

MONASH UNIVERSITY

STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENTS IN THE PACIFIC REGION

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Abstract

This qualitative study of five Pacific parliaments reports an investigation of the relationship between training and parliamentary performance. It draws on the theories from political science, adult education and training and human resources fields in an attempt to explain that relationship. The first part of the study identifies types of training programs available in the case parliaments. Then the study evaluates the impact of training on the performance of case MPs and their parliaments. It also conducts an across-case performance assessment. The results show that training programs provided to case parliaments are generally too didactic and have failed to produce a significant and positive impact on performance of case MPs and their parliaments. Parliamentary stakeholders interviewed in this study associate this failure with the manner in which training programs provided in the case parliaments are poorly designed and delivered. It is in this context that this study highlights the need for reforms and identifies approaches that could assist in reforming the way training programs for Pacific parliaments are designed, delivered and evaluated. In the case of Tonga, the need for training programs to be accompanied by other parliamentary strengthening techniques, such as embarking on relevant constitutional reforms, is examined. The thesis contributes to theory and practice by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness or otherwise of previously published training models. Specifically, while it supports the applicability of the training model proposed in the adult education and training field, it raises questions on the compatibility of the training model suggested in the human resources field. The final chapter of the thesis provides donors and parliamentary practitioners with an education and training model that could be used to improve the effectiveness of parliaments in the Pacific region and beyond.

Statement of Original Authorship

I certify that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any other university or institution. This thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Abel A. Kinyondo

Signed.....

Date.....

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Acronyms

ANZACATT	The Australian and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table
AusAID	The Australian Agency for International Development
CPA	The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
HCT	Human Capital Theory
HRD	Human Resources Development
ICT	Information Computer and Technology
IPU	The Inter-Parliamentary Union
KSAs	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
LDCs	The Least Developed Countries
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPs	Parliamentarians
PACs	The Public Accounts Committees
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PR	Proportional Representation
RMI	The Republic of Marshall Islands
TC	Training Cycle
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
UNDP	The United Nations Development Program
US	The United States of America
USAID	The United States Aid Agency
WBI	The World Bank Institute

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

1.0 Research Background

In recognition of the fact that governance plays a key role in attaining development and economic growth (Hudson & Wren, 2007; O'Brien, 2011; Pelizzo, 2010; Power, 2008; Reilly, 2000), development stakeholders such as the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) have embarked in recent years on efforts that are meant to promote improved governance in various countries around the world. Initially, these efforts primarily concentrated on either executive governments and their departments or on civil society organisations (Beahan, Andrew, Bourne, & Callan, 2010; Hudson & Wren, 2007). However, since it is increasingly clear that parliaments hold a central position in the process of establishing governance in countries everywhere (Hudson & Wren, 2007), the focus has in the last decade shifted towards parliaments. This eventuality results from the fact that parliaments are theoretically supposed to provide the platform through which the will and grievances of the people are reflected in government policies, government bills are scrutinised, passed, rejected and/or amended and governments are held accountable for their conduct in between elections (Beahan, et al., 2010; Hudson & Wren, 2007; O'Brien, 2011). It therefore follows that enabling parliaments to effectively perform their representative, legislative and oversight roles, otherwise referred in this thesis as 'strengthening parliaments', is a matter of paramount importance (Hudson & Wren, 2007, p. 4).

The rationale behind the need to strengthen parliaments stems from the role parliaments play in promoting good governance through overseeing executive governments and their departments with a view to improving their overall conduct (Beahan, et al., 2010; O'Brien, 2011; Pelizzo, 2010). Improved conduct is in turn associated with, among other things, the attainment of development and economic growth (Beahan, et al., 2010; Keuleers, 2004; O'Brien, 2011; Reilly, 2000). This argument is consistent with a study by Beahan et al., (2010), which reports a strong correlation between effective parliaments, governance and outcomes that can reduce poverty and improve the living standards of citizens.

It against this background, and following the disappointing impact of aid in Pacific countries¹ (Hayward-Jones, 2008; Henderson, 2003; Heppell, 2008; Hughes, 2003; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Payne, 2007), that a number of donor agencies, such as AusAID, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), have embarked on efforts to strengthen Pacific parliaments. The decision follows the generally accepted view by many political scholars (e.g. Larmour & Barcham, 2006; Meleisea, 2005; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005a; Pelizzo, 2010; Robert, Wright, & O'Neill, 2007) that Pacific parliaments are in a weak state and therefore need strengthening.

Some of the reasons suggested for the weak state of Pacific parliaments include: a clash between traditional and modern systems of governance (Boege, Brown, Clements, & Nolan, 2008; O'Brien, 2011; Richardson, 2009); small population but ethnic heterogeneity (Hughes & Gosarevski, 2004; Powell, 2007); and the weakness of political parties in the region

¹ For the purposes of this study, the Pacific region excludes Australia and New Zealand, due to their comparative advanced levels of democracy and development. It includes Timor-Leste as it forms part of the region for AusAID (Stringer, 2006: 569). See Appendix D for details.

(Alasia, 1997; Chand & Duncan, 2004). However, successes in countries faced with similar challenges elsewhere in the world, such as Mauritius and Botswana (Hughes & Gosarevski, 2004), suggest that such challenges are surmountable in the presence of strong parliaments (Saldanha, 2004). It is in this context that this thesis advocates for the strengthening of parliaments in the Pacific region through improved, more relevant education and training programs for parliamentarians (MPs).

The literature on building the capacity of parliaments (such as Beetham, 2006; Hudson & Wren, 2007; Olson & Norton, 1996; Power, 2008) has generally outlined four approaches to strengthening parliaments. These include (i) reforming parliamentary structure, (ii) building the capacity of specific institutions working under parliaments, such as the independent office of the Ombudsman, Auditor-General and anti-corruption commissions, (iii) promoting a sound external environment such as an open and fair electoral system that affects the make-up of parliaments, and (iv) improving knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) of MPs. This thesis focuses on the fourth approach to strengthening parliaments, improving the KSAs of MPs through education and training programs designed to improve their legislative, representative and oversight capacities. For the purposes of this thesis, the strength of parliaments is linked to the performance of MPs by the ability of MPs to effectively fulfil roles (Hudson & Wren, 2007; Power, 2008).

This thesis adapts Smith's (1998, p. 4) definition of training² by referring to it as an activity planned by parliaments or other relevant stakeholders, in the previous year, to facilitate the systematic acquisition of KSAs, in order to allow MPs to more adequately perform their

² Since the ultimate goal of training is learning (Garavan, 1997, p.41), this study uses the concepts of training and learning interchangeably.

roles, thereby improving both their performance and that of their parliaments. Training, it is argued, should not be restricted only to newly elected MPs, because even experienced MPs benefit from training. Indeed, according to Henderson (2003), while experience can have a positive effect on the performance of MPs, the lack of training can have a negative impact. For example, corruption and unethical deeds practised by some experienced MPs around the world may have been avoided by training in ethics, as suggested by Morgan (2005b). In this instance, training is intended to affect the behaviours of MPs in a manner that is consistent with improving both their performance and that of their respective parliaments (Morgan, 2005b).

The decision to examine the approach that mainly focuses on training MPs is strongly supported by the United States Aid Agency (USAID) report of 2001 (Hudson & Wren, 2007). It contends that, while deploying all the four approaches to strengthen parliaments provides for the best outcomes, training MPs has to be given first priority if choosing only one of them. Echoing this argument, Kunnath (2011) points out that ultimately the effectiveness of parliaments depends on the quality (possessions of relevant KSAs) of MPs. Pellizo (2010) concurs with this, arguing that in the case of emerging democracies (such as the Pacific countries which form the case studies in this thesis), institutional development alone is, in itself, insufficient to ensure the establishment of strong parliaments. This is because the inability to soundly perform roles has consistently been found (by political researchers such as Meleisea, 2005; Morgan, 2005a) to be the most common challenge facing MPs in emerging democracies and particularly those in the Pacific region.

These arguments by political scientists are also supported by adult education and training theories (as depicted by scholars such as Delahaye, 2000; Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 2001;

Peterson & Provo, 2000; A. Smith, 1998) and Human Resources Development (HRD) theories (as shown by authors such as Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003; De Cieri & Holland, 1998; Tharenou, Saks, & Moore, 2007; Yamnill & McLean, 2001). The adult education and training and HRD theories persuasively argue that there is potential for a positive relationship between training of a workforce and improvement in individual performance and that of respective organisations. In other words, these theories from three separate disciplines suggest that training MPs can potentially strengthen their parliaments.

In summary, this thesis argues that the inability of MPs to perform their roles soundly could be redressed by exposing them to effective training programs. This view is consistent with Power's (2008) proposition that any efforts to strengthen parliaments should particularly seek to align the behaviours of MPs to better parliamentary performance, rather than shaping structures of parliament and/or related institutions. Indeed, regardless of the structure and regulation governing parliaments, the quality of MPs is critical to affecting the effectiveness of parliaments because parliamentarians are central to the operations of parliaments (Kunnath, 2011). It is against this background that the thesis is investigating the role of training programs for MPs in strengthening parliaments in five Pacific nations: the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu. The reason for selecting these five countries is explained in the methodology chapter.

1.1 The State of Pacific Parliaments: Why Training is a Necessity

While no single reason satisfactorily explains why Pacific parliaments are considered weak, literature on the subject (e.g. Larmour & Barcham, 2006; Meleisea, 2005; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005a; Pelizzo, 2010; Robert, et al., 2007; Saldanha, 2004) has

overwhelmingly identified the inability of MPs in the region to perform their duties, due to the lack of relevant KSAs, as the main restriction on the ineffectiveness. For instance, Morgan (2005a) contends that the primary reason for the weak state of Pacific parliaments is the inability of MPs to effectively and efficiently perform their representative, legislative, oversight and budgeting roles. Similarly, Meleisea (2005) contends that parliamentary democracy in the region can only be strengthened if the ability of MPs to effectively and efficiently fulfil their duties is improved.

Mellor and Jabes (2004, p. 17) further list some of the possible reasons that could explain the weak state of Pacific parliaments. These include: (i) the lack of understanding of parliamentary procedures among MPs; (ii) a lack of professional parliamentary staffing to assist MPs with research matters; and (iii) the lack of interest to embrace positive change among MPs. They also argue that the state of affairs persists due to the poor KSAs development provided to MPs by respective Pacific parliaments, a situation that has resulted in ‘a serious weakness in policy development and in decision-making capacity’ in Pacific countries (Mellor & Jabes, 2004, p. 18). This situation highlights, once again, the inability of MPs in the region to effectively undertake their parliamentary roles and the urgent need for improved training programs to be provided to MPs in Pacific parliaments.

Similarly, Standish (2007) argues that parliaments in the Pacific region only exist for the sole purpose of forming executive governments. He concurs with Mellor and Jabes by pointing out that parliaments in the region often provide very little or no oversight because of MPs’ inadequate capacity to perform their roles. He further points out that due to the lack of legislative understanding among MPs in the region, legislation is often passed too quickly and without any meaningful debate. Since, parliamentary debates at various levels (in the

House and through the committee system) serve to ensure that legislation reflects the will of the electorate, the absence of it in the region means that legislation formulated in Pacific parliaments is often not as representative as it should be (Hudson & Wren, 2007).

Moreover, Saldanha (2004, p. 32) argues that Pacific MPs are often unable to rise above local interests. Indeed, according to Reilly (2000, p. 265), they ‘misunderstand’ their roles and reduce them to only one, that of representing local interests. This has severely affected issues of national interest, resulting in the situation where it is almost impossible for parliaments to formulate a coherent policy, thereby frustrating efforts to enhance governance and governability. Once again this situation showcases the need for providing effective training programs in Pacific parliaments so as to bring about behavioural change among MPs that is consistent with improved parliamentary performance.

Larmour and Barcham (2006) contend that some genuine efforts to oversee executive governments by independent officers of the parliament, such as the Auditor-General, have been curtailed by the inability of MPs to make use of their reports. A consequence of this can be evidenced in the high levels of corruption in many Pacific countries (Larmour, 2000; Larmour & Barcham, 2006). Furthermore, Larmour and Barcham (2006, p. 176) point out that many MPs are unable to comprehend and hence cannot adequately debate reports tabled by the Ombudsman and Auditor-General or act on them. This inability in turn affects individual MPs’ performance and ultimately that of their parliaments because it weakens the oversight ability of parliaments.

Furthermore, Morgan (2005b, p. 8) states that the limited capacity of MPs in the Pacific region to carry out their roles and responsibilities, as per ‘standing orders and privilege act’,

is the main reason for the dominance of the executive over the parliament. This, as explained previously, is partly because many MPs have poor educational backgrounds and this limits their ability to digest technical briefings and challenge government bills. The result is a situation whereby most MPs in the region fail to not only comprehend the content of the legislation, but also its subsequent implications (Morgan, 2002b, p. 4). This has led to a situation where most bills tabled in Pacific parliaments pass unchallenged, thereby undermining the principle of checks and balances inherent in parliamentary democracies (Henderson, 2003; Morgan, 2005b).

The perceived inability of MPs in the region can partly be explained by the brief nature of parliamentary careers in the Pacific region. In essence, they are extremely short (Banks, Muller, Overstreet, & Isacoff, 2010; Dinnen, 2002; Panapa & Fraenkel, 2008). This is due to the high turnover of MPs, averaging at more than 50% in each election. This is mostly a direct result of frustration by voters about their underperforming MPs (Connell, 2006; Henderson, 2003; Morgan, 2005b; Reilly, 2000). For instance, more than half of incumbent MPs in the Solomon Islands lost their seats in the 1997 election (Dinnen, 2002). Even more alarming is the fact that in Tuvalu's 2006 election, only one MP, the incumbent Prime Minister (PM), was re-elected (Panapa & Fraenkel, 2008). The shortness of parliamentary careers in the Pacific region has two main implications. Firstly, the high rate of turnover means that MPs have very little time to learn how to efficiently and effectively carry out their parliamentary roles and responsibilities. Secondly, the situation hampers the capacity of Pacific parliaments to create a body of experienced MPs who could assume responsibility to mentor the newly elected MPs (Henderson, 2003). The high turnover rates also limit the ability of Pacific parliaments to create and sustain the institutional memory needed to

maintain acceptable standards of performance for both the MPs and their respective parliaments. Exposing MPs to effective training could help in mitigating that situation.

Moreover, in well-established parliaments such as those in developed countries, most MPs (backbenchers) play various roles in parliamentary committees (Sala, 1993). Since parliamentary committees are associated with developing specialized policy expertise among MPs (Arter, 2008), they are accredited with enabling MPs to make informed decisions in parliaments. Additionally, Smith (1990 cited in Mattson & Strom, 1995) points out that the number of committees is positively related to the strength of a parliament. The logic behind this is that the more committees the more the time is available for bills and government actions to be thoroughly scrutinized, which in turn enhances a parliament's ability to hold executive governments accountable. However, due to the small number of MPs in most Pacific region parliaments, the committee system is generally weak and in some cases non-existent (Rich, 2002). For example, the Nauru parliament consists of only 18 MPs and the parliament of Tuvalu has only 15 MPs (Banks, et al., 2010). The smallness of the size of the parliaments in these countries, and in many other countries in the region, requires Pacific MPs to be across virtually all policy areas. This next to impossible task is made more difficult by the absence of appropriate training programs (Saldanha, 2004).

Even though in recent times there has been more emphasis on strengthening important committees, such as the Public Accounts Committees (PACs) in Pacific parliaments, Morgan (2005b) points out that the MPs serving on these committees often lack the necessary KSAs needed to execute their roles effectively. For instance, most MPs lack skills to adequately question experienced government officials (Morgan, 2005b). This in turn diminishes significantly the scrutiny ability of the relevant committees. The situation is exacerbated by

the tendency of donor countries and agencies to mostly single out civil servants, particularly those working in the government departments, for training on issues such as budgeting, economic management and governance, while neglecting MPs (Saldanha, 2004). It follows that efforts to train MPs may, in this case, help to minimise the knowledge gap (policy making dominance) between executive governments which are usually adequately supported by trained staff and a parliament that consists of inadequately trained MPs.

In more advanced nations such as Australia and New Zealand, parliaments and MPs are supported by staff members who are often equipped with expertise that augments MPs' KSAs (Roblin, 2003; Romzek & Utter, 1997). In contrast, in the Pacific region there are few staff working in parliaments, and those who do have KSAs that are not comparable with their counterparts in neighbouring developed countries (Morgan, 2005a; Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). Indeed, according to Morgan (2005b), when Pacific MPs from less advanced countries were questioned on possible reasons for the poor performance of parliaments in the region, most cited the lack of adequate parliamentary support staff as the main hindrance to their ability to effectively fulfil their roles. This situation further emphasises the need for MPs in the region to be equipped through training forums with adequate KSAs that can enable them to question and seek relevant advice from the bureaucracy (Mooney, 1994).

Finally, the rapid advancement of technology, which enables the public to access mass volumes of information, has not helped the situation. Orton et al. (2000, p. 207) explain that, due to the vast improvements in technology, the public is increasingly demanding 'speedy and informed' information from MPs. However, the growth in the abundance of information available in the 21st century has not been accompanied by the ability of MPs in Pacific parliaments to process it to assist them in their roles as parliamentarians (Mellor & Jabes,

2004; Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). In addition, while technology has made it easier for MPs to access vast amounts of information, the possible unreliability of such information necessitates that MPs acquire relevant KSAs to know how to process and analyse it (Orton, et al., 2000). This, once again, necessitates the need for improved training of MPs in the Pacific region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There have been efforts directed in the Pacific region that attempt to redress the weak state of Pacific parliaments. Indeed, the Centre for Democratic Institutions (2011), in conjunction with other parliamentary stakeholders such as the World Bank Institute (WBI) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), have been for more than a decade providing training to MPs in the Pacific region. Correspondingly, a recent Australian Senate report on Australia's security relations with Papua New Guinea and the Pacific (Parliament 2010) has recommended that governance stakeholders such as AusAID should develop a framework for providing a coordinated training program to strengthen Pacific parliaments. As explained above, the need for such efforts is based on the fact that training is theoretically meant to equip MPs with relevant KSAs that can enable them to more effectively perform their duties.

Even though the existing training programs in many Pacific parliaments have been labelled as being too 'modest and inadequate' (by authors such as Saldanha, 2004, p. 32), there has not been a systematic study that empirically assesses the impact of these training programs on the performance of both MPs and parliaments in the Pacific region. This study therefore provides ground-breaking work that focuses on evaluating the impact of training on the performance of MPs and parliaments in the Pacific region.

Hedlund and Freeman (1981) further highlight the limitation of studies that have attempted to evaluate parliamentary performance elsewhere in the world. According to them, studies that attempt to evaluate parliamentary performance fail to make sufficient use of theoretical frameworks to inform their evaluations, as the theory-based program evaluation methods demand. This study will utilise both adult education and training theories and HRD theories in order to inform the investigation on how training programs affect the performance of Pacific MPs and parliaments. This is consistent with the literature on organisational performance evaluation (such as that in Hedlund & Freeman, 1981) that argues for the use of theories to help answer questions such as how certain characteristics of MPs and parliaments may affect the performance of the parliament.

1.3 Research Questions

As discussed above, the research problem for this study emanates from the reported inability of MPs in Pacific countries to effectively and efficiently carry out their roles and responsibilities. This situation in turn threatens parliamentary democracy in the Pacific region. Designing effective training programs for MPs may therefore be a vital step in trying to improve the performance of MPs and parliaments and to strengthen parliamentary democracy in the region.

Parliamentary careers are significantly different from other occupations and professions (Lewis, 2011). By virtue of working in a unique and sovereign institution, the parliament, MPs face a unique recruitment and working environment. For instance, they face potentially short careers and operate in a situation where there is little clarity on what their roles actually

entail (Lewis, 2011). These and other unique features of parliamentary careers prompted the central research question of this thesis:

Can training programs improve parliamentary performance and hence the effectiveness of parliaments in the case study Pacific countries of the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu?

From this main question, three sub-questions are addressed. These are:

- (i) What types of training programs for MPs exist in the case study Pacific parliaments?
- (ii) Do existing training programs in case study Pacific parliaments affect the performance of MPs?
- (iii) Do existing training programs affect the performance of case study parliaments?

1.4 Significance of the Thesis

This thesis aims to make an original contribution to knowledge about the training of MPs by applying a cross-disciplinary approach to investigating the effectiveness of training programs for MPs in the five Pacific countries. Specifically, the study applies theoretical principles of adult education and training and HRD theories to identify the desirable features of a training model for Pacific parliaments in a political science context. By using this unique interdisciplinary approach to professional development, the thesis aims to assist scholars, trainers

and other professional development stakeholders, such as donor agencies, to better develop more effective and efficient training programs for MPs.

As mentioned previously, the Pacific region is experiencing a relatively poor governance cycle as a result of the failure of Pacific parliaments to effectively oversee executive governments, as well as the failure of MPs to engage in meaningful policy-making processes at a more informed level (Power, 2008). This study aims to benefit donors by identifying issues that will enable them to provide more targeted assistance to parliaments and MPs in relation to educating and training of MPs. In so doing, it will identify problematic issues that, if addressed, will allow donor countries and agencies to obtain better value for their aid funds than they are currently experiencing. Recipient countries could also benefit from the research as it highlights the need for education and training programs that focus on improved governance through enhanced oversight and legislative capabilities for parliaments (Rahaman, 2008; Standish, 2007). As for parliaments that self-fund the professional development of their MPs, this research will assist the evaluation of expenditure on professional development of MPs (Hubli, 2009).

As the intended outcome of well-designed and executed training programs is to enable MPs to acquire relevant KSAs to help them strengthen parliaments, this study also aims to assist the five case study Pacific parliaments (and others), to garner more legitimacy as central democratic institutions. This is important because strong parliaments are normally associated with enhanced parliamentary performance and heightened ethical standards among MPs (Kuklinski & Elling, 1977; Norton, 2000). Legitimacy of parliaments is increased through improved trust between parliaments and the public, which in turn empowers parliaments to act as a bridge that links the executive government (which in most parliaments is formed by

the parliament) to the people (Norton, 2000). In other words, by aiming to strengthen parliaments, this study will help address negative perceptions of the five Pacific case study parliaments (as evidenced by, Hollis, 1949; Thomas, 2003), which stem from the inability of these institutions to effectively and efficiently perform their roles.

1.5 Specification of the Scope

The study is largely exploratory in nature. It utilises theories of adult education and training to see whether they can improve the performance of MPs and parliaments in general. However, what this study does not do is suggest that training should be used as a panacea to strengthening parliaments in the case study Pacific region and beyond. Rather, it seeks to show that, if correctly provided, training can potentially improve both the performance of MPs and of parliaments at large. Also, while this study uses five countries (the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu) as case studies for the Pacific region, it does not in any way suggest that these five countries represent the entire situation in the Pacific region. Indeed, the study acknowledges that the case parliaments chosen do not necessarily reflect in their entirety the rest of the parliaments in the region.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter argues that there is an urgent need for effective training to be provided to Pacific MPs so as improve their performance as parliamentarians. This reflects the evidence that parliaments are the key to the attainment of sustainable development in democracies around the world (O'Brien, 2011). While the literature (such as Beetham, 2006; Hudson & Wren,

2007; Olson & Norton, 1996; Power, 2008) shows that there are four approaches to strengthening parliaments, the approach that provides for training MPs is the one that is investigated in the research reported in this thesis. The reason for this is that there is a general consensus among parliamentary scholars (e.g. Hudson & Wren, 2007; Kunnath, 2011; O'Brien, 2011; Pelizzo, 2010) that the effectiveness of parliaments ultimately depends on the KSAs of MPs.

However, providing training is one thing and its effectiveness is another. Accordingly, this study seeks to identify the types of training programs and the impact they have on MPs and their parliaments. This examination is important since it could provide a comprehensive parliamentary training model that may lead to a more effective alternative to the current approach to training MPs in the Pacific region (and beyond). In order to be able to assess the training programs in the region, the next chapter examines the literature on the parliaments, organisational performance assessment, adult training and education, and HRD, thereby providing the theoretical framework that informs this study.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews theories that inform relationships between training and organisational performance. It begins by discussing parliaments as institutions and explains their core roles. The chapter then examines some of the main factors that affect the performance of parliaments. It next moves to present strategies that can be found in the literature which describes how parliaments can be strengthened. Following this discussion, the chapter then focuses on how the performance of parliaments has been evaluated, before presenting the literature on the most recent developments in evaluating parliamentary performance. This discussion paves the way for a general review of the literature dealing with evaluating performance of organisations. As this study adopts a combination of training evaluation methods, including theory-based methods, the final section looks at the concept of training and the theories that inform it. The discussion on the theories of adult education and training, together with the literature in the HRD field, provides the basis for analysis of the link between training and performance of MPs and parliaments.

2.1 Parliaments and their Roles

Parliaments are ‘the basic state institutions responsible for legislation, oversight and representation in a democracy’ (Rugumamu, 2008, p. 1). Parliaments, in various forms as the people’s representative bodies, have existed for centuries throughout most societies (Alabi, 2009). Indeed, from ancient Africa, Asia, South America, and the Middle East to the

developed Western world, variant systems of representative governance have been embraced by societies (Alabi, 2009, p. 233).

Likewise, representative democracies existed in the ancient societies that resided in the Pacific region (Meller, 1997). For example, long before colonial invasions in the Pacific, ancient Melanesia societies had some forms of representative governance (White, 2006, p. 5). For instance, Melanesian societies such as those found in PNG and Vanuatu were egalitarian and practised a collective governance system that demanded consensus be reached prior to making any final decision, in discussions which took place in various chambers (White, 2006, p. 5). Such pre-colonial parliaments existed also in other Pacific societies and were known as Maneaba in Kiribati, Nitijela in the Marshall Islands and Aiga in Samoa (Cahn, 2008; Larmour, 2000; Meller, 1997).

Alabi (2009) points out that the first role that was performed by contemporary parliaments was that of appropriation. Axelrod (1991) concurs, arguing that such parliaments (modern) first existed in England and later in France as the increasingly unpopular Kings attempted to justify their tax and spending to their taxpayers/citizens. It can be argued that parliaments in the early parts of the last century were mainly used by the then rulers to rubber stamp their grip on power. This was done by making the public feel that all the major decisions such as tax imposition and spending choices were made and, importantly, approved by their own representatives (Axelrod, 1991).

As power gradually shifted from royalty to executive governments, the scope of the roles of parliaments in relation to the executive increased (Axelrod, 1991). While maintaining the appropriation role, parliaments began to engage in legislative processes, making and

unmaking governments, as well as providing oversight of same (Hanson, 1963). It should be pointed out that parliaments, particularly those under the presidential system of responsible governments, do not directly engage in forming the executive. This is because under this system, the (usually) popularly elected president is, in most cases, free to form a cabinet independent of parliaments.

Parliaments vary in size. They also vary in the way MPs are elected, the length of time they hold office, and the way they relate to their political parties, constituents and the executive. However, they generally perform similar roles (J. Johnson, 2005). Specifically, most political scientists (Axelrod, 1991; Hazell, 2001; J. Johnson, 2005; Mezey, 1983; Norton, 1990, 2000) generally agree that parliaments play four major traditional roles. These provide oversight of the executive government and its organs, preparing legislation, budgeting and representing the public/voters. These roles are further discussed below.

The parliamentary oversight role involves the responsibility of parliaments to hold governments accountable for their actions, including policy implementation. In many parliaments, this role is undertaken by specialised parliamentary committees: for example, in Westminster-style parliaments, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which works alongside the Auditor-General (A-G) and other independent overseeing bodies such as anti-corruption commissions and the independent office of the Ombudsman (Norton, 2000). The A-G and other relevant bodies, in conjunction with the PAC, provide parliaments with reports concerning government expenditures and the extent of efficiency in policy implementation (English & Guthrie, 2000). It follows that, for effective functioning of committees such as the PAC, serving MPs ought to keep abreast of developments, standards and emerging practices in auditing in order to ably scrutinise the conduct of governments of the day. It is highly

unlikely that MPs who are members of the PAC will possess accounting or commercial law backgrounds. Consequently, sustained training programs dedicated to ensuring that they possess basic expertise in the subject areas would be advantageous to the decisions of the committee.

The legislative role involves a process where parliaments consider and determine legislative proposals, often to enact policies of the government of the day (Norton, 1990). For instance, in the Australian Senate, the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee (LCAC) is responsible for deliberating on Bills tabled by the government of the day so as to arrive at recommendations on whether to accept, reject or, more usually, to modify tabled bills (Parliament, 2010). While recommendations of the LCAC are subject to approval by the plenary body (the parliament as whole), it is imperative that members of this committee are well versed in issues pertaining to constitutional laws. Once again, there is no guarantee (indeed, it is highly unlikely) that all members of the Australian Senate's LCAC will have legal backgrounds, and this raises the need for MPs to be educated on the type of issues that come before the committee for its consideration.

The parliamentary role of budgeting involves scrutinising and passing the appropriation bill and any other budget bill tabled by the government of the day. Basically, the appropriation bill delineates how the government plans its expenditures. The budget bills usually propose the government's fiscal policy (that is, tax measures and public spending levels) and monetary policy (interest rate and money supply measures). However, these policies can be extremely difficult to understand, especially if MPs do not possess basic knowledge in economics and accounting. Since it is neither possible nor desirable that all MPs have economic or accounting backgrounds, it is important that parliaments hold training programs

that specifically address this gap. This is necessary if parliaments are to provide informed input into the budget process, particularly in relation to the vital parliamentary tasks of analysing government expenditures, interrogation of ministers and amendment of budgets (Danish International Development Agency, 2010).

