by the principals during staff briefs, HODs meetings and Parents Day. There is a high expectation on students' academic achievement through the shared vision of teachers and students.

**Summary on Students' Goals:**

- Fijian managed LP schools do not have the school visions and missions displayed compared to most of the HP schools, who also have their school missions changed every year. When schools stay focused on school visions and missions, their academic results improve.
- Goal setting is not strongly monitored in LP schools, characterised by declining standards and results in the Fiji Form 7 examination.
- In Indian managed HP schools, the controlling authorities like the Arya Samaj and the Fiji Muslim League set targets and benchmarks. Every year, school principals compete to achieve and exceed their targets. In most cases, the non-government benchmarks are above the national targets set by the education ministry, especially in mathematics and science.
- In Fijian managed LP schools, while benchmarks and targets were set, these were not monitored; one of the reasons why the results for Fijian managed schools are not improving. There is no controlling authority in Fijian schools that regulate and monitor the performance of the schools and Principals.
- Worse still, many school managers in Fijian schools are not well educated and do not know their roles in schools. School managers of Indian schools daily and weekly monitor the performance of the principal. School managers in Fijian schools do not monitor the movements of their principals.
This study witnessed many Fijian principals leaving the school premises any time they wish and teachers' and students' performances are affected. Fijian principals sit in their offices and do not take rounds on the school premises to check on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process and the general discipline of students.

4.2.1e. CORE SUPPORT: Curriculum - Teaching - Assessment.

Figure 8A shows that 60 percent of the principals and HODs agreed on the need for an Examination Board. This will prevent leakages of papers, a loophole found in the current system.

**Figure 8A: HP schools - improvement of assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you improve the system of assessment in Fiji?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>percentage</td>
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<tr>
<td>70</td>
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<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Principals** | **HODs**

**KEY:**
1. An immediate need of a separate Education Board; a system like the South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment (SPBEA)
2. A transparent system like New Zealand and Australia
3. Monitoring systems should be intact
4. The section needs monitoring from outside
5. Ignore complaints from the public
6. The office needs a gender balance
7. It needs to be based with the Curriculum Development Unit

Previously, when examinations were set in New Zealand, the leakage of papers was unheard of, nor the scaling or recount of marks, as prevalent today. Now when the examination papers are set locally by teachers who also teach in schools, most of them based in Suva. The leakage of papers has really become a serious problem almost every year. Most of the examiners teach in schools, take tutorials and remedial classes for students in their own schools. This is one of the drawbacks of getting current teachers as examiners or the members of examination panels.
Further, the recount system of marks in Fiji is a problem that requires serious consideration by the Ministry.

Figure 8B: LP schools - improvement of assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you improve the system of assessment in Fiji?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>percentage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Stakeholders need to be educated on the scaling system. The local recount system should follow New Zealand’s recount system. Many students do not get additional marks in our current recount system. The scripts are hardly checked by chief markers.

Another contributing factor to the underperformance of students in LP schools was the lack of assessment monitoring by the Principals. HP schools have at least three assessment tests in a term, apart from the term exams where principals check the results and interview those who have failed. Parents are also called and advised to monitor the performance of their students. HP schools have fewer failures rather than their LP counterparts.

This study observed that in the LP schools, the Principals were not monitoring the performance of students closely and students were not called to the principal's office to explain and monitor their poor performances. This is considered a major reason why internal as well as external examination results are poor in most Fijian managed Form 7 schools. There is not any checking system at the school and national level to monitor assessment feedbacks to both students and parents. These are limitations, our current principals in LP schools failed to address.
Summary on Assessment

- The high failure rate of students in Fijian managed schools corresponds to the Principals' inability to monitor the academic performance of students.
- Principals need to closely monitor assessment tests and call students and parents who are not performing to the set standards in the school.
- Stakeholders need to know the criteria of the scaling system that MOE uses. It needs to address the weaknesses in the current assessment system.

4.2.2a STUDENT SUPPORT - Learning Environment

The study on Learning Environment examined the monitoring of attendance.

In order to ensure quality time in the classroom between teachers and students, there must be some monitoring mechanism in the school. Sixty percent of principals and HODs in Figure 9B shows that for LP schools, the period registers were hardly used and the arrival and departure times of teachers were not monitored. There is period attendance register for staff and students and a class time register for arrivals and departure of teachers in a class.

Figure 9A: HP schools - students and staff Class Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>HODs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the school use 'period-attendance' to monitor students' and staff's contact time?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to ensure quality time in the classroom between teachers and students, there must be some monitoring mechanism in the school. Sixty percent of principals and HODs in Figure 9B shows that for LP schools, the period registers were hardly used and the arrival and departure times of teachers were not monitored. There is period attendance register for staff and students and a class time register for arrivals and departure of teachers in a class.

When both registers were ignored, quality time between the staff and students were not monitored and learning too was not monitored. This left staff and students to do as they wished and this is consistent with lower standards noted in LP schools. School discipline gets affected if teachers and students are not closely monitored.

The study witnessed many teachers in LP schools being late regularly. In HP schools, school gates are shut at 8 am so the latecomers are readily noticed and reported to the principals for counseling. The teachers’ time book is also placed in the principal's office after 8 am so that teachers coming late had to see the Vice Principal and if necessary the Principal.

In LP schools, principals need to monitor the attendance of teachers and students closely, with frequent rounds to check that the teaching and learning is taking place. Supervision slips for absent teachers need to reach supervising teachers. Principals must ensure that all classrooms have a teacher and form monitors to inform the Vice Principal if this is not so.
4.2.2b STUDENT SUPPORT - Study Groups

The data on study groups, Figures 10A and 10B, show that 60 percent of principals and all the HODs in HP schools confirmed the presence of study groups, however, these were monitored by students. LP schools did not have study groups.

![Figure 10A: HP schools - How study groups are monitored](image)

**KEY:**
1. Form teachers monitor them weekly
2. Students monitor their own groups
3. They are monitored by parents and outsiders
4. The school has a monitoring system
5. The school has study groups but is monitored by teachers
6. The school does not have a system of study groups, not encouraged
7. The school is thinking about starting it

![Figure 10B: LP school - How study groups are monitored](image)

While HP schools reported a 90 - 100 percent attendance for afternoon classes, LP schools had below 60 percent according to the principals. The principals and HODs in HP schools confirmed the improvement on some subjects and vast improvement to all the subjects, while all the principals in LP schools reported the lack of improvement. HODs reported some improvements to some subjects that took extra classes.
The extra classes in HP schools started in Terms 1 and 2, whilst in LP schools only started it in Term 3. Thus, there was a vast improvement in results in HP schools but there only a minor improvement in LP schools. Teachers in HP schools also taught their students outside school hours but not in LP schools.

**Summary on Student Support**

- More formal and informal interactions between teachers and students in HP schools correspond to more contact times and more feedbacks and increased academic performance of students.
- LP schools need restructuring so that more organised after school classes, group work, coaching and peer tutoring can take place.
- This study observed that many Fijian students were not getting much support from teachers in schools. There is not any organised academic coaching for students who take part in other extra curricular activities such as rugby and netball. Such provisions are available in HP schools.

4.2.3 **COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Parental and Community Involvement**

This section looks at the extents to which school-community support and parental involvement affect the academic performance of Form 7 Fijian students.

**Involvement of Parents in School Related Activities**

*Figure 11A: HP schools - involvement of parents*
Both HP and LP schools agree that schools hardly involve parents and community in the academic work of the school. Eighty percent of the HODs of both schools also agree that parents are only involved when schools demand help from them. Similarly, 80 percent of the principals noted that parents and the community are only involved once in a year through fundraising drive for schools. In other words, they are hardly involved in school decisions, which directly affected them. Most principals avoid the involvement of these key stakeholders in the daily running of schools.

Not all parent partnerships are directed at pupil achievement and adjustment. Some are designed to improve the infrastructure that may eventually lead to better academic achievement. This is common amongst all Fijian-managed schools. Parents are only involved when there is a fundraising activity or when there is a discipline problem about any child. Intervention programmes to link the home culture and school culture are absent in most Fijian managed schools.

On whether facilities like village and church halls are used for educational classes, 80 percent of the principals and HODs agreed that these were hardly used for education classes. Both the 'vanua' and the 'lotu' have neglected the education of children.
According to research many respondents, buildings such as halls stand high in most villages and are places only for activities such as socializing and sports and the avenues of getting money from the people.

To make education community driven, 80 percent of the principals in both schools urged that there should be community awareness so that parents know which to be the top priority. HODs stressed that there should be coordination at all levels. The heads of 'vanua', 'lotu' and 'matanitu' need to collaborate, and mediate more on the problem of Fijian education and ways all three can work together and plan strategies in solving the current problems of poor quality marks of our Form 7 students. At present, the three Fijian institutions - 'vanua', 'lotu' and 'matanitu' - are working in isolation because education is not the first priority.

**Summary on Community Support:**

- There is the need to change the mindsets of Fijian parents to value education more. Various local studies established that education gets the lower priority. Fijian social and religious structures can be blamed as church and community halls are only used for religious purposes, to call the vanua (people) or to hold political meetings.

- The Fijian social structure, the lotu and vanua should change its priorities. Observations of church and village community hall meetings show that the main topics of discussion are either sports or social functions, or levies from the vanua and the church. Hardly anyone brings up the topic of education. Church and community leaders seem to only worry about their personal benefits. The uneducated parents are easily manipulated in the process.

