

The education Pacific Islands children deserve: The Learn and Play Project in the Solomon Islands

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The Learn and Play Project was initiated by Solomon Islands Football Federation and aimed at educating and providing football skills training for primary school dropouts. The aim of this paper is to report the implementation of the programme in a case study school. Because the project is still being implemented, this paper is not intended to provide a rigorous evaluation of the project's activities. Rather, this case study research investigates the students' perception of the project. The key findings of the study include improvements in students' confidence, self-esteem and academic performance. The project also has motivated the students to face the future with hope and determination and they have set future plans which are aligned to the vision of the project. The article concludes with a discussion of implications for policy, practice and further research.

[Keywords: education for the disadvantaged, education aid, peace education, Solomon Islands]

Introduction

Education discourse in Pacific Island countries in recent years has centred on such issues as teaching standards, schools' accountability and student achievement. There has been little discussion, however, on what kind of education is necessary for an individual's development and search for a meaningful life. There is a paucity of ideas being discussed at regional forums around topics such as: how education practices can be aligned with democratic principles of equity and justice; how schools can promote the flourishing of individual development as well as academic achievement; what skills and understandings are needed for citizens to play a transformative role in their society. Without conversation at this deeper level about the fundamental purposes of education, we cannot develop a comprehensive vision of the kinds of education our Pacific Islands children deserve.

This article is a contribution to rethinking partnerships in Pacific education with a particular focus on the kinds of education that serve the needs of individual children and prepare them for participation in and development of democratic

Pacific societies. It is maintained that while this is important to all Pacific education systems, it is of particular importance to those within a post-conflict environment such as Solomon Islands. The research investigates the 'Learn and Play Project' (LPP) in the Solomon Islands which aims to educate and train disadvantaged rural children who would otherwise drop out at the end of their primary schooling.

Theoretical Framing

The LPP as a post-conflict initiative can be located within the parameters of the Integrated Theory of Peace Education (ITPE). ITPE is based on the notion that peace is, at once, a psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual state with expressions at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup and international areas of human life (Danesh, 2006). The theory supports the view that all human states of being, including peace, are the outcome of the main human capacities: cognitive (knowing), emotive (loving) and conative (choosing) (Danesh, 1997; Huitt, 1999a) which, together, determine the nature of our worldview. Within the ITPE framework of a peace-based worldview, the fundamental elements of a culture of peace, such as respect for human rights and freedom, assume a unique character. Therefore the aim of ITPE is to change both the way schools operate and the ways educators think about the content of the school curriculum and their approach to education in post-conflict environment. It is this theoretical approach that informs the study of LPP as a practical example of how ITPE can be implemented in a post-conflict environment.

Peace education refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behaviour changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural (Fountain, 1999). Furthermore, the implementation of peace education provides the means for individuals to resolve conflict peacefully, and also to create conditions that are conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or global level (Fountain, 1999; United Nations, 1998). This definition suggests that a convergence of ideas may be developed into different forms of practical peace education programmes. Hence, peace education should permeate all forms, levels and systems of education in all societies – it is not only an intervention for countries undergoing violent conflicts or emerging from them. Effective peace education is necessarily a long-term process, not a short-term intervention. While often based in schools and other learning environments, peace education should involve the entire community. As revealed in this study's findings, the LPP has broken new grounds in partnerships for peace building at all levels in the Solomon Islands.

The (Post) Conflict Environment

Since its formation as a nation state, Solomon Islands has, from time to time, been affected by political turmoil and conflict. One of the major crises was the conflict locally referred to as 'the ethnic tension'. The tension began in 1998 when a group of youths from the main island of Guadalcanal, calling themselves

the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA), fought against those from Malaita who resided on Guadalcanal. Their actions were ignited by the failure of successive national governments to address issues raised by the indigenous people of Guadalcanal. These issues included the demand for rent from the use of Honiara as the capital city; non-payment of compensation for the indigenous people killed by settlers from other provinces over the years; demands for the review of the Land and Title Act; the existence of squatter settlements; and the demand that restrictions be put on citizens from other provinces from owning land on Guadalcanal. The violence escalated at the start of 2000 when a resistance group, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF), claiming to represent the interests of the Malaitans who had been displaced by the conflicts of the previous two years, armed themselves by raiding police armouries and subsequently took control of Honiara. Small arms battles took place frequently between MEF and GRA militants around the city area and other key areas on Guadalcanal and neighbouring islands. In July, 2003, in response to a Solomon Islands Government request for support in dealing with the conflict, an Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission (RAMSI) arrived, restored law and order thus moving the country to a post-conflict era, and is fulfilling that role in Solomon Islands to this day.

