

**THE LONG ARM OF GLOBALISATION:  
FOREIGN AID IMPACT ON THE  
CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT OF  
A SEMI-RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOL  
IN FIJI**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education.

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## Declaration of Originality

### Statement by Author

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



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### Statement by Supervisors

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## **Acronyms**

**AusAID-** Australian Agency for International Development.

**EU-** European Union

**FESP-** Fiji Education Sector Program (The program is implemented under aid projects initiated by AusAID and the European Union.

**FREP-** Fiji Rural Education Program (Implemented by the EU under its aid projects).

**FIT-** Fiji Institute of Technology (A tertiary technical and vocational training institute).

**MOE-** Ministry of Education (of Fiji).

**TVET-** Technical Vocational Educational Training (A section of Ministry of Education in-charge of technical and vocational education in Fiji schools)

**O/T-** Office Technology section (A section of the technical vocational section which deals with training students for office administrative duties).

# **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative, phenomenological study looks at the impacts of foreign aid on the educational process in Fiji secondary schools. The study focuses on a semi-rural secondary school in the eastern part of Viti Levu in Fiji Islands, where views of multiple educational stakeholders were sought on how foreign aid as a manifestation of globalisation affects the curriculum and school management, were obtained. The study employs interviews and *talanoa* sessions.

The findings of the study suggest that foreign aid and aid donors such as the European Union (EU) and Australian Aid for International Development (AusAID) have far reaching impacts on the Fiji education sector. Currently there are several on-going aid projects in the Fiji education sector which aim to reform various sections of the Fiji education sector. The curriculum and the management processes in Fiji schools are undergoing various phases of reforms under aid projects, which mostly involve consultants from donor countries. The study established that although aid has become an essential component of educational reforms in Fiji, it tends to limit the sense of ownership of the educational process by local people. Most aid projects do not involve extensive consultations with all local stakeholders which limit the prospects of sustainability of such projects. Better plans need to be devised in order to better prepare Fiji people to face the challenges of foreign aid in the future.

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Definitions and Rationale

This is a study of the impact of foreign aid as a manifestation of globalization, on the curriculum and management of a semi-rural school and its community, in the Fiji Islands. More specifically, it will focus on (possible) changes to the pedagogical processes as well as the behaviors of stakeholders in the educational process. Finally, it will try and identify opportunities and challenges that foreign aid provides, especially in relation to the question of sustainability of the education system in general and this school in particular

Globalisation has been defined differently by different people. I particularly like Held's (1991) who says that globalisation is the intensification of worldwide relations linking one part of the globe with other parts in ways that what happens in one place is shaped by events occurring in other distant places. The process of globalisation is often seen as blurring national boundaries, deeply affecting national and group identities. Manifested in different ways (such as global warming, global market economies, global educational instruments etc), globalisation affects the lives of almost everyone, including its most ardent opposers (Thaman, 2007). The present study views globalisation as a process, which increases the connectedness between nations, societies and individuals in the world we live in.

In Fiji, globalisation has far reaching effects on all sectors of society, including education. More specifically, through foreign aid partnerships, the education systems of Pacific Island Countries (PIC's), including Fiji will continue to be affected by their aid partners. The education budget in Fiji constitutes about 15% of the total national budget, which normally amounts between \$150 million to \$200 million (IOE, 2003). In a six year period (from 1998 to 2003), close to \$10,900 million was provided by major donors such as the European Union (EU), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and NZAID (IOE: 2003). This figure is expected to be maintained or increased in years to come. These are important statistics which show that Fiji, and in particular, its education system receives large amounts of foreign aid in its budgetary and planning processes. Moreover, with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) encouraging increases in development aid to less developed countries, the Fiji education system will most probably continue to depend on foreign aid partners for the realization of major global educational goals and targets.

Kamibeppu (2002) defines the term educational aid as including four types of education-related assistance to developing countries: grant aid, loan aid, bilateral co-operation activities and multilateral co-operation activities. For the purpose of this study foreign educational aid will be defined as the assistance received from countries and organizations for the sustainability and the reforms of the educational process.

One component of the educational process that is often reformed through aid projects in Fiji is the curriculum. Curriculum is often mistaken for syllabus. In Fiji schools, it is that

and much more. The word curriculum comes from a Latin root meaning ‘ race course’ and for many, the school curriculum is just that- a race to be run, a series of obstacles or hurdles (subjects) to be passed (Marsh & Stafford 1992). They further clarify that a curriculum will include a listing of content, but there will also be a detailed analysis of other elements, such as aims and objectives, learning experiences and evaluation, and explicit recommendations for interrelating them for optimal effect. For the purpose of this study curriculum shall be defined as the formal process of teaching and learning that takes place in a school environment.

Most education systems, including Fiji’s, have been affected by the phenomenon of globalisation, not only in terms of change to the pedagogical process but also in terms of the behaviors of stakeholders in the educational process. Foreign Aid stands out as one expression of globalisation that clearly impacts Pacific education systems, including Fiji’s. However, it is often said that while foreign aid may help improve infrastructure, we may be losing our grip on what our children learn at school and how we run our schools. It is therefore important for educational decision makers to have access to information about the possible impact of globalisation through foreign aid partnerships, on our education system, especially on the curriculum and school management.

There is limited data on the impact of globalisation in general and aid in particular, on education systems in the Pacific island region. One of the few available literatures on the topic is a collection of essays compiled by Sanga and Taufe’ulungaki (2005) on aid relations in Pacific Island Countries (PIC’s), an important source of information on

bilateral as well as multi-lateral relations in educational development, especially those involving Australia and New Zealand. In *International Aid Impacts on Pacific Education*, Chutaro & Heine (2005) describe how education aid affects educational outputs in the Marshall Islands, and how aid projects have played a role in the expansion of the education system. Maka (2005) also expressed the same concerns about Tonga where foreign aid has been central to almost all educational reforms and emphasizes the sensitive relations between educational aid donors and recipients, while Puamau (2005) examines the benefits and constraints of aid to higher education in Fiji. Most authors however, make recommendations regarding the role that recipients of aid should strive to play in aid relations.

## **1.2 Study Aims and Objectives**

This study aims to identify the impact of foreign aid (as a manifestation of globalisation) on formal education in Fiji. More specifically, it examines how foreign aid affects the school curriculum as well as school management processes by focusing on a semi-rural secondary school in Fiji. The study also explores the responses and strategies that educational decision makers have for dealing with some of challenges resulting from aid relations in the context of Fiji's education sector in general, and of the school and its community in particular.

### **1.3 Main research questions**

The following specific questions were used to guide this study:

- 1.31 What might be some of the manifestations of foreign aid in the secondary school system of Fiji?
- 1.32 How does foreign aid affect the school curriculum?
- 1.33 How do educational administrators and decision makers respond to foreign aid and what are the possible implications of their responses on future aid relationships in Fiji?
- 1.34 How does foreign aid influence stakeholder involvement in educational decision-making?

### **1.4 Study Context**

The context of this study is a semi-rural secondary school and its community which is located in the district of Navua, in Viti Levu, Fiji Islands. The study which focused on the school and its community, tried to find out how foreign aid, as a manifestation of globalisation, impacts the curriculum and management of the school. The school has recently benefited from assistance from Australian Aid for International Development (AusAID) in terms of improvements to the Office Technology section in the school. The school, because of Fiji's centralized curriculum development process, has also been affected by the aid projects that are initiated and implemented at national level. Consequently it may be concluded that all of the school's stakeholders are either directly or indirectly affected by foreign aid. In this study, the school principal, six teachers, six students, the school manager, three parents, one education officer attached to the

European Union (EU) and another attached to AusAID share their views on the impact of aid on the education system and their school.

The school community is made up of individuals from the major cultural and ethnic groups represented in Fiji. This school is a community-run school, classified as semi-rural by the Ministry of Education (MOE) because of its location. A Board of Governors comprising of members from the local community govern the school. The school is multi-cultural school, comprising of students from mainly average and low income families. Recently, the school has benefited from aid provided by AusAID.

This study also examined documents relating to two major aid projects namely, the Fiji Rural Education Program (FREP) and the Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP). Both projects have been initiated by the European Union and AusAID respectively. The Fiji Education Sector Programme (FESP) under the AUSAID aims to provide the Ministry of Education with flexible, responsive support mechanism in the form of facility to help improve the planning, management , provision, and monitoring of educational services (AUSAID : 2007). The priority areas under the programme are basic education, vocational and technical education, higher education, and institutional strengthening and distance education. The FESP programme under AUSAID is being managed by contractors Cardno ACIL Australia Pty Ltd (AUSAID: 2007). Under the programme the Western Australian Department of Education and Training provides to ACIL a full-time programme manager and the Faculty of Education at Curtin University provides the technical assistance and expertise (Puamau: 2005). Local participation and management

in the AUSAID run FESP programme are minimal (Puamau: 2005). Hopefully the findings of this study will add to the literature on the impact of aid on the education sector in Fiji and help educational planners to be better prepared to face the challenges of foreign aid.

## **1.5 Methodological overview**

This study used a phenomenological approach with qualitative methods of data collection. Information was obtained from intensive *talanoa* sessions and focused interviews with the two education officers involved with aid projects, the school principal, school manager, six teachers, six students and three members of the school community. All the individuals are stakeholders in a semi-rural secondary school upon which the present study is based. The *talanoa* sessions explored the effects of foreign aid on their school. *Talanoa* is an ideal instrument for obtaining valid and reliable information; it is particularly useful when working with Pacific Island participants because they are made to feel more comfortable in sharing information. (Johansson-Fua: 2006).



## **1.6 Summary of Results**

From the views expressed by participants in the study it was concluded that the phenomenon of globalisation through the mechanism of foreign aid, permeates the education system in Fiji. This is evident if we focus on the school curriculum as well as on the school management. The aid relations between recipients and donors generally tend to favor the donors in terms of control and direction of aid projects. Many participants expressed a wish for more emphasis on local participation and ownership. Participants were also concerned about adaptability and sustainability problems and suggested that there was an urgent need to devise better educational responses in order to ensure sustainability and improve aid relationships between donors, aid managers, and the users of aid.

## **1.7 Organisation of the thesis**

This chapter has provided an overview of the study together with the main research questions and findings. Chapter 2 reviews the literature pertaining to globalisation, foreign aid and education; Chapter 3 deals with the methodology of the study together with a rationale for using a qualitative approach to obtaining information on the impact of aid on a particular school in Fiji. Chapter 4 states the findings and Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the study and examines the views of different individuals on the impact of aid on their school. Chapter 6 concludes and discusses the implications of the study findings.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 The phenomenon of globalisation**

As mentioned earlier, different people view globalisation differently depending on their own worldviews. Joseph, Marginson, & Young (2005: 3) define globalisation as “simply the widening, deepening and speeding up of all forms of worldwide interconnectedness”. Jones (1998:143) on the other hand, describes globalisation as “the organization and integration of economic activity at levels which transcend national borders and jurisdictions”. The above views tend to emphasize economic considerations of global activities stressing that no country can isolate itself from global economic competition. As Sidhu (2005) suggests, one can either keep up or get left out of the process.

Many people in Fiji and the Pacific in general, believe that it is not possible to live in isolation if they want to be part of the global society and to progress. Some believe that countries should either restrict or intervene in the globalisation process because they regard globalisation as merely a vehicle for channeling western values into non-western societies. Others, however, believe that with vigorous and optimistic thinking globalisation may be seen as a dialectic process that is inevitable. For instance, through brain drain in Fiji, it can be said that Fiji ‘exports’ its human and cultural resources to other communities and countries. It may be possible to conclude that globalisation is “articulating a new form of social organization, enabling the flow of capital and new technologies that propels goods, information, people, and ideologies around the globe in volumes, and at speeds, never previously imagined” (Lockwood, 2004: 1). Such a process

is currently prevalent in PIC's who are seeking self-determination in an attempt to be counted together with developed nations, in the global scene. Fiji in particular is keen to compete in the dynamic global market, and education is often seen as the tool that will enable it to do so.

In Fiji, we cannot be ignorant of the fact that we are benefiting from some forms of globalization, and in particular, foreign aid and its impact on the education system. Ironically, however, some educational planners tend to be overly critical on both globalisation and foreign aid, blaming them for the degrading of our cultures. Our education system has been assisted by other countries, especially in relation to the improvement to infrastructure and increasing access to formal education. We also benefit from scholarships provided by overseas countries, which give students from Fiji an opportunity to undertake studies overseas, that are not otherwise affordable for many people in Fiji. Improving of educational credentials, especially at tertiary level, has led to better accessibility of jobs outside our country. Luke (2001) in Singh (2004: 109) suggests that most people, who criticize globalisation and its impact, have themselves "appropriated and acquired western knowledge and credentials". This is true to some extent as it can be argued that it is because of their western education that Pacific people are able to critique all things, including globalization and foreign aid especially at a wider or global level.

At a more general level, it can be said that globalisation has changed the style and habits of most of Fiji's students as well as teachers. Matters relating to dress, speaking, learning,

and behavior styles of students and teachers have changed due to the channeling of values from other countries to ours, via various media. Furthermore, the curriculum in Fiji secondary schools has been under-going reforms aimed at catering for increasing demands of the economy and market.

The curriculum being implemented in Fiji secondary schools had been regarded as formal, didactic, teacher centered, examination oriented, and directed towards memorizing and regurgitating knowledge (Subramani, 2001). This notion of curriculum in Fiji secondary schools is now changing. Most of the changes have been recommended in the Education Commission Report (Fiji Islands Education Commission, 2000). These changes may be attributed to the process of globalization. If we are to be competitive in the global arena we need a skilled work force with a broader knowledge base. Restructuring the curriculum can cater for the demands that globalisation presents to our education system. Some of the changes that are being initiated by curriculum planners in the country, with “outside help” seem to be affecting the behavior of administrators, teachers and students. While more emphasis seems to be given to technical and vocational education and information technology, the evaluation system is also undergoing a shift (albeit slowly) from norm-referenced assessment to a more criterion-based assessment. Classroom teaching is also becoming more student-centered, with more emphasis given to overall skill development rather than just focusing on the ability of students to recall information.

While many of these externally-driven changes are meant to help people become more economically productive, we may be in danger of losing our sights on other important aspects of education. One such area relates to the role of schools in transmission of culture (Thaman, 2001). The lack of promotion of local and indigenous cultures and their knowledge systems become more evident with the overriding emphasis of our education systems on economic development and becoming more globally competitive. Most recent educational reforms are aid-funded and we tend to give more emphasis to the views of overseas consultants rather than trying to maintain our traditional values in curriculum reforms (Puamau, 2005).

The management process in Fiji secondary schools has also undergone changes. These changes have been incorporated in the school system by the Ministry of Education after studying education systems abroad. The Performance Management System (PMS), which had been introduced in Fiji schools aimed to enhance the productivity of teachers so that better students, who are competitive in the global market can be produced. Tuinamuana (2005) provides an example of how globalisation has impacted the administrative process in some educational institutions in Fiji while drawing on the recommendations from the Fiji Education Plan (Fiji Ministry of Education 1999). The administrative system in Fiji schools is becoming more of a management-oriented in order to encourage productivity in schools. This change will affect the administrative process and the roles of the administrators in Fiji schools and other educational institutions. Educational administrators are being told to become more efficient managers rather than effective leaders.

## **2.2 Globalisation and education**

The introduction of new information and communication technologies (ICT's) has also affected the role of students and teachers. The 2000 Fiji Education Commission Report views globalisation as a challenge for educators in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and an important component of the education system and its Strategic Plan (Fiji Islands Education Commission 2000). In the same vein, Yabaki (2004: 2) believes that global markets and goods change all the time and this implies that there has to be changes in the skills that teachers teach and students acquire at school. Much earlier a Fijian academic Baba (1972) had warned that:

when a country is dependent on outside countries for help, it is often difficult to determine the direction of education change if the aid is tied or specified to a particular development and especially if it does not correspond with the objective priority of the requesting government (Baba 1972:1).

Fiji's school system, set up by European missionaries and later British administrators, had taught the vernacular languages but more recently with emphasis on external curricula and qualifications, schools had an obligation to follow a national curriculum that was, to a great extent, not local. The changes that the education system of Fiji is undergoing in terms of delivery (with new technology) have not really focused on the content of the curriculum and there have not been too many changes in relation to the integration of local and global knowledge (Thaman, 1993; Nabobo, 2007). Exposing

students to an education which is globally viable is often seen as a positive step towards being a competent member of the global society. However, at times it may prove detrimental to individual societies or countries that lose its skilled citizens to other countries, hence leaving a vacuum of skilled population in the country, not to mention the cultural transformation this may bring to some societies and people.

An argument against globalisation is often concerned with what has been identified as the increasing McDonaldization of the world, the loss of cultural diversity, and the increasing Western cultural hegemony. Western cultures have influenced non-Western people especially through the mass media such as television and the internet. This influence is evident in many PIC's as they tend to be small and vulnerable. Most are also dependent on larger countries for their economy and stability. Prior to significant global influences there once existed in the Pacific several thousand distinct cultures, but now the number has decreased significantly. This may be due to more powerful cultures subordinating weaker ones and forcing not only their political and economic control but also their cultures and religions upon the weaker and smaller ones (Lockwood, 2004). Western European and American cultures are very visible in the Pacific and Fiji's formal education systems, as countries moved from their own indigenous education systems and processes to a more western style education system. "Today formal education continues to be Eurocentric in outlook and academic in orientation reflecting western, industrial and scientific cultures rather than the cultures of learners and as well as teachers" (Thaman, 2000: 1). Thus formal education is sometimes seen as having a negative impact on Pacific cultures by undermining and undervaluing Pacific cultural knowledge and values.

### **2.3 Changing curriculum and management processes in Fiji secondary schools**

Globalisation has also influenced the taste and the style of students in schools, especially in terms of what they use as school stationery and other learning resources. These influences are normally advocated by major overseas countries through the media and more importantly through aid projects. The behavior, dress style, speaking styles, learning styles and the learning resources of students and teachers have also undergone changes seen to be the result of globalisation. Advertisements through the mass media act as a catalyst for change.

Curriculum reform is another consequence of globalisation, often initiated through foreign aid projects. According to Puamau (2005) two aid projects aimed to reform the school curriculum in Fiji secondary schools are FESP and FREP. She noted further that they are aimed at achieving curriculum and structural reforms in the education sector. The Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP) has been initiated by AUSAID, which has the aim of developing primary science curriculum and early childhood education. This program in recent years has also been used to upgrade the technical/vocational (TVET) curriculum in secondary schools in Fiji. From Puamau's (2005) article it is evident that because Fiji has a central planning process, all secondary schools are affected by educational reforms initiated by aid projects under the FESP and FREP programmes. The educational reforms in schools do not happen voluntarily but these reforms are often



passed on to the schools as policies of the government for the teachers and the administrators to implement.