- We need community leaders who are well educated and good mentors who can guide Fijian students to achieve better quality marks, get scholarships and get better jobs. We need leaders in the community who can prioritise what is best for future generations.
The answer to Fijian education is in the Fijian people themselves. The answer lies in the community and homes both in urban and rural.

4.2.4. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT:

Aspects of leadership and management support include: class and school size, school attendance, data richness, leadership styles, quality staff development and school culture.

4.2.4a. Class and school size

Many of the LP schools enrolled between 800 - 1400 students, and many Form 7 classes exceeded 30 students. However, HP schools have 400 to 800 students and their Form 7s have below 30 students. The two major differences concerning the Fijian Form 7 in HP and LP schools are the large class and school numbers.

Various studies had recommended the effective size of 300 to 400 students in elementary and 400 to 800 students in secondary schools. Reducing classes to 15 students or less had shown improvements. Little gain in achievement is expected when reducing class size from 40-35 or 30 but substantial reductions to 15 show higher results (Lee & Smith, 1997; Allen & Kickbusch, 1991).

4.2.4b. School Attendance

It was observed that many LP schools had below 60 percent weekly attendance while in HP schools, the average weekly attendance is above 85 percent in all schools with Form 7. Monitoring of students' attendance at Form 7 is crucial.

4.2.4c. Data Richness

From Figures 12A and 12B, the principals and HODs in HP schools had data put up on the graph and visible enough for everyone to see. However, in LP schools, 60 percent of the HODs admitted that the data are not often transparent. Only HODs have access to these data, according to principals. Schools should stress that data be clear and accessible to all staff. Staff development in the use of data and giving feedback as rapidly as possible were
also essential for the school mechanism to work. It is also important that scatter plots identifying students' results in a range of different subjects against prior attainment alongside national percentile lines be provided.

**Figure 12A: HP schools - Data**

![Graph showing how data like examination results are displayed in the school.]

- **Key:**
  1. Available only with Heads of Departments
  2. Accessible only to the Principals
  3. It is put up on graphs for everyone to see
  4. It is often not transparent
  5. Data are never displayed
  6. There is fear of displaying data
  7. No one has told us to put up this data

**Figure 12B: LP schools - Data**

![Graph showing how data like examination results are displayed in the school.]

Data richness is a management tool in the collection, interpretation and use of information in the school. Information that can be used are socio economic contexts, active and extensive recruiting of staff at all levels, assessment data through blanket testing of intakes,
classroom behaviours of teachers, areas that require professional development, weak and strong departments, structured teaching and monitoring of pupils performance.

Summary on Class Size, Attendance and Data Richness:

- Most of the Fijian managed secondary schools in the Suva-Nausori corridors have rolls of over 1,000 students and the class sizes are in the range of 40-50 students. Students normally do not excel in this environment. The Ministry needs to intervene or the quality would keep declining.
- Data like exam results on graphs are not visible in most Fijian schools. Many fear putting up these graphs because nearly all the results are not up to standard.
- The recommended weekly attendance of Form 7 students for one week must be between 95 to 100 percent. Many Fijian urban schools in this study have very poor students' attendance. Students' attendance needs to be monitored daily.

4.2.4d: Leadership Styles

Which leadership and management styles affect Fijian students' performance?

Figure 13A shows that 80 percent of the principals found transformational leadership the best style to improve student performance. Eighty percent of the HODs in HP schools prefer teamwork style while 60 percent of the HODs in LP schools felt that moral leadership is equally important.

**Figure 13A:** HP schools - Leadership Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>HODs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Autocratic</td>
<td>5. Transformational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Instructional</td>
<td>6. Pedagogical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Transactional</td>
<td>7. Moral/ Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Situational or Contingent</td>
<td>8. Inclusive/Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Organic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sixty percent of the principals in HP schools believe that the best form of leadership is transformational leadership which is shared. Sixty percent of HODs in HP schools, principals and HODs in LP schools prefer leaders who consult and lead.

**Figure 13B: LP schools - Leadership Styles**

Another characteristic of a good leader is in making sure that communication channels are clear and everyday work is communicated. In HP schools, all the principals described their communication procedures in school as clear through the weekly bulletins. Sixty percent of the LP school principals said that it was only made clear in staff briefings. The lack of planning in LP schools leads to chaos amongst staff and students.

Effective leaders monitor the quality of their staff. While all schools used observation techniques, formal and informal discussions and term reports with their teachers to appraise their performance, HP schools used other methods of staff appraisal like 'in class supervision' and monthly reports.

There is an absence of formal staff appraisal in LP schools. Teachers do not attain optimal performance under such conditions and this affects the performance of Fijian students. Effective leaders plan at getting better results with 80 percent of the principals aimed at improving results while all HODs believe in setting clear expectations.

However, 80 percent of the Principals in HP schools believed in setting clear expectations and 80 percent of HODs believe in sharing expertise. There is not any result or improving
performance in LP schools because it was not their top priority. This is another factor affecting the performance of students.

**Summary on Leadership Styles:**

- This study found that transformational leadership through teamwork is perceived as the best leadership style to boost performances and get quality results.
- Principals need to use pedagogical style to improve students' academic results.
- Due to political upheavals and growing immorality in our society, we need value-based, inclusive and sustainable leadership in our schools.
- A leader needs to evaluate his staff. There is not any staff appraisal in most Fijian schools. The success of any school rests with their teachers. It was also noted that most principals in Fijian schools do not monitor HOD's monthly reports. This is why we have poor quality teachers in most Fijian schools because the leaders are not doing their jobs. This kind of leadership is not different from laizzez faire governance.
- Fijian school managers should know their roles in the schools and must not abuse school funds they are entrusted with.

**4.2.4e. Quality of Staff Developments**

![Figure 14A: HP schools - Staff Developments](image)

**How would you describe the quality of staff developments that have taken place?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>very relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>high quality; will boost students' performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>some relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>some relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>repetition of familiar topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>outdated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY:**

1. outdated
2. repetition of familiar topics
3. guest speakers not performing to expectations
4. low qualities
5. some relevance
6. very relevant
7. high quality; will boost students' performance
Sixty percent of the principals and 80 percent of HODs in the HP schools described the quality of staff development as very relevant to improving students' performance. Principals in the LP schools found the quality of staff development as not up to expectations. Both schools had two to four staff development sessions in a term.

The major criticism of seminars and workshops is that they are traditional and 'one shot' experiences, completely unrelated to the needs of teachers. To update teachers' knowledge and skills, all principals in HP schools and 80 percent of HODs recommended that effective principals must update themselves professionally.

Sixty percent of the principals in LP schools recommended relevant academics from tertiary institutions such as USP and FIT to update their knowledge and skills. Another innovation is the partnership between schools and universities to carry out research and implement practices that promote the development of teachers in schools and universities.

Eighty percent of the HODs recommended that successful teachers update staff in LP schools. Both schools need regular staff development programs on improving teaching instructions. More expertise and skills are needed with staff development program on teaching instructions relevant to students' learning styles. Eighty percent of the principals
in HP schools recommended that the best form of staff development require teachers to be researches, mentors and practitioners. HODs agreed on observing good teaching to improve teaching instructions in classrooms.

Eighty percent of the LP schools' principals believe that the latest form of collaboration focuses on ongoing collaboration by teachers. HODs (60 percent) agreed that expertise and skills should be shared. LP schools certainly lack quality staff development, shared expertise and skills for delivering quality instructions. They need to realise that they are researchers, mentors and practitioners in their own fields. School principals can improve staff development in their schools by planning ahead, starting early, establishing a routine, tapping internal sources, establishing a mentoring programme, holding staff meetings for professional development and observing and guiding change. Principals in LP schools failed in their responsibilities as heads of institutions to plan and carry out professional developments, hence, overall results have deteriorated.

**Summary on Staff Development:**

- Most Fijian schools lack the technology to promote teachers' and students' learning while all Indian managed schools surveyed have internet in the principal's office HODs, staff room and libraries. Many Fijian schools do not have such facilities. Students and teachers in many Fijian schools need to access educational websites that would help them in their Form 7 projects and obtaining basic knowledge and skills in all subjects.

- In most Fijian schools, the resources such as libraries and laboratories are not suitable for Form 7 students and textbooks are inadequate. Past exam papers are not systematically filed and stored and students cannot access basic materials that would improve their results.

- The recent form of staff development is for teachers to become professionals, mentors and researchers. Technology, such as internet, would make this happen.
4.2.4f. School Culture

Culture affects motivation that affects productivity. Culture affects the willingness of staff members, students, parents and administrators into continuous improvement. Without a positive, collegial, professional community and strong culture productivity is difficult to achieve.

Eighty percent of the principals and HODs in HP schools stated that their schools have a well-defined mission, a collaborative culture with personalization and care. On the other hand, 80 percent of the HODs in the LP schools stated that their schools lack teamwork and clearly defined mission, vision and values. Roles and responsibilities are often not clear.