Educational Challenges

One of the main casualties of the conflict was the availability and standard of education, which remains one of the major challenges in the Solomon Islands today. The conflict resulted in economic crisis which saw diversion of revenues from core funding. Thus, school teachers were only paid irregularly, and often no funding was available for basic materials like chalk, textbooks and desks. This situation warranted suggestions from community and national leaders that donors should fund free education for primary and community high school students until the economy recovers "...otherwise the pool of illiterate, dissatisfied, disappointed youth will simply grow" (Oxfam Australia, 2003 p.15). Access to education during the conflict was severely constrained, particularly on Malaita and Guadalcanal. In Malaita, the mass influx of children from Honiara stretched an already struggling education system beyond capacity. Many of the extra children simply could not be accommodated in the rural schools. A survey carried out in September 1999 showed that 41 per cent of children on Malaita were not in school. At the time of the conflict primary and secondary enrolments in Guadalcanal and Honiara declined, as students were harassed and intimidated (Kudu, 2000 p.1). Soon after conflict period, it was reported that less than 40 per cent of Solomon Islands children had completed primary school, and functional adult literacy was as low as 22 percent, with lesser rates for women (Global Internal Displacement Database, 2004). Although this situation has now improved, ongoing political and financial disruptions have resulted in continuing concerns about the resources available for education, and Solomon Islands has become increasingly dependent on aid. In 2001-2003 US\$16.7m of education aid was received as assistance for post-conflict reconstruction (Pollard, 2005).

Despite the increase in educational aid assistance to the Solomon Islands, the issues of school dropouts, youth unemployment and rural-urban migration continue to challenge the development efforts of the country. In the 1990s, this longstanding problem prompted the Solomon Islands Government to approach the EU to support Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the Rural Training Centres (RTC). The EU agreed and funded two consecutive RTC-based VET projects at a total cost of 3,700,000 Euros through the European Development Fund (EDF) between 1993-2004 (Maebuta, 2006). The aim of the projects was to train school dropouts in vocational skills so that they could utilise their skills when they return to their villages. However, most of those who received training either used the RTC VET programme as a pathway to re-enter the formal education system, or migrated to the city in search of formal employment (Maebuta, 2006).

Another key concern of longstanding is the extent to which the education system in Solomon Islands is examination-driven. This means that teachers spend most of the instructional hours coaching students to pass examinations because a school's performance is largely judged by students' pass rates. Another effect of the examination system is that it determines students' transition through the system. This is exacerbated by an increasingly inadequate provision of secondary places, even for students who 'pass' the National Secondary School Entrance Examination, sat in Grade Six at the end of the primary school cycle. Thus the system has forced many students to drop out of school. The students most disadvantaged by the system are girls. In a recent statistics released by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) it is reported that girls' access to education at all levels has improved but their dropout rate remains high, especially at secondary level (Puia, 2011). Of the total 2010 enrolment in junior secondary, 46 per cent were girls while at senior secondary level 39 per cent of the total enrolment was girls (Puia, 2011).

As more students are dropping out of the system every year, the Government has attempted a number of reforms to make education more relevant to the needs of students and the country. This is not new. An early attempt at reforming secondary education in Solomon Islands was contained in the *Education for What?* report in 1973 (Bugotu, 1973). Bugotu recommended a vocational-based curriculum for self-reliance. This reform was not successful partly because parents still favoured an academic-based education.

As these educational challenges continue, so too the search for alternatives. Therefore, after the conflict a national education reform, with the assistance of aid donors, was undertaken and, as part of the reform process, in 2008 a national curriculum framework adopted. The framework specifies outcomes-based education (OBE) as the guiding philosophy for the Solomon Islands curriculum (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2008). Using an OBE, it is envisaged that the curriculum and syllabus of all subjects can be based on expected outcomes. Emphasis is placed on the learners achieving the expected outcomes. In particular, this means learners should acquire knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes which will be useful to them in later

life. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this approach, and as long as the system continues to be dictated by examinations, there is the likelihood of repeating past failures.