The curriculum in Fiji secondary schools was formulated during the colonial era when the education of the Fiji islands went through transformation from informal (unorganized worthwhile learning) to formal education (organized, institutionalized worthwhile learning). Much of what we have now in terms of the school curriculum belongs to the missionary and colonial era. There have been few changes in the curriculum over the years, mostly in relation to student assessment. Recently, the assessment process at the forms three and four levels in secondary schools has transformed to a more of a criterion-based assessment approach. This idea was introduced by overseas consultants and curriculum developers involved in various educational reforms. An example of such reform is in the technical and vocational sector of secondary schools. Most curriculum reforms seem to be welcomed by people although we need to keep in mind the need for ownership in the curriculum. Since its inception, the curriculum has been foreign in model and recent reforms seem to have taken it further from us. This may be due to the fact that we do not have appropriate resources to reform our curriculum and are always dependent on donor's countries and donor consultants who may have their own agendas.

The management process in all Fiji secondary schools has also undergone change. This is because the Ministry of Education believes that to enhance productivity in the education sector and to produce citizens who can adapt well in the global society; the administrative process needs to be more credible (MOE, 2000). Under the new reforms, the

administrators are taking up more management roles. An appraisal system has been introduced which has been appreciated by all stake holders because of its transparency. Introduced in 1999 and known as the Performance Management System (PMS) it too has been adopted from overseas. It tends to emphasize productivity within the educational process by encouraging maximum output with minimum input. This notion, although agreed by most stakeholders, does not auger well within a dynamic process such as education. The reforms in the administrative system have been constantly and consistently influenced by countries such as Australia and New Zealand (Tuinamuana, 2005), who provide resources for such reforms to take place. Consultancy is normally provided by citizens of these countries, as they claim to know the process better, leaving very little room for the views of local stakeholders (Sanga, 2005). This often has a negative effect on the success of many projects. The PMS was borrowed from overseas (Tuinamuana, 2005) and implemented in Fiji, with the help of overseas consultants. This project, although very much appreciated by most teachers and school administrators, is currently in the doldrums because of its failure to adapt to the realities of Fiji.

## **2.4 Foreign Aid in education**

Foreign Aid is a very significant manifestation of the globalisation process in the Pacific, including in Fiji. Sanga (2005) claims that educational aid has been an integral part of education development in the region, a fact that is not new to most Pacific educators, administrators, students and parents. Most educational reforms in Fiji have been planned and implemented through aid received from overseas donors. Sometimes, aid projects are designed and presented to aid donors requesting for funding, but most of the time the aid donors are the ones who decide on the design, planning, implementation and monitoring of aid related projects that they fund.

In Fiji, the major aid contributors include Australian Aid for International Development (AusAID), New Zealand aid agency (NZAID), The European Union (EU), the Japanese aid agency (JICA), The United Nations agencies and also USAid. These are the major donors but there are many other smaller but vital aid donors in Fiji. The sectors which are frequently associated with aid related projects are those associated with essential services, such as education, health, and law.

In 1981, the Australia Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB) suggested that aid was understandable and inevitable in light of the fact that education in all countries is seen as the foundation of manpower development, for without an educated cadre upon which to draw, it is not possible to obtain the skill required for the development of government and industry and the economy as a whole. The government of Fiji in conjunction with various aid agencies gives essential consideration to the fact that educated citizens will be vital

ingredients to an economically viable nation, therefore the education sector is one which receives major aid considerations every year. While all parts of the education sector are considered, the secondary section, technical and vocational section and teacher training component seem to receive more attention. Of course, the above attention may change with changing objectives of donor agencies and it should be stressed that the objectives do change with changes to the commitment, needs and agenda of the donor agencies.

The European Union and AUSAID have projects which are currently operational in the education sector. Although involved separately in other sectors, EU and AUSAID are working hand in hand to implement the two components of the Fiji Education Sector Programme (FESP). The EU has also been involved in planning and implementing the Fiji Rural Education Programme (FREP), which was a consequence of the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) signing by the Fiji government on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2004 (EU: 2004). The main objective of the country strategy was to promote sustainable national reconciliation in Fiji through the provision of and equal access to quality primary and vocational education for all ethnic groups in rural and most deprived areas (EU:2004). The country paper was drawn in accordance with the principles of the EU-ACP partnership outlined in the Cotonou-agreement , which the is the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African , Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and the European Community and its Member States, and was signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 (European Commission: 2000). The Fiji Rural Education Programme and the second component of the FESP were devised and implemented to benefit the rural and deprived schools by the EU after signing the agreement.

FREP and FESP are mainly concerned with providing infrastructure and equipment and are mostly being implemented by local counterparts in the Ministry of Education of Fiji (MOE). Although the evaluation of the aid projects is assisted by overseas auditors, the initiation and implementation of the projects are supposed to be done locally, dominantly by locals. AUSAID involvement in the FESP has been a consequence of Australia's strategic planning for the Pacific Islands (AUSAID: 2004). The Australian government through various programmes intends to upgrade the workforce in developing countries. The FESP which is an initiative of AUSAID is aimed at assisting in the implementation of reforms to improve educational services in Fiji, with the purpose of enhancing the quality of education for students by providing mechanisms to improve planning, management and the provision and monitoring of educational services (AusAID Guide: 2003).

### ***Objectives of aid***

Puamau (2005) identifies several reasons why countries give aid, ranging from poverty alleviation to preparing citizens who can be competitive in the global market. In Fiji much of educational reforms in Fiji involve aid projects. The Fiji Rural Education Programme (FREP) and the Fiji Education Sector Programme (FESP) are examples of projects, aimed at reforming the educational process and help build human capacity for the global market place. FREP and FESP are two of the most influential aid projects in

the Fiji education sector currently underway. On Australia's aid to Fiji and its purpose, a Government of Australia report stated that:

Australia's aid to the Pacific aims to help nations maximize their development and self-reliance, reduce poverty through broad-based growth and build Pacific policies, institutions and capacities to better manage governance challenges and support effective service delivery (Commonwealth of Australia, 2004:2).

These objectives are taken as a basis of developing strategies for the different sectors, including education, in aid recipient countries. The EU's aim on the other hand, is "to achieve equitable access, participation and achievement in life-long education for disadvantaged communities in Fiji and improve educational quality and outcomes" (Ministry of Education, Fiji: 2005).

FREP, initiated in 2004, had an approximate budget of \$37 million through the EU (Puamau: 2005). The project memorandum of understanding was signed in 2004 and consultations started immediately. According to Puamau (2005) the main objectives of the FESP programme under AusAID were

infrastructure development, rural electrification, water supply, roads; building of new dormitories and upgrading of school facilities, teachers quarters, libraries / telecenters, and laboratories; training at various levels, community non-formal education programmes, and curriculum reform; strengthening Ministry of Education and building capacity of non-state actors or agencies; and strengthening of partnership and establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and processes (Puamau,2005:55)

While under the EU the FESP had the objective

to concentrate on education priorities in rural and disadvantaged urban areas and on complementary activities such as : infrastructure development; training at various levels, community non-formal education programmes, strengthening Ministry of Education and Ministry of Youth ( Fiji Ministry of Education, 2005: 1).

The criterion for selecting the schools to be assisted by the EU was a joint exercise between the EU and the Fiji Ministry of Education, where mostly disadvantaged schools which had more than 50 students were chosen. About 75% were disadvantaged, rural Fijian schools (Ministry of Education: 2005). The objective of the FREP is to assist all levels of education, ranging from early childhood education to teacher training.

### ***Benefits and constraints of foreign aid***

The Aid literature discusses both the benefits as well as the constraints of aid. Foreign aid is often justified by its ‘trickle down effects’ on students, schools and the community and enhancing the social status of many involved in aid relationship. On the other hand, the uneven distribution of aid can lead to social inequalities and injustices among some communities. Regardless of the noble intentions that aid donors countries might have on the recipient countries, strings are always attached to aid (Sanga & Taufe’ulungaki, 2005). This sometimes leads to tensions between the interests of aid donors and those of recipient countries, with the interests of donors being the more prominent. On a positive note Bauer (1991) pontificates that aid has brought Third World countries, especially in

the Pacific, to prominence, where aid is needed for countries' economic and political survival.

For Fiji, Puamau (2005) suggests that aid activities and projects have greatly assisted the Fiji government in addressing educational issues such as, infrastructural development, enhancing teaching facilities and other needs. However, she warns that educational aid projects have tendered to create over reliance by host governments and organizations on overseas expertise, and some aid projects have not been sustainable with government control over parts of the education system gradually eroding. For example, 60% of AusAID projects are used for consultancy, monitoring, buying equipment from abroad, and paying for overseas based contractors, thus leading to erosion of the initial amount of money because it is being spent in donor countries.

Puamau (2005) also suggests that the similarities and differences among different aid donors and projects do provide insights into needs and wants of recipient countries, whether in the education sector or any other sector. Sometimes recipient countries at times may also be pressured into structuring their political affairs, as certain aid donors have conditions pertaining to the political situation in the country. One example is that Fiji has to oblige by the Cotonou agreement as a prerequisite to receiving any aid from the European Union (Puamau: 2005). Other donors may also have certain conditions which need to be fulfilled before receiving any aid.



## *Aid relations*

Nabobo (2003) notes that it is common for aid donors to set up aims and objectives of aid projects, without taking heed of the local needs, values, or aspirations. While it is true that the majority of aid recipients may not have a fully comprehensive understanding of international aid (Sanga, 2005), the locals will certainly put in local aspirations and values in the aid projects. While the benefits of aid may be enormous, it is crucial that locals in the consultant-recipient relationship are made to feel that they are equally valued in project aid. Local projects need local minds, if not these projects may not be sustainable when the overseas counterparts have left. This is a major hindrance in the effort to properly utilize international aid in Fiji. This is especially the case where projects have collapsed after the aid donors have left at the end of their terms. The collapse is not only because of lack of funds but also because of lack of project understanding and ownership. There is also a need for local educators to be valued for their expertise and contribution and be remunerated appropriately (Nabobo, 2003).

The Fiji Ministry of Education had recognized the fact that aid in the Pacific, particularly in Fiji, was an essential component for nation building. An aid donor may already have preconceived ideas about a country and in particular about the education system, which may influence the devising of aims and objectives of various aid projects. Ewels (2004) shows differences in donor objectives with the European Union for example, providing aid to improve schools infrastructure, facilities and services whereas AUSAID intends its aid to provide the Ministry of Education with flexible and responsive support facility to

improve planning, management, provision and monitoring of education services. The various aims for different aid projects stem out of the overall aims of donor countries, which intend to provide catalysts to the development of developing nations such as Fiji, which, according to Ewels (2004), has good management and implementation capacities, relative to other Pacific countries. However, he goes on to suggest that, aid needs to be provided to Fiji in order to reduce poverty through the promotion of stability and more equitable distribution of resources and government services to all people in Fiji. Ridolfi (2006) suggests that the EU intends to neutralize the pressure of globalization on Pacific Island nations by turning the pressures of globalization to the advantage of the Pacific Islanders.

Coxon and Taufe'ulungaki (2003) write about aid as a mechanism not only for development but also for further integrating PIC's to the global economy. This has come about as a consequence of heavy involvement of the donor countries in developing nations since the early 1990's. The sustainability of aid projects, however, is something that has been widely debated in the Pacific region and beyond (Sanga and Taufe'ulungaki (2006). Earlier on, Maglen & Throsby (1988) had warned that while the involvement of aid is quite significant in the development process of multiple sectors, sustainability of aid projects remains to be addressed. With the conclusion of funding from donors most aid projects are not sustained by the local counterparts, as the recipients may not have the ability or resources to maintain the projects. This notion in turn may have been the reason why the project was initiated in the first place, but lack of local involvement in majority aid projects leads to non-sustainability after the expatriates have left. Non- sustainability

of aid projects, including projects in the education sector, lead to more dependency on the donor countries for more funds and concessions. Aid in a developing state, such as Fiji, considers education to be the stepping stone for economic and social success because education is the most extensive and visible public service and often the most contested area of public policy (Coxon & Taufe'ulungaki: 2003).

Despite this noble notion, there exists a variety of problems in the education sector especially in the administrative and managerial capacity to plan and implement policies for rapid educational development. This compounds the problems associated with aid project implementation, increasing the need for more aid, as aid can contribute to educational development at primary and secondary levels in a number of ways, including provision of capital works, assistance with curriculum projects and materials and teacher training (Maglen & Throsby: 1988). As the reliance on aid projects increases, the risk of recipients losing considerable control of their education sector (because of the lack of local resources and expertise) also silently but swiftly becomes a reality. Coxon and Taufe'ulungaki (2003:9) refer to the Jackson Report of 1984 as “emphasizing the need for Australian aid to work for Australian economic interests” despite the intention of the various aid projects in different sectors to enhance the lives of people in the recipient country. They further suggest that even after independence many PIC's, including Fiji and their aid dependent education systems are moving from the patronage of colonial days to a benevolent humanitarianism. This cycle of dependency on aid continues year after year, with the rate of dependency increasing every time. With fulfillment of the objectives of various aid projects in all sectors, including the education sector, the

dependency should have decreased due to economic, social and political development in recipient countries. In 1997, they observed that Australia was giving more attention to aid relations between donors and recipients after the Simmons Report in 1997 recommended that relations with recipient countries needed to improve in order for the aid projects to achieve their objectives. Many reforms have taken place in the initiation, implementation and the evaluation phases of aid projects, but much is left to be desired in terms of aid relations between donors and the recipients.

## **2.5 Responses to impact of foreign aid**

Yabaki (2004) is optimistic about aid and suggests that Fiji can adapt and strategically take advantage of the opportunities for development that will be opened up in our region by forces of globalization. Since education is considered a key element in any society, education, he says, can help develop the citizens of Fiji country so that they can compete in the global market. Plans need to be devised too effectively maintain the educational process and the plans also need to be dynamic and can be altered as the educational environment process changes. However, it may not be easy to devise policies and a code of practice that both engages and responds effectively to the wide-ranging possibilities that globalisation brings to education. As Baba (1972) says, it is quite difficult to resist forces of globalisation when our education system is constantly aided by other countries. This means that educators in Fiji need to be vigilant and continue to critically examine the impact of globalization as well as foreign aid on Fiji and its education system.

Heine and Chutaro (2005) in their study of Marshall Islands, for example, warn about the far reaching impacts of aid on education systems and the need to carefully use external aid in order to ensure that false expectations are not created, or foster values and attitudes that are not only expensive but also are not centrally and institutionally viable. It becomes necessary therefore to have effective planning in progress to evaluate and understand the impact of aid on Pacific education systems. Analyzing the consequences of aid that we receive would therefore become mandatory. This will check the adverse effects that donors may have in place as basis of their donor activities.

Furthermore, most of the consequences of receiving aid may not be directly visible or is short term. Most consequences surface after a long term and its long term effects may not have immediate solutions. For example, it has been suggested that the 'brain drain' from some developing countries (including from Fiji) may be attributed to some extent as an impact of aid related reforms on the personal and social lives of citizens in recipient countries. While international aid projects provide an opportunity for professional and personal development, it is not necessary to accept what ever is handed out with open arms because we need to have our views recognized when dealing with overseas counterparts ( Nabobo: 2003; Sanga, 2005).

While recipient sectors are eager to have an input into the initiation and the implementation processes of aid projects, we may, however, not have a full and comprehensive understanding of international aid policies (Sanga: 2005). Therefore, the aid recipients need to have extensive and comprehensive knowledge of aid relations. In

the education sector, while it is important for donors to have comprehensive knowledge of our education system, the recipients also need to have extensive knowledge and experience to successfully implement aid projects and sustain the projects. This notion provides more urgency for the education sector to have effective measures in place before accepting aid projects with open arms. Aid in the education sector also raises a serious concern of ownership as despite decades of aid, Pacific people have not owned their education systems, often leading to increasing control, directly and indirectly, by donors, lenders, and international organizations on Pacific Island countries through conditionality marketing and use of certain paradigms, to the point that the very existence of the Pacific peoples, as countries and cultures, are at risk (Sanga: 2005). This increasing control, as seen in the past, has been initiated through the reform of educational processes and infrastructure in aid recipient countries. This may not entirely give control of the education systems to donor countries but calls for more effective responses to be devised by the recipient countries in order to have some measure of control over their education, social, cultural and economical structures and processes.

## **2.6 Summary**

It is evident from the above review of the literature, that globalisation is a process which is here to stay therefore we cannot disregard its impact on our societies and in particular, on our education systems. People are constantly using words such as world events, international economy, world peace, global warming and so forth, which exhibit that “this global talk is symptomatic of the local community, and its happenings are connected to distant political, economic and cultural happenings” (Singh 2004 : 104 ). There are always two sides to any phenomenon that affects our lives, and so it is with the

globalization of educational aid. The important thing here to note is that both globalization and aid have positive as well as negative consequences, often depending on the context in which they are played out. From the work of Tuinamuana (2005) it is evident that the curriculum and the administrative processes in Fiji schools are changing due to the pressure of globalisation. A major component that is a catalyst in the changes brought about by globalization is Aid (Sanga, 2005), and in the Fiji education sector, the main aid donors are AUSAID, EU, NZAID and the Japanese aid agency ,JICA.

From the works of Puamau (2005) and Sanga (2005), it is evident that the education system in Fiji is highly dependent on aid projects for reforming and maintaining the educational process. The majority of changes that take place in the Fiji education sector are usually a consequence of aid projects initiated by donors. From the works of Ewel (2004) and Coxon & Taufe'ulungaki (2003) it is also evident that the aims and objectives of aid projects in the Fiji education sector are usually originally drafted by the donors, and the aims usually designed to suit the national policies of the countries that give aid. Coxon and Taufe'ulungaki also believe that as aid pours into the recipient countries the dependency on aid increases with the tendency in these countries to drift away from the ownership of their education systems. The lack of local participation in aid projects has also been a concern as little local participation is encouraged by the donors and even fewer inputs expected from local counterparts (Nabobo, 2003). It is therefore important that proactive plans are devised in order to successfully respond to the impacts of foreign aid on our education systems so that they are better able to respond to the challenges of globalization (Sanga: 2005).

## 2.7 The present study

Evidence from the Pacific, (Coxon and Taufe'ulungaki, 2003); Sanga, 2005; Nabobo, 2003; Tuinamuana, 2005; Puamau, 2005) help identify a number of themes that are of interest to the present study and provide the conceptual framework for it. These themes include:

- Aid impact on the content of the school curriculum
- Aid impact on administrative/management processes
- Challenges related to aid delivery and relationships
- Responses to the challenges of Aid
- Some implications of aid relationships to the Fiji education system

It is evident from the literature survey that steps are needed to identify and respond to the challenges in aid relations at the school and classroom levels. The present study therefore tries to examine the factors associated with foreign aid that have a direct impact on our schools, especially on the school curriculum and the school management process. This study utilizes the available literature to try to ascertain the impact of aid on the education system of Fiji and how this might be reflected in the everyday life of a school, its students, teachers and community generally. The study is qualitative in nature and uses interviews and *talanoa* sessions as tools for gathering data. The next chapter will deal with the Methodology of this study.



## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The last chapter reviewed the literature on foreign aid as a manifestation of globalisation. This chapter will look at the methodological framework of the present research.

### **3.1 Qualitative research- an overview**

A qualitative phenomenological approach has been adopted for this study because it provides the means to studying a group's perception of a certain phenomenon and how it affects their educational process.

A qualitative, phenomenological research leads to “discovery and rediscovery of individuals and a group's perceptions and interpretations of their social reality, and an understanding of how the participants relate them to behavior and decision making in their daily lives (Sharma, 1996:4).

The present study examines how the phenomenon of globalisation, in terms of foreign aid, affects the education in a semi-rural school in Fiji. Since this study is qualitative in nature, data has been collected in terms of words rather than numbers (McMillan & Schumacher 1997), therefore interviews were conducted with individuals and talanoa sessions were organized with focus groups to gather the data relating to people's experiences. According to Denzin & Lincoln( 2000), qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of

empirical materials- case study ; personal experiences; introspection; life stories; interview; artifacts; cultural texts and productions; observational, historical interact ional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individual lives.

The present study explored the impacts of foreign aid through the meaning put to the phenomenon by various individuals in a particular setting. Qualitative research is interpretive; it is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied (Denzin & Lincoln: 2000). The current study been guided by the beliefs of the researcher and the participants about the concept of foreign aid and its impact on a secondary school in Fiji. The ideas that I need to explore have been stated as research question in chapter 1 and these questions have been guided by the researcher’s beliefs about the concept of globalisation and its manifestation; in this case, foreign aid.

### **3.2 A Phenomenological Study**

There has been considerable debate about the meaning of phenomenology and it is also important to understand the definition of phenomenology if we are to understand how to research a dynamic phenomenon like globalisation and via foreign aid its impacts on our education system. According to (Ehrich, 2003: 43) “phenomenology means describing things as one experience them, and this means turning away from science and scientific knowledge and returning to the things themselves”. (Patton, 1990:68)

suggests that “phenomenology has been referred to as a philosophy, a paradigm and a methodology, and has been equated with qualitative methods of research”. Phenomenology can be considered a process of making sense of a phenomenon unfolding in front of us, from our mental and physical experiences of the phenomenon. A phenomenological study is a study that attempts to understand people’s perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation (Leedy & Ormrod: 2005). According to Ehrich:

There has been a strong move to an interpretive and qualitative approach in educational research since 1960’s and phenomenology has been viewed as having a strong connection with the assumptions underpinning qualitative research (Ehrich, 2003: 64).

The study gained insights from students, teachers, community members, principal, and school manager and education officers on how foreign aid affects the secondary school education in Fiji, with reference to the school in focus. The individuals expressed their views through open ended interviews and *talanoa* sessions. *Talanoa sessions* are a valid and reliable means of gathering information, where several individuals may relate their experiences and views in an in-formal setting. This way is quite popular among qualitative researchers in Fiji like Sharma (1996), mostly because many individuals in a Pacific setting feel more comfortable in relating views freely in an in-formal setting. Various policy documents pertaining to policies of various aid donors in Fiji education sector were also analyzed to gain insight on how aid relations function in the Fiji education sector.

This study was based on a secondary school, which is situated in a semi-rural setting in the eastern part of Fiji. Participants from the school and the surrounding community provided data for this research. The participants included six teachers, the school principal, school board member and six form seven students. Other two interviewees are two education officers who are assigned to the European Union office and AUSAID respectively. From their extensive educational experience and the experience they have gained and shared with the local community, the present phenomenological study gathered data on how aid projects affected the curriculum and the management of the school.

### ***Methodological intentions of the present research***

Research on how globalisation, manifested in foreign aid, impacts education systems in different countries are dominated by collection and analysis of qualitative data. The impact of aid on schools and its occupants is an on-going and an enormous process, therefore the present research will focus on a singular branch of globalisation. The present study focuses on how foreign aid impacts the Fiji education system. This process warrants a subjective approach that can gather the views of different individuals on aid relations within a secondary school and its community. This study intends to maintain consistency with the above, as the experiences of individuals selected for this study may be constructed mentally or through experience in the physical world. The two types of experiences will not be separated during analysis, but used in conjunction with each other because it would be very difficult to separately

identify the experiences. This study therefore focused on gathering participants' experiences rather than to differentiate one type of experience from another. To ascertain in depth views of different individuals in the educational setting, interviews provided a convenient and valid method of gathering information.

The data collected from the school have been perceptions that the participants have constructed through their experiences in the school environment. The participants were required to provide their views in the context of the school, rather than in the context of their home. This study does not have the intention to generalize the views of the participants to the rest of Fiji.

### **3.3 Methods**

#### ***Data collection***

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), phenomenological researchers normally depend on about 5 to 25 individuals to express their views on the phenomenon being studied and the views are normally gathered through open ended interviews. The present study gathers the views from nineteen participants through open ended interviews and through *talanoa* sessions in focus groups.

### ***The participants***

The first task in selecting a sample is to define the population of interest, for which the results of this study are intended to apply. Purposive sampling has been utilized in this study where “researchers use their judgment to select a sample which they believe will provide the data they need” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993:88). The present study derives views from nineteen participants, which includes six teachers, the school principal, and one school manager, three community members (parents) and six form seven students, who have been based in their respective semi-rural schools for at least past five years. The study will also derive views from two education officer based at The Ministry of Education, and are involved in liaising with donor agencies for educational aid projects. One officer is attached to the European Union office and the other is attached to the AUSAID projects in the education ministry. The teachers may be referred as T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 and T6, while the students will be referred as S1 to S6 and the Education officers will be referred as EO1 and EO2, and the community members (parents) as P1, P2, and P3 for reporting purposes in the study.

### ***Study site***

The school at the focus of the present study is a large secondary school which, is situated in the district of Navua, which is situated in the eastern side of the Fiji Islands. The school is a multicultural school, comprising of teachers and students of various cultures, ethnicities, social backgrounds and religions. The school is situated in a semi-rural community and is also classified by the Ministry of Education as a semi-rural

school. There has been effort made to balance the participants in terms of gender and race. Two teachers are females of which one is of Fijian ethnicity and one of Indian ethnicity. Four other teachers are male and of Indian ethnicity. The Principal is male and of Fijian ethnicity and the school manager is male and of Indian ethnicity. The community members (parents) are all male and of Indian ethnicity. The students include 2 males, one of Fijian and the other of Indian ethnicity, and four females, one of Fijian and the other three of Indian ethnicity. The Principal, teachers and the school manager are constantly involved in activities within the community surrounding the schools. The education officers have been involved with aid projects in the Ministry of Education for a number of years.

**Table 1: Study Participants**

**Table of Participants**

<b>Participants</b>	<b># male</b>	<b># female</b>
Students	2	4
Teachers	4	2
School principal	1	
School manager	1	
Community members (parents)	3	
Education Officers	2	
Total	13	6

### *Open ended interviews*

Open ended interviews have been utilized as a data collecting instrument in this case study. Structured, open –ended interviews have been utilized to gather views from the principal, school board member and the education officer, who form part of the sample in this study. Subjectivist approaches of research are concerned with appropriation of views from individuals on their experiences and interviews serve as a valid instrument for this accomplishing this task. Entwistle & Nisbet (1970) in terms of sampling for interviews had the view that, “a sample is interviewed in order to collect unbiased information in a form which permits the answers from each subject to be put together to give an accurate picture of the population from which the sample is drawn” (p 32).

Interviews serve as a valid instrument for data collection in qualitative studies as the views of individuals on the process of phenomena is sought. Validity can be defined as referring to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the instrument in use (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). The interview technique is also flexible and adaptable. Furthermore McMillan & Schumacher (1997) noted that:

It can be used with many different problems and types of persons, such as those who are illiterate or too young to read and write, and responses can be probed, followed up, clarified, and elaborated to achieve specific accurate responses (p 263).

Interviews are considered valid for the present study as the participants are expected to give different and numerous views on general themes and research questions that have



been discussed in the previous sections. An open ended interview approach was given precedence over other types of interviews because it was considered an appropriate tool to provide sufficient data for the present study. Another reason why open-ended interviews have been utilized was to give structure and direction to the questions being posed, while at the same time allowing the participants to fully impart their views.

The questions in the interviews are based on the themes and the research questions. The questions in the open-ended interviews were designed to seek valid, rich and realistic views from the participants. Care was taken when designing the questions so as not to offend the participants.

### ***Talanoa sessions***

*Talanoa* sessions were used to gather views from at least three teachers who form the part of the sample of this study. *Talanoa* is unique to the South Pacific and is an effective method for gathering people's views in qualitative studies. *Talanoa* according to Sharma (1996) is an informal discussion and setting mostly used for gathering qualitative data. Pacific Islanders are very comfortable providing data via *talanoa* sessions, as this method has been used in their culture for many years, especially for transmitting information. *Talanoa* sessions are quite lengthy and unstructured but provide ample information to a phenomenological researcher about the phenomenon being researched. The vernacular language can be utilized during these sessions,

making it a reliable tool to gather information from individuals who may face difficulties comprehending the English language.

*Talanoa* sessions have been utilized by Pacific researchers such as Sharma (1996) to ascertain views and opinions from individuals in a more in-formal setting. The validity of the views is not affected by the in-formal setting as the individual may be more confident and forthcoming with ideas, mainly because most individuals in the Pacific are mostly at ease when sharing information in an informal setting. In the present study the *talanoa* sessions were utilized with parents and teachers put in focus groups.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Data analysis forms a vital part of any phenomenological research as interpreting the experiences of participants can be a very difficult task. Phenomenological researchers “should conduct a thematic analysis, which entails determining the themes or experimental structures of experience” (Ehrich, 2003: 57). This can be done by isolating thematic statements, which can be done in three ways; by holistic approach, the selective approach or by detailed approach. The first asks what phrases capture the meaning of the text, the second asks what seems essential or revealing in the text and in the third every sentence is examined to see what it reveals about the phenomenon or experience being described.

This study, drawing from the work of (Ehrich, 2003) employed the selective approach during data analysis, to identify the revealing aspects and those that seem essential in the views related during the interviews and *talanoa* sessions. The following steps, which have been modified after being adapted from Hyener (1985), have been utilized in analyzing the data from interviews. Hyener (1985) looks at how to analyze data gathered from interviews in phenomenological studies. The steps have been modified to suit the present research where both open ended interviews and *talanoa* sessions have been utilized to gather data.

1. Transcription- all data from recorded audio tapes were transcribed in written words.
2. Reading- all views were read several times and made sense of.
3. Clustering meaning- after selectively gathering the views, these were transformed into themes.
4. Summary- Themes from all interviews were collated and summarized into general themes.

The prominences of certain themes, as compared to others are presented in the findings. Themes generated from the interviews have been presented in the findings and discussion sections.

### ***Policy document analysis***

Policy documents of aid organizations have been analyzed to ascertain the aims and objectives these organizations have. In particular the Fiji Rural Education Program (FREP), funded by The European Union and Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP), funded by AUSAID and the EU have been the center of focus during the analysis of aid policy documents. Documents have been analyzed to ascertain the contemporary structures of aid policies and how the aims and objects are evaluated after the completion of the aid projects.

### **3.5 Procedure**

The interviews were conducted over a period of five weeks and each normally lasted for approximately thirty minutes. The participants had been interviewed depending on their availability and convenience. *Talanoa* sessions were conducted in focus groups, where questions were asked to two focus groups first a few teachers and then three community members around a grog session. The sessions with teachers were conducted after school and with the community members on the same day but at night in the school. This in-formal method has been used to gather collective views and the general ideas from the views have been noted. The interviews were conducted in English on a one to one basis but the interview with the school manager was conducted in Hindi for reasons to maximize data collection. This was later translated in English. The *talanoa*

session with the community members was also conducted in Hindi because the members had difficulty understanding English.

Permission for conducting the interviews and *talanoa* sessions was sought from the participants prior to conducting the interviews. The participants were not aware of each other's involvement in the study, therefore were not informed during the interviews of other participants so that they do not discuss their responses and come out with the same ideas as the previous interviewee. This was done to increase the reliability of the data collection. All the interviews were recorded in a laptop and on backup CD's and kept by the interviewer for analysis. The education officer attached with EU gave his views which were recorded just on paper as he did not wish to be recorded on audio tape. The school manager's interview was also just recorded on paper for similar concerns.

### **3.6 Reflexivity**

Any researcher has to be reflexive, especially when the researcher is part of the context that is being studied (Nabobo-Baba, 2005). The researcher has to be mindful of sentiments of the people who are giving views from within the researchers own environment.

### ***As 'insider'***

As an insider I am an administrator in the school on which the study is based. I have an explicit idea of the phenomenons that are influencing the school, including the phenomenon of globalisation. I have been in the school as a student for one year, a teacher for nine years and during this tenure I have also been in administrative posts for the past six years. As part of the school for so many years I became conscious of issues like aid in the education system and this led to my present study, in which I am studying the aid relations in the school. As an insider the samples had no problems relating to me their views as I have been part of the school for many years now, but some teachers has shown some reservation in their views towards the educational process in the school. This is perhaps due to the fact that I am an administrator.

### ***As an 'Outsider'***

As a researcher I may be viewed by some participants as an outsider as I was trying to investigate the phenomenon of aid in terms of 'their' school even though I had been a member of the school for some years I was still an outsider as a researcher. The community members, when interviewed, were a bit skeptical of the idea of the Acting vice principal was interviewing them, but I had to be explain that as a researcher I had to be considered as a person seeking their views and the factor of respect should not withhold their views.

### **3.7 Time and Financial Resources**

All interviews and talanoa sessions with the principal, school board member, community members, the students and the teachers took place in the vicinity of the school where I also teach therefore, the participants were easily accessible. The education officers were interviewed according to their time schedule. There were no specific gifts given to the participants but arrangements were made for kava during the focus group interviews. Some participants were treated to lunch. The interviews commenced in April 2007, and continued till the end of June 2007, depending on the time the participants availed themselves. The analysis of data took another one month to complete.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

“ Qualitative researchers need to be sensitive to ethical principles because of their research topic, face to face interactive data collection, and reciprocity with participants” (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997: 418). This study also took into account ethical considerations during and after the process of data collection. The participants were consulted before the interviews were conducted, and informed of the topic and the types of questions that would be asked. During the interview the participants were not compelled to answer all questions if they did not wish to do so.

During the analysis and presentation of data derived from the interviews and *talanoa* sessions, the participants were not be identified by their names, nor the name of the schools be mentioned. To prevent jeopardizing the aid projects which are currently on-going no new conclusions will be drawn about these projects but the existing literature and the views of the education officers will be analyzed and commented upon. The participants have been given codes such as T1 when presenting the data. Data that has been recorded on CD's will be in the possession of the interviewer at all times and will be kept under lock and key.



## 4.0 FINDINGS

### 4.1 The manifestations of globalisation in Fiji schools

From the interviews conducted it was interesting to find that many in the education sector were quite oblivious to the impact of foreign aid on education in Fiji. However, during the interviews and the *talanoa* sessions the individuals became quite engrossed in the concept and provided views regarding the impact that globalization as well as foreign aid on education in general and on the school under study, in particular.

In relation to globalisation in general, changes in dress style and cultural practices were mentioned by teachers, students and parents interviewed. According to teacher (T 6), globalisation “*applies to our school system, it has very big effect because we have to teach our students to move out and fit in the global world*”. She claimed that because of globalisation the education system in Fiji is reforming itself to produce a skilled work force that is able to adapt in the global arena. Therefore, the behavior, learning patterns and the attitude of the students and teachers are changing. The school manager also stated that students are becoming more aware of their rights and their learning habits are changing. They are now demanding modern facilities and want to use new technology in school. The manager also expressed the view that due to the impact of globalization on the pedagogical process, teachers are demanding from the school board, new technologies like internet etc to facilitate their new approaches to teaching students who are now more conscious of global trends and demands. Some of these technologies are being provided through foreign aid projects encouraging educational stakeholders to be

more technology oriented. The Principal claimed that changes are evident in the way students use language, as well as their attitudes. According to him these changes may not be very marked in semi-rural schools; however, all the stakeholders in the school are affected by the process of globalization in some way. He said that *“putting it on comparative basis our school is not affected much, compared to schools which are more exposed, example the schools in the vicinity of cities”* (School Principal).

Other evidence of the impact of globalization is reflected in the stakeholders’ attitudes to students’ rights. Teachers for example believed that the promotion of the rights of the child is beneficial for the students but at times this may cause problems for them. Parent 1, expressed that the promotion of the rights of the child, an idea that originated in foreign countries had deeply impacted the student - teacher relations in the school. He claimed that the discipline of children was eroding and students no longer respect the teachers and parents, because they know their rights.

An education official associated with aid projects, reports the influence that developed countries are having on the education system of Fiji. According him, such influences may or may not be intentional; it depends a lot on stakeholders’ individual choices. According to the education officer *“when the big boys from Australia, New Zealand, and the US pull strings we are all going to feel it ... it goes right down to your college”*. (EO 1)

### ***Positive impacts of globalisation***

While many people in Fiji tend to demonize the impacts of globalisation, the individuals who gave their views in this study expressed many positive views about the phenomenon of globalisation. Most expressed that their standard of living has been improving due to exposure to influences from more developed nations. The incorporation of technology in the daily lives of people and in the pedagogical process is seen as a positive impact of globalisation. *“Most students are learning new technologies and using it to research in education”* (T 1). The teachers claimed that introduction of technology in the educational process has enhanced the learning techniques of students and is making students in this developing country more aware of the challenges posed by the global job market. According to one of the teachers *“latest technology enhances our understanding in school..., use of technologies like internet enhances the sharing of knowledge and information, which is considered to be part of globalisation”* (T 5)

The change from exam oriented curriculum to a more outcome based curriculum is also seen as a positive impact of global education trends on Fiji education. *“One of the positives is the curriculum has changed from exam oriented to skill oriented”* (T 4). The teachers expressed that most developed countries were opting for outcome based education because the students were provided the opportunity to expose their various skills and at the same time be able to improve various skills rather than just depending on academic outcomes assessed by examinations alone.

The rights of the child are being promoted by global organizations, making the concept one of the major influences of globalisation on our education system. The principal considered this to be a positive step towards enhancing the educational process. “ *From my critical point of view yes, like students who were brought up in the culture of silence are now speaking up,... students know about their rights and have the freedom of speech*” ( School Principal).

Migration of skilled individuals from the country is often termed as one of the major disadvantages of globalisation, but teacher 6 believed that the brain drain can be beneficial for individuals who migrate seeking better living standards and job opportunities. “*Brain drain is a positive impact because it is good for most citizens*” (T6). “*It is a positive impact because students can move out and work outside Fiji, and given the present situation in Fiji, it is an opportunity to move out and have a better life*” (T 6).

