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**Seeking Transformative Partnerships:
Schools, University and the Practicum in Papua New Guinea**

Thesis submitted by
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in November 2009

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Education
James Cook University

Statement of sources

I declare that the thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given

Signed

20 November 2009

Date

Statement of Contribution of Others

Throughout the development and writing of the thesis I have had substantial discussion and feedback from my supervisors, but have maintained responsibility for all decisions regarding the intellectual development of the project.

I received financial support from AUSAID through the Australian Development Scholarship award that also paid for return airfares from Townsville to Goroka, PNG to access documents examined in the study. A further \$AUD 450.00 was paid by AUSAID for proof reading of the thesis. I also received financial support from the Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences Graduate Funding, School of Education at James Cook University, and the University of Goroka, PNG.

In accordance with the JCU Minimum Resources Policy, and from a School of Education Internal Research Award, \$AUD1786 to conduct a visit to University of Wollongong to discuss the Knowledge Building Communities initiative there in 2005. A further \$AUD1000 was awarded to fund my travel, accommodation and conference fees at the 2007 AARE conference in Adelaide.

Signed

20 November 2009

Date

Acknowledgement

The study was conducted using policy and enactment documents from the University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea and so I thank UOG for enabling me to access these key documents and to examine them for the purposes of this study. I acknowledge the assistance of the helpful staff at the University of Papua New Guinea Library, University of Goroka Library, and National Research Institute in PNG, James Cook University Library, and the School Liaison Office at UOG for all other support material and literature needed for this study.

In 2005 the JCU School of Education funded my trip to Wollongong to collect material on the benchmark *Knowledge Building Communities* as part of my literature review search. In 2006 the Faculty of Arts, Education, and the Social Sciences through its Graduate Research Scheme funded my travel to the AARE conference in Adelaide where I presented a refereed paper. In the same year AUSAID funded my field trip to PNG to access policy documents that largely comprise the data in this thesis. I wish to thank all those involved and the organisations for their support.

I am very grateful to my sponsors AUSAID in collaboration with the PNG government for the scholarship that covered tuition, health insurance, and living allowances for me and my dependents. Thanks to the JCU AUSAID Liaison Officer Alex Salvador who was helpful and supportive throughout my studies. The JCU School of Education also provided good support with quality office space, stationery supplies, computer, and efficient services in information technology. I thank the Head of School and all the support staff especially Shane Mackay in Information Technology for computer assistance I constantly needed in the early part of my studies. My employer, the University of Goroka also supported me financially hence my appreciation to the Staff Development Unit at UOG, in particular the Office of the Vice Chancellor and the Staff Development Officer, Mark Saghon for regular updates and communication.

In particular I would like express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my co-supervisors, Associate Professor Angela Hill and Associate Professor Malcolm Vick, of the School of Education for their time, effort, and confidence in this study. Without your constructive criticisms, positive encouragement and guidance, and practical assistance I would not have completed this thesis. Thank

you very much Angela and Malcolm for your invaluable support and understanding as demonstrated in the collaborative partnership we had.

Thanks to my immediate and extended families especially my brother Kasper in PNG for regular contact, family updates, and brotherly encouragement. In Townsville Michaela Solon provided me and my family lots of moral support and was a good 'big sister' to my sons, "thank you so much, Mikey." Throughout the study half my immediate family, my husband Jerry, my daughter Irene and my children's aunty Jastina had to remain in PNG whilst my sons Jerome and Marcel lived with me in Australia. Only they know best our pains having lived through the experiences of culture shock for the boys, and collectively, the financial sacrifices, and constant emotional roller coasters. To Irene, Jerome, Marcel, and Jastina, I offer my thanks with love and to Jerry, for your unending support throughout the course of my studies and for traveling this journey with me despite the challenges.

Finally, I am grateful to my parents Asap Pirou and Poke Kula who struggled with the little they had in order for me and my four brothers to receive formal education alongside *Pasin blong ples* (customs of the land). It is to you both *Tinang* (my mother) and *Tamong* (my father) that I wish to dedicate this thesis.

Abstract

Contemporary Papua New Guinea is shaped by geographical isolation, population expansion, a predominant subsistence economy, by colonial, and post-colonial histories, and by neocolonialism in the context of globalization. Within this context, education, economic, and social goals, institutionally constituted, are shaped by bureaucracy and a regime of policy. Recent developments in teacher education, nationally and internationally, highlight the importance of partnerships. While the system itself is highly westernised partnerships that are effective in promoting quality teacher education for the full range of social groups in PNG society will need to recognise and respond to Indigenous knowledges and understandings of partnerships.