The Learn and Play Project: Exploring New Educational Partnerships in the Post-Conflict Context

The story of education reform in Solomon Islands, as referred to above, is an example of a journey the country is travelling in search of the kinds of education that children deserve, and that will serve the needs of individuals, their communities and society. As the search widens a lot of aid funded initiatives have been undertaken in the attempt to make education more responsive to the needs of its citizens. While development aid is strongly targeted towards improving the quality of education, however, many rural children are still being disadvantaged by the education system. It is the plight of the disadvantaged rural children who are forced to drop out at the end of the six-year primary school cycle that convinced the Solomon Island Football Federation (SIFF) to develop new educational partnerships through the Learn and Play Project (LPP).

LPP was introduced by SIFF in 2008 and was funded by an overseas donor. The donor is not revealed by the project management team. The project aims to provide secondary education and football training for disadvantaged rural boys and girls in the Solomon Islands. The initiative helped rural students who were Grade Six dropouts and would not normally have the opportunity to further their education in the formal system, thus would have faced a future with very limited options. At the time of the research the LPP was educating 360 students at three secondary schools. It provides funds for school fees, uniforms and school stationeries. For many rural parents educating their children is one of the biggest financial burdens and secondary education is unaffordable; thus the partnership between the LPP and selected students' parents has opened a window of opportunity for these disadvantaged children.

Selection of LPP Students

The key selection criterion is that students must come from a disadvantaged background. The LPP characterisation of a disadvantaged background includes being a Grade Six dropout, living in a rural village and having low income parents. These are seen as the key factors depriving many students of access to further education. In the Solomon Islands education system, once students fail their Grade Six national examination they would not be able to move on to secondary education. Then, once they are out of the system they would have no real option apart from living in a rural village with limited opportunities to engage in meaningful livelihood. The only alternative for many of them is to attend a vocational course at a Rural Training Centre (RTC). However, if they are from low income families their parents still could not afford to pay the RTC fees. So many Grade Six dropouts who are living in rural villages have nothing meaningful to spend their time on. However, many do fill their time playing football and as they continue playing, they begin to develop their football skills

and a love for the game. Thus, a number of these disadvantaged young boys and girls who can play football, have been selected by the LPP to undergo their secondary education while receiving football training.

It is the young raw football talent and skills in disadvantaged rural children that motivates SIFF to initiate the LPP. Their perception is that if these children begin developing their skills by learning to play together, so too they can also excel in education if they are given another chance to go back to school. SIFF's aim is to provide alternative pathways to developing these disadvantage children. For those children who are academically capable they can pursue further education and others who are not can opt for further football training; leading towards becoming a professional player.

The LPP Implementation Partnership

The project is currently being trialled in three secondary schools in the country through a partnership arrangement. The three schools are King George Six in Honiara, Aligegeo on Malaita and Goldie College in the Western Province. As part of the partnership agreement, each host school has to provide a coordinator/coach to oversee the implementation of the project in their respective school. The school coordinators are teachers in the host schools. The LPP students are integrated into the schools, learning the same subjects as all the other students but grouped in their own classes. They attend their normal classes in the morning and the afternoon they do their football coaching and training sessions.

LPP is managed by a steering committee which is made of officials from the Ministry of Education, the host schools, Provincial Education Authorities (PEA) and SIFF. The committee meets regularly to review the implementation of the project and address emerging issues. SIFF has a LPP manager to manage and administer the project's implementation which works closely with the school coordinators. As part of the monitoring the project's progress, the school coordinators have to submit monthly reports to the steering committee. The project funding will end in 2012 and the steering committee is working on a proposal in partnership with the Ministry of Education to sustain the project after the funding ends.

Community Partnership

Another partnership dimension has emerged during the implementation of project. In the initiation of LPP it was not anticipated that the host school communities would play an active role in the project but this further partnership has not only contributed to the achievement of the project's aims but extended to national peacebuilding. According to the LPP manager, students are being socially integrated into the host school community. For instance, many of the students could not go back to their home islands during school vacations because the cost of sea and air travel is too expensive. As a result, many students spent their mid-year and Christmas breaks in their schools. This has prompted the host school communities to look after the students during the school breaks, thus

developing bonds between the students and the community, to the point where these students are almost becoming the adopted children of their host families.