Another education officer (EO 2) stated that “*it is a win-win situation, because people also get to go to greener pastures*”. Furthermore, he was of the view that the brain drain is beneficial to the country in terms of remittances sent back by those who migrate or have an occupation overseas. “*When skilled people migrate we lose out but again the individual gains and we also gain from migration in terms remittance*” (EO 2). Remittances are currently one of the highest foreign exchange earners in the country.

### ***Negative impact of globalisation***

Erosion of cultural and traditional values in the Pacific was considered by most the participants as one of the major negative impacts of globalisation. The principal and the teachers expressed that most students are changing their attitudes more towards the way of living in developed countries because they believe or are made to believe by the mass media that this way of life is better than the Pacific way of life. The students are becoming more susceptible to foreign values as they are exposed to foreign values through various means, including aid programmes, and they may regard these foreign values as superior or more exciting as compared to the values passed on by their fore .

*“The attitude of the students has changed as they admire the overseas style of living and they do not give a damn about their culture” (T 2).*

According to the school manager *“most students are losing their cultural and religious values due to influence from cultures overseas”*. The students themselves agreed that cultural loss is quite evident in most cultures today because many prefer to live the life style presented to them in terms of fashion and the latest foreign products. Students claimed that they have to move with the time if not they will be considered backwards by their peers. They exclaimed that people should embrace the life style of more developed countries in order to be part of the global society.

### ***Impact of globalisation on the education system in Fiji schools***

Another education official claimed that influence from other countries on our education system is quite significant, especially in terms of funding and expertise provided by them because they have well developed education systems. His view was supported by most of those who were interviewed. According to some participants, the influence has been very constructive for students; others believe that some forms of global influences may have been beneficial to our education system. *“The issue of education is not only a national issue but a global one, so overseas countries are mostly calling the shots”* (EO 2).

Students viewed globalization as assisting their introduction to new technology, helping them keep up with what is going on in other countries where students are now utilizing modern technology. They claimed that education in Fiji was becoming more outcome based rather than exam based following trends in the education sector of developed countries. They further expressed that more changes should be introduced to our education system, as this will ensure that Fiji students would have the same educational standards as students in more developed nations. This view was shared by a teacher who expressed that the education system should keep up with changing global trends, in order for students to learn to adapt to the global society. According to teacher, there is a need to change students in order *“to fit anywhere in the world”* (T 6).

As far as the curriculum is concerned one teacher (T6) expressed that the curriculum *“is copied from overseas”* and most of the educational process in Fiji is influenced by global

forces. According to the teacher, students in Fiji need to be connected with the information that other students all over the world are using, in order for them to survive in the global society. This exposure to new technology and information is also changing the learning patterns of students. Some teachers saw students as becoming more dependent on new technology such as computers, a trend that may be putting undue pressure on schools and parents to make available these new technologies to their students. Other teachers saw the introduction of more technology in our education system as contributing to students' development of their thinking abilities, and ability to analyze information available to them on global issues.

The curriculum in Fiji secondary schools is undergoing reform in line with global trends. The teachers pointed out that the secondary curriculum in Fiji schools is becoming more outcome based and moving away from the examination- based model that normally served as the entry point for students into the job market. This transition, according to some teachers, has been a consequence of Australian influence on our education system. *“One change is the internal assessment (exam system), if we look at the change in curriculum, they have brought in the Australian curriculum into Fiji and I think it is doing well”* (T 2).

As a result of changes in the teaching and learning practices, students are taking up subjects which reflect global trends that aim at providing students with diverse job opportunities. Students are now opting more for subjects like computer science and other technical subjects while subjects like vernacular and other more traditional subjects are

being neglected. The technical subjects are being encouraged by aid projects, as these aid projects aim to increase the technical knowledge of students in Fiji. This, according to the teachers, is affecting the passing on of values in some cultures in Fiji as students are being introduced to foreign languages more intensely. Moreover, parents are also encouraging their children to speak foreign languages from a very young age.

The Principal confirmed that the school was “*slowly moving away from exam oriented curriculum*” and students are being provided with opportunities to exhibit their various skills through out-come based evaluation processes. He claimed that although the global influence on our education system may cause few setbacks, it is beneficial for the students and teachers in Fiji to be exposed to educational practices from other countries as these are more diverse and can provide students with different skills that are useful in the global market place.

#### **4.2 What is aid and who gives aid?**

Most participants generally defined aid as funds provided by donors for the improvement and development of infrastructure and facilities. The students expressed the belief that Fiji will not be able to survive economically without aid flowing in the country at a regular basis and as a consequence our education sector will also not progress. The teachers in similar fashion had the opinion that reforms in the education sector may not be afforded by the Fiji government, as some reforms take millions of dollars each year. Aid therefore, is essential in our education sector if our students are to be educationally



viable in the local and the global arena. The teachers stated that normally countries like Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan and even China provide aid to our education sector. On top of this organizations such as EU and the UN provide a large quantity of aid to the education sector.

According to the Principal, aid is provided to the education sector for improvement of infrastructure and schools resources. The Principal informed that his school received aid from AusAID last year for upgrading of their office technology facilities. The aid was given by AusAID through the Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) section of the Ministry of Education. The school, although did not apply, received the aid because the school had existing office technology facilities. The office technology room was refurbished and new set of computers were installed and as part of the arrangements the school had to franchise the office technology courses with Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT). According to the principal the evaluation of the program could not be discussed because the program had not completed at the time of study.

According to Education officer 1, the European Union (EU) is one of the major contributors of aid in the Fiji education sector. According to him, Australia and New Zealand are also major contributors of aid in Fiji. The EU currently provides aid for two projects, namely the Fiji Rural Education Program (FREP) and the Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP). In the FESP the EU works in conjunction with AusAID to provide funds for component one of the program. The first component basically deals with

providing aid for rural education development projects. The programs under EU “*arouse from annual reports of Fiji Ministry of Education annual reports*” (EO 1).

According to Education officer 2, who is a senior official in the vocational section in Fiji Ministry of Education, aid is an essential ingredient for the development of vocational facilities in the country. “*The TVET facilities that we have currently in Fiji are 20 years behind than what we should be having*” (EO 2). He further explained that aid was needed to upgrade these facilities as vocational education contributes immensely in the development of a skilled labor force in the country. “*Our current donor is AusAID from Australia... AusAID has given out tenders through small companies and the program is managed by ACIL in Melbourne*” (EO 2). He stated that AusAID is currently funding programs under another component of the FESP in conjunction with the EU. Under this program the school in focus was aided to upgrade its vocational capabilities. According to the officer there are other donors who constantly provide funds in the education sector. “*Other donors include the European Union, New Zealand, Taiwan and currently China*” (EO 2).

### **4.3 Reasons why donors give aid**

According to the information gathered from the interviews and the *talanoa* sessions, the reasons for providing aid to developing countries are multifaceted. Some of the information was attained from analyzing policy documents of donor organizations. Donors have different aims and objectives for providing aid and most aims are

interpreted to be geared towards improving the living standards of the people in the developing countries. There are countries and organizations that provide aid as a goodwill gesture, while others may be obliged to provide various forms of aid. An education officer pointed out that a country gives aid because, *“we are just neighbors and in the capacity as our neighbors Australia gives aid...it is just like a friend sharing lunch”* ( EO 2). The officer further specified that countries like Australia have their own national plans which have the objectives for better relations with its Pacific neighbors. These national plans warrant nations like Australia, through various national and international organizations, to provide aid to various sectors of developing countries like Fiji. The education officer pointed out that AusAID is one organization which is part of Australian government’s strategy to provide aid to the Pacific island countries.

The students provided opinions from their own perspective and with reference to the knowledge they have of international aid relations. One student claimed that countries are *“just being generous”* (S 5), while another (S 2) believed that *“they expect something in return”*. A third has (S 3) had a different idea - that *“some countries give aid because they want to be recognized”*. Student 1 expressed that that *“some countries give aid because it is the first step to gain friendship from another country”*. Overall the students were of the opinion that many donors provide aid to Fiji, especially in the education sector, in order to enhance the relations between the two countries. They had the view that some countries like Australia feel obliged to help its developing Pacific neighbors.

The school manager had a more critical idea of why countries provide aid to Fiji, especially in the education sector.

*Before, people used to migrate with very little formal education and countries like Australia faced a lot of problems because of this. Then these countries decided to give aid to educate the people before they migrate (School manager).*

This, according to him, this was of the major reasons why countries like Australia and New Zealand have increased their aid efforts to Fiji. Now more and more people are migrating to these countries for better job opportunities, therefore through aid projects, most aspiring migrants are educated so that they are skilled before they migrate. The school manager further expressed that *“even if people stay in the country they become well educated through aid programs to serve multinational companies based in Fiji”* (school manager). While some countries tend to serve their own purposes by providing aid, the school manager claimed that there are some organizations like the EU who are genuine about helping the people of Fiji upgrade their standard of living.

The teachers too had diverse views on why countries provide aid, especially in the education sector. *“I think countries give aid because some sections in the education sector cannot provide facilities for themselves”* (T 6). Teacher 6 had the opinion that there is not enough help for the schools from government funds, therefore respective schools need to develop facilities through aid projects. *“Another reason why they give aid is because some of the aid has strings attached, they give at this end but they want to make sure that they get something back, it is a two way thing, give a little , take a little”* (Teacher 6). Teacher 5 supported this idea and according to her while some donors have

genuine interest in developing the nation, others may have some other motives. *“Some places are genuine, because I have seen it first hand, but on a national level they want something back because why else would they say that you don’t have to pay them back”* (Teacher 5).

Teacher 3 and teacher 2 were also very critical of the reasons why the education sector is being provided aid by other countries. *“ They get a lot of return out of it, one major consequence of aid is brain drain, especially for those who study through scholarships”* (T3), while teacher 2 had the idea that *“it (aid) leads to cheaper labor market from Fiji”*. Most teachers who gave their views were very skeptical about the reasons why aid is provided in the education sector. They viewed the intentions of the donors with suspicion and most believed that the donors get more out of the aid projects than the recipients.

According to the Principal, *“Australia is part of the region so it wants to give something back to the region in terms of aid”*. The Principal had the view that while most donors genuinely want to upgrade the education system in Fiji by providing aid, they also gain a lot of control over the educational process in Fiji. He had experienced that most reforms in the education sector through aid projects have a strong influence of the donor. At times the educational concepts from donor countries are implemented in Fiji because it may have been a condition of receiving aid from the donors.

Education officer 1, who is attached to the EU, has the impression that EU provides aid to Fiji because aid is a necessity as far as the development of the country is concerned. The

reason EU provides aid in the education sector, he believes, is because without aid most recommendations made regarding improving the educational process in Fiji would not eventuate. He explained that most aid projects in the Fiji education sector “*arose from the annual reports of Fiji Ministry of Education*” (EO 1).

#### **4.4 The European Union Aid**

The following information has been derived from education officer 1(EO 1), who has been attached to the European Union to participate in the initiation and implementation of aid projects in Fiji schools. The educational reforms initiated through EU aid projects at national level have a lot of influence on secondary schools, including the school in focus in this study.

The EU is currently implementing the Fiji Education Sector Program (component 1) FESP and the Fiji Rural Education program (FREP). These aid projects arose from discussions in educational forums and “*from the Education Commission Report 2000*” (EO 1). According to the officer, most ideas which form the basis of various aid projects under EU have originated locally through various education forums. For these projects “*other donors were considered but EU was chosen because of its objectives*” (EO 1). This is the reason why the EU was considered to collaborate with AusAID to implement the FESP program. According to the officer the FESP under the two organizations has different aims and objectives and their projects focus on different sections of the educational process.

Under the EU funded aid projects, *“disadvantaged rural schools are helped, mainly because they do not have adequate teaching and administrative resources”* (EO 1). Furthermore, *“remote schools are provided with better communications devices such as satellite phones, to improve links with headquarters”* (EO 1). Aid projects under EU normally focus on improving infrastructure, providing science equipments and improving the school facilities. For example, school offices are provided with equipment such as photocopiers and stationery. According to the education officer an efficient school office is a vital part of the educational process. Most schools do not have up to date office facilities and this usually affects the teaching and learning process.

In relation to provisions for capacity building, the school curriculum is being reformed with the help of CDU officers. This is done after consultations with CDU officials and the use of the views of participants in educational forums. Because of the involvement of the EU in the curriculum reform process, the curriculum has changed shape in recent years. According to the education officer the reforms are normally in line with current global trends. The teacher training programs at Lautoka Teachers College (LTC) and the Fiji College of Advance Education (FCAE) are also being reformed to with a view to improving the training of teachers to adapt to the current teaching environment in Fiji schools. Some teachers are being sent to remote islands so they can get accustomed to the teaching environments that exist there. The EU provides funds to enable this process to continue. The EU is also committed to developing the Technical/ Vocational section (TVET) of the Ministry of Education. TVET teachers are being undergoing training

because most do not possess formal qualifications or pedagogical skills in the vocational area. Some TVET teachers from the study school have attended or are attending training programmes initiated through EU aid.

The education officer emphasized the fact that human resources within the MOE are also being upgraded. *“MOE officials, including senior education officers, are also being trained to better manage resources and focus on accountability”* (EO 1) Furthermore, physical resources such as 4WD vehicles and state of art boats have also been provided by the EU under FESP to provinces which require these for transportation. As well as providing direct assistance to the schools and the MOE, the EU also *“provides aid to non-governmental organizations such as the Fiji Nurses Association which has been allocated \$200,000 by EU to prepare a lunch handbook, for use in schools”* (EO 1). The school in focus in the present study has received the lunch handbooks to promote nutritional diets in the school.

Most of EU funding for different projects is managed locally, especially by the Fiji Ministry of Education under guidelines agreed to by the government and the EU. *“Local consultants are used to manage the programs, such as MOE officials, Principals, head teachers, even in some cases the school boards”* (EO 1) . Supervision of the aid projects is carried out mainly by the MOE and about 95% of the planning and implementation process utilizes local talent. The officer stressed that only 5% is used up by overseas consultants who come in every 6 months to audit the programs. The programs are not only financially audited but the outcomes and efficiency of the implementation process is



looked into. According to the officer, the EU believes in strengthening other sectors in the country simultaneous to development in the education sector, therefore, tenders for building the infrastructure is called for locally, and materials are also bought from local business organizations. All of these funding agreements need compliance with the Cotonou Agreement, which has been signed by Asia Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) member countries with the European Commission (EU:2000).

#### **4.5 Australian Aid (AusAID)**

The following is based on information provided by Education officer 2 (EO 2), who was attached to AusAID for a number of years. AusAID provides aid to Fiji under the aims and objectives of the Australian government, which basically aims to help developing nations in the Pacific Islands. AusAID is currently a major donor in the education sector in Fiji and is currently providing aid under the Fiji Education Sector program (FESP) to the Ministry of Education. When asked about the aims of AusAID the officer stated that *“because we are neighbors, in the capacity as our neighbors countries like Australia give aid”* (EO: 2). AusAID currently provides aid for the second component of FESP and their programs are managed by consultants from Australia. *“AusAID has given out tenders through small companies and the program is managed by ACIL in Melbourne”* (EO 2). He further stated that *“ACIL is a consultant firm and the government of Western Australia and Curtin University do the job on behalf of the government of Australia”*(EO 2). AusAID has distributed the work to these organizations because they have

professionals who are experienced in conducting research and implementing aid projects in the South Pacific, including Papua New Guinea.

The Education officer said that AusAID aims to upgrade the standards of education in Fiji and make it comparable to Australian education standards. This is one of the reasons why AusAID is focusing on the vocational section of the ministry, because most vocational centers are not up to par with Australian standards. Even most vocational teachers do not possess formal qualifications therefore avenues are being sought to improve the quality of vocational education in Fiji. For example,

*The Australian Pacific Technical College (APTC) is coming, their aim is to set up something better than FIT because AusAID thinks that Fiji lacks skills for productivity and so the university is brought here, which will have Australian standard qualifications (EO 2).*

He claimed that productivity in the education and other sectors could be improved through AusAID projects, but the results of these projects may not be immediately visible. *“We are about 4 years into FESP but in another 2 to 3 years we shall be getting the results, as the results of productivity is seen as a long term effect”* (EO :2). To date AusAID has provided aid into various sections of the education ministry, including the primary and the secondary section, the vocational section, the Curriculum Development Unit, and for teacher training institutes. It has also provided funds for projects in individual schools and tertiary institutes.

The school under focus in this study received about \$44,000 worth of aid from the AusAID for renovations and upgrading of the Office Technology (O/T) section. According to the school Principal the school was chosen by the TVET section of the MOE for the particular aid project, most probably because the school had existing O/T facilities. About 20 sets of computers were provided, the O/T room was renovated, and the office technology teachers were also provided with training at the Fiji Institute of Technology (FIT). According to teacher 6, who also heads the vocational department in the school, the office technology course at the school was franchised with FIT after the aid project was implemented. This allowed students to do stage 1 of the course in the school and other stages at FIT, which meant automatic admission into FIT. *“It is a positive change because now our students can go directly to FIT after completing stage 1 of the course in the office technology section”* ( T 6). The Principal echoed similar sentiments. One other condition attached to the new program under the aid project was that the intake requirement was increased from Form 4 to Form 6 level education, and according to teacher 6 this led to many students in the school not qualifying to take the course.

Teacher 6 further suggested that one of the conditions for the AusAID was that it should be well utilized by students. As for the monitoring process of the FESP project in the school she says that *“we have to attend workshops and answer their questions for them (consultants) to take back the feedback to the people who gave aid (AUSAID)”* (T6). She further stated that *“there are people from Australia who come to conduct the courses”*

(T6). The workshops are conducted by consultants from ACIL who gather feedback from the teachers to evaluate the aid project.

#### **4.6 How beneficial is aid?**

All the participants interviewed were of the view that aid is a vital component in Fiji's economy. Most participants had the view that since Fiji is a developing nation, it may not be able to sustain certain sectors of the nation without the injection of aid. Even the students believed that aid is vital for the development of the education sector, as development may not eventuate if only the government shoulders the burden of financing educational reforms. The school that was the focus of this study benefits directly from the AusAID project, but may have also benefited in-directly from national aid incentives directed at the MOE involving teacher training and production of teaching materials etc.

The parents who were interviewed saw aid as very beneficial for the development of infrastructure in the country. As far as the education officials are concerned, they believed that most community managed schools may not be able to develop and maintain facilities with the funds they have or with the funds provided in terms of student grants. Aid therefore, is essential for developing infrastructure and providing teaching and learning materials for these schools. Parents on the other hand expressed that with the help of aid projects in the educational sector, the students are introduced to new

technologies that would enable them to achieve objectives that are comparable to those in other countries.

