

Micronesian Educator

A Journal of Research & Practice on Education in Guam and Micronesia

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Micronesian Educator

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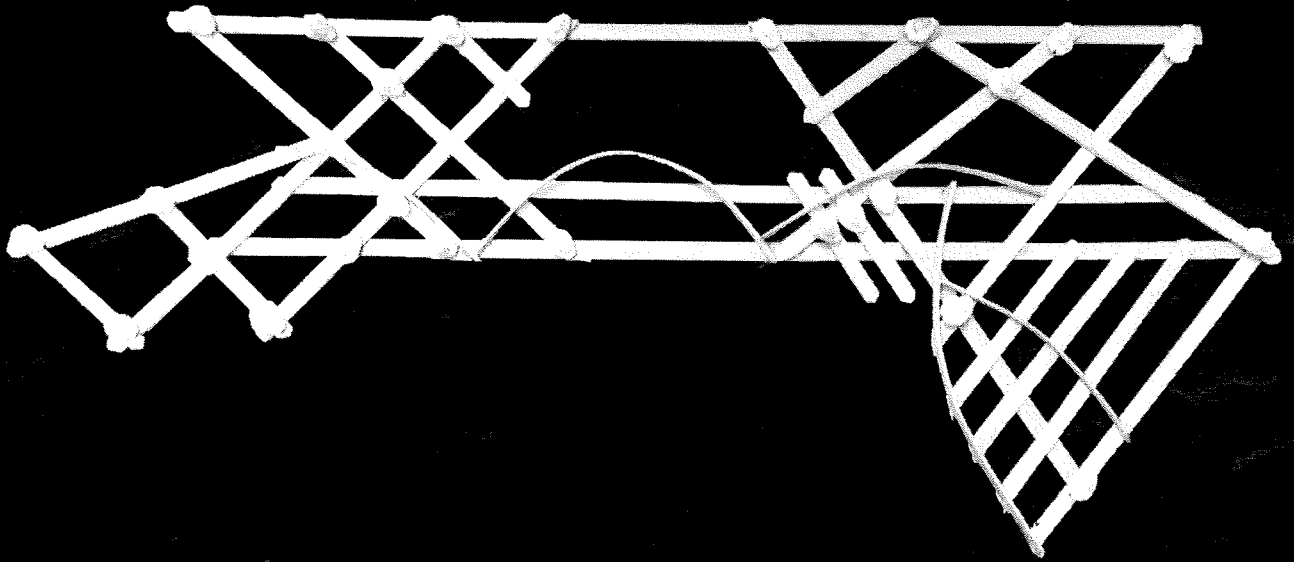
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INTRODUCTION



Editor's Introduction

Culture and Curriculum in the 21st Century: Rethinking Ideology, Teaching, Learning & Research, is the title of Volume 19 of *Micronesian Educator*. This volume expands on the idea that education has different meanings in different cultures. This is due in part to differences in cosmology, epistemology and philosophical ideas and beliefs. In an increasingly diverse, integrated and complex world, educators and professionals are called to dialogue and action in terms of how multicultural perspectives of education are brought into the formal curriculum so as to enhance success for all.

There are, on the one hand, mainstream priorities by neo-liberal states with standardized testing and other related control mechanisms versus those who reject such narrow positivist approaches to education in favor of a balance to include diverse epistemologies, methodologies and ideologies of education.

It is in this context that we introduce this issue. The issue *has both empirical-based papers and theoretical/position papers*. The issue also comes with an interview with Dr. Robert Underwood, President of the University of Guam, on the topic.

The issue has the following structure: Section 1 carries the first three articles, with the section titled "Language and Multiple Representations of Thought and Wisdom: Orality, Literacy, Social media and Textism". The articles highlight the continuum beginning with the discussion on orality as medium of thought and representation, to the importance of reading and writing, to the contemporary issue of the use of technology via social media and textism as ways to present and represent ideas and thought, as well as reality.

Article 1, "From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again: A Story of Story" is a powerful take on the humanism and power of inter-generational transmission of knowledge via orality as opposed to dependence on writing alone or technology. With eloquence and deep analysis, Professor of Pacific Literature, Pio Manoa (with an introduction by Communications Professor Lucy Ann Kerry) pursues the idea of the importance of engaging with orality and ensuring this is valued in the context of writing and technological advancement – he says: "It seems to me that the way to go forward in any satisfying literacy education program would be to give our past due recognition through a literacy that engages oral energies in its linguistic and cultural contexts while using available electronic technology to enhance the process, not diminish it...".

Article 2, "Survival of the Focused: Bernard Stiegler's Phenomenology of Attention Capture in the Era of Social Media", is an equally powerful and provocative account on the need to exercise caution in the use of social media. The article critiques the way technology has taken over and "captured" young people's attention today almost unquestioningly. Dr. Chris Schreiner, Professor of English and Applied Linguistics at the University of Guam, explicates that technological developments in education have to be critiqued hard, for with its advantages, via social media, for instance, it is insidious in its repercussions, especially if it is accepted wholesale and uncritically. He expounds on the work by Bernard Stiegler to present his thesis that attention, as it were, and deep thought and critical analysis are at risk today by an over exuberant clientele that is largely unquestioning of social media. He salutes Stiegler's works, saying: "French philosopher Bernard Stiegler is a rare educator and administrator who, book after book, soberly assesses the epistemological prospects of technical innovation for the human species". Schreiner pontificates further the strength of Stiegler's works on what he terms as "the battle for intelligence" in terms of what he sees as the struggle by young people to manage the "electronic infrastructure of today" who he says are struggling with intellectual autonomy to see beyond technological electronic gadgets and the transnational corporations and institutions of learning that push for such developments. Very often, he surmises, these are detrimental to human development, humanism, patience, waiting and the virtues one learns from reading and "the patience" that comes with the messages one gets from such cultural artifacts.

Article 3, "Textisms and Literacy in Adolescents: Revolt(ing) English" is a totally different take from Manoa and Schreiner in that Tabitha Espina argues for the benefits of textism as yet another pedagogical ploy to enhance communication and learning.

Section 2 is titled: "Pedagogical and Epistemological Diversities in Education, Politics and Life" and has three articles. These are broadly concerned with diversities in epistemology and pedagogy as these relate to communications, reflection and thought, and political representation and change.

In Article 4, "The Silence Which Has Woven My Life Together", Professor of Theology at the University of St Clara Dr. Eduardo Fernandez reflects on his intercultural and interreligious experience as a Roman Catholic Latino born and raised in the United States and a member of a religious community, the Jesuits. He describes the powerful unitive and pedagogical role which silence has played in his life. Key insights gleaned from silent, humble participation in community, prayer, pilgrimage, sabbatical research and interreligious dialogue form the basis of the essay, at the same time giving examples of the necessity of silence in our classrooms. The work concludes with a caution around some destructive forms of silence and a reference to the Divine in the Hebrew Scriptures.

In Article 5, "Silent/Absence as Passive Resistance in Fiji: A Case Study of Indigenous Ecotourism Development in Taveuni", Dr. Trisia Farrelly of the Development Studies Program at the Massey University of NZ documents the passive resistance that comes from sustained silences from within an ecotourism development project. She notes there are diverse ways of knowing and learning and that learning is best understood within an individual's cultural milieu, which then informs the practice of teaching and learning. The spoken word is only one in a myriad ways in which opinions or desires can be expressed. In some cultures, the "loudest voice" is spoken in "silence". In this paper, "silence/absence" as passive resistance to authority is explored in the context of efforts to implement indigenous ecotourism development in the Boumā National Heritage Park, Taveuni, Fiji. Implications of silence for pedagogy are then intimated.

In Article 6, "Sowing Representative Democracy in the Kingdom of Tonga: The 2010 Elections and Future Implications for Political Education", Dr. Durutalo of the Pacific Studies program at Otago University in NZ and her colleagues, Drs. Nanau and Amosa and Ms. Latu, document the first ever democratic elections in the only surviving monarchy of the Pacific, Tonga. This election was an important milestone in Tonga's political history as a number of political and legal changes were introduced to facilitate a gradual move towards the process of modern leadership democratization in the island kingdom, especially with the increased representation of commoners and the introduction of a political party system. Implications of political education and development are then suggested.