This community partnership has significant potential as a contribution to national healing and reconciliation. For instance, Guadalcanal students who are now socially integrated into the Aligegeo school community on Malaita would experience a deep healing and reconciliation as a consequence of being well cared for by their ethnic 'rivals', thus in the future forgetting about the wounds and hatreds caused by the conflict and creating the conditions for peaceful co-existence. An understanding of the concept that a culture of healing breeds true reconciliation has seen the establishment of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in several different countries. Reconciliation as a process has three stages: "(1) replacing fear by non-violent coexistence; (2) creating conditions in which fear no longer rules and confidence and trust are being built; and (3) the involved community is moving towards empathy" (Huysse, 2003 p.19). Huysse further explains, "all steps in the process [of reconciliation] entail the reconciling of not only individuals, but also groups and communities as a whole" (2003, p.22).

Student Perceptions of LPP

Research methods

The research study was conducted in February-March 2010. Only one of the three schools that are implementing the LPP was selected to participate in the study. The selection of the study site was dictated by external factors. The other two schools are located in outer islands and at the time of the research the country was experiencing frequent cyclones. For instance, during the time of the research the country was affected by cyclone *Ului* and this prevented the researcher from visiting the other two schools. Nevertheless, representativeness is not a criterion for the selection of the study sites. The overall emphasis is to situate the research on studying phenomena 'in situ', 'in practice', 'in the everyday' (Orlikowski, 2000; Suchman, 1987). The study is focused on one of the secondary schools with the aim of soliciting students' perception of the project. To this end, 57 students of the 120 in the case study school were randomly selected to participate in the study. A questionnaire was administered to the students. The questionnaire focused on gauging students' perceptions about the project and it included five key questions as indicated below.

To have deeper insights into the key educational issues and practices, conversational interviews were also conducted with the two teachers who were co-ordinating the project in the case study school. The interviews centred on key challenges of the project with particular reference to the teaching-learning, curriculum and school management.

The research subjects

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the research subjects. The category of age ranges from 14-18 years. A majority of the respondents were aged 16 years with

15 years being the next most frequent. Of the total respondents, the majority (almost 60%) were male.

Table 1. Profile of the Research Subjects (N=57)

	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Age:	14	7	12.3
	15	20	35.1
	16	23	40.4
	17	5	8.8
	18	2	3.5
Gender:	Male	34	59.6
	Female	23	40.4
Island/Province of Origin:	Malaita	12	21.1
	Rennell/Bellona	7	12.3
	Makira/Ulawa	2	3.5
	Temotu	10	17.5
	Western	3	5.3
	Guadalcanal	22	38.6
	Central	1	1.8
Current Class:	Form 1	20	35.1
	Form 2	20	35.1
	Form 3	17	29.8

Source: Fieldwork Data

Unsurprisingly given the case study school is located on Guadalcanal, Table 1 also shows that most of the respondents were from the island of Guadalcanal. The island providing the second highest number of students is Malaita, the most populated island in the country. The remainder of students come from a number of other islands in the country.

The project concentrates on the lower secondary level only and, as Table 1 indicates, the random sample consists of 20 students in Form One, 20 in Form Two and 17 in Form Three.

Research Results

What do you like about the project?

In response to the first key question, a number of the students rated the provision of the scholarship as the main reason for liking the project. This revelation depicts the rationale for the initiation of LPP. The project acknowledged that many disadvantaged children were denied secondary education because they were pushed out of school at the end of Grade Six. For most students, going on to any further education or training is too expensive for their parents to afford. Thus, the provision of scholarship under this project is highly rated by most students as one of the good things of the project. Furthermore, the case study school as one of the top national secondary schools in Solomon Islands charges higher school fees than other secondary schools in the country. Without the provision of scholarship these students would have not be able to access the school.

The second most common reason students liked the project is that it provides a coaching clinic to develop football skills. One of the selection criteria for

admission into the project is that students must have demonstrated football skills so that they would further develop their skills in the coaching component of the project. The students liking for the development of football skills is a testament to what they have achieved at the regional youth football level. Seven students were selected from each of the three secondary schools hosting the project and represented the country in an Oceania youth football tournament held in Vanuatu in January 2010 (Solomon Islands Football Federation, 2009). This tournament was won by Solomon Islands which made the students feel proud of representing their country at a regional level.