This study explores the problematic, yet critical nature of teacher education partnerships in PNG in the context of globalised policy and post-colonial reform agendas. On the one hand, teacher education institutions operate as state controlled policy and reform sites to promote government goals of economic development. On the other hand, teacher education institutions are also expected to fulfil their educational roles as democratic sites that promote issues of social justice. Within that context partnerships are intended to add to capacity building through the enhancement of teaching and learning, research, scholarship and community engagement in a modern university context.

The study involves two distinct components. Firstly, it documents and analyses historical partnerships in teacher education. Secondly, it examines contemporary teacher education partnerships including the place of western and Indigenous knowledge systems through key teacher education documents from the University of Goroka (UOG).

The study engages both critical and postcolonial lenses drawing largely from Kincheloe and McLaren's (1994) conceptual framework of critical theory to identify and analyse power relations that are social and historically constituted, and further to uncover the role of language as central to the formation of relations of power. Critical theory provides the framework for uncovering power relations embedded in discourse. Postcolonial theory provides the context for an analysis of knowledge and power from an Indigenous perspective. Discourse as power is examined in three ways; essentially dominant as 'power over', mutually shared as 'power with', and intrinsically generated as 'power-from-within'. The study draws on Fairclough's (1992, 1995) three-dimensional framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyse key policy reform and enactment documents, specific to the secondary teacher education sector in PNG from 1997 – 2005. It does so, firstly, to uncover how

the discourses of university teacher education programs position schoolteachers in teacher education, secondly, to ascertain how university teacher education programs conceptualise partnerships, and thirdly, to highlight and establish the need for socially transformative partnerships in the context of PNG.

Reform discourses, articulated in UOG's mission and vision statements, and embodied in its curriculum and pedagogy through course programs and the teaching practice handbook, as well as through curriculum review reports, consistently affirmed the dominant university position through 'power over' discourses to shape the nature of teacher education programs, including partnerships. Colonial discourses largely shape partnerships as cooperative agreements of shared understandings to serve a common purpose. Schoolteachers are positioned as cooperative and obligatory public servants. Post-colonial discourses extend beyond to establish bureaucratic systems that shape partnerships as regulated mechanisms whereby schoolteachers' roles and responsibilities are defined and monitored. Scientific, technical, and rationalistic knowledge shape teacher education programs with focus on training teachers to transmit knowledge. More recently neocolonial partnership discourses are largely conceived as marketing networks that function like business ventures. Schoolteachers are positioned as professional workers serving State goals of economic rationalisation as they engage in discourses of marketisation and new knowledge economy.

Although teacher education policy texts draw from globalised policy reform agendas to reflect international practices, fundamentally the notion of partnerships in PNG is shaped by social practices of relationships constituted by wider political, social, moral, spiritual, and ethical domains of Indigenous societies. In post-colonial PNG binary oppositions, like formal / informal, English / vernaculars, and partnerships / relationships, exist paradoxically hence the contentious nature of partnerships and marginalisation of schoolteachers. As Thaman (2001) contends, "traditional cultural values underpin much of what people emphasize and think about" (p.1) and so in the contexts of formal schooling, many teachers occupy culturally ambiguous positions (Thaman, 2001).

For PNG, schoolteachers serve in communities where they are constantly engaged in social relationships with others. In important respects, their experience of power is 'power with'; one of sharing in relationship with others. The pre-colonial *Barter Trade* system in PNG provides the context for a reconceptualised modern Indigenous teacher learning framework of social transformation. Consequently a transformation of Indigenous Melanesian knowledges and wisdom is conceived

through a theorising of *Pasin*. Drawing on notions of ‘power-from-within’ and ‘power with’ *Pasin* conceives learning as social practice of participation and interaction. *Pasin* entails four interrelated cycles of learning; *Lainim Pasin* to know, *Soim Pasin* to do, *Skelim Pasin* to reflect, *Stretim Pasin* to resolve, which collectively encompass *Luksave Pasin* to become. *Pasin LukSave* constitutes and is constituted by social reciprocity which shapes the nature of the relationship. In a modern university context, *Pasin* is inherently an optimistic outlook hence the study also draws from the framework of robust hope (Halpin, 1997, 2003). The central significance is the emphasis placed on integration of Indigenous Melanesian knowledges and western knowledge system with the possibility of transformative partnership models of inquiry communities in teacher education.