Teachers too supported the view that aid is very beneficial to education. While most teachers claimed that countries provide aid mainly for their own benefits, they said that in the end students, teachers as well as the school benefit immensely from aid projects. According to one teacher, aid projects are responsible for *“the productivity and the development of civil servants have improved”* (T 2). This improvement may have been achieved due to aid funded workshops intended at upgrading and upskilling human resources in the educational sector. Another teacher (T 5) expressed that foreign aid improves performance and quality. She further stated that aid has *“improved the way we teach because we learn new techniques of teaching through various aid funded workshops, and it also has improved the infrastructure in most schools, especially rural schools”* (T5)

Other teachers said that aid projects often introduce them as well as the students to new technology, which is nowadays considered to be an integral part of the pedagogical process. They were of the view that without the aid projects most of the new technologies available in Fiji schools would probably not be accessible to schools, especially if they were to purchase these technologies themselves. Most schools in Fiji are not able to afford the latest technology, hence their dependency on aid projects. T 5 for example, emphasized the point that most schools in the rural areas are now more accessible because of improvement in transportation associated with agencies. She claimed that

many people would not be able to use four wheel drives, boats or in some cases bridges, if infrastructure were not improved through aid.

The students believed that many sporting facilities, from which they have benefited, have been developed through aid. According to them schools as well as other organizations have benefited from aid projects specifically targeting the development of sports facilities. Many students in the country have benefited from sports scholarships by aid agencies. Many students see sports as a globally recognized career and some from Fiji schools are taking up professional sports.

According to the education officers associated with aid projects, the education system in Fiji needs aid funds to sustain its operations. *“The issue of education is not only a national issue but a global issue as overseas countries are mostly calling the shots,...however, for development we got to have funding”* ( EO:2). According to this officer, aid has enormous benefits for the education sector as funding from the government is limited and educational facilities are outdated. According to the officer, Fiji benefits a lot from aid in the educational sector because new technologies provided through aid projects are needed in the schools in order to keep up with global trends. He was of the view that Fiji as a developing nation may not be able to develop the educational facilities on its own. In order to meet the challenges of the global market Fiji needs external help. Education officer 2 believed that countries which give aid also benefit in various ways but the prominent beneficiaries would be the recipients of aid. The aid received from FESP (through EU and AusAID) has assisted in the development

of so many areas in the educational sector including, school facilities, laboratories, equipment, transportation, boarding facilities, transportation, access, new technology, teacher training, curriculum development etc. According to the education officers the government on its own may not have been able to cater for these developments.

As mentioned earlier the school in this study benefits from aid. According to the school manager, the school *“received aid in terms of computers for our office technology department”* (School manager), a statement echoed by the Principal and the head of the Vocational Department. According to the Principal, *“the main purpose of aid is to improve the school, in terms of infrastructure, facilities, the curriculum and the learning process”* (School Principal). He further explained that the aid for the office technology section does benefit the school in terms of infrastructure, new technology, training for the Office Technology (O/T) teacher and training of students. He however, mentioned that only about 20 students will benefit from the project every year. The teacher in-charge of the O/T section was also benefiting directly from the AusAID program as she has been allowed funds to enhance her qualifications.

#### **4.7 Aid Distribution**

Some participants expressed concern regarding the criteria used to distribute aid to schools. The concern was mainly raised by the school manager and community members.

*The aid for the OT department was given through the TVET department in the Ministry of Education, but this aid is the only one received in years that I remember, and no aid has been received for the primary or the academic secondary section (school manager).*

The manager further stated that aid was applied for every year but were told that *“our school is not in their priority list, as it can fund its own projects”* (school manager). According to the principal the \$44,000 aid was provided to the school after the Ministry identified the school as having existing office technology facilities, but the school did not apply for this particular aid project. The manager was of the view that there are other areas in the school which should have also benefited from MOE aid projects, rather than it focusing only on a particular department, where only a few students stand to benefit.

Parent 2 expressed his opinion saying that there has been some money given by the Australian government to the school to buy new computers but only a few students have benefited from the program. He said, *“no money has been given to improve any other facilities, ... there can be two reasons, one we may not be aware of aid programs or we did not apply for the aid”* ( P 2). The parents claimed that aid projects were common in some schools while others are left out, and, according to them, this is not fair because individual schools have their own unique needs. On the question of equity Parent 1 said that *“may be the government in power is not distributing the aid with accountability, and we cannot say only rural schools are poor as other schools, like ours in a semi-rural setting also lack a lot of resources”* (P 1).

As far as benefiting directly from the aid, the parents were not all fully aware that their children have benefited from any aid projects in the education sector. One parent reported: *“We are not aware of the aid benefiting our child because we did not receive*



*anything*” (P 1). The parents were of the view that most aid provided at national level does not trickle down to individual students in an equitable manner and this may be a contributing factor to their children not directly benefiting from aid programs. Education officers maintained that the selection criteria carefully designed in consultation with the aid agencies and the government of the day. At times aid agencies may have priority area about where the aid is to be distributed. For example, the EU is currently focusing on enhancing education in the rural areas.

#### **4.8 Impact of Aid on curriculum and school management**

All the teachers interviewed, including the Principal, acknowledged that aid is an integral component in the reform of the curriculum and the management process in Fiji education system. The education officers attached to EU and AusAID confirmed that curriculum development is one of the areas where aid projects are being implemented. According to these officers curriculum reform is being funded by different organizations in different areas, for example the vocational curriculum is being reformed under FESP, funded by AusAID. This has led to further developments in improving the qualifications of teachers. According to teacher 6 the teachers in the vocational section have been introduced to a new curriculum, associated with a franchise by FIT. She also confirmed that since the AusAID funded office technology courses have started in the school under study, *“some teachers from the academic section are now required to attend classes in English and commerce”* (T 6). The vocational section of the school seems to be undergoing various changes in several phases, driven by aid projects.

According to the Principal, *“aid donors have a lot of say, and they influence the government of the day to take the policies of the donors when accepting aid”*. He further stated that the changing administrative process was indirectly influenced by aid donors. *“We are blinded by the money we get and we tend to be oblivious of the fact that there are these hidden agendas by donors for their own benefits”* (School Principal). He claimed that the reform in the curriculum was being initiated by the donors. He was of the view that donors influence the nature of curriculum that is to be implemented in Fiji in order to raise the standard of education. Donors often set benchmarks for improvement in the education sector that is in line with the educational standards in the donor countries, therefore the curriculum reforms funded by donors is influenced by donors’ own standards and beliefs. This belief was echoed by an education officer who says that *“the benchmarks that are used to gauge our education standard are those of Australia and New Zealand”* (EO2).

Aid also influences the curriculum of secondary schools including the school under study. *“Before, teaching was teacher- centered now the curriculum is being reformed to be student-centered. For example the internal assessment system that has been introduced”* (T5). She said that the close association of the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) with aid donors such as EU and AusAID has led to reforms in our curriculum, especially in the syllabi of the various subjects. She had the view that the aid donors have a strong influence on the nature of curriculum reform and such ideas initiated by the donors eventually end up in our classrooms. Teacher 6 had the view that

through aid new technologies are introduced to the teaching process through making teaching more effective, a view supported by teacher 3 who views that the inception of new educational technology is improving the teaching process, at the same time is influencing students' subject choices. Teacher 3 for example, said that students are opting more for technology oriented subjects like computing science rather than traditional subjects like Hindi or Agriculture. Teacher 1 believed that the introduction of new technologies is very beneficial, especially if it *"links the curriculum to the market and new strategies to address market demand"* (T 1). The teachers and the Principal generally had the view that aid projects are very influential on our curriculum and the management processes, especially when the projects are undertaken at the ministry level. Since the Fiji education system has a top down planning process the curriculum changes at the ministry level will eventually find its way to all the schools including the school under focus in the present study. As mentioned earlier by teachers, the assessment and evaluation processes in secondary schools are already being reformed under various aid projects. The teacher training programs are also changing due to reforms initiated in teacher training institutes by aid programs and this eventually will have an impact on the curriculum of Fiji schools.

#### 4.9 Conditions of Aid

All the interviewees said that aid donors always have conditions which the recipients need to comply with before or during the implementation of aid projects. There are also underlying conditions of aid which are not apparent and in some cases aid relations may create negative circumstances and become a catalyst for other processes like brain drain.

The school Principal expressed that

*for us as a developing country we take things with open hands, whenever the carrot is dangled in front of us, without knowing the negative impacts because we may not be aware of the underlying reasons for aid (school Principal).*

He further stated that there are always underlying reasons for any donor or country to give aid. Most of the objectives of aid projects are genuine but the Principal believes that aid may still negatively affect our educational process. The parents echoed similar views. Parent 3 stated that “*any country which gives aid expects to benefit from that aid*” (P3). Collectively parents believed that while donor countries may have genuine reasons for providing aid, they may also have ulterior motives, such as the need to provide education for migration purposes. According to one of the parents, aid is normally provided to developing countries to upgrade the standard of education and productivity of the citizens, so when these citizens migrate to countries like Australia, they take with them their valuable skills and expertise. This view basically sums up the opinions of parents who saw aid as encouraging the out-migration of skilled people, even though this may not be the original aim of aid projects.

The school manager also said that providing aid in the education sector would ensure that people's skills and education was upgraded before they migrate to the donors' countries. He believed that while in the past people migrated to countries like Australia where their educational levels were upgraded, today skills level are enhanced before they emigrate. Furthermore, he suggested that by aiding our education system, donor countries are able to channel their educational ideologies to our education system. According to him, this would result in the involvement of more expatriates in reforming our education system.

The teachers interviewed expressed similar concerns saying that because aid is now essential for the development of our country and the education sector, as recipients we often do not have the choice of accepting or rejecting aid. According to the teachers, aid always came with strings attached which may be stated at first or become apparent at the end of the project. They claimed that the aid donors have a lot of say in most school and educational reforms and therefore they have a lot of influence. The management process and the curriculum process are currently being reformed through aid projects and most of these reforms are planned by consultants who are contracted by the donors. This according to the teachers is a requirement of aid and it undermines the involvement of locals in their own education system. According to teacher 4, teacher training institutions are being reformed through aid projects, and the benchmarks for such reforms are decided by consultants from donor countries. According to this teacher, the result would be voluntary migration of teachers to donor countries such as Australia. Another teacher (T 6), who is the head of vocational section at the school, thought that the department is

undergoing a lot of changes under FESP. Now the focus of teachers' performance is to keep the donors happy and regularly report project results directly to the donors. According to T6 donors rather than the Ministry sets the benchmarks for improving the vocational departments. She expressed that the donors are channeling their ideas in the overall reforms in the vocational section of the ministry, and while this may be good for the donor country it may not be in the best interest of individual schools. “ *We have a Pacific networking apart from the global, so Fiji is the hub of the Pacific, so Australia and New Zealand have to depend on Fiji, so when they give aid , you know its like you give something so you expect something back*” (EO 2).

He added that with reference to aid projects in the education sector, we need funds for development so we must accept the strings attached to have a win win situation for the donor and the recipient. The officer was of the view that since we are accepting the conditions of aid at times “*there is no control from us over the programmes in the schools*” (EO 2). The ministry has to respect the views of the donors and therefore and officials may need to suppress their own views on the development of our education system. According to the officer, this was a severe limitation of aid projects as the views of the locals should be important. He also stated that the presence of consultants in most aid projects is also limiting them in making important decisions on various aspects of the aid projects. Consultants make decisions on many things including funding, recruitment of teachers and advisors, purchase of equipment, and other related decisions. However, involving overseas consultants provides the expertise which the educational planners and professionals in Fiji may not have.

The pressure to sustain projects is another issue in relation to many aid projects. One education official (EO2) was of the view that after the donors hand over the aid projects to the ministry and/or the individual schools, the funding stops, but the burden of sustaining the project remains. This often leads to extra effort by the ministry and the individual schools to find more resources to sustain the aid projects. This according to the officer is quite expensive if the project had provided for major physical infrastructure that will need continual maintenance. The repair of vehicles and other equipment like computers also becomes the responsibility of the ministry and individual schools upon conclusion of aid projects. EO 2 said that although the assistance is well structured, after thinking through, especially keeping in mind sustainability of projects, some projects may not be sustained by recipients because of various problems. *“For example in Papua New Guinea they (AusAID) gave money, after five years the program just died out because of abuse of money”* (EO 2).

Another education officer (EO1) claimed that there were no major strings attached to their aid programs as all the aid projects (under EU mostly) utilize local ideas for inception and the implementation of aid projects. The officer said that Fiji, as a developing nation, does not directly benefit the EU. However, a major string attached with EU aid is the need for compliance by recipient countries to the Cotonou Agreement (EU: 2000). All countries which receive aid from the EU have signed the Cotonou Agreement and have pledged to follow the conditions of the agreement. One major condition of the agreement is that the country has to have just and fair governance. The

officer also stated that although EU does not have too many conditions for the implementation of its aid projects recipients are expected to be responsible for the sustainability of the projects after the EU hands over the projects to the local authorities. He said that most of the evaluation of the projects is assigned to local authorities and the EU does not push through its own ideas in educational projects, but gives more consideration to the views of local counterparts. The officer, however, agreed that expatriates from European nations are involved at the managerial level in some aid projects (such as FESP and FREP) and are prominently involved in educational planning for secondary schools, including the school under focus in this study.

#### **4.10 Local participation**

Local participation in aid projects was seen as important by many participants. Most teachers who were interviewed stated that since the planning in the education sector is a top down process, most of the stakeholders, including teachers and school boards, are often not included when discussing the issues pertaining to aid. They expressed concern that often local involvement is negligible in most aid projects and most of the planning is done by consultants contracted by the aid donors. According to some teachers, if local participation was allowed in aid projects it was normally for the implementation of the projects by the teachers and the administrators of the school, whereas the plans were devised with the help of people higher up the ladder. *“Local people know the environment, looking at this we should have local consultants, for example the school*



*manager who knows about the school should be a consultant if aid is given to this school” (T 2)*

The Principal expressed similar sentiments reporting that they were not invited to be part of the planning process before the aid was provided for upgrading vocational facilities. According to the Principal the school was chosen together with others that had office technology facilities. He pointed out that there were other areas which needed assistance more urgently, but they were not invited to be part of the initial planning process of FESP. He would prefer more involvement by the school at decision making and project design level. Referring to the office technology aid project, he said that the most of the consultants who come to evaluate our AusAID funded office technology section are not aware of the problems faced by the section and suggests that aid agencies through the ministry should implement procedures whereby the school and its stakeholders are able to give their views on what happens. *“Aid projects should be based on what the schools need rather than selecting projects for the school and trying to come out with positive evaluation after implementation of the projects”* (school Principal)

The Principal believed that if local participation in aid projects was maximized than the sustainability of these projects would be assured and that was why most projects fail because the implementers of the projects did not allow wider participation in the planning process.

The parents were also concerned about the lack of local participation, and wanted to be consulted while planning aid projects. *“The donor should allow submissions from the community on how to use the aid funds”* says P 3, while P 2 expressed that

*there should be independent body who needs to mind the needs of the community and consult with donors for contribution of aid projects ... the government should not get involved between the schools and the donors but the independent body should correspond on behalf of the donors and the recipients (P2).*

Teachers too were of the view that schools should be more involved and consulted before implementing large aid projects in the country. *“I think the schools should be asked to lay out projects they want, looking at the teacher student ratio, and the facilities we have and based on the needs of the local community”* ( T 4). Teacher 5 was of the view that forums like the Education Summit and the Principals’ Conference were good avenues for the aid donors to seek local views through consultative process with individuals who have been in the field for many years.

The education officer (EO1) attached to the EU said that most of the aid projects implemented by the EU gave prominence to local views during the drafting process. He claimed that meetings with the MOE, and the Education Commission Report (Fiji Ministry of Education: 1999), were used as a basis for formulating the aid projects. The implementation of the projects is normally overseen by local counterparts which includes the teachers and administrators. The education officer clarified that most of the funds are budgeted for awarding tenders and purchasing materials from local organizations. The

officer did not specify the level up to which local participation is encouraged within the education system to gain views of various stakeholders in aid projects but, as claimed earlier most teachers and parents have raised the concern that local participation in the planning process of aid projects does not extend to the schools or the communities.

The education officer (EO 2) attached to AusAID stated that since aid projects are run in phases, and the consultants are not always around, the local counterparts are in charge. For example, the monitoring of projects is done by locals. The consultants also rely on the locals, such as teachers and education officers, to provide them feedback on projects. The education officer claimed that the AusAID run programme could be handed over to locals in the next 2 years. As far as the planning of the aid projects is concerned, there was little local participation in AusAID projects, mainly because the locals might not have the skills and expertise to plan and initiate aid projects. According to the officer, local counterparts are being trained in all the aspects of initiating and implementing aid projects, so that they could be ready to take over new projects in the future. *“Now AusAID has confidence in their local counterparts to run aid projects but some involvement of consultants will be there”* (EO 2). He revealed that he will be taking over a new aid project in few months time and this project will initially generate views from the teachers and other stakeholders before being implemented.

#### **4.11 Need for improvements in Aid relations**

All participants expressed their concern regarding aid relations in the education sector and most interviewees expressed views on how to improve aid relations. There was general consensus about the lack of local participation in the consultation process of aid projects. *“We need locals to be involved in the consultation process... the dominating effect of donors should be got rid of and the ideas on aid projects should come from the ministry, government, schools and the community”* (school Principal).

According to the parents, more community involvement was needed in the aid process as the commitment of the community is vital to sustaining aid projects. They claimed that the aid donors need to go themselves and see what the problems are in schools and if aid is provided they should check how the money is utilized. They also expressed that the school management boards should play an active role in the consultation process, an idea that the school manager shares. He said that *“the ministry should discuss the aid projects with the management to try and see what the school needs are.”* (School manager). He also claimed that some aid projects cannot be sustained by schools because there was no real need for it in the first place rather, the project was initiated by the ministry and the donors. The students also believed that before making any policies about the implementation of aid projects, the donors as well as the MOE, should consult individual schools in order to find out the educational needs of the school and the students. *“Aid should be given where it is needed”* (S 2).

The teachers were of the view that in order to improve aid relations and to ensure that aid projects are sustained, teachers need to be involved in the planning process as well as the implementation process of aid projects. Teacher 4 said that the initiation of aid projects should come from the school and not from the MOE as some schools may not adapt to some aid projects and this may give rise to sustainability problems. Teacher 3 claimed that local participation was critical for aid projects and the *“community can be used to provide free labor when building infrastructure”* (T 3). He further pointed out that there are many people in the community, who would volunteer to help especially in relation to improving the infrastructure in schools, rather than hiring expensive contractors, local talents can be utilized in certain phases of the project and this according to him would help improve aid relations between the community and the aid donors.