Another important role undertaken by parliaments is representation. The representative role provides a platform through which MPs can take up important issues such as grievances and put forward the interests of their constituents to the government of the day. This can be done in diverse ways, such as participating in parliamentary questioning; instituting motions and debating in the plenary body (Norton, 1990). Meller (1967) proposed three types of role representation, based on the extent to which MPs can make decisions independent of their constituents. They can represent their constituency as trustees, delegates or politicians. MPs who are trustees represent their constituency based entirely on their discretion. MPs acting as delegates do so as messengers representing interests deemed to be important by the constituency. They play a spokesperson-type role (Meller, 1967). The politician MPs are a hybrid of trustee and delegate in that they sometimes use their discretion to determine how best to represent their constituencies and at other times act as spokespersons for their constituencies.

Regardless of the type, the representational role typically requires MPs to possess relevant KSAs that can enhance their ability to positively relate with the public and other important parliamentary stakeholders such as the media. Bearing in mind that not every MP may possess highly developed (mass) communication and/or human resource expertise, an effective training program to enable MPs to better foster consultations with their voters would be advantageous to the effective performance of their role. Critical areas include issues

pertaining to legislation and policy, reporting to voters, and interacting with the media, as well as being more accountable to voters, media and civil society organisations (Danish International Development Agency, 2010).

In sum, the above discussion has outlined briefly how vital MPs are to the effective and efficient operations of parliaments. This is consistent with arguments from Kunnath (2011), who points out that the effectiveness of parliaments depends on the quality of MPs. Indeed as Beahan et al. (2010) suggest, through the legislation role, MPs affect the supply of governance and through oversight, budgeting and representative roles they influence the demand for governance. However, these roles demand that MPs should constantly update their KSAs in order to enhance both the speed and accuracy of their decision-making (Orton, et al., 2000).

In addition, the increasing need for MPs to be able to comprehend the expected effects of the legislation they pass, and provide continuous monitoring and evaluation on how well legislation is implemented, requires that they have relevant KSAs that enable them to utilise and scrutinise data during decision-making (African Parliamentary Knowledge Network, 2010). Thus, there is a critical need for MPs to acquire, through training, KSAs that can, for instance, enable them to effectively analyse bills tabled in parliament, understand what type of questions to pose in the parliament as a whole, and engage with parliamentary stakeholders such as media and pressure groups at an informed level (Norton, 2000; Orton, et al., 2000).

There have been ongoing, albeit dwindling, debates about the relevance of parliaments since the end of the Second World War (Hollis, 1949; Norton, 2000; Thomas, 2003). Critics have generally been quick to question the practicality of some of the roles, such as oversight and

budgeting, that parliaments are supposed to perform. This is because, in most cases, the ruling majority, particularly in parliamentary democracies, more often than not tends to dominate parliaments, which implies a lesser propensity for these parliaments to soundly perform their budgeting and oversight roles (Cheibub & Limongi, 2002; Folscher, 2006; J. Johnson, 2005). However, parliaments will always be the central institution in democratic countries around the world. This is because they garner their legitimacy from citizens who vote for MPs (Hanson, 1963). As Kuklinski and Elling (1977, p. 135) argue, the role of representation affords MPs and parliaments legitimacy to function on behalf of the ‘whole body politic’. Indeed parliaments will always remain important, since they provide an authoritative link between citizens and their governments, as through them governments can be held accountable for their conduct and the people’s grievances can be aired (Norton, 2000).

That said, it is important to acknowledge instances in which parliaments may not perform according to expectations and the triggers for such instances. To demonstrate that, the following section introduces some of the main factors that could affect the performance of parliaments and suggests ways that could help to remedy these factors.

2.2 Factors Affecting the Performance of Parliaments

As previously suggested, there are several factors that can affect the performance of parliaments. They include the political system, the electoral system, formal parliamentary powers, the political capacity of governments in parliament, the effectiveness of

parliamentary staff and parliamentary technical capacity (Arter, 2006; Di Palma, 1976; J. Johnson, 2005; Opello, 1986). These are discussed below in detail.

The first factor that affects the performance of parliaments is the political system within which a particular parliament operates. There are three main political systems (aside from numerous variant political systems). These include, parliamentarism, presidentialism and semi-presidentialism, which is basically the hybrid of the two previous systems (Cheibub & Limongi, 2002; Folscher, 2006; J. Johnson, 2005). Under parliamentarism, the executive is formed by a party or coalition that possesses a parliamentary majority in its own right or through coalitions by agreement with independent members of parliament. It follows therefore from this arrangement that under parliamentarism, parliaments are theoretically less likely to be aggressive against the executive and therefore at times perform disappointingly (J. Johnson, 2005). Furthermore, since any fundamental disagreement under parliamentarism may lead to a vote of no confidence, capable of forcing the executive from the office, the two branches of government tend to always act in a manner that avoids legislative deadlocks (Folscher, 2006). This may, in the end, result in situations where parliaments under parliamentarism act as mere rubber stamps of the executive governments. Under presidentialism, parliaments and the presidents are voted in separately, and thus there is a theoretical possibility that parliaments under this system may be more aggressive towards the executive (J. Johnson, 2005). Nevertheless, having power to act is one thing and acting is another. This is because the performance of parliaments is, to a large extent, a function of the ability of MPs to perform their roles ably.

The second factor that affects the performance of parliaments is the electoral system. Two main types of electoral systems are dealt with here, as the rest are but hybrids of these two.

These are the first-past-the-post and the proportional representation (PR) electoral systems. First-past-the-post provides for a system whereby MPs are popularly or directly voted in. Consequently, this arrangement tends to make elected MPs more independent in policy decision-making and thus more responsive to their constituents. PR provides for an electoral system where constituents vote for parties rather than candidates. As a result, MPs elected under this system tend to be more loyal to their respective parties than to their constituents (J. Johnson, 2005). This is because, under PR, MPs are most likely to act according to strict party lines, which basically deprives them of political independence they may otherwise have possessed had they been elected under other electoral systems such as first-past-the-post where candidates are popularly elected. This is especially true for Pacific nations (except Timor-Leste), as there is lack of party discipline, and candidates (both independents and party candidates) are mostly elected based on their individual popularity rather than on ideological grounds (Alasia, 1997; Chand & Duncan, 2004). Nevertheless, as argued previously, the ability to be responsive to people's interests and act upon them is largely dependent on the ability of MPs to fulfil their roles and responsibilities rather than the nature of electoral systems.

The third factor that affects parliamentary performance is the formal powers that parliaments possess. These powers are normally broadly defined in the constitution. They include appropriation powers and the power to initiate bills, to name but a few (J. Johnson, 2005). The assumption here is that the parliament, vested with a formal (constitutional or otherwise) legislative mandate in relation to the executive government, has the potential to perform better. This may not be the case in practice. For instance, despite the fact that constitutions of countries in the Pacific region provide for formal powers of parliaments, Pacific parliaments, as stated in chapter one, are still widely regarded as weak. This is because, more than

anything else, the strength of parliaments depends on the ability of MPs to ably fulfil their roles and responsibilities – an ability which unfortunately most MPs in the Pacific region reportedly do not possess (Meleisea, 2005; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005a).

Another factor that affects the performance of parliaments is the political capacity of governments in parliaments. This is defined by the degree of dominance in terms of whether the government of the day has majority support in its own right (or not) and the size of that majority. The presence of one-party dominance in the parliament, coupled with strict party discipline and the strong influence of the head of government within a particular party, reduces the capacity of parliaments to hold governments accountable (Rahaman, 2008). In essence under this situation, governments take advantage of party loyalty to not only further their policy interests but also evade their accountability duties (Norton, 2000). For instance, parliaments in the Australian States of New South Wales and Victoria hastily passed terrorism-related bills following the September 11 attacks in the US with minimum of scrutiny because they commanded the ‘right number’ of MPs (Hocking & Lewis, 2007). This situation, where executive governments dominate the policy making process solely due to their absolute majority in parliaments, began to receive more attention when Lord Hailsham famously coined the description ‘the elective dictatorship’ (Barendt, 1997). Since governments functioning as elective dictatorships command absolute majorities in parliaments, they commonly use their numbers to pass legislation that does not reflect the interests of minority parties in parliaments or, in some instances, the general population (Barendt, 1997). This is because under such an elective dictatorship, parliament tends to be dominated by the government of the day by the virtue of its guaranteed numbers in parliament, thereby undermining the scrutiny role of parliament (and effectively the

opposition). In Pacific parliaments this is rare, as politics in the region is usually characterised by unstable coalition governments (Banks, et al., 2010).

Elective dictatorships are not the only challenge facing parliaments. Indeed, the literature concerning parliaments (such as Anderson, 1990; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005a; Morgan & Hegarty, 2003; Murdy, Gibson, & Yiannakis, 2002; Page, 2003) overwhelmingly indicates that the quality of parliamentary staff is central to improved performance by MPs and their respective parliaments. According to Anderson (1990), any increase in the use of capable parliamentary staff in parliament translates into improved parliamentary performance because parliamentary staff enhance the ability of MPs to hold executive government accountable for day-to-day operations. In other words, the ability of parliaments in parliamentary democracies, including those in the Pacific region, to soundly perform their roles and responsibilities, relies considerably on the competency of parliamentary staff (Morgan, 2002a). This is because the ability of MPs to effectively perform their roles and carry out their responsibilities is very much dependent on the quality of technical support that parliamentary staff can and do provide to them (Morgan, 2005a). It is not surprising that most parliaments in the world make use of the expertise of parliamentary staff at various stages of the legislative processes (Page, 2003). However, while parliamentary staff are indispensable to parliaments, especially those who need to significantly improve their performance, the technical expertise of those staff and their institutional memory is a crucial factor in their abilities to assist MPs and parliaments.

Another factor that affects the performance of parliaments, and one that is at the core of this thesis, is parliamentary technical capacity. This, according to Johnson (2005), refers to managerial and technical abilities possessed particularly by MPs that enable them to ably

fulfil their roles and responsibilities. These abilities include, for instance, the ability of MPs to listen to and act on voters' concerns, and the ability to gather and analyse relevant information and better understand the need to institute parliamentary reforms which could improve the effectiveness of parliaments (J. Johnson, 2005). The point here is, MPs who are equipped with relevant KSAs can more ably manage the internal and external structures of their respective parliaments through making speeches in parliaments and engaging with external stakeholders, including constituents and the media (J. Johnson, 2005). It is against this background that this thesis argues that one of the potent ways to improve the performance of parliaments is by equipping MPs with KSAs through training, so they can perform their roles more efficiently and effectively.

The need to enable MPs to effectively perform their roles and responsibilities is further supported by Keuleers (2004, p. 10), who points out that for a very long time the emphasis when discussing performance of parliaments has been placed on 'supply of governance', which involves the process of formulating and passing legislation. However, the ever-increasing demand for governance, which involves the parliamentary roles of oversight, budgeting and representation, necessitates that MPs have their KSAs enhanced, a process which, as argued previously, could be facilitated by exposing MPs to relevant effective training programs.

In sum, this section has highlighted some of the main factors that can affect the performance of parliaments. This discussion further underlines the need to strengthen parliaments as the demand for governance has continued to increase around the world. It also strongly argues for the training of parliamentary staff as one approach to strengthening parliaments, a point which is addressed in detail in Chapter Eight. Various strategies that have been used to

strengthen parliaments around the world are discussed in the next section so as to further explain why this thesis advocates the training of MPs.

2.3 Strategies to Strengthen Parliaments

The literature on strengthening parliaments (e.g. Beetham, 2006; Hudson & Wren, 2007; Olson & Norton, 1996; Power, 2008) has generally outlined four approaches. The first focuses on building the capacity of parliamentary infrastructure. This approach concentrates mainly on developing infrastructure such as libraries and information computer and technology (ICT) resources. The main reason for this approach is to create a learning environment in which MPs can use ICT to their advantage by facilitating evidence-based decision-making in parliaments through enhanced internet-based researching (Power, 2008). However, there is strong evidence in the literature (such as Power, 2008) that shows that infrastructure development in parliaments tends to produce negligible outcomes in developing countries, especially if it is not combined with training programs for MPs to acquire the necessary KSAs to enable them to use ICT effectively. The reason behind this is that, without training, MPs fail to appreciate the value of such important infrastructure in relation to the roles they perform (Pelizzo, Stapenhurst, Sahgal, & Woodley, 2006). It is against this background that Beahan et al. (2010) argue that the most potent means through which parliaments can be strengthened is through the training of MPs and parliamentary staff. As explained before, this is due to the fact that MPs occupy such a central position in the operations of parliaments that their inability to perform their roles ultimately affects the effectiveness of parliaments.

The second approach to strengthening parliaments in the literature focuses on building the capacity of specific institutions within them. This includes strengthening, for instance, the independent parliamentary offices of Ombudsman and Auditor-General, which are responsible for overseeing the conduct of public servants and holding governments accountable for their administrative decisions and financial expenditures (Norton, 2000). The assumption here is that strengthening these independent offices of the parliaments will in turn improve parliaments' oversight capabilities. Nevertheless, while supporting such institutions is critical, any failure to firstly equip MPs with relevant KSAs so as to allow them to ably work in tandem with such offices will most likely minimise the effectiveness of the independent bodies (Beahan, et al., 2010; Pelizzo, et al., 2006). For instance, Larmour and Barcham (2006) report that the important oversight role performed by the Auditor-General in most Pacific countries is often crippled by the common failure of MPs in the PAC to comprehend reports tabled before them. This situation, once again, shows the need for MPs to be equipped through training with necessary KSAs. Without this training, other approaches to strengthening parliaments will, at best, have minimum impact. International organisations such as the World Bank Institute (WBI) and the Global Organisation of MPs against Corruption (GOPAC) focus their parliamentary support on anti-corruption programs which target specific offices within parliaments, such as the independent offices of Ombudsman (Beahan, et al., 2010).

The third approach to strengthening parliaments focuses on building the capacity of the environment within which parliaments are embedded. This approach focuses on initiating programs that affect the regulatory and political systems within particular countries (Olson & Norton, 1996). This includes promoting free and fair electoral systems and supporting civil campaigns by financing CSOs and other special interest groups (Olson & Norton, 1996). This

approach is crucial in the quest to strengthening parliaments because organisations such as CSOs assist parliaments in scrutinising the government by raising pertinent issues that affect communities they work for. However, as studies such as those by Hudson and Wren (2007) and Power (2008) suggest, unless MPs are equipped to perform their roles effectively and efficiently, the impact of external pressure on executive governments, such as that which comes from special interest groups, is likely to have limited effect (Pelizzo, et al., 2006). As previously mentioned, this situation is likely to transpire due to the fact that the actual responsibility to hold executive governments accountable lies primarily with parliaments and MPs.

Pelizzo et al. (2006) persuasively argue that the way institutions (be they internal like PACs and independent offices of parliaments or external like electoral systems) relate is not necessarily mechanically determined. In other words, having robust political institutions is not a sufficient condition for legislative success. For instance, the success of parliamentary institutions such as the PAC are tied to the ability of MPs to analyse government expenditures and determine efficiency in policy implementation (English & Guthrie, 2000; Pelizzo, et al., 2006). Pelizzo et al. (2006) continue to convincingly argue that the effective performance of such institutions depends, albeit not deterministically, on the ability of MPs to gather information and analyse it before using it to scrutinise the executive. This further includes the ability of MPs to ask relevant questions in the parliament, engage in discussion, interviews, and initiate private motions, as well as the ability to make use of reports from independent oversight bodies of the parliament. Not surprising, strategies to strengthen parliaments should necessarily aim at equipping MPs with specific KSAs that are directly linked to their roles (Danish International Development Agency, 2010).

It is against such a background that this study has adopted the fourth and final approach to parliamentary strengthening which focuses on improving KSAs of MPs by exposing them to training programs that are relevant to their parliamentary roles. Basically, this approach is designed to improve the ability of MPs to effectively and efficiently perform their representative, budgeting, legislative and oversight functions (Power, 2008). Indeed there is strong evidence in the adult training and education and HRD literature (such as Burns, 2002) that supports the argument that effective training in organisations has a potential to enhance organisational performance. Specifically, using the logic from the theories of adult education and training, which have largely informed research in HRD, effective training programs could well improve the performance of MPs and ultimately parliamentary performance (De Cieri & Holland, 1998; Peterson & Provo, 2000; Tharenou, 1998).

This view is supported by the 2003 WBI's study on the impact of training on MPs in Ghana, which established that most MPs who participated in that particular training program were reported to be more effective in participating in deliberations after being exposed to training programs (Stapenhurst, 2004). The use of training as a means of strengthening parliaments has also been echoed by the Parliament of Australia (2010) which recommended that there should be a coordinated effort aimed at formulating training programs to strengthen Pacific parliaments. The argument that training is central to strengthening parliaments is further supported by a recent AusAID report on 'Power to the People' (Beahan, et al., 2010) that shows that when it comes to parliamentary support, most international organisations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) focus on developing the KSAs of MPs.

In sum, most parliaments in the least developed countries (LDCs), including Pacific parliaments, are generally regarded as being weak (Keuleers, 2004). However, as argued in Chapter One, there is an urgent need to strengthen parliaments so as to ensure political stability, vastly improved governance and policies that are responsive to the needs of the people (Danish International Development Agency, 2010). Parliaments can be strengthened by exposing MPs to effective training programs, a process that can equip them with KSAs which can enable them to perform their parliamentary roles more effectively (Danish International Development Agency, 2010).

Before reviewing the literature that advocates for training as a catalyst for improved organisational performance, it is important to introduce the concept of evaluating parliaments. This discussion is important as it highlights flaws inherent in methods that have so far been used to evaluate parliamentary performance. Having pointed out some limitations of current methods of evaluating parliaments, the discussion will embark on pursuing the alternative methods of evaluating parliamentary performance.

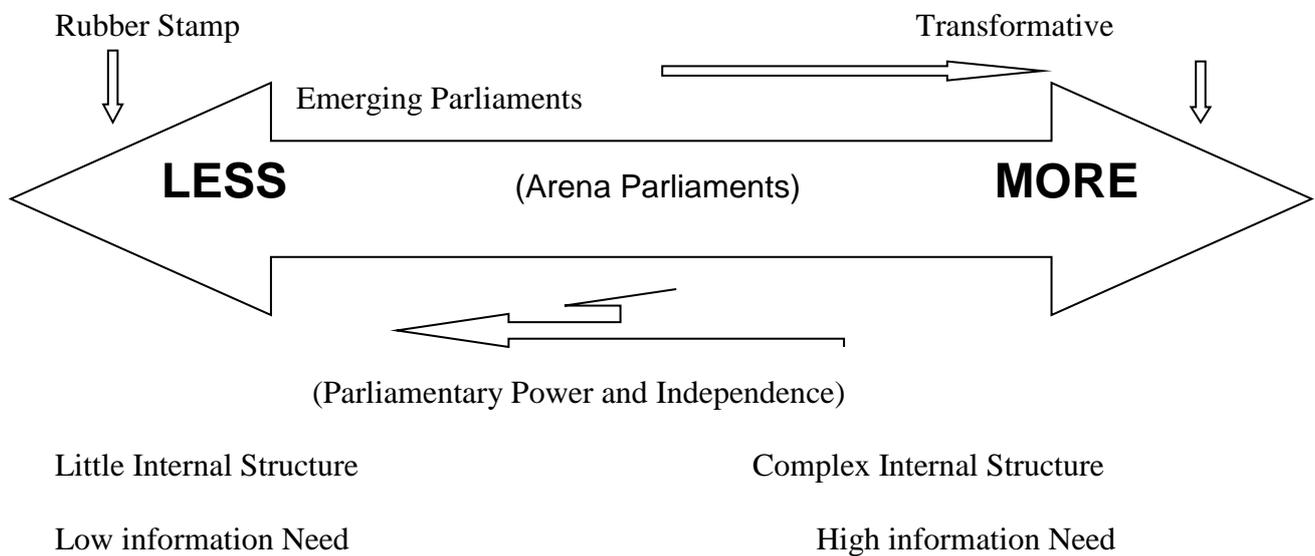
2.4 Evaluating the Performance of Parliaments

Parliaments have been classified in diverse ways by political researchers. For instance, Johnson (2005, pp. 4-6) describes parliaments as a continuum ranging from rubber stamp, emerging parliaments, arena to transformative parliaments. Rubber stamp parliaments provide the weakest types of parliaments in that they simply endorse policy initiatives from executive governments of the day and thus they tend to mostly be unresponsive to the interests of the people they represent. At this level parliaments are most likely to have a weak internal structure and little need for information, as shown in Figure 2.1 below. The

parliament of Russia during ‘the Cold War’ provided a typical example of a rubber stamp parliament.

The second type of parliaments are called emerging parliaments. These include most parliaments in nascent democracies such as Pacific parliaments. These are parliaments that are shifting between levels of rubber stamp to arena or from arena to transformative parliamentary levels. Importantly, emerging parliaments not only need internal restructuring but also need to provide more information for MPs in order for them to cope with increasing demands of their restructured roles (J. Johnson, 2005).

Figure 2.1: Rubber Stamp, Emerging, Arena and Transformative Parliaments



Adapted from: Johnson (2005, pp. 4-6)

Arena parliaments, on the other hand, represent an improvement on rubber stamp parliaments but fall short of the power that transformative parliaments have. Indeed, while they do not normally initiate legislation, they ably scrutinise tabled bills and are more responsive to voters. Most parliaments, particularly those that sit under various forms of the Westminster model, exhibit characteristics that can be found at this level.

Finally, at the opposite extreme to rubber stamp parliaments there are transformative parliaments. These represent parliaments that are not only responsive to voters' interests but also take the central stage in initiating legislation. These types of parliaments often possess complex internal structures and require a high degree of information that can be used to ensure that legislation is as representative of the electorate as possible. The US Congress is normally associated with such a parliament (Arter, 2006; J. Johnson, 2005; Mezey, 1983; Russell & Benton, 2009).

Apart from the classification of parliaments as a continuum from rubber stamp to transformative, there has been a continuing debate about parliaments being either reactive or active, and policy influencing or policy making (Russell & Benton, 2009). This debate is largely influenced by the seminal work by Mezey (1979), which emphasises the importance of the extent of power the parliament has in policy making in relation to the executive. According to Mezey, the strength of parliaments is measured by the power of parliaments to initiate legislative-making processes. It follows from this classification that rubber stamp, emerging and arena parliaments mentioned by Johnson (2005), are all weak parliaments. However, this may be misleading, because just the fact that a parliament can initiate legislation does not necessarily make it stronger. This is particularly because it is the quality and not just quantity of legislation that matters. While transformative parliaments may at

times produce poor quality legislation, other types of parliaments such as arena parliaments may use their influence on the executive to amend tabled bills, thereby improving their quality.

Arter (2006) provides two measures of parliamentary performance, namely the degree of legislative efficiency and the extent of legislative autonomy. Legislative efficiency measures the extent MPs are able to make informed decisions as far as fulfilling their representative, legislative and oversight roles are concerned. On the other hand, legislative autonomy measures the extent parliaments 'can and do' fulfil their roles independent of executive governments, particularly in scrutinising the formulation and implementing policies by the executive (Arter, 2006, p. 248). By implication, 'can' is related to legislative capacity and 'do' informs the will to perform by MPs (in parliament). In other words, Arter's classification implies that legislative capacity is inconsequential if the will power of the parliament is not exercised by MPs. Previous discussions have suggested that training has the potential to alter behaviours of MPs so that they can behave in a manner that is consistent with improved performance of both individual MPs and their respective parliaments.

Relatedly, Opello (1986, p. 293) has attempted to evaluate the performance of parliaments by taking into consideration two main approaches, namely (i) the analysis of legislative roles and (ii) the analysis of organisational attributes of parliaments. The analysis of legislative roles seeks to identify and assess the performance of parliaments based on the ability of MPs to fulfil their legislative, oversight and representative roles. On the other hand, the analysis of organisational attributes approach shifts the level of analysis from individual MPs to the parliament as a whole. It specifically measures the performance of parliaments based on the existence and persistence of 'valued rules, procedures, and patterns of behaviour which

enable the accommodation of new configurations of political demands', irrespective of the characteristics of individual MPs (Opello, 1986, p. 294). The first approach to evaluating parliamentary performance provided by Opello is the analysis of legislative roles. This is more relevant to this study than the second one, because, as stated previously, MPs hold the central position in the operations of parliaments, as parliamentary stakeholders such as Kunnath (2011) suggest. Therefore, a robust parliamentary evaluation process should seek to assess the ability of MPs to effectively and efficiently perform their roles.

Olson and Nonidez (1972, pp. 270-272) provide six measures of MPs' parliamentary performance popular in the US. They include: (i) the frequency with which MPs speak in the plenary body; (ii) the number of bills introduced by the parliament; (iii) the extent of specialisation of bills introduced; (iv) the number of bills sponsored by MPs that are passed; (v) a legislative effectiveness index, which is measured by the proportional of sponsored bills passed in relation to the total number of introduced bills; and (vi) the number of amendments offered per bill in parliaments. Ultimately, Olson and Nonidez (1972) found that these variables correlate with five independent variables that relate to characteristics of MPs in the US Congress, and these include: (i) number of years (experience) since becoming an MP; (ii) position held (seniority) since becoming an MP; (iii) position held prior to becoming an MP; (iv) strength of the political party that the MP belongs to; and (v) the extent of the liberalism of an MP.

Similarly, various studies (such as Hedlund & Freeman, 1981; Keuleers, 2004; Olson & Nonidez, 1972; Zennaro, 2005) have used parliamentary performance indicators such as the number of bills passed, the number of committee reports published, the amount of public

evidence compiled, or the number of questions asked of ministers, to evaluate the performance of parliaments.

However, these indicators are mostly inadequate in measuring performance as they fail to capture the quality side of the roles of parliaments (Danish International Development Agency, 2010). For instance, using the number of bills passed as the measure of performance can be misleading, since it is possible to have a situation where important bills get blocked at the expense of the less important ones (Russell & Benton, 2009). Similarly, these measures fail to capture the fact that many bills could be passed on a partisan basis in the presence of majority rule or, as is usually the case in advanced parliaments, because the two major parties in parliaments agree to pass the bill. If that happens, bills may not be passed based on informed decision-making but on party lines in order to foster narrow political agendas.

That said, the art of evaluating the performance of parliaments has in the last decade moved to another level (Hubli, 2009; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009; Oliver, 2009; The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009). This is because more and more parliamentary stakeholders have increasingly accepted evaluation as a potent tool, which can be used to not only measure the effectiveness of parliaments but also as a means to find ways to improve its performance. These important developments are examined below with the view of drawing lessons from them which can be applied to the present study.

2.4.1 Recent Developments in Evaluating the Performance of Parliaments

In view of the fact that parliaments are constantly assessed by outsiders such as the media and CSOs, several organisations have recently embarked on developing benchmarks against

which parliaments can assess their performance. The benchmarks are based on generally agreed standards of effective parliaments (Hubli, 2009; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009; Oliver, 2009; The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009). These benchmarks, which take the names of the organisations responsible for developing them, include the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) benchmark, the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF) benchmark, the Southern African Development Community – Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) benchmark, the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s (IPU) self-assessment toolkit, the IDEA state of democracy methodology, the National Democratic Institute’s (NDI) Power-Practice survey toolkit, the Canadian Parliamentary Centre’s (CPC) performance indicators (Australasian Study of Parliament Group, 2009; Herrero, 2009; Hubli, 2009; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009; Oliver, 2009; The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009) and the Fish-Koenig’s Parliamentary Power Index (PPI) ranking (Fish & Koenig, 2009; Hubli, 2009). The efforts to develop benchmarks have been made possible due to increased funding from organisations such as AusAID and WBI and the growing number of parliamentary stakeholders such as the APF and the SADC-PF that constantly monitor standards of parliamentary democracy in countries around the world (Hubli, 2009). As mentioned previously, the benchmarks were developed to assist parliaments to assess their own progress against the generally accepted parliamentary standards (The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009).

Most of the benchmarks were developed following inputs from MPs and/or from parliamentary officers. For instance, while the CPA³ benchmark was developed with the help of MPs and parliamentary officers from member parliaments within the CPA (The

³ CPA, an association of Commonwealth MPs, was founded in 1911 and has close to 60 countries in its membership, particularly the UK and its former colonies.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009), the IPU evaluation toolkit was developed from the best experiences shared by MPs from IPU⁴ member parliaments (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009). These benchmarks generally assist parliaments to measure their performance and determine the level of reforms that parliaments need to undertake. This is particularly done by addressing four main areas. They are: Parliamentary organisation (committees, party groups, caucuses, procedures and officers); Parliamentary functions (legislation, oversight, budgeting and representation); Values (accessibility, transparency, integrity, participation and public consultation) and general issues such as elections, immunity and remuneration awarded to MPs (Herrero, 2009; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009; The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009).

However, the use of these benchmarks is not without limitations, as it has been found by studies, such as that done by CPA (2009), that it is difficult to quantify the level of adherence to a particular benchmark by parliaments. In particular, evaluations using these benchmarks do not guarantee that the evaluation process will identify differences between the rules of procedures and how those procedures are actually followed in various parliaments. For instance, using CPA's benchmark, 'the power of parliaments to override the veto of the executive', one ought to conclude that the Canadian parliament lacks power since the Crown has a constitutional power to veto any policy advanced by the Canadian parliament (The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009, p. 5). However, since in practice this veto power is never exercised by the Crown, it is misleading to consider the Canadian parliament weak. In other words, benchmarks such as that of the CPA do not adequately explain the differences between rules and the actual practices found in various parliaments.

