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**RADICAL CHANGES IN INDIGENOUS
GOVERNANCE: UNDERSTANDING A FIJIAN
EXPERIENCE, 2006-2012**

by

Alisi Waqanika Daurewa

A supervised research project submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master in Development Studies

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March, 2013

DECLARATION

Statement by Author

I, Alisi Waqanika Daurewa, declare that this supervised research paper is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published, or substantially overlapping with material submitted for the award of any other degrees at any institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the text.

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Statement by Supervisor

This supervised research paper was researched and written under my supervision and to my knowledge is the sole work of Ms Alisi Waqanika Daurewa.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the loving memory of my parents, Mosese Vitabu Waqanika of Naivi, Natumua, Tavuki in Kadavu, and, Sainiana Talenalagilagi Tamanikairukurukiuvalau of Bureta, Ovalau Island, Central Fiji.



(L-R Sainiana Talenalagilagi Tamanikairukurukiuvalau, Mosese Vitabu Waqanika. Source: Family Album)

To my life-partner and dearest, dearest, friend, Petero Rokolekutu Daurewa (Tukai nona Yaca), of Yavusa Nakamakama of Dorokavu and later, Nukutubu, Rewa, (whose ancestors resided in Narauyaba in Nakauvadra, Ra, but relocated to other parts of Fiji, including the Rewa Delta, centuries ago). Your unconditional love, support, wisdom and deep knowledge, contributed in a big way to enabling the completion of this research project.

Noqu va'vinavinaka vuabale!

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To the following who understood my absence by giving me space; 'Fitu, Tau Seru, 'Uga, Miriam, Margaret, Adi Kakua, Sister Wati, Annie, Aunty Ruci, Nei 'Melia, Rusila, 'Meli and Lu and, St Monica Sector.

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ABSTRACT

Radical Changes in Indigenous Governance: Understanding a Fijian Experience, 2006-2012

This Supervised Research Project (SRP), DG600, looks at issues relevant to the iTaukei administration. The rationale for the research was to inquire about the 2006 'coup' and policies relating to the iTaukei Administration Board. Historically, the objective of the iTaukei Administration Board is to ensure the good governance and well-being of the iTaukei society. However, evidence from this research show it was quite ineffective with poor accountability and a general lack of transparency.

As part of the Post-2006 government's new direction, the People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress was created as an avenue to guide a new way forward for Fiji. This study examined the impact of this policy document on the iTaukei Administration, and, used the example of provincial councils in two provinces, which differ in their traditional governance structures.

This research employed two methodological approaches. An overarching approach which developed a theory from the data collected, and, a social constructivist approach which embraced individual knowledge relying on its social construction. Qualitative data was collected from primary and secondary sources. These included archival records and in-depth interviews with several individuals, most of whom preferred to remain anonymous.

As this research shows, there are several implications of the People's Charter on the iTaukei Administration. While the changes may be radical, they ensure that good governance principles are characterised in the operations of the iTaukei Administration. Given the aura of sanctification attached to this institution, which by tradition has always served the interests of the chiefs, yet, evolved over time to meeting the agenda of iTaukei political leaders, would there have been any other way?

ABBREVIATIONS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
BLV	Bose Levu Vakaturaga
DAS	Development Assistance Scheme
DO	District Officer
FHL	Fijian Holdings Limited
GCC	Great Council of Chiefs
HoD	Head of Division
KPC	Kadavu Provincial Council
KDC	Kadavu Development Company
KHL	Kadavu Holdings Limited
MNT	Mata ni Tikina
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NZAid	New Zealand Aid
PCDF	Partners in Community Development Fiji
PCCPP	People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress
PDB	Provincial Development Board
RPC	Rewa Provincial Council
RPHCL	Rewa Provincial Holding Company Limited
SART	Senior Assistant Roko Tui
SRP	Supervised Research Project
TLTB	iTaukei Land Trust Board
TNK	Turaga ni Koro
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
USP	University of the South Pacific
VKB	Vola ni Kawa Bula

GLOSSARY

Bose ni Tikina	Tikina or District Council
Buli	head of a sub-division of a Province known as Tikina
manuduitagi	birds that sing different tune. iTaukei metaphor to describe a governance structure that is circular where chiefs have individual sovereignty
Soli ni Yasana	annual tax contribution for development paid to the Provincial Office by all iTaukei male registered in the Vola ni Kawa Bula from 21 to 60 years
tabua	whales tooth used in ceremonial exchanges
talaidredre	disobedient, stubborn
talanoa	informal consultation, also means story telling
Tikina	an administrative sub-unit of a province
Turaga ni Koro	elected or appointed administrative head of a village
vakavanua	used to describe wayward behavior but also means, in the nature of the land, people and customs
vanua	land, people and custom
vi mataki or vei mataki	system of representation and is the equivalent of a foreign affairs function in a chiefly village
veiwekani	related to
Vola ni Kawa Bula	a register of social kinship for the iTaukei

waka

roots of the yaqona (piper methysticum)
plant prepared and used as a social and
ceremonial drink

yavu

mound, house platform or foundation

**Ni duka na wai mai cake,
ena mai vuvu na wai era**

this water is murky because its source is
dirty. iTaukei idiom descriptive of poor
leadership. It implies that the impact of
leadership is found in the state of those
being led.

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CHAPTER 1

RADICAL CHANGE

“...in its original conception, the Fijian Administration was an application of the principle of Indirect Rule to the administration of Native Affairs with the hope of developing a modern organisation by building on the old institutions...The Fijian Administration has failed to develop into this kind of institution, with the result that it continues to be seen in terms of the chiefly system...” (Nayacakalou 1975:92)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This research project examines leadership and its application within an administrative system that was adopted from a foreign concept. Despite decolonisation in the late 20th century, this system called the provincial council governs an indigenous society within the nation and has become a part of an institution that is embedded within a modern governance system. Over the decades, this indigenous society has embraced the institution as traditional despite evidence to the contrary. A new direction, however, is being promoted by the new leadership which includes, diluting the powers of the provincial councils by a substantial reduction in funding support and a change in its governance structure to improve accountability. This study attempts therefore to identify the changes that are occurring in the provincial council and to diagnose whether concepts of leadership will be affected by these changes. Given the closeness of the provincial councils to the chiefly structure, one wonders how the current leadership’s decision in April 2012, to disestablish the Great Council of Chiefs (Bose Levu Vakaturaga), is going to impact on this, too!

The chapter introduces the study, and provides the background to the significance of the study aim, research objectives and research questions. The final section provides a breakdown of the structure of the thesis.

1.1 NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW DIRECTION

On 5 December 2006, Fiji experienced its third removal of a democratic government, when the military, led by Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, ousted Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase and his Cabinet. The earlier 'coups' of 1987 and 2000 purported to be racially motivated.¹ The supporters of the earlier 'coups' alleged Indo-Fijians would threaten guaranteed supremacy of iTaukei (indigenous Fijian) political leadership. A powerful pressure group in iTaukei society, the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC), also supported the earlier 'coups'.

To the contrary though, the 2006 military 'coup' justified its action on allegations of racism and corruption. By this time, the Great Council of Chiefs², had changed its stance on 'coups' and cited the military's action as illegal, and, an abuse of human rights. Some members of the public found the chiefs' inconsistency to be hypocritical and expressed their opinion in the local newspapers³. Furthermore, the contradiction in the Great Council of Chiefs was also brewing internally with

¹ The majority of Indo-Fijians in Fiji are descendants of Indians who were indentured from 1879 by the British to provide labour for sugar cane plantations.

² For the purpose of this study, I shall use the English translation of Bose Levu Vakaturaga (BLV).

³ See Daurewa, A, 'Cry Not My Beloved Country', Fiji Times, Saturday, 21 April 2007.

some of its members, openly supporting the 2006 'coup'⁴. An alternative government was formed and by 2009, Bainimarama, as Fiji's Prime Minister in the United Nations 64th General Assembly said:

Fiji has had a colonial history which created anomalies and inequalities the legacy of which resonates today. Consequently and of the making of the politicians our post-colonial period has been punctuated with political instability on each occasion that a new government is voted into power. The old elite which benefited financially from the previous established government had been able to successfully destabilise the government and to replace it with its own supporters and representatives.⁵

However, there are differing views to Bainimarama's justification for the 2006 'coup'. Some claim it was a continuation of unfinished business between Bainimarama and Qarase from the 2000 'coup' (Fraenkel et al, 2009). Events that keep unfolding since December 2006 appear to support this argument. On another but related note, some interpret the removal of Qarase as a vengeful attack against the iTaukei for various reasons, key amongst which, firstly, because a majority of them supported the two previous racially motivated 'coups' of 1987 and 2000. Secondly, the Qarase government was voted into power by a majority of the iTaukei in the May 2006 General Elections. Thirdly, the Great Council of Chiefs, the strongest pressure group on iTaukei affairs was disestablished in April 2012 because it was too politicised, having supported the 1987 and 2000 'coups', but, not the 2006 'coup'. Fourthly, the Methodist

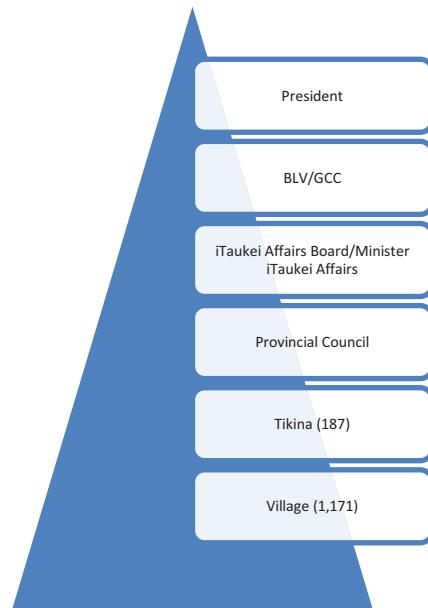
⁴ Some GCC members who supported the Military coup de'tat were Tui Macuata (paramount chief of Macuata province), Ratu Aisea Katonivere and Ro Eveli Mataitini, younger brother of Vunivalu (warlord) of Rewa Province.

⁵⁵ Consulted Fiji Government website www.fiji.gov/fj/index.php, 29/9/2009, 64th Session of UN

Church, which claims a majority iTaukei membership, is disallowed from holding annual choir competition through which it usually collects an average one million dollars annually from its members in Fiji and overseas. As a result, the administration which includes officials alleged to be politically aligned to the Qarase Government is affected adversely through a loss in their financial upkeep. In 2010, a moratorium was placed on annual conferences of the Methodist Church, till after the 2014 general election. However, later in 2012, the Government changed its mind and allowed the Church to have its annual conference exclusive of choir competitions, in August. The event was a far cry from the traditionally elaborate event it used to be. The outcome of this conference was a changed stance by the Church leadership which announced it would work with the Government.

A new direction however is being promoted by the leaders of the current government. As a roadmap for progress into the future, the People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress (People's Charter) was launched in 2008. It is a policy document formulated with assistance by members of the civil society including the head of the Catholic Church, Archbishop Petero Mataca. The People's Charter is currently being implemented for economic, political and social changes. One of the key principles of the People's Charter, "to Mainstream Indigenous Fijians in a modern progressive Fiji", and, its 7th pillar, "developing an integrated development structure at the divisional level", invites interest for this research project for its reference to the iTaukei. This appears

to offer a further challenge to iTaukei society, which at present makes up 55%, of Fiji's total population (837,271)⁶. This study, however, will focus only on the local government system for indigenous Fijians that was adopted from the British colonial government. The following figure, **1.1** sourced from the iTaukei Affairs Board refers:



The administrative system above is conical in structure with six strata. This study examines the fourth stratum from the top, which is the provincial council. The provincial council is the arm of the iTaukei Administration that recommends and monitors development for the iTaukei living in villages which currently total 1,171 in Fiji. Most of these villages are based in the rural areas under Tikina or districts of which there are 187 in Fiji. There are 14 provinces in Fiji and each has

⁶ Consult the Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics Census Report, 2007.

a provincial council office with the 'Roko Tui'⁷ as the head civil servant, or chief executive officer of the province. The provincial council through the provincial office (administrative bureaucracy) usually receives funding from two (2) sources, an annual government grant that covers salaries and administrative costs and an annual tax levied on all iTaukei males over the age of 21 (Rika et al., 2008). Additionally, some provincial council benefit from alternative sources of funding such as dividends from business investments.

The demise of the Great Council of Chiefs, (the second stratum from the top), and other likely changes in the provincial council because of the People's Charter, provide the impetus for this study.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

While provincial councils of various types exist in some religious and other civil society groups⁸, the organisations, termed 'Provincial Councils' in Fiji are better understood as local government institutions that administer development for people in a certain area. In the context of local government, some former British colonies such as India and South Africa now receive fiscal allocations from the

⁷France (1969) explained that in the pre-Colonial period the title Roko Tui was widely used in the Rewa and Tailevu areas for the chief priest. These titles still exist but for chiefs who may not necessarily be traditional priests. The arrival of Christianity rendered this role inactive and so the Colonial Government used the title for their provincial institutions.

⁸ Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League in Canada. As it appeared on 13/9/2011 via <http://www.cwl.on.ca/> Accessed on 17/9/2011.

central coffers via finance commissions⁹. Others, like the Fijian provincial councils, are funded by both government and the people who pay taxes to their respective provincial councils.

Provincial administration had its genesis in the Roman Empire for example during the rule of Augustus from 43 BC to AD 69. Augustus allowed self-government for his various conquests, which became provincial communities. The local authorities in these provinces were required to levy taxes, which were then delivered to the Roman officers. When Rome colonised England in the 5th century, local chiefs were used as agents to implement the decisions of the Romans. The English discontinued this form of administration when the Romans left after four hundred years.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, a similar system of indirect rule was applied by Britain firstly in Fiji by Governor Gordon (Nayacakalou, 1975:3, Scarr, 1984:82, Durutalo, A, 1997:205) and later, in Nigeria under Lord Lugard who served as governor general between 1914 and 1919 (Perham, 1941). Over time, some former British colonies like India, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea and Fiji, to name a few, adopted a system of provincial administration for their mode of local government.

⁹ Dr Laksiri Fernando, Sun, 20/3/2011, 'Redesigning the Provincial Council in Sri Lanka', Asian Tribunal, Vol.11, No.140. Accessed on 17/9/2011 from <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/03/20/redesigning...> as it appeared on 15/9/2011.

1.2.2 THE ORIGIN OF INDIRECT RULE IN FIJI

The iTaukei Administration began informally in the 1840s as a group of chiefs who acted as advisors on native Fijian political and social matters to European planters, traders and Christian missionaries, to name a few.

When Sir Arthur Gordon arrived in 1875 after Cession to govern Fiji, Darwin's theory of the evolution of man was already rattling the Christian religious establishments in Britain. This was also the era of industrial revolution in Europe, particularly Britain, France and Germany, which demanded businesses for cheap raw material and low labour cost for massive productivity, out of which, widespread socio-economic changes, invited the interest of European scholars. Saddled with this background, Gordon was met by a native race threatened with extinction by a foreign contagious disease. He was alarmed that the iTaukei population had dropped in 1800, from 250,000 to 200,000, and by 1874 to 140,000 (Narayan, 1984:17)¹⁰. The 1875 measles epidemic decreased their number further. After Gordon's departure in 1880, the iTaukei population dropped again in the Post 1st World War influenza epidemic at 83,000 in 1919 (Roth, 1973: vii).

Encouraged by his Christian faith,¹¹ and, convinced that native culture was backward and similar to his Scottish ancestors of the 14th century (Wiener,

¹⁰ Native Fijian population continued to decline due to the 1875 measles epidemic and a larger number in the Post 1st World War influenza epidemic, till the iTaukei dropped to its lowest point at 83,000 in 1919.

¹¹ See Qalo-Qiolevu, J, (S95001231) Migration and Resettlement:Qiolevu Road Settlement: A History of the Migrants from 1973-2000, Research Project HY 402, University of the South Pacific, Suva.

2009), Gordon believed he had a Divine mission to save the iTaukei from extinction and to elevate them to the 19th century.¹² Secondly, land, without which the people's social construction would be derogated, was quickly being alienated by Europeans with the connivance of chiefs for increased agricultural activities, particularly cotton, during the period 1840 to 1874.

Gordon was conscious of his responsibility to ensuring the objectives of his government were met. He therefore responded to the circumstances that surrounded him by creating a development and political framework under the Native Affairs Ordinance of 1876¹³. John Bates Thurston¹⁴, who served as Chief Secretary and Acting Premier under Cakobau¹⁵, was instrumental in this creation. Thurston later became Governor of Fiji, by which time he had lived in Fiji for twenty-five years.

From the perspective of the iTaukei, this structure enabled chiefs to participate as advisors in a prestigious advisory body which recommended Fijian legislation

¹² Perham (1941) explained that the Colonial Office of the British Empire trained and prepared young university graduates who were then deployed and sent to work as administrators in the colonies. This study assumes however, that their background contributed to the way they moulded their decisions during those difficult times. For example, 'modern' Eurocentric based development theories which saw tradition and culture as hinderance to development could easily have prevailed during this period.

¹³ See Qalo-Qiolevu, J, (S95001231) Migration and Resettlement:Qiolevu Road Settlement: A History of the Migrants from 1973-2000, Research Project HY 402, University of the South Pacific, Suva.

¹⁴ See Brown, (1973) for Thurston's life in Fiji, where he lived for 25 years before assuming office as Governor (1888-1897). Thurston was a plantation owner and took office as chief secretary + Acting Premier under the short-lived Cakobau Government (1871-1873). He was the Colonial Secretary and Attorney General under Governor Gordon. When a system of taxation and administration over the natives was planned, he introduced the idea of provinces and districts to be administered by the *Roko Tui* and *Buli* (district administrative officer), and that they had to grow crops. He was a close friend of 2 powerful chiefs, Cakobau of Bau, and, Golea of Cakaudrove.

¹⁵ Ratu Seru Cakobau was the chief who was the most accomplished politician in Fiji in the 19th century. With the help of white settlers, he led a government dominated by Europeans. He was also a friend of the Wesleyan missionaries but did not convert to Christianity till later in his life. He led 12 other chiefs closely connected to him to cede Fiji to Britain in 1874. See Brown, 1973, France, 1969, Nicole, 2011

to the Governors.¹⁶ While the membership was exclusive only to those who supported Cakobau and were sympathetic to European colonialism, there was consciousness though for good leadership. Dias (1977) observed in her thesis that the initial council of chiefs, consisted of responsible leaders who would monitor each other's behavior to ensure good governance. For example, when a Roko Tui who was also the paramount chief for his province was found to have told some untruth to his people, other chiefs within the council reprimanded him for poor behavior and warned he had brought disrepute to his province.

The council was empowered to recommend native Fijian Legislation to the Governors and was regarded as the official voice of the native Fijian people. This was put into effect by native magistrates in the courts. The establishment of the provincial system, which demarcated land into provinces for ease of administration and resource management, resulted in mobilising hamlets into villages (Narayan, 1984:17). This was not only an integral part of the overall system of indirect rule, but economically necessary.