Teacher 5 also had the view that local participation was essential for sustainability of aid projects; therefore the participation of the stakeholders needs to be encouraged. *“The MOE just writes to us for the changes to occur overnight”* (T 5). Referring to the changes made to the secondary curriculum by projects funded by AusAID and the EU, T5 said that this was *“because the donors think that whatever worked for them will also work for us”* (T5). The teacher also claimed that there were many problems associated with the implementation of curriculum reforms in individual schools as there was lack of capacity to successfully implement them. She further emphasized the fact that since the donors do not involve teachers and other educators in the planning process of aid projects, the aid projects usually fail because of lack of interest by teachers and the school in sustaining the projects. Teacher 5 also believed that in order to improve aid relations,

communication between different stakeholders need to be improved, such as letting stakeholders know about procedures that schools have to follow in order to get assistance from an aid project. According to the teacher many schools are not aware of what aid programs are available and many times schools are not asked to apply but instead the MOE selects the schools. According to teacher 5 the MOE should organize a method of informing the schools of upcoming aid projects so that schools can express their interest in being part of a project. She suggested that *“Principals can be informed through conferences as well as through special gazettes (from the MOE), provided the aid donors want information to be published”* (T 5). Such sentiments were also expressed by parents who believe that there should be more and better communication between the donors and the would-be recipients. They were of the view that many schools lose out on aid because they are not informed about upcoming aid projects.

Accountability was another major factor affecting aid relations in Fiji. According to the parents interviewed, improvement in accountability of aid funds would lead to better aid relations and also the achievement of the aims of aid projects. *“There should be a policy for donors to check if the money is used in the proper way”* (P 2). *“Some funds could have been misused and some fund would have been distributed with biasness”* (P 3). Parent 3 claimed that in the past most aid projects were biased towards certain schools. Therefore, the need for transparency in choosing schools. The parent further believed that aid money is often misused by some schools leading to failure but if the money was given to schools that are known to be more accountable, projects would still continue. According to parent 2 *“any money that comes for the education system, should be*

*distributed equitably for all to benefit” (P2).* He further commented that the ministry should encourage submissions from all schools before deciding which schools will be given aid. The Ministry should also see how previous aid money was utilized by different schools before giving them more aid. *“We know in Fiji some schools receive large amounts of money every year but no progress is made, even to the infrastructure” (P 2).* Teachers also claimed that accountability of aid funds had to be increased in order to have better aid relations.

*There has to be greater accountability and transparency of aid money if aid projects are to succeed and gain the interest of all the stakeholders. If there is misuse of funds then some stakeholders may not be enthusiastic enough to fully cooperate in aid projects (T2)*

Teacher 6 suggested that special institutes need to be constructed with aid money rather than providing funds for individual schools. *“A special institute needs to be provided for students who move out of our vocational section for tertiary institutes” (T 6).* She also thought that aid relations between donors and recipients would improve if the resources provided were centrally located. The donors would be able to keep better track of funds and the projects can be easily evaluated.

The school manager also had views about selection criteria for the distribution of aid to schools and agreed with the need for transparency. He said that although the schools come under the MOE, donors were the ones who set out the criteria for selection of schools and other institutions. *“Aid agencies should not differentiate between schools*

*when providing aid as all schools have their own needs”, he said. He further added that, “If some schools in the rural area do not have facilities it may also be due to the attitude of the people managing the schools, while other rural schools have adequate facilities”* (school manager). He also claimed that aid donors should carry out an assessment of school needs and why some schools couldn’t afford appropriate facilities. He referred to past projects where some schools which have been funded through aid have slipped back to their old status after the conclusion of the projects because the schools did not have funds to sustain these projects. The school manager suggested that all the factors about a school or organization have to be taken into account before selecting schools to take part in aid projects. Students are supportive of this view. They expressed that because of the selection criteria most students don’t benefit from aid programs. The students said that aid donors should consider the needs of students and their background and provide aid accordingly, especially in relation to school facilities and infrastructure.

An education officer (EO 2) suggested that the MOE brings about changes within the education system that would help improve aid relations with the donors. He said *“Some of the aid projects suffer from teething problems such as very slow to start, therefore the issue of training the people to look after the projects should be re-examined for better sustainability of projects”*. He had the view that currently most aid projects were implemented in the schools by teachers and administrators who have not been trained to implement aid projects. Most projects fail because the people who are in charge of the projects lack skills in starting off and sustaining projects. *“One area I think we need to look into is up-skilling of our teachers because it will help in the sustainability of*



*projects*” (EO 2). He also claimed that where aid was provided “*most teachers do not know why is a particular aid given and they need explanations about the structure of the aid projects*” (EO 2). At the end, there would be more awareness of and improvement in aid relations.

#### **4.12 Summary**

There was general agreement among participants that the phenomenon of globalisation was evident in Fiji in the education sector through the impact of aid in the school under study. The school was seen as being influenced by aid and different individuals expressed their perceptions on how foreign aid affects the school and its stakeholders. Beneficial impacts of globalisation and aid include introduction to new technology, and educational reforms, both were seen as helping prepare students for the global job market. Most participants saw the loss of culture and way of life, as well as loss of skilled workers as prominent disadvantages of global forces.

The participants admitted that the Fiji education sector benefits a lot from foreign aid, especially through FESP and FREP programs. The school in this study directly benefits from the FESP program as well as from other national aid projects in terms of capacity building and gaining access to teaching and learning materials prepared by the MOE under aid projects. The stakeholders of the school agreed that the curriculum and the management process in the school (as well as other schools) were affected by various aid projects. The prominent roles bestowed upon the donors and their consultants allow them

to be very influential in the educational planning process, and this according to many participants, tend to undermine their own role in the school system. More local participation should be encouraged to foster better aid relations and to ensure the sustainability of aid projects. Participants made suggestions about how to improve aid relations in Fiji education system, in order to ensure that benefits trickle down to the school in this study. The next chapter discusses the main findings of this study in the context of the research questions. This will be done according to the themes that emerged from the views of the participants.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION**

This chapter discusses the views presented by the participants. Since the present research is classified as a phenomenological study, the views of the researcher are also expressed in this section in order to critically analyze the study results, in light of existing literature.

### **5.1 The globalisation phenomenon**

Azad (2004) had the view that the phenomenon of globalisation would mean a more competitive and deregulated educational system, modeled after free market, but with more pressure on it to assure that the next generation of workers were prepared for an amorphous job market of 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is evident from the views of the participants that the phenomenon of globalisation has far reaching effects on the livelihood and the educational processes of individuals and communities in Fiji. Teachers saw student students as being vulnerable to the impact of globalisation, especially through changing fashion and dressing styles, as well as ways of behavior. The teachers attributed these to the influence of international mass media and the constant advertising of foreign products in Fiji. The teachers also expressed concern that students were increasingly exposed to mass media, such as TV that tend to promote the way of life in developed countries, and enticed the students to believe that these were better than what they have in their own country.

Technology, according to most individuals interviewed, was seen as a major influence of globalisation on the educational process in Fiji. The school manager was of the view that new technologies attracted not only students but also teachers and parents. Teachers viewed the introduction of new technology in the school as a step towards improved teaching process; hence the demand for the introduction of new technology for pedagogical reasons was increasing day by day. These, according to the teachers, might not directly improve results but will certainly improve the delivery of lessons. The teachers however were concerned that students would not be able to adapt to the new technology. Furthermore, new technologies such as internet and computers were quite expensive in Fiji, and too much emphasis on technology may put undue pressure on parents and the management of schools. There was also the problem of social inequity among teachers and students if some parents were not able to provide new technology for their children. Aid projects, to some extent provided the funds needed for the introduction of the new technologies (such as computers), but stakeholders often ended up having to bear some costs in purchasing and maintaining these technologies. Recurrent costs like electricity and water also cases increased as a result of such new introductions, as this has to be borne by the local school and its communities.

Fiji, as a developing country, is quite vulnerable to impacts of globalization, especially in education. *“The issue of education is not only a national issue but a global issue, so overseas countries are mostly calling the shots”* (EO 2). Similar sentiments were stated by Tuinamuana (2005) who said that although local institutions and governments might appear to have autonomy in educational policy formulation and practice, international

trends have had a wide-ranging impact on peripheral systems of education. The influences may eventuate in different forms, aid being a major determinate. These influences were often seen as unwarranted by educational planners because of a lack of expertise in reforming our educational system to meet the global demands.

Most educational benchmarks are set with overseas standards in mind. The Fiji curriculum is being reformed at various levels in order for students to achieve qualifications which are acceptable in the global market. The teachers at the school under study saw current curriculum reforms as the MOE trying to cater for global demands. Students also stated that their choices of school subjects was affected by a judgment of their opportunities in the global market, leading them to make choices related to the job market not only in Fiji but in other countries . All individuals who were interviewed believed that Fiji had to adapt to the influences of globalisation and should have an education system to nurture global citizens. The teachers and the Principal of the school emphasized the need to accept changes brought about by globalisation and attempt to utilize global influences to become dynamic citizens of the global community. This view is consistent with Yabaki (2004) who expressed the need for changes in the education system that would help students to be viable in the global market.

It is not easy for people in developing countries to resist global influences because of their dependence on other countries for their livelihood. They can however tread carefully when adapting to global changes as some of the influences may be detrimental to their way of life. In Fiji it is not an option to turn a blind eye towards global trends as

we need to educate the citizens to adapt in the global market. Tuinamuana (2005) also expressed this point saying:

The international context of education has changed significantly over the last decade, and in today's more globalised world it is no longer possible to ignore the effects of global macro socio-economic changes on both national and local education systems ( p: 199).

However, the education system should not accept all global influences with open arms as we have to conserve our integrity as a Pacific society. As with all phenomena, globalisation has benefits and disadvantages for those who are voluntarily or involuntarily exposed to its influences. Most of the responses on the positive and the negative impacts of globalisation were received in the context of the education sector in Fiji, in particular in context of the school that was the focus of the study. The incorporation of technology in the pedagogical process is seen as a positive impact of globalisation by all participants although there was no mention of any evidence that suggest that incorporation of the latest technology would result in improved teaching and learning. The teachers believed that the introduction of latest technology like Internet in the school, has led to students having a more investigative approach to learning. It must however be noted that none of the latest technology like computers and Internet is a common feature of all secondary schools, therefore improved learning outcomes cannot entirely be attributed to introduction of new ICTs. The manager of the school together with the parents believed that the introduction of new technology in the school would enhance the student's capabilities and would help them adapt to the local and global job

market. On the other hand most of the interviewees agreed that the latest technology may not be readily available or affordable by all stakeholders in the Fiji school system.

The changes to the school curriculum was considered as a positive impact of globalisation, as students are being exposed to new trends followed by more developed countries. The students and the teachers believed that a flexible curriculum would result in more dynamic citizens with multiple professional capabilities. The introduction and promotion of the rights of the child in the curriculum was seen as a positive impact of global trends, as more children of this country are being educated to express themselves in school.

The brain drain is often seen as a necessary evil associated with globalisation phenomenon, but teacher 6 thought it was good because school leavers can move and work outside of Fiji. He believed that many individuals today have more career choices as the connectedness between countries increased. The opportunities available in other countries may be beneficial for these individual but may not be as good for Fiji who would lose its skilled people and professionals, a trend that is now common with hundreds of educated and skilled people leaving for greener pastures every year. However, as one of the educational officials reminded us, this brain drain may be detrimental for the country, but on other hand, remittance is a big income earner as well.

Globalisation was seen by the participants as contributing to the erosion of cultural and traditional values, and the decline in moral values among school students. While it is

understandable that globalisation may be eroding values like respect for elders and people in authority one must also realize that if we follow educational trends from other countries in our schools, we are bound to see changes in students' behavior. The students are exposed to behavior patterns of students in developed countries, especially through mass media, and they are bound to imitate this behavior as a result.

## **5.2 Foreign aid impact**

Foreign aid was collectively perceived by participants as funds received by the recipient countries for the development of facilities and other infrastructure. Foreign aid is viewed in this study as a manifestation of the phenomenon of globalisation. Foreign aid has been increasing over the years due to increasing interdependence among nations. Today many Pacific nations, including Fiji are partially dependant on foreign aid for political and social survival. However, as aid money flows into developing countries, some products of aid tends to flow back to donor countries, thus fueling ever increasing phenomenon of globalisation.

According to the views obtained from participants in this study, educational aid is a necessity in Fiji, as without aid, the education system may not be able to reform itself and improve educational efficiency or effectiveness (Maglen&Throsby: 1988). Education reforms in Fiji are aimed at meeting global demands and as Sanga (2005) claims educational aid is now an integral part of education in the Pacific Island Countries. Participants confirmed this view as they too made the point that aid has become a vital



component of Fiji's education system. We are not be able to afford extensive educational reforms hence we are susceptible to aid programs if we are to produce a better equipped work force.

According to Maglen & Throsby (1988), no country outside the oil-rich group has achieved high rates of economic growth without having a well-educated workforce, a well developed education system and high levels of educational participation. If Fiji does not develop, we may be pushed into isolation. According to the education officers interviewed, aid is a vital component of education especially in relation to the development of infrastructure and other facilities in schools is concerned. They stressed the point that the government and the all schools on their own may find it impossible to update their facilities in order to meet the current educational demands. Similar opinions were echoed by the school manager and the Principal, confirming the fact that aid is a vital component in the development and maintenance of our educational system.

Sanga (2005:17) had stressed that "external assistance, as aid and loans, has been significant to educational developments in the Forum Pacific Islands countries and is likely to remain so in the foreseeable future". The views of participants suggest that Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan and even China who provide aid to Fiji, were specifically focusing on up grading our education system through aid projects. Organizations such as the European Union and the United Nations are also very actively involved in aid projects in the Fiji education sector. The prominence of aid projects in our education system was emphasized by the participants as one of the major impacts of

globalisation and they too agreed with Sanga (2005) that this situation would continue in the foreseeable future.

All donors have their own objectives for providing aid to Fiji and the objectives vary depending on overall country or organizational strategic plans. The education officers interviewed stated that countries like Australia have an obligation to provide aid to Fiji but also because they may benefit through the development of various sectors in Fiji. The teachers were very skeptical about the aims of aid donors and most of them were of the view that aid is normally provided in order for the donors to have direct gains from the recipient countries. Similar comments were echoed by the school manager, who believed that donors encourage migration from the developing countries by upgrading the education of their citizens. This point is debatable since aid may not be seen as a major factor which contributes to brain drain. Although this may be true in the context of the school and its community, there are other aspects of globalisation which may serve as a better catalyst for encouraging the out-migration of skilled people, even though the political and the social situation in the country may push people to migrate. According to the school Principal, donors have genuine reasons behind providing aid to Fiji, especially since development in Fiji will contribute to the development of the Pacific region. As deduced from the views of the education officers, most donors want to see an improvement to the social status of citizens in Fiji by upgrading the education of the citizens through aid projects. Some aid donors, such as the EU, specifically target rural development as Fiji has a large percentage of its population living in rural areas.

The findings of this study show that aid donors may also have ulterior motives, since all the donors stand to benefit to a certain extent from their aid projects, especially when it comes to reputation and money. Most donors tend to utilize most of aid funds in their own countries, to pay for technical and human resource needs, especially consultants. A discussion of the aid projects under the EU and AusAID and their direct and indirect impact upon the school under study follows.

### **5.3 Aid under EU**

The EU is currently actively involved in the education sector in Fiji and, according to Education Officer 1, the aid projects under EU are mainly focusing on development of educational facilities in the rural area. The aid was initiated by the EU after studying the recommendations of the Education Commission Report 2000 (Ministry of Education: 2000). So far the EU has been involved in the Fiji Rural Education Development Program (FREPD) and is also responsible for a component of the Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP). The main aim of the EU educational aid is to upgrade rural education therefore; the aid projects are mainly aiming to building and maintaining infrastructure in the rural schools. Other than infrastructure the EU has also been working at providing access for students to schools and for schools to the headquarters in Suva. This is a very important step towards improving rural educational facilities because most of the rural schools suffer because of smallness and remoteness . The EU has provided communication equipment, vehicles and boats to improve the transportation and communication between the schools and the Ministry of Education.

Another important area that the EU is focusing its attention on is the development of human resources. *“MOE officials, including senior education officers, are also being trained to better manage school resources and focus on accountability”* (EO 1). Human resources development usually make up the bulk of capital in any educational process, therefore the development of human resources will definitely ensure progress for the educational process in Fiji; provided the people trained have access and the will to utilize their training to enhance productivity of the sector. It is encouraging to note that the EU also provides funds to non governmental organizations, which provide some services to the education sector. The project mentioned in the results regarding aid given to the Fiji Nurses Association to produce nutritional handbooks for the schools may not have direct impact on examination results but will help enhance the holistic development of the school child. The school under focus in this study has also taken heed of the guidelines provided by the EU in relation to planning and implementation of project relating to the implementation of nutritional guides in schools. It is a positive sign that the locals are given some responsibilities to share in projects, but whether local stakeholders are consulted is still a question. Most of the locals involved in EU projects are senior education officials, who may not be actually aware of the needs in individual schools. More diverse selection of local counterparts to include Principals, teachers, parents, community and board members, may lead to a more efficient and sustainable projects. The EU projects have one major string attached to it, and that is that the host country must abide by the Cotonou agreement, which demands political accountability before receiving any EU aid.

## 5.4 Aid under AusAID

According to Education Officer 2, AusAID provides assistance to the Fiji education sector to upgrade the standards of education here, in order to bring it up to be comparable to Australian standards. AusAID is currently providing aid for the education sector under the second component of the Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP). *“AusAID has given out tenders through small companies and the program is managed by consultants from Australia”* (EO 2). Unlike aid projects under the EU, most educational projects under AusAID are managed by consultants, (such as those from ACIL in Melbourne), Australia. The consultant firm normally hires consultants from Australia to conduct feasibility studies, plan and monitor the aid projects. Puamau (2005) had earlier stated that there is minimal involvement of locals in AusAID projects, except in the implementation stage. Participants agreed and pointed to the way AusAID projects gave prominence to the views of consultants rather than the local recipients. Some teachers expressed concerns about some national education reforms that were initiated and implemented under AusAID projects without proper consultation among stakeholders except personnel from the MOE. An education officer interviewed justified this process of selecting locals, saying that there was not enough local expertise available in Fiji to manage large educational aid projects. This may be true, but if this was the case then we need to start the training of locals to manage future educational aid projects. According to the officer there are plans in the future to hand over aid projects to locals but they need to be trained first.

AusAID is currently focusing on upgrading the Technical Vocational Educational Training (TVET) section of the MOE in order to enhance the training of skilled personnel in the country. This project is currently being implemented in schools which already have vocational training facilities. The school in the present study received aid from the AusAID for further development to its Office Technology section of the vocational department. According to the Principal the school did not really want aid but was provided by the AusAID through MOE anyway, in order to specifically upgrade office technology facilities. According to the school manager, while the school appreciates the aid, there were other areas of need in the school that merited attention. The manager was of the view that AusAID needed to consult with all the stakeholders, especially at the school level, before identifying areas where aid projects would address. While the views of the manager are understandable, most of the aid projects under AusAID take into account the national educational plan and do not necessarily cater for the needs of individual schools. Nevertheless, the idea of putting money where it is needed most needs to be emphasized. The aid project at the school under study saw approximately \$40,000 worth of computers and other equipment provided to the school to be utilized by approximately 20 students per year. The vocational teachers thought that the project offered better opportunities for students who might not have been able to complete their academic studies. It also provides skilled labor to some local industries which need employees with office technology skills. AusAID is also undertaking similar projects in Fiji schools which have existing vocational facilities.