The third reason for liking their participation in LPP relates to interacting and making new friends from other islands. As already stated Guadalcanal and Malaita were the two islands contributing most students to the LPP in this school. This is an interesting scenario because they are two islands involved in the ethnic conflict. Bringing together students from these islands and ensuring their mutual interaction and making friends are a true sign of creating a culture of peace through education and football. Developing such friendships is treasured by students for life. When these students become adults they will relate to their school mates as brothers and sisters. Thus it can be predicted that if LPP becomes integrated into the education system, the future generations of Solomon Islands will not see the scars of further ethnic conflict. Introducing peace education in conflict and post-conflict environments is a difficult innovation. The reason for this difficulty is “primarily because of the tremendous need for children to overcome the catastrophic impact of [conflict] on all aspects of their lives and grieve their monumental losses” (Vriens, 1999, p.46). Therefore as LPP has already demonstrated, such an educational initiative can cultivate a culture of healing, helping children to overcome the devastating effects of the ethnic conflict. “Without healing, feeling vulnerable and seeing the world as dangerous, survivors of violence may feel that they need to defend themselves from threat and danger. As they engage in what they see as self-defence, they can become perpetrators” (Staub, 2002 p.83). Here, Staub is ascertaining that the culture of healing and culture of peace are twin conditions and prerequisites for implementing effective reconciliation and peace education programmes.

Are you satisfied with your schooling and football training?

When the respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction of their schooling and football training, most indicated that they were satisfied with the project. However, some of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the project in terms of the combined focus on schooling and football training as shown in the following comments: “Football training disturbs school works and Football training in hot sun makes us tired so in the evening we cannot do any studies”. Further reasons for dissatisfaction related to the lack of a living allowance and the quality of football training: “Coaches are not up-to-date with coaching skills”.

Although the 70 per cent satisfaction rate is high, the issues stated above should be addressed if found to be valid. In order for the project to be responsive and conducive to the students’ needs, incremental improvements to the issues raised by the students must be seriously considered rather than leaving it to the final

evaluation of the project. Progressive improvements are crucial to the current cohorts so by the time they finish their schooling and football training they would have benefitted as far as possible from the project.

How would you describe your experiences when you first started with the project?

Students' initial experiences with the project are interesting. Most of them commented that they experienced lack of confidence, low self-esteem and low academic performance. This revelation points to the fact that these students were primary school dropouts because they failed the National Secondary School Entrance Examination. The school system branded this category of students as failures and unable to deal with academic learning. It was this perception that shaped many LPP students early experiences.

Some of the respondents also stated a feeling of loneliness as their initial experience, especially students who come from outer islands including the farthest islands of Temotu and Rennell/Bellona. For many of them this is their first time to be away from their home island, let alone to be in Honiara city and so being isolated from their parents is the reason for their being lonely.

How have your experiences changed after being with the project for some time?

Many students, including all those who reported an initial lack of confidence and self esteem, indicated that they have gained confidence and self-esteem and reported that this has contributed to an improvement in their academic performance. Thus the project has created positive values, attitudes and skills to pursue their education and training in football with determination.

The other notable change is that some had overcome their initial loneliness and made new friends. This is an indication that the project is enhancing a culture of peace through cross cultural interactions amongst the students. As one of the respondents commented: "I have made a lot friends after being with the project for some time now and leaving school will be a painful experience" (Respondent 05).

The notion of a culture of peace includes the realisation that "healing is inevitably a lengthy and culturally-bound process" (Hamber, 2003 p.78). In agreement with Hamber's claim, integrating LPP into the secondary school system has a long-term goal of peacebuilding in the Solomon Islands. This is driven by the notion that while current peacebuilding initiatives restore peace, the legacy of a culture of peace and a culture of healing must live on through generations. Education in this regard is seen as a means to transmit this legacy into the future. Hamber's claim further points to the issue of foreign aid in the restoration of peace in the Solomon Islands. Healing as a culturally-bound process, calls for locally grown strategies as opposed to foreign imposed strategies. The integration of LPP as conceived by SIFF is a Solomon Islands-grown peace initiative and its long-term goal is to suture the wounds of conflict so that future generations will not see the scars.

What are your future plans?

The project has inculcated in students a sense of purpose and given them hope to face the future with determination. As revealed in Table 2, the students have already looked ahead with plans to advance what they gained from the project. The three most popular future plans are: to be in the Solomon Islands National Football Team, to pursue further education and to be involved in professional football training. It is clear that although the students entered the project with limited options for the future, after spending some time with the project, the students were motivated and determined to face the future with renewed hope. They see themselves as capable of developing into someone they would like to become in future. Thus, as the findings, indicate many students have already set future plans, plans which are achievable because the components of LPP are specifically targeted to most of the plans listed by the students.