Section 3, titled "Diversities in Education Delivery for Different Contexts", has three articles. Article 7, "Teacher Educators and Indigenous Rights in a Complex, Multicultural but Uncertain Future", is penned by Dr. Zane Ma Rhea, Professor of International and Indigenous Education at Monash University in Australia. The article critically discusses teacher education in systems and nations where first peoples are dominated by migrants such as the US, Australia and NZ. She expounds on models and options of delivery. She writes: "Of central importance to this paper is the question of how teacher educators can manage the Indigenous rights challenge within a multicultural space of negotiation, while recognizing the colonial presence and legacy in their work".

Article 8, "Perspectives of Gender Roles in a Selection of Oral Traditions: Folklore and its Implications on Multicultural Counseling" is penned by Beverly Alave and Dr. Margaret Artero. The article documents a selection of personal oral stories and traditional Chuukese legends which speak to gender roles in Chuukese culture and specifically the idea of the importance of the female role and strengths and aspects related to matrilineal power. Findings and ideas from the study have the potential to broaden the training of mental health and school counselors in building their multicultural competence when working with Micronesian cultures on Guam.

Article 9, "The Effect of Reading Curriculum and Ethnicity on Elementary School Students' Reading Achievement" is written by Dr. Pretzel Baletto and Dr. Geri James of the University of Guam. The article reports a study which examined the relationship between reading curriculum program, ethnicity and student achievement among grade three students enrolled in the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) elementary schools. The researchers concluded that, in order for reading to be taught well and elementary students to successfully develop reading skills, a structured, scientific, research-based program is beneficial regardless of students' ethnicity.

Section 4 is on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). ESD is pivotal as it is central to one of the UN Millennium Development Goals (Goal 7). It has two articles focusing on health as a pivotal element of sustainable development and environment as crucial to ESD.

Article 10, "Getting to the 'Heart' of the Matter: Health, Well-being & Education for Sustainability Introducing Health Promoting Schools in Fiji" is by Dr. Crescentia Frances Koya, Associate Dean of Research at the Faculty of Arts, Law and Education at the University of the South Pacific (USP). Koya details the need to critically improve health in the Pacific islands given the huge numbers of people with NCDs. Schools promoting health, she describes, are a good way to ensure health is centralized early in the lives of our Pacific peoples. She pontificates that we cannot have sustainable Pacific societies without good health.

Article 11, "A Brief Case Study -Report Going Green is a Focus in College Coursework" is by Dr. Inoue-Smith of the University of Guam and focuses on a case study of an environment sustainability infused class that produced "green lessons". This mechanism, she argues, enhances environmental awareness and sustainability.

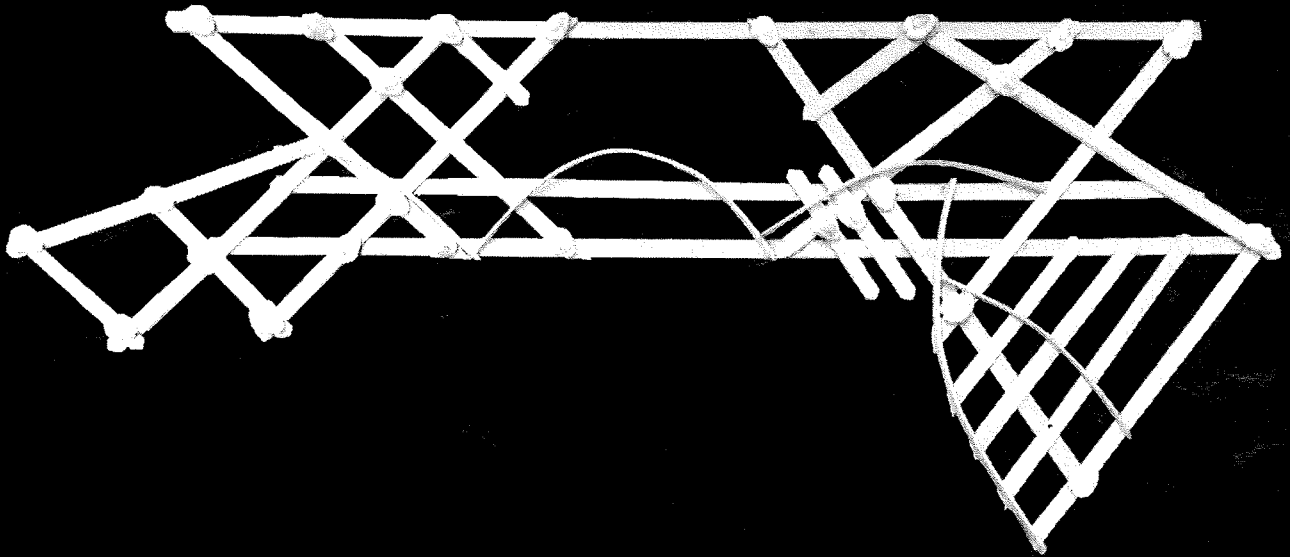
Section 5 is a section on critical essays. Article 12, "Continuing the Conversation: The Case for More Than "Deconstruction" in Micronesia" is by Fran Hezel. Hezel continues a conversation begun in Volume 18 (the last volume) where David Kupferman's book: "Disassembling and Decolonizing School in the Pacific" was reviewed. In this article, Hezel encourages Kupferman to keep conversations on schooling in the Pacific open and to encourage further dialogue on the matter of focus to his book. Hezel cautions on the work of deconstruction and laments it might not produce much practically if reconstruction does not take place not only in theory but in some concrete form that Pacific peoples will benefit from.

Section 6, the last section on Talanoa (Dialogue), carries an interview (a *talanoa*) with Dr. Robert Underwood, current President of the University of Guam. He is interviewed by Dr. Don Rubinstein and the editor. The interview focuses on the area or theme of the volume on culture, education and diversity in Guam and Micronesia. The interview also intimates the role the University of Guam plays in promoting diversity and culturally competent education, as well as enhancing success of students.

Enjoy the Volume!

Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, Editor

**LANGUAGING AND MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS
OF THOUGHT AND WISDOM:
SOCIAL MEDIA, ORALITY, LITERACY, AND TEXTISMS**



From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again: A Story of Story

Pio Manoa

[with an Introduction by Lucyann Kerry]

Introduction

Perhaps 'Do not go gentle into that good night...of Literacy' could have been another title for Pio Manoa's 'From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again'. This article offers a journey that spans the millennia with a scope and wisdom from the ages, yet it is told from the specific perspective of a Pacific Islander. In an era in which media literacy seems to displace an older print-based literacy, Manoa's cautionary tale of shifting communication dominance and authority in the Pacific Islands leads the reader to rethink what could be lost or gained as our global population jumps on the digital bandwagon of the newest, fastest technology device or internet platform. He allows each of us to step into the footsteps of the islander's experience of orality and literacy, as he gleans from human experience universal truths and a celebration of our common humanity against unforeseen outcomes of change.

If indeed the world is changing rapidly to a new and different context of communication and human interaction, one perhaps that may bring us closer to a previous orality, we are far beyond the point of jumping a digital divide of 'haves' and 'have nots' in our global village; we have now entered unknown, uncharted territory—as unknown as the arrival of the printing press into the South Pacific that Pio Manoa's article describes. This article is a tale to prepare us for these unknown waters. Pio speaks to us...

- Lucyann Kerry

Ladies and Gentlemen

It must be a streak of madness in me to presume to stand here before people who have dedicated a fair portion of their young and middle-aged or not so middle-aged talents and energies to thinking and teaching about reading, and the practice of literacy, in or out of school.