Summary on School Culture:

- The principal sets the school culture. The culture of many Fijian schools do not emphasise academic achievements, even their vision and mission are not clear. All stakeholders in Fijian schools need to collaborate to set a high academic culture.
- Personal observations and comments from Principals in HP schools confirm that many Fijian students are not getting quality marks in LP schools because sports and other social activities are over-emphasised.
- While HP schools are conducting afternoon classes (3.00 - 4.00 pm), Fijian students in LP schools are in the playground. HP schools also take part in extra curricular activities but they are done after the extra afternoon classes are taken. Extra classes are also compulsory for all in HP schools. Fijian principals in LP schools simply cannot prioritise school activities. This is why the results are poor as most HODs articulate. Leaders set the culture of the school. Unless the Ministry makes clear directives and sets a clear guideline on extra curricular activities in Fijian schools, Fijian education would not improve.
4.2.5. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT - MOE Policies

What are some school and governmental policies that would improve the performance of Fijian students in Form 7?

In order to improve the performance of Fijian students in F7, the Ministry needs to be firm in its intake policy. Sixty percent of the principals in the HP schools and HODs in LP schools felt that the academic committees should screen students' intake rather than those Principals who consider other personal and social factors. The Ministry must do the final selection. Furthermore, to improve the performance of students, Form 7 should be taken by qualified and experienced Form 7 teachers and headed by capable HODs. Teachers also need to be inclusive in their teaching methods and understand the individual differences of students.

Figure 15A: HP schools - MOE Policies

What are some education ministry policies and programmes that can improve the performance of Form 7 Fijian students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have a strict policy on intake for form 7</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Principals submit Form 7 applications at the end of year and the Ministry approves F7 candidates when the FSFE result is out.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Educate the stakeholders to have quality intake for Form 7</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Release results in December so the Ministry can work on its selection before the school begins the following year.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The Academic Committee alone screen candidates from schools</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Principals alone do the intake of students.</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Both the Principals and the Ministry are to be accountable and answerable for the end results.</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another government policy that adversely affects the performance of students in Form 7 is the free tuition to all Form 7 students. About 60 percent of the principals in the HP schools
questioned the eligibility of these students to enter Form 7. In addition, 60 percent of the HODs in HP schools blamed the MOE for allowing students with poor marks in Form 6 to enroll in Form 7.

Figure 15B: LP schools - MOE Policies

Principals in the HP schools blame the MOE for not putting up graphs on the low quality pass rates of Fijian students over the past years. Lastly, the poor performances of Fijian students according to 60% of the HODs in LP schools is because the Ministry is approving more new Form 7 Fijian centres with rather inadequate facilities.

In 2006, the MOE warned all Form 7 centers that all students who wished to enroll in Form 7 scoring below 230 marks in FSLC would not be allowed to sit the FSFE in 2007. The directive from the Ministry was ignored and Principals enrolled many students below 230 marks because of the free tuition fees. In 2008, the MOE sent another circular informing all schools to enroll only students above 250 marks but the principals still ignored this directive and continued to enroll students with below 250 marks.

Summary on Government Support:

- Both Principals and the MOE should be equally blamed for the improper intake of Fijian students in Form 7.
- Many schools are blatantly ignoring the MOE's intake policy but the MOE too is not doing anything. The quality pass in Form 7 Fijian schools declined while the quality pass of nearly all Indian managed Form 7 continue to improve.
• The MOE needs to be faithful in maintaining and following its policies if Fijian education is to improve.
• We need local experts and qualified people with Masters and especially Doctorates in educational leadership, curriculum development, assessment and evaluation and policymakers in the MOE especially to train Principals and our communities on how to improve the quality marks of our Form 7 Fijian students.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the data collected and suggested some potential solutions to the problems yielded by the home and school factors that affect the performance of Form 7 Fijian students. The summary at the end of each section points to possible solutions. The study on the three home factors - home environment, home culture and orientation sought to understand the problem of student quality performance from the home perspective. When the education of a child is foremost at home, the gap between the school and home cultures is negligible.

Similarly, school factors such as curriculum, teaching and assessment are important if teachers in Form 7 can integrate teaching and assessment methods that are culturally inclusive to the needs of the Pacific students. Students need the support of parents, tutors and teachers if they are to excel academically. Leaders at the school level need to be inclusive in their styles of leadership. Transformational, instructional, value based, sustainable and total leaders are needed to allow students to achieve their full potential.

There must be a balance between the emphasis on academic education and sports in Fijian schools if quality education is to prevail and academic achievement to improve. At the moment, it weighs heavily in favor of sports, religion and cultural and community activities.
Schools must be inclusive in its approach in involving the community and parents in the school. Schools need to reach out to the parental community. Parental participation in schooling can help provide resources and bridge the gap that currently exists between home and school cultures.

Students need the MOE’s support in providing IT to schools that need them. The MOE needs to be faithful, strict and fair in its intake policies so that students’ external marks are not compromised. Further, the scaling of Mathematics and Science marks are evident in secondary schools. Many students, who fail Mathematics and Science subjects in their annual examinations, pass them in the external examinations owing to the scaling system used by the MOE. This is also reflected in the high rate of Fijian students failing in these subjects at USP.

The next chapter presents the implications of the study. Then, it goes on to articulate specific recommendations that may be gainfully utilised to improve the quality of Form 7 passes of Fijian students.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

AND

RECOMMENDATIONS
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken to establish and better understand the various key factors contributing to the low quality performance of Form 7 Fijian students. The quality of passes in many Fijian managed secondary schools is deteriorating.

In 2006, there were 540 Form 7 Fijian students enrolled in schools in the Suva City area, and based on this number, a sample size of 280 gave a 95 percent confidence level with a confidence interval of 4. The data collected, the conclusions and the recommendations presented in this study were drawn within these parameters.

There were two cohorts in this study representing the High Performing (HP) and Low Performing (LP) schools. A comparative analysis of these two cohorts, on the characteristics observed, provided the basis for the conclusions reported. The primary subjects were the Form 7 Fijian students and the areas examined were the (a) home factors and (b) school factors, with the feedback gathered from (i) students and their parents, (ii) principals, HODs and teachers, and (iii) education officers, and teacher unions.

5.1.1 HOME FACTORS - Research Question One

How and to what extent do factors such as home-environment, home-culture and orientation affect the academic performance of students?

HOME ENVIRONMENT: Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F1 The dominant factor contributing to the poor achievement in schools for Form 7 Fijian students was their disadvantaged socioeconomic status. This is in agreement with what is generally known from similar studies on low academic achievement. The question then is how to address this in Fiji's context.
Schools with student-intakes from housing settlements such as Raiwai, Raiwaqa and Nabua, were found to be socio-economically disadvantaged because most parents in these areas do not have good education, have low family income and low social status. Students from these homes were not well supported in their education.

**Recommendations (R)**

R1.1.1. Parents should provide appropriate support such as supervising homework, arranging for tutors, study groups, peer tutoring, remedial classes at home and in schools.

R1.1.2. Parents should encourage their children to read at home. Having resources such as newspapers, books, libraries and internet help accelerate students' learning.

**5.1.2 HOME CULTURE: Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)**

F2 Fijian parents place the church and the 'vanua' as a higher priority and obligation than the education of their children.

F3 The home cultures of majority of Fijian students are not very supportive and accommodating for students to excel.

F4 Students who excel in Form 7 are those students whose parents have arranged tutoring, extra coaching and provision of technology like internet in their homes. There is a match between the home culture and school culture.

R1.2.1. The MOE and schools should provide scaffolding lessons for parents of these students on what they have missed at home. The home culture must match with the school culture if these students are to benefit.

R1.2.2. Educate and change parents' values to seriously take the education of their children as their first priority. Fijian students need to take education as a personal priority, over leisure activities, which adversely affect their education.

R1.2.3. Parents must effectively organise daily times and spaces for their children.
R1.2.4. Home Resources - giving students the proper resources can make learning more effective and increases the chance of success. Nothing can replace parents' support, love and time. It is important for every home to provide the basics,

(i) Provide a quiet study space or room: away from the television. Provide a desk or a second hand kitchen table is adequate,

(ii) Provide a simple bookshelf or a bookcase,

(iii) Encourage the use of a dictionary when students come across a difficult word, even looking one word a day should build the child's vocabulary,

(iv) Place an atlas and a globe somewhere so that it is visible,

(v) Provide newspapers, books, magazines and other reading materials

R1.2.5 Form 7 students need to read and write well. It is important to allow students to visit the local town or city library. Provide students with a good role model of reading at home and at school.

(vi) Encyclopedia, if used correctly, would enable Form 7 students to develop research skills that are important for success at school and in later study.

(vii) Computer and Internet: these provide invaluable information on anything around the world. They are great aids to learning. Internet has varieties of tutorial websites that students can access.

5.1.3 PARENTS’ ORIENTATIONS: Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F5 Parents and guardians in LP schools with low socio-economic background have correspondingly low education aspirations for their children. Fijian parents, especially mothers, need to daily supervise their children and push them to achieve quality marks in examinations.

R1.3.1. Parents must adopt higher academic expectations for their children and constantly motivate and assist them towards their short and long-term goals.

R1.3.2. Fijian parents must counsel their children to avoid social activities that adversely affect children's studies.
R1.3.3. Fijian parents must discuss and clarify the best career paths for their children.

R1.3.4. Fijian students need regular expert counseling to keep them in the right path.

5.2 SCHOOL FACTORS: Research Question 2

To what extent do school factors like curriculum, teaching and assessment affect the performance of students?