Under the British Empire, orders from London were very clear. All colonies must pay for themselves. So, for Gordon, ruling indirectly through existing authority figures and structures were a cheaper option for local administration. Colonial officers from England were the more expensive option, and not likely to be provided by the Colonial Office. Prominent Fijian anthropologist, Dr Rusiate

¹⁶ The Council of Chiefs, as the official voice of the native Fijians, was the pinnacle of this hierarchical structure. Dias (1977:42) however observed that the Council of Chiefs worked under enormous constraints for the British had the political and economic power.

Nayacakalou, notes (1973:3) however that while Gordon and later John Bates Thurston prided themselves in creating such a system, policies suggested the system was supposed to be a temporary one.

1.2.3 RE-ORGANISATION OF THE FIJIAN ADMINISTRATION BY SUKUNA

After a temporary removal by governors who perceived indirect rule via the Native Administration as primarily for the welfare of the chiefs, Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna, the first Fijian to gain a knighthood and a university degree, reinstated this system as Secretary for Fijian Affairs under Governor Mitchell in 1945. His father, Joni Madraiwiwi, was a nephew of Cakobau, the chief who led Fiji's Deed of Cession in 1874, (Macnaught 1982:52). The Native Affairs administration was re-organised by Sukuna as the Fijian Affairs under legislation Cap 120. Fijian academics, Dr Alumita Durutalo (1997) and Dr Ropate Qalo (2008), observed that, while the number of provinces was reduced from nineteen to fourteen, to streamline the Fijian administration system for efficient management and cost reduction, it (Cap 120) only compounded the promotion of inequality within Fijian society that was introduced by Gordon's Native Ordinance 1876. The impact of this reorganisation was that traditional *vanua* (tribal) politics that was once independent was progressively neutralised and made more subservient to the Fijian administration.

Since its re-organisation, the Fijian administration has undergone several reviews including a name change to iTaukei Affairs under the current interim

government. The iTaukei has generally come to accept the provincial council as the institution that keeps abreast of development on the ground. Furthermore, they understand its involvement in politics as cultural. That is, the chiefs are assumed to act as political middle persons on behalf of their people.

1.2.4 THE REVIEW OF THE ITAUKEI ADMINISTRATION

While there have been several reviews of the iTaukei Administration since pre-Independence, overall, most appear to share the common view that the iTaukei administrative system has in fact, become an impediment to the iTaukei's economic progress.¹⁷ A number of studies of Fiji's political development have blamed the series of Post-Independence 'coup' on the nation's colonial past¹⁸. However, S. Durutalo (1986), A. Durutalo (1997) and Ratuva (1999) question the authenticity of the Fijian administration as an institution for the welfare of the iTaukei, and argue that the iTaukei administration has instead, been an enabling tool for hegemonic elite, so that effectively, it is only a small elite group of chiefs, politicians and technocrats who benefit from such a system in the name of and at the cost of iTaukei development.

¹⁷ Spate (1959), Burns (1960), France (1969), Nayacakalou (1975), Macnaught (1982) Narayan (1984), Durutalo (1986), Naidu (1989), Lal (1992), Plange (1996), Durutalo (1997), Ratuva (1999), Lal (2010), Qalo (2008), Rika et al (2008), Robertson, R & Sutherland, W (2001) and Nicole (2011).

¹⁸ Taken from Robertson, R and Sutherland, W (2001), Robertson R, Tamanisau A, Knapman B (1988), Lal B (1992), and Norton R, (2009), The 2006 Military Take Over in Fiji

The first comprehensive reviews were conducted almost ten years after the solidification of the iTaukei (then Fijian) Administration under the Fijian Affairs Act (Cap 120) in 1945. Amongst those reviews commissioned after 1945 were: Spate (1959), who examined the iTaukei's economic problems and prospects; and Burns et al. (1960) who analysed the national resources and population trends of Fiji. Spate's (1959:10,11) report recommended several changes including an overhaul of the Fijian Regulations, increasing the executive and financial responsibility of Provincial and Tikina (district) councils and, cash remuneration for services including those by the Turaga ni Koro (TNK). In 1966, the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) formally approved some modifications that contradicted Spate's (1959) proposal, such as the abolishment of the posts of Buli (head of the Tikina/district Council) and Turaga ni Koro (village headman).

The report by Burns and his colleagues (1960: 30, 178) was sympathetic to the iTaukei respondents who recommended the immediate abolishment of the Fijian administration and proposed its disestablishment in areas where local government had been set up, claiming that the Fijian Affairs Board was an unnecessary expense and the well-being of the iTaukei could be left to the provincial administration (then District Officer or DO). Reviews of the functioning of the Fijian Administration after Independence were not so different from their predecessors. Cole et al. (1984) reviewed the Fijian provincial administration and made some innovative recommendations such as a consultative process with those who were affected; legal and economic

responsibility to the village council, the lowest strata of the iTaukei administration; and; a third of *Soli ni Yasana* (annual communal tax collection) collected be refunded to individual villages as incentive because respondents consulted saw little tangible evidence of benefit from the *Soli ni Yasana*.

Prominent among additional reviews of the iTaukei administration commissioned in the 21st century, was the 2002 review undertaken by chartered accountants, PricewaterhouseCoopers.¹⁹ Its method of data collection was perhaps the most comprehensive and the sample of respondents included other ethnic groups, as well as rural and urban residents. The PricewaterhouseCoopers review team allowed the Lau Provincial Council to send written submissions because the Review team could not travel to the Lau group of islands.²⁰ The PricewaterhouseCoopers (2002) reported that throughout the interview, every iTaukei who participated in the process acknowledged that the iTaukei Administration had not delivered. Both this and the Burns et al. (1960) reviews shared the recommendation that development for the iTaukei be directly supervised by the central government. PricewaterhouseCoopers (2002) justified this on the grounds that the iTaukei was a majority and their issues should therefore be handled by the central government and not a separate administration. They also proposed a separate bureau to promote culture and

¹⁹ Ministry of Fijian Affairs, Culture & Heritage. Review of Fijian Administration Report Volume 1, 1 February, 2002. Parliament of Fiji, Parliament Paper No. 70 of 2002.

²⁰ The Review Team collected data via 6 consultations through a series of workshops & interview to obtain their views on effectiveness of the iTaukei Administration, and, their expectations of the revamped systems and its performance capability. They interviewed 41% of urban iTaukei (161,335) & 59% of rural iTaukei (234,882).

heritage for the iTaukei and recommended that the Ministry of Fijian Affairs be given the overall responsibility to monitor development for the iTaukei. However, as to be expected because of the proposal to dilute the iTaukei Administration, the Great Council of Chiefs rejected this review and commissioned instead, a 'review of the PricewaterhouseCoopers' review' by Tu'uakitau and others, in 2003. That review recommending an increase in autonomy of the Fijian Administration, with increased funding, was 'blessed' by the chiefs just before the Military 'coup' of December 2006.

1.3 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

This study is significant for various reasons. Firstly, it is an examination of leadership within an indigenous society, the iTaukei. For development purposes, the iTaukei adopted a governance system that was introduced by the British colonial government in the 19th century. Over the years, despite some reactions against this system and recommendation for its removal, it has survived. However, the new direction initiated by the current Government after December 2006, via the People's Charter, should cause some consequential impact on the status quo. Such change to the status quo could be viewed as Fiji's first concerted effort,²¹ to decolonise an institution transferred from its colonial past. Secondly, the new direction questions the survival of a governance structure for over half of Fiji's total population, iTaukei, who have generally believed that provincial councils are traditional despite their colonial

²¹ Despite almost forty years (40) since Independence on 10th October 1970.

orientation (Durutalo, 1997). Thirdly, this study will attempt to demystify an administrative system that is generally considered ineffective²² and exclusively chiefly. Fourthly and perhaps most importantly, a study has yet to be made on the implications of the People's Charter to iTaukei society and this study will be doing this with regards to provincial councils.

Except for Alumita Durutalo (1997)'s thesis on the politicisation of provincial councils, and Rika et al (2008) on accounting and accountability by provincial councils in Fiji, there is a dearth of study on provincial councils in Fiji. The present research into leadership and governance in provincial councils as a more recent examination of the state of the provincial council than Durutalo's (1997), addresses visible features of colonialism inherent in the councils.

1.4 THE AIM

As mentioned earlier, this study attempts to compare the administration of provincial councils, before and since December 2006 when a change in government leadership forcefully promoted a new direction for the country. The People's Charter is a policy strategy formulated in 2008 to clarify the government's new direction. This study has chosen to examine the implications

²² In an interview with the author, on 21 September 2011, Archbishop Petero Mataca, as a young priest in the 1960s saw the Fijian Administration as non-effective, and inefficient. Furthermore, he suggests that poor leadership has contributed to its inability to address the general poor state of rural education.

of the People's Charter for the provincial councils, focusing on the Rewa and Kadavu provincial councils.²³

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research project has three objectives:

- To provide an overview of the Fiji provincial council administrative system from 1876 to pre December 2006.
- To examine the implications of the government's new direction on provincial administration since December 2006.
- To identify gaps in the administrative system of the provincial council that challenge characteristics of good governance.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Nine research questions were addressed to guide the study:

1. What is the current governance structure of the iTaukei Administration?
2. What is the current responsibility of the provincial council?
3. What changes have been taking place in the provincial offices since 2006?
4. How do issues at village level reach the provincial council?
5. Is the provincial council threatened with dilution?
6. What has *not* changed in the provincial councils since December 2006?

²³ The 14 provinces are; Central Division; Naitasiri, Namosi, Rewa, Serua & Tailevu. Eastern Division Kadavu, Lau & Lomaiviti. Northern Division; Bua, Cakaudrove & Macuata, Western Division; Ba, Nadroga/Navosa & Ra.

7. Is there any major infrastructural improvement to the province since 2006?
8. Do the people contribute to these developments?
9. Do the chiefs support the government's development effort?

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE SUPERVISED RESEARCH PROJECT (SRP)

This SRP is divided into six chapters. This chapter has introduced the topic on provincial administration, described briefly the current leadership's new direction, and provided some historical background on Fiji's experience with provincial administration. It also explained the significance, aim and objectives of the study. Chapter two contextualises some development theories relevant to this study. Chapter three explains the methodological framework and method of data collection applied in the study. The fourth chapter highlights some interesting incidents, both historical and modern, in an attempt to better illustrate hegemonic practice as an inherent culture of the provincial administration. This study's reference to hegemony is adopted from Holub's (1992:6) definition as quoted by Ratuva (1999:23) which describes it as:

'a concept that helps to explain on the one hand, how state apparatuses or, political society supported by and supporting a specific economic group, can coerce via its institutions of law, police, army and prisons, the various strata of society into consenting to the status quo'.

Chapter five presents an analysis of the findings of this SRP on the administration and performance of the Kadavu and Rewa Provincial Councils since policies under the Government's new direction were introduced after December 2006.

Chapter six offers concluding remarks for this study and recommendations for the way forward. References to this SRP are listed in a bibliography followed by two appendices.

CHAPTER 2

COLONIAL CULTURE IN DEVELOPMENT

“The real tragedy of our postcolonial world is not that the majority of people had no say in whether or not they wanted this world; rather, it is that the majority have not been given the tools to negotiate this new world” (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Half of a Yellow Sun)²⁴

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Theories of development share the commonality of responding to the essential question on, why rich and poor countries exist, and, how the poor can reach the condition of the rich. These theories generally fall into two categories, the modernisation theory which is based on the European experience of development, and, theories of underdevelopment.

The decline of the old colonial empires prompted the development of modernisation theory in the 1950s and 1960s by social scientists. They are fundamentally premised on the idea of linear paths to growth. They helped politicians who were threatened by competition from the Soviet Union, show third world countries pushing for independence, that sustained development was possible under the western wing, (rather than that of the Soviet Union). Prominent amongst these social scientists was American scholar, Talcott Parsons. Hence the reason some portray modernisation theory as an extension of the foreign policy of America because of the

²⁴ Taken from <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes...Last> accessed 27/4/2011

rationale for American 'expert' intervention and aid which seek to transform traditional societies into modern ones. Theories of underdevelopment on the other hand, locate underdevelopment within a historical context. Dependency writers such as Frank (1969) for example, blame imperialism for the condition of the Third World. Frank (1969) argues that we cannot hope to formulate adequate development theory and policy for the majority of the world's population who suffer from underdevelopment without first learning how their past economic and social history gave rise to their present underdevelopment. He adds that most historians who study only the developed metropolitan countries pay scant attention to the colonial and underdeveloped lands. Frank therefore claims that for this reason, most of our theoretical categories and guides to development policy have been distilled exclusively from the historical experiences of the European and North American advanced capitalist nations.

Both strands of theories, that is modernist and under-development become applicable in the context of the development of Fiji's indigenous society, the iTaukei, under an administrative system that was adopted from its colonial past. Statistical figures indicate the indigenous Fijians make up a majority of the poor population in Fiji and, previous reviews blame the Fijian (now iTaukei) administration for the under-development of the iTaukei.

This chapter, however, does not provide any solution to the economic problems of the iTaukei, but aims instead to discuss and illustrate a logical theoretical framework which captures some theories of development and their relevance to the iTaukei under the provincial administration.

2.1 DEVELOPMENT THEORY and COLONIALISM

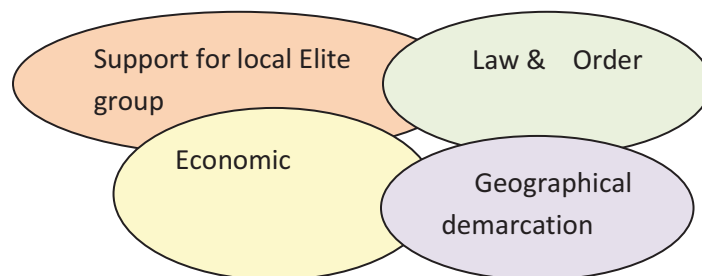
Theories of under-development point to the past, and, imperialism is blamed for the condition of the Third World. There is however, except for Mittelman, little reference to 'glocalisation' as a contributing factor to under or poor development. Mittelman introduces 'glocalisation' as the emergence of globalisation in forms of economy, culture, ideology and politics which lead to increased local resistance and hegemony. The following description of colonialism aims to help understand its common features and implications on indigenous cultures.

2.1.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF COLONIALISM

Colonialism is a historical phenomenon justified by various factors such as profits, expansion of power and religious and political beliefs. The British Empire became the largest of all colonisers in the 19th and 20th centuries. Writers including Durutalo S, (1986), Naidu (1988), Durutalo A, (1997) and Wiener (2009) observed that the system of colonisation ensured its own increase in power and wealth although Perham (1941) argued that Britain did not take possession of territory for economic reasons until other powers threatened to take countries

with which Britain had historical trading relations. In the Pacific, both Plange (1996) and Durutalo (1997) observe most islands became integrated into the British Empire either directly or indirectly through the settler colonies of Australia and New Zealand. Fiji, Western Samoa, Nauru, Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Tonga constituted the South Pacific outposts of the British Empire. However, regardless of coloniser, there appear to be four common features of change that effectively transformed the lives of the people. Figure 2.1.1.1 illustrates the following explanation of the common features of colonialism.

Figure 2.1.1.1. Common features of Colonialism



This study found that the four common features, characteristic of colonialism in the 19th century were, support for the local elite group, geographical demarcation, economic development and the establishment of law and order.

Firstly, support for the local elite group was established to nurture trust and understanding to support the objectives of colonial rule and enable social stability. As a consequence, this invented class systems such as those noted by Perham (1941) in Africa and the invention of 'Brahmin vs peasant' in India by

Bose and Jalal (1998)²⁵. In Fiji, Durutalo (1997:205) shows how a class system was prevalent amongst those who were employed by the Colonial Administration, where commoners became chiefs and chiefs became state chiefs.²⁶ In addition, the local elite were exposed to education in the country of the coloniser. This was a subtle strategy, designed to further ingrain the culture of the coloniser into the native people. However, in some instances, the local elite group was not always fully representative of the total population of the colony. Hence, dissident groups arose and their agitation was a risk to the security of the colonial administration and its local elite supporters. In Fiji for example, the hill tribes of the hinterland of Viti Levu (the main island) became the enemies of the state because they did not support the local elite group and everything this group represented such as the introduction of Christianity through the Wesleyan missionaries from London (Nicole, 2011).

Secondly, geographical demarcation was implemented for ease of administration but without regard for the diversity of pre-colonial political and social environments. This phenomenon was noted for African countries like Libya and Chad²⁷ and Fiji (Durutalo, 1997:106, Qalo, 2008:44).

Thirdly, economic development was necessary to sustain the colony. Britain expanded its deployment of Indian labour to its colonies and Fiji was added to

²⁵ According to Bose & Jalal (1998), this gave substance to caste hierarchy and rigidity dominated by the Brahman which was available on theory but often ignored in social practice.

²⁶ For African countries, see Perham (1941). For India, according to Bose & Jalal (1998), this gave substance to caste hierarchy and rigidity dominated by the Brahman which was available on theory but often ignored in social practice.

²⁷ Taken from www.beyondintractability.org/essay/post-colonial. Last accessed 23/6/2011, Effects of colonization by Sandra Marker, 2003.

the destination of Indian labourers for sugar production in 1879.²⁸ In Fiji, its success was due to the labour effort of the hard works of both the iTaukei and the Indian labourers and their descendants (Indo-Fijians). The iTaukei were organized into labour groups for government plantations²⁹ and Knapman (1987:33) noted their economic success. These plantations increased to a level almost equal to the colonial revenue from import duties until the early 20th century. However, it is estimated that the actual growth in native cash crop production for taxation purpose was faster than the tax receipt data alone suggested (Knapman, 1987:33). These colonial initiatives had some unintended repercussions on the iTaukei and Indo-Fijian societies and chapter 4 attempts to illustrate some implications of economic development on the iTaukei.

Fourthly, laws were created and local armed forces introduced to ensure the policies of the colonial government were implemented effectively but this frequently caused confusion within indigenous societies. Christianity was also a strategy for law and order and the colonised were coerced into adopting the religion of the coloniser. In Fiji age-old customary practices were disallowed as evil³⁰. However, this caused confusion within indigenous societies. Africa (Perham, 1941) and Canada³¹ shared similar experiences.

²⁸ Scarr (1984) noted the Indians were referred to as *girmit*, a neologism from 'agreement' in Hindi. They (60,969 Indians) gained their freedom as independent cane farmers in 1884 after five years of labour (Robertson and Sutherland, 2001). By 1916, the *girmitiya* had stopped arriving. The indenture was ended much later in 1920 by the Indian Government. (Scarr, 1984). Those who preferred to return were an estimated 26,667 Indians.

²⁹ See Narayan, 1984:50, Macnaught, 1982, Knapman 1987:33, Durutalo, S, 1986, Durutalo, A, 1997:204.

³⁰ Consulted records at the Fiji Government Archives - Lorimer Fison, 'Land Tenure in Fiji.

³¹ Consulted www.rtjournal.org/vol.5, last accessed on 28/2/2010

2.2 DEVELOPMENT THEORY and THE FIJIAN ADMINISTRATION

The previous section (**refer pg 8-11, 1.2.2**) suggests that the Fijian Administration was formulated under the notion of improving economic development, implemented by the misconception that it resembled the Fijian traditional governance structure. While modernist development theorists, unaware of the flaw in its formulation might have lauded this colonial creation as sustainable, the system encouraged instead, a culture of capitalism and bred competitiveness, between native Fijians who worked in the system and those who did not.