But if you bear with me, I will talk a little on a number of issues that relate in some way to the matter of reading and literacy, issues that point to the societies of the Pacific islands before literacy, to the presence of the word (to use Walter Ong's term)¹ in these societies from European contact down to this moment. Please do not expect coherence in what I have to say for the field I wish to explore is as vast as the ocean that is all about us, but consider what I say as utterances, like the waves reaching out to you, some even, some frayed, some broken, and some even dissipating.

It might help us all perhaps if I explain my title for a start. I've named this talk "From Orality to Literacy and to Orality Again: A Story of Story". If we took that title to refer simply to the progress of the technologizing of the word², i.e. from a time when people organized all their speech acts, verbal communication, word-arts -

¹ In his *The Presence of the Word*. (1967). New Haven and London: Yale University Press. It will be clear how indebted I am to Walter Ong throughout this paper.

² This concept is also developed by Ong in his *The Presence of the Word*, and more specifically in *Orality and Literacy*. (1982). London: Methuen & Co Ltd.

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Sowing Representative Democracy in the Kingdom of Tonga: The 2010 Elections and Future Implications for Political Education

Alumita Durutalo
Gordon Nanau
Desmond Amosa
Anchie Mona Latu

Abstract

The November 2010 general elections in the Kingdom of Tonga was a historical event in the sense that further amendments was made to the Constitution in April, 2010 to allow for an increase in the People's seats in the Legislative Assembly as well as the formal recognition and registration of political parties. As the only island state in the Pacific that was not directly colonized, Tonga's political development is unique in the sense that the Monarch and the Aristocrats or Nobles controlled political leadership for a long while since 1875. The move to allow for more commoner representation in 2010 marked the beginning of leadership democratization in the island Kingdom.

Researching and documenting this political milestone is crucial in the sense that it would contribute significantly to the study and understanding of the wider democratization processes in the small Pacific island states as well as highlight the need of political education.

Keywords: *Tonga, election, Pacific, politics, democratization*

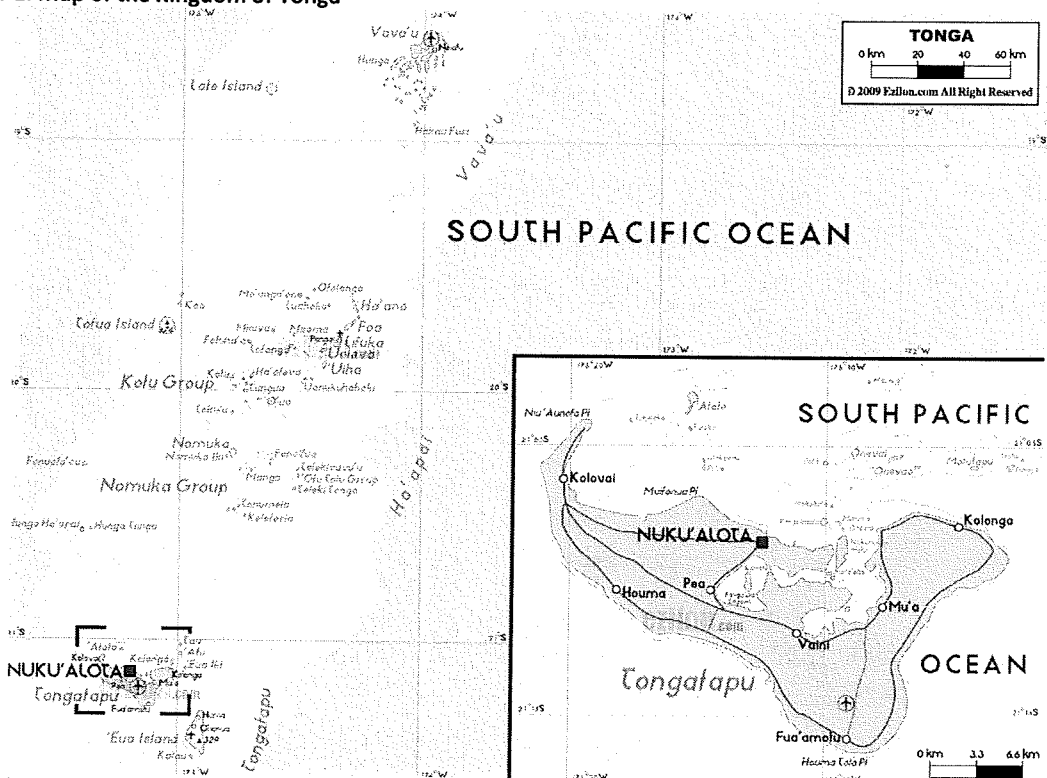
Research Background

This paper is based on a research that was conducted in the Kingdom of Tonga prior to and during the November 2010 General Elections. This election was an important milestone in Tonga's political history as a number of political and legal changes were introduced to facilitate a gradual move towards the process of modern leadership democratization in the island kingdom. Initially in April 2010, a Constitutional change marked a new move towards gradual democratization in the island kingdom's political system. These included an increase in the number of commoner representatives in parliament as well as the formal recognition of a political party system.

This study is part of a bigger and long-term research which has as its main aim the study of democratic leadership systems in the Pacific Islands region. It specifically targeted the commencement of long-term examination of political representation and political equality through party and electoral politics. The overall study involves both election observation and the collection of data that would contribute to the accumulation of knowledge and the establishment of a data base in the area of political representation through parties and elections.

In terms this Tongan study, the research had five main objectives. These included overseeing *policies and legislation* and ascertaining the processes of constitutional, legislation and policy changes to facilitate the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections. Linked to this was the documentation of Tonga's party and electoral system as well as registered parties.

Map 1: Map of the Kingdom of Tonga



<http://www.ezilon.com/maps/oceania/tonga-physical-maps.html>

The second objective was the review of election information awareness in terms of the assessment of the level of awareness and understanding of the role of party formation, party membership and elections in the democratic process in Tonga. Additionally, people's perceptions of parties, party membership and the conduct of elections were gathered. The sources and type of information that was disseminated to people prior to elections was also analyzed.

The third objective involved the study of political party formation as well as the assessment of people's awareness of the link between elections and national security concerns. In this context, the study also involved the documentation of people's awareness of the link between party formation, the nature of parties, the conduct of elections and political violence. Also linked to the third objective was an analysis of the level of people's awareness and perception of party formation, party membership, elections and corruption.

The fourth objective focused on an examination of customary and traditional influences on party and electoral politics in Tonga. This included a study of customary and traditional influences on party formation, party membership and the conduct of elections. People's awareness, understanding and views on "gift giving" or "vote-buying" before elections were analyzed and documented. Furthermore, objective four also focused on documenting any practice of patron-clientelism in the formation of parties and conduct of elections.

The fifth objective of the research was futuristic focused in the sense of envisioning a political education strategy that could be adopted given the fulfillment and or non-fulfillment of research objectives. This included identifying how the education systems in the Pacific such as the University of the South Pacific member countries can be used as a major medium for the dissemination of information on leadership through representative democracy. The same could be said of other countries in the Pacific islands.

Furthermore, the research through its findings, focuses on the possibility of exploring how international aid funding can support awareness workshops in the area of parties, elections and the overall promotion of democracy in the Pacific especially in the University of the South Pacific's twelve member countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Is, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Research Methodology

In terms of Research Methodology, this research adopted a qualitative approach but also used quantitative methodology as elections involve figures and some quantification processes.

Research Methods

This research involved both *secondary and primary data* collection. Secondary data collection began with a detailed review of accessible literature in the area of political parties and elections globally as well as regionally in the Pacific Island countries. In the case of Tonga, this included a review of the Tongan Electoral Act which informed the research on legislation governing the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections.

Primary Data Collection involved four phases. Phase one involved consultation with stakeholders. These were consultations with the Supervisor of Elections in the Kingdom of Tonga, leaders of registered political parties; a candidate for the nobles' representatives; candidates for People's Representatives; leaders of prominent NGOs; Church leaders; leaders of some women groups and community leaders; youths and youth leaders' representatives.

Phase two involved in-depth interviews and Collection of data from the Elections Office. Data gathered included those about registered political parties, population and registered voters. Interviews were conducted and interview questions were guided by the study objectives.