Table 2. Students' Future Plans

Future Plans	Frequency	Percent
Unstated	8	14.0
Further education	11	19.3
Further professional Football training	14	24.6
Join Solomon Islands National Football Team	18	31.6
Not sure	4	7.0
Others	2	3.5
Total	57	100.0

Source: Fieldwork Data

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of the study have raised a number of implications that have emerged in the discussion of the findings. The aim of this section is to consolidate the pertinent issues that have arisen out of the discussion of the results and organise them into three key implications for policy and practice. Relating the implications to these key areas also assists in delineating the core contributions of this study to rethinking Pacific education and the role of education in peacebuilding.

Educating disadvantaged children

The LPP has contributed to the achievement of basic education for all children. The Solomon Islands Government's national education policy defines 'basic education' as up until the end of Grade Nine. It also has targets for ensuring basic education for all. Despite this intention however, the system continues to eliminate most children at the end of primary schooling. Therefore, educating disadvantaged children through the Project is truly an Education For All initiative.

Peacebuilding

In embracing and creating a culture of peace the findings confirmed that the students were practising peace through sports and education. At the regional level, seven students from each of the three project schools represented Solomon Islands in the Oceania Youth Soccer Tournament in 2010 and won the tournament. When the students joined the project they identified themselves with their own island groups. However, winning an Oceania tournament has instilled in them a sense of national identity. The sense of national identity is further embraced by the students because they are being educated in one of the country's top rated National Secondary Schools.

As discussed earlier the findings also revealed that the students had made friends with students from other islands. Such friendly interaction provided healing and reconciliation among the students. If the concept of the project is introduced in many secondary schools in the country, the long term benefits would be future generations of Solomon Islands will not experience ethnic conflict. The implication is that the LPP is a very effective vehicle for advancing the culture of peace into the future.

Educational partnerships in post-conflict contexts

The findings revealed that the implementation of the LPP in the Solomon Islands has implications for rethinking educational partnerships in post-conflict context. This article noted that the involvement of SIFF, an aid donor, Ministry of Education, the pilot schools, students, parents and local communities in the LPP has not only provided education and football training for disadvantaged rural children but also embraced a culture of peace. Thus, education in post-conflict environments can be meaningful if partnerships are grounded on the theme 'education for peace.' Similarly, engaging grass-root level partnerships such as with parents and local communities is empowering and breathes in a sense of community ownership of education projects which is important for the long-term sustainability of such projects.

Further Research

The basis for conducting research that has been established in this case study is one which has the potential to produce an ongoing contribution to rethinking the vision of Pacific education particularly the kinds of education our Pacific Islands children deserve. Within this vision, a number of areas for further research suggest themselves. At the point that fieldwork ended with the case study project, some particularly interesting analyses were beginning to emerge from the integration of football training that formed part of the secondary school curriculum. Investigating the implementation of the LPP in one school has the potential to offer a very rich and textured account of secondary education for disadvantaged children. In particular, it has the capacity to draw out further implications concerning the introduction of the LPP concept in more secondary schools with the view of sustaining the concept in the education system. In this respect, understanding if and how peace cultures can be developed through

integration of football training and formal schooling forms an interesting area of study.

The LPP was initiated as the result of the increasing number of school dropouts and longitudinal studies in five to ten years may therefore also be revealing. One main area for further research is to undertake a tracer study of the graduates to find out what they go on to do with their lives.

Conclusion

The findings of this study are testament to the fact that the combination of education and football in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in the Solomon Islands is producing valuable outcomes. The findings and their related implications for policy and practice pointed to one of the fundamentals of effective educational aid programmes and that is to motivate students to the embraced vision of the programme. Once students are motivated to the vision they can easily formulate their own future plans and work towards them. The LPP experience suggests that for any introduced concept of educational aid to work in the Solomon Islands, it must uphold the cherished social fabrics. Football is like a religion in the Solomon Islands and institutionalising football training in the formal education system is promoting national unity. It is hoped that the discussion and implications that emerged from the findings of this case study shall contribute to the ongoing discussion and conversation about educational partnerships and their impact on the kinds of education Pacific Islands' children deserve.

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