Power and how it operates remains an under-explored area in education, especially in PNG education. To address this issue, the study of how teacher education documents construct partnerships examines structural, ideological, and discursive power, with the view to transforming dominant practices. The study is limited to the case of UOG in PNG consequently; it has no capacity to generalise to other institutions or contexts. However, its analysis of the way power operates in the problematic relationship between western knowledge and Indigenous Melanesian knowledges and wisdom in the teacher education program at UOG, proffers the possibility of a transformation of the relationships between these knowledge systems, the institution and the communities it serves. This understanding offers insights into the possible relationships between Indigenous Melanesian knowledges and western knowledge and practice that are potentially of wider value.

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Glossary

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Capacity building | The emphasis is on participation whilst at the same time drawing upon the strengths of others to enhance the community. |
| Community | People who share their lived experiences with others. Communities have the capacity to influence transformation of policies and practices |
| Communities of practice | Diverse individuals and groups working together as a learning community for purposes of capacity building. |
| Cooperating teacher | The classroom teacher whose class the student teacher is assigned to teach throughout teaching practice. |
| Culture | As used by anthropologists – a way of life especially in traditional Indigenous contexts. As used in the discourses of education – a systematic organisation, e.g., school culture, university culture. |
| Indigenous knowledges | The use of Indigenous knowledges or Indigenous knowledges and wisdom in the plural form represents the different worldviews or ways of knowing in Indigenous epistemology. |
| Indigenous knowledge systems | When discussed as a system in a modern context, the word system takes on the plural form, ‘systems’ to represent the collective Indigenous knowledges |
| Melanesia | Includes PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu; preservice and inservice students at UOG originate from these three Melanesian States. |
| Partnerships | Collaborative teacher education partnerships as used globally. |
| Post-colonial (ism) | The terms post-colonial and post-colonialism with a hyphen after ‘post’ refer to the historical period after colonisation, or the process of political decolonisation. |
| Postcolonial(ism) | The terms postcolonial and postcolonialism without the hyphen refer to postcolonial theory that originated out of postcolonialism as a cultural movement to signify ongoing influences of western imperialism. |
| Practicum | Teaching practice or annual extended school experience. |

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Preservice teachers | The equivalent to preservice final year students at UOG. |
| Relationships | Social reciprocity and participation of power sharing. |
| Schoolteachers | Indigenous secondary schoolteachers or practicing teachers. |
| Stakeholders | Preservice teachers, school students, parents, schoolteachers, teacher education institutions, business communities, industry, unions, department of education divisions and personnel, other government departments, churches, non government organisations and the general public. They are all considered as partners in education. The definition does not include unions, and business and industry. |
| Student teachers | The equivalent to preservice teachers. |
| Teaching Practice | Practicum or annual extended school experience. |
| Tok Pisin | PNG Pidgin, a lingua franca. |

Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CEC | Churches Education Council |
| CHE | Commission for Higher Education |
| COP | Communities of Practice |
| DE | Department of Education (prior to the restructure) |
| GTC | Goroka Teachers College |
| HERST | Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology |
| HOD | Head of Department |
| JCU | James Cook University |
| KBC | Knowledge Building Communities |
| MTC | Madang Teachers College (an affiliated Primary Teachers College of UOG) |
| NEB | National Education Board |
| NDOE | National Department of Education |
| NRI | National Research Institute |
| OHE | Office of Higher Education (prior to the restructure) |
| OHERST | Office of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (under current restructure) |
| PIN | Pacific Island Nation(s) |
| PEB | Provincial Education Board(s) |
| PHS | Provincial High Schools(s) |
| PNG | Papua New Guinea |
| PNGITE | Papua New Guinea Institute of Teacher Education (Primary) |
| PVC | Pro Vice Chancellor |

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| PVC – A & D | Pro Vice Chancellor – Academic & Development |
| PVC – Admin. | Pro Vice Chancellor – Administration |
| QBTR | Queensland Board of Teacher Registration |
| SHS | Secondary High School(s) |
| SIL | Summer Institute of Linguistics |
| SPIN | South Pacific Island Nation(s) |
| SSE | Secondary School Inspector (s) |
| TSC | Teaching Services Commission |
| UOG | University of Goroka |
| UOW | University of Wollongong |
| UPNG | University of Papua New Guinea |
| UPNG-GC | University of Papua New Guinea – Goroka Campus |
| VC | Vice Chancellor |