5.2.1 CURRICULUM: Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F6 Many of the stakeholders were not involved during the initial stages of designing the national curriculum. As a result, we have a cultural bias curriculum.

F7 Many of the textbooks, especially in secondary schools, are outdated and need revising or replacing. We need more locals to write our own curriculum relevant to the region.

R2.1.1. The Curriculum Development Unit should involve stakeholders at the grass root level when designing any new or revised national curriculum.

R2.1.2. The culture, customs and traditions, of the country and the region should be considered when developing any new or revised curriculum.

R2.1.3. The curriculum should satisfy the philosophy and purposes of the school.

R2.1.4. All stakeholders like teachers, union officials, religious organizations, and academics from institutions like USP and FIT must be involved in the design of the national curriculum. This will prevent large gaps created between the design and implementation of the curriculum - (teaching gap).

R2.1.5. The CDU must identify or write textbooks that are relevant to both the urban and rural and any other culture in Fiji.
5.2.2 TEACHING: Findings and Recommendations

F8 Some of the Form 7 teachers are not appropriately qualified to teach Form 7. Some schools still have unqualified teachers teaching Form 7.

F9 The three styles of teaching: interactive, cooperative group and concept teaching would enable teachers to teach effectively. Interactive teaching is the best style of teaching as it encourages teachers and students interaction in the classroom. The quality of feedback from students allows teachers to scaffold teaching strategies that enable students to achieve the learning outcomes.

F10 Fijian schools need attendance registers to monitor teachers and students attendance and their movements in and out of the classrooms.

F11 Many Fijian managed schools do not have a vision and mission statement, and as a result there are no short and long term goals set for staff and students. The culture of many Fijian schools do not emphasise academic achievements.

F12 Principals are not doing their jobs of calling in parents whose students are not performing well in school tests and provide immediate feedback on their child's academic performance and progress.

R2.2.1. Form 7 course content and instructional methods must be redesigned in ways that increase adolescent engagement and learning. The instruction typical of most high schools is to engage students cognitively, emotionally, or behaviourally. When instructions draw from students' understandings, interests, culture, and real-world experiences, the curriculum becomes more meaningful to them. Students stay engaged when instruction is varied and appropriately challenging, when students are active participants, and when teachers allow students to use their native language abilities and other resources to master the material and complete tasks.

R2.2.2. There must be ongoing classroom assessment of students' understanding and skills. Instruction that is appropriately challenging for all students in a class
requires that teachers have information about each student's current knowledge and skills. Teachers' decisions about tasks and next steps would be more effective if they are informed by daily or weekly data about student progress. Standardized testing done annually does not provide enough useful information for teachers to make instructional decisions in their classrooms. Teachers should monitor the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional practices, not only for progress in learning, but also to see whether students are staying engaged behaviourally (e.g., attendance, completion of work), cognitively (e.g., efforts to understand and apply new concepts), and emotionally (e.g., enthusiasm for learning activities).

R.2.2.3. The pre-service teacher preparation programs must provide high school teachers with deep content knowledge and pedagogies, and about students and how they learn, and that schools and districts provide practising teachers with opportunities to work with colleagues and to continue to develop their skills.

R2.2.4. Teachers need to know different methods of teaching and about students' learning, and they must have a deep understanding of the discipline they teach. Teachers need to have a range of strategies ready to use with their students, and skills at adapting instruction to the needs of individual students.

R.2.2.5. Schools should pursue improving the quality of teaching and learning In particular emphasis should be on securing high levels of literacy and numeracy as major contributing factors to improved performance.

R2.2.6. School registers should monitor not only the presence of students in a class but also the time of entry and exit of teachers in class.

R2.2.7. Schools must be strict on disturbances to the time of classroom teachings, by not making announcements and intercom interruptions unless in an emergency.

R2.2.8. Staff development on teaching methods, such as interactive teaching, group teaching, and open discussions to replace the traditional lecture method of teaching so that instructions are more inclusive.
5.2.3 ASSESSMENT: Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F13 Many of the Form 7 Fijian schools do not have a school organised programme such as morning, afternoon or Saturday classes to help students to obtain quality marks.

F14 Many of the Fijian schools do not have school-based trial tests or topic tests before internal examinations. The more students are tested the better their marks would become. Principals need to closely monitor these tests.

F15 Scaling-up of marks for Science and Mathematics, and scaling-down of marks for Languages and Social Sciences are unfair. Many stakeholders need to know the scaling system the Ministry uses. F7 English marks are also scaled twice.

F16 Rechecking of marks costs $5.00 per subject is unfair on students as students' full scripts when rechecked should not exceed 5 marks according to a standard procedure by the Ministry. In most cases, students do not get any mark from rechecking of scripts.

F17 The appointment of chief examiners and panels for external examinations need close monitoring from the Ministry. We need recognised and experienced experts with postgraduate qualifications for the different subject areas.

R2.3.1. Form 7 assessment must comprise 50 percent of coursework and 50 percent examination. This is to get rid of time wasted in repeating what has been covered from the beginning of the year, in terms two and three.

R2.3.2. All Fijian schools must have compulsory after school classes, tutorials and study groups from Term 1 until Term 3 in order to have quality pass and the Ministry to closely monitor this otherwise academic performance would not improve.

R2.3.3. Schools must compare their results with national averages, their performances with schools of similar characteristics and subjects.

R2.3.4. Student learning skills must be a school priority with school assessments.
R2.3.5. Students must take ownership in goal setting at the initial stages; with schools using formative assessment strategies and assessment for learning.

R2.3.6. Students' assessments must be properly recorded and closely monitored by subject teachers, to note improvements of every child in the school.

R2.3.7. Teachers should list all the internal assessment required each year.

R2.3.8. In order to improve student achievement, more attention must be paid to the classroom assessment.

R2.3.9. A comprehensive, long-term development program must be in place at the national and local levels to foster 'literacy in the classroom assessment' for teachers. Resources need to be allocated in order to provide teachers with the opportunity to learn and grow professionally.

R2.3.10. Teacher and administrator licensing standards in all teacher certification contexts should change to reflect the competence expectations in assessment.

R2.3.11. Provide teacher preparation programs to ensure that graduates are assessment literate in terms of promoting and of documenting student learning.

R2.3.12. Tests used to evaluate schools, teachers, and students assess high-level, critical thinking and incorporate broad and multidimensional conceptions of subject matter, including fluency, understanding, analysis, and application.

5.2.4 STUDENT SUPPORT: Research Question 4

How does the students' learning environment affect the performance of Form 7 Fijian students?

Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F18 Fijian students in Form 7 do not have the basic writing and arithmetic skills.

F19 Fijian students do not perform well in schools because they do not have much support from their parents. There are very few organised tutoring, peer learning, study groups, extra classes and individual coaching in Fijian homes and communities.
Many Fijian principals are not committed in arranging extra classes and tutoring in schools.

Many Fijian students do not have personal tutors but rely on their peers who often mislead them. Bad peer groups, poor habits and procrastination are common.

R2.4.1. Form 7 Fijian students require closer monitoring of achievement, tutorial assistance and a proactive approach to promote student perseverance.

R2.4.2. The various supports for Form 7 Fijian students must be re-organised into one cohesive unit offering academic, social, cultural and political guidance.

R2.4.3. Further in-depth study on Form 7 Fijian students to ascertain their perceptions of the obstacles to study and the steps that might be taken to overcome them.

R2.4.4. An in-depth study of learning styles of Form 7 Fijian students to be undertaken to ascertain the study centres’ accommodating cultural needs and their implications to Form 7 pedagogies.

R2.4.5. Provide more study centres that are adequately staffed and resourced in the urban centers to scaffold students learning.

R2.4.6. The selection of Fijian students wishing to do Form 7 be reviewed to ensure that their ability and motivation are appropriately assessed.

R2.4.7. Orientation programs need to focus on study skills, essay writing and general tertiary preparation.

R2.4.8. Support programs from the MOE and the FAB be re-focused to concentrate on giving Form 7 Fijian students’ greater motivation to remain and a thorough understanding of the Form 7 requirements with adequate support to help students meet these demands.

R2.4.9. Particular attention be paid to better prepare students, especially those gaining special entry.
R2.4.10. School administrators must create opportunities for low-achieving students to interact more with academically successful peers because students tend to interact only with students with the same ethnicity and similar achievement levels. Efforts must be made to create activities that would attract diverse students and to promote a climate in which students feel comfortable venturing beyond familiar peer and instructional contexts.

R2.4.11. School guidance and counselling responsibilities be diffused among school staff, including teachers, who are supported by professionals. Serious social or psychological problems can interfere with adolescents' own academic engagement as well as undermine a positive learning climate.

5.2.5 SUCCESS GAME PLAN FOR STUDENTS

Tracy (2006) outlined the game plan for success.

R2.5.1. Syllabus/Prescription: It is a safe policy to study as many topics as possible in their revision for external examinations.

R2.5.2. Mark Schemes and Examiners' reports: Principals and HODs must check past mark schemes and examiners records of individual teachers. These should be visible in the students' exercise books. That students are accessible to examiners' reports and the marking schemes.

Mark schemes are used to award or deduct points. They show what percentage of marks can (or cannot) be gained by good structure, illustration, graphics, presentation, grammar and spelling. Examiners' reports comment on the quality of previous years' coursework and exam papers. They explain what examiners do and do not like, and point out common mistakes that students make in the subject.