Phase three involved following the campaign trail in terms of listening to campaign speeches and collection of party manifestos for in-depth study.

The fourth and final phase of primary data collection concentrated on election observation, analyzing the conduct of elections and interviewing voters and candidates.

Apart from the stakeholders and candidates, approximately sixty voters were interviewed during the elections. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used to analyze data from the research.

The Research: An Introduction

The formation of political parties and the conduct of elections symbolize the practice of representative democracy globally. In the words of Andrew Heywood, "elections are ... nothing less than democracy in practice"⁴⁸. One of the fundamental roles of elections is to facilitate and promote the processes of *political representation* and *political equality*, two fundamental principles of democracy. Through elections, politicians do not only represent the *general will* of the people but they are also viewed as *servants of the people* that elect them into power. Citizens are empowered to control government during elections since it is a time when they can vote out undesired political representatives and vote in promising ones. Having a say in political representation contributes towards the notion of "*government by the people*".

Pacific island societies like other indigenous societies globally, have come to embrace various principles of democracy through the processes of imperialism, colonization and globalization. In Pacific Island societies, transition from the customary ways of leadership to the modern democratic leadership systems involve the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections. However, it is interesting to note that in some indigenous societies like those in the Pacific, modern democratic leadership systems operate alongside customary ways of leadership, or at least are impacted by the sways of customary leadership.

⁴⁸ Heywood, A. 2007. *Politics* (third edition). Palgrave Macmillan, New Zealand: p. 247.

Island countries in the Pacific region including eleven of the twelve member countries of the University of the South Pacific (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu), have gradually embraced the principles of representative democracy and political equality in various degrees. The Kingdom of Tonga, on the other hand, following its ancient customs and traditions closely, was not directly colonized. Tonga was an absolute monarchy and had a slightly different political system in that the King and Nobles dominated socio-political leadership for quite a long period of time. Tonga was the only Pacific island country that was not colonized directly but had an advisor in the British missionary Shirley Baker in the late 1800s.

The Kingdom of Tonga: A Brief History

The Kingdom of Tonga is divided into three main island groups: Tongatapu, Vavau and Ha'apai. It has a land area of 748 sq. kilometres and a population of approximately 104,100 (2010 estimate). More Tongans now reside outside of Tonga in countries like New Zealand, Australia, the United States of America and also in Europe.

What makes Tonga's political development interesting is that apart from not being colonized, Tonga has one of the oldest recorded and oral histories in the indigenous Polynesian world. Tongan history relates the evolution of three dynasties beginning with the Tu'i Tonga lineage; the Tu'i Ha'atalau lineage and on to the current ruling dynasty, the Kanokupolu lineage. The evolution of these lineages spanned centuries.

When missionaries arrived in Tonga in the early 1800s, consequent to the evolution of the latest Kanokupolu lineage, Tonga's customary political system was already quite advanced and complex. Perhaps, this was a major reason that no European power competing in the Pacific at that time could find a gap for an excuse to colonize Tonga. Tribes were ruled by a number of independent and powerful chiefs who were competing for overall dominance in the island group. Taufa A'hau I from Ha'apai for example, finally gained dominance in Tonga through warfare and inheritance. This enabled him to establish supreme authority, thus making him first overall King of Tonga.⁴⁹

Royalty in Tonga was established both by customary law through inheritance and victory in warfare, as well as the establishment of a new Constitution in the 1870s. The Constitution codified the King's authority as the ultimate power in Tonga. British advisor, Wesleyan missionary Shirley Baker, helped to draft the 1875 Tongan Constitution and became Tonga's Prime Minister from 1880-1890. The Tongan Constitution, supporting a Constitutional Monarchy is also one of the oldest in the Pacific. Germany was the first power to recognize Tonga as an independent state leaving Great Britain with no choice but to follow suit since Britain was in competition with Germany in the Pacific⁵⁰ at the time.

Modern government leadership in Tonga had always been in the hands of the reigning monarch and Nobles until the Tongan Constitution was amended in 2010 to increase the people's or commoner representation in parliament. On November, 25, 2010, Tonga moved gradually towards representative democracy, when for the first time, two political parties were registered prior to elections.⁵¹

Significance of the Research

An observation and analysis of the evolution of parties and elections in the Pacific Island states highlight some peculiar traits about party formation and the conduct of elections in this region. For example, apart from Tonga and to some extent Samoa, the idea of political representation through party formation and the conduct of elections emerged overnight in almost all Pacific Island countries, that is, on the eve of the departure of colonizers.

⁴⁹ See also I. C. Campbell. 2003. *Worlds Apart: A History of the Pacific Island*, Canterbury University Press, New Zealand: pp. 93-96.

⁵⁰ Hixon, M. 2000. *Salote, Queen of Paradise*. University of Otago, New Zealand: 14-15.

⁵¹ <http://pidp.eastwestcenter.or/pireport/2010/September/09-15-02.htm> Date accessed, 15/10/2010.

Additionally, parties and elections in indigenous societies are influenced by the processes of colonization as well as the sways of cultures. Political parties and elections although theoretically constituted and grounded along legal-rational thinking, have been based on other reasoning in the indigenous Pacific Islands' context. Kabutaulaka explains that in the Solomon Islands, politicians' allegiances to parties are weak and consequently the party system is weak. The frequent practice of "crossing the floor" reflects the practice of "unbounded politics". He adds that, "parties are not sufficiently strong in binding the loyalty of elected members"⁵². This particular case shows that both the party system and the electoral processes have not succeeded in preparing individual political leaders to fully embrace the democratic principles upon which the notion of political parties and elections are grounded.

Likewise, party formation and the conduct of elections in Fiji between 1970 and 2006 were highly influenced by factors such as ancient Fijian rivalries, patron-clientilism, ethnicity and militarism. These in turn contribute to and exacerbate long-term political instability in post-colonial Fiji.⁵³

At another level, parties and electoral systems in a number of Pacific island states have not facilitated nor promoted gender balance in terms of female leadership and representation in parliament. This has happened despite the fact that females also had crucial leadership roles in matrilineal and patrilineal pre-European Pacific societies. Hindering the entry of women into Pacific parliaments directly negates the democratic principle of political equality in the modern leadership system.

The table below highlights women's representation in some Pacific Islands' parliaments.

Table 1: Women in Pacific Parliaments (June 2006)

Country	Size of Legislature	Number of female members	% parliament members
Papua New Guinea	104	1	0.1
Vanuatu	52	2	3.8
Solomon Islands	50	0	0
Tonga	30	1	3.3
Nauru	18	0	0
Palau	16	0	0

(Source: A Woman's Place is in the House – House of Parliament, Pacific Islands Forum: p.61).

As seen in Table 1, women in the Pacific Islands region have been grossly under-represented in parliaments in the post-colonial period, despite the high level of education that women have achieved in a number of Pacific Island states including Tonga. Therefore, long term research in the area of representative democracy is needed to facilitate possible solutions to the problem through the introduction of suitable policies. Additionally, in this particular election observation in Tonga, interviewees have openly discussed their views on what should be the role of women in Tongan politics. While this research focused on how the principles of democratic representation and political equality were addressed during the 2010 Tongan general elections, a long-term study of political parties and elections need to be done to identify needs in this particular sector of the political system. These can then be used to inform policy such as the strategies to be used in political education; whether there is a need for the temporary reservation of seats in parliament for women and other minority groups, and or the instigation of legislative and constitutional changes to facilitate other democratic processes.

Due to increasing concern in political stability, good governance and gender inclusiveness in Pacific leadership systems, it is important to undertake in-depth and long term study in the area of political representation

⁵² Kabutaulaka, T. T. 2006. "Parties, Constitutional Engineering and Governance in the Pacific Islands", Rich, et. al., (eds), in *Political Parties in the Pacific Islands*. Pandanus, The Australian National University: p. 104.

⁵³ Durutalo, A. 2006. "Fiji: Party Politics in the Post-Independence Period", Rich, et al (eds), in *Political Parties in the Pacific Islands*. Pandanus, Australian National University: pp. 165-182.

through the formation of political parties and the conduct of elections. These could provide important avenues for introducing long-term stable leadership changes in Pacific societies.

