Teacher Education in the Pacific Islands: New Landscapes and Challenges- Where are we going?

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Introduction

The world that we live in today differs quite markedly from the world of our childhood, what we may term here as "the world that was" as well the world of our parents, grandparents and their grandparents although we are linked to these. The world continues to change albeit, in varied ways, intensities and rates in the Pacific Islands. With these changes, both desirable and undesirable elements creep into our Pacific lives at times changing its landscapes or configurations; sometimes temporarily, sometimes forever. It is also a truism that if we strategise and are ready for changes then we may place ourselves in better positions to handle their different influences in our lives, education and teacher education included. This includes the agenda and necessity to syncretise global developments and local indigenous knowledges that are deemed useful to us so that we move forward benefiting from "both worlds". What comes to mind here is Peddiwell's famous story of the Sabertooth curriculum, a situation we do not want to experience in the Pacific. The moral of the Sabertooth Curriculum story by Peddiwell (1939) rests on the need to re imagine, refocus and reconceptualise education given changing contexts and what I might term here as "changing ecologies of education". Such changing ecologies have brought about new landscapes and challenges in teacher education in the Pacific Islands.

This paper is based largely on the responses of Pacific teacher educators who attended a teacher educators' symposium in Samoa in December, 2005. This was under the aegis of the University of the South Pacific project called PRIDE (Pacific Regional Initiative of Basic Education) as well as PATE (the Pacific Association of Teacher Educators). Responses of the attendants and the author's analysis of the responses provide the main data of the paper. Responses reported were done in groups under the main theme of teacher education in globalisation (new times). The main theme was interrogated under a number of sub-themes: challenges to pre service teacher education in the Pacific, models of pre service delivery, challenges of in service support for teachers, management challenges of teacher education, reform, and challenges to professional development of teacher educators.

In the paper, the Pacific Islands refers to Papua New Guinea (PNG), Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tuvalu, Niue, Tokelau, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Marshall Islands. There are about 13 teacher education institutions in PNG, five in Fiji and one in all the other countries listed above except Nauru, Niue, Nauru, Tuvalu, Tokelau, FSM and Marshall Islands. Teacher education institutions range from those who offer certificate courses, to those who offer diplomas and the handful that offer degree.

All Pacific Island countries, with the exception of Tonga have all been subjected to colonisation under various powers which include, Britain, Germany, France, and one can argue in recent times, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. What this means is that education systems in different pacific Island countries have borrowed models from former colonisers or neo colonisers. In recent times given globalisation, Pacific Island teacher educators have had to re think their work and revision their ideas of teacher education delivery, form, philosophy and content in terms of new challenges posed by globalising

forces. In this visioning of future directions, the Samoa workshop had as its main goal the syncretising of global ideas and local Pacific knowledges in their teacher education programmes, processes, delivery and philosophies.

Blending the Global and Local

The need to blend the best of contemporary global and indigenous and local practice is a step in appropriately facing up to the realities of the changing 'ecologies of education' and teacher education. The question to ask is what does it mean to blend indigenous and global ideas? Should global ideas that come through varied and diverse means be thoroughly scrutinised? Where did these global ideas (of pedagogy and learning) originate from and what cultures do they implicitly and explicitly represent? Pedagogy itself is not free of the cultural values and ideologies of the society in which it originates and teachers transmit and reinforce the cultural values that are embedded in the teaching approaches that they use (Barrow, 1990; Kelen, 2002 in Thaman, 2005).

Pacific responses need to be critical and well informed. Pacific responses must also be located within our own Pacific languages and cultural contextual understandings; as well as, an informed position on the background or origin, the dimensions and discourse of globalisation itself. In teacher education globalisation like any other contemporary topic should become a part of the curriculum, but presented as problematic and hence lends itself to systematic inquiry and critique.

The other important question to bear in mind here is to do with the dialectics that we hear so much of today; that of globalisation versus the local or indigenous. This is problematic because it does suggest that globalisation "is a particular local, that it does not cover the globe if it is seen against the "local and indigenous". Groppo (2005:29) makes this point quite succinctly when he emphasizes that the current discourses of globalisation lacks "precisely the characteristics of being global, being in the end a particular and a regional approach to world affairs". "The global idea is a capitalist and European global" (ibid: 35). That I think is the context within which we who are going to blend global and local ideas will need to consciously work from. This is the standpoint or position I think Pacific people are having to deal with in (with the help of post-colonial theorising for instance and post modern theory) in order to **increase the effectiveness of the inclusion** of the local and indigenous which I think modernisation (50's and 60's), neo liberal paradigm -economic liberalisation (80's and 90's) and now globalisation since the creation of the WTO (1995 to date), have effectively marginalised. Our efforts at blending then "local" and global" ideas must be critically done and well informed. They also must include "new conversations between indigenous and Western [Anglo-American] peoples" (Semali and Kincheloe, 1999: 39).