R2.5.3. Model Answers: this must be provided to students after all their assessments, to scaffold their learning. This is helpful, particularly in coursework where students
can learn by example how to do a good essay. Students may find model answers useful in preparing a science exam or essays in other subjects.

R2.5.4. Past Years Papers: All students must cover the last 5 years’ external papers in their internal exams well before the annual examination. These are a must, at the initial stages of revision, in order to get acquainted with the format of the exams and to apply their existing knowledge to exam questions. Students must go over 3-5 years past papers to assess the range of topics they need to revise and to what depth. In the final stages of their revision, students should aim to practice writing correct model answers.

5.2.6 TUTORS

R2.6.1. Students must find a tutor to mark their work. Knowledge is not everything; technique matters just as much, therefore, students need to practice working under timed conditions so that they can be proficient in organizing time, developing their ideas while sticking to the point and recalling useful facts and figures. Study groups and peer tutoring should also be organised for students.

R2.6.2. To prepare students well, schools should

(i) teach all students that they can learn. The school must develop the students’ self-confidence in their ability to learn.

(ii) teach all students how to learn.

(iii) develop the students' unique talents and strengths.

(iv) develop the students’ ability to adapt and to change.

5.2.7 STUDENT ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

(i) Learning ought to be holistic, taking into account not only academic but also spiritual, physical and social development,

(ii) Attendance of Form 7 must not be less than 95% on a weekly average.
(iii) Have a well monitored internal assessment on topic tests. Three tests per term is recommended, and

(iv) Accurate record of students with remedial needs and types of remedial program carried out in the classroom,

(v) Individual student's learning styles and teaching strategies are recorded and applied to meet the diverse needs of students,

(vi) Each student's areas and topics of strengths and weaknesses be identified and rectified and

(vii) students set realistic goals each term matching the school's mission and vision,

(viii) Each student be provided with a mentor, study group in order to excel in his studies and

(ix) also receives constant counseling and guidance, and

(x) students engage in healthy relationships with their teachers, peers and significant others to promote learning.

5.2.8 COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Research Question 5

To what extent does school community support and parental involvement affect the academic performance of Form 7 Fijian students?

Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F22 Most communities and schools do not work together. The school sees the community as a threat. Many Fijian schools do not keep records of parents' complaints.

F23 Fijian community and religious leaders must be educated to realise that education is one of the solutions to poverty and ignorance in communities.

F24 Fijian homes do not monitor students' learning activities such as homework, study, coaching, educational tours, visiting libraries, learning styles and counseling on issues that can hinder their overall academic performances.
Instead of blaming the low academic performance of Fijian students, the Ministry of Education needs to educate the community on strategies to improve the academic performance of Fijian students from the kindergarten to college. Epstein (1995) describes different types of family/school/community partnership. The guidelines are based on her different categories.

R2.8.1. Run workshops, courses, literacy and other information programs to help parents cope with parenting situations that they identify as important. Establish family support programs to assist with nutrition, health and social services.

R2.8.2. Find ways to help families share information with the school about the child's cultural background, talents and needs; learn from the families.

R2.8.3 Design effective forms for school to home and home to school communication and make sure communications fit the needs of the families. Provide translations, visual support and large print to make communication effective.

R2.8.4 Visit families in their homes and do not expect family members to come to school until a trusting relationship is established.

5.2.8a. Volunteering: Recruit and organize parent help and support.

R2.8.5. Identify family talents, interests, availability and suggestions for improvements. Keep all families informed, if possible, set aside a room for volunteer meetings and projects.

5.2.8b. Learning at home - provide information and ideas for families about how to help children with schoolwork and learning activities conducted at home.

R2.8.6. Draw assignment schedules, homework policies and tips on how parents can help with schoolwork.

R2.8.7. Get the family input into curriculum planning.
5.2.8c. Decision making partnerships: include families in school decisions, developing school and family and community leaders and representatives.

R2.8.8. Form family advisory committees (PTA) for the school with parents' representatives.

5.2.8d. Community partnerships: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

R2.8.9. (i) Encourage parents to assist their children in their research projects,
   (ii) Identify service projects for students.
   (iii) Identify school alumni amongst the community and get them involved in school programs.

5.2.8e. Information for Parents

R2.8.10. Parents need accurate and regular feedback about happenings in schools. They must feel a real part of the effort to raise students' performance. All schools must circulate annual reports and must give parents a pupil report at least once a term.

R2.8.11. Effective school-parent partnerships need to be fostered by teachers and parents to raise standards and improve results. The detail would differ from school to school, but the discussion must include expectations about attendance, discipline, homework, the standard of education and the ethos of the school.

5.2.9. LEADERSHIP SUPPORT: Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

How does the style and quality of leadership and management support of principals affect the performance of students?

F26 Transformational leadership and instructional leadership styles boost students' academic performance. Owing to political upheavals and growing immorality in our society, we need values, inclusive and sustainable leadership in our schools.
F27 Fijian schools lack staff appraisal. Key results areas are not identified, objectives are not set and performance objectives are not set and met. The Ministry needs to prepare staff appraisals forms that would evaluate teachers twice in a year.

F28 Fijian schools are not performing to standards because data like external examinations results are not displayed. This is to gauge how the school has been performing compared to the national standard. There is less improvement in many Fijian schools because leaders are not data rich.

F29 The latest and best form of staff development is for teachers to become professionals, mentors and researchers.

F30 Fijian schools do not have the internet where teachers can daily update themselves as professional experts and practitioners in the teaching profession.

F31 Principals in Fijian schools do not closely monitor the teachers' usage of lesson plans and lesson notes in the classrooms. There are no recorded lesson observations from Heads of Departments.

F32 Many Fijian schools have principals who are not certified. The majority has not done any courses on educational leadership, management or administration.

F33 Many teachers in Fijian schools have no professional teaching portfolios.

F34 Many Fijian school managers are not doing their jobs of monitoring school Principals and teachers.

F35 Many Fijian schools do not have peer coaching where the young teachers are coached on effective classroom teaching techniques, classroom control, questioning techniques, general management skills and professional growth.

F36 Students' poor academic performance in Form 7 is due to the large class numbers and that Fijian schools do not use proper benchmarks for admitting students.

F37 Many Fijian schools do not have qualified Maths, Science and Commerce teachers and hence there is an overall poor quality passes in these subjects. However, many Fijian schools have good pass rates in the Arts subjects.
F38 Many Fijian schools do not have school councils to advice Principals, teachers and the community on how to educate parents and how to raise the academic achievements of Fijian students.

F39 There is a lot of emphasis on sports in many Fijian managed schools. Therefore, the focus has shifts from academic achievements to sports.

**Recommendations (R)**

R2.9.1. Train school leaders with proper managerial skills to use scarce resources in most Form 7 centres effectively. Ineffective management of these resources has directly led to ineffective schools.

R2.9.2. Schools must change their strategies to improve the performance of students. These include: (i) improvement on teaching and learning, (ii) parental involvement, (iii) developing a learning community in schools, (iv) on going professional staff development, (v) effective leadership, (vi) appropriate use of data to make informed decisions, (vii) promote a culture of high expectations, (viii) building links with other schools and external agencies, (ix) proper resource improvement, (x) community education on home and school culture.

R2.9.3. For schools to function, Roberts (1993) identified the characteristics of the high reliability schools programme: (i) a small number of clear, ambitious goals; (ii) a careful monitoring of key systems; (iii) data richness; (iv) standard operating procedures, including an agreed model of teaching and consistent implementation of other policies; (v) focus on at risk pupils; (vi) proactive recruitment and training of staff; (vii) rigorous performance evaluation; (viii) maintenance of equipment in highest working order.

R2.9.4. Target or goal setting must be a top priority for principals.

   (i) Targets should focus on learning rather than performance. (ii) Targets should be personal. (iii) Target setting should be an aspect of planned formative assessment to
be an integral part of the teaching learning process. (iv) Targets should be frequently monitored and reviewed. (v) They should be achievable in the short term. (vi) Students must want to achieve them. (vii) Students should participate in setting targets, and have a sense of ownership of their targets. This will improve the academic performance of students (Tanner and Jones, 2006).

R2.9.5. Schools must provide the support resources necessary to help high school students to meet the challenging standards.

R2.9.6. School administrators must provide individualized instruction, tutoring and programs for students who are behind with their studies, to help them progress. Teachers need to help students develop short-term goals that match their current knowledge and skills, while students work toward meeting the higher standards.


1. Leading by example in accordance with the company’s core values.
2. Building the trust and confidence of the people with which they work.
3. Continually seeking improvement in their methods and effectiveness.
4. Keeping people informed.
5. Being accountable for their actions and holding others accountable for theirs.
6. Involving people, seeking their views, listening actively to what they have to say and representing these views honestly.
7. Being clear on what is expected, and providing feedback on progress.
8. Showing tolerance of people’s differences and dealing with their issues fairly.
9. Acknowledging and recognising people for their contributions and performance.
10. Weighing alternatives, considering both short and long-term effects and then being resolute in the decisions they make.

R2.9.8. Serious consideration should be given to the establishment of school councils. As mandatory corporate governing bodies they should have representatives from all
education stakeholders preferably they two representatives from each of the following groups: teachers, parents, students, alumni and community leaders with school heads as ex officio member.