Research Findings

Research findings and data were derived from the various sources previously mentioned in the research methods. The findings were categorized under the main themes according to the main research questions. Set out below are explanations of findings under the main themes as well as some recommendations in the area of political education.⁵⁴

Historical and Political Background

Changes that Facilitated the Electoral Process: When and how did these Come About?

The 2010 Tongan elections marked a political watershed for commoner citizens when the Tongan Constitution was amended to allow for new democratic changes. King George Tupou V had to relinquish some of his power, to enable some Constitutional changes in Tonga's electoral law. For example, for the first time, the Prime Minister was no longer nominated by the King but chosen by the 26 members of Parliament. Changes in the membership of Tonga's Legislative Assembly began in April, 2010 when political reforms were introduced to increase the number of people's representatives from 9 to 17. There were five main electoral divisions. These included 10 seats for Tongatapu, 3 seats for Vavau, 2 seats for Ha'apai, 1 seat for Niua, and 1 seat for Eua.⁵⁵ These new changes implied that 17 out of 26 seats in the People's Assembly or 64.5% were directly elected by the people. Prior to this, only 30% or 9 out of 30 seats belonged to the common people.⁵⁶

Although Tongan commoners had occasionally voiced their opinions on the need for more democratization in the Island Kingdom, what quickened the pace towards the embracing of modern democratic leadership was the 2006 "Black Thursday" event in Tonga's capital Nukualofa, where almost 80% of buildings were burnt down by pro-democracy supporters. The pro-democracy movement was [and is] under the leadership of Samuela Akilisi Pohiva, who is also leader of the Democratic Party of the Friendly Isles.

Changes which were ushered in through the demands of the pro-democracy movement included the formation of political parties. However, the Supervisor of Elections in Tonga explained that political parties were not formally registered in the 2010 elections even though they were formally recognized generally.⁵⁷ It was anticipated that the role of political parties in Tonga would have been similar to those in other Pacific Island countries in terms of their promotion and facilitation of the democratic processes. Voters were registered after the constitutional changes in 2010. Table 2 shows a comparison in the number of registered voters in each of the five electoral districts in 2008 and 2010.

The figures show that there was a significant decrease in the total number of registered voters in 2010 in comparison with the numbers in 2008. Reasons for this decrease may be due to a number of factors and this can be a topic of research on its own.

Candidates were also registered prior to the elections and Table 3 shows the number of candidates in the different constituencies.

⁵⁴ Please refer also to Appendix 1.

⁵⁵ The 17 constituencies include 10 on the island of Tongatapu (constituencies 1-10); 1 constituency on the island of Eua (constituency 11); 2 constituencies on the island of Ha'apai (constituencies 12-13); 3 constituencies in Vava'u (constituencies 14, 15, 16) and 1 constituency on Niua (constituency 17). See also appendix 2 on constituencies.

⁵⁶ "Tonga on Track to Historic Democratic Elections: Parliament to Address Critical Legislation in Coming Weeks". <http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2010/September/09-15-02.htm>. Date accessed, 15/10/10.

⁵⁷ Interview with the Supervisor of Elections Tonga, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.

Table 2: Registered Voters (2008 & 2010)

Constituency	2008	2010
Tongatapu	37,418	29,157
Vava'u	13,008	6,701
Ha'apai	8,916	3,267
Eua	4,463	2,241
Niua	1,989	864
Total	65,794 ⁵⁸	42,230 ⁵⁹

Table 3: Number of candidates in each constituency

Constituency	Number of candidates
Tongatapu 1	8
Tongatapu 2	9
Tongatapu 3	10
Tongatapu 4	7
Tongatapu 5	13
Tongatapu 6	15
Tongatapu 7	10
Tongatapu 8	10
Tongatapu 9	15
Tongatapu 10	12
Eua 11	3
Ha'apai 12	11
Ha'apai 13	3
Vava'u 14	7
Vava'u 15	6
Vava'u 16	5
Ongo-Niua 17	3
TOTAL	147

(Source: *Moana*, November, 2010: 8-24)

In the November, 2010 General Elections in Tonga, people's representation to the Legislative Assembly not only attracted numerous local candidates but also some overseas Tongan candidates, many of whom had already departed for "Greener Pastures" in New Zealand, Australia and the United States of America. One of these, Dr. Sitiveni Alapua, for instance, a winning candidate in the 2010 General Election, had lived and worked in Hawaii for quite some time.

Tongans living abroad were recognized and legally entitled to vote or run as candidates if they were present in Tonga during the election period.⁶⁰

Factors that Contributed to Party Formation as well as Party Leadership and Membership

The 2010 Constitutional Amendment enabled the formation of political parties in Tonga prior to the November 2010 elections. However, although a few political parties were formed, we gathered through our interviews that approximately 60 percent of our interviewees still did not have an in depth understanding of what a political party was. The only party that had some semblance of a political party was Akilisi Pohiva's *Democratic Party*

⁵⁸ Final Report – 5 December, 2009. Constitutional-Kingdom of Tonga, p.83.

⁵⁹ *Enrolment Statistics*, Tongan Electoral Commission (Komisoni Fili'O Tonga): <http://tongaelections.com/index.php/electoral-roll/enrolment-statistics> (Accessed 08/02/1013).

⁶⁰ Final Report – 5 November, 2009. Constitutional and Electoral Commission _ Kingdom of Tonga: p. 94.

of the Friendly Islands (DPFI). However, even DPFI was more a political movement than a properly organized political party per se.

Some interviewees gave the following answers when interviewed whether they subscribed to or knew anything about political parties. Ignorance in what political parties are about were reflected in the following answers: "What is a party?"⁶¹; "I do not really understand how political parties work".⁶²; "I do not know what party means"⁶³ and "I do not really understand".⁶⁴ ..."

Other answers reflected a partial and skewed understanding of the roles of political parties. For example, "I do not like the idea of having political parties because it is a narrow way of thinking and it will make people go to war"⁶⁵; "Tonga does not need parties because it is only a small country"⁶⁶; "Only a few people will believe in what parties say"⁶⁷; "Parties will constrain people from speaking their minds"⁶⁸; and "I dislike parties... Parties will control what has to be said".⁶⁹

Those that gave their reasons for supporting a party acknowledged the advantages of a party in a political system. For instance, some interviewees explained the following about the roles of political parties: "parties will unify people's thinking"⁷⁰; "by having parties, it will be easy for people to identify which parliamentarians to go and see if we have needs"⁷¹, "members of one party will enable parliamentarians to work together as a group when they are in parliament".⁷²; "Parties already have their agendas which they will implement in parliament".⁷³; Parties are important for the development of Tonga"⁷⁴; and "Through parties, people can work together for the benefit of the country"⁷⁵.

Other answers reflect an understanding that parties facilitate the running of government, for example, "Parties will enable all constituencies to have a representative in parliament"⁷⁶; "Running a government is best left to a party which is made up of a group working together"⁷⁷; "I like the idea about parties because there are things we do not know about the government that parties reveal"⁷⁸; and "If each member of a party knows what he/she is supposed to do in parliament then it's alright".⁷⁹

In the 2010 Tongan elections, the high number of independent candidates standing in each constituency reflected a number of possible trends. First, that the idea of contesting under a party banner was new and not yet understood and or appreciated by candidates. Second, that the electoral system, which was '*first past the post*', tended to encourage the participation of many candidates. Similar situations occur in other Pacific Island countries that use the First Past the Post electoral system, like the Solomon Islands. Given Tonga's electoral system, the 2010 elections saw a large number of candidates competing in the people's seventeen constituencies.

⁶¹ Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁶² Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

⁶³ Interviewee, Constituency 4, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010

⁶⁴ Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁶⁵ Interviewee, Constituency 7, Tongatapu 7, 25th November, 2010.

⁶⁶ Interviewee, Constituency 8, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁶⁷ Interviewee, Constituency 10, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

⁶⁸ Interviewee, Constituent 8, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁶⁹ Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu, 22nd November, 2010.