⁴ IPU, an international organisation of parliaments was established in 1889 and has 159 member countries and nine regional and sub-regional associate members.

Furthermore, these benchmarks fail to consider duties that are undertaken outside parliaments. For instance, one of the CPA benchmarks requires parliaments to encourage political participation of marginalised groups (The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009, pp. 5-6). However, in countries such as Canada, that responsibility falls under political parties and departments in the executive. This means that, while the benchmark gives a very low score to the Canadian parliament in terms of promoting political participation, the low ranking does not give an accurate reflection of parliamentary performance since that responsibility falls outside the constitutional jurisdiction of the parliament.

The NDI survey toolkit, on the other hand, measures the perception gap between the actual constitutional powers of parliaments and the power MPs exercise in practice (Australasian Study of Parliament Group, 2009; Herrero, 2009). The rule from the toolkit is that, when the power-practice gap is narrow, the parliament in question is considered to be relatively weak compared to other parliaments. Under such circumstances, the toolkit recommends that efforts to strengthen parliaments should concentrate on ‘constitutional and legal reforms’ (Australasian Study of Parliament Group, 2009, p. 1). This is because in this scenario, the ineffectiveness of parliaments is not necessarily due to the inability of MPs to perform their duties but the political environment that limits their effectiveness.

Conversely, if the power-practice gap is large, efforts should focus on assisting the parliament to concentrate on effectively utilising existing ‘formal authority’ (Australasian Study of Parliament Group, 2009, p. 1). In this instance, the performance of parliament is largely a function of the ability of MPs to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

Nonetheless, the perceived power-practice gap varies with people that view it (Australasian Study of Parliament Group, 2009; Herrero, 2009). This is because it is a generally accepted rule that while CSO representatives usually perceive the existence of a larger power-practice gap than MPs, parliamentary staff's perceptions on the power-practice gap are usually in the middle of the two (Australasian Study of Parliament Group, 2009). This subjectivity inherent in defining the power-practice gap once again casts doubts in the reliability of the NDI toolkit in evaluating the performance of parliaments.

Since most parliamentary roles are subtle, largely invisible, and mostly immeasurable, they cannot adequately be captured in benchmarks (indicators) such as those discussed above. For instance, executive governments may opt to hold back from some of their policy inclinations if they anticipate a backlash from the parliament. In other words, some bills may not be proposed at all because of the expected resistance from the parliament (Russell & Benton, 2009). Blondel, Gillespie, Kaati & Leonard (1970) concur with this argument by pointing out that most of these benchmarks are inherently 'reactive' and hence they lack ability to capture the 'preventative' role performed by parliaments which may well be more important as far as the performance of parliament is concerned. Similarly, it may be improper to consider a parliament as a rubber stamp if it does not initiate legislation, because sometimes governments make policy concessions before tabling a bill before the plenary body (Russell & Benton, 2009). It is the intangible roles that parliaments perform that render benchmarking inadequate since they completely ignore the qualitative aspects of parliamentary performance.

In addition, Russell and Benton (2009) persuasively argue that focusing on the impact of individual MPs on issues such as the number of individually sponsored bills is irrelevant

because usually party whips are responsible for selecting MPs to perform that role. In other words, the fact that an MP introduces a bill does not say anything about his/her performance since he/she could merely be reflecting the wishes of a political party or lobbyists, and this may not reflect the views and interests of constituents. Moreover, measuring the number of amendments to bills is also flawed as an indicator. This is because this benchmark fails to capture the amendments and committee recommendations which normally take a long time to be included in a bill due to the expected thorough scrutiny of bills at the committee level (Russell & Benton, 2009).

In sum, the above discussion has shown that even recent developments in evaluating the performance of parliaments fail to provide robust ways to evaluate parliamentary performance. It is against this background that the next section examines alternative evaluation methods that can be adapted to the parliamentary context and therefore to this research study.

2.5 Evaluating Performance in Organisations

Evaluation grew in popularity in 1960s following societal pressure to demonstrate the value of programs, given limited resources that governments and non-governmental organisations possess (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Indeed, according to Cronbach (1980), evaluation of programs arose as a result of the need to instil more accountability in organisations to ascertain whether initiated programs achieved their intended targets. Program evaluation was initially meant to provide for an explanation on effectiveness of programs. As the pressure to demonstrate effectiveness and sustainability of programs grew, organisations increasingly opted to use evaluation as a tool to justify program existence

(Knollmayer, 2002). However, as time went on, program evaluation has not only been used to assess effectiveness of the program but also to improve the quality of programs at hand (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

In evaluating 'effectiveness of programs' or accountability, the emphasis was placed on quantitative data showing whether the program works, as opposed to the more qualitative data explaining how to improve programs, otherwise known as program design improvement (Knollmayer, 2002). The emphasis was to calculate, for instance, the rate of returns from programs specifically by using Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) (Knollmayer, 2002). However, of late the emphasis of program evaluation has shifted into helping also to improve program implementation rather than merely evaluating its effectiveness (Knollmayer, 2002). This experience resulted in a shift of focus in program evaluation from quantitatively biased evaluation methods to more qualitative ones (Knollmayer, 2002). This shift occurred following an increase in appreciation that, when dealing with more 'complex social or community based programs', qualitative methods better reflect the reality than quantitative methods do (Knollmayer, 2002, p. 4). Indeed, evaluation methods such as CBA can only be adequately used when evaluating organisations in which capital returns are mostly tangible. However, when dealing with more complex organisations such as parliaments, which include quite a number of intangible elements which cannot be easily measured such as the quality of bills passed, quantitative methods such as CBA are mostly inadequate. Modern program evaluation is intended to mainly achieve the following objectives: (i) to enhance the performance of programs; (ii) to enhance accountability of the program; and (iii) to provide lessons that can be used to enhance program design.

Having briefly introduced the concept of evaluating organisational performance, the discussion turns specifically to examining various methods of program evaluation. The literature indicates that there are four main methods (Knollmayer, 2002; Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998): (i) scientific evaluation methods; (ii) interpretivism or constructivism methods; (iii) participatory and community-based evaluation methods; and (iv) evaluation as a management tool or theory-based or logic-based model evaluation methods. These are discussed in detail below.

2.5.1 Scientific Methods

Scientific methods use a variety of statistical approaches to test hypotheses relating to the program being evaluated (Knollmayer, 2002). These methods are potent particularly when one can control conditions under which causes and effects relate to each other and the processes that link them. These methods, which are dominant in the effectiveness evaluation field, involve testing hypotheses regarding the impact of social programs using statistical analysis techniques (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Furthermore, scientific methods are meant to explain what took place and the causal relationships that lead to an outcome of interest (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 6). In other words, scientific methods seek to explain how the introduction of certain factors such as training lead to improvement in a desirable outcome, say, organisational performance.

Nonetheless, scientific methods have several weaknesses which limit their usefulness in program evaluation. Firstly, scientific methods are only designed to answer questions on the effectiveness of programs or rather on the workability of programs. This means they lack the ability to demonstrate, as part of the evaluation outcome, the lessons learnt during evaluation

with a view to improving program design. Specifically, the Will Keith Kellogg Foundation (1998) argues that these methods lack the mechanism to thoroughly address issues of process and implementation as well as improving programs, thereby making them relatively unfavourable when compared to qualitative methods particularly when dealing with more complex social systems such as parliaments. Indeed, while measuring effectiveness of programs is an important part of program evaluation, the need to gather and analyse data with the aim of improving the program in question is imperative for sustainability of both the program and its intended outcomes.

Secondly, while scientific methods have traditionally been celebrated in the evaluation field, they can only work perfectly under a controlled environment such as types of natural science studies. It should be noted that a scientific method of evaluation is normally treated as a complex experimental exercise involving treatment and control groups in determining statistical changes in relation to the intended outcomes (Knollmayer, 2002). Nevertheless, most evaluations of social or community programs, such as those involving parliamentary performance, are so complex that it is impossible to reduce them into simple cause and effect relationships (Knollmayer, 2002). As a result, since the 1980s there has been a shift in focus when it comes to program evaluation away from scientific approaches, which are mainly quantitative in nature, towards methods that attempt to combine both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Knollmayer, 2002). Some of the best known methods of program evaluation which accompanied this shift are discussed below.

2.5.2 Interpretivism or Constructivism Methods

Interpretivism is one of the methods introduced because of the inadequacy of scientific methods in evaluating complex social programs (Knollmayer, 2002). Originating from the field of anthropology, interpretivism ‘seeks to understand rather than explain what is being studied’ (Knollmayer, 2002, p. 6). The actual understanding of the phenomena being studied is captured via physical contacts with program participants using tools such as observation and interviews (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). The qualitative data drawn from program participants in this method of evaluation address the weaknesses inherent in scientific methods, which mainly rely on pre-determined variables that sometimes grossly disregard contextual variables.

Moreover, since interpretivism focuses on the process including the implementation and attached meaning of experiences of those involved in the project, it has a potential to assist in suggesting ways to improve the project design for future use (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). This helps to correct methodological biases inherent in most theories that have guided program evaluation, including models such as career stage models which are known to have been formulated using male-only samples, thereby limiting the justification for their generality (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). All this notwithstanding, one has to acknowledge that interpretivism is also prone to the subjectivity of the evaluator. In fact, Knollmayer (2002) points out that this method may not only produce biased results but also be unnecessarily time consuming. This can be explained by the fact that interpretivism uses instruments of data collection (interviews and observations) that can produce subjective output following a long process.

2.5.3 Participatory and Community-Based Evaluation Methods

These methods are closely linked to participatory observation methods that are used in interpretivism methods of program evaluation. Mostly used when evaluating community-based programs, these methods encourage communities in which programs are undertaken to actively participate in the evaluation process itself (Knollmayer, 2002). They are largely divided into two groups: (i) Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and (ii) Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The RRA aims at providing a broader overview of the project without necessarily having an in-depth analysis, using data from various sources in the community concerned (Knollmayer, 2002). On the other hand, PRA arose as a result of RRA being criticised as a tool that evaluates programs based on subjective opinions of outsiders (Knollmayer, 2002). In essence, PRA seeks to actively involve the community in the evaluation process, thereby localising the process.

It can be argued that since participatory evaluation methods intend to provide a balanced priority of the process of evaluation between the opinion of the evaluator and that of individuals by involving all the concerned parties in the program, they are able to make the result of the evaluation relevant to all stakeholders (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Furthermore, since these methods are practical and inclusive of all stakeholders, they have the potential to enhance program implementation and outcomes. Nevertheless, Knollmayer (2002) argues that Participatory and Community-Based Evaluation Methods are generally inadequate because they tend to be oversimplified. Even more damning is the fact that they lack a theoretical basis and hence academic rigour and therefore credibility. The criticism of this program valuation method gave rise to the theory-based evaluation method, which is discussed next.

2.5.4 Theory-Based or Logic Model Evaluation Methods.

The theory-based program evaluation method seeks to provide for a conceptual framework that describes relationships between short-term outcomes, processes and long-term complex community goals of a particular program (Julian, 1997). It describes necessary conditions and what it is that has to be done in the short-run so as to produce desired outcomes in the long-run. It thus depicts a road map towards establishing programs' processes and their subsequent long-term desired outcomes.

The logic model of program evaluation comprises four areas (Julian, 1997, p. 251): 'conditions, activities, outcomes and impacts'. Conditions represent what the community needs or its concerns, such as high levels of poverty. The second area, activities, describes specific actions that need to be undertaken to address the conditions, say, training of MPs. The third, which comprises outcomes, shows the immediate results of the activities. For instance, it has already been argued that the expected outcome of training MPs is to enhance their KSAs, which in turn improves their performance. The fourth and final area, impacts, represents the long-term consequence of the outcome. In this case it could theoretically mean that improvement to performance of MPs will, in the long term, strengthen parliaments, which in turn will ensure good governance and economic growth and ultimately poverty reduction, which was hypothesised earlier as a primary concern of the people.

In essence, the theory-based evaluation method assumes that all programs are based on an explicit or implicit theory depicting how and why the program works (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). The intuition behind this is that the only way to understand the program is by understanding the theory behind it and thus one has to develop a program logic model that

depicts how the program works. In particular, theories on how programs can be used to transform certain outcomes are used to develop interim outcomes which guide evaluation of long-term outcomes (Knollmayer, 2002). Ultimately, interim outcomes, which can be measured by both quantitative and qualitative methods, provide an opportunity to know whether or not the program is likely to achieve the intended outcomes. This in turn, allows evaluators to change the theory and/or the program depending on their relevance to the intended outcomes. Therefore this evaluation method can potentially allow program stakeholders to both understand and demonstrate program effectiveness (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Similarly, this approach can make use of the comparison between potential and actual impact of the concerned program.

Ultimately, the main advantage of the theory-based program evaluation method rests on the fact that it provides for an opportunity to link conditions, activities, outcomes and impacts of programs, thereby providing for not only evaluation (as per scientific methods) but also community level planning (Julian, 1997). Indeed according to the Will Keith Kellogg Foundation (1998, p. 12), this method provides for answers to questions pertaining to program evaluation such as ‘What are the pitfalls? What are the core elements? What were the lessons learned along the way?’ It follows from this logic that the theory-based evaluation method can be used positively to inform the design and implementation of programs, including training programs in parliament and, in terms of this thesis, Pacific parliaments.

In summary, the bias towards using use scientific methods of evaluation was a result of both the pressure to demonstrate effectiveness of programs and the monopoly of modern research philosophy that, perhaps wrongly, advocates that quantitative methods are superior to qualitative ones (Knollmayer, 2002; Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). This may be

challenged. As has already been established, qualitative methods of program evaluation are vital if a comprehensive assessment of programs is to be conducted. This is because qualitative evaluation methods not only provide for learning opportunities during evaluation process but also take into consideration the political context within which it is carried out. This of course does not mean to say that quantitative methods should be completely ignored. In fact, Knollmayer (2002) advocates the simultaneous use of multiple methods of evaluation for robust results. As explained above, this is because program evaluation should be concerned with both intended outcomes (best captured by quantitative methods) and acquired KSAs of the individuals involved in the program evaluation, which are best captured by qualitative techniques (Will Keith Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Consequently, any program evaluation should make use of various methods of evaluation in order to capture robust outcomes.

Since the Theory-Based or the logic model evaluation method is the evaluation method deployed in this thesis, there is a need to introduce the theory that is going to guide the evaluation process. Accordingly, the next section of this chapter discusses adult education and training and HRD theories of organisational performance. As explained in the overview of the chapter, this discussion is aimed at explaining how training relates to improved performance of MPs and parliaments.

2.6 The Concept of Training and its Theories

Over the years, studies (such as that of Alabi, 2009; Romzek & Utter, 1997) have exposed the lingering perception that executive governments hold an unfair capacity advantage over parliaments, given the ample expertise the former garners from the bureaucracy. This

argument is based on the view that executive governments are, among other things, richly endowed with capable technocrats who augment the KSAs of government ministers in a manner that provides executive governments with an advantage in KSAs over parliaments (particularly opposition parties) in the legislative process. It follows from this line of argument that this thesis argues for all MPs to be exposed to effective training programs so as to boost their KSAs in order to better match executive governments. In particular, since Pacific parliaments suffer in this manner from policy domineering executive governments, the need to train Pacific MPs is crucial. Training in such cases, is intended to facilitate the process of equipping MPs with KSAs that can enable them to soundly perform their traditional roles comparably to ‘experts’ from the bureaucracy (Mooney, 1994, p. 71). This brief introduction paves the way for a more detailed examination of the concept of training including the theories that inform it.

2.6.1 Types of Training

Before venturing into theories that inform training, it is important to look at different types of training. This is crucial because, as will be demonstrated later, the way adults learn is different from the way children learn, and therefore selecting the proper type of training for MPs is a crucial issue. That said, Pascual-Leone and Irwin (1998, p. 37), argue that there are two types of learning: low-road and high-road learning. Low-road learning involves low cognitive functions such as concrete and at times experiential types of training delivery. This form of learning is consistent with andragogical types of learning which, as argued below, ought to be the ones used for adult learners such as MPs. This is because low-road learning is associated with self-development and motivation. It allows adult learners, such as MPs, to

critically evaluate experiences and assumptions that are usually held dear in societies, as discussed below (Husain, 2003; Merriam, 2001).

The latter type involves high cognitive functions, including abstract techniques similar to those used in mainstream schools. Since these types of learning techniques are pedagogical and therefore inappropriate to adult learners, there are not examined further in this present study.

Furthermore, the way training is provided differs across six different forms. These are reality learning, authority learning, imitation learning, didactic learning, mediated learning and self-mediated learning (Pascual-Leone & Irwin, 1998, p. 56). These forms of learning can be placed on a continuum from reality learning, which is based on trial and error and thereby allows an adult learner to develop ‘adaptive flexibility’ (Pascual-Leone & Irwin, 1998), to self-mediated learning, where an adult learner, such as an MP, can engage in independent and self-directed acquisition of KSAs. The acquisition of KSAs is achieved by a process where learners such as MPs formulate and subsequently begin to solve problems that they deem important as far as their roles are concerned (Pascual-Leone & Irwin, 1998). The main point to emphasise in this case is that adult learners such as MPs may need to be exposed to a range of learning methods from trainer-directed to MP-directed learning (Merriam, 2001). In other words, to accommodate different learning styles among MPs, self-directed learning may only need to be deployed after other learning methods have been provided. The discussion on the types of training has generated the first research question of this study:

- (i) *What types of training programs for MPs exist in case study Pacific parliaments?*

As explained in the previous chapter, training is, for the purposes of this thesis, defined as an activity planned by parliaments or any other relevant stakeholder in the past year to facilitate systematic acquisition of KSAs, including rules, concepts or attitudes by MPs, in order to allow them to adequately perform their roles, thereby improving both their performance and that of their parliaments (A. Smith, 1998). It should be noted that training in the workplace has increasingly shifted its focus from the ‘trainer’ to the ‘learner’ (A. Smith, 1998). This shift of focus has in particular informed the development of three main theories of learning. These are behaviourism, cognitivism and humanism (Dubin & Okun, 1973; Peterson & Provo, 2000). The following section provides a very brief discussion of the first two theories, before concentrating on humanism, which is the most relevant theory for this study.

Behaviourism, which provides the first known learning perspective, involves the analysis of observable behaviours of individuals. Under this theory, learning is described and eventually rewarded on the basis of observable changes in behaviour, attitude or performance of individuals (Dubin & Okun, 1973). According to this theory, people learn (or respond to stimuli) in two main ways. Firstly, individuals learn by replicating personal or other people’s behaviours that result in a possible reward. Secondly, they learn by refraining from personal or other people’s behaviours that could result in a ‘punishment’. Behaviourism proposes that individuals such as MPs learn by responding to certain incentives or disincentives. An individual, according to this theory, will be motivated to learn, if for instance, learning can guarantee a pay rise (incentive) or alternatively career stagnation (disincentive). However, since such incentives and disincentives are typically not compatible with parliamentary careers, behaviourism is not a sound theory of training to inform effective training programs intended for MPs. This brief discussion on behaviourism theory of learning takes the discussion to the second theory of training known as cognitivism.

Cognitivism concerns itself with examining mental processes involved in learning. It proposes that perceptions in individuals are formed by mental identification of patterns in observed events (Peterson & Provo, 2000). Bruner Goodnow & Austin (1956) concur with this view by stating that cognitive learning can be explained by the mental categorisation of events. They argue that the only way individuals learn is by assigning information they get to existing information categories within their brains. Subsequently, individuals only formulate new categories if the information they process does not fit existing ones. By placing information in an appropriate category, cognitive learning allows a learner to comprehend events and therefore make decisions. Ausebel (1962) uses a similar concept to that of Bruner et al.'s categorisation of information. However, unlike Bruner et al. (1956), Isabel insists on the introduction of the trainer in the learning process, whose responsibility is to facilitate the process of categorisation in a learner. The facilitator typically guides a learner in formulating categories by pointing out new categories to be formed without necessarily 'teaching' the learner how to form those categories.

While cognitive learning is an advance on behaviourism, it is often criticised by researchers such as Husain (2003) for the lack of critical reflection found in elements of it. Indeed, categories formed in the human mind are usually 'culturally induced' and therefore unless they are 'reframed' their interpretations may be misleading (Husain, 2003; Merriam, 1993). For instance, an MP relying on cognitive learning without applying critical reflection techniques is prone to making decisions according to the status quo, which may not necessarily be the correct way of approaching issues at hand. This makes cognitivism a poor approach to learning for MPs, particularly because it does not involve critical reflection as

part of the learning process. To this end, the discussion on behaviourism and cognitivism paves the way for the introduction of humanism, a theory that underlies this study.

2.6.2 Humanistic Theory of Learning (Humanism)

Humanism is concerned with enhancing the way an adult learner is instructed (A. Smith, 1998). It departs from the theories of behaviourism and cognitivism by assuming that human behaviours can also be determined by factors other than experiences or environment, particularly when a learner is effectively trained (Peterson & Provo, 2000). Chief among humanistic theories of learning is andragogy, which proposes that the way adults learn is significantly different to the way children learn, which is otherwise known as pedagogy (Delahaye, 2000; Merriam, 2001).

Knowles (1973) advocated andragogy on the assumption that adults can self-direct their learning process. Self-directedness in adult learning is based on the assumption that adults have an intrinsic ability to plan, execute and evaluate their own learning processes without any external support. Furthermore, andragogy proposes that adults are self-motivated, ready, need to learn and are capable of incorporating their experiences in the learning process (A. Smith, 1998). It is not surprising, then, that andragogy advocates argue for more experiential types of training, based on real life tasks, unlike the more theoretical approaches that are popular in pedagogy (Pascual-Leone & Irwin, 1998). A typical adult such as an MP would

therefore, according to andragogy, be expected to be capable of self-directing his/her learning process.

Understandably, andragogy has been fiercely criticised by several adult education theorists (such as Husain, 2003; Pascual-Leone & Irwin, 1998) due to the inherent weaknesses in its principal assumptions. This includes assumptions that generalise the ability of adults such as MPs to self-direct their learning processes and to motivate themselves, as well as the flawed assumption proposing that all adults can ably apply experiences in their learning process. In reality, adults, including MPs, have varying personality and learning styles (Stone, 2005). It follows, therefore, that any training program that blindly applies assumptions that have been advanced in andragogy may prove to be fruitless.

The potential differences in the ability of adults to learn suggests that there may be a need to mix pedagogical and andragogical approaches when designing training programs for MPs (Pascual-Leone & Irwin, 1998). In fact, even Knowles (1973), the pioneer of andragogy, admitted later that pedagogy and andragogy should not be separated when training adults. As Merriam (2001, p. 8) argues, adult education and training may work more effectively if designed as a continual learning process that ranges from ‘teacher-directed learning to student-directed learning’. For instance, while a certain level of self-directedness (as per andragogy) may be crucial in training MPs, the presence of a trainer in the form of a facilitator may equally be crucial to guide them through the process of learning (A. Smith, 1998). The appreciation for the need to combine elements from various theories of training gave rise to the more recent theories of adult training. These are discussed below, as they are the theories that have been used to inform this study.

2.6.2.1 Post-Andragogy Humanism

A number of humanism adult learning theorists have attempted to improve on Knowles' conception of andragogy. For instance, Carl Rogers approached adult learning as an active process where adults are challenged to develop curiosity, be inquisitive and question everything on the assumption that everything is subject to change (Burns, 2002). He particularly emphasized cognitive and experiential types of learning, which, in his opinion, allowed an opportunity for an adult learner such as an MP to, among other things, 'learn how to learn'.

Similarly, Mezirow (1990) emphasized the concept of transformative learning, which basically explains the way adults learn. Adopting this approach to learning, Delahaye (2000, p. 28), points out that an adult learner is able to examine 'frames of reference' such as values and beliefs that dictate the way people act. Transformation (or in this case learning) takes place when an adult learner unlearns or changes frames of reference that are not congruent with validated ones. Ideally, in transformative learning, critical reflection is used to question and/or revise assumptions that are generally presumed to be common sense (Husain, 2003). While both the Rogers and Mezirow theories provide some advance from andragogy, the application of their theories to MPs may be limited. This is because they do not adequately explain how an adult can learn how to learn and start being critical. Furthermore, the theories maintain the flawed assumptions from andragogy that generalises abilities of all adults to learn largely independently. The two theories tend to provide outcomes of learning rather than processes that can be followed to help adults learn. It is against this background that this study adopts Dewey's humanistic theory of adult learning (Dewey, 1933), which is discussed next.

John Dewey's theory of adult learning is credited with revolutionising the world of adult learning, as understood by Knowles' theory of andragogy (Burns, 2002). In particular Dewey argued for a theory in which an adult learner is guided by the trainer, who assumes the role of facilitator in order to ensure that an adult learns by firstly formulating a problem before coming up with a hypothesis backed with practical evidence (Burns, 2002). Dewey's view on adult learning is backed by Hossain (2004), who humorously argues in his training manual for training Bangladesh MPs that, since adults such as MPs are more than 'tall children', they should be trained with the understanding that, unlike children, they possess differing attributes. These include differences in experiences, values, attitudes, motivation, interests, personalities and learning histories. The core idea here is that MPs need to be active rather than passive during learning periods.

Importantly, Dewey (1933, p. 229) considers training of adults as a process that ought to develop their 'curiosity and susceptibility'. Dewey further argues that in order to trigger curiosity in adults, abstract ideas must be aligned to concrete ones. Dewey defines concrete learning as a means towards a specific end (understanding). Conversely, abstract learning does not lead to an end but triggers in adults the acquisition of KSAs through the development of inquiry and speculation. According to Dewey (1933), this type of learning provides KSAs to adults without disregarding what they already know. One can clearly see similarities in learning/training processes as advanced by Dewey with that suggested by Hossain (2004) in his training manual for Bangladesh Parliament mentioned earlier. It should be noted, however, that Dewey regarded experiences and freedom as necessary conditions for best learning (Burns, 2002). This is because, while past experiences can effectively be used to solve future problems, adult learners need to be in a position where they can freely decide on

the best way to solve the problem at hand. In other words, learning may not be productive under authoritarian social arrangements where freedom of expression is suppressed.

Following Dewey's logic, acquired KSAs, particularly those that can allow MPs to solve problems, should ultimately enable them to become the source of social transformation. Indeed, using Burns' (2002) interpretation of Dewey's theory, if MPs can acquire relevant KSAs to solve problems, they can potentially help to transform both societies and cultures at large. According to Dewey, problem-solving KSAs not only improve the performance of the adult learner but also the society/organisations they work in. It is this view of training that prompted Norton (2000), and thereafter Hughes and Gosarevski (2004), to suggest that perceived weaknesses in parliaments can be effectively addressed, given proper training of MPs.

Dewey's version of adult training is consistent with the principles theory of training transfer design (Hughes & Gosarevski, 2004). The principles theory advocates a training design that focuses on the transfer of KSAs that can assist a learner to solve problems in diverse environments (Hughes & Gosarevski, 2004). Considered 'a far transfer training design' (Yamhill & McLean, 2001), the principles theory proposes that adult learners, such as MPs who have been exposed to training programs focusing on general principles and concepts that underlie their roles, are more likely to replicate their acquired KSAs when faced with new challenges and unfamiliar problems in the future than those who have been exposed to task-specific training designs. Following this argument, Pacific MPs exposed to Dewey's form of training could acquire KSAs that facilitate further inquiry, and as a result may grasp the art of making speedy and informed policy decisions, thereby improving the output of their

parliaments. This ability to face various problems is crucial to MPs, as improvements in technology have increasingly raised public expectations of parliaments (Orton, et al., 2000).

In sum, Dewey's humanism theory of training (learning) has helped to inform the second research question of this study:

- (ii) *How do existing training programs in case study Pacific parliaments affect the performance of MPs?*

2.6.2.2 Training and Parliamentary Performance: The HRD Perspective

Before examining the link between training of MPs and parliamentary performance, it is important to clarify how the HRD theories that originate from profit-oriented and hierarchically structured organisations (Hedlund & Freeman, 1981; Hirsch & Wagner, 1993) could be applied to parliamentary careers. As explained in Chapter One, parliamentary careers have features, such as elections as a recruitment tool for potential MPs, which distinguish them from careers in other organisations. These HRD issues are addressed below.

Firstly, HRD assumes that the transfer of KSAs during training is enhanced by the education levels of trainees (Abbott, 1998; Brunnelo & Nedio, 2001). Given this fact, organisations tend to purposively recruit employees with the minimum required experience and expertise that match a particular job. However, it is not so with parliamentary careers because democratic principles, governing nearly every parliament around the world, do not consider education levels to be a formal criterion for eligibility of candidature.

Lewis (2011, pp. 11-13) describes the way MPs' careers can be distinguished from other occupations and professions. These include the fact that unlike other occupations/professions, MPs i) work under a sovereign institution responsible for formulating laws and policies for a particular country, ii) have to be pre-selected by political parties, often faction-led, prior to being subjected to the popular vote, particularly in countries with a party system, iii) face uncertainty surrounding the longevity of their political careers which depend on successful re-election bids that are usually a function of factors other than individual performance, iv) face the absence of clarity and preparedness as far as their roles are concerned, as they do not have a well-defined job description for their duties, and v) often get promoted based on connections within a political party and coalition groups rather than based on their individual performance.