This was not consistent with the Fijian tradition of cooperation which was already challenged with two development changes, the introduction of capitalism in 1840 by European sandalwood traders. Secondly, Polynesian assimilation centuries earlier into the coastal and eastern parts of the islands, was responsible for a fundamental shift in local governance structure, from cooperation to competitiveness. To add further to this confusion, the hill tribes of the hinterland, who were notorious advocates for the removal of eastern chiefly rule and white colonialism, observed their customary practice of baptism to encourage cooperation for social cohesion. This included sharing one's resources unconditionally. Hence to the hilltribes, capitalism was a cardinal sin of *kocokoco* or self-accumulation.³²

³² See Brewster (1922), Thompson (1940), Macnaught (1982), Narayan (1984), Nicole (2011).

It was inevitable therefore, that governors, who served after Gordon between 1897 and 1942 (Knapman, 1987:37-38), should refuse to support the Fijian Administration for its characteristic practice of hegemony by its chiefly employees. Governor im Thurn called it, 'iron customs' while Governor O'Brien (1897-1901) defined it as 'governing of the natives through the chiefs and for the chiefs' (Macnaught, 1982).

The consequent temporary dilution of the powers of the Fijian Administration in 1915 to 1926 encouraged native adaptation to the modern competitive world. However, this did not deter native Fijian employees from continuing with hegemonic practices after decolonisation in 1970. More of these practices are discussed in chapter 4. Featherstone's (1990) question therefore, on whether indigenous cultures are becoming globalised and the effect this would have on local and national development, is consistent with the spirit of this study. For it essentially argues that as long as there is a separate administration for the iTaukei, without a robust check and balance system to better monitor the implementation of its policies, hegemonic practice will always prevail within this system, at the cost of development for the Fijians.

2.3 INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFERS

Larmour (2004) argues that decolonization in the Melanesian countries, no matter how peaceful provoked a constitutional crisis as the colonial powers withdrew. He added that most constitutions recognise or show deference to

some traditional institutions such as chieftainy for example. Most transfers were successful. In the context of this SRP however, Larmour appears to be sounding a warning that decolonization will not be successful without workable processes. This could be the solution to Fiji's series of constitutional crisis³³ since Independence in 1970.

³³ Since Independence in 1970, Fiji has suffered 3 removals of democratically elected governments in 1987, 2000 and 2006 via 4 coup d'état.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

“As for me, all I know is I know nothing”, (Socrates)³⁴

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This study is guided by two entwining methodological approaches which attribute their origin largely to reknown psychologist, Lev Vygotsky. The overarching approach which develops a theory from the data collected and a social constructivist approach. Vygotsky explains that culture gives the child the cognitive tools needed for development³⁵. From the perspective of this SRP, this is a bottom up approach, situated within the group of phenomena one is researching and, informed on an ongoing basis by the people and issues being researched. It is usually qualitative. As such, the researcher’s persona as a member of the iTaukei society researching her own community is an integral part of this process³⁶.

While this study is about the provincial administration of Fiji’s indigenous society, it accepts that the descriptive terminology of the iTaukei (owners of the land) as Fiji’s indigenous people is debatable when Fijian history of migrations, including a significant Polynesian presence in the outer islands and coastal parts

³⁴ Taken from <http://www.brainyquotes.com/quotes...>

³⁵ Lev Vygotsky was a Soviet psychologist (1896-1934), consult www.psychology.about.com

³⁶ For clarity, please consult www.viking.coe.uh.edu... Accessed 5/3/2013

of the two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, is taken into consideration (Brewster, 1922; Thompson, 1940; France, 1969; Nunn et al, 2009).

3.1 INTERPRETATION OF GOVERNANCE

While there are various definitions of governance and good governance, this study was guided by the 8 characteristics of good governance proposed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP): (1) accountability, (2) consensus orientation, (3) effectiveness and efficiency, (4) equity and inclusiveness, (5) responsiveness, (6) rule of law, (7) participation, and (8) transparency. In this context, the study's approach is similar to that adopted in Daurewa (2010) which describes the formulation of Kadavu's 5-Year Development Plan.³⁷

3.2 PROVINCIAL COUNCILS: 2 CASE STUDIES

The investigation of the central question of what has been happening to the provincial councils since December 2006, the provincial council's Roko Tui, or chief executive officer becomes the main respondent. There are 14 provincial councils and Kadavu and Rewa were selected for their diverse characteristics. Kadavu is an outer island in the eastern division, faced with the biggest development challenge of accessibility. Rewa, on the other hand, is on coastal Viti Levu, near urban Suva City and Nausori Town, without such hindrance. More detailed features of the two provinces are described in Chapter 5. Appendix 1 illustrates the provinces of Kadavu and Rewa in a map of the Fiji islands.

³⁷ Daurewa A.W. (2010), 'Meeting the Standards, Community Governance in Fiji' in *Just Change, Global Focus Aotearoa*, Issue 17 March-May 2010.

3.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

This study employed various data collection methods as follows; search in historical and current archival records, and reports, in-depth interviews and *talanoa* via email, telephone and face-to-face meeting, questionnaires and, through observation as a participant researcher.

3.3.1. ARCHIVAL and PRIMARY DATA

In attempting to ascertain the impact of 19th century development on the iTaukei other than that already written by Dias (1977), Macnaught (1982), Durutalo (1997) and Nicole (2011), the researcher sought additional information from archival records of the Archdiocese of Suva and the Government Archives. In fact, much of the data for Chapter 4 was collected from the archival records of the Archdiocese of Suva. The permission of the Archbishop, the head of the Catholic Church was obtained. The researcher's close involvement with his Office, as a member of the Finance Council, helped the approval process. However, there were rules to observe, including prohibition of photocopying and photographing of any document. The researcher was given access to a register of all available records in the luxury of an air-conditioned conference room. This was necessary to maintain the two-century old hand-written papers, which had visibly begun to deteriorate because of age. Unfortunately, much of the beautiful writings are in French and the researcher was fortunate to receive the assistance of a Marist priest for some translation work.

Data collected revealed some alternatives to well-known iTaukei history. Firstly, some records related to the creation of a 'new' class system between those who worked (the chiefs) and those who did not work (the commoners) in the iTaukei Administration, observed by Macnaught (1982) and Durutalo (1997), are indeed to be found. Some of this process of class creation was noted by planters and priests, such as the subjugation in Vanua Levu and Rewa by their chiefs who worked for the colonial administration. Secondly, attempted Tongan imperialism via the Wesleyan church was noted by a publication titled, 'The Tongan Influence through the Church (Wesleyan) in Fiji' in the archival records of the Archdiocese of Suva. It described the failure of this attempt when Tongan mercenaries, led by Ma'afu's henchman, Wainiqolo, were killed in a battle by chief Golea and his men, in Cakaudrove, with the help of a Catholic priest who lived in Taveuni.

In order to access the records of the Government Archives, one must seek the assistance of the desk officer who keeps the register book to record information such as the purpose of one's visit and the information sought. The officials at the Government Archives were efficient in providing relevant information collected from Government records as early as the 19th century, including the 1892 edition of *Na Mata* which recorded the winning tale of the Lutunasobasoba theory discussed in Chapter 3. In addition, an autobiography of Ratu Serupepeli Qaranivalu who was Governor for Kadavu in the Ratu Seru Cakobau Government (1871-1873) gave an insight into the formulation of Tavuki as the leading district in Kadavu. It also revealed the age-old social intercourse of political alliances

between Tavuki and Tonga and described a person named Nacagilevu, a nephew of Qaranivalu and a signatory to the Deed of Cession, as part Tongan.³⁸ Records of the early Council of Chiefs and Provincial Council meetings were also available including some reviews of the iTaukei administration. The data collected provided insight into the difficulties experienced by the officials when the iTaukei refused to follow the Buli (district representative of the Fijian administration) who was neither of chiefly status, nor, from the district.

3.3.2 SECONDARY DATA

The Library of the University of the South Pacific also contained archival records such as Government reports and diaries of early Europeans such as William Lockerby, a sandalwood trader³⁹ and Richard Wynkoop the Shipwrecker.⁴⁰ These documents revealed an alternative to the stereotype gentle and submissive iTaukei women; in Bua and Kadavu they were assertive, strategists and participants in local politics. In addition, Brown's (1973) collection of European experiences since their arrival in Fiji was a celebration of the various roles they played which brought prominence to the eastern chiefs. Having said this, I must add that, Tongan influence through their close iTaukei associates in eastern Fiji cannot be overlooked. According to France's (1969) and Macnaught (1982), it appears that Fiji was ceded to Britain by a family of chiefs who shared the

³⁸ This is explained further in note 41 in the following page.

³⁹ See the Journal of William Lockerby, Sandalwood Trader in Fiji during 1808-1809. Edited by; Sir Everard im Thurn & Lenoard C Wharton.

⁴⁰ Churchill W, (1892), A Princess of Fiji, copyright Dodd, Mead & Company.

common bond of *veiwekani* through either or, both of the two rival chiefs, Ratu Cakobau or Tongan Ma'afu.⁴¹

Data was collected from the following sources for information on development in the provinces and their respective business arms:

- PricewaterhouseCoopers review obtained from the iTaukei Affairs Board;
- Minutes of the Kadavu Provincial Council meetings from 2006 to 2011;
- Minutes of the Rewa Provincial Council meeting, 2007-2011;
- Rewa Provincial Company Holding Limited Annual General Meeting (AGM) between 2007 and 2011;
- Records of the Ministry of Provincial Development;
- Office of the Registrar of Companies for, Kadavu Development Company (KDC), Kadavu Shipping Services Limited and the Kadavu Holdings Limited

Much of the data in Chapter 4 which includes the researcher's eight-year experience as the executive director of Non Government Organisation (NGO), Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF), was obtained from Annual reports and other publications of PCDF, aside from her observations.

⁴¹ *veiwekani* means 'related to'. The iTaukei culture places a lot of emphasis on relationships. However, the relationship is in various contexts with its own complexity. The maintenance of the relationship is dependent on the agenda of those involved. For example, chiefs could be related but also sworn enemies such as those from Bau and Rewa in Pre-Cession. There were 13 signatories. Cakobau, his son Ratu Epeli and kin from Bau, Savenaca & Isikeli (Mcnaught 1982). The Roko Tui Dreketi of Rewa, also a signatory was Cakobau's cousin. Those with Tongan connection included; Vakawaletabua of Bua, who had a Tongan mother (France 1969). Tui Cakau, Cakobau's cousin had a Tongan, Tule, as one of his wives www.matavuvale.com/group/yavusatoga accessed on 15/8/2011 as it last appeared on 10/8/2011, posted by Timoci on 13/6/2009. Nacagilevu of Kadavu had a Tongan paternal grandmother. One of his Tongan ancestor was the first Ka Levu (F/T, 19/10/2008, Paula Tagivetaua), paramount chief of Nadroga. His descendent Ratu Kini was also a signatory of the Deed of Cession. The chiefs connected to Tonga through blood or marriage are therefore *veiwekani* to anyone from Tonga including Ma'afu. The remaining 3 chiefs, Katonivere & Ritova from Macuata and Matanitobua of Namosi were also related to Cakboau. These levels of relationship describe the different forms of *veiwekani* between the chiefs who ceded Fiji.

3.3.3 PARTICIPANT OBSERVER

The services of the USP Library were often sought and the post-graduate room was an ideal sanctuary for the researcher. Similar to sources of information noted earlier, data collected there provided the background of this study which helped shape its theoretical framework.

The situation of provincial councils since December 2006 were obtained from completed questionnaires by the Roko Tui Kadavu and Roko Tui Rewa and 3 consultations with the Manager of Provincial Services and two other (unnamed) officials of the iTaukei Affairs Board. Follow-up interviews were made via telephone and email, particularly with the two Roko Tui. The researcher who was the chairperson of the KDC from 2008 to 2011, became a member of the Kadavu Provincial Council in 2011. In addition to her participation in rural development under the iTaukei Affairs Board, she is also a member of the Kadavu Provincial Development Board (2010-2013) and the Eastern Division Development Board. This falls under the separate administrative ambit of the Office of the Commissioner Eastern under the Ministry of Provincial Development. In-depth interviews with some traditional leaders not only from Kadavu but also other provinces provided a wealth of background on the iTaukei perception of leadership. Lastly and by no means the least, the researcher's continued involvement with her husband's village development in Nukutubu in Rewa helped reveal some of the impact of the government's new direction.

3.4 LIMITATION

There is possible bias because of the researcher's previous work experiences with the provincial administrations. Furthermore, she is a current member of the Kadavu Provincial Council and the Eastern Division Development Board. Secondly, the register of the archival records of the Archdiocese of Suva indicates that their archival records contain a wealth of valuable historical information. However, much of their records were written in French and the researcher who did not know the language could not decipher more data. Furthermore, while the French Embassy offers translating services, their charges were not affordable. Some assistance was provided by Father Milio Vakasirovoka.

CHAPTER 4

THE ITAUKEI and their CONTRADICTIONS

“...it seems to me that one of the greatest obstacles facing the Fijians today is the failure to recognise that there is a contradiction; they must now make the momentous choice between preserving and changing their ‘way of life’. The belief that they can do both simultaneously is a monstrous nonsense...” (Nayacakalou, R (1975:135)

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to provide an overview of the Fiji provincial council administrative system from 1876 to post December 2006. It examines aspects of governance and its contradiction in iTaukei society after Fiji was ceded to Britain in 1874. It also attempts to illustrate the similarity of hegemonic practices (refer 1.7 for interpretation) by the leadership in provincial administration during Colonial and Post Independence Fiji. These concepts are explained in sections 4.2 and 4.3 as characteristic of *vakavanua* in provincial administration.

4.1 TALE OF ORIGIN

It has been revealed that one of the most prominent arrival tales of iTaukei was manipulated to give prominence to eastern chiefs. The tale that describes legendary chief Lutunasobasoba as the founder of the iTaukei race (Reed 1967: 112) is taught in schools, yet it has been shown to have originated from a competition of fictional stories held by the *Na Mata*, 19th century Colonial Administration’s newsletter (France, 1966; France 1969; Gravelle 1980). The winning tale of this competition appeared in the December 1892 issue of the *Na*

Mata. The fictional story describes the arrival of legendary chief, Lutunasobasoba and his entourage from Africa. They were supposed to have landed on the west coast of Viti Levu, and travelled inland to the Nakauvadra mountain range. They were so big and strong that they only needed to *vitika* (to flick) the trees while clearing the land on arrival. Hence, Fiji earned its name Viti, shortened for *vitika*. From there, his children, ancestors of some current chiefs, dispersed to other parts of Fiji.

Some people have even claimed that the genealogy of Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi,⁴² an eastern chief and a prominent officer of the colonial administration, might have descended from Lutunasobasoba. His paternal grandfather's name was Buisavulu Vuibureta (Macnaught, 1982:51) which suggests his namesake was Buisavulu, the name of Lutunasobasoba's oldest child.

Brewster's (1922) study and anthropological records, however, reveals that Nakauvadra, a place revered by many iTaukei as sacred because it is the home of their ancestral gods, is actually the home of another legendary chief, Rokola. Rokola's *yavu* (mound) looks down to sites belonging to the ancestors of seventy-seven (77) tribes⁴³ none of which is related to Lutunasobasoba. Most of these tribes now live in the western and central parts of Viti Levu while others

⁴² Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi was the father of statesman, Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna and nephew of Ratu Cakobau.

⁴³ A map of a location of village sites belonging to Rokola (highest site), Narauyaba, Nasanimai, Takina, Nukuitabua, Navanani, Navono, Dakunivatu, Bua, Naikoro and Burelevu. After Frazier 91973:82), in the Nakauvadra Valley prior to 1874, adapted from the Department of Lands and Survey, 1989 and Native Lands Commission and list of the 77 tribes taken from EW Gifford (1952), A List of the tribes (Yavusa) from the Nakauvadra Mountain and Tribes of Viti Levu and their Place of Origin. Anthropological records, Vol.13 No.1

are scattered in other parts of Fiji. Furthermore, an examination of oral and archival records⁴⁴ by the researcher, (Brewster, 1922; Thompson, 1940; France, 1966; France, 1969; Thomson, 1973; Gravelle, 1980; Narayan, 1984; Mara, 1997; Robertson and Sutherland, 2001) and excavation work by Nunn and his colleagues in 2009 reveal additional contradiction of the Lutunasobasoba legend.⁴⁵ Their collective discourse is as follows: Fiji has been peopled by several waves of migrants including Melanesians, Lapita people and Polynesians, which explains the difference in culture between the interior of the bigger islands and, coastal areas and small outer islands. Fiji's geographical position in the South Pacific⁴⁶ as the crossover point between Melanesia and Polynesia earned the name *fiti* (a Polynesian word for 'over there') and suggests, it has been considered as the centre of traffic for a long time. Through these waves of migration, ancestors of iTaukei had adopted various skills in commerce, art and craft. Also it is important to note that in people and culture, iTaukei society is far from homogeneous.

⁴⁴ (1) Consulted Archives of the Archdiocese of Suva which record origin of the Baki religion, widely practised in Western Viti Levu as "...coming by sea from the west and arrived on land in the Nadi Bay.." (2) When Lutunasobasoba's eldest child, Buisavulu arrived in Bureta, Ravouvou Ni Bureta, originally from Nakauvadra was already residing in Lomaibureta. (Refer Native Land Commission's Veitarogi Vanua by the Native Land Commission, for Muanaecolo, Bureta, Ovalau on 2/7/1916), (3) Govt Archives, Preliminary report on archaeological field work in Kabara, Southern Lau, Oct-Dec 1964 by Colin D Smart recorded that Kabara was already occupied when Daunisai, son of Lutunasobasoba arrived about 1650. Kabara also traced their link to Lemaki (Samoa) and Tonga.

⁴⁵ Also in <http://arts.anu.edu.au/arcworld/resources/papers/Spriggs/1984/Spriggs1984.pdf>

⁴⁶ Vanuatu to the West, France's New Caledonia to the South- West, New Zealand's Kermadec to the South-East, Tonga to the East, Samoa and France's Wallis and Futuna to the North-East, and Tuvalu to the North.

4.2. THE IMPLICATION OF COLONIAL ECONOMIC POLICIES

The British effort for economic growth of colonial Fiji invited three obvious social consequences which ignited social conflict: (1) capitalist planters' demand on land, which disturbed traditional organisation of land ownership (Narayan, 1984:21); (2) the chiefs' tax-garden (*lala*) planted by the people interfered with their social structure; and (3) poor conditions of Indian sugar cane labourers (Lal, 2000:184). For the purpose of this SRP, only (1) and (2) above are discussed.

4.2.1 THE PLANTERS DEMAND ON LAND

Narayan (1984:21) and Nicole (2011:18-19) noted an additional dilemma for the iTaukei, an example of which was protests of some of the Hill Tribe members against the capitalist planters who often collaborated with chiefs, in acquiring iTaukei land cheaply to plant and settle on. Actually, similar incidents had begun before Cession (1874) and continued onto Post-Cession period. Repercussions of this resulted in many deaths including the unfortunate murder of Wesleyan Reverend Thomas Baker in 1868 whom Nicole (2011:16) argued as a victim of the Hill Tribes intense dislike of Cakobau, who was a friend of the Wesleyan missionaries.