The next important question to ask is whether global ideas about education reform (if they have worked elsewhere) would work in the Pacific given that the Pacific standpoint (s) of once being once colonised, neo colonised and some still being colonised. Most Pacific countries have the vantage point of having experienced colonialism in varying shapes, colours and intensities. I call this position a vantage point (after Smith, 1999) because being colonised and neo-colonised should give one a thoroughly critically edge in reflecting on the so called "global flow of goods and ideas that have now become the hallmark of globalisation. Luke (2005) very rightly remarked regarding the dire need for Pacific people to realise that most new ideas in education and reforms have not worked where they have originated from. Luke (2005) noted further:

There are no answers anywhere else...we have relied on experts from elsewhere but these have not worked: the answers do not come from colonial masters (New York, London)...all systems of the West are in crisis- all systems are facing up to system problems...they are trying to fix system problems...Models need to suit-may be a lot of us do not have a choice but to look for our own solutions...we need to look at local answers...

The need for reconceptualising curriculum and practice in education and teacher education

There is a need to reconceptualise Pacific education. In reconceptualising Pacific education and teacher education, there are a number of explicit and implicit assumptions made. These are:

1) that the **quality** and **relevance** in formal education remain a major goal of Teacher Education in the Pacific, (following the global trend);
2) that teachers play a central role in realising national, regional and global educational roles;
 3) that teachers, curriculum, teacher education, education policy and practice must be relevant to our island contexts and the needs of the students in these societies;
4) that all educators must create an inclusive learning environment that allows students to share the 'power space' that educators once monopolised;
5) that teacher competence and capacity are absolute baseline factors needed to reconceptualise the policy, content and delivery of teacher education;
6) that the ultimate goal of education and teacher education is quality of life for our people. (This is variously described in our Pacific languages, Eg Fijian *mana, sautu*; Kiribati *toronibwai*; Maori *hauora, mara*)
7) that because Quality of Life indicators need to be strategically engineered by Pacific peoples- **In engineering these indicators, local and global realities, life ways and pathways needs to be considered.**

Pacific Encounters of "New Times": Narratives of Current Challenges of Pacific Teacher Education – Locating Ourselves given new landscapes

At this point I turn to Pacific voices from the workshop to highlight what they considered to be some challenges in the various facets of teacher education today. I do this deliberately to contextualise the situation of reforms that global ideas of "New Times" will have to be received and couched in. Pacific voices here (though edited), provide the current or contemporary context and reality where global and local, indigenous ideas of pedagogy and learning will have to work in and with. I have focussed only on the challenges because this is the point where I think our efforts at syncretising or blending global and indigenous or local will have to meet before any blending can take place.

All ideas from "outside" via globalisation will have to undergo "selection and rejection processes of locals, local institutions and systems". Ideas that flow in with globalisation are dealt with in numerous ways by local and indigenous peoples; there is no uncritical acceptance or at least no passive reception. Locals and indigenous peoples in numerous ways sieve through changes in many and varied ways. Such responses may differ from one Pacific country to another due to the different nature and degree of such encounters and from one institution to another within a country.

Pacific Voices- na Domodra na I taukei ena Pasifika (Pasifik 'tok tok' en 'Spik')

During the Samoa workshop, Pacific participants (Pacific Voices) spoke of the many challenges facing their teacher education programs and institutions today. To some extent one can say that present challenges listed henceforth seem so overwhelming that one begins to wonder whether to begin to really engage in globalisation discourses is really a quantum leap that in the words of key note speaker Allan Luke, "may require Pacific people to short circuit reforms" so as to forgo all the steps so to speak (and by implication to overlook the challenges) and to somewhat go straight into reforms and changes that are quite radical (like designing curriculum for New Times" in the form of our own "New Basics".

A brief overview of the stated challenges also significantly point towards the "failure of the modernity project"[1] so to speak and the onslaught of post-modernity and its associated theorising of "embracing difference, indigenous and "other" and generally the including of the "peripheral: values, cultures, spirituality and indigenous philosophies etc". The funding of higher education (teacher education included) had changed quite dramatically since the 80's and 90's when education costs given economic liberalism policies were moved from governments to parents or to the user-pay system. To date, finance remains the single most pressing challenge of all facets of educational reform. This is why teacher education in the Pacific is donor and project driven hence the reform agenda which are in most cases dictated to by donors (see for instance Baba, 1989, Nabobo,1999; Sanga, 2000; and Coxon and Taufeulungaki, 2003).