Nonetheless, this reality does not, at least at this stage, discount the applicability of HRD to MPs since parliamentary careers are mostly skill-based rather than knowledge-based (Lam, 2011). Indeed, HRD practices such as training that make use of vocational training techniques could be used to equip MPs with KSAs that enable them to more effectively and efficiently perform their duties, regardless of their stage of education or career development (Holton, 1996; Lewis, 2011). Findings from a recent study of the Ugandan parliament indicating zero correlation between education qualification of MPs and their performance in parliament (Alabi, 2009) are consistent with this line of argument.

Another issue that arises is that, unlike other organisations, parliaments are said to lack hierarchical control. As a result, MPs are not bound to adhere to HRD practices such as training in the way that employees elsewhere normally are (Allan, 2006). However, this claim is debatable because, in reality, the conduct of MPs is 'controlled' at two levels. The first

involves political parties, which provide MPs with the political ticket to stand for a parliamentary seat, as Lewis (2011) puts it. Parties ensure that MPs conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with their goals. In return, MPs are expected to adhere to party lines and, indeed, in most cases need to do so for their political survival. Since one of the goals of any political party is to win and retain as many parliamentary seats as possible, good performance of incumbent MPs is critical. As the performance of MPs can be improved by exposing them to effective training programs, parties may potentially enforce the participation of MPs in training programs. It follows that, just as executives in other organisations can ensure full participation of their employees in HRD practices, political parties could play the same role in relation to providing hierarchical control to MPs. Therefore, HRD practices, in this case training that strategically targets political parties' involvement, could pave the way for the successful application of HRD in parliaments, in a similar manner to executives in other organisations. This approach is strongly recommended by Kunnath (2011) and Fox and Korris (2011) when describing training models in the South African and the UK parliaments.

The second level of 'control over MPs' involves the electorate. This is particularly the case for MPs who want to be re-elected. The onus in this case is on the MPs to not only perform effectively but to be seen to be doing so by their voters, if they want to be re-elected. It is in the best interests of MPs, and by extension the political parties they represent, to ensure that whenever possible they engage in HRD practices such as training so they can update and improve their parliamentary KSAs. Thus, indirectly, just like employees in other organisations, MPs need to acquire KSAs to 'impress their bosses', in this case political parties and/or voters, and one of the ways to do this is by engaging in training.

Importantly, effective training can potentially improve performance of both the MPs and their parliaments. Indeed, the literature in the HRD field (e.g. Holland & De Cieri, 2006; Kramar et al., 2011; Tharenou, Saks, et al., 2007; Wright, Gardner, Moynihan, & Allen, 2005) strongly suggests the existence of a possible link between improved performance of MPs and parliamentary performance. Specifically, Human Capital Theory (HCT) in the HRD field contends that organisations can create, maintain and retain human capital (HC) by exposing their workforce to relevant training programs, thereby improving the performance of the workforce and that of the organisations in which they work (Holland & De Cieri, 2006; Kramar, et al., 2011). HCT suggests that exposing MPs to effective training programs can (i) ‘create’ or equip MPs with relevant KSAs, (ii) ‘maintain’ KSAs acquired by MPs by constantly updating training programs to reflect the latest and most relevant KSAs, and (iii) help to ‘retain’ or improve re-election chances of MPs following improved performance of MPs as a result of the possession of KSAs that enable them to more effectively and efficiently perform their roles.

One should note the subtle difference between the terms human resource (HR) and human capital (HC). According Orton, Marcella and Baxter (2000), while all the members of the workforce can collectively be referred to as human resources, only the workforce with quality KSAs qualify as HC. This fact is further emphasized by Kramar et al. (2011), who define HC as the list of KSAs and other relevant human characteristics that an individual must have in order to perform a particular job. Hossain (2004) expands this definition by arguing that HC is constituted by KSAs embodied in individuals (including MPs) that can enhance the performance of a particular organisation. He further points out that HC is formed by exposing individuals to relevant training programs. In building the training model for Bangladesh’s

parliament, Hossain (2004) argues that even MPs can be transformed into HC if they are equipped with KSAs that are relevant to the roles they ought to perform.

The logic behind HCT suggests that MPs who have been transformed into HC will perform at a vastly improved level, which in turn can potentially improve the performance of the parliament in which they serve (as implied by scholars e.g. Holland & De Cieri, 2006; Kramar, et al., 2011; Tharenou, Saks, et al., 2007; Wright, et al., 2005). This view is strongly supported by the World Bank Institute's 2003 study (Stapenhurst, 2004), which reported an improved parliamentary performance in Ghana following a successful training program targeting Ghanaian MPs. A similar view is held by several organisations involved in the capacity building of parliaments, such as the IPU and AusAID (Beahan, et al., 2010; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2009). The HCT proposition, that training at the individual level may result in improved organizational performance, informs the third and last research question:

- (iii) *Do existing training programs affect the performance of case study Pacific parliaments?*

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the literature that informs this thesis by examining the four traditional roles of MPs, various evaluation methods and, importantly, theories of adult education and training and HRD. It demonstrated that, while there are several factors that affect the performance of parliaments, technical capacity of MPs is a main factor that affects parliamentary performance. This is because MPs hold the central position in the operation of parliaments (Kunnath, 2011). This contention was found to be in line with both the theories

of adult education and training and HRD, which provide for the link between training and improved individual and organisational performance.

The emphasis in this chapter on investigating performance originates from the fact that training-led performance can be measured (Yamnill & McLean, 2001). This position is in line with the work by Holton (1996) who proposes two outcomes of training: individual and organisational performance. Specifically, training under this logic is expected to result in improved performance of MPs and that improvement is anticipated to be reflected on parliamentary performance.

In the next chapter, the methods used to answer the research questions raised in this thesis are discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology

3.0 Overview

This chapter provides a detailed discussion on available research methodologies and the criteria for choosing the research method and design adopted in this study. It also provides a discussion on how the analysis of collected data is used to answer the research questions of this thesis. Finally, the quality of the data used in this thesis and ethical issues considered in conducting the study are outlined.

3.1 Review of Methodologies

Literature on research methods (such as Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Hakim, 1987) point out that there are three broad types of research methods. These are the qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methods.

Qualitative research focuses on exploratory studies with particular interest in ‘individuals own accounts of their attitudes, motivation and behaviours’ (Hakim, 1987, p. 26). These types of research methods generally provide descriptive outcomes. Examples include issues pertaining to individuals’ perceptions, beliefs, views, feelings, attitudes as well as individual meaning attached to events. It follows that such outcomes are normally captured by the ‘how’, ‘why’ and ‘what’ kind of questions (Yin, 2009).

According to Creswell (2003) strategies of inquiry that are commonly used to execute qualitative research methods include ethnographies, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research and narrative research. Generally, these strategies of inquiry seek to understand social, historical and cultural aspects based on multiple experiences shared by individuals. Such inquiries aim at exploring scenarios, constructing theories or simply narrating specific phenomena. Ultimately, qualitative research gathers open-ended and emerging data by making use of interviews, field observations and archival materials with a view to generating themes from them (Creswell, 2003).

Quantitative research methods focus on scientific research that seeks to cultivate knowledge by examining cause and effect through the use of hypotheses to measure observations and theories or to reduce specific variables (Creswell, 2003). Quantitative methods seek to answer numerical questions such as how many, how often, and how much and the existence of relationships between elements in an event (Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005; Yin, 2009). It follows that quantitative research makes use of strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys

which typically provide statistical data (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2009). Note that, unlike qualitative methods, where data can be gathered on an open-ended basis, the collection of statistical data in quantitative methods is done using predetermined instruments (surveys). Depending on the type of research, this may prove to be the main handicap of quantitative research methods because predetermined instruments tend to ignore variables that may emerge in the data collection stage.

Finally, the mixed method approach involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative data in order to provide an extensive analysis of a research problem or broadening the understanding of findings from one method using another (Creswell, 2003). The numeric data (quantitative) and text information can be sequentially or concurrently gathered. For instance, a research study using this method could start by either employing a survey so as to generalise outcomes before strengthening the findings by details gathered from interviews, or otherwise it could start by exploring a phenomenon using interviews before formulating survey instruments to be deployed in a subsequent quantitative research study.

This thesis has adopted a qualitative research method. This decision is consistent with the work by Hakim (1987), who argues that qualitative research should initially be used for exploratory purposes before conducting quantitative research studies, which are usually more structured. The same technique has been used by highly respected case study researchers such as Eisenhardt (1991) and Yin (Yin, 2009).

3.1.1 Selecting a Research Method

Yin (2009, p. 8) provides comprehensive criteria that can be used to select research methods appropriate for research studies. He specifically suggests three criteria a researcher should follow in order to come up with an appropriate research method: (i) the type of research question to be asked during investigation; (ii) the currency of the event to be investigated; and (iii) the degree of control the researcher has over the behaviour of the investigated events. He further proposes that the three criteria would invariably result in five types of research inquiry strategies: experiment, survey, archival analysis, history and case study research designs.

Accordingly, the first condition, which looks at types of research questions asked during an investigation, categorises research questions into familiar one-worded questions such as what, who, how, where and why (Yin, 2009). Under this criterion, such questions, intended to collect either exploratory or explanatory data, suggest the need to employ qualitative research methods. On the other hand, questions such as how many, and how much, are intended to capture the frequency of occurrence or causality of events, suggesting the need to employ quantitative research methods.

The second selection criterion to determine an appropriate research method focuses on the currency of the event to be investigated. Under this criterion, qualitative research methods can be used to investigate events which are either contemporary or otherwise. On the other hand, quantitative research methods focus only on contemporary events. For instance, if a researcher investigates an event which is not contemporary, then either archival analysis or history research strategies is required. Note that both of these methods are qualitative in nature. However, if the focus is on contemporary events, then experiment, survey, archival analysis or case study research strategies can be used. It can be observed that, out of all the

five research designs discussed above, only archival analysis can be used when the researcher's focus is both on current and past events.

The third and final selection criterion to determine an appropriate research method as provided by Yin relies on the degree of control the researcher has over the behaviour of the investigated event. For instance, when the researcher has control over investigated events, the appropriate research strategy should involve quantitative research methods, particularly experiments. However, if the researcher has no control over the event simply because it involves past events that may easily be forgotten by individuals participating in the research, the appropriate research method should involve qualitative research methods such as history or archival analysis. Yet if the researcher is interested in a current and accessible event without necessarily having control over the behavioural side of the investigated event, the appropriate research strategy could be the case study method. Note that the case study method can employ quantitative data, qualitative data or both (Yin, 2009).

It follows from the above discussion and the research questions that have been raised in this research study, this thesis will use a case study research method, particularly the multiple case study approach. The design will make use of qualitative evidence, as suggested by Yin (2009). Note, on the other hand, that due to factors beyond the control of the author, quantitative data (survey) could not be collected and therefore it was decided to abandon the initial idea of applying a mixed method design to this research. This decision was made due to the failure of intended participants to respond by completing and returning survey questionnaires even after more than a year of continuous follow-ups through personal emails and personal phone calls. Various training providers informally confirmed how difficult, if not impossible, it was to have MPs and parliamentary staff from the region complete surveys.

Consequently, qualitative data sources such as interviews and documentary analysis are the main source of data, as also reported by parliamentary researchers interested in Pacific parliaments for the better part of the last decade (Campbell, 1994, 2005; Care, 1997; Larmour, 2000, 2006; Meleisea, 2005; Morgan, 2002a, 2008). This thesis follows that tradition.

3.2 Justification for the Methodology

The multiple case study method has been selected as it provides one of the best techniques to explain, in detail, a particular social phenomenon (Hakim, 1987). This is because the present study intends to answer both descriptive and exploratory questions that pertain to how training relates to improved performance of MPs and parliaments in the Pacific region. Since this study seeks to provide an in-depth explanation on this contemporary relationship, in which there is no control on the behaviour of the event, the best possible research strategy is the case study method (Yin, 2009). This decision is consistent with the literature on research methods (by researchers such as Voss, Tsiriktsis, & Frohlich, 2002; Yin, 2009), who recommend that when a study seeks to answer the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ kind of questions, with an intention to either explain or explore fully a given phenomenon, a case study research strategy may have to be employed. A multiple case study design is but a variant of a single case study design (Yin, 2009).

Another advantage associated with using a multiple case study design is that it can be used to replicate the logic found in a series of cases that are treated in a similar way to series of experiments (Eisenhardt, 1989b; Yin, 2009). In this respect, each case is used to either ‘confirm or disconfirm inferences’ drawn from others (Eisenhardt, 1989b, p. 545). In other

words, the use of more than one case in a study produces more convincing outcomes, particularly when the aim of the study is to either test or generate theories (Eisenhardt, 1989a). As this study makes use of five cases (Pacific parliaments) to answer its questions, its findings may lead to better design and delivery of training programs that are more effective for members of those parliaments.

Finally, one of the strengths of a case study design is that it can employ multiple sources of data and techniques. Specifically, this study utilises multiple sources of data that have been gathered from interviews, documents and archival records to answer the research questions. The process of making use of data from multiple sources is known as triangulation (Yin, 2009). In essence, triangulation helps research studies draw conclusions based on a pooled analysis from various sources of data (De Weerd-Nederhof, 2001; Yin, 2009). The simultaneous analyses of data from various sources helps in determining results convergences or divergences, a very important factor in assessing internal validity of data (De Weerd-Nederhof, 2001). In turn, internal validity provides for a stronger case for generalising study outcomes (Eisenhardt, 1989a).

3.3 Case Study Design

Case studies are designed to provide in-depth understanding of a specific event, activity, process or, at times, individuals (Creswell, 2003). Indeed, case study designs are meant to capture ‘the dynamics that are present in single settings’ (Eisenhardt, 1989a, p. 534). They arguably provide the most flexible research design a researcher can utilise (Hakim, 1987). This is because case study design allows for the use of multiple data collection methods,

thereby providing for a more holistic approach to researching than any other design (Hakim, 1987).

Having established that the multiple case study technique is the preferred research method in this thesis, the next step is to design the technique itself. According to Yin (2009), a case study design ought to outline whether a researcher uses single or multiple case research technique, how the cases were selected, how interviewees were chosen, how questions posed in the case study are expected to be answered, and finally how to analyse the collected data. These issues were considered in this thesis and are addressed in the following sub-sections.

3.3.1 Single versus Multiple Case Design

Yin (2009) proposes that under all circumstances, multiple case studies provide for better design than single case studies. While he does not stipulate the optimum number of cases that researchers should aim for, Yin is convinced that even a two-case study design is better than a single one. The superiority of multiple case studies over single ones is based on analytical advantages that multiple case studies are associated with. These can be explained in two ways (Yin, 2009). Firstly, multiple case studies allow for replication of findings in the presence of similar patterns among several cases. This in turn serves to strengthen the findings derived in individual cases. Secondly, theoretical replications may also be drawn from cases with contrasting features, particularly when the purpose of the study is to prove the hypothesized contrast (Yin, 2009). The point here is that, however you look at case studies, multiple case studies tend to produce superior outcomes compared to single case studies. As Hakim (1987) rightly suggests, this is in particular true since multiple case study designs provide an

opportunity to compare findings across several cases, making them the stronger of the two design strategies.

Although there is no formally agreed optimal number of cases in a case study design, Eisenhardt (1989a) in her classic work, *Building Theories from Case Study Research*, proposes that a number between four and ten cases is ideal. This is because while cases fewer than four are deemed to be too few for a suitable generalisation of findings, cases more than ten are a recipe for generating complexities emanating from the difficulty in dealing with high volumes of data (Eisenhardt, 1989a). Voss et al. (2002) concur with this argument by pointing out that while more cases should always be preferred for replication purposes, one ought to use a few cases only to allow for in-depth investigation of a phenomenon, which is a core rationale for deploying case study designs. This thesis makes use of five case parliaments in its investigation, which is in line with the arguments presented directly above.

Finally, it should be pointed out that this project used a non-probability sampling technique, particularly purposive sampling, to select the five case parliaments. This decision is consistent with Voss et al.'s (2002) argument that, when dealing with case study designs, case selection should be based on replication logic as opposed to sampling logic, popularly used in other research methods and quantitative methods in particular. Subsequently, the purposive sampling technique was employed with a view to identifying possible patterns across cases.

3.3.2 Selection of Cases

This study consists of five parliaments from the Pacific Islands: the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Tonga, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu parliaments. The decision to select these particular parliaments was based on four main criteria, as shown in Table 3.1 below. Firstly, the five case parliaments were selected based on evidence that they have been exposed to a reasonable number of training programs. This criterion was important, since at the core of this thesis is a desire to investigate how training relates to performance of MPs and Pacific parliaments.

The second criterion used is the presence of political stability in the targeted countries. This was important particularly because the researcher needed to have safe access to these countries to interview MPs.

Thirdly, the decision to select the five parliaments considered constitutional systems of responsible government (Parliamentary, Executive) in these countries. This was necessary because, as argued in Chapter Two, political systems can affect the performance of parliaments. The choice of the parliaments was therefore influenced by the fact that their parliaments operate within diverse political systems. Specifically, while PNG, the Marshall Islands and Vanuatu adopt variants of the Westminster System of responsible government, Timor-Leste has adopted a variant of semi-presidential systems. Tonga, however, has a hereditary constitutional monarchy similar to a parliamentary system.

Table 3.1: Parliaments Studied

Country Name	Type of Regime	Type of Parliament	The Main Ethnic Group
Marshall Islands	Modified parliamentary system	Bicameral parliament	Micronesian
Papua New Guinea	Modified parliamentary	Unicameral	Melanesian

Lastly, the selection of these case parliaments took into account the inclusion of all ethnic groupings in the sample. In particular, the selection was done in such a way that case parliaments were drawn from the three main Pacific ethnic groupings of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia⁵. PNG and Vanuatu are Melanesian, the Marshall Islands is Micronesian and Tonga is Polynesian. The decision to include parliaments from all ethnic groupings in the region was based on the desire to investigate whether specific cultures in the region are relevant factors in training and its effectiveness.

Note that, although Timor-Leste does not form part of the conventional Pacific region, it shares features such as size of population and geographical area and economy. Furthermore, AUSAID treats it as a part of the Pacific region for administrative purposes. Accordingly it is included in the sample of the five parliaments.

⁵ See Appendix D for a complete list of Pacific countries and their salient characteristics.

3.3.3 Data Collection Techniques and Sources

According to Hakim (1987), case studies are usually conducted using at least two methods of data collection. Indeed, as explained previously, one of the advantages of deploying case study designs is that they provide researchers with an opportunity to draw data from multiple sources (Eisenhardt, 1989a; Hakim, 1987; Yin, 2009). Multiple data collection methods are used in this project. Dubbed as ‘triangulation’, the use of multiple sources of data allow researchers to corroborate findings from cases, thereby strengthening the outcomes (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, triangulation is associated with the enhancement of the validity of findings (Dooley, 2002). Specifically, this study used data from the following sources: (i) semi-structured interviews (conducted with three different groups of parliamentary stakeholders, consisting of case MPs, parliamentary Clerks and training providers); and (ii) documents and archival materials such as Hansard, training materials and other relevant materials. A more detailed discussion of sources of data is provided below.

3.3.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The principal source of data for this project is semi structured-interviews with case parliament MPs, Clerks and training providers. According to Yin (2009), interviews provide one of the most important sources of data in case studies. This is because most case studies seek to investigate human affairs or behavioural events, both of which can only be adequately provided through interviews (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, interviews are crucial, as usually interviewees point to other relevant sources of information not initially known to a researcher (Yin, 2009). Ultimately, as Barriball (1994) convincingly argues in his article on collecting

data using semi-structured interviews, interviews provide for one of the best techniques to explore complex phenomena such as attitudes, values, beliefs and motives. It is in this context that the present study employs semi-structured interviews as the primary strategy to collect qualitative data, which forms the principal source of the data of the study.

Semi-structured interviews have the advantage of enhancing reproducibility (Brugha, Bebbington, & Jenkins, 1999). Reproducibility entails the reliability and validity of interview responses (data), following standard coverage and structure of questions found in semi-structured interviews (Brugha, et al., 1999; Dearnley, 2005). Specifically, this present study employed semi-structured interviews that consisted of a combination of closed and open ended questions. These questions were devised in such a manner that they largely (but not exclusively) addressed specific, pre-determined mandatory topics. This practice is consistent with arguments that semi-structured interviews are semi-directive in the sense that they involve a list of pre-determined topics as a reference to be used by an interviewer to cover specific areas (Flick, 2006; Millwood & Heath, 2000). The originality of responses was ensured by the fact that responses captured in interviews were independently provided by interviewees, as they formulated their responses without receiving any kind of assistance from others (Barriball, 1994).

As suggested by researchers such as Huntington (1998), the interviews employed for the purposes of this study were not strictly confined to a fixed number of questions or a fixed ordering of questions to be asked, nor did they have a fixed time for discussion. They were conducted in such a way that they were flexible enough to allow interviewees to freely add or skip certain questions as they wished. While the structuring of questions was used to help provide reliability and validity of the data, the open-endedness of questions allowed for the

capture of additional themes that were not pre-conceived by the researcher prior to conducting the interviews (Dearnley, 2005).

While some of the actual questions in this thesis were typically descriptive, as suggested by Neumann (2000), most included general questions that allowed in-depth exploration of information about the impact training programs have on parliamentary careers in the Pacific region. In other words, the semi-structured interview, which consisted of an initial total number of 26 questions, was designed to elicit information about how training programs available in Pacific parliaments affected the performance of MPs and parliaments at large. Although interviews were designed to be as flexible as possible, questions were guided in such a manner that obvious omissions or digressions were avoided. Interviews were mostly conducted in English, except in few cases when an interpreter was needed. This was particularly the case when interviewing Portuguese and Tetum speaking Timorese MPs.

3.3.3.2 Documents and Archival Records

Documents and archival records provided secondary data, and included corporate plans of parliaments, profiles of parliaments, Hansards, training manuals and recent literature that addresses topics relating to parliamentary careers and training programs in Pacific parliaments. As suggested by Yin (2009), documents and archival materials are used to augment the primary information gathered through semi-structured interviews. Furthermore, this source of data was used in some cases to clarify responses gathered from the interviewees. A caution provided by researchers such as Hakim (1987) and Yin (2009) about the analysis of archival materials such as corporate plans of parliaments was taken into account when analysing data. This is because such documents are at times written for public

relations purposes and hence may end up providing information that does not reflect the actual situation in parliaments.

3.4 Case Study Protocol

Unlike in a laboratory where a researcher has full control of the environment and variables, social scientists do not possess such control, particularly when conducting qualitative research. The obvious challenge under such circumstances is how social science researchers can try to control their environment and variables, particularly when studies contain some level of qualitative data. Case studies in this present study provided a similar challenge. It is against this background that social science researchers (such as Flick, 2006; Yin, 2009) insist on the use of protocols while conducting qualitative research. Specifically, the case study protocol provides a road map to be followed in the processes of administering interviews. It contains not only interview questions but also procedures and a set of rules that guide the data collection process (Yin, 2009). In this particular research study, the case study protocol was crucial in guiding the researcher before and during data collection phase, as Yin (2009) suggests.

Yin (2009) stresses the importance of a case study protocol because it is one of the main ways to enhance reliability of the case study design, as it directs a researcher in the data collection phase. Yin (2009, p. 79) argues that, while it may not be necessary to use a case study protocol in a single case scenario, it is critical that it is used when conducting multi-case studies. The logic in this particular argument is that a case study protocol guides a researcher to conduct all interviews with much more consistency across cases. Consistency implies the ability of a researcher to try, as far as possible, to ask similar questions across all

sampled cases. Consequently, and consistent with Flick (2006), the case study protocol used in this thesis guided the researcher in: (i) ensuring that interview questions always reflected the main aim(s) of the present study; (ii) guaranteeing that redundant discussion and omission of questions were avoided during the interviews; and (iii) simplifying the process of documenting the context and the situation involving data collection such as those captured in nonverbal cues.

The case study protocol of the present study was developed with the help of interview questions⁶ developed by Coghill et al. (2010), who constitute the research team for a broader Australian Research Council Linkage Grant, entitled ‘Parliamentary Careers: Design, delivery and evaluation of improved professional development’. Following Yin’s (2009) suggestion, the protocol begins with descriptive questions, then moves to explore the opinions of interviewees on basic issues such as parliamentary roles, before introducing questions that reflect the complex inter-relationship between training, parliamentary careers and performance of MPs and parliaments in the Pacific region.

3.5 Case Sampling

In case studies, case sampling entails making a judgement about which individuals and sub-groups should be interviewed within cases and where these particular individuals should be drawn from (Flick, 2006). This study makes use of interview data from three main groups of individuals: MPs, Clerks of parliaments and parliamentary trainers. These groups of individuals were purposely selected from the five case parliaments and two principal training organisations, the Centre for Democratic Institutions and the United Nations Development

⁶ See Appendix C for a complete case study protocol.

Program (Centre for Democratic Institutions, 2011; United Nations Development Program, 2011). Specifically, a total 63 MPs, three Clerks and seven trainers were interviewed, as outlined in Table 3.2. Unfortunately, efforts to secure interviews with Clerks from the parliaments of PNG and Timor-Leste did not come to fruition, despite continual requests. That said, the choice of the above-mentioned interviewees is consistent with arguments that, in order to understand organisational attributes, it is the persons who work under these organisations who can best explain them (Flick, 2006; Hakim, 1987).

Table 3.2: Proportion of interviewed MPs and the main training organisations in case Parliaments

Country Name	Number of MPs Interviewed	Number of Clerks Interviewed	Total Number of MPs in the Lower House	The Main Organisations Providing Training
Marshall Islands	13	1	33	UNDP
Papua New Guinea	11	0	109	UNDP and CDI
Timor-Leste	13	0	65	UNDP and CDI
Tonga	11	1	26	UNDP
Vanuatu	15	1	52	UNDP and CDI

In particular, while the present case study investigates the relationship between training and improved performance of case parliaments, the researcher realises that it is the MPs, Clerks and trainers who are best placed to explain the link between the two variables. Probabilistic sampling techniques often used in quantitative research add no value in qualitative research such as the present one and therefore were not employed in the case sampling process. This is because case studies place more importance on understanding complex phenomena of interest than logical generalisation of findings that probabilistic sampling techniques usually seek to generate (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2009). It is in this context that the selection of case MPs and parliamentary trainers to be interviewed was purposively based on the ability of the interviewees to answer interview questions with a view to create an understanding as to how training relates to improved performance in case parliaments. Specifically, the semi-structured interviews were centred on finding whether training programs provided to case parliaments resulted in a significant and positive impact on the performance of these MPs and their parliaments. The interviews sought to find if there was common ground on which strategies could be devised to make parliamentary training in the region more effective.

3.6 Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected from interviews, documents and archival records were analysed in two stages. The first involved the use of the pattern-matching logic technique so as to explore patterns emerging in each sampled case parliament (Yin, 2009). The second stage entailed across-cases analysis, in which case patterns showing similarities and differences across case parliaments were revealed (Yin, 2009). This, as suggested earlier, serves to provide stronger conclusions and therefore enhance generalisability of conclusions drawn from the separate case analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989a; Voss, et al., 2002).

In the present study, the qualitative data were compared and contrasted and thereafter assimilated into categories believed to capture the impact of training on the performance of MPs and their parliaments. This was done by employing content analysis. In particular, content analysis is deployed in this study to answer Research Questions 1 through to 3 (What types of training programs for MPs exist in the case study Pacific parliaments? Do existing training programs in case study Pacific parliaments affect the performance of MPs? Do existing training programs affect the performance of case study parliaments?). This follows Flick's (2006) assertion that data drawn from semi-structured interviews ought to be dealt with using this technique. Basically, content analysis involves interrogation of data to suit frameworks and ideas that have been decided beforehand. In this thesis, the researcher firstly interrogated the data based on Pascual-Leone and Irwin's (1998) classification of training into six types: reality, authority, imitation, mediated and self-mediated and didactic training methods.

Secondly, and following Creswell's (2003) approach, content analysis was used to interrogate the collected data based on themes such as effectiveness of training in impacting performance of MPs and their case parliaments. Also, using Freeman's methodology (1983), performance was measured by the extent to which perceptions of MPs provided reliable and valid measures of MPs' performance and that of case parliaments, including reasons that contributed to such performance. The data were therefore analysed by carefully observing patterns that emanated from multi-case examination. Note, however, that, following Cooke (2008), emergent categories (themes) were also accommodated. This is because this thesis examines parliamentary training largely based on the perceptions of case MPs, and at times some of their responses were not fully captured in pre-defined parliamentary roles.

Furthermore, responses of case MPs on the perceived importance of parliamentary roles were ranked, following an approach by Millwood and Heath (2000). Ranking is important because it gives a better perspective on what case MPs consider to be their main responsibilities, a fact that helps in contextualising their perceptions of effectiveness of training on their performance. Ranking was conducted based on Hazell's (2001) list of traditional roles of MPs, which include representation, legislation, deliberation, scrutiny, budget setting, redress of grievances and making and breaking governments.

In particular, while executing content analysis, the researcher adopted eight basic steps in content analysis, as suggested by Creswell (2003). These steps, which were consistently followed during the data analysis phase of this research study, include: (i) obtaining overall understanding of responses by carefully going through all transcripts; (ii) choosing one document, and, while going through it, asking the question, 'What is this about?' so as to get the underlying meaning; (iii) repeating the process with other documents and starting to make a list of topics, eventually putting these topics into specific categories; (iv) applying the list of categories against the text in all documents and seeing whether new categories arose; (v) turning all descriptive wording of the topics into categories and trying to reduce the number of categories by collapsing closely related categories into a single category; (vi) finalising the coding (abbreviating) of each category and then arranging them in alphabetical order; (vii) collecting together data belonging to each category after initial analysis was completed; and (viii) re-coding the data when necessary.