Other related incidents followed, this included the exile of Navosavakadua who later died in 1897 (Macnaught, 1982:99), and the final subjugation of the rebellion of Hill Tribes (Nicole 2011:17). It was not until the early 1900s when iTaukei reaction to leadership re-emerged via Apolosi R Nawai (widely known as

Ranawai) who was from western Viti Levu like the 19th century rebel, Navosavakadua. Macnaught (1982:75) described Ranawai as:

The only man from the ranks of ordinary villagers who rivalled Ratu Sukuna for eloquence, personal mana and compelling vision of the future of the iTaukei in their own country.

Ranawai was quick to reject the pittance the iTaukei received for bananas from European buyers and decided it was time for the iTaukei competing directly in the economy and taking the production and export of the bananas in their own hands. Macnaught (1982:79) also pointed out that many chiefs⁴⁷ who were without government appointments or had lost them, expressed their opposition against their previous employer by supporting Ranawai and his Viti Company. Unfortunately, poor handling of funds and Ratu Sukuna's ridicule of Viti Company initiative caused Ranawai's downfall and he died in 1946 in Yacata after exile in Rotuma.

Dissatisfaction amongst iTaukei against the colonial 'indirect rule' and its descendent of the Fijian administration however did not end with Ranawai. The researcher believes that these continued in the form of Burn's (1960:178) review where many iTaukei interviewed recommended the immediate abolishment of the iTaukei administration. Much later in 2002, the outcome of the Price Waterhouse Coopers Review, the most comprehensive and consultative thus far, reported that most iTaukei interviewed felt the Administration was not effective.

⁴⁷ See Mcnaught 1982:79 who named high chiefs of Rewa, Ro Tuisawau, Roko Tui Dreketi and, Verata, Ratu Mai Verata, as dissident chiefs. He also noted that there were dissident chiefs from Bau.

4.2.2 THE CHIEFS' TAX GARDEN - LALA

In the Native Councils meetings of 1876, the Gordon Administration sought information from the chiefs on their tradition and culture, to determine how best to harmonise State revenue generation with the cultural practice of the people. The system of *lala* was identified as one such practice. As a customary practice for reciprocity, the *lala* was an impetus for social cohesion and security within a particular community. The *lala* allows the chief the right to request a service from the people, upon which the chief reciprocates with a gift in thanksgiving. While Macnaught (1982:40-45) observed that *lala* was traditional, it was only so, to some native Fijians. It was therefore the right of some chiefs and not necessarily all the chiefs including those who were employed by the Colonial Administration.

In adopting the *lala*, it was necessary for the Colonial Administration to modify this customary practice, to suit official requirements. Through Indirect Rule, the Roko Tui (provincial executive officer) or Buli (district officer) administered the *lala*. The introduction of Indirect Rule more or less gave legal recognition to these officials and others who worked for the Colonial Administration as chiefs.

Plantation tax gardens were produced and each province was allocated a specific quota to achieve within a specified period. This system confined them to their work areas where they were discouraged from having too many children. In order to sustain the *lala*, Durutalo (1986) observed Colonial state regulated

relations between workers and employers through the Master and Servants Ordinance, modelled on 18th century British Law. This made quitting or leaving work before a contract ended, a punishable crime (Durutalo 1997: 96).

However, Macnaught (1982:40-45) observed that taxation officials and chiefs abused it. For example, the *lala*, or chief's tax garden, extended to other chores as directed by the Roko Tui of the Province. In some instances, these allocated tasks were not included in the official work plan of the provincial office (Macnaught 1982:39).

Dias (1977:17) described how a young *Buli* was called before the Provincial Council to explain his inability to collect the tax quota. He answered the people were disrespectful and, non-cooperative. This was prevalent behavior when a *Buli* was neither a chief nor, served in a district to which he did not belong. Some chiefs also protested against this new system. Scarr (1984:89) observed that in the early 20th century, the *Vunivalu* (chief) of Serua, when displeased with the Colonial Administration converted to Catholicism. The whole ex-Wesleyan province had to follow him. In Vanua Levu, the second biggest island of Fiji, the mountain tribes of Seaqaqa resorted to cannibalism when they protested against a tyrannical *Roko Tui* (Provincial Administrator)⁴⁸ who was a chief from their province. However, it was noted that not all *Roko Tui* were oppressive. Macnaught (1982:55-57) observed that in Kadavu, a *Roko Tui* who did not belong

⁴⁸ Consulted the archival records on the Archdiocese of Suva, PMB 463 (3), translation of handwritten notes on slavery in Fiji, by a German planter.

to the chiefly village but whose education surpassed his chiefs', created a new district from the principal district, out of concern for the over-worked villagers⁴⁹.

In addition, the Wesleyan Church also used Indirect Rule for its interests. For example, two *mataisau* men, protested when the Provincial office of Rewa, asked them to build a church for the Wesleyan denomination in the district of Vutia. They were punished for their disobedience by a fine.⁵⁰ Father Rougier of the Catholic Church did not let this go unchallenged and wrote a letter on 23 November 1905 to Bishop Vidal complaining against the Roko Tui Rewa. Rougier complained that the Governor's ruling was not being followed by the Rewa Provincial Office which was making people build houses of worship.⁵¹

The people's differing levels of reaction to leadership, could therefore suggest that hierarchical rule was not necessarily traditional to native Fijians.

4.3 MODERN CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP IN PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Some concepts of leadership that evolved out of the iTaukei administration in colonial Fiji appear to be inherent in post colonial Provincial Administration. Furthermore, this neotraditional leadership style is not always consistent with characteristics of good governance principles frequently advocated by a few international donor agencies such as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Nor is it genuinely traditional to the iTaukei

⁴⁹ Ratu Ifereimi Qasevakatini of Yale created Ravitaki out of Tavuki district because of the chiefs' abuse.

⁵⁰ Consulted archival records on Naililili Parish of the Archdiocese of Suva.

⁵¹ Consulted archival records of Naililili Parish at the Archdiocese of Suva. Pg 34, Na Mata, March 1905.

society, which is described by Ravuvu (1991:6, cited in Carling 2009:46) as small autonomous communities or kinship groups that demanded total allegiance of their members for the sake of the *vanua*. Carling (2009:46) notes this as more traditionally iTaukei. Not too unlike the democratic principles frequently advocated by international donor agencies today as good governance principles.

4.3.1 THE CHIEFS and THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Governor O'Brien who served in Fiji from 1897 to 1901 described the Fijian Administration as 'governing of the natives through the chiefs and for the chiefs' (Knapman, 1987: 37).

Durutalo (1997:204) observed that the creation of the Provincial system with its own integral position in the overall system of Indirect Rule together with its newly created role produced its own internal dynamics and impacted considerably on iTaukei socio-political structures and hence on the socio-political relations that revolve around them. New roles for iTaukei, mostly who were to act as agents of the colonial state amongst their own people, were created within the newly created provinces. For the most part, it was mostly Eastern chiefs who emerged as the "new type of chiefs" and in their various provincial roles. This resulted in the emergence of powerful chiefs like Ratu Sukuna.

In Kadavu and Rewa, their respective provincial offices continued to facilitate the interests of the local elite regardless of whether the action of the elite was ethical or otherwise. In some instance, such as the following discussion on Rewa

in 2003, the Provincial Office adopted the traditional role of the *matanivanua* (messenger/spokesperson for the chief). For a chief, this can be quite inexpensive when transport, telephone and necessary cultural items like yaqona are taken into consideration. It is therefore an economic advantage for the chief to use the service of the Provincial Office. However, effectively the taxpayers end up paying for this cost. In the second place, the traditional governance system is threatened by the displacement of the role of the *matanivanua* and similar roles which play an integral part in social cohesion.

Based on the researcher's close involvement with provincial development in Kadavu and with an NGO (Partners in Community Development Fiji), the following sections including Boxes 1 and 2, attempt to describe some concepts of traditional and modern political leadership that appear confused because they have used the Provincial administration for their various development agenda.

Box 1

In 2003, an NGO, Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF), introduced Voices and Choices, a governance project, to Nukutubu Village in Rewa. There had been several prior consultations with the Provincial Office through the Turaga ni Koro (TNK) of Nukutubu Village. The project aimed to revisit traditional customary practices as *Mataisau* (skilled craftpeople) and to identify characteristics of good governance similar to their culture. After several workshops and *talanoa* sessions, the village was visited by an officer from the Provincial Office. He told the village elders that the paramount chief would be opening the Great Council of Chiefs meeting to be held in Viseisei village in a few weeks' time and that the village of Nukutubu was to contribute a certain number of kerosene drums and some bolts of cloth. The *Mataisau* were not pleased that the chief should send an official from the Provincial Office as it was not customary to them. Secondly, as *Mataisau*, their obligation was to build a boat and they did. On completion of the boat, the *Mataisau* visited the Vunivalu (warlord) of Rewa who more often than not, stood in for the paramount chief

who resided in Suva. In presenting the boat, the *Mataisau* expressed their disappointment with the untraditional way of relaying such a message and its nature of request. They counseled that, the age-old custom treasured by them must be maintained. The *Vunivalu*, reciprocated the *Mataisau's* presentation, with a big *tabua*⁵² and bundle of *waka*⁵³ and thanked them for the boat.

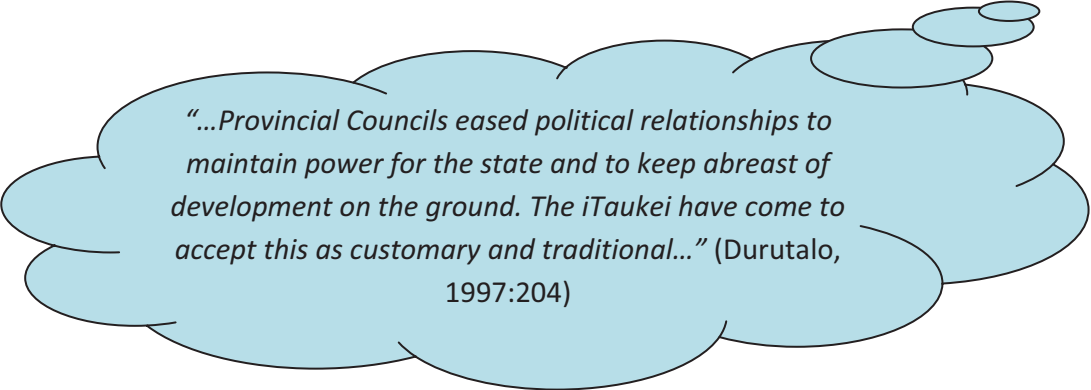
In Kadavu, the provincial council meeting on 10th November 2011 in Suva discussed at length a list of debtors totalling F\$28,858.64 which had been outstanding since 1995. On scrutiny, the debtors' list was dominated by those from the chiefly village where the Provincial Office is situated. Some of them lived and worked in Suva. They owe F\$12,416 or 46% of the total debt. The reason given for the loan requests ranged from development projects, personal business, overseas travel, overseas education and, Methodist church functions to subscriptions to a political party⁵⁴. The Provincial Council resolved to hand this matter over to the appropriate government facility, the Small Claims Tribunal as it was difficult for the Provincial Office to recover effectively this money and 15 years had already lapsed.

⁵² *Tabua* is a whale's tooth often used in customary practices as a gift to acknowledge, or, to request a service.

⁵³ *Waka* is the root of *yaqona* or piper methysticum plant. It is presented by the host to acknowledge the presence of a visitor or to seek permission from the host for one's presence.

⁵⁴ *Soqosoqo ni Vakataulewa ni iTaukei* (SVT). This loan was granted to 3 districts on 14/6/1996 when SVT was in government.

4.3.2 PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AS THE POLITICAL ORGAN



"...Provincial Councils eased political relationships to maintain power for the state and to keep abreast of development on the ground. The iTaukei have come to accept this as customary and traditional..." (Durutalo, 1997:204)

Politicians have become the second wave of new chiefs, thereby replacing the first wave of chiefs who worked in the provincial administration during pre-Independence Fiji. Their role is enabled by the provincial council, which is the avenue through which iTaukei politicians who serve in the government have been able to mobilize support for their political agenda. While political interference in development initiatives at provincial level may appear to be uncharacteristic of good governance, Durutalo (1997: 204) observed that the iTaukei accept this as customary.

In post-Independence and post-Coup Fiji, while Provincial Councils continue to be the mouthpiece for iTaukei political positions such as the province's preferred political party or candidate, other political interests have not been deterred from representing the same province. However, the council's preferential support for designated politicians has created the image of a divisive leader, and effectively caused confusion to the chiefs and Government officials. In the following case, it appears that, officials at the Provincial Office are accustomed to political interference in their work.

Box 2

In early 2006 prior to Fiji's General Elections, while PCDF prepared for a workshop in Kadavu, as part of its process of developing a Strategic Development for the Provincial Council, the permission of the Ministry of Regional (now Provincial) Development was sought to release one of its senior officers well versed with the financial regulations of the government system to speak to the participants by linking his work with, the budgetary system at provincial level and its relationship with village level funding. This was to be the highlight of this NZAID funded project. The cost of his return air travel and per diem was arranged by PCDF. However, on the designated day of the officer's presentation, another officer from the Ministry turned up at the workshop. The participants were instead subjected to a promotional talk of the Minister's political party by his political assistant, the son of a chief from Kadavu, which was included in the Minister's constituency. Neither the officials nor participants reacted to the change in presentation. PCDF was, however concerned that donor funding was used to pay for the political campaign of the ruling government party, with general elections due in May of that year.

4.3.3 PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AS A FUNDRAISER

Under the Fijian Affairs Act, the provincial councils raise funds annually to support the administration costs of the provincial office. This is discussed further in the next chapter, section 5.12. In addition to this regular fundraising initiative, provincial councils also collect money for other development projects usually targeted to benefit those who reside in the villages. From observation, however, it seems the successful projects that develop into businesses are usually managed by only a few, who dictate how profits are utilized in accordance with company laws. For those that have failed, the credibility of leadership is not questioned openly and instead, allowed to fester into dissident groups which are inhibited from reacting during annual general meetings

because culture dictates that open opposition to someone is disrespectful (*viavialevu*), particularly if he or she is a chief.

In the final analysis, most people who contribute funds to these initiatives do not enjoy the benefits derived from such projects. They end up as ‘losers’ while the initiators, who are often the politicians, end up ‘winners’. For a better understanding of this concept of leadership, the following provides a brief background of communal fundraising for business purposes.

4.3.4 BUSINESS INITIATIVES OF PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

At the behest of prominent iTaukei politicians and the Great Council of Chiefs, provincial councils began discussing the benefits of investment in the commercial sector before Fiji became independent in 1970. Ratuva (1999) noted that the iTaukei’s interest arose out of the fear that they lagged behind other ethnic groups in business participation. Provincial councils collected money by organising ‘*solu*’ (public communal collections) from their people. The Provincial Council companies⁵⁵ such as the Kadavu Development Company with shares worth F\$51,608.07, were set up in the early 1970s. Ratuva (1999:197) added that this initiative was intended to ensure the benefits from its investments were spread as widely as possible among the iTaukei people, through the acquisition of equity in the well-managed profitable companies with excellent prospects for growth. Later, a further \$20 million was lent to FHL by the government in 1994,

⁵⁵ Ratuva (1999) “...Ba/ Bua/Cakaudrove/ Kadavu/ Lau/ Lomaiviti/ Macuata/Nadroga/Naitasiri/Namosi/Ra/ Rewa...”

and institutions supposed to encourage iTaukei economic and social development, such as the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) and the iTaukei Affairs Board, also became shareholders of FHL.

It is said⁵⁶, the concept, proven by its profitable operation was good but the same could not be said for companies created by Provincial Councils. While some have been hailed as models of successful business⁵⁷, most like Kadavu Provincial Council companies were criticised as failures.⁵⁸

At Provincial level, it is usually the politicians and those sympathetic to their respective Party manifestos who are involved in the operation of the business arms of the province. While they usually participate as company board directors, there is generally a lack of appreciation for the relevance of accountability and transparency in such matters. When regular reporting of activities and financials to Provincial Councils is absent, it is difficult for Provincial Councils to question this oversight. To do so, would be questioning your chief and/or, a Member of Parliament who could be a Cabinet Minister. Culturally, such behavior is discouraged as disrespectful. From the perspective of the Roko Tui or, executive officer of the Provincial Council who is a public servant, demanding accountability from such an authority could cost him

⁵⁶ interviewed Chairman, Fijian Holdings Limited, 5/5/2011

⁵⁷ Tailevu Provincial Holding Company Limited which owns over 100,000 in FHL and is listed amongst FHL's top 27 list of shareholders along with Bua, Cakaudrove & Macuata Provincial Councils. Furthermore, Tailevu has extended its business to dairy farming and timber and has formed subsidiary companies at district levels; Nukurua Tikina Holdings for timber and Bau Investment (Source:Chairman Board of Fijian Holdings Limited, on 5th May 2011).

⁵⁸ Daurewa, A, Fiji Sun, 9/5/2009, Opinion, P7, ' Will the true owner of Kadavu House stand up?'

employment for insubordination. Without regular monitoring, it is usually for this reason that such businesses fail.

At the level of the 'I Taukei' Affairs board, which oversees provincial councils and their respective companies, the Chairman of the Fijian Holdings noted that they had given the I Taukei Affairs Board an accumulated share of profits totaling F\$28 million. The whereabouts of this money (F\$28million) was however under investigation and made more difficult by the delayed audit of the Board's records since 1997.⁵⁹

4.3.5 REWA AND KADAVU BUSINESS INITIATIVES

Some business initiatives of the iTaukei have failed and for those that do, Durutalo (1997:209) attributed their failure to the Colonial state and Colonial capitalism in Fiji. On the other hand, those that have succeeded owe their success to practices of accountability, transparency and adherence to the rule of law, which are characteristics of good governance. In response to the Post Independence government initiative mentioned in **4.2.4** above, the Kadavu and Rewa Provincial Councils joined other provinces in establishing their respective business arms. Both provinces undertook major fundraising drives within their territories and collected money from individuals, villages and districts. Their interpretation of accountability, however, differed from each other. The Rewa Provincial Council received each contribution in the contributor's name and the

⁵⁹ Interviewed Chairman of the Board of Directors, Fijian Holdings Limited, on 5/5/2011

person effectively became a shareholder of Rewa Provincial Holdings Company Limited (RPHCL). The Kadavu Provincial Council, Ratuva (1999:214) observed, transferred individual cash collections to legal ownership of the district chiefs. While shareholders of RPHCL, including the Rewa Provincial Council received annual dividends for 3 years from 2007 to 2009 for their investment⁶⁰, the questions of the Kadavu Provincial Council to its business arm remain unanswered.

The annual reports of Kadavu Provincial Council include a list of investments. Two cases were conspicuous for their non-return of investments whether in the number of shares or the market values of investments: investments in the Kadavu Development Company (KDC) for F\$64,000 and the Kadavu Shipping Services Limited for F\$150,000. Both companies enjoyed the close involvement of prominent politicians who held cabinet positions in Parliament at the time of their respective formation. Despite inquiries for accountability by the Provincial Council which included a submission on financial risks from the Development Committee, an acquittal has yet to be presented from either company.