⁷⁰ Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

⁷¹ Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁷² Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu, 25th December, 2010.

⁷³ Interviewee, Constituency 4, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁷⁴ Interviewee, Constituency 8, Tongatapu. 25th November 2010.

⁷⁵ Interviewee, Constituency 7, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

⁷⁶ Interviewee, Constituency 2, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

⁷⁷ Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁷⁸ Interviewee, Constituency 7, Tongatapu. 25th November, 2010.

⁷⁹ Interviewee, Constituency 1, Tongatapu, 25th November, 2010.

Table 4 shows the number of candidates in each of the five main electoral divisions, the number of candidates, the number of seat and total number of registered voters.

Table 4: Electoral Divisions, Number of Seats & total number of registered voters for people’s representatives

Electoral Division	Number of Candidates	Number of Seats	Total Number of registered voters
Tongatapu	109	10	29,157
Vavau	18	3	6,701
Ha’apai	14	2	3,267
Eua	3	1	2,241
Ongo Niua	3	1	864

While the average number of candidates competing in each constituency was quite high for relatively small electoral bases, Tonga also has seats which are reserved solely for nobility representatives.

Nobility in Tonga is an inherited status. The Tongan Constitution recognizes the customary leadership role of Nobles. In the 2010 elections, 33 registered Nobles voted for their 9 representatives in Parliament.

Therefore the percentage of noble seats in the Legislative Assembly was 35% and 65% belonged to the people’s representatives. Noble family members over the voting age of 21 voted as commoners.

Image 1: A Noble’s Residence on the island of Tongatapu



Photo: © Alumita Durutalo, A Noble’s Residence on Tongatapu 2010

The electoral division for Noble representation in Tonga were: three representatives for Tongatapu, two representatives for Vava’u, two representatives for Ha’apai, one representative for Eua and one for Ongo-Niua. Altogether a total of nine Nobles and seventeen People’s representatives were elected to the Tongan Legislative Assembly. Table 5 highlights the names of Noble representatives in the 2010 elections.

Table 5: Noble Representatives in the 2010 General Elections

Island Group	Noble Representatives
Tongatapu	Lord Tuivakano
	Lord Ma'afu
	Lord Vaea
Vava'u	Lord Tu'ifafitu
	Lord Tu'ifakepa
Ha'apai	Lord Fakafanua
	Lord Tu'ihateiho
Eua	Lord Lasike
Ongo-Niua	Lord Fusitu'a

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The 2010 final report of the Constitutional and Electoral Commission explains that Tongan Nobles are still recognized as customary leaders by the Tongan people. In this context, their leadership roles are still considered as relevant in modern Tonga. Similar to chiefly leadership systems in other indigenous Pacific Island societies, Tongan Nobles have their customary areas of jurisdiction. This gives Tonga its uniqueness in terms of the inclusion of indigenous leadership in the modern leadership system.⁸¹

Table 6: People's Representatives in the 2010 Tongan General Elections

Constituencies	Representatives
Tongatapu 1	Samuela Akilisi Pohiva
Tongatapu 2	Semisi Kioa Lafu Sika
Tongatapu 3	Sitiveni Halapua
Tongatapu 4	Isileli Pulu
Tongatapu 5	Aisake Valu Eke
Tongatapu 6	Siosifa Tuitupou
Tongatapu 7	Sione Sangster Saulala
Tongatapu 8	Sione Havea Taione
Tongatapu 9	Kaveinga Fa'anunu
Tongatapu 10	Semisi Palu'ifoni
Eua 11	Sunia Manu Fili
Ha'apai 12	Uliti Uata
Ha'apai 13	Mo'ale Finau
Vava'u 14	Lisiate Aleveita Akolo
Vava'u 15	Samiu Kuita Vaipulu
Vava'u 16	Viliani Uasike Latu
Ongo-Niua 17	Sosefo Fe'aomoeata

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Party and Electoral Systems

The role of political parties in the Tongan political system still has to be fully understood and accepted by the majority of the voting population, even though the 2010 Constitutional change allowed for the registration of political parties. While parties existed in the 2010 elections, the majority of candidates competed as independents. The Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands (DPFI) which won twelve out of the seventeen people's seats, operated more like a political movement than a formally organized party. However, given that the DPFI dominated the party

⁸⁰ Tonga Election Results 2010, <http://tongaelections.com/index.php/elections/election-results> (Accessed 31/01/2013).

⁸¹ Final Report – 5 November, 2009, Constitutional and Electoral Commission, Kingdom of Tonga.

⁸² Tonga Election Results 2010, <http://tongaelections.com/index.php/elections/election-results> (Accessed 31/01/2013).

system in 2010, Tonga appeared to have had a *dominant party system* at that particular point in time, given that there was only one dominant party. But it must be noted that Constitutional change in 2010 allowed for the establishment of a *multiparty system*. The type and nature of party system may change again in the future due to such factors as an increase in people’s political awareness or a change in political culture.

While Tonga had a *Multiparty System* with a *First Past the Post* Electoral System, it cannot not be affirmed that the influence of the party system on the electoral system or vice versa, was enough to contribute to the high number of candidates, competing for only seventeen seats in the Legislative Assembly. Additionally, the majority of candidates in the 2010 elections competed as independents. However, it could be argued that the *First Past the Post* electoral system encouraged the participation of many independent candidates. The Constitutional change allowing for new political changes was similar to the act of opening Pandora’s Box. Even new campaign trends, unseen in election campaigns in other parts of the Pacific was witnessed for the first time as seen in Image 2.

Image 2: Campaigning on a Moving Truck in Tongatapu



Photo © Alumita Durutalo, Nuku’alofa, Tongatapu 2010.

On the whole, campaign speeches delivered from the back of moving vehicles were not very clear. In our interviews, more than 60% of the interviewees did not really know the main message(s) that candidates in their constituencies were trying to convey to them, let alone from the back of a moving truck.

Table 7 provides a summary of political parties, independent candidates as well as Noble candidates and the number of seats they won in the 2010 elections.

Table 7: Number of Seats Won By Each Political Group

Parties/Independents /Nobles	No. of Seats
Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands (DPFI)	12
Independents	5
People’s Democratic Party (PDP)	0
Sustainable Nation Building Party	0
Tonga Democratic Labor Party	0
Noble Representatives (Elected by 33 registered Nobles only)	9
Total Number of Seats	26

(Source: Matangi Tonga, Nov. 26, 2010)⁸³

As the table shows, the only political party that won seats was the Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands (DPFI). Supporters of the pro-democracy movement provided the power base of the DPFI. Other parties did not seem to have solid power bases from which to draw their support. The dominance of independent candidates also indicated that the idea of having political parties has not been widely considered nor embraced in Tonga.

Promotion of Women Candidates

Between 1875 and 1951, Her Majesty the late Queen Salote Tupou III gave Tongan women the right to vote and stand as election candidates when she amended the 1875 Constitution.⁸⁴ Despite this legal sanction, a few Tongan women have been parliamentarians.

In our interviews, a lady interviewee confirmed that women in Tonga were given the right to vote in 1951 and since then only four women have been voted into Parliament. She stated that women have participated in elections but “they are generally seen as newcomers on the block”, or “the new electoral divisions with smaller constituencies disadvantage them” and “Women are publicly attached to men for their contribution and Parliament is not women friendly”⁸⁵.

Additionally, another lady interviewee indicated, “in Tonga, there are many women voters but they just don’t want to stand in elections”. One reason that she gave for this is that “in politics you have to do a lot of compromising”.⁸⁶ She noted that many women do not want to participate in elections because of this. Overall, the reasons explained above were some of the stumbling blocks that served to deter women’s participation in general elections.

In 2010, out of a total of one hundred and forty seven candidates, only eleven were women. Out of these, ten competed in the Tongatapu constituencies and one competed in Ha’apai. Table 8 highlights women candidates and the constituencies they competed in.