Finally, this thesis conceptualised and measured training using an absolute measure, following Wright, Gardner and Allen (2005). An absolute measure of training is here defined

as the amount of training received by MPs as explained by the average number of training days available to MPs each year (Wright, et al., 2005).

3.7 Data Quality

Research quality has commonly been explained by the reliability and validity of the data (Flick, 2006; Neumann, 2000; Yin, 2009). While reliability suggests consistency, constancy or dependability of instruments, validity refers to correctness or truthfulness of measurements as compared to the real meaning of a phenomenon under investigation (Babbie, 2005; Neumann, 2000; Yin, 2009). Reliability of this research was firstly ensured by a series of pilot studies which were done at the broader project level as explained earlier (Coghill, et al., 2010). Furthermore, reliability was achieved through the use of the case study protocol. This is because a case study protocol demands that similar questions are answered by interviewees, which ultimately facilitates comparability of responses across all respondents (Barriball, 1994; Yin, 2009). Moreover, following Freeman (1983), the reliability of the data is also determined by the high level of convergence in perception among MPs, particularly on performance measures. Finally, the adoption of data collection and analysis techniques from reputable journal articles and books helped also in establishing the reliability of this research study (Eisenhardt, 1989a, 1989b, 1991; Eisenhardt & Bourgeois III, 1988; Yin, 2009).

Validity was achieved in various ways. Firstly, validity (construct) was ensured through the process of triangulation, discussed above (Yin, 2009). This is achieved by comparing perceptions of MPs, parliamentary Clerks and training providers with analysis of results from other sources such as documents and archival materials (Freeman, 1983). Secondly, the ability of the researcher to compare verbal and nonverbal cues during interviews strengthened

the validity (construct) of the research study (Barriball, 1994). Generalisation of findings as a result of the replication logic discussed above also ensured the validity (external) of the research study (Yin, 2009). Indeed according to Voss et al. (2002), cross-case analysis is vital for enhancing generalisability of conclusions drawn from each separate case analysis. Finally, the use of semi-structured interviews strengthened the validity of this research study. Indeed, according to Hakim (1987, p. 27), if interviewees are interviewed in detail, the combined information that they give can be taken as ‘true, correct, complete and believable’.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The fact that social research involves a certain level of intrusion into the privacy of individuals and organisations (Babbie, 2005) creates the need to address ethical considerations prior to conducting research. The methodology of this study was approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) before the data collection process begun.

In accordance with MUHREC protocols, all participants in the interviews were provided with two documents: the explanatory statement provided an outline of the aims and objectives of the project; and the informed consent form had to be signed by participants to express their voluntary willingness to participate in the study.

3.9 Summary

This chapter has explained the research methods and design of the thesis used to answer the research questions. The chapter began by reviewing available research methodologies before selecting and justifying the employment of multiple case study method. The chapter then delineated data collection techniques and data sources and data analysis, as well as data quality. Finally, the ethical considerations of the study were explained. The discussion in this chapter paves a way for the dissemination of research findings.

However, in order to provide the contextual understanding of research findings, the next chapter constitutes a thorough discussion of the origins, as well as the past and present state, of Pacific region parliaments, including the five case parliaments.

CHAPTER FOUR: Regional and Case Parliaments: An Overview

4.0 Overview

The previous three chapters outline the background, theoretical framework and the methodology, explaining how the research questions of this thesis are answered. Before presenting findings from the five case parliaments, this chapter provides an overview of parliamentary democracy in the Pacific region, particularly in case parliaments. In doing so, it provides a bridge between the first three chapters of the thesis and the study's findings. The chapter starts with a general outline of historical origins of parliamentary institutions in the

Pacific region. This is then followed by a discussion on the influence of colonial powers on current parliamentary systems in the Pacific region. Thereafter, general challenges affecting Pacific parliaments are discussed, before presenting a country by country account of parliamentary democracy in case parliaments. The latter provides a more detailed discussion on the unique features found in each sampled parliament.

4.1 Historical Origins of the Parliamentary Institution in the Pacific Region

The Pacific region⁷ generally consists of countries which are small both in size and population and have a heavy dependence on foreign aid (Bartlett & Rodgers, 2004; Meller, 1990). Bartlett and Rogers (2004) classify Pacific countries into three main groups based on their cultural and linguistic affinity:⁸ Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia. Micronesia, which means small islands, comprises the Republic of Marshall Islands among other countries in the sub-region. Of the Micronesian countries, only Nauru and Kiribati were not formally administered by the United States of America (US). Micronesian countries usually have a mixture of either Melanesian or Polynesian cultures. It is in this context that the Pacific region is usually divided into two major cultural groups, Melanesian and Polynesian (Anghie, 1993).

Prior to colonial occupation of the Pacific region, there were several forms of governance. In particular, 'chiefly' systems were embraced throughout the region, albeit with different styles (Meller, 1997). Indeed, according to Larmour (2000), pre-colonial Polynesian societies

⁷ As explained in Chapter One, the Pacific region for the purposes of this thesis excludes Australia and New Zealand.

⁸ See Appendix D for a complete list of cultural grouping of Pacific parliaments.

embraced hierarchical chiefly systems, where chiefs were treated with reverence and were the absolute central authority in the society. For example, only people with *matai* (chiefly) titles had the right to lead in pre-colonial Samoan societies. Ironically, even in the post-colonial era, the Samoan constitution allows for only two parliamentary candidates who do not hold the *matai* (hereditary) title (Cahn, 2008). It can be argued that, with central powers vested in chiefs, Polynesian societies exhibited characteristics that are closer to those found in presidential systems (presidentialism) of responsible governance, where presidents possess executive powers and largely operate independent of parliaments. However, despite Polynesia's cultural resemblance to presidentialism, Samoa, as discussed later, adopted a parliamentary system from its New Zealand colonial master.

In stark contrast to Polynesian societies, chiefly systems in Melanesian societies were more egalitarian. All major decisions were reached through consultation and consensus with the broader community (Larmour, 2000). Furthermore, loyalty in these societies was solely entrenched within ethno-linguistic groups and kin-related groups (Dinnen, 2002). It is this traditional way of social dealings which would later breed problems in the post-colonial Melanesian countries simply because people in Melanesia could not fathom inter-cultural relations, let alone the notion of being citizens of a country. Indeed, according to Banks et al. (2010), such narrow cultural bonds within societies in Melanesia were at the core of the post-colonial Bougainville insurgencies in PNG in 1989 and the violent ethnic disputes between communities in the neighbouring islands of Guadalcanal and Malaita in the Solomon Islands in 1997. Nevertheless, the culturally egalitarian Melanesian societies exhibited a system that is closer to the parliamentary system of responsible government.

The chapter now outlines the influence of colonial powers on current parliamentary systems in the Pacific region. This exercise is important as it helps in understanding some of the lingering misconceptions (by political researchers in the region such as Boege, et al., 2008; O'Brien, 2011; Richardson, 2009) about the presence of clashes between traditional and modern systems of responsible government.

4.2 The Influence of Colonial Powers on Current Parliamentary Systems in the Pacific Region

Despite being colonised by different countries, the majority of the countries in the Pacific region adopted a political system closely related to the Westminster system of responsible government, albeit with some local variation (Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). Even Tonga, the last standing constitutional monarchy in the Pacific region and the only Pacific country to have never been formally colonised, largely operates under principles of the separation of powers heavily borrowed from the Westminster system of responsible government. Timor-Leste, another country that is included in the sample of the study, adopted the semi-presidential system following its former coloniser, Portugal (Monge, 2006).

Colonial or modern systems of governance were mainly introduced in the Pacific region during or after colonial occupation. However, Richardson (2009) points out that most of the time modern political systems were imposed on Pacific countries without proper integration with pre-existing traditional systems. This supposedly incompatible coexistence of traditional and modern systems of governance predictably forms one of the key areas of contention in the post-colonial Pacific region politics, as is demonstrated later. Nevertheless, all Pacific

countries save the two Micronesian countries of Kiribati and the Republic of the Marshall Islands adopted governance systems from their colonisers. Indeed, while the Marshall Islands, which is the only Pacific country with a bicameral parliament, adopted the parliamentary system instead of presidentialism from its coloniser, the US (Morgan & Hegarty, 2003), Kiribati adopted presidentialism despite having been colonised by Britain, which follows a parliamentary system (Alabi, 2009). However, given the dismal parliamentary performance that is similar to their Pacific counterparts, neither the Marshall Islands nor Kiribati can claim to have benefited from their bold move. Indeed, according to Larmour (2000), both countries have been found to be lacking when it comes to effective governance.

As noted in Chapter One, ineffective governance is a challenge that is shared across all Pacific countries and it can be traced from the weak performance of parliaments in the region (Larmour & Barcham, 2006; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005b; Morgan & Hegarty, 2003; Standish, 2007). The most celebrated, albeit not scientifically proven, explanation that has been provided by political commentators (such as Boege, et al., 2008; Care, 1997; Larmour, 2000; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Menzies, 2007; Richardson, 2009) for the relatively weak parliamentary performance in the Pacific region is that tradition and customs in the area do not fit with modern systems of governance. While this argument cannot be totally dismissed, it is misleading to assume that the perceived weaknesses in parliaments of the Pacific region are solely an outcome of hybrid institutions, as Menzies (2007) and others imply.

According to Hughes (2003), the perceived clash between traditional and modern systems, and other familiar excuses, such as complaints about the smallness of the countries and

dispersion of population, are perpetuated to serve the interests of a few in the region (mainly corrupt politicians and international donor agencies working there). Indeed, success elsewhere in the world in countries with similar characteristics to those found in the Pacific region calls into question these widely-held myths. For instance, according to Hughes (2003), Botswana, a country which historically has had strong traditional tribal communities and whose Per capita Gross Domestic Product (PGDP) in 1970 was half that of PNG, currently boasts a PGDP three times that of PNG which has embraced a variant of the Westminster system. Similarly, Mauritius, a country with an ethnic composition similar to Fiji's, experienced a growth of its PGDP from half that of Fiji to three times greater after having strengthened parliamentary principles of effective governance.

As for the argument of smallness in population size, PNG has more than three times the people compared to Botswana and Mauritius, both of which enjoy better political, social and economic standards (Banks, et al., 2010). This difference is again attributed to prudent and effective governance practices in the latter countries (Hughes, 2003). It is not surprising then that Meleisea (2005) argues that the issue is not whether traditional and modern principles of effective governance can coexist in the region but rather the willingness and ability of political players to diligently undertake their roles. Consequently, while willingness is not the easiest thing to achieve, enabling political players to effectively perform their duties is a challenge that is achievable, especially if sustainable and effective training programs are given to new MPs in the region.

The point that has to be reiterated here is that the general ability of Pacific MPs to ably perform their duties leaves much to be desired. According to Morgan (2005a), the main reason parliaments in the Pacific region underperform is because their respective MPs have

not acquired the capabilities for their highly demanding tasks. Mellor and Jabes (2004) argue that the parliaments lack not only meaningful oversight capabilities but also policy development skills. One way to appreciate the inability of parliamentarians in the region to effectively perform their duties can be explained in part by the high turnover of MPs. Dinnen (2002), for instance, reports that, having been frustrated by ineffective governance in the Solomon Islands that resulted from ineffective MP performance, electors voted out more than 50% of MPs in the 1997 election. By implication, it could be argued that enabling MPs in the region to ably perform their roles and responsibilities may well serve to help them win elections and potentially have longer careers in parliaments. As discussed in Chapter One, the longer the careers of MPs the better the likelihood that parliaments will establish institutional memory. It follows, therefore, that the outcome of training programs can potentially be beneficial to both parliaments as institutions and to MPs. To this end, the next section discusses general issues that commonly affect the performance of Pacific parliaments.

4.3 General Challenges Affecting Pacific Parliaments

Notwithstanding the fact that Pacific islands differ greatly in their colonial history, constitutional make-up, political system and size, they share common obstacles as far as performance of MPs and parliaments are concerned. For instance Morgan and Hegarty (2003) contend that generally the parliaments play a subordinate role to the executive. This hinders them from executing their oversight role. Additionally, Morgan (2005b) points out that often numerical advantage has been used by executive governments to suspend standing orders to their advantage. While, to be fair to Pacific parliaments, the same practices seem to occur in parliaments elsewhere in the developed world, it does not change the fact that such practices defeat the core principles inherent in parliamentary democracies. For instance, due to numerical advantage in parliaments, the amount of time needed to scrutinise bills in Pacific

parliaments is often reduced so as to ensure quick passage of legislation. It is not surprising then that oversight offices, such as the Ombudsman and Auditor-General, and parliamentary oversight mechanisms, such as standing committees, are mostly inconspicuous in the region, and when they do exist they get very little if any support and cooperation from ministers (Morgan, 2005b).

Importantly, the legislative role of Pacific parliaments is weakened by the inability of MPs to understand bills tabled before the parliament, as well as drafting and amending bills (Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). This is an urgent situation as parliaments need effective parliamentarians for them to also be effective. This assertion is strongly supported by the former Speaker and Prime Minister of Vanuatu, Hon. Edward Nipake Natapei, who was quoted as saying that ‘the effectiveness of parliament depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of its members’ (Morgan, 2001, p. 2).

Moreover, in most cases Pacific parliaments are either understaffed or under-skilled or both (Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). This results in a situation where MPs receive weak support from parliamentary officers, thereby worsening the situation. This situation provides the basis for the argument in this thesis that MPs in the region need to be trained so as to equip them with KSAs that will enable them to perform better their roles and responsibilities.

As argued earlier, Pacific countries and indeed parliaments differ significantly in various areas. It is therefore necessary to discuss them separately in order to understand the unique features of each country. The following section provides a country by country account of case parliaments.

4.4 Parliamentary Democracy in Case Parliaments

Since the pre-colonial governance systems in the region have already been discussed, this section will focus on events during the colonial and postcolonial era. Importantly, the discussion will raise the unique challenges facing each and every case parliament and highlight the impact of tradition and colonial legacy on the postcolonial Pacific way of governance. The case parliaments are dealt with alphabetically: the Marshall Islands; Papua New Guinea; Timor-Leste; Tonga; and Vanuatu.

4.4.1 The Parliament of the Republic of Marshall Islands

The Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) has an interesting colonial history that stretches from 1889, when the RMI was purchased by the Germans from the Spanish (Chutaro & Heine, 2003), to its seizure by the Japanese during World War I, and thereafter becoming a part of trust territories under the US in 1947, following World War II (Friberg, Schaefer, & Holent, 2006). Eventually the RMI drafted its own constitution which came into effect in 1979, having removed itself from the Congress of Micronesia of which it had been a member since 1965 (Banks, et al., 2010).

Having been ignored for several years, the RMI became a strategic country at the peak of the Cold War (Chutaro & Heine, 2003). The newly strategic importance of RMI prompted the US to formulate the Compact of Free Association with RMI in 1982. The compact only became official following final approval by the US Congress and subsequent confirmation by the RMI in 1986 (Friberg, et al., 2006). Generally, the Compact established the RMI as a

sovereign state in all aspects but issues pertaining to defence and foreign policies, which still remained under US control (Banks, et al., 2010).

Banks et al. (2010) further reveal that following the two-year extension at the end of the initial Compact, a new compact was agreed between the two countries. The new compact provided for a continuation of aid from the US for the next two decades, while allowing for visa-free access of RMI citizens to enter, reside and work in the US. In return, the RMI had to permit the US to establish the Ronald Reagan Missile Defence Test Site in the Marshall Islands. However, the continuation of the pact has had some negative effects on governance in the RMI. Specifically, US aid, which in 1998 amounted to 68% of the total revenues of the RMI, continues to create an artificially high per capita income in the country, making its economy exceedingly reliant on the US and thereby reducing the accountability of political players (Friberg, et al., 2006). Indeed, according to Chutaro and Heine (2003), the ongoing financial assistance from the US has not only reduced the political commitment of governing authorities, thereby inducing poor governance in the RMI, but has also created a wrong perception among the RMI citizens that the US is especially responsible for looking after their well-being.

4.4.1.1 Parliamentary Democracy in RMI

The 1979 constitution of the RMI provides for a variant of the Westminster system of responsible government in which a president elected by popularly elected MPs in the parliament (Nitijela) serves both as the head of the government and of the state (Banks, et al., 2010; Fraenkel, 2002). Consistent with the Westminster system, the president of the RMI is accountable to the parliament (Banks, et al., 2010). The constitution allows for the president

to serve a four year term, which is the same as that of MPs. The constitutional choice to adopt the Westminster system as opposed to presidentialism, a system followed by the RMI's former colonial master and a very close ally, the US, was a surprise move. Nevertheless, as argued before, there has not been strong evidence to suggest that parliamentary democracy in the RMI is in better shape than in other Pacific countries as a result of opting for the Westminster system (Larmour, 2000).

The 1979 constitution of the RMI stipulates the existence of a bicameral parliament. The lower house, which is responsible for most parliamentary duties, is made up of 33 popularly elected MPs (Banks, et al., 2010). The same constitution provides for the 12-member Council of *Iroij* (the upper house) which possesses no veto powers, a departure from the early days when the *Iroij* (noble MPs) used to have reserved seats in the Nitijela (Fraenkel, 2002). Indeed, according to Fraenkel (2002), in 1958 the Nitijela was a unicameral parliament with all seats reserved for the *Iroij*.

Since the *Iroij* dominated RMI politics even prior to independence, the constitution of the RMI was constructed in such a way that it ensured 'Western democratic principles' were used as the tool to advance the interests of chiefs (Fraenkel, 2002, p. 300). Specifically, the nobility was portrayed constitutionally as the only source of leadership (Fraenkel, 2002). It was not surprising, then, that 20 years after the creation of the 1979 constitution, there were neither contested presidential elections nor veto exercised against the paramount chief (*iroijlaplap*), who was the president at the time. It should be noted that, following the 1979 constitution, which re-established a bicameral system, most of the *Iroij* (chiefs) contested parliamentary seats and entered the Nitijela, since the constitution shifted all legislation power to the lower house (Fraenkel, 2002).

Fraenkel (2002) notes that, prior to late 1990s, both the upper and lower chambers were dominated by the *iroijlaplap*. However, allegations of corruption and nepotism against some *Iroij*, following the death of the first president of the RMI, culminated in an extraordinary election in 1999, which for the first time produced the first commoner president (Fraenkel, 2002). Ironically, while the *Iroij* PM was defeated in the 1999 parliamentary election due to corruption, the commoner president who took over from him was later overthrown for fighting corruption. Indeed, according to Fraenkel (2002), MPs in the RMI attributed the task force on accountability to fight corruption in the RMI, created by the then commoner PM, the Hon. Kessai Note, as the main factor that led to his ousting. This is because he was perceived to be ‘meddling’ in the interests of other senior politicians.

It is the lower and not the upper house of the RMI which is responsible for electing the president. Also, for any bill to pass in the Nitijela, including a vote of no confidence against a sitting government, the motion has to be supported by more than 50% of members (at least 17 MPs) (Banks, et al., 2010). Furthermore, while the upper house does not have legislative power, it provides counsel on issues pertaining to customary laws and related matters. The lack of legislative power should not suggest that the upper house is completely redundant. Indeed, according to Banks et al. (2010), while at the municipality level elected officials such as councillors are in charge, traditional rule largely governs at the village level.

4.4.2 The Parliament of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea

PNG provides a classical example of a state that is a colonial construct. This is because PNG never existed as a country prior to foreign occupation (Reilly, 2008). Indeed, in the pre-

colonial era, PNG society mainly comprised thousands of small and autonomous tribal groups of up to 100 people (Reilly, 2008). Prior to 1914 what today is referred as PNG was two different countries of Papua and New Guinea, which were separately colonised by the British and Germans respectively (Banks, et al., 2010). PNG was put under Australia's administration in the early 20th century and this continued up until it became independent in 1975 (Reilly, 2008).

PNG is considered to be the most heterogeneous country in the world (Fraenkel, 2002; Schaper, 2002). Indeed, according to Schaper (2002), the latest count of languages in PNG shows that the country accounts for a thousand of the estimated 6,000 languages globally. However, the pidgin language (tok pisin) and English are the national languages of PNG citizens. PNG is the largest country in the Pacific region in terms of its population, which stands at slightly higher than six million people (Banks, et al., 2010, p. 1036).

Furthermore, despite the current relatively peaceful environment, there have been skirmishes in the country. For instance, for over a decade, there were armed insurgencies in the Province of Bougainville, spearheaded by the Bougainville Revolution Army fighting over the rights of the locals to have control over copper mines riches, reminiscent of the 'resources curse' concept found in most developing countries (Schaper, 2002, p. 81).

4.4.2.1 Parliamentary Democracy in PNG

In typical Westminster fashion, the state of PNG is headed by the Governor-General who is to a large extent a ceremonial figure who represents the Crown. Governors-General are appointed for a period of six years (Banks, et al., 2010). The head of state is responsible for

appointing a PM following a parliamentary decision to vote for the PM. In addition, the Governor-General is also responsible for providing ceremonial approval of the cabinet, which complements the National Executive Council (effectively the cabinet) on the advice of the PM (Banks, et al., 2010).

The country has a unicameral parliament with a parliamentary term that lasts for five years. According to Banks et al. (2010), the term of parliament in PNG is subject to dissolution, which can result from either a vote of no confidence which may be initiated by at least 10% of MPs or in the event the leader of the opposition secures majority support in the parliament. In order for such a motion (and bills) to pass through the parliament, a two-thirds majority is needed (Banks, et al., 2010). Banks et al. also point out that at lower levels of administration (sub-provincial level) there is an operational coexistence of elected councillors and community governments which results in the much debated 'collision' between the modern and traditional values in the Pacific region.

In typical Melanesian cultures, it is the clans in PNG which provide the basic cultural units from which both political and social loyalty originates (Reilly, 2008). This cultural background largely polarised the social and political scene along clan lines even prior to colonial occupation. The introduction of parliamentary democracy in the colonial and post-colonial era only served to divide further an already fragmented PNG. Indeed, according to Reilly (2008), elections in PNG are mainly won and lost on ethnic lines. Furthermore, since being in government is often considered as the means to riches for clans in PNG, elections are normally contested not on policy matters but on the need to get a clan member into office so that he/she can draw resources for the clan. It is no wonder then that elections in PNG are

always dominated by violent behaviour that has prompted political commentators such as Reilly (2008, p. 16) to refer to parliamentary democracy in PNG as ‘gun point democracy’.

The cultural divide in PNG is also evident within the parliament itself. Political instability has been the order of the day since independence as no single government in PNG has been able to serve a full term (Hawksley, 2006; Reilly, 2006). This instability is mainly a result of continuous crossing the floor of the parliament by MPs (Feeney, 2005). The constant crossing is caused by the scramble for access to resources to fulfil narrow interests of the MP and his/her own clan. This is because MPs in PNG generally feel that they are only responsible to their constituencies, the particularly voters from their clans (Hawksley, 2006). The need for MPs to ‘repay’ voters’ loyalty, coupled with the readily available opportunities to embezzle resources through the taking of bribes, means that political survival depends on ‘buying’ political allegiances. This has only served to fuel the flames of political instability in the country (Feeney, 2005). To make matters worse, the legislation passed in the PNG parliament that restricts MPs to voting along party lines in an attempt to curb political instability has been overruled by the Supreme Court of PNG because it considered the legislation to be unconstitutional (Reilly, 2006).

The electoral systems have also had a large impact on the political process in PNG. Indeed, while still an Australian protectorate, PNG used the Alternative Vote (AV) system in which candidates are ranked in order of preference (Reilly, 2008). Understandably, the system forced candidates (clans) to form alliances among each other because no single candidate could win singlehandedly. However, following its independence, PNG shifted to the plurality (first-past-the-post) system, in which case a candidate with the most votes wins (Hawksley, 2006; Reilly, 2008). With this system in place, candidates had no incentives to seek alliances,

particularly as those from the largest clans were practically guaranteed a win. The result of this change was catastrophic as far as democracy was concerned. For instance, in the 2002 election, the majority of MPs won by gaining just 20% of the vote (Hawksley, 2006; Reilly, 2006, 2008). Even worse were candidates who won by marshalling just 5% of the total vote (Hawksley, 2006; Reilly, 2006, 2008). This defeated the whole point of representative democracy (parliament) because MPs who won election never really commanded the voters' mandates due to the low percentage of votes gained.

The level of corruption, violence and further cultural fragmentation that was vivid during the election under the first-past-the-post electoral system put much pressure on the PNG government to re-examine it. As a result, the PNG government eventually resorted to the preferential voting system that is akin to that in Australia, except that preferences are restricted to three candidates, hence the name limited preferential system (Reilly, 2006). As Reilly (2008) reports, the 2003 re-introduction of the AV system in PNG has since drastically reduced the level of violence during elections.

4.4.3 The Parliament of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste has come a long way in its quest for achieving political freedom, economic and social development. Indeed, a history of Timor-Leste shows that the country was colonised by Portugal for over 50 years before facing 25 years of brutal oppression by the Indonesian dictatorship (headed by Suharto), having been constantly considered as 'unfit' to govern itself by the western superpowers (Goldstone, 2004, p. 138). The occupation of Timor-Leste by Indonesia, which started in 1975, was conveniently perpetuated by the then urgent need of the West to maintain ties with Indonesia rather than angering it and a shift of allegiance by

Indonesia towards the USSR during the Cold War period (Philpott, 2006). At the time, the Timorese freedom fighting party, Fretlin, was deeply suspected of attempting to turn Timor-Leste into Asia's Cuba. Indonesia's dictator Suharto had virtually annihilated⁹ the communist movement led by the Indonesian Communist Party (Philpott, 2006, p. 139). This resulted in praise from the West which described Indonesia as a 'capable' guardian of capitalism in Asia (Philpott, 2006, p. 139).

However, the combination of the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Asian financial crisis which claimed Suharto's presidency, and the subsequent awarding of the Nobel prize to Jose Ramos-Horta¹⁰ for sustained efforts to hinder the oppression of a small people signalled the beginning of the end of Indonesian occupation in Timor-Leste (Philpott, 2006). Timor-Leste almost gained complete independence in 1999, following a national referendum which gave people an opportunity to vote for or against independence (Chand, 2001). The outcome of the referendum showed that almost 79% of eligible Timorese people voted for independence (Beauvais, 2001). However, violence, instigated primarily by the Timor-Leste's militia, who were opposed to total independence, prompted the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in Timor-Leste (UNTAET) from late 1999 to May 2002 (Monge, 2006). Its role was to govern the territory and provide peacekeeping and civil administration (Monge, 2006).

⁹ An estimated 500,000 Indonesians were killed between 1965 and 1966 in President Suharto's crusade against the communist movement in Indonesia (Philpot, 2006, p.139).

¹⁰ Jose Ramos-Horta is a founder of Timor-Leste's anti-colonial movement, Fretlin; he left his country three days prior to Indonesia's invasion to become a long time external envoy for the independence struggle. Following independence in 2002, he became the first foreign minister of Timor-Leste, before going on to assume the prime ministership and thereafter the presidency. Mr Ramos-Horta recently (in March, 2012 presidential elections) failed in his bid to be re-elected as a president.

The three-year UN administration in Timor-Leste was not without its share of controversy. Indeed the administration was considered to be displaying elements of neo-colonialism because UN staff, it was claimed, were working hard to perpetuate their careers by continuously arguing ‘for the old case’ that Timorese people were ‘weak, unreliable and not ready to govern themselves’ (Philpott, 2006, p. 146). Nevertheless, Timor-Leste eventually overcame its many challenges to emerge in May 2002 as the first nation to achieve independence in the 21st century (Beauvais, 2001).

4.4.3.1 Parliamentary Democracy in Timor-Leste

Influenced by its Portuguese colonial past, Timor-Leste adopted a semi-presidential system in its constitution (Monge, 2006). Under the regime, a popularly elected president who possesses limited powers is the head of the state. One of these powers involves making sure that the executive subjects itself to scrutiny and directions from the parliament. The head of state serves a five-year, once renewable term (Banks, et al., 2010). It should be noted that the constitution of Timor-Leste requires the president to have non-partisan status (Monge, 2006).

Monge (2006) explains out that the executive comprises the PM and his/her cabinet. It is the PM who selects the cabinet, which gets ceremonial approval from the president. It is important to stress here that the president in Timor-Leste does not have powers to influence the selection of ministers (Shoesmith, 2008). Moreover, the executive is accountable to the parliament. Note that the PM in Timor-Leste is not popularly elected but is nominated by a coalition of parties that form the ruling majority in parliament and is formally appointed by the president (Monge, 2006). Though the constitution of Timor-Leste provides for the

president to be the commander-in-chief of the defence forces, national security responsibility is equally shared between the president, the executive and the parliament (Shoesmith, 2008).

The parliament of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is unicameral and consists of 65 MPs, proportionally elected by an subdivided electorate, and who serve a renewable five-year term (Banks, et al., 2010). A two-thirds majority of the parliament is required for any amendment to the constitution (Banks, et al., 2010). In addition, the parliament can be dissolved by the president at any time on grounds of allegations of gross misconduct and/or perpetual weakening of the government, as indicated by a loss of a two-thirds majority in parliament. The exception is if it is less than six month before a scheduled election.

Timor-Leste MPs are obliged to vacate their seats and be replaced by the next candidate on the party list when appointed to become ministers (Shoesmith, 2008). The PM can choose his ministers from outside the parliament and appointments are at the full discretion of the PM (Shoesmith, 2008). However, the ability of the PM to select ministers at his/her discretion has not only weakened the position of the parliament but also widened the gap between ministers and MPs. This is because ministers do not feel that they are responsible to the parliament but to the PM who literally ‘employs’ them (Shoesmith, 2008). The position of the Timorese parliament is undermined by the fact that the parliament neither appoints the PM nor does it have powers to confirm ministers appointed by the PM (Shoesmith, 2008). Furthermore the parliament is weakened by a constitutional provision that allows the cabinet to issue decrees independent of the parliament (Shoesmith, 2008).