This study noted that the KDC board papers for a meeting on 9 January 2004 of the directors for KDC revealed that assets were shifted to a newly formed company called Kadavu Holdings Limited (KHL). There is no record of an approval via a shareholders' meeting for this transfer, which includes 105,000 shares. KHL

⁶⁰ Shareholders own Ro Lalabalavu House which is currently rented by the Government.

is the landlord for Kadavu House in Suva city. Its tenants include agencies of the United Nations and Digicel.

In another development, the Kadavu Provincial Council and the Directors of KHL are at loggerheads over the ownership of Kadavu House. The Kadavu Provincial Council claims it paid F\$64,000 to KDC, the parent company for KHL, almost 20 years ago for investment purposes and current records of the Provincial Council confirm this. The KHL, however, denies receipt of this money. Meanwhile, its acquittal remains outstanding with the Office of the Auditor General via the iTaukei Affairs Board. The following are contributory factors to the situation:

- The Registrar of Companies⁶¹ failed to be effective. It took 24 years for the Registrar to fulfill its obligations to the Companies Act (Cap 247) by advising KDC in a letter dated 7 April 2011, that it had not filed its annual returns from 1986 to 2010, nor, produced a record of shareholders.
- The Kadavu Provincial Council is inhibited for cultural reasons. The chiefs are divided over the decision to press for redress, which would implicate the prominent politicians and technocrats.

The following diagram illustrates the process of payment (F\$64,000), (figure **4.3.5.1**). It explains that the people of Kadavu helped fund development in the province. The \$64,000 was part of their series of communal collections for the purpose of provincial businesses. It was then paid to the Kadavu

⁶¹ Ref.No.Co.No.1749 of 20/5/2010 letter to KDC c/-FDB, reminded that annual returns not delivered to the Registrar in accordance with Section 127 to 131 of the Companies Act No. 5 of 1983

Provincial Office under Section 8(2) of the Fijian Affairs Act (Cap 120). Of this sum, \$50,000 was allocated for KDC and \$14,000 as architectural fees for a proposed property in suburban Suva. The Kadavu Provincial Office claimed it paid \$50,000 to KDC as required but KDC denied receipt of this money. Despite KDC's denial, the records of the Kadavu Provincial Council's investment portfolio continue to list the amount \$64,000 as an investment in KDC.⁶² The KDC's position of denial is confusing for its contradiction. In 2005, its Secretary/Director acknowledged that Kadavu Provincial Council's investment with KDC as at 31 December 2001 was valued at F\$200,000 for 70,000 ordinary F\$1.00 shares representing 49% of the total shares of KDC.⁶³

⁶² Minutes of the Kadavu Provincial Council meeting 22-23/4/2009, MW of FAB pgs 41-42 of 19/11/2009 (above) + Minutes of the Kadavu Provincial Council meeting, 19/11/ 2009, p18 (7.19) of the Vola ni Bose ni Yasana ko Kadavu, Suva, 12-13/5/2010

⁶³ Letter dated 31 July 2005, signed by Company Secretary/Director to the Managing Partner of KPMG.

(Figure 4.3.5.1: The gap in communal collection. Daurewa, A, 2012)

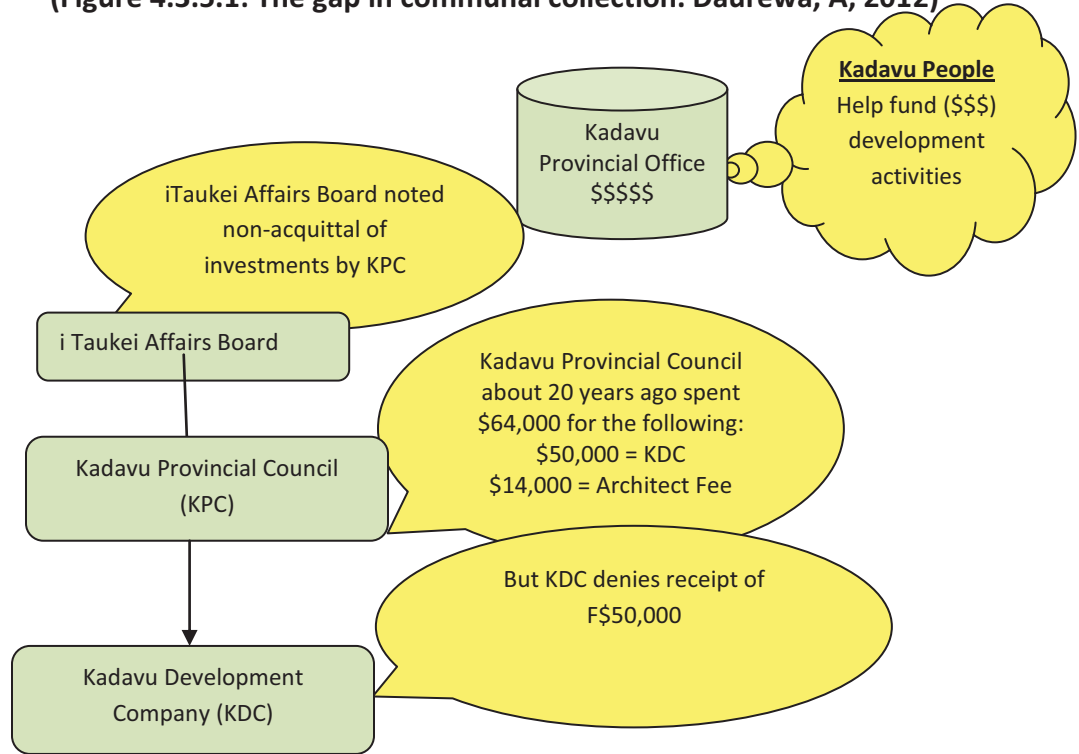


Figure 4.3.5.1 illustrates the gap that exists in accountability for communal collections. In Kadavu, the politicians and technocrats who initiated the collections and know of its usage are considered useful members of the province. The politicians served as Government ministers while the technocrats held top management positions in government statutory institutions. Most of them also serve in the Kadavu Provincial Council, a fact that inhibits most people from questioning their denial of receipt of the missing money. The additional gap that exists is in the legislation. The iTaukei Affairs Act Cap 120 does not protect those who contribute to communal collections in the provinces.

4.4 THE IMPACT OF THE REVERSAL OF A GRANT TO A LOAN

In accordance with policies of the People's Charter, the Bainimarama government (2006-current 2012) reversed the Qarase government (2001-2006) decision to convert the Rabuka government (1991-1999) F\$20 million advance to the Fijian Holdings Limited, from a loan to a grant. Bainimarama's decision has impacted on iTaukei institutions, including the Provincial Councils, which had become dependent on dividends from this F\$20 million grant (now borrowing which must be repaid to FHL) to fund development initiatives. By the time of Bainimarama's reversal of Qarase's decision, a total sum of F\$28 million had been paid to iTaukei Affairs in dividends.

The records of how the dividends totalling F\$28 million was spent by the iTaukei administration, is unclear, because an audit of this is still outstanding. It is also unclear how much of these dividends were paid to the individual Provincial Councils. Although Kadavu and Rewa for example, were receiving an annual F\$100,000 each which were absorbed into their respective development programme budget.

4.5 PROVINCIAL COUNCIL and ITS BENEFIT

Durutalo (1997: 207) observed that Provincialism has its benefits as a semi-federal form of governing of which four highly significant ones are noted here. Provincialism has enabled the partial preservation of indigenous forms of socio-

political organisation which act as a buffer against the direct onslaught of modernity and its innovations.

Furthermore, through the adoption of such a system (within the larger framework of the system of indirect rule), traditional structures such as the *tokatoka* (extended family units) and *yavusa* (clan) have been preserved and social relations of which govern the existence of such structures have been maintained.

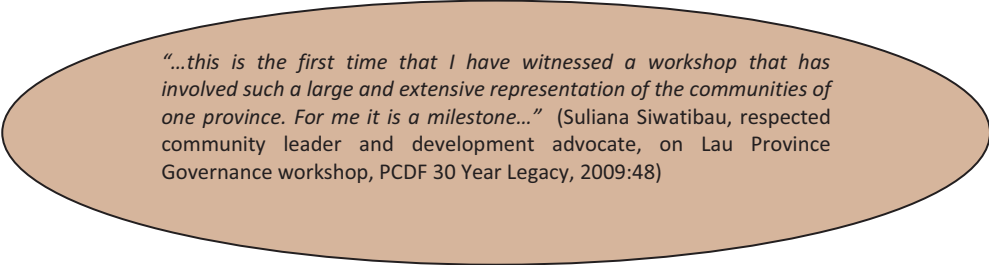
In addition, the revival of pre-colonial *vanua* through the provincial system has been a positive move in a number of ways. Firstly, it has enabled people who originate from a common kinship and traditional political system to work together and challenge the claim to power by the iTaukei ruling class that emerged as a result of colonialism. Secondly, in terms of developing resources of land and sea, which have been reserved through codification by the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB), it is more meaningful to maintain the *vanua* since resources can then be shared amongst members of the kinship groups.

Through the management system of dividing people into various groups, provincialism has also made it easier to assess which group has been neglected in terms of resource allocation and development, and which groups have always been favoured.

This study adds that Provincial Councils can better mobilise resources to support development by adopting an inclusive approach. Amongst possibilities, utilising

the voluntary service of members of the province who are more often than not, appreciative of the importance of linking development to the people and to policy makers, out of which networks are formed to help implement their plan. Similarly to **4.3.1** and **4.3.2**, this section includes an incident selected from the researcher's 8-year experience (2002-2010) with PCDF. The approach adopted by the Kadavu Provincial Council, in including its villages through the representative Village Headmen of 71 villages and settlements in consultations on the development of its strategic plan is not only innovative but also non-traditional.

4.6 PEOPLE and POLICY



"...this is the first time that I have witnessed a workshop that has involved such a large and extensive representation of the communities of one province. For me it is a milestone..." (Suliana Siwatibau, respected community leader and development advocate, on Lau Province Governance workshop, PCDF 30 Year Legacy, 2009:48)

Some provincial councils network with civil society groups as a means to ensuring their objectives are met. Suliana Siwatibau's (2009) highlighted observation above is reflective of a concerted effort, made by Lau Provincial Council for good governance awareness and practice. In this instance, provincial councils in Lau and Kadavu engaged with an NGO, (PCDF), to implement their respective governance projects. It was found that networking was absolutely necessary as a means whereby costs were shared between the stakeholders. For

Lau province, the workshop at provincial level was an opportunity for community leaders to share some of the difficulties of their role at village level.

Box 3 Lau

In 2009, PCDF was asked by the Roko Tui Lau to co-fund a workshop on governance for members of the Lau Provincial Council. One of the highlights of this workshop was the collective concern among community leaders that at village level, traditional leadership was often challenged to the extent that, chiefs found it difficult to be effective in their role as leaders. Another chief lamented that nowadays an effective leader must have many children residing in the village to support his decisions. Otherwise, people no longer cooperate in communal work such as keeping the village clean and tidy.

Box 4 Kadavu

In early 2006, PCDF was approached by the Roko Tui Kadavu to assist with the production of a strategic development plan for the Province. With limited resources, PCDF and the Roko Tui Kadavu agreed that the plan would identify key development needs on the island as a guide for stakeholders. PCDF sought the assistance of Suva based Kadavu professionals from different areas of expertise who shared their skills in addition to 71 Turaga ni Koro (TNK) in Kadavu, who completed a questionnaire to identify key development issues of concern. Government services in Kadavu were also consulted, such as the Vunisea Hospital and some schools. To date (2012), the 5-year (2007-2012) strategic development plan for Kadavu provides the roadmap for development. Furthermore, it is a useful source document for the Government to help Kadavu implement its Plan.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Acting Roko Tui Kadavu reported that Government has spent F\$12 million to increase accessibility by building roads and jetties, which according to the Kadavu Development Plan is a key development need.

Box 5 Lomaiviti

For two years (2010 and 2011), the Lomaiviti provincial council has held two successful festivals in Suva. Funds collected were realised to meet the province's development agenda. According to some sources⁶⁵, expenses were minimal because the provincial council partnered with private companies which sponsored some of the costs of the festivals.

The examples provided in the boxes for the provinces of Lau, Kadavu and Lomaiviti reveal the effort by Provincial Councils to engage with civil society groups, in order to achieve their respective objectives.

4.7 SUMMARY

This chapter establishes that provincial councils continue to be subservient to local chiefs and politicians who use this structure to serve their respective interest. This has really been the consequence of inheriting a system that became the property of the local elite, to ensure British Colonial governmental objectives were met. Since Independence (1970), this institution through the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) and provincial councils continued to be used as the 'mouthpiece' for the iTaukei. With the advent of General Elections, it seemed natural that political parties sanctioned by the GCC, should use the same system to advocate their manifesto. On their part, the people including the officials of the Fijian Administration understand this as cultural for the system.

⁶⁵ In-depth interview, 18/2/2012)

CHAPTER 5

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION 2006 to 2012: A CASE STUDY OF KADAVU and REWA PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

"People can be encouraged to change, but if the structure of the system in which the individuals work does not support them or allow enough flexibility, improvement efforts will fail. Similarly, if the organization's governance, policies, structures, time frames, and resource allocation are changed but the individuals within the organization do not have opportunities to learn how to work within the new system, the improvement effort will fail." - Todnem & Warner (1994)⁶⁶

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents an analysis of the two provincial councils identified as case studies namely; the Kadavu and Rewa Provincial Councils. An outline of the two provincial councils is presented. This is followed by discussions on one of the policies of the Government's new direction, the Peoples' Charter and the current governance structure after the implementation of the People's Charter. A summary of the findings concludes this chapter.

5.1 KADAVU AND REWA PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

The Provincial Councils of Kadavu and Rewa administer development for those residing in villages within their respective areas. Kadavu and Rewa share common features as non-homogeneous societies⁶⁷ with remnants of Tongan

⁶⁶ See www.hr.com/...quotes/quote... Accessed 31/7/2012

⁶⁷ Vola ni Kawa Bula (register for iTaukei social kinship groups) at the Native Land Commission refers.

presence in principal areas⁶⁸. They also participated in two historical events of Fiji's 19th century Colonial era:

(1) The Deed of Cession. Chiefs from Rewa and Kadavu were related to Ratu Seru Cakobau and supported Fiji's cession to Britain in 1874;

(2) The introduction of Indian labour into the country. Five men from Kadavu were circumstantially amongst the first load of Indians under the Indentured Labour system to arrive via the *Leonidas* in Levuka in May 1879⁶⁹. Rewa was a site for the early mills⁷⁰ which employed Indian labour for sugar production.

(3) The provinces of Kadavu and Rewa belong to the same confederacy, the Burebasaga (one of three confederacies) in iTaukei society, of which the paramount chief of Rewa, the ⁷¹*Roko Tui Dreketi* is the head.

⁶⁸ Consulted the Government Archives record on 'Tukutuku kei Ratu Serupepeli Qaranivalu' whose mother was Tongan. He was Governor for Kadavu under the Cakobau Government. He explained Tongan presence in Tavuki amongst the chiefs and Yawe which was dominated by Tongan warriors. In Rewa, the paramount chief has Tongan ancestry. In addition, surrounding villages of Nabua and Sigatoka were peopled by Tongans who settled in Rewa for various purposes.

⁶⁹ Accessed on 9/8/2011 - www.usp.ac.fj. According to Professor Sudesh Mishra (USP) 1/12/2010, the men hailed from Galoa village in Kadavu. Galoa was a favoured port of call for mail steamers from Sydney to San Francisco via Honolulu & back, in the mid 1870s. Typical of their Oceanic trait, these men left Galoa in a boat for Australia, then continued on to America and then ended up in India where they worked in Calcutta as topazes (cleaners). They met Charles Mitchell who had been sent by Governor Gordon to seek the Indian Government's permission to recruit labourers. The men were at Trinidad Depot in Calcutta and Mitchell arranged from their return via *Leonidas* free of charge. They arrived on 14th May 1879 with the first load of Indians who were to work as labourers in sugar cane plantations for the Australian Colonial Sugar Refinery Company. Their names were written as; Sonia f/n Chaipus, Tom f/n Machua, Bill f/n Toma, George f/n unknown, Johnee f/n Ilimatama

⁷⁰ Roger Frazer, October 1981, A History of Penang Mill

⁷¹ According to Durutalo (1997) confederacies are not traditional. Burebasaga is one of 3 confederacies created by the Colonial Administration and includes 4 other provinces; Ba, Nadroga/Navosa, Namosi and Serua. Burebasaga consists of 6 while the other 2 confederacies consist of 4 provinces each. The other 2 are; Kubuna (Lomaiviti, Naitasiri, Ra & Tailevu) of which the Vunivalu of Bau is head and Tovata (Bua, Cakaudrove, Lau & Macuata), of which the Tui Cakau is head. Furthermore, realistically, Rewa and Kadavu are two independent traditional governance systems. Records in the Government Archives, 'Tukutuku kei Ratu Serupepeli Qaranivalu', Tui Kadavu, or Governor of Kadavu confirm, some islands in the Ono district were under the jurisdiction of Rewa until Tavuki and Nakasaleka from Kadavu, challenged Rewa which eventually returned Ono to Kadavu.

5.2 KADAVU PROVINCE

Kadavu is in the eastern division and is the fourth biggest island in the Fiji group with an area of 408 kilometers. It is located 96 kilometers south of Fiji's capital city of Suva (on mainland Viti Levu). Kadavu Province, a mountainous terrain, is challenged with costly internal access. Physical development in the Province is at a minimum and it does not have a town. There is a hospital, some village health centres, and schools including 3 secondary and 33 primary schools. Kadavu Province has a population of 10,167 of which 9,964 are iTaukei⁷² Kadavu's traditional governance structure is circular, called *manuduitagi* (creatures with different voices). In the context of the Provincial Council, this metaphor is symbolic of a council of chiefs representing each *tikina* (district) where each is autonomous and decision is reached by consensus.

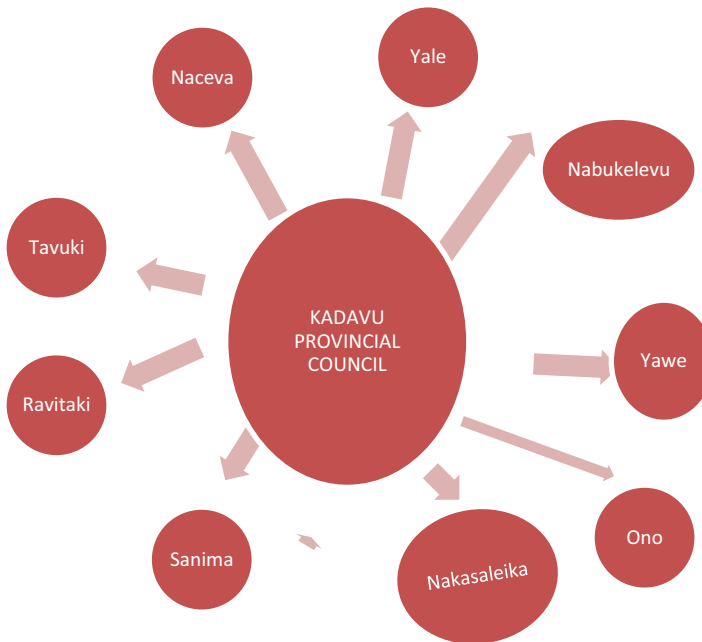


School children in

Nabukelevu, Kadavu (Source: Google Image <http://www.birdlife.org>)

⁷²Consult Fiji Government Bureau of Statistics 2007 Census Report.