Challenges in Pre service teacher education: Group 5-Teremoana Hodges et al [2]. highlighted the following under the heading "Redecorating the Fale: From the 'known to the 'new' of Pre –service Teacher Education in the Pacific:

- The need to re-conceptualise framework (s) of pre-service teacher education that is firmly grounded in Pacific Realities [Pacific knowledges, Cultures, philosophies of life and epistemologies]. Here they suggested the example of the "fale as metaphor for teacher education in the Pacific.They explain thus: *The metaphor of the Pacific house (fale, bure, are) is used is used…Redecorating the house implies changing, removing, adding and moving around, repainting, refurbishing…"*;
- The need for a clear vision or philosophy that is preferably shared by all involved in teacher education; this needs to be future focussed but rooted in our local and indigenous cultures. This needs to be grounded very well in local and indigenous values, beliefs, philosophies while taking the best from "outside" on as well. In a nutshell there remains a challenge to contextualise teacher education;
- The challenge remains of maintaining, keeping vibrant our Pacific cultures in the face of change;
- The need for research and in particular action research;
- The need to publish;
- The need to align short and long term goals;
- The need to shift from the usual prescriptive, full and exam oriented curriculum to one that encourages the holistic development of student teachers; and
- The need to respond to the "supply and demand of teachers".

Closely linked to group 5 is group 3 (Michael Tapo et.al[3].) whose topic: "**Models of pre-service delivery"** generated a lot of ideas and discussion. Some of the challenges identified

[1] See for more Groppo, A (2005:34) on the six main problems of contemporary global economy stated in the 1997 United nations Report on Trade and Development. These problems resonate closely with the challenges raised by the Pacific participants in the December, 2005 Samoa teacher education workshop.
[2] Teremoana's group members include: Cresentia Koya, Susan Faoagali and Rosa Tuia

by them in the current Pacific teacher context in this area have been identified as those which are systemic and those which are of the institutional. The systems (big picture challenge) include:

- A need for a Teacher Education Standards Frameword (A national Teacher Education Board perhaps that can look at standards, setting visions and directions (in consultation with stakeholders) and accreditation across the board)
- Teacher Education (TE) goals should be reflected in MOE plans and strategic directions' documents and plans: this has high implications for financing.
- Resources and Facilities as well as adequate remuneration packages and terms and conditions of teacher educators: these remain one of the biggest challenges today and ties very closely with financial constraints or limited teacher education budgets.

In terms of institutional challenges: budgets, on going professional development for Teacher Educators, review of curricula (to include ethics and values education, ICT and media, and local cultures and knowledges), review of models[4] to reflect Pacific knowledges as well as realities. They pointed: "*[This] model (s) requires the reconceptualisation of the Pacificalisation of pedagogy that connects practice, research, and theory and must be developed by TE providers in the Pacific*". The need for quality assurance in TE packages was also highlighted as a key challenge.

In terms on **the Challenges of In service support for teachers (new) in the Pacifc,** Debbie Tkel-Sbal's[5] group identified some of the following challenges:

- Poor attitude of teachers towards training (It was identified that in some PI countries, teachers will not opt for in service training unless they were on full time pay. The question remains is whether this is due to financial constraints of families or whether it is due to teacher attitude.
- The objectives of aid and educational grants do not always favour in service training of teachers and teacher educators alike.
- Correspondence or distance education remains a challenge that may be explored by different countries and institutions. The feasibility of this will remain the decision of individual institution to decide.
- High costs (establishment, maintenance and upgrading) of new technologies , media ICT- some are highly desirable but so expensive for our people and institutions.

Group seven Ken Miere et.al[6] looked at **The Management of In service teacher education** and highlighted some challenges. Some of these included:

- The biggest challenge is that of funding: All countries depended on external funding or aid as well as allocations by the various MOEs around the region. This in itself is a challenge: trying to find the allocation to do in service training programs be they accredited, non accredited, short course types or modules, holiday or summer types or more long term ones.

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[3] Michael Tapo's group included: Joanna Daiwo, Dawn Rasmussen and Alvina Timarong
[4] Allan Luke (2005) also highlighted this point in his keynote: the need to re examine current models-(generally a little of the social foundations of education, some education psychology and a practicum). Pacific respondents also agreed that may be there is a need "in-country" to re look at such a model to ascertain whether this is what we need at this point. However, Luke's idea of practicum in other countries (Pacific or abroad) I don't think will work given Practicum budgetary allocations as is. This is a desirable idea though and may work through some (yet again!) external aid.
[5] Debbie's group included: Jimione Buwawa, Molly Helkena, Benson Moses and Silia Pa'usisi.
[6] Ken Miere's group included: Stanley Karuoo, Nemani Drova and Tili Afamasaga.