According to Shoesmith (2008), the parliament of Timor-Leste has operated under two distinct periods. The first (2002-2006) was when the parliament was dominated by the Fretlin

party. The second and still current period has been mainly under the Parliamentary Majority Alliance (AMP). The transition between the two periods has seen a considerable shift from the executive-dominated Timor-Leste parliament during Fretlin rule to a more multiparty, shared power under the five parties that make up the AMP (Shoesmith, 2008). If anything, the desire of Fretlin to centralise power to itself was the main reason for its defeat in the 2007 election (Shoesmith, 2008).

It should be noted that the presence of ambiguities within the Timorese constitution regarding the limits of powers vested in the president provided the first test of democracy in Timor-Leste. According to Shoesmith (2008), the ambiguities led to a power struggle between the Timorese president and the PM which resulted in the subsequent resignation of the then PM in 2006. This event brought about political tensions in Timor-Leste. However, it did not eventuate in political or societal chaos, since, unlike other Pacific countries, Timor-Leste boasts a more cohesive social system that is well lubricated by the legacy of broad support for the revolutionary movement among the Timorese people and this largely continues to control the contemporary political scene (Keuleers, 2004).

4.4.4 The Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga

Tonga, the only Pacific country which has never been directly colonised, became a constitutional monarchy in 1875. It has since remained the last standing constitutional monarchy in the Pacific region (James, 1994). Prior to the 2010 reforms, the monarchy held absolute power, with the constitution declaring it 'sacred', much to the discontent of the Christian community in the country (James, 1994). However, events in the past two decades that included protests which eventually led to a major strike, the appointment of the first

commoner as PM, the appointment of the first female minister, as well as divisions within the nobility in 2005-2006, pressured the King into forming the National Committee for Political Reforms. This led to the most significant constitutional reforms in the history of Tonga (Leslie & Heather, 2007, p. 264).

4.4.4.1 Parliamentary Democracy in Tonga

The 1875 constitution provides for a unicameral parliament that sits for a period of three years between elections (Hills, 1991). A reformed constitution that followed the formation of the National Committee for Political Reforms (Leslie & Heather, 2007) has established a parliament of 26 MPs, nine of them nobles elected by 33 hereditary nobles (Banks, et al., 2010) and the rest popularly elected. The same reforms greatly reduced both the powers and involvement of the King in day-to-day government operations. However, even after these reforms, the constitution still maintains that the Speaker of the Tongan parliament can only come from among members of the nobility. MPs serve a three-year term (Banks, et al., 2010). Furthermore, while the PM can be voted out by two-thirds majority vote, the constitution prohibits doing so within less than eighteen months before an election (Banks, et al., 2010).

The major obstacle to parliamentary democracy originates from the power vested in the King and, by extension, the nobility. However, contrary to popular belief, mostly among foreign commentators of Tongan politics, the real power of the King is not derived from the constitution but rather from customs and traditions (Campbell, 1994; Hills, 1991). As a result, while the constitutional reforms that have been taking place for over a century (such as the 2010 New Zealand-sponsored reforms) are to be applauded, the idea that these reforms will

necessarily have a lasting positive effect on Tongan parliamentary democracy is flawed. This argument forms the basis of Chapter Eight and will be explained in detail there.

4.4.5 The Parliament of the Republic of Vanuatu

Jointly administered by the Anglo-French condominium since 1914, the New Hebrides, which was later called Vanuatu, gained independence in 1980 (Morgan, 2008). Although the constitution of Vanuatu provides for English-derived pidgin, Bislama, as the national language, English and French remain the official languages (Crowley, 1989). The Anglo-French dichotomy later proved to be a major divisive political and social factor in Vanuatu, as explained in the following section.

4.4.5.1 Parliamentary Democracy in Vanuatu

The constitution provides for a variant of a parliamentary system in which a largely ceremonial president heads the state for a five-year term with executive power vested in the PM (Banks, et al., 2010). The PM is elected from among MPs and he/she, together with all the cabinet members, must hold parliamentary seats to qualify as ministers (Banks, et al., 2010). The parliament is unicameral and consists of 52 proportionally elected MPs. The parliamentary term lasts for four years (Banks, et al., 2010).

The constitution provides for a president who is elected by the electoral college, which includes the parliament and the presidents of provincial governments (Morgan, 2001). The

same eligibility criterion that applies to MPs applies also to the presidential candidates. In the event that the president is incapacitated, the constitution provides for the Speaker of the parliament to take over the presidency (Morgan, 2001). As is the case in most parliamentary democracies around the world, the PM, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker in Vanuatu are elected by MPs. In turn, the PM has both the power to select and to dismiss cabinet ministers. The constitution requires that the number of the cabinet members, including the PM, not exceed a quarter of the total number of MPs (Morgan, 2001). Furthermore, MPs are elected every four years through a universal suffrage electoral system with a proportional representation system to ensure fair representation of different political groups and opinions (Morgan, 2001). A two-thirds majority is needed for any bill to pass in the parliament (Banks, et al., 2010).

However, political party fragmentation is the major challenge that has faced parliamentary democracy in Vanuatu since its independence. Indeed, according to Morgan (2006), in its first decade of independence, the parliament was dominated by a largely Anglophone party, Vanua'aku Pati (VP) at the time when an alliance of predominantly Francophone groups, the Union of Moderate Parties (UMP), was in opposition.

In retrospect, attempts by France to disrupt the process of transferring power to Vanuatu in the months leading up to independence worked, in part, to the VP's advantage because the UMP became unpopular and the target of VP rhetoric that claimed they were not patriotic enough since they were more French than Vanuatu (Morgan, 2005a). Such claims fuelled failed secession attempts led by Nagriamel¹¹ in a number of Francophone islands, including

¹¹ A political movement, Nagriamel, emerged in the New Hebrides (Northern Vanuatu) in the mid-1960s resisting the French occupation. At the peak of the rebellion in 1980, Nagriamel claimed to have attracted up to

in Espiritu Santo just after independence (Banks, et al., 2010). By 1988 the VP and the UMP disintegrated into smaller parties. However, the continuation of party politics on Anglo-French political lines has resulted in frequent shifts of alliances among MPs, which has led to unstable coalitions. This situation has only served to weaken parliamentary democracy in Vanuatu over time (Morgan, 2006).

After waiting for 12 years, and after being discriminated and disadvantaged by the ruling Anglophone party, VP, 1991-1995 was the ‘payback’ period for the then newly Francophone ruling majority (Ambrose, 1996). Thus, instead of using this period to show how governance could best be executed, the ruling majority used its rare time in power to siphon resources to their communities (Ambrose, 1996). During this period, the Francophone communities realised the benefits associated with having ‘one of their own’ in power and the Anglophone communities learnt not to take the benefits derived from power and control for granted. As both camps tested the sweetness of power, Vanuatu politics gradually plummeted into an abyss that eventually led to political instability and party fragmentation (Ambrose, 1996). This fragmentation has resulted in an ‘endemic instability’ within successive, frequently changing governments, primarily as a result of the shift in allegiances within the parliament (Morgan, 2005a). Given the fact that all this political chaos was a result of the so-called Anglo-French ‘condominium’, it is no wonder that political commentators (such as Ambrose, 1997) have labelled the ‘condominium’ as ‘the pandemonium’.

20,000 followers. It has anti-state, anti-VP and anti-missionary ideologies. With headquarters located in Vanafo at the house of the local chief, Nagriamel is based on the hope that one day America will emancipate them from their enemies; this is otherwise known as an instance of a ‘cargo cult’, which is also practised in PNG (Morgan, 2005a).

It can also be argued that the ever-changing allegiances of MPs are worsened by the ever-increasing number of political parties and independent candidates. For instance, following the 2008 election, the total number of MPs from the major parties (VP and UMP) put together had less than the required majority to form government (Van Trease, 2010). Consequently, the ruling coalition had to form a government that included 15 smaller parties and four independents (Van Trease, 2010). As a result, parliamentary democracy in Vanuatu has been reduced to a scramble by MPs to create ruling coalitions. For example, one of the few PMs to survive an entire term was only able to do so in the 2001-2004 term by allegedly condoning corruption by senior members of his coalition, thereby putting 'stability' ahead of governance (Van Trease, 2010). The result of this situation is rampant corruption, evidenced by a famous quote from a former PM who reacted to scrutiny from the independent parliamentary office of the Ombudsman by arguing that 'the fact that the Ombudsman can investigate a Minister is detrimental to the operation of a democracy' (Ambrose, 1997, p. 2).

One of the concerning legacies of the Anglo-French condominium is the provision in the constitution that requires all minutes from the parliament to be published in both English and French (Morgan, 2001). This provision not only acts to increase delays in the dissemination of information among MPs, thereby weakening the ability to have informed debates in parliament, it also disregards the real situation on the ground. This is because debates in the parliament are conducted in Bislama, a language that both the Francophone and Anglophone MPs understand better than their so-called respective 'official' French and English languages. It can be argued, therefore, that English and French languages are not suitable for the recording of parliamentary debates, especially if MPs are to work to their maximum ability, as argued below in this study.

Chand and Duncan (2004) note that political instability in Vanuatu and in the Pacific region in general is a result of ‘clientelism’, which is a special case of rent seeking where politicians are only interested in diverting public funds to the interests of the few groups of people they represent. Under clientelism, parliamentary democracy is reduced to a game that focuses on the need to create and subsequently sustain coalition governments (Ambrose, 1997). In Vanuatu, clientelism ultimately creates a situation where party loyalty is frequently subordinated to selfish ambitions (Ambrose, 1996). It is not surprising, then, that allegations of corruption and self-interest constantly made by MPs have been blamed as a major reason for the ever-shifting allegiances of MPs in Vanuatu (Van Trease, 2010).

4.5 Conclusion

In sum, while Pacific countries differ in size, culture and political systems, their parliaments largely face common challenges. These include the lack of MPs’ KSAs to effectively perform their roles and responsibilities; MPs are supported by understaffed and under-skilled parliamentary staff, and there are corruption and the negative effects from colonial legacies, to mention but a few challenges. All these factors and many more work to weaken parliamentary democracy in the region.

The only way for these parliaments to progress in a positive fashion is for them to look forward. This includes the need to strengthen parliaments by equipping MPs with suitable KSAs that may enable them to improve their performance and that of their parliaments. However, the fact that training programs have been provided in Pacific parliaments for the better part of the last decade raises three important questions as far as performance of MP and parliaments are concerned. Firstly, how suitable are existing training programs? Secondly, do

these programs produce the desired impact on the performance of both MPs and parliaments? Thirdly, what factors explain the kind of impact the programs have on performance of MPs and parliaments? The next four chapters address these questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: The Impact of Training in Pacific Parliaments

5.0 Overview

The previous chapter discussed training programs available in case parliaments and analysed their suitability. This chapter measures the impact those particular training programs have had on the performance of MPs and their respective case parliaments. In so doing, the chapter begins with case by case analyses of case parliaments before presenting a cross-case analysis of the five selected parliaments. Thereafter, the chapter examines themes that arose during the interviews regarding training programs provided in case parliaments.

5.1 Findings and Discussion

As explained in Chapter Three, interviewees were asked several questions (see Appendix 1), including about their education and career backgrounds, experience in parliament, and their assessment of the effectiveness of training programs in improving individual performance and that of the parliament. MPs were also asked to rank seven parliamentary roles in order of importance and to elaborate and/or give examples to substantiate their views whenever possible. Note that when disseminating findings from case parliaments, the gender issue is only examined in the Timor-Leste parliament. This is because the rest of case parliaments either have only one female MP (in the case of PNG and Vanuatu) or no female MPs at all (in the case of the Marshall Islands and Tonga).

5.2 The Parliament of the Republic of Marshall Islands

A total of 13 MPs were interviewed, 39% of the total number of MPs in the lower house of the Marshallese parliament. As explained in Chapter Four, the parliament of the Marshall Islands is the only bi-cameral parliament in the Pacific region. However, for the purposes of consistency, the researcher chose to only interview MPs from the lower house (the Nitijela). This is because the upper house has virtually no legislative powers (Banks, et al., 2010; Fraenkel, 2002). Furthermore, since there are no legally incorporated political parties in the Marshall Islands, just unofficial groupings of MPs (Anckar & Anckar, 2000), the choice of MPs to be interviewed by the researcher was based on balancing between MPs from chiefly backgrounds and those who are commoners. This choice is consistent with the literature on Marshallese society (such as Chutaro & Heine, 2003) that shows that it is divided into two main classes, royalty (*Irooj*) and commoners (*kajoor*). The researcher interviewed six noble MPs and seven commoners.

The average number of terms served by the interviewed Marshallese MPs is three (12 years). This figure is, however, grossly inflated because five out of the 13 MPs interviewed were serving their first-ever terms. This confirms the arguments made in Chapter One that there is a relatively high turnover in Pacific parliaments (Banks, et al., 2010; Dinnen, 2002; Panapa & Fraenkel, 2008). Moreover, those few MPs who served five or more terms belong to chiefly families. This result is consistent with the discussion in Chapter Four that over the years members of the nobility in the Marshall Islands have monopolised the political scenery due to the unfairness embedded in both the constitution and the culture that portrays members of the nobility as born leaders that the Marshallese people cannot afford to do without (Fraenkel, 2002).

The fact that the average length of parliamentary service by Marshallese MPs is short implies that the Nitijela does not possess adequate institutional memory in the form of experienced MPs who can, in theory at least, transmit their parliamentary knowledge and experiences (KSAs) to new MPs. It is not surprising, then, that eight Marshallese MPs said that they were never mentored. This means that training programs provide the only source of learning to many MPs. This reality necessitates training programs provided in the Nitijela to be tailored in such a manner that assumes the majority of MPs have little or no parliamentary KSAs to begin with and that they require training if they are to have any significant impact.

Those MPs who claimed to have received some form of mentoring were exclusively from the chiefly families. This suggests that the nobility, though fading in popularity in the last decade due to corruption allegations (Fraenkel, 2002), still maintains a level of organisation among

its membership. It follows that the lack of a party system in the Marshall Islands only affects commoner MPs.

Also, every interviewed MP worked as a civil servant at some level prior to entering parliament. In fact, only one MP identified his career background as ‘a former businessman’. This is interesting, since, on the one hand, a background in the civil service may provide MPs with a significant experience on how government works and enhance their relations with ministers and departmental officers, but on the other, and unfortunately this seems to be the case on the ground, having worked in the public sector, newly elected MPs tend to perpetuate a corrupt culture learnt from years of working as civil servants (Larmour, 2006). Indeed, according to Larmour (2006, p. 11), driven by the ‘American culture of materialism’, Marshallese MPs usually ‘offer services and gifts’ to voters so as to retain their parliamentary seats.

It is not surprising that even newly elected MPs work to maintain the status quo rather than bring about real changes in the Nitijela, because they mostly come from the same career backgrounds. This has resulted in a situation where voters are disenchanted with the way parliament has progressed over the years (Fraenkel, 2002). Indeed, according to parliamentary staff in the Nitijela, a few years ago people used to attend parliamentary sessions in large numbers but they no longer do so as the Marshallese people have realised that their parliament is just about ‘politics as usual’. This, they argue, is because MPs always seem to pursue issues of self-interest such as political positions and wealth at the expense of issues of national interests. This has often resulted in a situation where sound policy formulation and implementation are neglected (Larmour, 2006). One MP concurred with this

general view of the Marshallese people by admitting that ‘islanders are annoyed by the minimal output that they see coming out of the Nitijela’.

5.2.1 The Impact of Training on Performance of Marshallese MPs and their Parliament

As outlined in Chapter Three, performance is measured by the extent to which perceptions of MPs provide reliable and valid measures of the actual performance of MPs and that of case parliaments (Freeman, 1983). To that end, perceptions regarding the performance of MPs and that of the Nitijela were collected from the interviewed MPs.

Furthermore, training has been conceptualised and measured using an absolute measure. Generally, an absolute measure is defined as the amount of training received by MPs as explained by the average number of training days available to them each year (Wright, et al., 2005). This data was obtained directly from MPs during interviews. Accordingly, the average number of training days available to the MPs in the Marshall Islands is five days in a typical parliamentary year and the actual number of training days available to MPs ranges from zero to fifteen days per annum.

Nevertheless, the average of five training days is grossly inflated by the number of training days that experienced MPs in the Nitijela undertook. Indeed, while some of the most experienced MPs had up to 15 training days per annum, the majority (10 out of 13 MPs) had an average of only one day’s training at the time of the interview. Of these 10 MPs, five were new, implying the correlation between parliamentary experience and access to training programs in the Nitijela, as stated above. This may explain why the majority of those

interviewed (10 out of 13 MPs) consider training programs provided to them to be too short to be effective.

5.2.1.1 Individual Level Performance of Marshallese MPs

The majority of training programs took place immediately after parliamentary elections (induction programs), thus suggesting that there are many fewer training opportunities for MPs in between elections. This explains the general feeling by MPs that most training programs provided in the Nitijela is too short and at best too basic to be effective. Indeed, nine out of 13 MPs considered training programs to be too ineffective to produce a significant impact on their performance. They mainly blame this result on the flawed parliamentary training model, particularly on the unsound design and delivery techniques of existing training programs. These issues are further examined below.

Firstly, the majority of MPs (10 out of 13) stated in various ways that training programs provided to them are too general to be relevant to the cultural and constitutional context of the Marshall Islands. This was often blamed on the tendency of training providers in the region to provide the same training content to different jurisdictions. For instance, one MP alleged that training on issues such as standing orders and codes of conduct ‘were out of context, as material provided was directly copied mainly from Australia and New Zealand which have different parliamentary rules and procedures’. Reflecting on this matter, another MP suggested that in order to avoid such problems, training providers in the country should, ‘ask themselves how their training content applies to the context of Nitijela’. This is because parliaments across different Pacific countries operate in a very different way based on a

particular constitution and standing orders that govern their operations. Training programs should necessarily reflect this reality.

Furthermore, the types of training programs offered are further flawed by their tendency to overwhelm MPs with too much information in a short period of time. As a result, MPs' ability to process it all is impaired (Kunnath, 2011). Moreover, such didactic methods of training delivery in the Nitijela have often made MPs reluctant to attend training sessions, one MP suggested, claiming that 'most of the training programs are a waste of time because even if there are (*sic*) a lot of information given, one learns nothing from them'. This kind of reaction is not uncommon from adult learners (Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000). It follows that Marshallese MPs are more likely to be comfortable with adult education and training techniques which, among other things, incorporate experiential methods such as mock sessions as a means of delivery (Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000; Dewey, 1933; Hossain, 2004; Husain, 2003; Knowles, 1973; Merriam & Leahy, 2005).

Another factor that has led to training programs being perceived by most MPs (10 out of 13) as ineffective is the inability of these programs to consider differing parliamentary experiences and academic qualifications of MPs. Note that experience and the educational backgrounds of MPs are crucial, as according to both HRD theories (Brunnelo & Nedio, 2001) and adult education and training theories (Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000), they provide the necessary ingredients for effective learning by the adult trainee. By ignoring these two components, training programs in the Nitijela have often produced negative and mixed reactions from MPs. For instance, while an experienced MP claimed that 'training programs are only good for new MPs but crap for experienced ones', a new MP expressed his concern

that training programs are ‘too complicated to understand’. As a result, training programs satisfy neither the novice nor experienced MPs in terms of their ability to transfer KSAs.

The biggest disappointment to all those interviewed was the inability of training programs to reflect the actual roles that they perform on daily basis. This watered down the value of training programs in the eyes of MPs. This view resonates with Kunnath’s (2011) arguments that most training programs in parliaments fail to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Indeed, an MP echoed this argument, stating that, ‘Training should focus on how to make MPs more effective in performing their roles’. It is not surprising, then, that while most training programs available in the Nitijela provide general information on how parliaments operate, Marshallese MPs generally suggested training should focus on pertinent and directed areas, such as training on how to (i) connect with voters, (ii) work with fellow MPs, (iii) understand, scrutinise and introduce bills, (iv) ask questions in parliament, (v) manage time, (vi) understand the constitution and standing orders, (vii) conduct oneself ethically, (viii) use ICT facilities to their advantage, (ix) engage in debates inside and outside parliament at an informed level, (x) understand cross-cutting and thematic issues, such as debates on climate change, and (xi) conduct research that can inform parliamentary debate.

The concern from Marshallese MPs that training programs do not reflect the roles they are expected to perform sums up the need for training providers to conduct a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) prior to designing and delivering their programs to MPs. This, as explained in the next chapter, can potentially make these programs more relevant and thus effective, and may also be more attractive to those MPs who are reluctant to attend training programs. A well-conducted TNA would identify all salient features that ought to be

considered for a particular training program to make it appealing and effective (Fox & Korris, 2011; Hossain, 2004; Lam, 2011).

Perhaps the most surprising result from the interviews conducted in the Marshall Islands was the perception of MPs about the education level that potential MP candidates should possess. It should be noted that the average education level of the interviewed MPs was a diploma. Only one MP had a postgraduate degree and one MP had secondary school qualifications only. However, this average level of education may not be a true reflection of the actual average education level of the MPs. This is because during a field trip to interview the MPs, five who were originally selected for interview had to be quickly replaced. Apparently, the MPs who were originally scheduled, withdrew because they thought the interviews included ‘offensive questions’. Although these MPs never explained their claims, according to the parliamentary staff the researcher talked to informally, those particular MPs pulled out because one of their colleagues, who had already been interviewed, told them to expect a question about their education level, something which could potentially embarrass them, since they possessed ‘very low’ educational qualifications.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, MPs had an option to decline to respond to any question that potentially made them feel uncomfortable. However, the complete withdrawal of some MPs suggests that the education level of several of them may be below diploma level. This information is important because it could explain the negligible impact of training in the Nitijela, since higher education levels are associated with a smoother transfer of KSAs necessary to trigger improved performance of both MPs and parliaments (Brunnelo & Nedio, 2001). This argument was further supported by an MP who cited the poor level of education of most MPs as the sole reason for the poor performance of the parliament. In particular, this

MP (perhaps harshly) said, ‘garbage in, garbage out. The parliament will only improve if the criteria for candidature eligibility are improved to allow for only educated people to run for MP positions’. Nevertheless, this elitist approach to a parliamentary career, which suggests that only a small group of educated Marshallese islanders should be given the right to parliamentary candidature (Kearns, 1995), is impossible (and undesirable) to achieve, as neither the traditional principles of democracy nor the 1979 constitution requires parliamentary candidature to be tied to pre-determined minimum academic qualifications (Banks, et al., 2010; Fraenkel, 2002). It is in this context that Chapter Seven of this thesis proposes a training model that can accommodate MPs with various academic qualifications.

That said, nine out of 13 MPs suggested that a university degree should be a minimum requirement before any citizen could be eligible to stand for parliament. The irony of this suggestion, though, is that most MPs (seven out of nine) who advocated for the education bar to be raised to a university degree level did not possess one. One wonders if they were just echoing the popular cry from the public, who are increasingly disenchanted with poor output of the Nitijela due to the perceived incompetencies of MPs (Jacklick & Ueno, 2010). This is because the leadership culture at Nitijela does not reflect this idea. Indeed, all the interviewed MPs admitted that promotion in the Nitijela is based solely on party affiliation and not academic qualifications. This culture in the Nitijela not only discourages incumbent MPs from seeking to improve their academic credentials but may also discourage potential educated candidates from joining politics. This situation is summed up nicely by an MP who argued that the performance of the Nitijela is very poor because ‘there is no higher standard for MPs to aspire to. For example, the current president is an eighth grader and therefore he sets a bad example for the rest of MPs’.

That said, the issue of educational qualification was also raised as one of the main reasons why the legislative role is poorly executed in the Nitijela. Indeed four of the interviewed MPs cited the understanding of, and the ability to debate, bills and legislation, as the most important skill that every MP should possess. This again could explain why nine of the interviewed MPs think that the only way to improve the performance of the Nitijela is by restricting the eligibility to parliamentary candidature to candidates who possess a minimum qualification of a university degree. As one MP put it, this is because persons with college degrees or higher education qualifications are associated with the ability to ‘think critically and engage in debates at an informed level’. The need for more educated MPs in the Nitijela was further stressed by seven of the MPs, who cited research skills as one of the most crucial skills that an MP should have. Research is mentioned as the source of much needed information that MPs need in order to engage in the policy making process at an informed level. This argument was echoed by an MP who pointed out that ‘the lack of research skills among most Marshallese MPs has watered down the quality of debates in the Nitijela’. While an MP with a tertiary education may possess superior research skills, it does not necessarily follow that this is always the case.

Adding to the argument for restricting parliamentary candidature to only candidates with a minimum of a college degree, three of the interviewed Marshallese MPs who had relatively low academic qualifications admitted that everything was difficult for them when they entered the Nitijela. They did not understand or readily grasp what it took for them to perform their roles and responsibilities. This was confirmed by one MP who claimed that ‘MPs who are not educated do not participate in deliberation because they do not understand the contemporary issues and they can neither articulate nor analyse the issues at hand’. However, since the elitist approach to a parliamentary career, where only candidates with

degree qualifications are allowed to contest, is not an option; the only thing that can be done is to expose Marshallese MPs to some more effective training programs which consider, among other factors, the low levels of education by many. Chapter Seven proposes such a training model.

5.2.1.2 The Performance of the Parliament of the Marshall Islands

In a similar fashion to perceptions of MPs on their individual performance, 10 out of 13 consider the training programs provided had failed in affecting positively the performance of the Nitijela. The majority of these MPs (nine out of ten) cited the hegemony of the executive government over the Nitijela as the major contributor to its inability to perform its roles effectively. The way the executive in the Marshall Islands dominates the Nitijela is further explained below.

Firstly, the executive is said to dominate the Nitijela by shaping and dictating the parliamentary agenda. Bills that reach the parliament usually originate from the executive branch of government. This situation exists even in parliaments in developed countries such as Canada, New Zealand and Australia. However, the difference here is the inability of Marshallese MPs to improve the quality of the bills (through deliberations) prior to passing them into law. This is partly because the majority of Marshallese MPs interviewed (12 out of 13 MPs) consider the role of legislation to be the government's responsibility. More effective training programs can potentially not only change this kind of thinking among MPs but also equip them with quality KSAs that can enable them to engage in deliberations at a more informed levels.

Relatedly, the poor quality of debates, coupled with mismanagement of time during deliberation sessions, due to what one MP termed as ‘campaigning’, has also negatively affected the performance of the Nitijela. This is partly caused by the fact that MPs usually do not understand the bills they deliberate upon. It is also a result of the inability of Marshallese MPs to put national interests ahead of their individual interests. The outcome of this is that little oversight is provided by the Nitijela. Once again, more effective training programs could assist MPs to change their behaviour in a manner that may make them subordinate their individual interests to the national interests, as well as providing them with KSAs that can enable them to perform their roles well.

Unhealthy partisanship is also cited for the underperformance of the Nitijela. This is made worse by the fact that promotions to various positions such as Speaker and committee chair are solely made along political lines. This has led to a situation where the more competent MPs, particularly those from the opposition, are left out of committee system leadership positions. This tradition has served to weaken the potential of the Nitijela to hold the government accountable for its conduct, as it has technically made the parliamentary committee dysfunctional due to the inability of those serving as committee chairpersons to effectively perform the tasks at hand. The point here is, while it may prove difficult to change this tradition in the short term, providing a more effective committee system training program could help improve the situation in the medium to longer term.

Another factor that has contributed to the underperformance of the Nitijela is indiscipline among MPs. Firstly; MPs do not enforce attendance and punctuality at parliamentary sessions, resulting in the Nitijela losing its quorum time and again. Secondly, too much in-fighting among MPs has meant that the Nitijela has had very little time to produce significant

results. This situation has caused Marshallese voters to become disenchanted with their parliament, because they are annoyed by its minimal output (Jacklick & Ueno, 2010). Once again, more effective training programs focusing on transferring inter-personal KSAs to MPs may prove to be crucial in changing this situation.

The last factor cited by the MPs is the lack of technical support from parliamentary staff in the Nitijela. Eight out of 13 MPs believe that their performance, and ultimately that of the Nitijela, could be a lot better if parliamentary staff possessed quality KSAs that enabled them to more effectively support parliamentary operations. While the issue of parliamentary staff is addressed in some detail in Chapter Eight, it is important to note that even the staff can only be equipped with quality KSAs if they are exposed to more effective training programs. It follows, therefore, that the need for reforming training programs in the Nitijela remains a priority.