5.2.9a Data Richness

R2.9.9. All schools must compile data, especially pass rates of all subjects in the external examinations including the national averages.

R2.9.10. All schools must have a comprehensive data collection about pupil performance, progress and potential. This data richness allows schools to use target setting effectively and to employ tracking as means of improving learning outcomes.

R2.9.11. Each school must identify underachievers and to address inadequate progression on an individual basis; students must be assisted to realize their full potentials.

R2.9.12. Records of extra classes, parents' attendance and the rate of attendance should be kept as well.

R2.9.13. Extra classes after school hours must be made compulsory in all Fijian managed schools throughout the school academic year.

5.2.9b Staff Development

R2.9.14. Staff Development must be conducted in schools so that teachers learn from one another in the staffroom as well as the classrooms.

R2.9.15. Staff development on improving instructions in schools can involve more school based researches to make teaching, learning and assessment more inclusive.

R2.9.16. Mentoring: a teacher mentor can be assigned as a resource person for new Form 7 teachers. This approach would enable new teachers to learn from the more experienced ones and be able to conceptualize their teacher education content to local situations.
5.2.9c  Peer Coaching

R2.9.17. Members in a peer coaching situation become sensitized to their own teaching behaviors. They have a chance to discuss general issues of teaching and learning together and are able to observe a variety of teaching styles. Meadows and Saltzman (2000) offers the following strategies:

1. Commit to ongoing and professional growth.
2. Block out weekly time to spend with colleague to give and receive feedback.
3. Develop a high trust level over time. Set goals for the process.
4. Establish ground rules to honor confidentiality.
5. Spend time observing in different settings: classrooms, P.T.A and staff meetings.
6. Gain recognition and support from the "official" evaluator and/or boss.
7. Be open and take risks. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
8. Be willing to learn from mistakes and use information in a constructive way.

Joyce and Showers (2002) reported that they expected a 90 percent or more of the participants will reach a good level of skill if training includes theory presentation, demonstration, and practice; the workplace enables peer coaching to take place.

5.2.9d  Professional Teaching Portfolio

R2.9.18. Professional development can be documented through a teaching portfolio which is a record of benchmarking from year to year of continuous learning. The following are generally included: (i) resume, (ii) statement of philosophy of education, (iii) list of subjects/classes taught during the time of the portfolio, (iv) goals for the time covered by the portfolio, (v) development activities, (vi) teacher work samples, (vii) student work samples, (viii) observation records and reflections.

R2.9.19. The leadership of the head is a significant factor in a school's success in raising achievement. (i) School principals with stakeholders constantly revise school visions, missions and goals to accelerate students' performance. (ii) That students have ownership of targets set.
5.2.10 GOVERNMENT and MINISTERIAL SUPPORT

What are some school and government policies that would improve the performance of Form 7 Fijian students?

Findings (F) and Recommendations (R)

F40 The academic performance of the Fijian-managed schools in Form 7 is declining in standards because Principals are not following the Form 7 student minimum intake mark officially announced by MOE.

F41 Many schools enroll many Form 7 students because the Government provides free tuition to Form 7 students.

F42 Many Fijian schools do not have proper facilities, equipment and personnel to start Form 7 education.

F43 Many Form 7 teachers do not have postgraduate qualifications to teach Form 7.

5.2.11 Government Policies to improve the current situation in Form 7

R2.11.1. The Ministry of Education and the schools' academic committee should select the final candidates for Form 7 and that free tuition fee is to be given only to the students who are qualified to enter Form 7.

R2.11.2. The MOE and schools should only appoint experienced and appropriately qualified Form 7 teachers.

R2.11.3. The MOE must disallow schools with inadequate facilities such as computer labs, science laboratories and well-contained library to start Form 7.

5.2.12 Form 7 Student Intake

R2.12.1. Schools and principals must be strict in following the MOE's intake guidelines for enrolling Form 7 students.
5.2.13. Expert Teachers

R2.13.1. Form 7 teachers must have postgraduate qualifications. Policy-makers and education leaders agree that teacher quality is a vital factor in improving student achievement. A successful quality teacher recruitment plan includes:

(i) Recruitment plan, (ii) A marketing and outreach strategy, (iii) Partnerships with traditional teacher education institutions and alternative licensure programs, and (iv) Financial incentives (Atwell, 2006).

5.2.14 Student Attendance

R2.14.1. Monitor the daily attendance of students in school and in classes.

Addressing Truancy - the Role of the School

a. Keep accurate records of all student attendance.

b. Contact the homes of all truant students each day the students are absent and document the contact. When a student's absences exceed three days, call the parents. After three days absence the child must be accompanied by his/her parents on the fourth day.

5.2.15 Class and School Sizes in Form 7

R2.15.1. Average class size of 15-20 students is recommended in Form 7.

5.2.16 Parents and Community Involvement

R2.16.1. Creating positive relationships with parents and the local community, and involving them in their children's education and the running of the school is one of the strongest levers for school improvement (Joyce et al (1999).)

5.2.17 Use of Technology

R2.17.1. Form 7 Fijian students must have adequate access to technology such as internet, and education software programs so that their learning are accelerated.
5.2.18 Quality Recorded Instructions

R2.18.1. Evidence of high quality, relevant and effective delivery of instruction in the school should be recorded and kept including the following:

**Instructional Strategies at the beginning of a unit.**

a) Identify clear learning goals and objectives.

b) Allow students to identify and record their own learning goals.

c) Brainstorm ways to achieve their goals

**Instructional Strategies during a Unit**

a) Identify and articulate what students already know about the topics.

b) Provide students with ways of thinking about the topic in advance.

c) Ask students to compare the new knowledge with what is known.

d) Have the students keep notes on the knowledge addressed in the unit.

e) Help the students represent the knowledge in non-linguistic ways, periodically sharing these presentations with others.

f) Get students to sometimes work individually, but other times in groups.

g) Give homework that requires students to practise, review and apply what they have learned. Provide feedback regularly.

h) Involve students in projects that involve generating and testing hypothesis.

i) Ask students to revise their linguistic and non-linguistic representations of knowledge in their notebooks as they refine their understanding.

**Instructions Strategies for use at the End of a Unit**

**Helping Students Determine How Well They Have Achieved Their Goals**

a) Give students clear assessments of their progress on each learning goal.

b) Students to assess themselves on each learning goal and compare these assessments with those of the teacher.

c) Ask students to articulate what they have learned about the content and about themselves as learners, Marzano et al. (2001).

5.2.19 Inclusivity

R2.19.1. Collate evidence of the schools’ success in improving learning for special needs and or special population. Some of the key points of inclusive cultures include:

a) The need for a culture where everyone is made welcome, students help each other, staff collaborates with each other, staff and student treat each other with
respect, there is partnership between staff and parents, and all the communities are involved in the school.

b) The need for acceptance of all individual differences
c) The need to ensure effective communication and collaboration.
d) The need for recognition that policies and practices develop over time and an acknowledgement that this development is influential in the formation of inclusive cultures (Jordan, 2001).

R2.19.2. Academic Performance:

a) Academic performance drives Leadership: Leaders of excellent schools demand, manage and support strong academic performance.
b) Academic performance drives Design: everything about a school's design - from its schedule to curriculum to instructional strategies - helps students achieve high academic standards.
c) Academic performance drives Culture: to succeed academically students need and deserve a culture that is highly disciplined, well structured, and motivating of their intrinsic desire to excel.
d) Academic performance drives Decisions: decisions at every level of a school's operation are based on careful measurement and analysis of student-achievement.
e) Academic performance drives Governance: a school cannot succeed without the determination of its board to hold the school fast to its ambitious standards and to provide resources to meet those standards.
f) Academic accountability drives Academic Performance: standards and testing systems combined with strong internal standards and assessments provide the incentives and guidance for student academic performance.
g) Building Excellent Schools works with individuals and communities who share these core beliefs, who are committed to building schools in underserved communities around measurable student outcomes; who embrace strong standards and are willing to set high expectations for all students; and who are prepared to do whatever it takes to help students reach and succeed (Marzano etal, 2001).
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study examined some of the home and school factors affecting the performance of Form 7 Fijian students. The study needs to be replicated for the whole Form 7 population in the nine education districts in Fiji. Various local studies have looked at the failure of students at USP but this study is different as it focused on the factors affecting performance at Form 7 levels of the Fijian students. There are other factors that affect the academic performance of Fijian students. These other factors that can be studied in depth are the environmental and psychological factors.

A possible area to be investigated would be the geographical factor and its effect on academic performance since this study sampled only the Suva City urban setting. The interest is in determining if the results are similar or different between urban and rural Form 7 schools.

5.4 CONCLUSION

There have been studies locally on the factors affecting the performance of students at the university and schools but this study focuses specifically on the performance of Form 7 Fijian students. The research involved over a half of the schools with Form 7 centres in Suva, the largest and the capital city in Fiji and it carries a 95 percent confidence level. A pilot study was conducted in two schools outside Suva to refine and validate the instruments for this exercise. Although the performance factors have been previously reported and discussed, they need to be examined in the context of Fiji's schools environment and context.