- Managing in service training is not that hard as finding the available funds to meet all the demands of in service training.
- The other challenge is that of the accumulation of non credit courses
- Lack of sustainability
- Duplication of in service efforts
- Usually reactive rather than proactive
- Lack of effective national planning models

Stephen Potek's group[7] looked at **In service Support for new teachers** and raised some issues and challenges. Some of these I highlight here, like the latter, in the hope to ground the paper in the current context and challenges of Pacific teacher education**.**
The group noted: "*The early years of teaching are crucial times. New recruits feel overwhelmed by the challenge they face on entering schools as full time teachers*".

- There are no national induction policies for new teachers, the group has also suggested the drawing up of a framework for the induction of new Pacific teachers-this could be Pacific wide then countries can use the document to suit their contexts.
- Some schools have induction programs, others, none
- The question is: "Whose responsibility is it to induct new teachers?"

Another group (Bakalevu et.al) also looked at **In Service Delivery and the Reform of teacher education.** They identified a number of challenges which included the need to re examine power relations in education, the need to re-look at curriculum and pedagogy so that there is a balance between local needs and the effects of globalisation. There is also the need to re examine and perhaps change funding structure to ensure that areas like teacher education are catered for well. The other major challenge identified by the group is the need to monitor and evaluate systems.

Group 2 (Kaure Babo et al[8].) looked at **Professional Development of Teacher Educators** and highlighted the following challenges:

- Funding for professional development is a major challenge
- Limited infrastructure
- Institutional politics
- The need to network with colleagues across institutions is needed
- Staff upgrading policies need to be supported by MOE's, and need for support in general : institutional and systems
- Systems challenge: Lack of coordination and cooperation within MOEs' other sections
- Need for staff to attend conferences and be more involved with professional activities and associations
- The need to balance teaching, research and writing time
- The need to nurture an effective profile for teachers who are culturally appropriate and responsive. These teachers positively reject deficit theorising; are committed to and know how to bring about change in educational achievement; care for the students and their performances or outcomes couched in the understanding that

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[7] Stephen Potek's group included: Gauna Wong, Janet Tasmania and Aloesi Logavatu.
[8] Kaure Babo's group included: Tryphosa Keke, Malama Taaloga Faasalaina, Saumaeafe Vanya Taule'alo and Lice Taufaga.

students are culturally located human beings; and engage in effective teaching interactions.

The final group (Lavenia Tiko et.al[9].) looked at **Teaching Practice.** They highlighted the following challenges:
- Need for adequate funding to effectively run teaching practice programs
- Need to re examine course offerings and curriculum
- Need to look at theory and teaching content in relation to practicum
- Need evaluation tools to evaluate effectiveness of our work
- Need to encourage reflective practice
- Need to develop our own theories and models and do research on how students learn best in our cultural contexts
- Need for training in ICT/ media skills for trainees as well as teacher educators

Globalisation and Teacher Education in the Pacific

Let me suggest four possible scenarios that I had heard in the Samoa workshop and elsewhere with regards Pacific responses to globalisation. These are:

i) The Give Up Mode

Its all to hard! Too many others are "calling the shots". Let's just give up.

This mode is based on what I believe is a false assumption, that globalisation produces a homogeneity of culture and we are thus rendered powerless. While some aspects of dominant Anglo-American cultures have become rampant and insidious worldwide, I strongly believe we should not overate the dominance of the such "homogenising powers". I say this because as Allan Luke (2005) alluded to - globalisation today is seeing the shifts in global power bases, with especially the rise in power and influence of China and India.

ii) The idea that Society is Too Fragmented

In responding to an increasingly fragmented contemporary society, our people turn in on themselves and hold on tight to what they have and what they know. They become exclusive and lose the capacity to practise inclusivity. This may come through the assertion of Identities (race/culture). (egs. of extreme exclusivity around the region at times are volcanoes waiting to happen- Fiji coups/ Solomon Is Crisis..)

iii) the outright " No! No! No! People"

A group of people see both dominance of certain cultures and further   fragmentation of the world.ie., exclusive politics etc. We mustn't underestimate the potential of the dominated (Pacific cultures) to resist Globalisation.WE must not overestimate either the degree of dominance of Western and OTHER dominant World Cultures (Anglo-American).

iv) The people who believe in Interdependency

These people believe that with globalisation comes an increasing interdependency of countries across the world.I think this is a naïve assumption, because it assumes an unnatural and impossible 'equality of island states' for example to dominant global forces.

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[9] Lavenia Tiko's group included: Liuaki Fusitua, Lina Tone-Schuster and John Atkins Arukelana.