Table 8: Women Candidates and their Constituencies

Candidate	Constituency
Mele Teusivi Amanaki	constituency 2 (Tongatapu)
Malia Alisi Taumoepeau	Constituency 2 (Tongatapu)
Betty Blake	Constituency 3 (Tongatapu)
Mele Linda Mau	Constituency 4 (Tongatapu)
Ofa Tautuiaki	Constituency 5 (Tongatapu)
Lesieli H. Niu	Constituency 6 (Tongatapu)
Mavaetangi Manavahetau	Constituency 7 (Tongatapu)
Fataimoemanu L. Vaihu	Constituency 8 (Tongatapu)
Ofa Fatai	Constituency 9 (Tongatapu)
Malia Peata Sioko Noa	Constituency 10 (Tongatapu)
Langilangi Vimahi	Constituency 12 (Ha’apai) ⁸⁷

⁸³ Matangi Tonga, Nov. 26, 2010: 2-29

⁸⁴ Likiliki, O. G. 2006. “Advancing Women’s Representation in Tonga”, in *A Woman’s Place is in the House – the House of Parliament*. Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji: p.145.

⁸⁵ Interviewee, Nuku’alofa, Tonga, 22nd November, 2010.

⁸⁶ Interviewee, Nuku’alofa, Tonga, 22nd November, 2010.

⁸⁷ Refer to Appendix 2.

Overall, women contributed 7.5% of the candidates in the 2010 elections. None of the women candidates won a seat in the election, however, the current Minister for Education, Dr. Ana Taufe'ulungaki was nominated by the government to become a Government Minister.

Due to the low turnout in women's participation as election candidates, a male candidate argued that there is a need to encourage women to participate in parliamentary elections. He explained that in future, one way of achieving this is to have reserved seats for women in parliament. He believed that if there are reserved seats for Nobles in Parliament, then there should also be reserved seats for women as well as for Tongans living abroad as this would cater for those who have dual citizenship.⁸⁸

Another interviewee who was an independent woman candidate highlighted the need to promote women candidates in Tonga. She argued, "there should be a reservation of seats for women in parliament, even if this was only a temporary measure". She explained that cultural inhibition is one of the major stumbling blocks for women to join politics in Tonga.⁸⁹

While the majority of women candidates in 2010 stood as independent candidates, a few such as Mele Teusivi Amanaki, joined political parties such as the Tongan Democratic Labor Party.

As explained in the 2010 final report of the Constitutional and Electoral Commission, having no political parties work against the chances of women candidates and also against the candidates of minority groups.

However, the Commission does not believe that reservation of seats for women to go to parliament is beneficial for women in the long-term. The Commission believes that Tongan women have customary rights and most are also well educated and can compete with men on these grounds.⁹⁰

Figure 1 shows the percentage of voters by gender in 2010.

The above graph shows that the number of female voters were on the whole slightly higher than male voters in almost all constituencies. Perhaps, in future if women candidates were better organised to get support from the women, they may win a number of seats in the Legislative Assembly.

A number of organizations, national, regional and international, contributed to the promotion of women candidates prior to the 2010 elections. One such organisation was the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).⁹¹ Almost all women candidates that we interviewed believed that more should be done in terms of awareness and training to encourage women candidates in future elections in Tonga.

Voter Preferences

In terms of voter preferences and influences, the majority of our interviewees voted for people that they preferred and choices were made on individual decisions. Some voters preferred independent candidates while others voted on party line. On Tongatapu, where our research focused, the Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands was quite popular as a party choice.

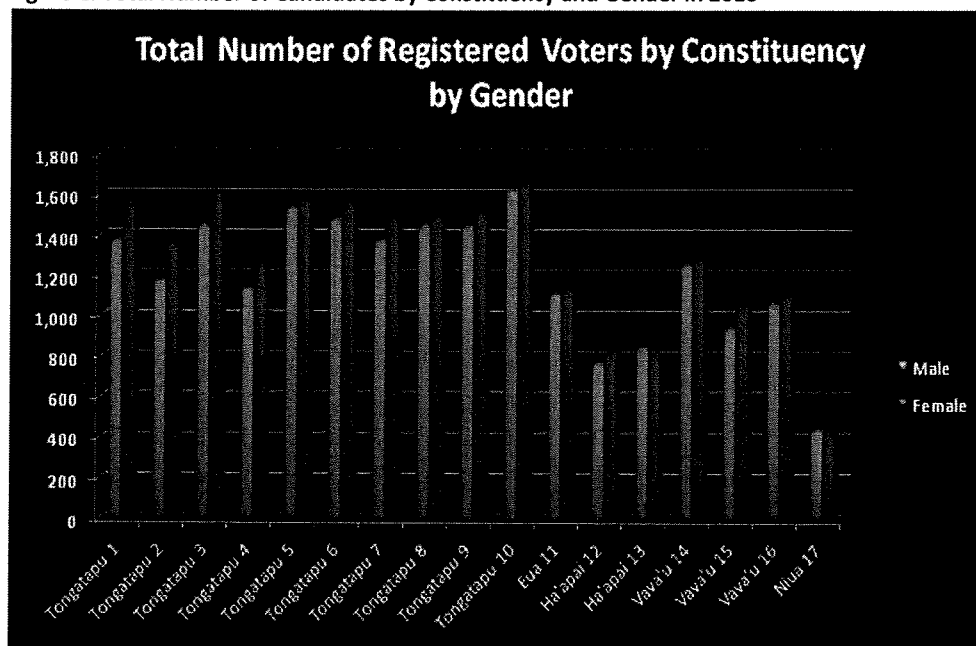
⁸⁸ Interviewee, Tongan election candidate, 23rd November, 2010. Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

⁸⁹ Interviewee, Woman Candidate, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. 23rd November, 2010.

⁹⁰ Final Report – 5 November, 2009. Constitutional and Electoral Commission – Kingdom of Tonga: p. 77.

⁹¹ Interview with a woman candidate, Nuku'alofa, Tonga. 23rd November, 2010.

Figure 1: Total Number of Candidates by Constituency and Gender in 2010



(Source: Tonga Electoral Commission)⁹²

Some interviewees were influenced in their choices by the campaign messages that they heard and the experiences of the candidates. For example, we found that some campaigns in Tongatapu were quite well organized. Mr. Semisi Sika's campaign in Tongatapu Constituency 2 was one such example. He had a campaign centre with workers who managed his campaign for him. He even had Tee Shirts specifically printed, and DVDs specifically made to promote his campaign and the Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands. Image 3 shows Mr. Semisi Sika's campaign centre and slogan.

Mr. Sika's well organized campaign together with his long-term work amongst youths in Tongatapu contributed to his election victory. For those who supported political parties on Tongatapu, the majority supported the *Democratic Party of the Friendly Islands* which won nine out of the ten seats.

During election day, people freely converged and socialized near polling stations. This is a common feature of elections in Pacific societies. Even though people vote for different political groups, socialization amongst kin groups still happens. Image 4 shows a kava session (Faikava), at a polling station in Tongatapu on election day.

Major Concerns of Candidates in the 2010 Elections

Candidates highlighted a number of major concerns that they wanted to address in parliament, foremost of these was the issue of resource distribution and poverty. These were reflected in the following interviews on the reason(s) for contesting the elections: "to address poverty in the sense that people don't have money"⁹³; "things are not going according to plan in Tonga. I am standing to address poverty"⁹⁴; "equal access to economic development

⁹² *Enrolment Statistics*, Tongan Electoral Commission (Komisoni Fili'O Tonga): <http://tongaelections.com/index.php/electoral-roll/enrolment-statistics> (Accessed 08/02/1013).

⁹³ Candidate for Constituency 1, Tongatapu. 22nd November, 2010.

⁹⁴ Candidate for Constituency 9, Tongatapu. 23rd November, 2010.

and the equal distribution of resources⁹⁵; “to improve Tonga’s economic viability so that it can bypass the amount earned through remittance⁹⁶; and “to promote self-sufficiency in Tonga⁹⁷

Image 3: Tourism Industry + Semisi Sika = Prosperous Tonga



Photo: © Alumita Durutalo, Semisi Sika’s Campaign Centre, Nuku’alofa, Tongatapu 2010.