5.2.1.3 Training Needs as Expressed by the Marshallese MPs

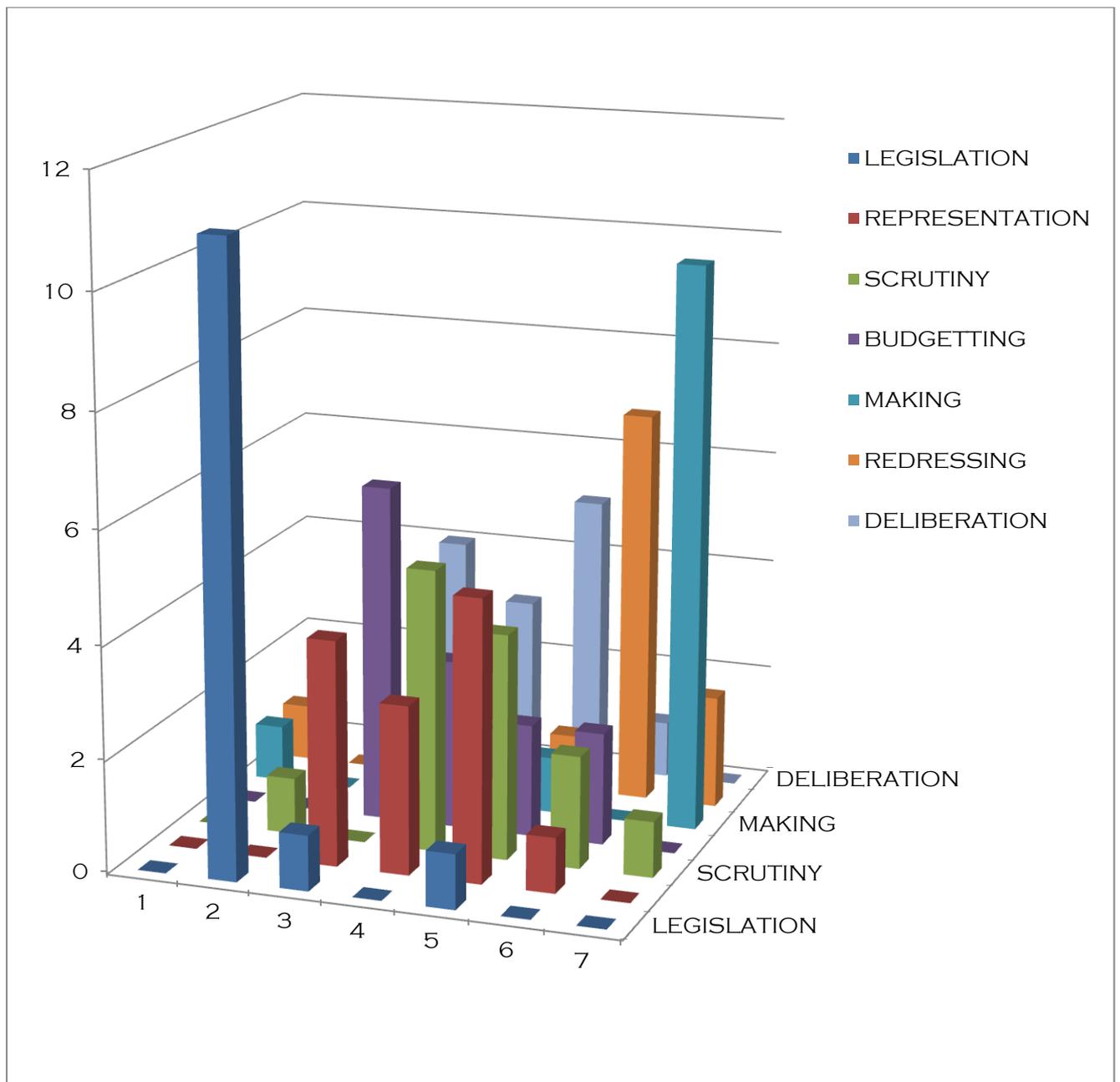
As pointed out in Chapter Three, a closed question was set for MPs to rank seven pre-determined parliamentary roles in order of importance. These parliamentary roles included representation, legislation, deliberation, scrutiny, budget setting, redress of grievances and making and breaking governments (Hazell, 2001). Following Millwood and Heath (2000), the ranking was such that number 1 was assigned to the role perceived by the MPs to be the most important through to 7, the number depicting the least important parliamentary role.

As Figure 5.1 below shows, one Marshallese MP apiece ranked parliamentary roles of redress of grievances and making and unmaking governments as the most important roles. However, these rankings seem to be outliers, since the majority of the MPs ranked these two roles as the least important ones. Indeed while ten out of 13 ranked making and breaking governments as the least important role, a further seven out of 13 ranked redress of grievances as the least but one important parliamentary role. This situation can be explained in two ways. Firstly, the disapproval of making and unmaking of the government role by MPs emanates from the political paralysis that engulfed the Marshall Islands in the 1990s, when successive governments were removed from office by the parliament due to the self-interested culture prevalent among MPs (Fraenkel, 2002). Since the constant removal of governments has inflicted lingering political scars in the Marshall Islands, the parliamentary role of making and breaking governments is widely scorned.

In relation to the redressing of grievances role, Marshallese MPs, just like their counterparts elsewhere in the Pacific region, tend to shun the role of redressing voters' grievances. This is particularly so because MPs consider their constituents to have an 'insatiable appetite' for salaries and allowances. This perception was well reflected by one MP, who claimed that 'expectations of the Marshallese people are just too high. Islanders expect MPs to give them money and commodities but it is impossible to help everyone'. Nevertheless, it is important to note that these very same MPs make unrealistic promises during election campaigns that fuel the situation (Fraenkel, 2002). For instance, according to Larmour (2006, p. 11), it is usual to see candidates 'offering services and gifts such as stereos and small cars to voters'. It follows from this background that MPs share a considerable responsibility for this situation.

Importantly, though, the implication that can be drawn from the shunning of redress of grievances and making and breaking parliamentary roles by MPs is that they need training programs (KSAs transfer) that can enable them to develop both MP to MP and MP to voter inter-personal skills. This is important, as ultimately, while parliamentary output traditionally depends on majority consensus among MPs (Tsebelis, 1995), the legitimacy of the Nitijela depends on the acceptance it garners from the public (Norton, 2000). In other words, while the effectiveness of training programs in transferring KSAs to MPs in the Nitijela is important, it also requires working together so that meaningful output can be produced. Secondly, if training programs can enhance MP-voter relationships, there is a potential for MPs to be re-elected, and that in turn can increase the KSAs MPs accrue from the experiences gained from working in parliaments over the years. This would also address the issue of institutional memory and capacity to mentor in the Nitijela.

Figure 5.1: Role Ranking by the Marshallese MPs



Specifically, when asked an open question on the roles that MPs felt less prepared to do, the responses were relatively varied and these have been captured in four main areas. Firstly, and not surprising given the above discussion, four out of 13 interviewed MPs raised the inability to work with other MPs as an issue of concern. This is particularly true, as MPs in the Nitijela more often than not work to represent their narrow interest (individual and those of their constituents), thereby ignoring the national interest (Fraenkel, 2002). The result of this state

of affairs is that the Nitijela formulates toothless and disjointed national policies (Chutaró & Heine, 2003). This situation calls for two important measures. First of all, MPs need to be trained on the broader meaning of their representation role so that they realise the importance of achieving national policies that lay the foundation for economic growth and development in their respective constituencies. Secondly, they need training in interpersonal and negotiation skills. In other words, MPs should be discouraged from the ‘win all’ culture that has over the years crippled the performance of the Nitijela

Additionally, eight out of 13 Marshallese MPs cited interpersonal skills as one of the most important skills that an MP must have in order to become effective. The need for interpersonal skills is evidenced in a quote from one MP who argued that ‘MPs need to learn how to work together for the sake of national interests instead of fighting every time for personal interests’. Yet another MP added that ‘there is so much unnecessary fighting in the Nitijela such that it is impossible to embark into new legislation and policies’. Indeed, there is a consensus among all the interviewed MPs that one of the reasons why the output of the Nitijela is so low is because MPs engage more often than not in personal attacks for personal gain. This view is captured in a statement by one who pointedly stated, ‘There are no debates in the Nitijela, just political campaigns by MPs’. Training programs that explain the importance of working together for the national interest could be useful in the Nitijela, particularly given that almost every MP accuses the rest of misbehaving.

Also, three MPs cited the inability to fulfil promises to voters as their greatest challenge. This, as explained above, is a result of unrealistic promises that most of these MPs make during their political campaigns. While ‘the big man culture’, in which an MP is expected to help everyone, has been apparent in the Marshall Islands for several decades (Larmour,

2006), one could argue that the time has come when the consequences of such a culture need to be questioned (Hughes & Gosarevski, 2004). This is because such traditions are partly responsible for fuelling a culture of corruption and nepotism evident in the country (Fraenkel, 2002; Larmour, 2006, 2008).

Importantly, though, Figure 5.1 above shows that the overwhelming majority of Marshallese MPs (11 out of 13) ranked legislation as the second most important role. This implies that MPs correctly see themselves as the ‘law makers’. This argument is supported by a further six MPs who ranked budget setting, which is a special form of legislation, as the third most important parliamentary role. This ranking result could be explained by the continuous democratic reform agenda in the Marshall Islands that sought to alter the chiefly-oriented 1979 constitution toward the current model that is closer to the Westminster system of responsible government (Banks, et al., 2010; Fraenkel, 2002). This result implies that any training program provided to the parliament should necessarily target the legislative role.

Furthermore, four MPs cited public speaking skills, such as making speeches, deliberating in the Nitijela, talking to the media and speaking to voters as the most important skill. This skill was deemed to be important because it underlies the very essence of the representation role, which in turn is one of the highly ranked parliamentary roles in the Marshall Islands.

Other common training needs expressed by the MPs, which are common across other case parliaments, include training in areas such as: (i) questioning and debating in parliament; (ii) scrutinising the budget in parliament; (iii) interpersonal skills; (iv) negotiation skills; (v) researching skills; (vi) training on IT; (vii) drafting legislation; (viii) public speaking skills; and (ix) training parliamentary staff.

5.3 The Parliament of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea

A total of ten MPs were interviewed which make up 10% of the total number of MPs in the PNG parliament. The choice of interviewees considered the inclusion of MPs from different ideological groupings in the parliament. Specifically, two independent MPs plus nine MPs belonging to eight different political parties were selected. The relatively large number of political parties in PNG¹² gives a clear indication of the cultural and political fragmentation that has shown that party loyalty has its foundation at clan level (Reilly, 2008).

The average length of terms served by the interviewed PNG MPs is slightly less than one and a half terms (six years). However, that figure is largely inflated. This is because the majority of the interviewed MPs (eight out of 11) were serving their first term. In fact, out of all interviewed MPs, only three were in their second or more terms in parliament. While alarming, this result is consistent with the literature on Pacific parliaments (such as Connell, 2006; Henderson, 2003; Morgan, 2005b; Reilly, 2000), which has consistently stated that the turnover rate of Pacific MPs is well above 50% in each and every election. Once again this result implies that the PNG parliament does not possess an adequate institutional memory necessary for the transfer of experience (KSAs) from experienced MPs to those newly elected. It is not surprising, then, that a considerable number of the interviewed MPs (six out of 11) said they were never mentored when they first entered the parliament.

¹² According to the July 2007 statistics, PNG has a total of 45 registered political parties.

Interestingly, all the remaining seven MPs who claimed to have been mentored belonged to the ruling coalition. This suggests a low level of organisation on the part of the opposition camp in PNG. Nevertheless, with more resources at the disposal of the ruling coalition, that situation is not surprising. Indeed, according to one of the senior opposition MPs the government of PNG provides ‘too meagre resources for opposition to flourish’. Feeney (2005) supports this view by pointing out that, given access to fewer resources in the opposition camp, it is not uncommon for MPs from the ruling coalition in PNG to bribe those in the opposition so as to gain their support on various parliamentary issues. Granted, it is not the job of any government to ensure that opposition camps ‘flourish’. However, the presence of a very weak opposition such as that in PNG effectively deprives the opposition of the ability to hold the government accountable, thereby undermining parliamentary democracy. An effective training program that highlights the importance of opposition in a parliamentary system may thus be vital in redressing this situation.

As was the case with the Marshallese MPs, most PNG MPs interviewed worked as civil servants at some level prior to entering parliament. In fact, only two identified themselves as businessmen. This situation has not helped to change the battered image of the PNG parliament, because these ‘former civil servants’ (MPs) are seen as an extension of the corrupt culture that is almost synonymous with the PNG government (Larmour, 2000, 2008; Larmour & Barcham, 2006). This argument is well echoed by an MP, who stated that ‘the public perception is that all MPs are crooks. The media does not help the situation either’. Nevertheless, with such a bad reputation and poor relations with the media, it was a surprise that not a single MP mentioned media and people skills as one of the KSAs they need (to be trained on) so as to enhance their performance.

5.3.1 The Impact of Training on the Performance of PNG MPs and their Parliament

Once again, performance of MPs and the parliament are measured by the extent to which perceptions of MPs provide reliable and valid measures of their performance and that of the parliament (Freeman, 1983). Perceptions regarding the performance of MPs and parliament were collected from the interviewed MPs.

Using an absolute measure (Wright, et al., 2005), the average amount of training received by the interviewed MPs is two days per year. The number of training days available to MPs ranged from zero to ten. However, as in the Marshall Islands, the majority of these training programs took place immediately after elections (induction programs), and there were many fewer in between elections, suggesting that training providers mainly concentrate on induction training programs.

An important observation to be made here is that experienced MPs in the PNG parliament were more likely to receive more training, both locally and abroad, than the new ones. This has resulted in a situation whereby certain MPs (mostly experienced) received training regularly, thereby gaining ample opportunities to refine their KSAs. Note, however, that despite being trained more, PNG still has a corrupt government. This situation may have implications on the performance of MPs, as discussed below.

5.3.1.1 Individual Level Performance of PNG MPs

Interviewed MPs overwhelmingly perceive training programs provided as generally ineffective. Specifically, ten out of eleven regard the programs as being too ineffective to produce a significant impact on their performance. These MPs came to this conclusion mainly because they perceive the process of designing and delivering programs for their parliament to be faulty. Specific issues pertaining to this general view against training programs in the PNG parliament are discussed below.

The main problem pertaining to program ineffectiveness, cited by nearly all MPs (10 out of 11), is the fact that training programs are not the result of a comprehensive training needs assessment (TNA). As a result, training content, delivery techniques and the timing of delivering has been mostly perceived as largely irrelevant. For instance, MPs had varied reactions to how simple training programs are. In particular, while eight MPs complained that the training provided to them was too complicated, another five raised their concerns that training was too basic for their liking and that it involved ‘too much spoon-feeding’. This suggests that training programs provided to MPs have failed to accommodate the diverse academic and parliamentary experiences of MPs. It is in this context that a TNA should be considered a must for training providers in the future.

One MP summed up the benefits that a comprehensive TNA would bring to training programs by pointing out that the use of a TNA prior to designing and delivering training can ‘not only help to determine areas of focus in training but also help in factoring in differences in education and experiences among MPs’. This argument is consistent with the contemporary parliamentary training literature from researchers such as Hossain (2004), Lam (2011) and Fox and Korris (2011). There is clearly a need for training programs to be designed in a manner that accommodates the various abilities of MPs in order for them to

have a significant impact on MP performance. Indeed, according to one, training has to consider educational and experience diversity that MPs always have so that ‘is not too basic that it discourages the educated and experienced MPs yet it should not be too complicated to confuse the new MPs and less educated ones’. This kind of thinking about training programs in the PNG parliament makes sense because, as one MP rightly pointed out, in reality the only qualification MPs need to possess ‘is winning elections’.

Other issues of concern relating to the ineffectiveness of training programs involved the issues of timing, delivery and the location where training session took place. Nine MPs expressed concern that training programs were provided on an *ad hoc* basis, something that has constantly made it difficult for MPs to attend, particularly MPs from remote constituencies. The *ad hoc* nature of the design and delivery of training programs often means that training is too shallow to produce significant effects on the performance of MPs, as Kunnath (2011) suggested. Four MPs also said that training sessions that take place away from their voters and families give them an opportunity to concentrate their minds on training. Study tours and other forms of training sessions organised outside PNG and/or those taking place as far from public attention as possible were highly recommended.

All the interviewed MPs thought that training programs were too didactic. The issue of too many ‘lectures’ that was raised by the Marshallese MPs was again also raised by PNG MPs. One experienced MP lamented that the lack of discussion, group work and question time during training led him to think that training providers were ‘remote controlling him’. This reaction is to be expected, as theories of adult education and training examined in Chapter Two demand that MPs be trained using experiential and practical approaches that make use of valuable past experiences.

Another issue that came up during the interviews relates to the length of training sessions and training content. Eight MPs were concerned that sessions were too short yet there was always too much material that was meant to be communicated to MPs. As a result, MPs tended to be overloaded with excessive amounts of information that prevented the smooth transfer of KSAs. They could not digest the information. A more measured and effective training program that focuses on KSAs transfer, rather than covering vast amount of materials, as Kunnath (2011) suggests, may address this problem. This issue is explained further in the following chapter.

Relatedly, instead of training programs that provide general information about parliaments, the majority of PNG MPs (10 out of 11) proposed skill-transfer oriented training programs be provided to them. These are the kind of skills that MPs can directly apply to their daily tasks. For instance, all the interviewed MPs proposed programs that focus on financial management, auditing, asset management, project proposal writing (fund raising skills) and implementation (delivering projects to their constituencies). There is a unique training need for MPs as they receive Constituency Development Funds (CDFs) on an annual basis (Allen & Hasnain, 2010). It follows that training that can enable them to manage those funds to the benefit of their constituencies is crucial for possible re-election bids and the longevity of their political careers in general, something which in turn has the potential to produce positive and significant impact on the performance of PNG MPs and its parliament.

5.3.1.2 The Performance of the PNG Parliament

The majority of the interviewed MPs (eight out of 11), adjudged training programs to have failed significantly in terms of positively affecting the performance of the parliament. Reasons provided fall into four main categories: (i) committee dysfunction; (ii) hegemony of the executive over the parliament; (iii) the failure of parliamentary staff to provide technical support; and (iv) the failure of the parliament to enforce rules and regulations that govern its operations. These are now examined.

Committee dysfunction, which seems to be symptomatic of the inability of Pacific parliaments to hold governments accountable, is also a problem in the PNG parliament. The committee system is in fact virtually non-existent. According to nearly half the MPs (five out of 11), they hardly meet or undertake the roles they are meant to perform. This has led to a situation where bills, which as in most parliaments are almost exclusively introduced by the executive branch of government, are passed without significant contribution from the parliament. A more effective training program on how committee systems work would help to address this unsatisfactory situation.

Relatedly, successive executive governments in PNG have managed to dominate the parliamentary agenda. In fact, according to an experienced MP who is a veteran of five consecutive parliamentary terms, 'the actual introduction, deliberation and passing of bills in PNG takes place at the cabinet level'. This is because, in all cases, bills approved by the cabinet to be tabled in parliament swiftly get passed in parliament without proper debate and/or even general understanding of the bills themselves by MPs. Granted parliamentary agendas are usually dominated by governments even in advanced parliaments like those in neighbouring Australia and New Zealand, nevertheless, the inability of PNG MPs to engage

in informed parliamentary debates before bills pass into law is a direct result of a lack of KSAs that could be addressed by more effective training programs.

Another common factor that is attributed to the ineffectiveness of the PNG parliament is the inability of parliamentary staff to provide significant technical support to MPs. Given the high rate of turnover, the inability of parliamentary staff to step up and guide new MPs in particular makes it difficult for the parliament to perform as expected. This is because MPs, who are at the centre of the operations of the parliament, do not get proper assistance from parliamentary staff that can help them perform at acceptable standards. However, as explained previously, the lack of quality KSAs both on the side of MPs and parliamentary staff can only be addressed in the presence of effective training programs, which according to most interviewed PNG MPs, do not exist in the PNG parliament.

The final reason behind the ineffectiveness of the parliament can be traced to the failure of the parliament to enforce rules and regulations that govern its operations. This situation has hampered its smooth operation. For instance, according to one MP, 'Parliamentary sittings are less than those stipulated by the PNG Constitution. Instead of seating for a total of nine weeks, the parliament sat for 30 days'. Yet another stated that, even when parliamentary sessions are in progress, they 'normally start at 11am instead of 9am and sometimes most of the MPs leave after lunch'. This has resulted in a situation where the PNG parliament fails to reach the quorum needed to pass important bills rather too often.

The ineffectiveness of both MPs and the parliament has led the public to have negative perceptions of the law-making institution to such a degree that, according to one veteran MP, 'all MPs are regarded as crooks by the public'. A more effective training program on ethics

could be used to help modify behaviours and in a manner that is in line with better parliamentary performance.

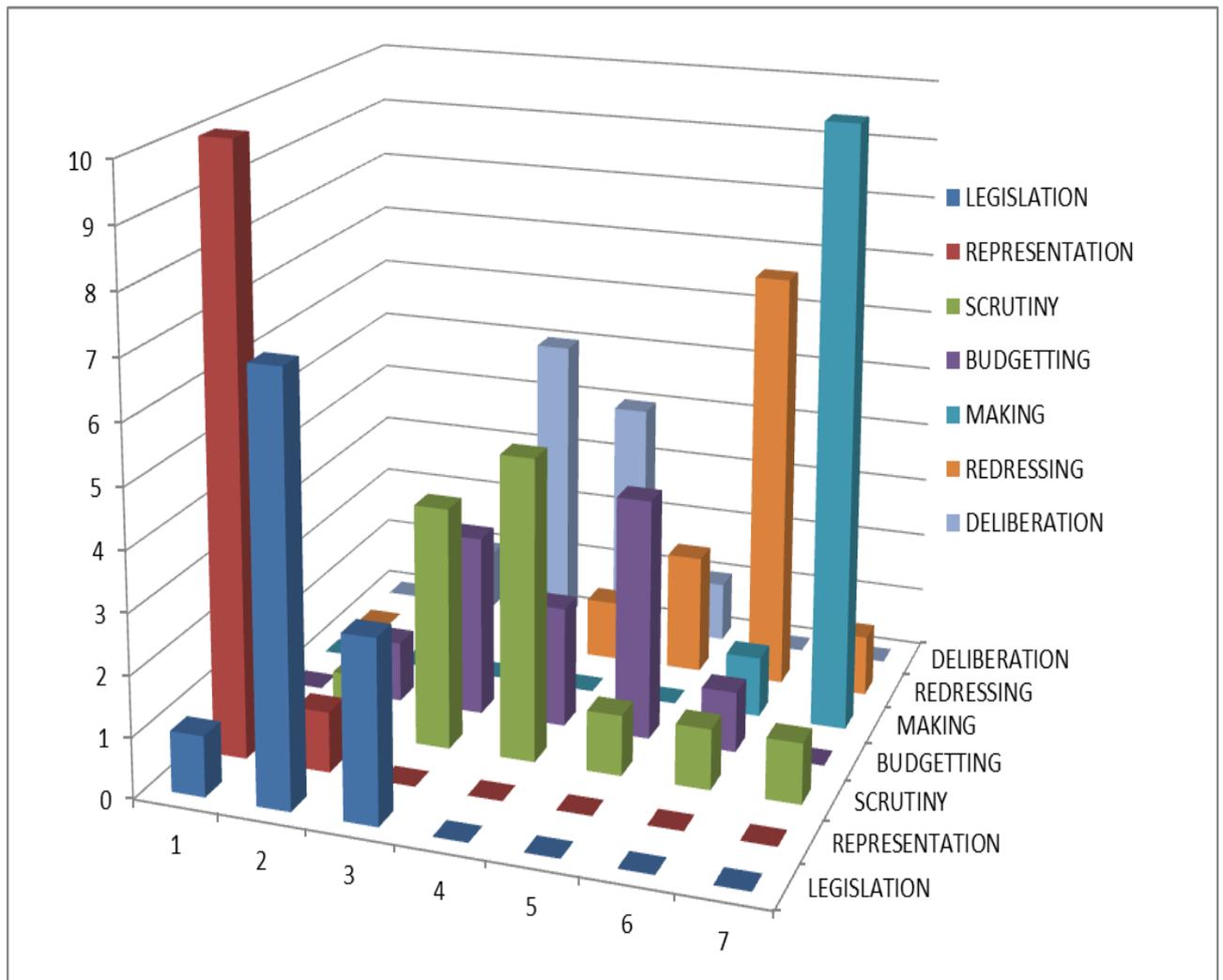
6.3.1.3 Training Needs as Expressed by PNG MPs

As explained in the first case parliament, a closed question was set for MPs to rank seven parliamentary roles provided to them in order of importance. The results are clearly seen in Figure 5.2 below, which shows that an overwhelming majority of interviewed MPs (10 out of 11) ranked representation as the most important role. It follows that MPs largely measure their performance against how well they execute their representative role. It should be noted that to MPs representation generally means providing projects such as the building of physical infrastructure in their constituencies. Infrastructure includes hospitals, town halls, tarmac roads and airports, to mention but a few. These projects, as elaborated further later, are tied to CDFs, which are annually disbursed to MPs by the government to help them develop their constituencies (Allen & Hasnain, 2010). It is not surprising, then, that most PNG MPs (eight out of 11) cited training on securing and implementing projects as urgently needed in their respective constituencies.

The vast majority (ten out of 11 MPs) cited securing and implementing projects in their constituencies as the single most difficult role they have faced and continue to face. The difficulty emanates from the perceived lack of KSAs among MPs to perform the representation role as defined by project delivery. MPs explained this in two ways. Firstly, they mentioned the need for KSAs that can help them to secure funds over and above what the government routinely provides. The main issue here, as one put it, 'is knowing how to work the system by understanding who to talk with to make things move'. Since this need is

unique, training providers have continuously overlooked it. As one MP argued, ‘MPs in PNG have not been exposed to proper training on how to secure project funds’.

Figure 5.2 Role ranking by PNG MPs



The second apparent difficulty faced by MPs in trying to perform their representation role is in the actual implementation of projects after securing funds, particularly guaranteed funds from government. The implementation entails a process that involves planning, budgeting and actually rolling-out a particular project on the ground. The lack of KSAs in the

aforementioned areas is so dire that one MP stated that ‘financial management is a problem. They (the government) gave me ten million *kina* but how can I budget and use it so I can make all my people happy?’ Yet another MP lamented, ‘I have received (from the government) seventeen million *kina* without any explanation on how to use it. They should give us a breakdown on how we must use the money’. It is not surprising then that nearly all the MPs (10 out of 11) wanted training programs provided to them to focus on: (i) basic financial budgeting, reporting and management; (ii) basic auditing; (iii) basic asset management; and (iv) how to secure and channel funds to constituencies. From these training needs, one could surmise that MPs urgently need some basic training on project and financial management.

Figure 5.2 above shows that while only one MP ranked legislation as the most important role, seven out of 11 ranked it as the second most important parliamentary role. This is to be expected as the constitution is often blamed for dysfunction in PNG. As one MP said, ‘The PNG constitution is adopted from colonial powers and therefore it should be revisited and amended’. That said, the majority of MPs (eight out of the eleven) accept the fact that the quality of debate in the parliament is poor. Even more alarming is the fact that these MPs overwhelmingly indicate that the parliament plays a very small role in policy making. For instance, one MP pointed out that ‘most of the deliberation is done at the National Council (cabinet) level’. This suggests that the PNG parliament is but a rubber stamp parliament, as it does not provide any significant contribution to legislation. This conclusion is supported by the fact that seven MPs stated that the committee system is essentially dysfunctional in their parliament due to little or no (financial and technical) support from the government. As one MP put it, ‘committees are dysfunctional because no funds are allocated to them. All funds are sent to government departments’. This is alarming because one would expect most of the

scrutiny and serious debates to take place at the committee level as is the case in established democratic parliaments such as Australia (English & Guthrie, 2000).

At the extreme opposite, Figure 5.2 shows that nearly all MPs (10 out of 11) ranked the making and unmaking of governments last. This is not compatible with what is actually happening on the ground. Indeed, since independence, no single PNG government has survived a whole term without facing a vote of no confidence from the parliament (Reilly, 2006). Furthermore, since party discipline in PNG is very low (Alasia, 1997; Chand & Duncan, 2004), MPs have never shied away from shifting their allegiances and voting out even the coalition governments they are part of. This result is puzzling because the interviews covered, almost equally, MPs from the ruling coalition and those from the opposition. Nevertheless, since there is no evidence that supports this sudden ‘total dislike’ of the making and unmaking of governments role by MPs, one could argue that those interviewed were simply giving the researcher a response they thought most people would like to hear or they were deliberately ignoring the high turn-over of parliaments in order to paint a better picture of the real situation.

Just as with the Marshallese MPs, most of the interviewed PNG MPs were uncomfortable with the redress of grievances parliamentary role: seven out of 11 ranked that role last but one. This is a slight contradiction, as 10 out of 11 ranked the representation role as the most important. Once again the issue of culture largely explains this paradox as the same MPs who overwhelmingly think representation is the most important role have little regard for their redress of grievances role. The *wantok* (‘one talk’) system in Melanesia societies (which includes Vanuatu) demands that MPs provide special ‘favours’ to friends, mates, relatives or individuals that come from their constituencies (Mana, 1999). The favours, which are usually

reinforced by unrealistic promises during elections, include but are not limited to giving out items of food and offering employment to people from the same geographical areas as the MP (Levine, 1999). The result is that voters demand to be helped even with personal issues such as school fees for their children. As argued in the case of the Marshall Islands, this culture is unsustainable and only serves to worsen corruption (Larmour, 2008; Larmour & Barcham, 2006). It is in this context that this thesis argues for more effective training programs that can change behaviours of MPs, particularly in terms of their ethical conduct when dealing with public resources.