Globalisation has infiltrated all aspects of our Pacific lives, education included. It has brought about "New Times and new Eduscapes". Some features of this 'New Times' or new landscapes as highlighted by Luke (2005) include:

- *Problems- where new migrants are taking jobs of the local and indigenous populations*
- *There is an increasing rate of the problems of drugs*
- *There are new youth identities: where children do not go to temples/churches, they wear jeans, act like African Americans, don't respect their elders and parents, hang out in malls, some cannot speak their native tongues neither can they speak formal languages/ or official languages like English properly*
- *With rapid rates of culture change, indigenous people and lives under assault, new values are confronting social fabrics all over the Pacific*
- *New movements of capital, of bodies (people) and information. There are also new forms of work and leisure.*
- *'Macdonalisation' vs vernacularisation*

Likewise, Carmen Luke (2005) spoke of "Media and Youth Culture" emphasizing the **"Shifting Ground of Media"**

Carmen Luke noted the prominent role played by the media and ICT in globalisation. She noted that:
"the media is not free of prejudice. We need to ask who is the face behind the media? We need to know and understand the ideology that shapes our media".

The digital divide is real in the Pacific. The internet is enjoyed by only 5% of Pacific students. Carmen Luke goes on to ask a serious question: "*What are we going to do with this new world of "techno kids"… kids who have lost the art of conversation? [Talanoa*].

The media is a "shifting ground". The computer models change so rapidly and we have to deal with this. Communication and language changes have occurred because of rapid changes in ICT. There is increased global connectivity but the media is creating a "cartography of difference" in the Pacific. There is increasing disparities in education-there are people who have access to ICT while some do not. The question to ask is: How do we handle the "Digital Divide"and by the same token how do we decrease the disparities in education in the Pacific that ICT will increasingly create.

The other issue is the necessity of ensuring that Pacific children excel in computer or ICT skills while not losing touch with the cultural knowledges of their own people.

Need for Shifting Teacher Education Discourses

Allan Luke (2005) suggested a need to shift our educational discourses to focus on critical analysis of global trends and especially as we try to blend Pacific and global ideas of teaching and learning. There is a need for teachers for instance to play catch up with current trends of IT used by "New Kids". Allan Luke notes again: *"Pacific kids have already changed radically; a metamorphasis is apparent. However, teachers, school leaders and academics have not kept pace…" (*Ibid).

There is perhaps a pressing need for Pacific educators to be focused in our thinking, writing and debate about globalisation so that we can explore, explain and reform our

educational agendas for our island communities. We must not be caught up in the spider web of resistance and reaction by local communities and acknowledge that there is as yet limited analysis and real understanding of the impact of globalisation on Pacific Islanders in education and in other aspects of our lives.

Teacher Education in the Pacific given globalisation: Some Changes

Education is changing especially as it relates to a number of factors:

First is the cost. Globalisation especially beginning with structural adjustment programs that have been around the Pacific from the early 1990's has had many effects[10] on educational financing. This includes the introduction of the idea of the "user-pay" system.

Besides this is the devolution of responsibilities of running schools to the communities (by implication richer communities will afford better opportunities and schools). In Fiji for instance where schools are largely owned by communities; the implications of this is one of obvious and severe disparity.

Second is the nature of the students we are facing in the Pacific today. Allan Luke noted in the Samoa workshop: *"We as teachers have different animals in our classrooms today [and increasingly will]... Teachers grow up in different times hence the generational gaps from our school children are obvious. What makes a difference today though is the enormous influence of the media and information technology in general"*. Luke maintains that given the new global changes on society, cognitive developments of children have changed as well. This calls for new teaching and learning styles where increasingly teacher authority may have to be increasingly shared with new "techno-advanced" kids in the classroom.

Third today's "New World Kids" are growing up in an environment of increasing cultural hybridity, linguistic and cultural diversity and increasingly mapping out their own "youth cultures". In this scenario, kids are good with new technology while it is proving increasingly hard to get teachers to be on par with new technology. But Allan Luke cautions " … *having a lot of new computers in the classroom will not improve learning and new technology… can create huge moral vacuums…"* Allan Luke further maintains:

"We have to create a system for our hybrid kids... All that we could do was to give tools to our people so that people can begin to think, create...and do analysis for themselves... Teaching people to way up impacts on their environments, knowledges, way of life etc.".

Fourth, in terms of educational planning, Alan Luke suggests that global flows of knowledge and ICT need to be engineered into educational planning.