Figure 5.2.1 Nine Tikina (districts) of Kadavu



Most of the people from the Province generate their income from the land and the sea as farmers and fishermen. The Province is accessible by a regular shipping service that is privately owned. Other ships including government vessels also visit Kadavu but on an ad hoc basis. There are also regular flights from Viti Levu. The administrative structure of Kadavu's iTaukei is a 3-layered strata with the provincial council in the centre, surrounded by the nine tikina (districts) in the Province (Tavuki, Nabukelevu, Naceva, Nakasaleka, Ono, Ravitaki, Sanima, Yale and Yawe).⁷³ The 78 villages in Kadavu represent the grass-roots.

⁷³ Taken from Kadavu Province Strategic Development Plan (2007-2012), 'About Kadavu in Brief', Roko Tui Kadavu

5.3 REWA PROVINCE

The Province of Rewa is in the Central division and is on the south eastern coast of mainland Viti Levu. While it is host to the City of Suva, it also has easy access to Nausori Town, the main urban centre for the Provinces of Naitasiri and Tailevu. Rewa is a flat terrain of 272 square kilometers⁷⁴ and has easy access to land, sea and air travel. The cost of internal travel is comparatively cheaper than Kadavu. In addition to its Wainibokasi Hospital, Rewa also has access to Nausori and Suva hospitals. School children in Rewa have access to education via one secondary and some primary schools, in addition to schools and tertiary level institutes in Nausori and Suva and the corridor between them. Rewa has a population of 100,787 which includes 61,973 iTaukei, 11,634 of whom (Bureau of Statistics 2007 census), reside in villages with a total land area of 53,405 acres.⁷⁵ Similar to Kadavu's 3-layered administrative strata for the iTaukei, the Rewa Provincial Council is at the top, followed by the 9 Tikina (districts) of Rewa, Noco, Burebasaga, Dreketi, Toga, Suva, Vutia, Raviravi and, Dakuibeqa. The 54 villages form the bottom stratum.

However, unlike Kadavu, Rewa's traditional governance structure is hierarchical with a paramount chief and supporting social task groups residing in other

⁷⁴ Source: www.facebook.com/pages/Rewa/139655419386609

⁷⁵ Source: Rewa Province website, www.rewapc.com/prov_profile.aspx. Refer Baro Saumaki Bose ni Vanua & Democratic politics in Rewa, Table 16.1

villages not necessarily within the periphery of the district or provincial boundary.⁷⁶

5.3.1 EXPLANATION FOR THE PYRAMID

The pyramid in figure 5.3.1.1 illustrates that the Roko Tui Dreketi, is the paramount chief of the Rewa Province. Rewa has an interesting representation system called *vi mataki*, which is the equivalent of a foreign affairs function. Within Lomanikoro, the village of the paramount chief, there are *mataki* or ambassadors of the paramount chief for the other villages in Rewa and likewise, to other chiefly houses in parts of Fiji where Rewa has traditional blood ties.⁷⁷

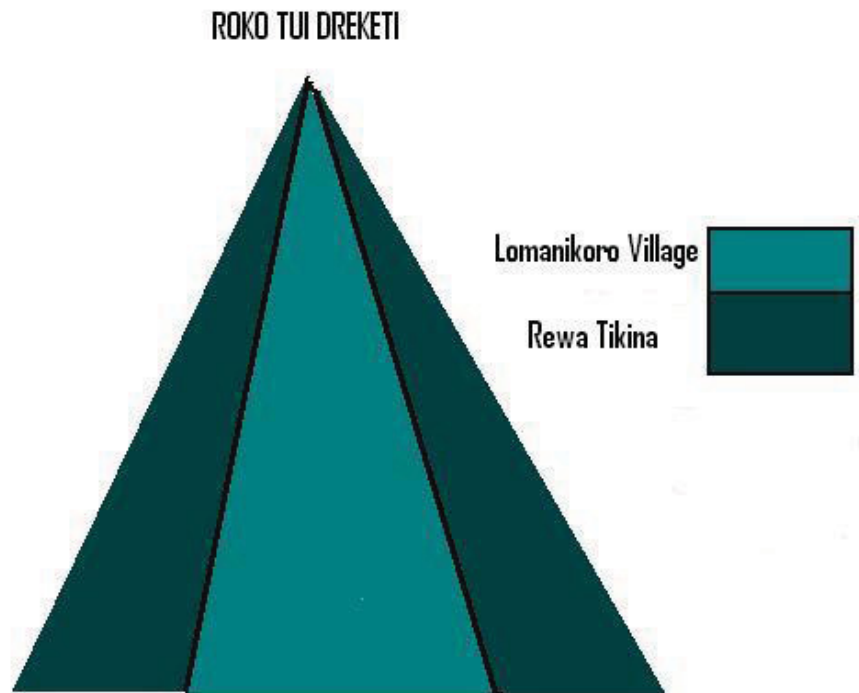


Ro Teimumu Kepa, Paramount chief of Rewa. (Source: Google Image <http://crosbiew.blogspot.com/2012/04/>)

⁷⁶ Bati or warriors are in Tokatoka, Tailevu Province. Mataisau (craftspeople) and Gonedau (fisherfolk) in nearby villages (to Lomanikoro village where the paramount chief lives) of Nukutubu and Nukui in Rewa Tikina (district) and Vutia Tikina (district).

⁷⁷ The effectiveness of the *mataki* system was tested during the *so mate* (funeral gathering) in 2005 of the previous Roko Tui Dreketi which was widely lauded as well organized. The credit was due to the *mataki* system where each *Yavusa* (clan) or *mataqali* (sub-clan) hosted their respective *vimataki* (village, district or province with special traditional link) within the periphery of their own area which diverted the crowd from converging in the main ground of the paramount chief's village. It was observed that the presence of such a large crowd in the village was not obvious because the *mataki* system achieved cohesion in Rewa.

Figure 5.3.1.1 TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN REWA



5.4 THE NEW DIRECTION POST 2006

As part of the government's new direction after December 2006, two events that followed affected the administration of the Provincial Councils. The first was the temporary dismantling of the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) in 2007 which was formalised in April 2012. The GCC which refused to support the Bainimarama government was alleged to be heavily politicised. The chiefs who were members of the GCC were discouraged from speaking against the Government at Provincial Council meetings. In Kadavu and Rewa, the chiefs

were divided in their support for the Bainimarama Government. The people however appeared not to be affected.⁷⁸

The second was the launch of the People's Charter. The People's Charter is a policy document to rebuild Fiji under the following eleven key pillars: (1) ensuring sustainable democracy and good and just governance, (2) developing a common national identity and building social cohesion, (3) ensuring effective, enlightened and accountable leadership, (4) enhancing public sector efficiency, performance effectiveness and service delivery, (5) achieving higher economic growth while ensuring sustainability, (6) making more land available for productive and social purposes, (7) developing an integrated development structure at the divisional level, (8) reducing poverty to a negligible level by 2015, (9) making Fiji a knowledge-based society, (10) improving health service delivery, (11) enhancing global integration and international relations.⁷⁹

The formulation of Pillar 7 was based on ethnic driven development which was successful in the promotion of culture and heritage, but failed in the areas of economic and social development for the iTaukei. As a way forward, Provincial Development Boards (PDB) was established for each province by integrating the

⁷⁸ Acting Roko Tui Kadavu, interview on 1/8/2011

⁷⁹ See Government of Fiji, People's Charter for Change, Peace & Progress, 2008. His Grace, the Archbishop Petero Mataca and Fiji's Prime Minister Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama co-chaired the National Council for Building a Better Fiji (NCBBF) which was established specifically to formulate the People's Charter through two steps; (1) Prepare a comprehensive, facts-based, diagnostic, forward-looking report on the state of the nation and the economy, (2) This report provided a list of recommendations for changes to systems of government, the constitution, laws, economic and resources development policies, leadership values, community relations and institutional reforms.

present Provincial and Advisory Councils. A major task of the PDB is to revitalize economic activity in rural areas and the outer islands through the provision of basic infrastructure.

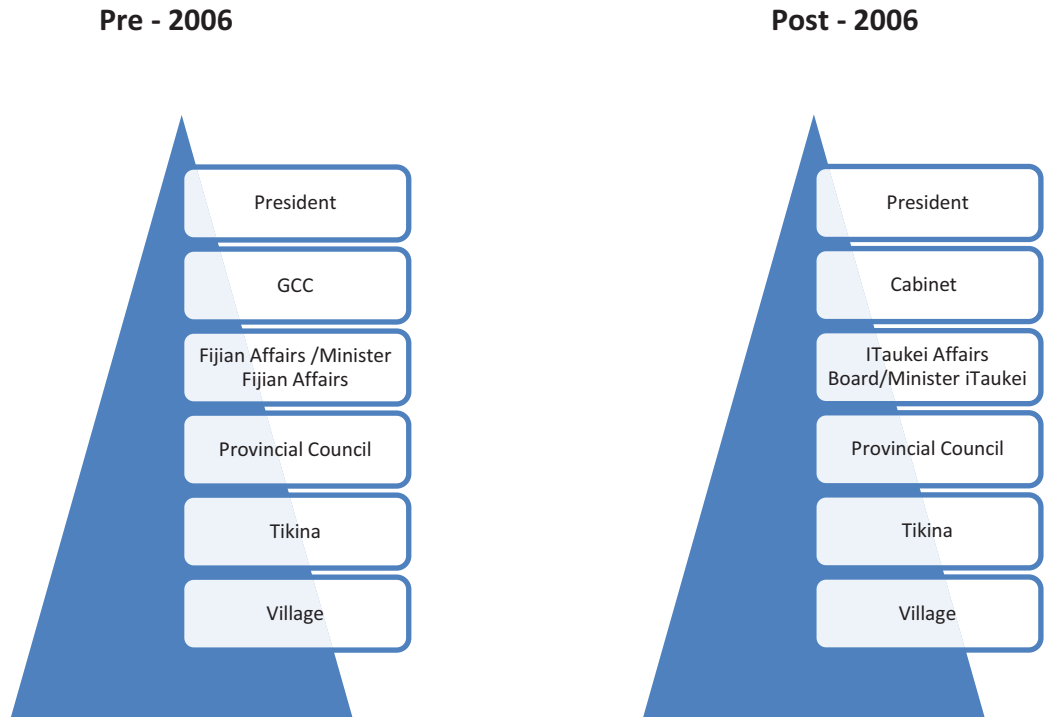
5.5 ITAUKEI ADMINISTRATION STRUCTURE POST 2006

The governance structure of the iTaukei Administration which has been incestuous since Pre-2006 has improved. Previously, the Provincial Council provided the membership for the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) via representatives from the provinces so that effectively, the same people served in both institutions. However, this changed when the GCC was dismantled after 2006 and replaced by the Cabinet. This implies that the welfare of the iTaukei maybe, better addressed effectively by the central government which includes Ministers with different development portfolio. Unlike the GCC, whose members are also members of the fourteen provincial councils⁸⁰, and often limited in their ability to effectively address the development of the iTaukei because of their isolation.

⁸⁰ There are 14 provinces, 187 tikina (districts) and 1,171 villages in Fiji. Source:T.Namotu, iTaukei Affairs.

The following figure 5.5.1 illustrates the changes in the governance structure of the iTaukei Administration:

Figure 5.5.1 ITAUKEI ADMINISTRATION GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



5.6 PROVINCIAL OFFICE CHANGES POST DECEMBER 2006

The provincial office is making notable improvement with several changes, characteristic of good governance taking place. These changes adhere to Pillar 4 (Enhancing public sector efficiency, performance effectiveness and service delivery) of the People’s Charter. Furthermore, the iTaukei Affairs Board accepts that it does not have the capacity to be responsible for the good

government and well-being of the iTaukei. Rather, this is the role of the central government. The role of the Provincial Office is changing to a monitoring one.

In order to test the effectiveness of policy change at national level, it is helpful to capture some of the changes that are taking place in the Head Office under the responsibility of the Provincial Services Division before noting their trickle-down effect, at the level of the provincial offices. Firstly, the iTaukei Affairs Board recognizes that the social and economic development of the iTaukei is the responsibility of the Government and all its agencies. Secondly, there is potential for the TNK report to be used as a tool for the iTaukei Affairs Board to guide government and NGOs in the development resource allocation, as well as to propose policy redirection to achieve the iTaukei well-being in their village setting. Thirdly, the Board's reporting system has become outcome based on targeted goals of its corporate and business plans. Fourthly, there is nil tolerance for mismanagement. Anyone found guilty of gross mismanagement faces instant dismissal.⁸¹

In response, the Provincial Offices of Kadavu and Rewa are undergoing re-structures to improve governance, including a shift in responsibility from development to monitoring development. Major changes include: (1) Roko Tui cannot serve in his own province; (2) Roko Tui must have university degree. Roko Tui of both Rewa and Kadavu are university graduates; (3) A new post of

⁸¹ Provincial Services reported 2 recent sackings; a Roko Tui of a province in the Central Division and a young chief of a province in the Western Division who despite pleading was still removed. Normally, prior to the Provincial Services recent change in policy, this would have been entertained as his father is quite influential in their province.

Senior Assistant Roko Tui (SART) has been created to ensure the implementation of the corporate plan for the provincial office; (4) The Roko Tui who has been empowered with added decision making power as part of Pillar 7 of the People's Charter, which ensures an integrated approach to development. As such the Roko Tui is encouraged to participate in central government activities. For example, the Roko Tui Ba is current chairman of the Heads of Division (HoD) committee.⁸² (5) All Treasurers must have a minimum qualification of a Diploma in Accounting. (6) In recognising the role of accountability and financial transparency, the new post of Assistant Treasurer has also been created to assist the Treasurer. (7) The post for Assistant Roko (Urban) Kadavu has been removed. (8) Posts for messengers and tea/cleaning ladies have been removed. Previously it was common practice for these roles to be filled via nepotism. (9) TNK reports highlighted two common health problems of scabies and dysentery, which have since influenced policy development at the Board and the Water Authority of Fiji.⁸³

5.7 THE ROLE OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL POST 2006

The provincial council is threatened with dilution. Its responsibility has been reduced in development activities and funding that supports these activities.

⁸² Refer T. Namotu, Manager Provincial Services, iTaukei Affairs Board, 8 September 2011

⁸³ Water supply to villages by the Water Authority of Fiji is now chlorinated and, village by-laws include a requirement that young married couples must live separately from their parents to avoid skin diseases, which are becoming prevalent in situations of overcrowding.

The role of the provincial council, according to the iTaukei Affairs Board and translated by the researcher is as follows:

- Formulate a development plan that includes health, peace building, good governance, economic empowerment culture and tradition;
- Formulate by-laws for better implementation of projects for the following initiatives: accessibility, health with emphasis on child health, sports and recreation, village plans, water, education, reading centres, land use, environment conservation and the market;
- Seek support from members of a village, district or the province at the ages of 18 to 60 years, to participate in development initiatives for their general well-being;
- Carry out any other task requested by the Minister;
- Increase the general well-being of the people: (1) Improve roads on iTaukei land, (2) Building and maintenance of housing, (3) Planting and protection of plantation, (4) Facilitate iTaukei land development, (5) Transfer of the sick to health facility.

Firstly, the development responsibility of the iTaukei Affairs Board for the iTaukei through the provincial council has been shifted to the Ministry of Provincial Development as required by Pillar 7 of the People's Charter noted in **5.4 (refer pg 68-70)**. Secondly, funding provision to provincial councils has decreased: (1) the transfer of the Development Assistance Scheme (DAS) fund

to the Ministry of Provincial Development to pay for the cost of implementing Pillar (7) mentioned in **5.4 (refer pg 68-70)** . (2) the interim Bainimarama government's reversal of the F\$20million from grant to loan to the Fijian Holdings Limited (FHL) via the iTaukei Affairs (discussed in Chapter 4), has resulted in a further loss to the Provincial Councils averaging \$100,000 per annum in dividends. (3) The Rewa Provincial Council received annual dividends from its business arm, Rewa Province Company Holdings Limited (RPCHL) for two years, 2008 and 2009. This ceased for 2010 when the company reported a decrease in profit. (4) Kadavu on the other hand lost F\$214,000 in investments. Both provincial councils are now left with the annual *Soli ni Yasana* which shows positive results at a 72% and 90% collection rate respectively for Kadavu and Rewa. Thirdly, the transfer of the Assistant Roko Tui (Urban) who is based in Suva to the Head Office means committee meetings of the provincial councils and Suva based chiefs will no longer be facilitated by this Officer. Fourthly, a plan to reduce provincial council meetings from 2 to 1 annually, has yet to be implemented.

5.8 PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP POST 2006

The responsibilities of the provincial council are not consistent with the changing role of the iTaukei Affairs from an implementer to a monitor of the good government and well-being of the iTaukei⁸⁴. According to the iTaukei Affairs Board, the membership of the provincial council comprises the district

⁸⁴ As discussed with the Manager Provincial Services, 8/9/2011

chiefs, elected district representatives and the Minister of iTaukei Affairs nominees. The nominees must not number more than five, who must not be resident in the province, plus one representative each for the women and youth and other nominees of the Minister. The number of district representatives is dependent on the number of villages within a *tikina* (district) and not on the number of districts within a province. Those with ten or more villages have two representatives in the Provincial Council while those with fewer than ten villages have one representative. The *tikina* representatives must be residing in their villages. This is a new policy that was changed from previous governments, which allowed *tikina* representatives to be resident elsewhere⁸⁵ where necessary.

5.9 THE CULTURE OF THE OFFICIALS POST 2006

The *vakavanua*⁸⁶ culture of the iTaukei Affairs appears to be disappearing and increasingly replaced by officials of the iTaukei Affairs Board who appear vigilant in their practice of good governance. There is an increase in awareness for good governance⁸⁷ practice by the officials of the iTaukei Affairs Board. Firstly, Kadavu's Roko Tui was instrumental in increasing women's participation in the Provincial Council from 2 to 5 women (out of 34 members). Secondly, the same official ensured the selection of urban representatives followed a transparent process of

⁸⁵ The iTaukei Affairs Board introduced this change to improve monitoring of development in the villages. The chairperson of the *Tikina* (district) council is reserved for the traditional chief.

⁸⁶ *Vakavanua* in this context is action without regard for regulations and the rule of law.

⁸⁷ This study uses the UNESCAP's interpretation of good governance which is described in Chapter 2.

election. In the past, it was left to the discretion of the chiefs. Thirdly, the Manager of Provincial Services at the iTaukei Affairs Board has instructed the Mata ni Tikina to present their reports also, to the Commissioners via the Provincial Administrators for each Province. Fourthly, the TNK reports, which used to justify the payment of their allowances, are now analysed at both the Provincial Office and the Provincial Services unit of the iTaukei Affairs for policy development and change.

5.10 THE PROCESS OF THE VILLAGE REPORT POST 2006

The provincial councils do not have the capacity to calibrate the good government and well being of the iTaukei because they are not adequately resourced with reports from their members. Furthermore, village-level development issues raised by TNK do not normally reach the provincial councils. For example, unlike the Rewa Provincial Council, the reporting process of the Kadavu Provincial Council does not necessitate reports from the urban representatives and the nominees of the Minister of the iTaukei Affairs Board. However, similarly to the Rewa Provincial Council, all other members of the Council, including the working committees such as Finance and Staffing, Development, Health and Education and, Government agencies and other development partners present reports to the Kadavu Provincial Council meeting. In both provincial councils, the chiefs act as counsellors and contribute to the discussions in the meetings on their own accord.