Image 4: Faikava in Tongatapu – election 2010



Photo © Alumita Durutalo, Faikava during Polling Day in Tongatapu 2010.

⁹⁵ Candidate Constituency 3, Tongatapu, 23rd December, 2010.

⁹⁶ Candidate Constituency 5, Tongatapu, 22nd December, 2010.

⁹⁷ Candidate Constituency 1, Tongatapu, 23rd November, 2010.

On the issue of democracy, interviewees expressed both the strengths and weaknesses of democracy. An interviewee viewed the pro-democracy movement in a negative light: "the Tongan Pro-democracy Movement was condemning Tongan traditions and way of life...people have a choice to contribute or not ...the movement should not go out and tell the people to stop respecting".⁹⁸ Along this line of argument, an interviewee, who used to support the movement in its early days, argued that the burning of Nuku'alofa in 2006 turned her away from the movement as innocent people were victims of this violence.⁹⁹

In terms of the strength of the pro-democracy movement, another interviewee argued, "that the economy in Tonga has dropped drastically due to a lot of corruption and people do not know how much is left in government. The new democracy movement has been uncovering all these".¹⁰⁰ Additionally, another candidate stated that the reason that he contested election was: "to actively participate in moving Tonga towards democracy".¹⁰¹

An interviewee further argued that one of the electoral changes that he expects in Tonga in the future is that, "all nobles are to be elected by all the people and not by nobles only".¹⁰²

The 2010 Election Results: An Overview and Implications on Political Education

The 2010 election observation in the Kingdom of Tonga concentrated on the island of Tongatapu, which altogether has 10/17 constituencies for the people's seats as well as 3/9 Noble representatives. A total of 147 candidates competed for 17 People's seats, implying that an average of 9 candidates competed in each constituency. This is quite high for a small developing country with a population of about 104,100 in 2010. Overall, there was an air of great enthusiasm about the elections from both the voters and the candidates. The late King himself, King George Tupou V, expressed that the election was, "the greatest and most historic day for our Kingdom".¹⁰³

The formation of government after the elections was an interesting and cautious political maneuver in the exercise of balance of power in the small Pacific Island kingdom. Although the pro-democracy movement's party DPF, won the majority of people's seats, twelve out of seventeen, they did not get the chance to choose the Prime Minister. Lord Tu'ivakano, a Noble representative from Tongatapu became Prime Minister with the support of the Noble as well as independent candidates.

It could be argued that judging by the formation of government after the elections especially in the election of a Noble to be Prime Minister, that Tongans will move cautiously in selecting modern leaders through the democratic process. As two interviewees reiterated: "there should be a balance in the system of government between the customary and the modern" and "potential conflict should be avoided in the formation of any government".

The 2010 Tongan Elections and Its Implication on Political Education

Political education can be defined simply as teaching and learning processes in the area of power and power relations in a community, society or country. Such teaching and learning process is used to enable people to gain information and knowledge so they can make informed and wise decisions on political matters. Political education in the context of this research is aimed at preparing voters to make informed decisions prior to electing national leaders.

In the context of indigenous societies like Tonga and other Pacific Island states, where democracy co-exists with customary leadership systems, political education would be challenging as one tries to maintain a balance between customary and modern leadership systems. However, based on the objectives of our 2010 elections

⁹⁸ Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 22nd November, 2010.

⁹⁹ Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.

¹⁰⁰ Interviewee, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.

¹⁰¹ Candidate constituency 2, Tongatapu, 22nd November, 2010.

¹⁰² Interviewee, male candidate, Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 23rd November, 2010.

¹⁰³ Telegraph, London. <http://www.smh.com.au/world/kingprepares> (accessed, 12 February, 2013).

research, we have made the following observations and recommendations based on the practice of modern democratic elections.

Deconstructing and Simplifying the Concept of Democracy

There is a need to inform voters about democracy in general and specifically *representative democracy* and *political equality*. In the long-term, a good grounding in democracy may mean including it as a subject or part of a subject in the school curriculum at both the primary and secondary school levels. A sound knowledge of democracy in terms of its history, nature and application would facilitate better understanding of other inter-related democratic processes.

Party leadership and membership

As mentioned earlier, the role of a political party was not clearly understood by approximately 60% of those interviewed. This may have been partially due to the fact that the idea to have political parties were fairly recent in Tonga. In the long-term, there is a need for political education in this area.

Party and Electoral system

There is a need for political education to inform the voters on the relationship between the party system and the electoral system and vice versa. For example, a First Past the Post electoral system with a multi-party system tends to increase the number of candidates and intensify competition. This may cause a winning candidate to enter parliament with only 20% or 30% of the votes. Given the large number of Tongan candidates in the 2010 elections, it would be worth considering the introduction of a system such as the Alternative Vote (AV) system, for example, which will make candidates and parties work together in terms of exchanging preferences, thus preventing a lot of votes from being wasted.

Promotion of Women Candidates

One particular need area in political education not only in Tonga but in the majority of Pacific Island States, is the encouragement of women to compete in parliamentary elections. The limited number of women competing in the 2010 elections, regardless of the high number of well-educated Tongan women, was testimony to this need.

All voters should be educated on their constitutional and human rights to participate equally in elections either as voters or candidates. In our interviews, except for women candidates, very few interviewees wanted to promote women's rights to contest future parliamentary elections.

Political education is a need in indigenous societies that are now embracing modern leadership democratization. It is important that people are educated to fully understand modern leadership systems in terms of their strengths and weaknesses to enable them to make informed and wise decisions on the leadership choices they are presented with during elections. Uninformed choices can have negative socio-political and economic consequences in the long term.

International Funding and Support for Democracy Education

Political education in small island states in the Pacific including the Kingdom of Tonga require both funding and professional expertise to carry out democratic awareness through education. While some education for women were funded by UNIFEM prior to the 2010 elections, more support is needed for broader political education purposes in the future. A possible source of expertise to undertake political education training could be drawn from the University of the South Pacific which is a regional university for twelve island states in the Pacific, including the Kingdom of Tonga. Intensive political education processes are needed to inform people about modern political representation and democratic leadership.

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Comments and recommendations in this research may be used for further research and study on democratization in Tonga and the Pacific Islands region as a whole.

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Appendix 1

Research Questions

I. General Research Questions

1. What Constitutional changes have been introduced in Tonga in terms of its electoral law to include political parties and people's representatives?
2. Why have the changes come about?
3. How are political parties formed?
4. How long have the parties existed?
5. What factors contribute to party formation?
6. Who are the party leaders?
7. Who are the party members?

II. Party and Electoral Systems

8. What type of party system does the country have?
9. What type of electoral system does the country have?
10. In what way(s) does the party system strengthen the electoral system and vice versa?

III. Promotion of Women Candidates

11. Has the party fielded women candidates before? If not, why not?
12. What steps have been taken to include women candidates.

IV. Voters Preferences

13. Do you vote for whoever you want or do other people influence your choice?
14. Do you like the current party system and electoral system in your country, give your reason(s).
15. Which party do you support and what are your reasons?

Appendix 2: Women Candidates, Kingdom of Tonga Elections 2010

In 2010, a total of eleven women were candidates in the elections. Out of these, ten competed in the Tongatapu constituencies and one competed in the outer islands. Overall, women contributed 7.5% of the candidates in the 2010 elections. Women candidates included:

- Mele Teusivi Amanaki (constituency 2)
- Malia Alisi Taumoepeau (Constituency 2)
- Betty Blake (Constituency 3)
- Mele Linda Mau (Constituency 4)

- Ofa Tautuiaki (Constituency 5)
- Lesieli H. Niu (Constituency 6)
- Mavaetangi Manavahetau (Constituency 7)
- Fataimoemanu L. Vaihu (Constituency 8)
- Ofa Fatai (Constituency 9)
- Malia Peata Sioko Noa (Constituency 10)
- Langilangi Vimahi (Constituency 12)

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