Fifth, what this means is that we need to be clear of the purposes of education. Luke suggests a shift from a needs based models to a re-conceptualistmodel- *"This is where you first think of what a human being/ people/ society you want to create then map the curriculum from there...For example we need to project the type of human being we want- what type of Fijian/ new Fijian we want to have in 2010 –This way we will create a new Fijian identifying the things we need to get right then planners can define/ draw or conceptualise a curriculum using that guideline.*

Sixth, in terms of teaching the need for quality teachers is clearly obvious now. In terms of teacher capacity, there needs to be a baseline content knowledge that they acquire and a

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[10] See Baba (1999) for a more detail discussion of teacher education and globalization in the Pacific.

basic general education is needed. Teachers also need to use creative alternatives methods. There is also a need to intensify debate and dialogue- part of this has to be about 'macdonalisation' of cultures, flows of monies/ how do we preserve lagoons against overseas dragnets etc...in other words a whole host of issues that matter to us in the Pacific today.

Seventh, the solutions are not more tests, school management models, assessment models ie Anglo-American models (lots of tests, lots of changes in curriculum to hundreds of outcomes) are not going to solve problems...There is a need for each Pacific context to define their own "New Basics" and Reconceptualist curriculum and teacher educators need to be in the forefront of that work. Allan Luke suggests that the *drawing up of New Basics for the Pacific will need to get rid of Piaget and get into cross-cultural psychology. The more pressing need is for indigenous psychology based on indigenous philosophies of knowledge, epistemology and psychology.*

Eighth, all roads lead back to Teacher Capacity: Schools need to be pushed to think about the future and prepare students to prepare for the future...This includes problem solving and the encouraging of intercultural and transcultural communications. What this means is that teacher training explicitly embrace and implement approaches and strategies in all their courses that ensures this happens. Teacher education courses can also ensure that multiculturalism [like globalisation] becomes a problematic in their curriculum, policies and in all that they do (Gagliardi, 1995:10).

Indigenous Approaches to Education/ Teacher Education
Such a topic interrogates the idea that indigenous approaches to pedagogy and learning may benefit teacher education in the Pacific. In reconceptualising teacher education for "New Times", the Samoa workshop through Pacific voices and workshop resource persons reiterated what some Pacific academics have been talking about for sometime (see for example a collection of works on this in Thaman (ed) 2003). This is the need to account for and include indigenous Pacific philosophies of knowledge, teaching and learning, and epistemologies in education, teacher education, included.

Why do we need to include indigenous approaches to pedagogy and learning?
Some Pacific academics and educationists have over a decade now pushed for this inclusion, more prominent of these is Pacific academic, Konai HeluThaman. They have over a number of years now emphasized the need to use indigenous approaches in pedagogy and learning. Such approaches are rooted in Pacific philosophies, epistemologies and values. Thaman for instance: (1992, 1993, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2002 and 2003) had variously emphasized the need important role culture plays in influencing pedagogy and learning. She cites for example (Eagly and Chaiken, 1998) who noted: "culture shapes people's beliefs, attitudes, their role expectations as well as the way they make meanings of their own and others' behaviour (in Thaman, 2003: 3). Thaman further clarifies, role expectations and role conflicts are culturally defined hence the importance placed on the degree of congruence of teacher-student role expectations, which itself is mediated by pedagogy.

She adds that pedagogy is shaped by cultural values and ideologies of the cultures of its origin. Teachers own professionalism and cultural sensitivity are important for children to succeed (Thaman, 1999). Thaman states again: "In order for teaching and learning in schools and universities to be culturally inclusive, we need to target teachers, since they are the ones who can bridge the cultural gaps between the learners' home cultures and the expectations of formal education (2003:8).

The work of teacher educators then become a powerful tool in the Pacific as they can ensure that the preparation of teachers will be for meaningful teaching later in schools where they ensure that curriculum offerings and pedagogy are culturally inclusive. To this end Thaman has outlined a cultural framework for education called Kakala. (Thaman 2003)

Kakala is similar in some degree to Kaupapa Maori framework of education which according to Durie (2001) have goals for Maori which include: "Be Maori, Be Global and Live a Healthy and Secure Life". The same thinking has been highlighted by Bishop (2005), pointing that for meaningful reform to take place, teachers teaching indigenous students must ensure the following:

1. *Culturally appropriate teaching: no deficit theorizing, teachers do not blame:- need quality teachers' thinking*
2. *Teachers need to get out of deficit spaces-they need to be committed to and know how to bring about change in educational achievement*
3. *Teachers care for kids who are culturally located human beings*
4. *They care for the performance of students*
5. *They create a secure, well managed learning environment*
6. *They can engage in effective teaching interactions*
7. *Use strategies to promote change*
8. *They promote and monitor outcomes-they want to know how they're getting on with their school work and the reasons behind success and failure.*

Priorities for Pacific Teacher Education: A Suggested Agenda

Our efforts towards the using of indigenous approaches to pedagogy and learning may be enhanced by a number of suggested priorities of the Interinstitutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK) based at the Pennsylvania State University. These are outlined by Semali and Kincheloe (1999: 5) as:

- engaging in the validation of indigenous knowledge.
- producing new research methods for studying indigenous knowledge.
- giving students and faculty both the methodologies for recording indigenous knowledge and the tools for using it effectively (eg., curriculum materials, courses, lecture series, research projects involving faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students).
- Promoting diversity by valuing the ways of knowing that are characteristic of various cultures.
- Promoting interdisciplinary, participatory research and cooperative problem-solving between communities and academic institutions.
- Enhancing locally-appropriate development efforts in the Commonwealth.
- Enhancing the internationalization of the curriculum of academic institutions by giving faculty and students ready access to a global network of indigenous knowledge centers.
- Identifying and compiling resources.
- Increasing teacher awareness of indigenous knowledge through a worldwide integrated database and the National Association for Science, Technology and Society.

- Providing teacher training programs in Pennsylvania with methods which demonstrate how to use both local and scientific knowledge to make decisions about natural resource use and the environment.
- Providing a linkage to Science, Technology and Society educational programs.
- Encouraging interaction between indigenous epistemologies and western epistemologies for the purpose of finding new methods to produce knowledge.

Most if not all the points above and especially the last point (point 12) resonates closely with what the Samoa workshop was in my view targeting. The workshop's main aims and deliberations were focused on the need to encourage the interaction and blending between indigenous/ local knowledge, its approaches, philosophies and epistemologies etc. to those of the global to enhance learning and especially to produce new ideas of pedagogy and learning.

The Way Forward in Pacific Teacher Education: Where are we Going?-Revitilising Deliveries, Revamped Visions and Redefined Directions

In order to revitalise deliveries in teacher education, we need to redefine our philosophies of teaching and learning. Here the use of local knowledges, metaphors and wisdoms are needed to ground "outside" theories and beliefs of teaching and learning. A consistent commitment to a hopefully similar vision and philosophy that are based on carefully thought through and generally accepted beliefs and values of pacific peoples is crucial here as starters. This is a tricky proposition as we all know that it is hard to agree on any one philosophy of teaching and learning as every serious teacher educator and educator for that matter, has their own philosophies of these, borne out of many and varied experiences, values, beliefs, cultures and their own philosophies of education and life in general.

Adopting and Adaptability

Our redefined directions must have to embrace therefore a collective philosophies of teacher education in any one context. Here the need to adopt new ideas from the "global context" and to adapt these to our own Pacific context will remain the biggest challenge for us in teacher education in the Pacific. Change must not be a threat, instead change must be enabling, to enable us to feel the "flow of life" through ideas (both new and old) and both (local and global). Newness is inherent in life, as nature itself reinvents its life through changes in seasons and in nature habits. Similarly we in education, need to change to expand, grow and to keep re inscribing our directions, visions and life. But we in the Pacific must not be dominated by change. We must also ensure that we are always in a position to evaluate these, to reject or accept these, according to their merits.

Building Research Capability among Pacific Teacher Educators: Some Challenges and Possibilities-Some Challenges

There is a recognised need for the Pacific to be authored increasingly by indigenous Pacific scholarship in ways that will re centre, affirm and empower Pacific knowledge systems, philosophies of knowledge, cultural pedagogies and epistemologies. For teacher educators, research and the writing that results from that are areas that may need more and more attention and focus. Research is crucial as teaching needs to be continually informed by research. It appears however that most teacher education institutions are relatively busy with their teaching engagements that research is neglected. This is despite the fact that research has been increasingly identified as an important area of teacher education and there are initiatives already underway to ensure that this is so.

Smith (2004:4) highlights an important point noting: "The history of research from many indigenous perspectives is so deeply embedded in colonization and not as a potential tool for self determination and development especially for re-establishing our own academic engagement with and scholarly authority over our own knowledge systems, experiences, representations, imaginations and identities".

In the past decade or so in the Pacific there has been an upsurge in writing, debating, researching and networking among Pacific indigenous scholars working alone, among themselves or with "the other"around research topics, methodological issues and agendas which purport to affirm their indigeneity as well as enhance Pacific lives, their cultures and development. This is in line with what Rigney (1999, as cited in Smith, 2004: 5) described as the effort by indigenous researchers to "not only disrupt hegemonic research forms and their power relations, but to alleviate and reinvent new research methodologies and perspectives".

Further, research by Pacific educators need to be transformative, to question status quo and to reach out to new horizons where new forms of knowledges are created by us. Again Tuhiwai Smith talking about indigenous researchers emphasizes: "...indigenous researchers [need to] work, to produce the bodies of literature, to lead and mentor others, to engage and to share…to reconcile the connections between the academy of researchers, the diverse indigenous communities and the larger political struggle of decolonisation…" (ibid: 6).