## **5.5 Benefits of Aid**

The participants in the study emphasized the fact that the education sector benefits a lot from foreign aid. This notion is consistent with Puamau (2005) who, as reported in Chapter 2 asserted that aid projects have assisted the Fiji education sector greatly, especially in infrastructure development and curriculum reforms. The school under focus in this study has benefited from various aid projects over the years. According to participants, Fiji education needed assistance of foreign aid projects in order to realize the aims of educational reforms. All the teachers as well as the school Principal stressed that aid was necessary for the education sector to sustain changes in-order to adapt to global trends, making aid, as Sanga (2005) had stated, an integral part of our educational process. In a developing country such as Fiji the education sector receives a lot of funding mainly because the education sector is seen as the backbone of economic prosperity in the country. The education officers emphasized the fact that MOE was not able to initiate and/or implement educational reforms on its own especially when the country is experiencing a difficult period in its economic development. However, in the same breath they stated that in order for the citizens of this country to be in par with global trends we needed to have educational reforms, which can transform our educational structures and processes in order to meet the demands of the global market economy. This makes aid something from which we can benefit, but it also means that we can become dependant upon it.

The students and the parents that were interviewed also considered aid to be very beneficial for educational purposes. Although some parents expressed concern regarding the inequitable way in which aid is distributed, they still believed that aid projects implemented at higher levels in the education system will eventually have trickle down effects and will benefit students at the school in the study. Most students and parents did not have any knowledge of direct benefits of aid projects but they too expressed the view that national aid projects should have some benefits for individual students. As mentioned earlier, the school under study received approximately \$40,000 worth of aid from AusAID and benefited only 20 students directly, each year. The school manager acknowledged that without aid funds provided to the MOE most privately managed schools would not be able to sustain changes to the education sector; hence extra funds via educational aid are crucial.

The increasing incorporation of new technology into the educational process attributed to aid projects by the teachers, has served to improve the teaching and learning process in the school. . Although it is difficult to directly credit classroom dynamics to aid, teachers believed that there was a link between aid projects, technology input and improved teaching and learning. Teachers also expressed the view that the curriculum reforms taking place in the secondary levels were beneficial for teachers as well as students. Most of the reforms were aimed at encouraging more outcome-based educational approaches rather than an examination- oriented approach. Parents too agreed with the views of Yabaki (2004), who believed that students should be kept abreast with global educational trends and the latest technology available in more developed countries, so



that they can attain education that is viable in the global market. Aid for the purposes of development and enhancement of sports was another area that students said they had benefited from.

## **5.6 Reliance on Aid**

The participants shared the view that Fiji, as a developing country should not be totally dependant on aid for the development and maintenance of the various sectors in the country. While aid is essential in the education sector, the MOE is not totally dependant on aid projects for its operations as it has its own budget allocation from the government. Fiji had one of the strongest economies amongst other Pacific Island Countries, and aid contributes only about 4% of the GDP (AusAID: 2003). Although the country is not totally dependant on aid projects, most people in the different sectors in the country are reliant on aid projects for various reforms and development. This is certainly true in the education sector where reliance on aid projects for educational reforms is quite evident. The school manager stated that his school was not at all aid dependant and was functioning well over the years without much help from the aid projects.

Knapman (1986) had said that if there was no prospect of growth without aid, and there was no prospect of reducing aid reliance as a result of growth, then what exactly was aid doing? This is a very complex question as there are numerous reasons for the presence of aid projects in any country. A possible reason may have to do with the fact that many recipients of aid are becoming reliant on aid for the development of various sectors. As

mentioned earlier, many aid projects in Fiji are planned and implemented by overseas donors and their consultants, who, sometimes overlook national priority areas in favor of their own priorities and interests. This seems to be the case in this study where aid was provided to the vocational section in the school under focus, yet according to the school manager the aid could have been better utilized in other priority areas. The manager also pointed out that there are many schools in Fiji who receive aid every year but very little progress is evident in these schools, compared to those who do not receive aid and yet seems to be making good progress. Aid assisted schools may not be a consequence of the needs expressed by people but a result of inequitable aid distribution criteria, which reflect donors' interests in these schools.

It is important to keep in mind that outsiders can not 'fix' countries- but they can help local people overcome some of the constraints they face and achieve their own objectives (AusAID:2003). In the educational context, it is important for schools to prioritize their needs before applying and accepting aid as receiving aid may not produce a sense of reliance. Needs should be carefully scrutinized so that we are not burdened by aid projects causing reliance on more aid to sustain them. The idea of reliance on aid will be discussed later.

## **5.7 Impact of aid on curriculum and school management**

From the views obtained from various individuals it is evident that most recent curriculum reforms in Fiji secondary schools have eventuated through aid projects. The

views expressed by the participants were consistent with views of Tuinamuana (2005) that the curriculum and the administration in Fiji schools are being interfered with through aid projects. While in some cases aid is provided to execute the reforms, in others the reforms may have been a consequence of the aid provided. *“As aid donors have a lot of say, they influence the government of the day to accept the policies of the donors when accepting aid”* (school principal).

Most teachers echoed similar sentiments emphasizing the over involvement of aid donors in the curriculum development process. The education officers interviewed also acknowledged that most of the curriculum reforms in Fiji education were initiated by aid agencies based upon the recommendations in local reports such as the Education Commission Report 2000 (MOE, 2000). They were also of the view that donors were very influential in the planning as well as the implementation of many other educational reforms.

According to teachers, the secondary curriculum had become more out-come based rather than teacher centered, and they believed that this was good for the holistic development of the child. However, there were some inconsistencies one of which relates to the uniform approach to the curriculum and all stakeholders. For example, when the curriculum is reformed teachers are not adequately prepared for the change. In some cases the reforms are implemented uniformly but not all schools may be able to afford resources needed to implement the reforms. For example, there have been inconsistencies in curriculum reforms, especially in relation to the introduction of a new internal

assessment system at Form 3 level in secondary schools. According to the teachers, the system allows for a better pedagogical approach but tends to burden teachers who have large workloads and in some cases schools are not able to afford the materials required for internal assessment. Furthermore, the teachers, who are the implementers of the new system, were not extensively consulted while plans were devised for the initiation and the implementation of the new system. This may lead to the eventually to the lack of sustainability of the project as the ownership of these reforms did not belong to those implementing the project; teachers merely followed instructions from MOE and aid agencies.

The study findings also pointed to the dependence of Fiji education on outside expertise. As Puamau asserted, “There is over-reliance on outside expertise in aid projects and programmes” (Puamau: 2005). The irony is in the fact that overseas experts initiate curriculum reforms that are meant for local use. Many reforms in the education sector so far have shown elements of foreign curricula being incorporated into the Fiji curriculum and passed on to teachers to implement in Fiji classrooms. While it is essential to keep up with global educational trends, it is also important to note that what has worked in other countries may not necessarily work for Fiji. Students may score higher marks because of the introduction of internal assessment as a result of an aid project but this is not necessarily a reliable indicator of good citizenship. Similarly, millions of dollars have been poured into reforms of vocational school subjects but it is too early to find out if this is leading to improved quality of education and eventually to the enhancement of the economy. However, some teachers are optimistic that these reforms will have

positive effects on education as well as the economy even though there are few positive signs regarding these projects. But according to the school manager, some of these curriculum reforms have taken place without much consultation with teachers or the school management; therefore he did not anticipate that the project would be very sustainable. As for teacher training, an education officer said that teacher training facilities were also undergoing reforms that were in line with the policies of aid donors who are funding the reforms. This too had a high degree of donor influence.

The school management process has also been affected by the aid projects. Aid funded projects tend to open the door for donors to have a certain degree of involvement in the decision making process of schools. Most aid projects may be said to 'belong' to donors until the completion of the allocated period or before the project is handed over to individual schools. The manager of the school in the present study confirmed this with reference to the aid provided by AusAID to the office technology section of the school. He pointed out that the donors had free access via the MOE to the school and the decision making process regarding the office technology section. The manager emphasized the fact that even though they were the custodians of the school, they were hardly consulted on matters regarding the office technology section. The administrators, who report to senior education officials, were also subjected to influence from overseas consultants or donor agency officials.

While there should be a certain level of influence which can be entertained from aid experts in the school system, they may, at times contribute to conflicts amongst

stakeholders regarding the ownership of aid projects. Some of the individuals interviewed in the present study referred to donor influence in the management of the school and how this might have been the result of undue pressure put on school management by the central planning authorities. There were other reforms taking place in the school that were not aid-related, but for which the school management was responsible. Additional responsibilities arising from aid projects therefore, affect other developments in the schools. Because aid was allocated to the school without the school applying for it, more pressure is put on the school board to eventually be responsible for sustaining the project.

There was evidence of managerialism in schools because of aid. Tuinamuana (2005) had claimed that the educational plans devised recently measure the educational outcomes in terms of economic benefits and have a strong sense of the new managerialism in them. The more humanistic concerns of education were therefore placed after economic concerns. Most aid projects aim to improve the educational standards of students in terms of academic outcomes, which was usually seen as important for economic growth in the country. The humanistic values were not targeted by the projects. The education stakeholders of the school under study were concerned with the new managerial system that targets achievement only in terms of academic outputs and not in values and moral instruction for students. Teachers and administrators often utilize much of their time trying to achieve goals that are set for individual project components, ignoring their social responsibilities to the child.

## 5.8 Conditionality in aid relations

Strings attached in aid relations may not necessarily be defined as ill effects in aid relations, but are simply the conditions of the relations or in some cases the conditions arising from aid relations between the donors and the recipients. Most study participants expressed the view that all aid projects have conditions, or 'strings attached'. Some of these conditions may be a consequence of the agreement between the recipient and the donors while others may arise during the implementation of the aid projects. According to the school Principal, recipients of aid rarely consider the strings attached when accepting aid. *"For us developing countries we take things with open hands, whenever the carrot is dangled in front of us, without knowing the negative impacts and the underlying reasons for aid"* (School Principal).

This view is consistent with the views of Nabobo (2003) that we normally tend to accept whatever is handed to us with open arms. The aid packages we accept with open arms tend to have conditions attached to them that may have a long term effect on our resources. The education sector has received numerous aid packages over the years and according to the teachers some reforms under aid projects had a lot of conditions attached to them. The involvement of overseas experts in the reform process has been stated as one the major strings attached. Donors spend large sums of money on bringing in overseas experts while existing capacities are undeveloped (Witoelar: 2006). This notion was supported by the teachers who were interviewed, who believed that overseas experts are brought in so that some influence of the donor countries are brought to bear on our

education system. Some donors like AusAID spend most of the funds in their own shores, as the consultancy and other human resources take up the bulk of the aid funds. According to Puamau (2005) only about 20% of aid funds is spent in-country while approximately 80% is spent abroad, mostly in consultancy and buying materials. In the education sector, and especially the vocational section, the involvement of overseas experts is becoming very visible and according to one of the teachers (T6) this involvement was a condition of aid projects. The involvement of overseas experts may benefit us in reforming the curriculum to international standards, but may deny the involvement of local educators in reforming their own education system. The involvement of foreign consultants could give rise to a lack of ownership of the education system by Pacific peoples. There is also the issue of sustainability when overseas experts leave and local educators may not show adequate interest in the projects to ensure sustainability. Easy access to the school and its management were seen as a requirement of aid and as a 'string' attached to the aid projects. Aid projects were seen as providing avenues through which foreign ideas and philosophies could make their way into the school system. Donors have free access to schools and their planning process. The Principal and the head of vocational section at the school in focus mentioned that aid officials have access to the office technology facilities for evaluation purposes. It is also clear that since the project commenced at the school the school board and the school administration have had limited contribution to the operations of the section. The projects might have provided more opportunities for staff and students but at the same time they unwittingly provide access to the ideologies of donors and their education systems.



The benchmarks set by donors may also be considered as strings attached to aid projects. There are always certain expectations from the donors about the level of achievement different projects can have. Most of the benchmarks are set in accordance to what has already been achieved in the donor countries, but what has worked for them may not work well for us. When projects lag behind in achieving certain objectives, undue pressure is put on the implementers of the projects, although the implementers may not have had any opportunity to be part of the planning process. Curriculum reforms, for example, have set benchmarks to achieve as a requirement but students at the school may not be able to achieve the outcomes in the time given.

Sustainability itself is a requirement of many aid projects. According to Education Officer 2 “*the donors also want to see the sustainability of aid projects*”. Sustainability is a desired outcome of any aid project, as it ensures long term survival of the project for the recipients. The views expressed by the participants substantiated the views of Heine & Chutaro (2005) who noted that at times there are false expectations created by aid projects that lead to attitudes that are not only expensive but are not sustained over a long period of time. While aid projects may be beneficial, sustaining the aid projects is a major task for many recipients. The recipients accept aid because they may not have sufficient resources for some endeavor and to expect them to sustain something they could not afford in the first place may be an enormous task. Most aid projects in the education sector are not sustained by schools and other educational departments because when the project is handed over to the recipients they do not have sufficient resources to sustain the

aid project. According to the school manager this has become a trend in some schools and departments as they are not able to sustain the aid projects, and this may lead to continuous reliance on aid. Sustaining projects puts an extra burden on the limited resources of the school and at times some projects which were not warranted by the schools in the first place, have to be sustained by schools at its own cost. The school manager stressed the fact that the office technology project at the school in focus, did not apply for aid but was selected by the MOE to participate in the aid project. This may lead to a situation in the future where the school will have to utilize its own resources to sustain the project, causing disruptions to other projects in the school. According to EO 2 a major condition of the European Union related to recipients having a just and fair governance. Aid recipients must also comply with the Cotonou Agreement.

### ***Aid reliance***

The continuous flow of aid in the country and in particular the education sector was seen as producing a certain degree of reliance on aid projects to reform and /or sustain education in general and schooling in particular. Education officers believed that that most reforms in the education sector rely on aid projects and foreign expertise. In some cases the sustainability of aid projects has heightened the need for more aid and this cycle often continues till the donors are 'exhausted' or when the aims and the objectives of the donors change. According to Knapman (1986) once the reliance cycle continues, it can in some cases lead to permanent dependence on aid. Fiji, although a developing country, is not totally dependant on aid but some sectors, like the education sector, are certainly

reliant on aid for macro reforms. This may not necessarily mean that the sector will not survive without aid but it means that the sector is reliant on aid for reforms, and might lead to Fiji not being able to effect change without aid. According to the education officers interviewed for this research, some aid projects tend to give rise to other aid projects for sustainability because there is often a lack of sense of ownership by the locals. Most projects are planned by consultants and the locals tend to be hesitant to sustain these projects, leading to more aid in order to sustain these projects. The support may not always be monetary but overseas expertise given the foreign benchmarks that are often set by donors.

The power and influence of governments are often affected by aid. It is because aid accrues to the government that the latter increases its resources, patronage and power compared with those of the rest of the society (Bauer, Kasper, & Siwatibau: 1991). Some authors believe that governments accrual of aid may lead to reliance on aid as the aid funds provide an edge to the government to achieve its political endeavors. Fiji does not have many natural resources or exports, therefore the government may be reliant on aid funds for development and in the process strengthening and fulfilling their political ambitions. This effect not only stays at the government level but also trickles down to lower managerial levels, where accrual of aid funds may provide more patronage for those in the management of schools. However, this did not seem to be the case in the school under study where the school manager said that the AUSAID money they received for the office technology section was not applied for but was provided by the MOE. He was concerned however that if they were to become reliant on aid funds, the community

might not make an effort to assist in the maintenance of the facilities in the schools. He also claimed that his school had shown a lot of educational and structural progress despite not being reliant on foreign aid, and because of this the school had the liberty to consider the educational wishes of the school community. He believed that in aid-reliant schools the donors usually had the upper hand in the educational decision making process, reducing the extent of ownership (and power) of the locals in the running of schools.

### ***Local participation and sustainability***

Many participants raised a concern about the apparent lack of local participation in the aid projects. These concerns were consistent with that raised by Nabobo (2003) and Sanga (2005), that there was a lot of room for improvement in aid relations especially when it comes to seriously valuing of local views and talents. Sanga (2005) too was concerned about “unequal relationships where donors have power and Pacific partners do not”. Comments from some participants confirmed this. The school manager was critical about the non-involvement of school boards when devising aid projects to be implemented in schools. He pointed out that while local involvement is encouraged to some extent; it only exists at higher levels (of the MOE) at the planning stages. Some teachers had also expressed concern about the lack of consultation between them as implementers and the educational planners in the curriculum reforms currently being undertaken as part of the aid project. According to most participants the lack of local participation will result in the non-sustainability of aid projects. The consequence becomes inevitable as the implementers in the classrooms or schools do not have the

sense of ownership of some projects, especially because the implementers were not invited to be involved in the planning of the project.

According to Nabobo (2003) it is crucial that the locals in the consultant-recipient relationship are made to feel they are equally valued in project aid, a view supported by the principal who expressed the view that most local educators have a lot of knowledge about the reliability and validity of aid projects. Most of the time the locals are not valued for the resources they have, especially their knowledge of the local situation, and this may lead to problems in the initiation phases of aid projects. Education Officer 2 refers to 'teething problems' often faced when overseas consultants are involved in designing projects for local people. The resources normally valued by donors such as money, technical expertise, delivery during the shortest possible time (Sanga: 2005) may be essential but may not ensure success and sustainability of projects. Pacific values such as hospitality, listening and respect are values which the local people possess and are vital in successful aid relations. The involvement of local people and their values in aid projects may indeed ensure validity, reliability and sustainability of aid projects.

According to Education Officer 1, the EU normally encourages local participation and most of the projects have been initiated in light of suggestions put forwards in local educational forums. This may be a valid point but participants felt that the level of participation was restricted only to a few MOE officials. The stakeholders in the schools and communities are rarely involved as they are regarded as lacking the necessary expertise in aid projects. However, it is often not technical expertise that makes an aid

project successful but other factors such as relevance to the local way of life, the social structure of a community, and the local values of schools are also very important for success. The general assumption that it is always the recipients who are lacking expert knowledge and have to be changed as it is often false in that donors should also be altered to and receptive of views of the local communities. Sanga (2005) puts it nicely when he said that in aid relations, both the donors and the recipients were learners.

Some participants emphasized the need for an assessment of local needs before devising aid projects which rely heavily on overseas consultants to devise and implement aid projects. Participants wanted more local values and involvement ensures sustainability as well as relevance and is an indicator of donor sincerity and willingness to build capacity. However, Nabobo (2003) had expressed concern that the local educators who are involved in aid projects more often are not remunerated appropriately when compared to their overseas counterparts, indicating that there is often inequality in the valuing of local versus overseas skills and knowledge. There appears to be a serious inequality that needs to be addressed appropriately in order to improve aid relations and in order for aid donors to gain the confidence of local educators and stakeholders.