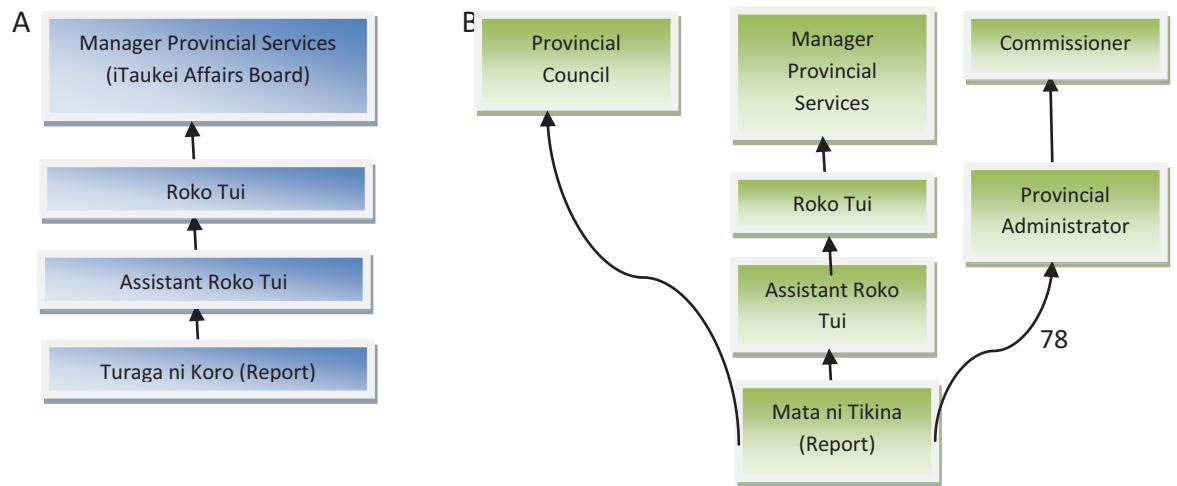
The Mata ni Tikina (MNT) reports on the physical development such as schools, hospitals and roads in the villages, and, outside of the periphery of the villages. The

MNT is not expected to provide a report on the outcome of development in the villages. The MNT reports are presented to the Provincial Council and the Commissioner Eastern, through the Provincial Administrator.

The TNK on the other hand reports all issues including environmental, political and social at village level. The report is given to the Assistant Roko Tui for the particular *tikina* for analysis. It is then given to the Roko Tui for further analysis after which the TNK is paid his allowance and the report is forwarded to the Provincial Services division in the iTaukei Affairs Board for additional analysis and as a document for policy development. The reporting process described above indicates that neither the Provincial Council nor the Provincial Administrator is aware of village level development because unlike the iTaukei Affairs Board, they are not included in the reporting process of the TNK as figures A and B in 5.10.1 below illustrate. This suggests that a mechanism to formally gauge the impact of development in the provinces is absent. This is instead left to the discretion of the iTaukei Affairs Board, which has access to the TNK reports via the Provincial Offices.

Figure 5.10.1 : Reporting system for villages and districts (A. Daurewa, 2012)

FA = Village (1,171) B = District (187)



5.11 DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROVINCE POST 2006

Rural development has never enjoyed so much Government affirmative action until after December 2006. Rewa, being of flat terrain, does not share Kadavu's challenge of inaccessibility. The Government has however, spent about F\$20million, much of it on dredging works in the Rewa delta.⁸⁸ The Office of the Commissioner Eastern reported to the Kadavu Provincial Council recent⁸⁹ meeting a total expenditure of F\$6,801,448.98 in development for 2010/2011 in Kadavu. Of this amount, almost half (F\$3,086,038.67) was spent on roads. As a consequence of improvements to roads in Kadavu, the markets in both Kadavu and Suva have become more accessible. The social phenomena of rural to urban push is reversing to urban to rural push in Kadavu, as people return to their villages to participate in income-generation projects, most of which are initiated by the Government.⁹⁰ The Government's effort to increase economic activities in rural areas, however, is thwarted by its own policies. For example, in regulating the informal finance sector, small village canteens lost potential money earners when cigarettes could only be sold in packets and not in rolls. While on one hand, health authorities gain from this policy, canteen owners suffer loss, because their profit margins are lowered.

⁸⁸ Email of 26/4/2012, Ministry of Provincial Development, Nausori

⁸⁹ This was held on Thursday, 10th November 2011 at the Studio 6 in Suva.

⁹⁰ Out of 9 Tikina (districts), this trend is prevalent in the following 5: Ravitaki, Ono, Nabukelevu, Naceva and Yale, where there is active participation in dalo and yaqona planting and the Agriculture Department's Affirmative Action programme with the rural population, which provides farm houses, seedlings and access roads.

5.12 THE PEOPLE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT

The annual *Soli ni Yasana* (annual tax contribution) benefits only the Provincial Office and not necessarily the people. As in other provinces, the people of Kadavu and Rewa provinces contribute to their development via the *Soli ni Yasana*. The relevance of this system however, is questioned because development for the iTaukei is increasingly becoming the responsibility of the central Government.

All iTaukei males from 21 to 60 years old registered in the Vola ni Kawa Bula are expected to make annual contributions to the *Soli Ni Yasana*. This has been a continuing practice since 1876 except that in the beginning, tax contribution was paid via village plantations. These annual tax contributions contribute to covering the operational cost of the provincial office, which acts as the secretariat of the provincial office and is headed by the Roko Tui. The provincial councils determine their respective budgets, out of which the tax rate is formulated for each province. Some of the funds are also used for development projects in the provinces. In the years 2006 to 2010, the total *Soli* collected by the 14 provinces was F\$3,961,192 against a budgeted income of F\$5,633,613. The lowest point of collection was in 2008 at 60.89% while the highest point of collection was in 2009 at 81.89%⁹¹ The collection rates of the annual Provincial tax from 2006 to 2010 for Kadavu and Rewa averaged 72% and 90% respectively. This appears to be highly successful and some contributing factors gathered by this study are: (1) people's general belief that development only reaches villages that fulfil their annual obligation of the *solu*

⁹¹ Timoci Namotu, Manager Provincial Services, iTaukei Affairs Board

ni yasana; (2) the sense of pride in its achievement that a village that successfully collects its annual *solu ni yasana* develops; and, (3) the belief of the officials at the iTaukei Affairs Board that the *solu ni yasana* justifies the existence of a separate governance system for the iTaukei to their counterparts in the central government.

5.13 THE CHIEFS and DEVELOPMENT POST 2006

The chiefs generally support the government's development effort. However, there is some division amongst the chiefs in both Rewa and Kadavu. When chiefs are divided, social cohesion is disrupted and economic progress threatened. The conflict in Rewa appears to be more complex than the mere fact that its paramount chief was a cabinet minister in the ousted Qarase government. The division amongst the chiefs became apparent after the Great Council of Chiefs was replaced in 2007 with an alternative council, which was supported by some but not all the chiefs in the two provincial councils under study. However, the traditional circular governance structure in Kadavu appears to be resolving its conflict, contrary to Rewa's conical governance structure.

In Kadavu, the chiefs differ in their respective positions between those who do not and those who do sympathise with Kadavu politicians who were ousted with Qarase in 2006. Those who sympathise with Qarase are less concerned with Kadavu's lost investments totalling F\$214,000, which the politicians who were instrumental in establishing its business arms cannot acquit. However, for the

greater good of the people, the chiefs do not outwardly display their differences and continue to make decisions collectively.

In Rewa, the division is more complex. Its paramount chief was the Minister for Education in the Qarase Government. She does not support Bainimarama. The current paramount chief, who is a widow, lives in her Lomanikoro Village and is actively engaged with development in her province. However, the paramount chief is involved in an age-old conflict over a chiefly role with another family that currently supports Bainimarama⁹². It is alleged this family used the Vola ni Kawa Bula (VKB)⁹³ to ascend to their current position. This division between the chiefs has become obvious in Rewa Council meetings.

⁹² According to a member of the chiefly Valelevu family of Rewa, the conflict is between Tokatoka Nukunitabua, whose origin is Ra and Tokatoka Nakoro, whose origin is Namosi. It is alleged that Nakoro, which now claims the chiefly title of Vunivalu (warlord), is not the rightful holder but that Nukunitabua is, and that a member of Nakoro who was the Roko Tui Rewa in the early 1900s, capitalized on his position in the Native Administration and usurped the traditional tribal chief of Nukunitabua via the VKB.

⁹³ VKB is a register of iTaukei social kinship and was created by the Colonial Administration in 1894 to determine landownership. Claims for wrongful entry in the VKB, for various reasons, are not new and similar allegations against those who raised their social status because they worked in, or were closely connected to, the officials of the Native Administration continue to emerge. See Chapter 3. The issue of ascent in social status in local communities, and, formalizing it such as is alleged for Rewa, was characteristic of colonies. In Fiji, Durutalo (1997) noted this as prevalent amongst the iTaukei who worked in the iTaukei Administration.

5.14 TRADITION IN MODERN GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: KADAVU vs REWA

The governance structures of egalitarian for Kadavu (for Kadavu) and hierarchical rule (for Rewa) affect their respective provincial councils differently. The following table attempts to illustrate a comparison between Kadavu and Rewa:

Issue	Kadavu (egalitarian)	Rewa (hierarchical)
Membership for the Council	Confirmation for membership rests with the Provincial Office	Confirmation for membership rests with the paramount chief
Decisions of the Council	Decision is reached by consensus.	The paramount chief makes the final decision, even for those that were reached by consensus.
Use of Council resources	Tavuki village, where the Provincial Office is, benefits most. They use telephone/fax, vehicle and officials for personal/ <i>vanua</i> errands. They also borrow money from the office. However, these have been curtailed since 2007.	Likewise for Lomanikoro, the chiefly village of Rewa, where the Provincial Office is.

5.14.1 IMPLICATIONS

When confirmation for membership of the provincial council rests with the paramount chief of Rewa, this can inhibit potentially qualified and experienced members of the province, from participating effectively in the development affairs of their province. The same however can be argued for Kadavu where the Roko Tui makes the final decision, because there is no transparency in the criteria used, for selection of members of both Provincial Councils. The opposing forms of decision making process where Kadavu’s is by consensus but Rewa’s is subject to the final

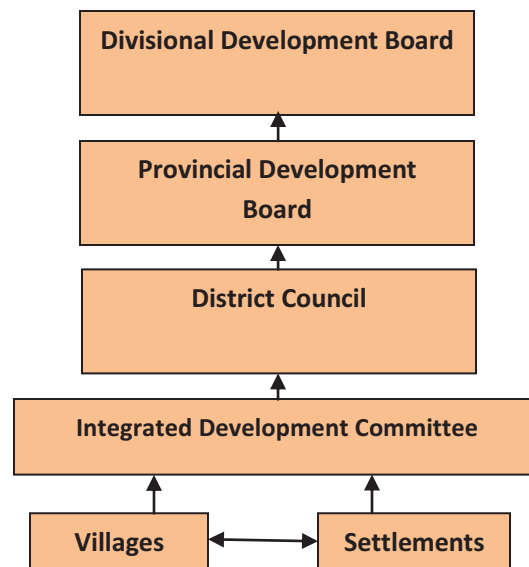
approval of its paramount chief, is generally acceptable to the members because it is traditional to them. The use of Government resources through the Provincial Office has always been culturally rampant until the Bainimarama government when this practice was curtailed. On their part, the chiefly villages see this as the Government's act of reciprocity to their chiefly forebears and descendents. Firstly, for supporting the Colonial Administration by giving land to build their office. Secondly, for having provided the security and protection needed when necessary.

5.15 INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT and the PEOPLE'S CHARTER

The implications of a principle of the People's Charter, 'to mainstream indigenous Fijians in a modern progressive Fiji' and, its 7th pillar, 'to develop an integrated development structure at the divisional level', allows for a more effective and efficient delivery of infrastructural and economic development service to rural communities, under the Ministry of Provincial Development and Multi-Ethnic Affairs. The representatives from provinces, who sit in provincial and divisional development boards, recommend and prioritise infrastructural and economic development project proposals in close consultation with the respective commissioners and relevant government agencies. This 'new' structure enables the people to communicate directly with the relevant authority in the government, such as the Commissioner. The Office of the Commissioner is the decision making authority on funding allocation for development projects in rural areas. This model also allows the opportunity for the people to monitor and evaluate development in

their provinces, and, to communicate the impact, and, negotiate for improvements where necessary. The following figure 5.15.1 illustrates the new development structure for the rural population which is currently in place.

(Figure 5.15.1 Development Model for rural development, Source: Jesoni Kuruyawa, Acting Roko Tui Kadavu, 2011)



5.15.2 EXPLANATION FOR FIGURE 5.15.1

The model above (5.15.1) applies to all divisions (Central, Eastern, Northern and Western). The Roko Tui (of the respective Provincial Council) is an ex-officio member of the District Council, the Integrated Development Committee, Provincial Development Board and Divisional Development Board. This structure enables rural development to be integrated in the central government system where all relevant ministries are represented. Furthermore, this structure identifies and

prioritizes Government funded projects and/or also, donor funded, but Government administered projects. Civil society is a partner in the decision making process of this model, through the membership of members of the province, regardless of ethnicity, in all levels of strata in the model.

From the perspective of rural development in the villages, the effectiveness of this structure is largely dependent on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Roko Tui in his role. For example, in the Kadavu Provincial Council, the Yaubula (Environment) Committee which monitors environment conservation and management in the province, participates in the decision making process at the level of Integrated Development Committee under the office of the Commissioner Eastern in the Ministry of Provincial Development. As a result, environment projects for Kadavu are better addressed by the Government. As opposed to the integrated development system, projects submitted for government funding through the provincial council system, often suffer oversight and delay because of the bureaucracy that must be overcome. This is due mainly to the isolation of the Taukei Administration, as a local government body for rural iTaukei resident in villages, governed by a separate legislation (Fijian Affairs Act Cap 120).

Not only is the role of the Roko Tui crucial if rural development initiatives by the Government are to be effective. More importantly, the people need empowerment to question government policies. Particularly in the case of the cigarette sale in Rewa (**refer 5.11, pg79**), which did not reach the Provincial Office.

5.16 GAPS THAT REMAIN AFTER 2006

Despite improvements in the operations of the provincial councils via the provincial offices, there are seven obvious gaps as follows:

1. The iTaukei Affairs Board has not honoured its fiduciary responsibility for the good government of the iTaukei since 1997. As a consequence, the financial records of the two provincial councils are not regularly audited. Kadavu's last audit was in 2001. On the other hand, Rewa's Roko Tui did not know when its most recent financial audit was and referred the researcher's question to the iTaukei Affairs Board.
2. The system is not transparent on the process of the TNK report. With no follow-up mechanism in place, the provincial councils have no idea of the situation in the villages.
3. Despite the villages' commitment to their annual tax collection, the *Soli ni Yasana*, the TNK who is responsible for this achievement remains the most over-worked and under-paid official in the iTaukei Administration. The TNK remains committed to development via the provincial office, which is reflected in the high annual provincial rates (*Soli ni Yasana*) collection from 2006 to 2010, which averaged 70.53% for the 14 provinces.⁹⁴ Yet the TNK is an underpaid official with a mere F\$50 a month to cover transport and phone card and other expenses like keeping the village clean, where there is often little cooperation from other village members. An ex-Turaga-ni-Koro

⁹⁴ Timoci Namotu, Manager Provincial Services Division, iTaukei Affairs Board, 2nd meeting, 7/9/2011

observed that, “...to be a *Turaga ni Koro* one had to have plenty children to assist with carrying out his responsibilities such as keeping the village clean...”⁹⁵ Furthermore, with this responsibility, he has limited time to attend to his own plantation for his subsistence.

4. The decrease in central government funding support for provincial offices means more of the funds raised from the annual tax collection is utilized for the administrative costs of the provincial office and not necessarily for development projects.
5. The legislation is weak on the protection of the people, particularly those governed under the iTaukei Affairs Act Cap 120, from communal fundraising initiated via the provincial councils, which are neither transparent nor accountable, such as the case in Kadavu. Neither has it taken into consideration that the culture of silence prevalent in iTaukei society inhibits the people from demanding good governance practice from their leaders.
6. The women continue to be grossly under-represented in provincial councils despite their active involvement in development. For example, while some improvement is noted for Kadavu Provincial Council, the Rewa Provincial Council has remained unchanged at 28 men and 2 women.
7. While the dismantling of the Great Council of Chiefs has not thus far affected the people, there is division amongst the chiefs between those who support and those who do not support this latest government action.

⁹⁵ Lau Province Governance Workshop at Partners in Community Development Fiji, 2009.

5.17 SUMMARY

It appears the provincial council, a creation of the Colonial Administration, is becoming redundant, with reduced responsibility for development and a reduction in funding. This therefore questions the relevance of the *solu ni yasana*. How relevant is it now? The change has however, developed a 'new look' culture of a crop of officials dedicated to ensuring characteristics of good governance are visible in an institution that has for decades carried the label of *vakavanua* because of poor governance practice. However, while rural development at divisional level is now integrated at central government to ensure effectiveness and efficiency, plus, mobilization of resources, the Government must ensure the presence of a robust monitoring mechanism, if the model (**refer pg 85, 5.15.1**) that has been introduced for rural development is to be effective.

In order to achieve positive outcomes from the Government's concerted effort to improve rural development, the emerging issue of a conflict-ridden iTaukei society needs to be addressed by its leaders. Coincidentally, most of these appear to be related to modern institutions for iTaukei governance that were created by the Colonial government. For there is evidence, that development is thwarted when there is conflict in a community.⁹⁶ For example, the issue of the VKB as a contentious document for the chiefs in Rewa is an example of the consequence of the Colonial Administration's support for local elite where, an employee of the

⁹⁶ Permanent Secretary iTaukei Affairs address to Kadavu Provincial Council meeting November 2011.

Provincial Council became a chief by manipulating official records. There is hope though for redress, if the following is to be taken into consideration:

The High Court Judgment between Jonetani Kaukimoce (plaintiff) and the Native Lands Commission (defendant) which the plaintiff won on 30 April 2008 read:

the Commission (NLC) should not be afraid to amend its records accordingly. It must not adhere to the conventional belief that its record of proprietary units and individual members as contained in the VKB is sacrosanct. This record is a living instrument of Fijian ethnography and must of necessity accurately reflect the make-up or composition of every yavusa. It cannot meet this obligation if it continues to exercise undue caution to correct its record in the face of irresistible evidence to the detriment of the maintenance of a harmonious and cohesive community

On another but related note, the Provincial Council of Kadavu has a responsibility to ensure politicians responsible for mismanaging its investments are brought to justice. The Rewa Provincial Council also has the responsibility to ensure the division amongst its chiefs is addressed. The following idiom on the implications of poor leadership observed by our elders says, “*Ni duka tiko na wai mai cake, ena mai vuvu na wai era*”. It points out that when the source for river water is dirty at the top, water at the bottom will be murky. That is, the state of the land/people, which is the river water, is determined by its leadership, the source of water. As peace builders would lament, development is not sustainable without peace. Shouldn't Kadavu and Rewa provinces take heed of the wisdom of the past?