In teacher education, the challenges of research are many and varied. These range from the need to make spaces in our very often crammed curricula to have spaces for Pacific teacher educators to do research and writing. Another challenge is related to research funding which is in most cases next to nothing in institutional budgets. The other prominent challenge is to do with the need to build capacity in order that research is done by Pacific teacher educators themselves or with "the other". The other is the need for Pacific research to be conceptualised philosophically (Sanga, 2004: 49). The other major challenge perhaps worth noting here relates to academic leadership. Sanga pointedly argues: "The academic leadership for indigenous Pacific research however is weak. This leadership base must be strengthened. As well, a deliberate developmental agenda should be created wherein emerging Pacific researchers are trained and mentored…" (Ibid: 50). On a similar note Nabobo-Baba (2004) argues that Pacific leaders in research and academia must not be "seen as easy pawns in the power games that dominate academia…where brown or native faces who are easily agreeable and are easily manipulated by those in power are strategically put in places where those dominant can then keep power and control over them…" (p.20). She adds further, "This is a point of silencing, strategic silencing, that we as Pacific scholars have to confront and strategise against" (ibid).

Some Possibilities
Building capacities and Strategising – A Pacific research community
A desirable outcome for Pacific teacher education is the building of capacities within countries and within institutions toward a researching community. Some research has been done in a number of Pacific teacher education institutions but it is true to say that research remains an area of need though may be not identified formally in teacher education institutions' priorities.

A number of initiatives like that of the Pacific Educator's network on Researching the Pacific Initiative spearheaded by Victoria University of Wellington and the University of the South Pacific, have in a major way rekindled interest in researching Pacific, indigenous

knowledges, and generally in rethinking and revisioning Pacific education. Increasingly, such networking relationships are seen as a strength in promoting better educational outcomes for Pacific peoples. It is in networking, sharing, exchange of ideas and experiences among educators that may need to be nurtured further.

Smith (2004) outlines the direction and strategies Maori took in New Zealand to effectively establish a research community which incrementally permeated all other areas particularly of academia. The Pacific experience can benefit from that of the Maori experience but each country and institution should have to define their priorities and agendas. Smith points out: "Building a research community is an important part of building research capacity and research culture. The purpose of a research community is that researchers need to communicate and contest ideas, they need to operate in a system where some basic values about knowledge and research are understood and shared, …In other word they [Pacific researchers] need to breathe, talk, drink and eat knowledge and research and scholarship…" (ibid: p.8). Pacific researchers must also take into account Bishop's (1999:17) advice in terms of Maori context and that is to caution that research and teaching must never simplify and commodify Maori knowledge and history but must enhance indigenous capacities in education. Further he suggests that indigenous metaphors and relationship types, (in the case of Maori, whanau metaphors and whanau-type relationships) must be used in education contexts (ibid: 174-175).

Identifying Research Priorities

For Pacific education and teacher education the need to identify priority areas of research is pivotal to our development. Priority areas may differ from country to country and institution to institution. However some general agendas may include some of the hopes participants articulated for Pacific children that may also be topics related to pedagogy and learning such as:

1. the inclusion of strong indigenous/local knowledge base in curriculum-this includes a radical reorientation of teacher education programs. This to ensure Pacific children undertake an education that will enable them to be strong in their own cultures
2. the examining of indigenous cultural pedagogies to see how these may have implications on our work-this needs further research.
3. the examining of local and indigenous epistemologies and the implications of these on education
4. the identifying of philosophies of teaching and learning and hopefully the drawing up of collective philosophies of teaching and learning (our collective Kaupapa)
5. Using indigenous Pacific conceptual frameworks eg Kakala, to enhance teachers and teacher education in reconceptualising pedagogy and learning
6. the examination of the impact of globalisation on local institutional development, curriculum and ethos
7. the examining of the impacts of attempts to blend local/ indigenous and global or "new ideas" from "outside".
8. a re examination of the standard offerings of teacher education (a little social foundations of education courses, some education psychology/ human development courses, some arts and the practicum). There is perhaps research needed here to see whether in "these New Times" whether we can use what Allan Luke (2005) refers to as a reconceptualist model of teacher education. This is where we define what type of persons/ child we want for our futures then define/ draw up curriculum offerings to suit. This is referred to as "The New Basics". We may need to define as Pacific

educators the nature of new basics we would like to offer for our own contexts. This is best done through rigorous research by Pacific researchers.

The ultimate goal of these priorities are to "facilitate the empowering of students with an indigenous knowledge base to understand and evaluate conventional science [and school offerings that are a result of global trends], and to make judicious choices between their indigenous knowledge and conventional science [or other global introductions] when such situation arise" (George, 1999:92).

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