## **5.9 Educational responses to the challenges arising from aid**

Foreign aid as a manifestation of globalisation in the present research is impacting the majority of stakeholders, either directly or indirectly, either knowingly or unknowingly. So what might be the educational responses to this? According to Sanga (2005), the

recipients of aid should be aware of the implications of various aid projects before accepting the aid. The first response to educational aid should commence even before receiving the aid. According to the teachers and the school Principal, there should be clear guidelines for the central authorities to follow. They should just not receive any aid which comes by. The school principal expressed his concern at the complacency with which we devise our educational plans regarding the selection of aid donors and projects. He said that “*whenever the carrot is dangled in front of us*” (school Principal) we accept it without pondering on the consequences. The Principal and the teachers of the school believe that the structure within the education sector and its decision making policies and process must be refined before accepting aid. According to most teachers the best response to the impact of educational aid is to make collective decisions, involving teachers, students and community members. This will provide a greater scope on the impacts that the proposed aid project can have on our educational process. According to the school Principal the consultancy process within the educational sector was vital for the feasibility, validity and the sustainability of future aid projects. An improvement in the consultancy process may also provide ideas for the purpose of identifying the sections in the educational process which are in most need of aid funds. It may not be wise to implement aid projects based on the perceptions of donors in sectors which may not improve productivity in the nation while other needy areas are ignored.

The inability to properly manage aid funds was another serious concern among stakeholders. The education officers interviewed, had the view that most of the local counterparts needed to be educated in order for them to be able to effectively manage

and sustain aid programmes. Education officer 2 believed that more teachers needed to be trained to be part to the aid implementation process. Current teacher training procedures mostly focus on the pedagogical process rather than enlighten teachers on foreign aid policies and procedures. Therefore, as part of the educational response, teachers and educational administrators should be regularly trained and updated to be able to understand the policies and objectives of various educational aid donors and projects. Teacher 6, believed that aid projects would attain viability, reliability and accountability if they are centralized. According to T6, instead of providing aid to various schools for improving vocational facilities, the aid donors should set up centrally located vocational colleges which provide vocational training that have their own administration and curriculum. These types of colleges would be better sustained and the accountability of funds would be ensured. Furthermore there might be a decrease in the influence that aid donors have on school policies. A centrally located school can be further developed to meet the demands of various industries. She concluded that this idea could only be taken onboard by the donors if they are genuinely interested in improving the vocational skills of students and not just use aid to influence the Fiji school system.

According to the school manager there was a need to improve the distribution of and justification for aid. Puamau (2005) had emphasized the point that the MOE seemed to be ill equipped to prepare proper submissions and make its case to donor agencies, a suggestion supported by the school manager who thought that education officers lack the insight to properly identify the needs of schools. He suggested that most aid projects were based on national curriculum objectives and the ministry tends to make general,



macro view submissions to the donors, ignoring the specific needs of various schools which could be fulfilled through aid projects. The manager also believed that educational planners put undue pressure on schools by initiating aid projects, which may not benefit the school. This may be a very good point for educational planners to think about because if the aid projects, (which have national objectives), do not flourish in individual schools then the national success of aid projects may be jeopardized. The submissions prepared by the MOE should be made in consultation with all stakeholders, including the school management, and should look at policies which will encourage equitable distribution of aid among schools and students. Policies which benefit only a certain group may not be readily accepted by all schools, as most secondary schools in Fiji are managed by various management boards, with members drawn from different sectors of the society. Educational responses towards aid should encourage equity and accountability of the various social groups and schools, which tend to have their own unique needs. This should clearly be spelled out for the donors when various aid projects are initiated, so that they are fully aware of the needs of different schools in Fiji and policies can be devised to cater for their real needs. Some policies may not instantly encourage nation building but might ensure that all stakeholders are interested in the relevance and sustainability of the aid projects with which they are involved.

Most teachers, who were interviewed, commented upon the dominance of foreign experts in most curriculum reforms, and the lack of local educators in the process. Teachers were particularly concerned about this saying that such an approach was no longer viable. An example of this was the introduction of the Performance Management System for

appraisal of teachers' performance which they saw as something introduced by foreign consultants. We cannot be constantly altering the direction of our education system, influenced by the policies of major educational aid donors. Even though education is a dynamic process, the foundational directions need to be firm in order to be referred to before accepting aid from donors. There are strategic plans devised by the MOE, such as the Annual Corporate Plan 2006 and Annual Corporate Plan 2007 (Fiji Ministry of Education: 2007) which ought to serve as the basis for planning aid projects. These plans clearly outline the desired outcome of the MOE and provide indications to donors of the reforms that are needed in the Fiji education system. However, not all stakeholders had a chance to make a contribution to these plans and if aid projects are aligned to them, then many stakeholders would not have ownership of aid projects and may not be ambitious nor committed enough to see the projects through.

## **6.0 Conclusions and Implications of the study**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

It is evident from this study that Fiji like other developing countries is affected by global forces and in particular, foreign aid. The Fiji education system is dependent on aid as it tries to produce citizens who can adapt to global trends and become part of the global workforce. Some global trends are beneficial to some people while other trends are not beneficial. However, it would not be wise to totally ignore all global influences, especially since we are part of a global society. However, we need to ensure that global influences do not override our own education and our cultural and social processes. It can be confirmed that there is a general lack of awareness of the actual influences of aid as a manifestation of globalisation. Many educational stakeholders, including the teachers, parents and the students were not aware or involved in the planning of aid projects that affect their school. There seemed to be a degree of secrecy, about aid projects and their activities seemed to pass through our educational process and society without being effectively noticed by stakeholders.

The views of the participants confirm that the curriculum and the management processes in the school under study have been influenced by foreign aid projects. In most of reforms associated with foreign aid are being initiated and implemented by overseas consultants. Consequently, our education system may be losing some of its own unique features because of influences associated with foreign ideas and values associated with

aid projects. On the other hand, some sections of the school, such as the vocational section, is currently benefiting from foreign aid in promoting skills-based education, which may eventually yield better economic benefits for the country.

From this study, it can be concluded that there needs to be valid and dynamic educational responses to the phenomenon of globalisation and in particular, foreign aid. We should not continue the trend to take up whatever is being dangled in front of us but there should be clear criteria for aid donors to abide by, before commencing aid projects in our education system. It was obvious from the views of participants that aid donors benefit from giving aid. Although there are documents such as The Fiji Ministry of Education Annual Corporate Plan 2007 (Fiji Ministry of Education: 2007), which serve as guidelines for donors about the aspirations of the Fiji education system, it is essential for the MOE and donors to be more receptive of the views of local stakeholders prior to designing educational plans or educational strategies. There is always an ambition of developing nations, such as Fiji, to create well educated citizens who can compete in the global arena, but there also has to be a balance between adapting to global trends and jeopardizing our cultural values and way of life. While foreign aid is essential for the development of human resources through a reformed education system, educational planners should ensure that aid projects do not increase social inequities among citizens, in their aid funded projects. Although we can not resist or neglect foreign aid, if properly planned and managed, we can certainly benefit from it.

The present study has also established the fact that foreign aid as a manifestation of globalisation as it enhances the diffusion of foreign ideas through the processes and activities of aid donors. Although Fiji as a nation may not be totally dependent on aid (Singhe, 2005), the education system to some extent is, and this would have serious implications on what students learn in school and what curriculum planners consider to be worthwhile for the curriculum. The curriculum and the management processes in Fiji schools, in particular the school under study, are being constantly reformed through aid projects. Some prominent aid projects such as FREP and FESP are currently being implemented in several Fiji schools, including the one under study. The school management process is also becoming more outcomes based and according to the findings of this study, the process may be unwittingly giving little attention to the social development of students in the school. The education sector to a large extent is dependent on aid projects for educational reforms and sustainability of educational resources. Although foreign aid normally acts as an essential catalyst in the education system it is at the same time a major challenge for educational stakeholders, all of whom do not play an active role in aid related decisions, often leading to questions about aid validity, accountability and sustainability.

The study also established that, foreign aid has provided for educational reforms, which might not have eventuated without aid funds. The EU and the AusAID through the FESP and the FREP aid projects have injected millions of dollars to Fiji education, mainly for the secondary schools and vocational centers. It would be premature to say whether these two projects have been successful or not as they are on-going. However, the study has

allowed participants to express their views on the impact of two aid projects on their school. Many agreed that while these projects are beneficial in providing new resources for the school, they also provide opportunities for donor countries and overseas experts to have a prominent role in our educational planning process. It is possible that this would result in the seepage of foreign and irrelevant educational ideas into our education system, ideas that may not be seen as beneficial for most of the stakeholders of our schools. Participants spoke about the weaknesses and negative impact of various aid projects which tend to vary from project to project and from school to school. Positive outcomes are always emphasized by the aid donors, but not all outcomes of aid are positive. The negative outcomes of aid may have a detrimental effect on our education system, especially when it means creating an aid project to right the wrong of previous aid projects.. This vicious cycle will continue if we do not plan well for the future of our education system.

From the findings of the study, it can also be said that the sustainability of educational aid projects was a major concern in aid relations. The expertise and financial resources required for sustaining aid projects may be lacking in the schools and the irony of the situation is that this very problem might be responsible for a school wanting aid in the first place. It is understandable that aid donors will not commit for life towards an aid project, but the circumstances in which the aid projects are initiated and implemented should be conducive to sustainability within the financial means and human capacity of the schools and local communities concerned. Participants in this research agreed that the expertise needed to sustain the aid projects in the education sector was generally

lacking. This was especially so at school and management levels, most probably because these levels are usually given minimal attention when initiating and designing aid projects. Local participants are not usually provided the opportunity to have a say in aid projects, especially in the initial stages, but they are expected to implement and sustain projects ideas by the MOE as well as donors. In fact some participants believed that the central planning system was a hindrance to the educational progress of Fiji, limiting the input of educational ideas from all educational stakeholders. This is particularly so with aid projects, where local views are not taken into considerations, and teachers only implement curriculum that others have put together. The result was lack of ownership not only of projects but also curriculum and management practices.

The lack of ownership of projects, according to this study, could lead to the problem of sustaining changes brought about as a result of the aid projects. This is normally the case when the implementers of projects were often not the initiators. If all the stakeholders in the educational change process are not involved in projects at an equitable level then the sense of ownership of the project is in question. Future aid relations need to take heed of the problems faced currently in relations to further minimize the influence of aid projects in the Fiji education system. If local views are not considered as a major component in devising aid projects, then in future there will always be a question mark on the validity, reliability and sustainability of aid projects in the Fiji education sector.

## **6.2 Implications**

The present study views foreign aid as a prominent feature in Fiji education, in particular the secondary schools. As such it becomes critical for local educational planners to have a dynamic set of guidelines outlining the level of involvement of aid donors in our education system. As deduced from the information provided by teachers and through research of literature, there is no doubt that, aid is an important catalyst in the process of upgrading our educational process, but in the same breath many teachers had expressed reservations towards the dominant role that donors and consultants tend to play in the planning process of our curriculum. It is recommended that the MOE, with the help of all education stakeholders, need to identify the areas in need of aid projects and not just accept whatever is being offered by various donors. The Fiji Ministry of Educations Annual Corporate Plan 2007 (Fiji Ministry of Education: 2007) is a good example of strategic planning that is proactive in informing prospective donors about the reforms warranted in the education sector.

Donor influence in the Fiji education system is increasing due to the prominence given to the views of the donors in aided educational reforms. The general consensus in this study was that aid is an essential component in educational reforms in Fiji but, we need to have our own strategies with which the donors have to comply because if we continue to give leeway to donors and their respective strategies, our education system may end up in a confused puzzle. Of course we as a developing nation have to be conscious of the aid plans of donors countries but we also need to take a stand on the direction we desire for



our education system to move towards sustainability of our culture, and way of life and at the same time improve our economy and the political system. There is always a desire to create global citizens, but this has to be done while keeping our integrity and identity intact.

The need for aid donors to be more sensitive to the local situation, when devising aid projects, cannot be overemphasized. The improvements in aid relations is a two way process where both the recipients and the donors need to revise their strategies. Fiji being a multiracial and multicultural society has diverse educational needs. National education reforms, most of which are aided; affect schools in many ways and some may not be able to adapt to changes resulting from reforms. The validity and reliability of aid programmes may be increased if feasibility studies were conducted to ascertain if an aid project would be useful or relevant to local situations. It may not be possible to entertain the needs of individual schools, but the aid projects should be dynamic enough to adapt to the needs of most schools. Therefore, to add dynamism to aid projects, it becomes essential for aid donors to give more prominence to local views and expertise, in order to make aid projects more successful and sustainable.

### **6.3 Limitations**

The study was limited to the views obtained from participants who were part of a particular community and school. We cannot generalize about globalisation and/or foreign aid based on their perceptions. However, according to some sources quoted in

the study, some of the perceptions of participants are shared by people in other Pacific countries. This is because the processes of aid provision and aid delivery tend to be the same throughout the Pacific. (Sanga & Taufe'ulungaki: 2005). There is not much local literature on aid impact in Fiji and the Pacific and there needs to be more research carried out in other parts of the Pacific particularly in relation to the questions of stakeholder participation and the sustainability of aid projects.

The apparent lack of awareness among participant of the impacts of globalisation and in particular the impact of foreign aid on our education system proved to be a major limitation to the present research. Even the teachers were not very well versed with the concept of globalisation but the open ended interviews provided sufficient data for this study's purpose. This lack of awareness of foreign aid was evident among many stakeholders; only the education officers were well versed with the aid policies. The views of teachers on the impact of aid on the educational responses showed a general lack of knowledge and appreciation of national education policies especially that associated with aid. This may not be their fault as a general lack of stakeholder consultation is a feature of many education systems in the Pacific, including in Fiji. This means that most stakeholders are not fully aware of what is planned for education in their country, and in particular foreign aid policies and projects.

## **6.4 Summary**

The phenomenological approach proved suitable for the study. It was evident from the literature as well as from the findings of the present research that globalisation and foreign aid were important phenomena in Fiji. Pacific writers such as Sanga (2005), Puamau (2005), Nabobo (2003), Taufe'ulungaki (2003) Yabaki (2004) and Thaman (2000, 2001 & 2007) have all declared that foreign aid (as a manifestation of globalisation) had far reaching effects on Pacific education systems and this was confirmed in the present study through the views of the research participants. Although the Fiji education is totally not dependant on foreign aid, it certainly considers aid to be an important catalyst in realizing educational reforms. Concluding from the views obtained in the present research, we should not lag behind in our educational evolution but we need to keep a balance between global and local demands and needs.

AusAID and the EU, among other organizations, are two major aid donors in Fiji. These two organizations have their own respective strategic plans for Fiji education, and how the reforms in the education sector may lead to political, social and economic achievements in the country. The two organizations are currently contributing funds and resources under the Fiji Rural Education Programme (FREP) and the Fiji Education Sector Programme (FESP) to improve facilities and the delivery of education mainly in secondary schools and vocational centers. According to project officials the programmes are designed to upgrade the educational standards in all parts of Fiji, working in conjunction with local stakeholders but it was realized in the present study that

stakeholders from all levels were not consulted either in the initiation or the implementation process. The present research has concerns that this oversight had not created a sense of ownership and sustainability of aid projects. There also seems to be an over emphasis on overseas experts and their views rather than local views, and this according to the present research, may become a major hindrance to improved aid relations. There seems to be an atmosphere of suspicion in aid relations as evident from the views of teachers and other local stakeholders. In the study participants as local stakeholders, admitted that aid is essential for educational reforms, but in the same breath they expressed disappointment that foreign aid may be providing channels for foreign cultures and values to seep into our unique cultural and traditional processes.

The study suggests that all education stakeholders should re-assess the important roles that they play in regard to the initiation and planning of educational aid projects - only then would they have the pride in and the ability to sustain the projects that affect their school. A one-size shoe will not fit all, therefore educational and structural reforms cannot be forced on to schools and expect them and their teachers to achieve favorable outcomes. Wide consultations are needed among all stakeholders on educational reforms, especially those that involve foreign donors and expertise. Local talents have to be appreciated and given more emphasis over foreign consultants, especially when assessing the needs of the recipients of aid. If more local personnel are involved as consultants, then this would be a first step towards improving the processes associated with the initiation and implementation of aid projects and will lead to their sustainability as well.

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# **GLOSSARY**

1. Catalyst (p 32) - something that makes a change happen.
2. Consultants (p 24) - Experts or advisors in a certain profession.
3. Counterparts (p 27) - Are corresponding persons.
4. Manifestation (p 9) - Evidence or sign of.
5. McDonalidization (p22) - Encouragement of similar values amongst people all over the world.
6. Memorandum (p 29) - A written statement summarizing the terms of a contract or legal term.
7. Phenomenon (p 11) - Anything which is visible or can be experienced.
8. Sustainability (p 9) - Ability to maintain or endure.

# **APPENDICES**

## **Tentative Interview Schedule**

1. How do you think globalisation affects the educational process in Fiji, particularly in your school?

### *Prompts*

- Give examples.
- How about if you generalize for all schools in Fiji?
- How are the parents of the students in school affected directly or indirectly by the effects of globalisation on education in your school?
- Do the impacts of globalisation at your school level have any bearings on the student's education when they progress to higher level education?
- What are the positive and negative impacts on student learning outcomes?
- Student welfare.
- Do the impacts in school carry on to the student's social and economical settings?
- Staff welfare.
- On the infrastructure.

2. How do you think aid from other countries impacts the educational process in Fiji secondary schools?

*Prompts*

- Who gives aid to Fiji education?
- Who gave aid to your school? Why?
- What are the benefits of aid given to secondary schools or for development at secondary school level?
- What are the strings attached to foreign aid in your view?
- What may be some disadvantages of aid in schools?
- How can educational planners in the country address the disadvantages of aid, including the strings attached to aid?

3. How is the curriculum changing due globalization, in particular through aid projects, in secondary schools?

*Prompts*

What has changed?

Who initiated the changes?

Why do you think these changes, which can be contributed to globalisation, have been brought about?

Are the changes benefiting the students, teachers and the parents?

Do you think the changes benefit the aid donors who may be involved in initiating the changes? How?

What may the negative points about the changes in the curriculum brought about by aid projects?

Do you think caution should be taken by curriculum reformers when implementing changes initiated by aid projects? Why and How?

4. What are the changes that the process of globalisation, in particular the impact of aid, has brought about in the administrative process in secondary schools?

What changes are visible?

Who initiated these changes?

Why have changes been initiated in the administrative process?

Who funds the cost of reforms in the curriculum and the administrative process?

How do you feel about the changes made in your administrative system?

Do you have other suggestions that would have resulted in more worthwhile changes to the administrative process?

5. In light of challenging aid relations faced by the education sector, what could be some possible responses by educational planners at various levels to these challenges?

*Prompts*

What can be done at the state level?

What can be done at school level?

Should the students and their parents be involved in devising plans to face the challenges of globalisation?



Are the teachers in schools, especially in your school, trained appropriately to face the challenges of globalisation?

Should local views be paramount when initiating and implementing aid projects? Why?