(Wainibuka River, Tailevu. Source: Google Images
<http://www.justpacific.com/fiji/fijiphotos/cards/modern/wainibuka.jpg>)

“NI DUKA NA WAI MAI CAKE, ENA MAI VUVU NA WAI E RA”

(This means, “this water is murky because its source is dirty”. This is an iTaukei idiom descriptive of poor leadership. It implies that the impact of leadership is found in the state of those who are being led).

CHAPTER 6

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

“Ultimately a genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a moulder of consensus”, Martin Luther King, Jr, 1968⁹⁷

6.0 INTRODUCTION

The central question for this thesis is; “what has happened to Provincial Councils since the People’s Charter was introduced by the current regime after December 2006?” In response, three (3) research objectives (**refer 1.5**) were formulated and addressed by nine (9) research questions (**refer 1.6**). The following presents a summary of responses to the 3 research objectives and concludes with a summary of responses to the 9 research questions.

6.1 SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

6.1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1 TO provide an overview of the Fiji Provincial Council Administrative system from 1876 to pre December 2006

6.1.1. DISCUSSION

Chapter 4 examined historical and modern aspects of governance and their contradictions in iTaukei society. The chiefs appear to be confusing their traditional role and that of their role as members of a modern governance

⁹⁷ An address to the Episcopal National Cathedral, Washington, DC, 31 March, 1968.

system, the provincial council. They have adopted the inherent attitude that provincial offices are their personal property, from their forebears who worked in the colonial Fijian Administration. There is no visible question asked on accountability and transparency. This was not characteristic of traditional customary practices in iTaukei society prior to the adoption of Governor Gordon's modified *lala in* 1876. The politicians on the other hand continue to weave their influence into the provincial councils, through the chiefs who sympathise with their political ideals.

Discussions in Chapter 2 established that the iTaukei Administration, of which the provincial council is a crucial component, was formulated on the flawed assumption that the iTaukei is homogeneous and governed by a hierarchical structure, similar to Tongan and Scottish systems. In fact, the traditional iTaukei deliberative and decision-making system was circular and based on cooperation, as described by Ravuvu (1991:6, In Carling 2009:46) and Durutalo (1997). The introduced provincial council system created instead Fiji's first wave of 'new chiefs', who worked for the Colonial administration. However, some iTaukei reacted against this new system, some being more volatile than others as shown by the example of the hill tribe in Vanua Levu that cannibalized local officials of their provincial office.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Consulted archival records of the Archdiocese of Suva.

The current (2012) conflict amongst the chiefs of Rewa discussed in Chapter 5 is a consequence of new chiefs who ensured their continuity by institutionalism and the subsequent protests by the traditional chiefs of Rewa⁹⁹. In the period between Independence and the first coup (1970-1987), the second wave of new chiefs emerged. Composed mostly of politicians, they became competitive by capitalising on the iTaukei Administration with hegemonic styles of leadership to meet their respective agenda. The third wave of new chiefs has established itself since its first coup success in 1987. This is the Military and its embedded presence has been critical in political systems since then till the current Bainimarama regime.

The most comprehensive and inclusive review of the provincial administration thus far (2012), has been that undertaken in 2002 by Price Waterhouse Coopers. It reveals the iTaukei demanding effectiveness from a system that they claim has failed them. Chapter 5 described the function of the iTaukei Administration as increasingly diluted by the Bainimarama post-2006 initiative and the People's Charter for Change, Peace and Progress. Its role is challenged with reduced responsibility for development and the funding that supports it. It has however developed a 'new look' culture of a crop of officials dedicated to ensuring characteristics of good governance are visible in an institution that has for decades applied the label of *vakavanua* to its determined lack of adherence to policies and the rule of law. Furthermore, the Provincial Services Division of the

⁹⁹ In the early 20th century, they registered themselves as chiefs in the Vola ni Kawa Bula, a register of social kinship for land ownership introduced by the Colonial Administration.

iTaukei Affairs Board has begun the proactive role of monitoring village development and policy change by using TNK reports as its source document, an example of which was an agreement signed between the iTaukei Affairs Board and the Water Authority of Fiji to include chlorination in water supplied to villages to help prevent rampant typhoid.¹⁰⁰

6.1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2 To examine the implications of the government’s new direction on provincial administration since December 2006

6.1.2.1 DISCUSSION via FOLLOWING TABLE (Refer p17-18, 1.6)

No.	RESEARCH QUESTION	RESPONSE
1	What is the current governance structure of the iTaukei Administration?	The Cabinet has replaced the Great Council of Chiefs. This means the iTaukei Affairs Board, the umbrella body for provincial councils is subservient to the Cabinet and no longer directly responsible to the President of Fiji. (Pg 71, 5.5.1 refers).
2	What is the current responsibility of the provincial council?	(1) Shifting from decision making to monitoring development. (refer Pg 71-73, 5.6) (2) Formulate development plans, by-laws and mobilise resources to actualize these initiatives. (Pg 73-75, 5.7 refers).
3	What changes have been taking place in the provincial offices since 2006?	(1) Vakavanua culture disappearing. (2)Dedicated effort to include more women in Provincial Councils and Development Boards under the Commissioners office, (3) Transparent process of electing urban representatives, (4) Increase integration with central government via committees. (Pg 76-77, 5.9 refers).
4	How do issues at village level reach the provincial council?	Poorly coordinated at provincial level. Dependent on the management skill of the Mata ni Tikina (district representative). Village issues are better addressed at district meeting which is also attended by government

¹⁰⁰ T.Namotu, Manager Provincial Services Division, iTaukei Affairs Board on 7/9/2011

		representatives and other stakeholders. (Pg 77-78, 5.10 refers).
5	Is the provincial council threatened with dilution?	Yes. The Provincial and Divisional Development Boards under the Commissioner's Office are now replacing provincial councils. These 2 boards include members of the Province who work with central government to prioritise government funded projects, recommended by the district councils in consultation with Government's Integrated development committees. (Pg 83-84, 5.14 refers).
6	What has <i>not</i> changed in the provincial councils since December 2006?	(1) People continue to pay their <i>solu ni yasana</i> to the Provincial Office despite reduction in their service to the villages. (2) Communal contributions for scholarship etc continue to be coordinated through the provincial council despite questions on accountability. (3) Unresolved conflicts remain – VKB issues, (4) Almost nil monitoring of village reports. (Pg 84-86, 5.15 refers).
7	Is there any major infrastructural improvement to the province since 2006?	Yes. F\$20million on Rewa for dredging works (2010/2011). While Kadavu roads/jetties etc costed F\$6,801,448.98 (2010/2011). (Pg 79, 5.11 refers).
8	Do the people contribute to these developments?	Yes they do through the <i>solu ni yasana</i> and other requirements expected such as 1/3 contribution for projects. (Pg 80 refer 5.12)
9	Do the chiefs support the government's development effort?	They generally do. (Pg 82 refer 5.13)

6.1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3 To identify gaps in the administrative system of the provincial council that challenge characteristics of good governance

6.1.3.1 DISCUSSION

There are visible gaps. Firstly, the iTaukei domination in statistical figures of the poor population in Fiji questions the effectiveness of the role of the iTaukei Administration as the guardian of good government and well-being of the iTaukei, as stipulated by its Act (Cap 120). Secondly, the iTaukei Administration is not adequately resourced to undertake the major task of development for the iTaukei. Thirdly, who actually benefits financially out of the *Soli Ni Yasana* must be addressed with honesty, for figures currently show that much of this collection is received from the villages, thus are paying for the administrative costs of the provincial council rather than contributing to their own development. The iTaukei, on their part continue uncomplainingly because they are told the 'Soli' is a justification of their identity, as the collection tax rate appears to suggest. For example, the Kadavu Provincial Council's meeting on 10th November 2011 recorded a 90% collection rate.

A fourth weakness lies in the fact that the reporting mechanism in place ensures only that village concerns reach the iTaukei Affairs Board via the *Turaga ni Koro* (TNK) reports to the *Roko Tui* and to district level meetings, or *Bose ni Tikina*. After this, the *Tikina* representatives report on infrastructural and economic

development within their respective boundaries to the provincial council. This implies that there is effectively no reporting mechanism in place to provide regular feed-back on the socio-economic status of the people to the provincial council. For while the TNK report reaches the provincial office, it is utilised to justify the payment of the monthly allowance of the TNK, aside from further analysis by the Provincial Services Division. This suggests also a fifth gap, lamented by the head of the Catholic Church in Fiji, the Archbishop Petero Mataka, as the overworked and under-appreciated role of the Turaga ni Koro (TNK)¹⁰¹. Recognition must also be given to the villages, which, realistically speaking have been taking responsibility for their own development through the TNK, who have been liaising directly with government and non-government agencies since laws governing the movement of the iTaukei out of the villages to the urban centres were relaxed in the 1960s.¹⁰²

A sixth area deserving attention is highlighted in the recent announcement of increasing dispute in iTaukei society over matters of land ownership and chiefly role, (similar to that mentioned earlier in Rewa). The Permanent Secretary of iTaukei Affairs in his address to the Kadavu Provincial Council on 10th November 2011 drew attention to this and appealed for solutions to be found within cultural mechanisms. This was an admission of failure of the very system that was created to protect the chiefs. It further questions the effectiveness of the

¹⁰¹ Interviewed on 21 September 2011 at 11.00am.

¹⁰² Refer to appendix 2 for village development model.

current iTaukei Affairs' Appeals Tribunal. That is, whether it is guided by baseline examples such as the High Court Judgement in **5.17 (pg 90)**

Finally, the Military 2006 coup is characteristic of Larmour's (2004) observation that decolonisation through institutional transfers prepared the ground for constitutional crisis in Melanesian countries such as Fiji¹⁰³. However, this thesis adds that it is not so much decolonisation but the *nature* of decolonisation and its effectiveness that is causing a constitutional crisis in Fiji, as evidenced by the failure of its post-coup governments to arrest the root of the problem, which appears to be embedded in iTaukei society. The Peoples Charter, as mentioned earlier, is an initiative of the current Bainimarama regime, which is another post-coup government, much like the iTaukei- dominated Rabuka and Qarase governments. The People's Charter is a policy document formulated to address decolonisation such as that described earlier by Larmour's analysis of constitutional failures in Melanesian countries such as Fiji. As findings from this research project reveal (figure **5.5.1, pg71** refers), the responsibility of the iTaukei Affairs Board and likewise, the provincial councils shifted after December 2006, from the chiefs to the central government, which is represented by the Cabinet in the governance structure. This is a major structural change, which has three obvious implications. Firstly, the central government has taken over the responsibility for the development and good governance of the iTaukei.

Secondly, iTaukei leadership must carefully reconsider its traditional position of

¹⁰³ Peter Lamour by Mosmi Bhim, USP Beat Vol 4, Issue 1, 2004, Institutional transfer to the Pacific was successful but 'un-intact'.

utilising the provincial council as an institution of convenience to satisfy its own various agenda, for such practices are increasingly becoming intolerable not only to the people but to the iTaukei Affairs Board, which must now account to the Cabinet for any contradiction to the iTaukei Affairs Act (Cap 120). Thirdly, the waning of characteristics not consistent with good governance in iTaukei Administration implies that there is improvement within the system. However, some gaps remain as the following recommendations suggest.

6.1.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO 6.1.3 - GAPS

The following seven recommendations hope to address the gaps identified in the previous chapter under section 5.15 (pg 84-86):

1. The iTaukei Affairs Board must honour its fiduciary responsibility for the good government of the iTaukei as required under its Act (Cap 120) and update its financial audit from 1997. Likewise, provincial councils.
2. The iTaukei Affairs Board must honour its social responsibility for the well-being of the iTaukei as required under its Act (Cap 120). The reporting process of the TNK report must include a mechanism to enable follow-ups by the Provincial Council which should work with the Office of the Commissioners in the Central Government system which are already receiving reports directly from the *mata ni tikina* or district representatives. For example, the Provincial Office should engage in monitoring activities via the reports they receive from the TNK and reconcile these reports with

those from other government and non-government agencies that integrate their development under the Commissioner's Office.

3. The role of the TNK deserves additional financial and technical support.
4. The decrease in responsibility of provincial offices for development brings into question the rationale for utilizing the annual tax *Soli ni Yasana* for administrative purpose. The *Soli* should be discontinued.
5. The legislation must be amended to protect the people, governed by the iTaukei Affairs Act Cap 120, from participating in fundraising initiatives of the provincial councils that do not comply with good governance principles.
6. A concerted effort to increase the number of women in provincial councils.
7. The iTaukei Affairs Board, as the guardian for the good government and well-being of the iTaukei, should address the divisions that exist within its society. It can begin by allowing anomalies in the VKB to be corrected, such as that proven by the case, of the Jonetani Kaukimoce (plaintiff) v Native Land Commission which the plaintiff won in 2008.

As a conclusion, this study provides evidence that the People's Charter, a home grown solution to decolonisation aimed at improving development assistance, is making considerable progress. For example, rural development is now integrated under the Ministry of Rural Development which also has the authority to allocate funding for development projects. Furthermore, unlike past practices where people's access to government development assistance was segregated by race, the government has established multi-ethnic provincial and divisional boards,

the membership for which consist of government and civil society representatives, who together, consult, negotiate and prioritise potential infrastructural and economic-initiative projects for government funding. For the people, this means, service delivery is more effective and efficient. They have the opportunity to monitor government's services and where necessary, halt the work if it is detrimental to their natural environment.

In another example, improved monitoring of budget utilisation by the government disallows entertainment of ad hoc requests for use of official resources. In other words, there is nil tolerance for abuse of funds at provincial council level. This has been a traditional practice for decades. In the provinces, those most affected by this change are the chiefs and their families, who for generations, have always depended on provincial council resources to support their role. However, having discussed the above, legislation continues to allow provincial councils to engage the people in fundraising activities without a formal monitoring mechanism to protect the people and other donors from dubious initiatives. While it is simplistic to suggest that the law is there to deal with such issues, the reality remains that culture continues to be a barrier to demanding for accountability and transparency from the leaders in provincial councils. This has been the lament of a people who make up a majority of the poor in Fiji¹⁰⁴ and the government has yet to address this gap.

¹⁰⁴ See, May 2012 p18, Narsey, W. Fiji Bureau of Statistics Report on Poverty in Fiji, Changes 2002-2003 to 2008-2009. The iTaukei increased their share of the poor from 55% to 60% while the Indo-Fijian declined their share of the poor from 42% to 35%. See also, Moceica, 1/12/2011, 'iTaukei are Poor', Fiji Times

6.2 THE CENTRAL QUESTION and CONCLUDING THEORY

Lastly, as a final conclusion, with, arguments and discussions aside (**6.1.1, pg92-94** and **6.1.3, pg97-103**), we return to the second research objective for this study, (refer **6.1.2, pg 94-96**), which specifically addresses, the central question for this SRP, “what has happened to Provincial Councils since the People’s Charter was introduced by the current regime after December 2006?”

Much has happened. A local government system for Fiji’s indigenous people, the iTaukei, that has its genesis in Fiji’s colonial past, is being decolonised. There is a reduction in *vakavanua* and improvement in good governance in the provincial councils. The authority of the iTaukei Administrative system has been diluted through the removal of the Great Council of Chiefs which has been replaced by the Cabinet. This means the iTaukei Affairs Board is now subservient to the Cabinet and can no longer enjoy direct official access to the Office of the President of Fiji (refer **5.5.1, pg71** for chain of authority) as in the past.

Furthermore, development previously administered by the provincial councils is now integrated into the central government system (refer **5.15.1, pg85**) where members of the provinces, regardless of ethnicity, participate as partners in project identification for Government funding. In essence, these structural changes are implications of the People’s Charter’s principle ‘to mainstream indigenous Fijians in a modern progressive Fiji’ and, its 7th pillar, ‘to develop an integrated development structure at the divisional level’.

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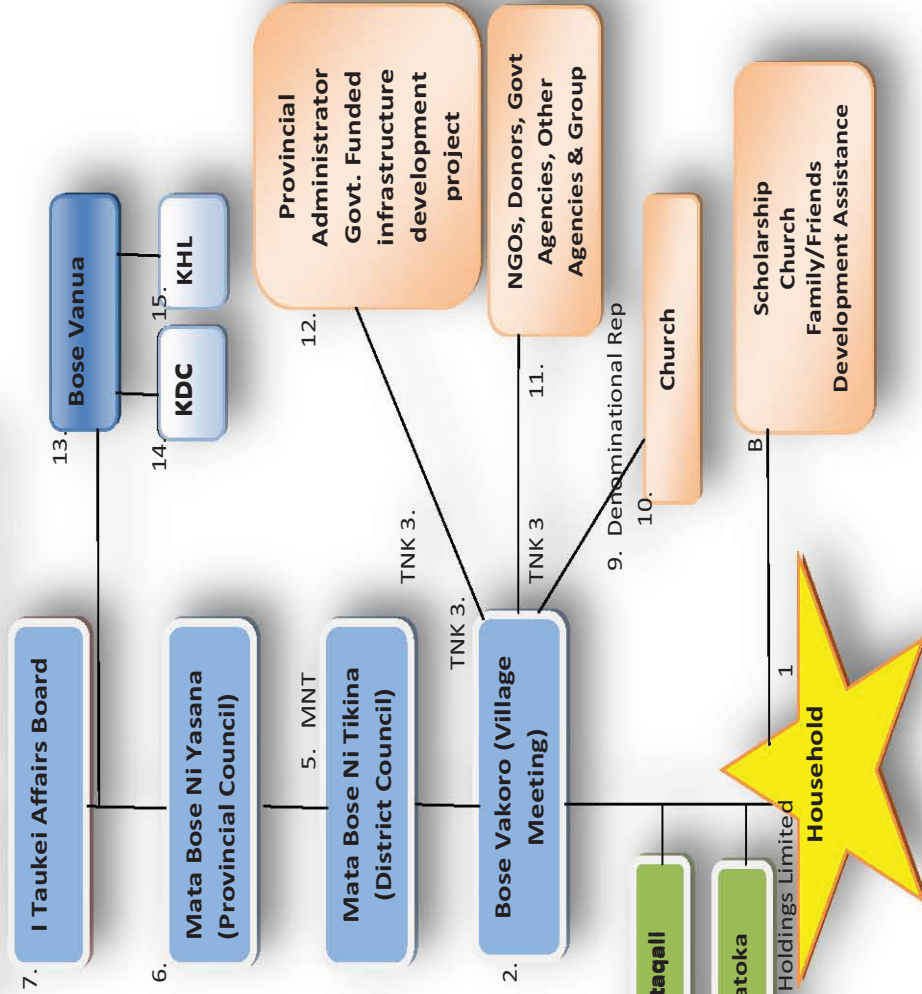
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8.0 APPENDICES

1. Map of Fiji
2. Typical householder's relationship model in a village

Appendix 2

Householder's Relationship Model



- 19 Vanua
- 18 Yavusa/Vanua

1 Mobilisation Model for support when eg. there is a death or installation of a chief. Note: Model is not uniform in Kadavu eg. Some villages are also Vanua.

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17. Tokatoka

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