The home and school factors were shown to influence the low quality performance of students but the students intake in Form 7 came out strongly as the dominant contributing factor affecting the performance of the Fijian students. All the Fijian schools that participated in this study did not follow the Ministry of Education's criteria compared to
the Indian-managed schools who all strictly adhered to the Ministry's intake policy, in having a minimum of 250 marks in the FSLCE as the entry requirement.

The home culture such as the level of education of parents, parents' aspirations and orientations determine the ability of students to succeed in schools. What students bring from home makes 50 percent of students' achievements in schools. Given that most homes cannot help their children with their studies, schools must adapt their structures to meet the demands of all the students in the school by scaffolding techniques such as tutoring, extra classes and study groups. Teachers contribute to 30 percent of students' achievements, and, therefore, need to be competent and professional practitioners in order for students to exceed.

Other contributing factors come from the effective leadership of Principals, in monitoring teaching standards, effective classroom assessment methods and providing an inclusive curriculum. Similarly, quality staff development, continuous improvement of instructions and collaboration amongst the members of the staff are needed.

In evaluating how successful a school is, these main factors come out strongly: students' intake policy, students' attendance, school sizes and class sizes, recorded quality instructions by teachers, school leadership and culture, inclusitivty and the use of technology. It was established that while the minimum intake marks in the Indian-managed schools increased, that in the Fijian-managed schools decreased.

This study provides valuable information and insights to stakeholders in education, especially Fijian parents, teachers and students on Fijian Form 7 education. It is expected that the research reported here would be viewed as a useful contribution to the course of Fijian education in Fiji and other indigenous communities of the Pacific island nations.
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APPENDICES

A1: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED
A2: HIGH AND LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS
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APPENDIX 1: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

Structured interview with the following stakeholders and questionnaires with Fijian students in Form 7.

1.1 Ministry of Education Officials
1.2 Principals of schools under study
1.3 Heads of Departments
1.4 Teachers’Unions
1.5 Schools
1.6 Pilot Schools

A1.1: Ministry of Education Officials
Mr. Ram Chandar: Deputy Secretary - Professional
Mr. Filimone Jitoko: Deputy Secretary - Finance
Mr. Simione Buvawa: Director — Special Unit:
Mr. Suliasi Lutubula: Director - Secondary
Mrs. Salote Rabuka: Director - Examinations

A1.2: Principals of schools under study
D.A.V Boys: Mr. Amendra Singh
D.A.V Girls: Mrs. Sunil Arya
Dudley High School: Mr. Rusiate Matewale
Gospel High School: Mrs. Vindula Naidu
Indian College: Mr. Gulab Singh
Marist Brothers High School: Mr. Susau Managreve
Nabua Secondary School: Mr. Marika Uluinaceva
Ratu Sukuna Memorial School: Mr. Gauna Halofaki
Saint Josephs Secondary School: Sister Genevieve Loo
Suva Grammar School: Mr. Ilkimisi Kunagogo
Suva Muslim School: Mr. Abdul Shariff
Suva Sangam High School: Mr. Sundresan Pillay
Yat Sen Secondary School: Mrs. S. Tevita

A1.3: Heads of Departments D.A.V Boys
D.A.V Girls: HOD Science
Dudley High School: Vice-Principal
Gospel High School: Vice-Principal
Indian College: Assistant Principal
Marist Brothers High School: HOD Languages
Nabua Secondary School: HOD Social Science
Ratu Sukuna Memorial School: HOD Social Science
Saint Josephs Secondary School: HOD Languages
Suva Grammar School: HOD Agriculture
Suva Muslim School: HOD Science
Suva Sangam High School: HOD Commerce
Yat Sen Secondary School: HOD Maths

A1.4: Teachers Union
Mr. Tevita Koroi: President: Fijian Teachers Association
Mr. Agni Deo Singh: General Secretary: Fiji Teachers Union
Mr. Arun Prasad: Industrial Relations Officer: Fiji Teachers Union
Mr. Jaswant: Singh General Treasurer: Fiji Teachers Union
Mr. Mahend Pal: Publicity Officer:

A1.5: Schools
D.A.V Girls
Dudley High School
Gospel High School
Indian College
Mahatma Gandhi High School
Marist Brothers High School
Nabua Secondary School
Ratu Sukuna Memorial School
APPENDIX A2: HIGH AND LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS


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A3.0: QUESTIONNAIRES AND STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A3.1: PHASE ONE - QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

A3.2: PHASE TWO - ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRES AND STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A3.3: PHASE THREE - STRUCTURED INTERVIEW-INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A3.4: PHASE FOUR - STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS, SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS/ FORM SEVEN TEACHERS, EDUCATION OFFICERS, TEACHERS’UNIONS

A3.5: PHASE FIVE: STUDENT BIODATA
APPENDIX A.3.1:

PHASE ONE - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FORM 7 FIjian STUDENTS

Please answer the questionnaire EITHER by ticking box or by writing in the spaces provided

A HOME ENVIRONMENT

1. Who do you live with?
   - □ Both parents
   - □ A parent and step parent
   - □ Guardian
   - □ Relatives
   - □ Others, please specify __________________________

2. Is this different during school terms?
   - □ No
   - □ Yes

3. How many brothers and sisters do you have? ________________

4. What is the total number of people in the house? ________________

5. What is the highest level of education attained by parents or guardians?

   Mother
   - □ None
   - □ Primary
   - □ Secondary
   - □ Tertiary

   Father
   - □ None
   - □ Primary
   - □ Secondary
   - □ Tertiary

   Guardian
   - □ None
   - □ Primary
   - □ Secondary
   - □ Tertiary

6. Please specify weekly family income:
   - □ Do not know
   - □ Less than $100.00
   - □ $200.00 - $300.00
   - □ More than $400.00

7. Indicate whether you possess any of the following things at home:
   - □ Daily newspaper
   - □ More than 50 books
   - □ A room of your own
   - □ TV Set
   - □ Computer

8. What is the main language used at home?
   - □ English
   - □ Fijian
9. How many hours on average do you spend doing your individual study each day?
   - Less than 1 hour
   - 2 hours
   - 3-4 hours
   - 5-6 hours
   - More than six hours

10. How many hours on average do you spend watching TV per week?
    - 0-5 hours
    - 6-11 hours
    - 12-17 hours
    - More than 17 hours

11. How many Video movies, CDs or DVDs did you see last month?
    - None
    - 0-3
    - More than 3

12. On average, how many hours per week do you spend socializing or visiting friends?
    - 0-2 hours
    - 3-5 hours
    - 6-8 hours
    - More than 8 hours

13. On average, how many hours per week do you spend in leisure activities like sports? (going to night clubs, cinema etc).
    - 0-2 hours
    - 3-5 hours
    - 6-8 hours
    - More than 8 hours

14. How often do your parents help with your schoolwork?
    - Never
    - Sometimes
    - Often

15. How often do your parents discuss about:
    
    | Never | Sometimes | Often |
    |-------|-----------|-------|
    | Your experiences at school? | | |
    | Your plans after leaving form 7? | | |
    | Your problems and successes at school? | | |
    | Your future career? | | |
16  Do you receive financial support you need from your parents?
    • Yes
    D No

    If yes how much?
    • All
    I I Some

    In what way, please explain ____________________________

17  Indicate how strict your parents or guardian are in terms of their expectation of your discipline?
    I I Not at all strict
    I I Sometimes Strict
    CH  Often Strict
    I I Always strict

18  How often do your parents or guardian encourage or motivate you in your school work?
    CH  Not at all
    I I Sometimes
    I I Always

19  How often do your parents or guardian ask you to improve or try to do better in your studies??
    CH  Not at all
    I I Sometimes
    I I Never

20  How often do your parents and guardians ever ask you to compete with other students in terms of your academic achievement?
    CH  Not at all
    I I Sometimes
    I I Never

21  How many additional classes (afternoon and Saturday classes) do you attend apart from the normal classes timetabled?
    I I None
    I I 1-3 classes
    I I More than 3 classes

22  How many other educational activities (like going to public libraries, museums, attending concerts etc) do you participate in?
    I I None
    I I 1-3 classes
    I I More than 3

23  How often do you discuss problems and assignments with your friends?
    CH  Not at all
    I I Sometimes
    I I Always
24 Would you approach teachers/subject teachers when you experience problems or difficulties with your studies and assignments?

- Yes
- No

Why or why not? Please explain

25 Would you like to talk to someone else instead?

- Yes
- No

26 Does your school give much emphasis to sporting activities?

- Yes
- No

27 Does sports affect your studies?

- Yes
- No

If yes how does it affect your studies?

28 How much time has been given to sports activities in your school?

- Less Time
- Enough Time
- Too much time

If less or too much time, please specify:

29 How many additional classes (afternoon and Saturday classes) do you attend apart from the normal classes timetabled?

- None
- 1-3 classes
- More than 3 classes

30 Do you receive tutoring after school hours, at home or any other centre?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify which location?

31 To what extent does tutoring help you in your studies?

- None
- Little
- Great
- Very Great
32 Do you have a special study room at home?

☑ Yes
☐ No

33 How would you describe your studying space at home?

☐ None
☐ Very little
☐ Little
☐ Plenty

If little space describe where you study and when you study?

B INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

1 Gender

☑ Male
☐ Female

2 Ethnicity

☐ European
☐ Fijian
☐ Indo Fijian
☐ Rotuman
☐ Others. Please specify __________________

3 Specify age group you belong to:

☐ Below 18
☐ 19-20 years
☐ Over 21 years

4 Classify home background

☐ Rural
☐ Urban

C EDUCATION

1 Name of current school

______________________________

2 Specify whether it is a boarding or non-boarding school?

☐ Boarding
☐ Non-Boarding
3. Were you a boarder or a day student while attending the above school?

- [ ] Boarder
- [ ] Day Student

4. Is it a multi-racial school?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

5. Are you a sponsored or private student?

- [ ] Sponsored
- [ ] Private

6. If sponsored, name the sponsor

- [ ] P.S.C
- [ ] F.A.B
- [ ] Company
- [ ] Others. Please specify: ____________

7. Which field are you pursuing in Form 7?

- [ ] Science
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Technology
- [ ] Others. Please specify: ____________

8. What was your F.S.LC mark before entering F7?

- [ ] Below 200 marks
- [ ] 200-225 marks
- [ ] 226-249 marks
- [ ] 250-275 marks
- [ ] 276-300 marks
- [ ] Over 300 marks

9. Are you experiencing a gap between Form 6 and Form 7?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
If yes, to what extent is the gap?

☐ High
☐ Moderate
☐ Little

D FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

1. How much interest do you have in your field of study in Form 6?

☐ High
☐ Moderate
☐ Low

2. Does the school set personal target and school targets to achieve?

☐ Yes
☐ No

3. Are you still interested in the field of study you wish to pursue?

☐ Yes
☐ No

4. Are you specializing in that area because you need it for a future occupation?

☐ Yes
☐ No

5. Which institution will you pursue your studies after completing form 7?

☐ Teachers Colleges
☐ Fiji Institute of Technology
☐ The University Of Fiji
☐ The University of the South Pacific
☐ Others (Specify):  

6. Indicate whether you have already or yet to decide on the above career.

☐ Already decided
☐ Yet to decide

7. Did your parents/guardians or relatives initially influence your career choices mentioned above?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Thank you so much for your cooperation
APPENDIX: A3.2: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

HOME FACTORS

What would you consider as some of the home environmental factors that has affected the academic performance of Fijian students to excel in schools. Please rank in order from the best to the least by ranking them at the end of each option.

HOME CULTURE - are lifestyles based on beliefs, values that are practiced at home?

Which home cultures, will enable more Fijian students to improve their academic performance in F7? Please number from the most important culture practised to the least practised? (At the end of each option)

SCHOOL FACTORS

Curriculum

2(i) In designing a more inclusive school and national curriculum, what basic principles should be taken into account when designing the curriculum? Rank them in order by numbering your choice at the end of each option.

2(ii) To improve the academic performance of students, what curriculum would be relevant and practical to address the present situation? Please rank your choices in order?

2(iii) How would you describe the learning gap- teachers who implement the curriculum versus the intended curriculum that needs to be taught to students? Please tick wherever appropriate

3(i) The subject teachers' instructions about the content often matches very well with the different types of assessments students sit whether external or internal exams?

3(ii) Subject teachers always change teaching methods instead of relying solely on textbooks?

3(iii) How do you describe the teaching gap in the school? Teaching gap is the loss of sacred time in teaching due to interruptions, roll call, and announcements, late arrival of teachers. Please tick whatever is practiced in the school?

3(iv) Does the school also record and monitor time in and time out of subject teachers during every lesson from the first to the last period? Please tick whatever is practiced?
3(v) Teaching methods that are common in our classrooms today include:

- Lecture Inquiry
- Open discussions
- Interactive teaching (reciprocal teaching)
- Group work
- Individualized instructions
- Eclectic (Variety of Approaches)
- Expository Approach (concept teaching)

Which teaching methods in your opinion will accelerate students’ performance? Please rank in order by numbering? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,

**Assessment**

4(i) How often does the school evaluate school goals with departmental and students' individual goals/targets?
4(ii) How many topic / monthly tests does your school carry out in a term apart from the end of term exam?
4(iii) How can we address the complaints of parents and students in the media about scaling and external examination marks in form 7?
4(iv) How can we improve the forms of alternative or authentic assessment in form seven so that more students are successful?
4(v) How would you improve the administration system of assessment in schools?
4(vi) How would you improve the system of assessment in Fiji? Please tick appropriate choices?
4(vii) The recount of marks in Fiji’s external examinations do not exceed 5 marks and students should never apply for a recount,

**Data**

5(i) How are data, like the external results displayed in the school? Please place a tick or ticks on whatever is practised?
5(ii) How do administrators and HODs’ use the school data like examination results as a monitoring tool? Please tick those that are practised in the school?
5(iii) Does the school monitor and analyse teachers and students attendance to class through period attendance register?

**STUDENT SUPPORT: Involvement of students in own Learning**

6(i) How are students study group/study circle monitored?
6(ii) How would you describe peer tutoring for these form 7 students in the school?
6(iii) How would you describe the attendance of students to after school classes? (Afternoon and Saturday classes)
6(iv) What kinds of improvement have been shown on the results of students taking after school programmes-extra classes-afternoon classes and Saturday classes in the school?
6(v) What can be done to improve students learning so that they can be self-regulated learners?
**Professional Learning**

(Professional learning are skills and knowledge teachers have.)

7(i) How many staff developments were organised and carried this year?

7(ii) How would you describe the quality of staff developments that has taken place to boost students’ performance?

7(iii) To update teachers’ knowledge and skills, who do you recommend to take staff development?

Please rank them in order from 1-7 from the most important to the least important.

7(iv) How would you describe staff development on improving teaching instructions/teaching strategies/pedagogical content knowledge to improve students performance?

7(v) What do you believe should be the latest and best form of professional development to develop teachers in the school? Please rank them from the best to the least by numbering at the end of the options.

**Collaborative Planning (Planning together)**

8(i) Which of the alternatives provided do you think is/are most useful for HODs who want to encourage teachers in the same department to improve the quality of their collaboration with others in the school in order to improve students’ performance?

Please rank them into order of importance-by numbering no 1-7 at the end of each option

8(ii) Who is often left out during collaborative planning in the school?

8(iii) School decisions that are implemented successfully always reach their targets and goal because they are agreed in principles by:

8(iv) To help school leaders run a democratic school system, what should the principal do? Please rank in order by numbering at the end of each option.

**Student learning**

9(i) In order to improve the Fijian Seventh Form External Examination pass rate and the quality of passes how often do you feel Fijian parents or guardians encourage or push students to achieve better marks?

9(ii) How do you describe the study space at most Fijian homes? Please rank

9(iii) How would you describe Fijian parental support in improving student’s performance? Please rank

9(iv) How would you describe the learning styles of Fijian students? Please rank them in order?

9(v) In order for students to prepare and excel in their examination marks which of these will be appropriate for students to do as their game plan? Please rank in order of importance

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Community Involvement**

10(i) How often do parents/community contribute to the welfare of the school?

10(ii) How often are community halls and church halls used for education classes?

10(iii) Beginning with Number 1 as the most important, please assign the numbers 1 to 6 in order of importance to the alternatives listed below on how the Ministry of Education, church leaders, heads of the vanua could collaborate to make the goal of improving Fijian students success community owned and community driven?
LEADERSHIP SUPPORT Leadership and Management

Leadership and Management-style of leadership, quality of leadership, team leadership
- Autocratic - dictatorial
- Instructional. Principal boldly leads the academic program, set goals, examined curriculum, evaluated teachers, and assessed results. Top down approach. Jack-of-all-trades
- Transactional-(Charismatic) Management by objectives, a telling type of leadership,
- Situational or Contingent - a mixture, depending on the situation
- Transformational, (Team) vision building, motivating, coaching, empowering, creating trust
- Pedagogical (the student) Principals focus on how students learn, narrowing curriculum to increase students’ score, shared leadership, Needs and interests of students.
- Moral - has similar characteristic to transformational leadership but is focus on values, ethics, beliefs and moral purpose. (Theories Of Educational Leadership and Management)
- Inclusive style - involve all include parents
- Organic-group power, expertise, collaboration, sharing power, distributed leadership

1 1(i) All of the style(s) of leadership listed below will boost the performance of students. Please rank them list them in order (at the end of each option)

1 1(ii) What current leadership will work in schools today?

Organisational Structures

12(i) Who makes the final decisions on students’ intake for form 7?
12(ii) How do you describe the mode of school communications on the daily routines and programmes of the school - all events/happenings? Please tick what are practised?
12(iii) Which communications structures are prevalent in the school? Please tick whatever is practised?
12(iv) What affects the school culture in the school? Please tick practised whatever is practised?

Inclusitivity

13(i) How would you describe special classes or remedial lessons for those who are well below average due to problems of learning styles, impairments, and different cultural backgrounds in the school? Please tick whatever is practiced.
13(ii) How would teachers vary their teaching strategies in order to be inclusive? Please number them into their degrees of importance 1-7?

Professional Appraisal (Monitoring or formative evaluation)

14(i) What sort of staff appraisal (monitoring of staff) do the HOD s carry out?
14(ii) What is your view on the Performance Management System in the school? Please rank?

School Plan

15(i) Please state the school vision, mission and values?
15(ii) What are some ways form 7 school’s can plan at getting better results? Please rank in order of importance?