The issue of academic qualification raised by the Marshallese MPs arose again in PNG, albeit with fewer MPs supporting the idea that there should be a minimum academic requirement for eligibility for parliamentary careers. Four out of 11 PNG MPs cited tertiary education as one of the most important qualifications an MP needs to be effective. To these MPs, tertiary education is important because it provides MPs with confidence and technical know-how pertaining to the execution of their parliamentary roles and responsibilities. For instance, one stated that, 'eligibility to an MP position should consider tertiary level education. All the uneducated MPs have not spoken one word in parliament for the past four years now. This is because only tertiary education can give them confidence and ability to contribute in debates'. Yet another argued that there should be no negotiation on minimum education requirements for aspiring MPs. He/she equated the parliament to boards of directors in profit-making corporations and argued that 'the parliament is the highest board in the country and thus it cannot afford to have uneducated MPs among its membership to make decisions on behalf of the country'. This viewpoint is, however, not expected to be embraced by other MPs, as the average education level of those interviewed MPs in the PNG parliament was secondary school level – only three held university degrees.

Three out of 11 cite the understanding of Information and Computer Technology (ICT) as one of the most important skills for improving MP research capabilities. It is interesting to note that, according to a senior officer in the parliament, UNDP embarked on a project to install the internet in the parliament, only to cancel the project before it came to fruition. Misunderstandings between UNDP and the Office of the Speaker are cited as the reason behind the cancellation. While details of the apparent misunderstanding are not known to the researcher, one wonders why the Office of the Speaker would allow any such misunderstanding to stop the project, since ICT is very important to the parliament. This situation could perhaps explain why the overwhelming majority of MPs (10 out of 11) suggested that they be trained in areas that focus on securing and implementing projects from both internal (the PNG government) and external sources (such as UNDP).

Rather surprising though is the fact that only two MPs thought they needed training on interpersonal skills. This was unexpected as the parliament is extremely fragmented by the narrow interests of MPs, based on the *wantok* system. That no single government survived a vote of no confidence and went on to serve a full term since independence in 1975 testifies to the depth of the fragmentation. It follows, then, that, under normal circumstances, interpersonal skills, negotiation skills and team work skills should be in high demand. The fact that very few MPs think training in such areas is crucial only serves to provide further evidence on the need to train MPs on the importance of compromise and choosing the national interest over narrow self-interest.

Other common training needs expressed by PNG MPs include training in areas such as: (i) asking questions and debating in parliament; (ii) leadership skills; (iii) people management

skills; (iv) training on how to develop networking; (v) training on IT; (vi) training parliamentary staff; (vii) basic financial budgeting, reporting and management; (viii) basic auditing; (ix) basic asset management; and (x) how to secure and channel funds to constituencies.

5.4 The Parliament of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

A total of 13 MPs were interviewed, which comprises 20% of the MPs in the Timorese parliament. The choice of the interviewees considered both gender and party political party affiliation. Consequently, a total of five female and eight male MPs were selected for interview. These 13 Timorese MPs were selected from seven different political parties represented in the parliament. However, five were selected from the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretlin) party for, even though Fretlin is now in opposition, it commands the greatest number of MPs in a single political party in the Timor-Leste parliament. In fact, the single reason why it is not in power is that five relatively smaller parties agreed to form a government, which left the legendary revolutionary party, Fretlin, in opposition (Banks, et al., 2010). One of the interviewed Timorese veteran MPs stated that the ruling coalition is ‘a forgery because Fretlin is the only party that won most seats in the last election’.

The average length of terms served by the interviewed MPs is slightly less than two terms (eight years). Specifically, only two of the 13 interviewed were serving their first term. This result generally indicates a significantly lower turnover rate of MPs in Timor-Leste than in other Pacific countries. At the time of interview, the young Timorese parliament was in its second-ever term. Note, however, that the turnover of MPs in Timor-Leste could be worse

than the data provided above seems to suggest. This is because all 11 interviewed MPs serving their second term belong to the revered group of MPs who directly participated in the independence struggle. These, as Keuleers (2004) points out, are the symbols of the revolutionary movement which took place in the 1990s and therefore are practically beyond rebuff by the Timorese people. The turnover rate among non-revolutionary MPs in Timor-Leste may just be as high as that facing MPs elsewhere in the Pacific region.

That said, the two serving their first term at the time of the interview said that they were well mentored. According to them, mentoring and even formal training mostly takes place at the committee level. Since by law every MP in Timor-Leste must belong to at least one committee (United Nations Development Program, 2006), mentorship in the parliament is relatively impressive. However, there was some concern from older MPs that newly elected MPs had ‘a-know all mentality’ and therefore mentoring them had at times proven to be a cumbersome task.

Nearly all those interviewed (12 out of 13 MPs) worked as civil servants prior to entering the parliament. In fact, only one identified himself as a private practice lawyer. Interestingly, 10 who were civil servants worked for the government as either school teachers or university lecturers. This suggests that since parliamentary careers require people skills, the teaching profession potentially provides possible political career aspirants with the tools that are vital for success in political-related careers. This may help to explain the fact that, unlike other interviewed Pacific MPs, not a single Timorese MP mentioned communication with the media and public speaking skills as areas training providers and training programs should focus on.

5.4.1 The Impact of Training on Performance of Timorese MPs and their Parliament

As in other case parliaments, performance at both individual and parliamentary levels is measured by the extent to which perceptions of MPs provide reliable and valid measures of performance of MPs and that of case parliaments (Freeman, 1983).

Once again training was conceptualised and measured using an absolute measure. Here, the amount of training received by the Timorese MPs is explained by the average number of training days available to MPs each year (Wright, et al., 2005). The data were obtained directly from the MPs during interviews. The average number of training days available to MPs in the Timor-Leste parliament stands at nine in a typical parliamentary year. The number of training days available to Timorese MPs range from zero to 19. However, as in previous case parliaments, experienced MPs dominated access to training programs. That said, on average it is clear that Timorese MPs enjoy a many more training hours than MPs in the previous case parliaments, that is, five days a year in the Marshall Islands and two days in PNG. By the logic of the theories of HRD (see Wright, et al., 2005), the impact of training should be greater in the Timorese parliament. An impact assessment is done below.

5.4.1.1 Individual Level Performance of Timorese MPs

Despite being exposed to more training programs, Timorese MPs roundly adjudged training programs provided in the Timor-Leste parliament to be ineffective. Specifically, 11 out of 13 consider training programs to be too ineffectual to have a significant impact on their performance. The fact that most of the interviewed female MPs (four out of five) also adjudge these programs to be ineffective suggests that there is no gender disparity as far as

MPs' assessment of training programs is concerned. Consequently, as in the previous case parliaments, data analysis for Timor-Leste parliament does not consider gender difference.

This result is particularly ironic since the average educational level of those interviewed was a university degree. This average was punctuated by two MPs possessing diploma certificates and another two master's degrees. As implied in Chapter One, this result contradicts the assumption inherent in HRD theories suggesting that the more educated an MP is, the better the impact of training will be (Brunnelo & Nedio, 2001). Interestingly though, the result is consistent with the study conducted in the Ugandan parliament, which reported a zero correlation between possession of a tertiary qualification by MPs and their ability to effectively and efficiently perform their duties (Alabi, 2009). Therefore this result raises a question on the suitability of HRD models in informing and/or assessing training programs targeting MPs.

That said, as was the case in previously examined case parliaments, the Timorese MPs have generally questioned the suitability of training programs provided to them, with a particular focus on the design and delivery of training programs. As with previous case parliaments, too, the main flaw associated with training programs provided in the Timor-Leste parliament can be traced back to the lack of a comprehensive TNA prior to designing and delivering training. Furthermore, also as in preceding case parliaments, the majority of those interviewed (11 out of 13) raised the issue of the lack of needs assessment by parliamentary strengthening organisations.

A typical example of this is the majestic library donated to the parliament by an international organisation. However, since this library is full of English books and other materials in the

same language, very few MPs have been able to make use of the facility due to the obvious language barrier. Another example of how the lack of a TNA hurts genuine efforts by international organisations intending to strengthen the parliament involves the generous donation of Macintosh laptops to all Timorese MPs. Without belittling the good intention of the international organisation that provided such a donation, the majority of MPs are said to have either sold or given theirs away as gifts because they did not have the KSAs needed to use the equipment to advantage. As one MP rightly put it, ‘international organisations should stop just dishing out resources to our parliament without conducting a needs assessment because it is simply a waste of money. The best way is to first teach MPs how to use resources (such as the library and laptops) to their advantage before just giving them out’. The lack of a comprehensive TNA in the parliament has led to issues of concerns which are further examined below.

Firstly, training programs have been criticised by the majority of MPs (11 out of 13) for ignoring the unique cultural context and the evolution of democracy in Timor-Leste. This is important, as while the independence struggle and post-independence violence in the country continues to shape the political scene (Keuleers, 2004), the semi-presidential system adopted (Banks, et al., 2010) makes the parliament of Timor-Leste structurally different from a typical Westminster system of government. This means that the majority of training materials provided to MPs have unfortunately been inappropriate. As one MP explained they ‘are copied from advanced Westminster-style parliaments’ and are therefore mostly irrelevant to members of the Timor-Leste parliament. This has often led to training programs that have been perceived as confusing. Some training providers have ignored the different political system in Timor-Leste when designing their training programs. This was particularly the case

with training on standing orders, which was cited by ten MPs as being confusing for the reasons mentioned above.

Furthermore, one of the unique features of the parliament is the use of Portuguese and Tetum as the official languages (Banks, et al., 2010). Since most training programs by NGOs have been in English, understanding training content has been one of the main challenges for MPs. This situation was well reflected by a new MP who stated that he could not learn anything during training sessions because ‘he does not understand English’. The reason behind this is that the transfer of KSAs, particularly when dealing with important concepts, is usually lost in translation during training sessions. The situation is made worse by the fact that, even though Portuguese is the official language in Timor-Leste, the majority of MPs do not master it well and understand better the local pidgin, Tetum. This means that even training programs provided in Portuguese cannot be understood by most MPs. Moreover, the interviewed MPs who are fluent in Portuguese lamented the fact that most parliamentary materials such as pamphlets, books and web-based documents are provided in English. This means that Timor-Leste, being a non-English-speaking country, loses much in terms of research. It is because of this challenge that a considerable number of MPs (9 out of 13) have suggested that all training materials be translated into Tetum ahead of training sessions. As evidence of the seriousness of this matter, Timorese MPs have roundly (10 out of 13) proposed that training be provided by individuals who can speak the local language. This proposition is dealt with in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Another issue raised against training programs provided to MPs is that training programs are usually not job-specific. Instead, they are more general information provision sessions rather than specific parliamentary KSA transferring sessions. This situation is summed up by one

MP who labelled training programs in the parliament as ‘shallow’. This situation is often made worse by the poor choice of training delivery techniques, as training providers, for reasons known only to them, tend to overuse didactic techniques. Such delivery techniques only serve to make programs more cumbersome for MPs, as the appropriate methods should deploy adult education and training delivery techniques discussed in Chapter Three. Indeed, most MPs (10 out of 13) demanded that they be exposed to training methods that are participatory and hands-on, such as simulations and mock sessions. They also demanded that training providers allow ample time for question and answer sessions during training sessions.

Another criticism was that training programs were too short and congested to allow for a smooth transfer of KSAs. This problem, as expected, has often led to information overload, which has compromised the ability of MPs to digest the materials that are being communicated to them (Kunnath, 2011).

Relatedly, the frequency of training programs seems to be sparse. Addressing the irregularity of these programs has been cited as one of the issues that could help MPs to have a more systematic learning process. As one veteran MP stated, ‘Timorese MPs need some comprehensive and regular training programs so as to update them with modern parliamentary skills’. However, MPs are generally guilty of poor attendance at programs. While some deliberately decide to stay away because they consider them ‘a waste of time’, the timing of programs has also contributed to the attendance problem. It is in this context that one MP proposed that programs be during parliamentary sessions so as to maximise attendance.

5.4.1.2 The Performance of the Parliament of Timor-Leste

In relation to the perception of MPs about their individual performance, 11 out of 13 interviewed consider that programs have failed in affecting the performance of the Timor-Leste parliament. Various factors have been cited as the reason behind this situation. These are addressed below.

The first reason pertains to the inability of the parliament to ably provide oversight of the executive government. This is explained by two main factors. Firstly, the committee system in the Timor-Leste parliament, while not as dysfunctional as in other case parliaments, is not yet functioning as adeptly as those in advanced parliaments such as Australia and New Zealand. This situation has crippled the oversight ability of the parliament, as committees are supposed to be responsible for providing the platform upon which governments are scrutinised (English & Guthrie, 2000). Secondly, poor media scrutiny of the government and/or the poor media skills of MPs mean that there is no vocal media providing oversight of the executive in Timor-Leste. As argued repeatedly in this thesis, both of these two factors can be reversed by exposing MPs to more effective training programs.

Another factor that affects the performance of the parliament is the ability of the PM to use his/her discretion to choose ministers who do not have to be MPs (Shoesmith, 2008). This has widened the gap between ministers and MPs, as ministers do not feel that they are responsible to the parliament and, in turn, to voters; rather they feel responsibility to the PM who literally ‘employs’ them (Shoesmith, 2008). The position of the parliament is further undermined by the fact that the parliament neither appoints the PM nor does it have powers to confirm ministers appointed by the PM (Shoesmith, 2008) because he/she is nominated by a coalition

of parties with a parliamentary majority and is formally appointed by the president (Monge, 2006). Furthermore, the parliament is weakened by a constitutional provision that allows the cabinet to issue decrees independent of the parliament (Shoesmith, 2008). The situation is exacerbated by the insistence of donor countries on concentrating resources on the executive so as to reduce poverty and induce growth (Shoesmith, 2008). As is the case in many developing countries (Rugumamu, 2008), such a concentration of resources has only served to undermine parliament in Timor-Leste.

However, uniquely compared with other case parliaments is the proposition by MPs to have training activities in their parliament concentrated on the parliament as an institution. The majority of MPs (11 out of 13) suggest that programs would have produced greater impact if they targeted parliamentary staff rather than MPs. This is because, unlike MPs, the careers of parliamentary staff are not subject to election cycles and thus training them would improve institutional memory (Besly, 2010; Kinyondo, 2011; Thomas, 2003). The possibility that capable parliamentary staff can provide technical support to MPs and train them, thereby getting rid of language barrier problems associated with current training programs, is another benefit that concentrating training on parliamentary staff can potentially bring. Details concerning this issue are examined in Chapter Eight.

Finally, the last issue associated with poor parliamentary performance in Timor-Leste is the inability of the parliament to interpret and subsequently enforce parliamentary standing orders. Indeed, a considerable number of MPs (seven out of 13) indicated that there is a poor standard of interpretation of standing orders among MPs; the most basic rules in the Timor-Leste parliament are not respected by MPs, and are without consequence. For instance, poor attendance at parliamentary sessions is one of the biggest issues facing the parliament and

achieving a quorum has often been difficult. According to a veteran MP, this situation is mainly because ‘most of the MPs in the Timor-Leste parliament hold more than one job’. Also, although standing orders in Timor-Leste very explicitly state that if an MP misses five sittings he/she has to vacate their seat, and while one expects having such a provision would discipline MPs in terms of improving their attendances as standing orders are considered to be only ‘second to the constitution’ with regards to being a legally binding document (United Nations Development Program, 2006, p. 11), the provision has never been exercised. This has led to a situation where, more often than not, the parliament fails to pass legislation as a result of not reaching the required quorum.

Unlike in previous case parliaments, most of those interviewed overwhelmingly raised the need for training in ethics and codes of conduct. Specifically, ten of the interviewed Timorese MPs were concerned about the lack of ethics among MPs and said that training in that area is urgently needed. Their concerns were generally explained by the following: (i) lack of teamwork and constant personal attacks among Timorese MPs; (ii) constant non-response from both the ministers and departmental officers when queried by MPs; and (iii) poor attendance among MPs, which is partly caused by the guarantee MPs have, in getting a life pension upon serving for only 42 consecutive months in parliament.

5.4.1.3 Training Needs as Expressed by the Timorese MPs

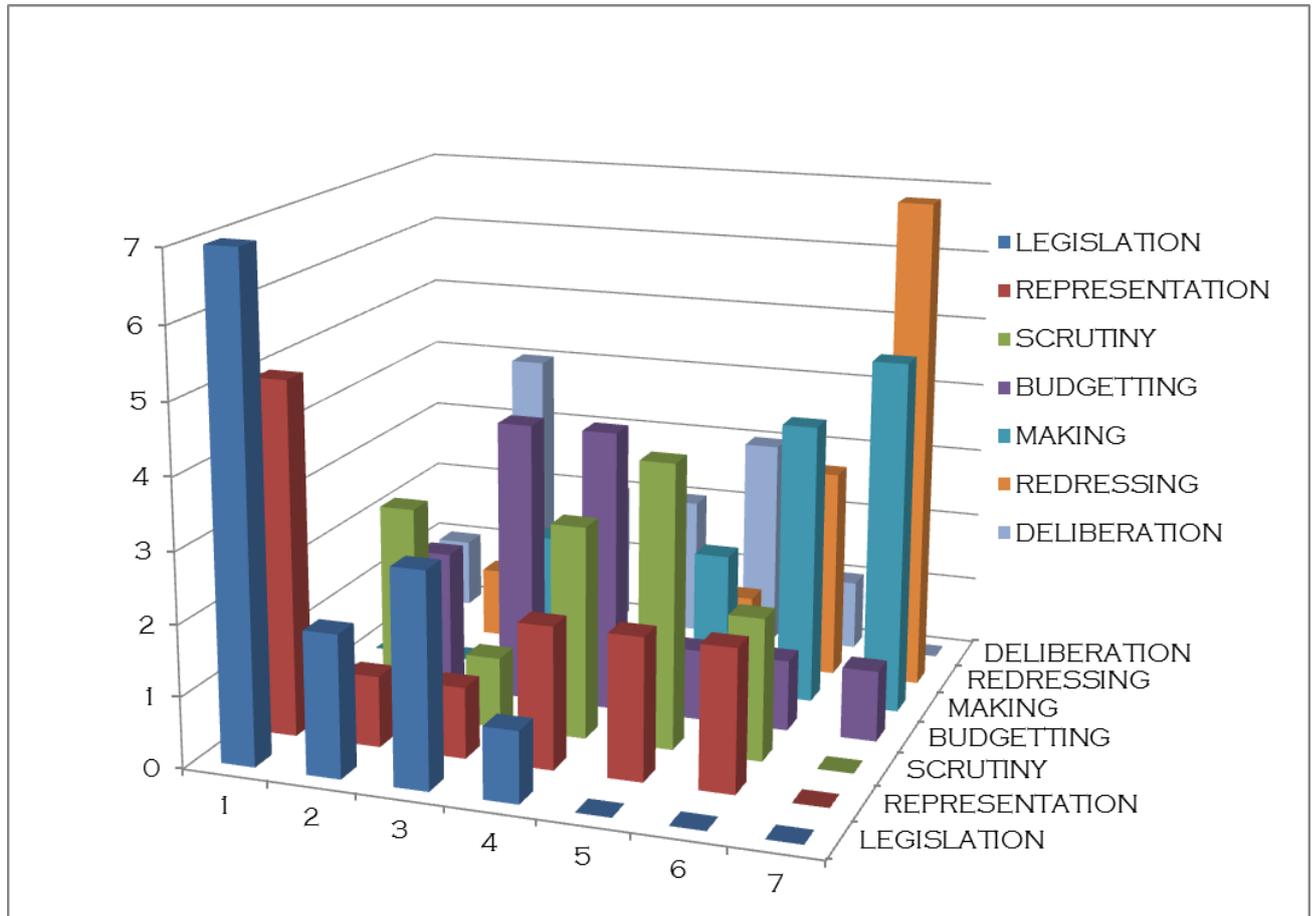
As explained when discussing previous case parliaments, a closed question was set for MPs to rank seven parliamentary roles in order of importance. It can be seen from Figure 5.3

below that a little over half the Timorese MPs (seven out of 13) ranked legislation as the most important role they perform. This could be explained by the fact that, being a relatively young nation, Timor-Leste is still in the process of discovering how best to protect her natural resources and citizens through legislation. It is not surprising then that majority of the interviewed MPs (nine out of 13) cited legislation as the single most important parliamentary role and the one they would like to constantly receive trained on.

Interestingly though, Figure 5.3 clearly shows that the majority of those interviewed (seven out of 13) ranked the parliamentary role of redressing grievances as the least important. This can be explained by the fact that there is a proportional electoral representation system in Timor-Leste that provides for an arrangement in which constituents vote for political parties rather than candidates (J. Johnson, 2005). Consequently, the first loyalty of elected MPs lies to their parties and not the voters. It follows from this argument that, unlike other Pacific countries, MPs in Timor-Leste do not feel under pressure to return favours to constituents. In fact, strictly speaking, they technically do not have constituencies, as constituents vote for parties and, in turn, the percentage of votes won is reflected in the number of MPs a particular party is allowed to have in parliament.

The effect of a proportional representation electoral system on the execution of the parliamentary role of representation in Timor-Leste is evidenced by five out of the 13 interviewed MPs, who stated that representation is the most difficult role they have to perform. As one rightly put it, ‘we have a proportional system here; therefore it is very difficult to give adequate attention to constituents’.

Figure 5.3: Role ranking by Timorese MPs



Only three out of 13 MPs cite lack of teamwork among MPs as the biggest challenge they face in parliament. One who did expressed the view that ‘Timorese MPs, particularly the new ones, need people skills. The win-all mentality instead of compromise is wrong’. Another added that, during parliamentary debates, ‘everything is quickly personalised and insults start to fly from one corner of the parliament to the other’. Moreover, the main cause for the lack of teamwork is extreme partisanship which results from strict party discipline among MPs. This is an interesting result, since, while in other Pacific parliaments party indiscipline has constantly caused political instability (Alasia, 1997; Chand & Duncan, 2004), the relatively well-established party system in Timor-Leste has polarised MPs by making them work

strictly along party lines. As one MP stated, ‘Normally political parties impose their agenda on their MPs. Sometimes the agenda goes against standing orders and therefore they affect the performance of MPs’. Furthermore, another MP lamented that ‘sometimes good bills are rejected just because of partisanship’. Yet another argued that ‘political parties are a hindrance to the smooth operation of the Timorese parliament’. It is not surprising, then, that the majority of those interviewed (nine out of 13) cited interpersonal skills as the area where the parliament needs the most training. Granted partisanship in terms of differing political ideologies (left-centre-right ideologies) exists in virtually all parliaments, including those that are advanced, since the partisanship in Timor-Leste is not strictly ideological (Chand & Duncan, 2004), we are convinced that effective training can help MPs to make their decisions over and above petty party politics.

Other common training needs expressed by the MPs, which are common across other case parliaments, include training in areas such as: (i) parliamentary rules and procedures; (ii) questioning and debating skills; (iii) team work skills; (iv) researching skills; (v) training on IT; (vi) drafting legislation; (vii) networking skills; (viii) training parliamentary staff; (ix) training on how members of the ruling coalition can scrutinise the government without risking instability; and (x) training on scrutinising the budget.

5.5 The Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga

A total of 11 MPs were interviewed, which is 42% of the total number in the Tongan parliament. Since the monarchical constitution of Tonga does not provide for political parties

(Banks, et al., 2010), the selection of MPs to be interviewed was based on whether or not a particular MP belongs to the nobility. However, unavailability of noble MPs, who, to be fair, are mostly extremely busy since they primarily occupy senior positions such as cabinet positions, made it possible for the researcher to interview only one noble Tongan MP. Hence 10 out of the 11 interviewed are commoners. However, this composition is not far from the representational mix in the Tongan parliament, as commoner MPs form the majority in the parliament. At the time of the interviews, 17 out of the total 26 MPs in the parliament were commoners.

The average length of terms served by those interviewed is four (12 years). However, this figure is largely inflated, because almost half the interviewed MPs (five out of 11) were serving their first-ever term. The average was therefore inflated by the fact that the rest of the interviewees (who are largely reformists) had served three or more parliamentary terms. This can be explained by the democratic movement that started in late 1980s and continues today (Banks, et al., 2010; Campbell, 1994; Hills, 1991; James, 1994; Leslie & Heather, 2007). Five of the 11 interviewed form a core group of commoner MPs who have become the mainstay in the Tongan parliament since the genesis of the people reform movement in the late 1980s (Campbell, 2005; Powles, 2009; Ward, Vaea, Halapua, Taufe'ulungaki, & Fonua, 2009).

The vast majority of MPs (nine out of 11) stated that they have never been mentored. This can be explained by the absence of political parties in Tonga, the platform that has been used elsewhere in the Pacific for mentoring purposes. Also, it has to be noted that, even if noble MPs are in the minority in the parliament, they have succeeded in forming government with the help of commoner MPs. While this phenomenon is explained in more detail in Chapter

Nine, the fact that the ruling nobility persuaded the commoner MPs to join them and form the government means that commoners in the parliament do not have the capacity to organise themselves as a formidable parliamentary group akin to an opposition party. This, of course, has implications particularly for the ability of the parliament to hold the government to account.

5.5.1 The Impact of Training on the Performance of Tongan MPs and their Parliament

Performance (at individual and parliamentary levels) in the parliament were once again measured by the extent to which perceptions of MPs provide reliable and valid measures of performance of MPs and that of case parliaments, following Freeman (1983).

Using the absolute measure of training (Wright, et al., 2005), the average amount of training received by the MPs is six days in a year. Also, the number of training days available to MPs ranged from five to 21. Note that only one MP had more than five training days. This was because, unlike other MPs, this particular MP made use of personal connections to gain access to training programs organised and provided outside Tonga. As for the remaining MPs, five days was the average, because for the first time since the beginning of the reform movement, the parliament, in conjunction with UNDP, organised an induction program for MPs immediately after the 2010 parliamentary elections.

5.5.1.1 Individual Level Performance of Tongan MPs

As was the case in previous case parliaments, the majority of Tongan MPs adjudge training programs provided to them to be too ineffective to improve their performance. Specifically,

seven out of 11 MPs, perceived these programs to be too ineffectual to significantly and positively affect their performance. Once again, the main reasons behind this perception are flaws inherent in the design and delivery techniques associated with training programs. These are highlighted below.

The first flaw, and what seems to be a common issue regarding training in case parliaments, is the lack of a comprehensive TNA prior to designing and delivering training programs. This has resulted in a number of difficulties, the most serious being training materials having content that is irrelevant to the Tongan context. Lack of a specific context not only confuses new MPs but also makes experienced MPs suspicious of the real intentions of these programs, namely, that training programs are but one of the tools used by the West ‘to impose its ideologies on nascent democracies’ as most MPs suggested. In order to address this issue, just over half the MPs (six out of 11) proposed that the speaker and the Clerk of the parliament should, at the very minimum, be involved in both designing and delivering training programs. Otherwise, the popular advice from most MPs (10 out of 11) was to gather information about salient training needs from all MPs prior to designing and delivering any training programs.

The lack of a TNA also causes problems in that training programs fail to capture differences in educational and parliamentary experience among trainees. Again, a veteran MP pointed out that a TNA should be done before providing training because currently most of training sessions are ‘too childish for educated MPs’. Yet a new MP contradicted this perspective by arguing that training programs should be ‘simplified because some of us are not very educated’. Training design that allows for a comprehensive training program which

accommodates various levels of understanding among MPs should be given priority to address this issue.

Poor delivery techniques have also been blamed for the failure of programs having a significant impact on MP performance. For instance, seven of those interviewed raised concerns about the fact that training delivery in most programs is often too didactic. They also noted the lack of time for questions and group discussion sessions, which they said could get MPs more engaged in training sessions. The majority of MPs (seven out of 11) find training programs to be superficial at best, hence their negative perception towards them.

Furthermore, the majority (seven out of 11) consider programs to be too short to achieve their intended objectives. They also pointed to the fact that providers often deliver much materials within too short a time frame for them to be able to digest the verbal information and literature they receive (e.g. Kunnath, 2011). Indeed, according to one MP, ‘too many materials are delivered in a very short time. Extend number of training days or give few materials each time’.

5.5.1.2 The Performance of the Parliament of Tonga

As in other Pacific parliaments, a considerable number of MPs consider training programs have failed to improve the performance of the parliament. Six out of 11 feel that programs did not have a significant impact on the performance of their parliament. The reasons for this are examined below.

Firstly, there is a lingering a perception among Tongan MPs that their parliament is, as one MP claimed, ‘a puppet body’ of the executive government. This is because the executive dominates the parliamentary agenda. In addition, there is a genuine feeling among most MPs, particularly the commoner MPs, that the cabinet, rather than being accountable to the parliament, is accountable to the King. This brings into question the impact of the 2010 reforms, which supposedly rendered the King of Tonga inactive (Fonua, 2009; Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga, 2011). The details surrounding this issue are discussed in Chapter Nine.

Another issue that seems to hinder a positive performance by the parliament is the structure of the parliament itself. Indeed, while commoner MPs are still not eligible to stand for certain positions in parliament, such as the position of the Speaker (Fonua, 2009), the nobility is guaranteed at least nine members, as the constitution allows for the noble community to elect among itself this number of MPs (Banks, et al., 2010). Such a structure gives an unfair advantage to the nobility and by extension the King, whose influence in determining who among nobles get to become an MP remains strong. As discussed in Chapter Nine, one of the reasons behind the failure of the parliament to improve its performance can be traced to the power the King still wields.

MPs point to poor parliamentary staffing as a final reason for the failure of training programs to improve the performance of the parliament. Specifically, seven out of 11 suggest that its performance can only improve if the capacity of parliamentary staff is also improved. This perspective is consistent with arguments that parliamentary staff with quality KSAs can improve the performance of a parliament by first providing technical support to MPs and then by providing institutional memory to the parliament (Besly, 2010; Thomas, 2003). Chapter

Eight of this thesis addresses the issue of the role that Pacific parliamentary staff could play in improving the performance of MPs and respective parliaments in more detail.

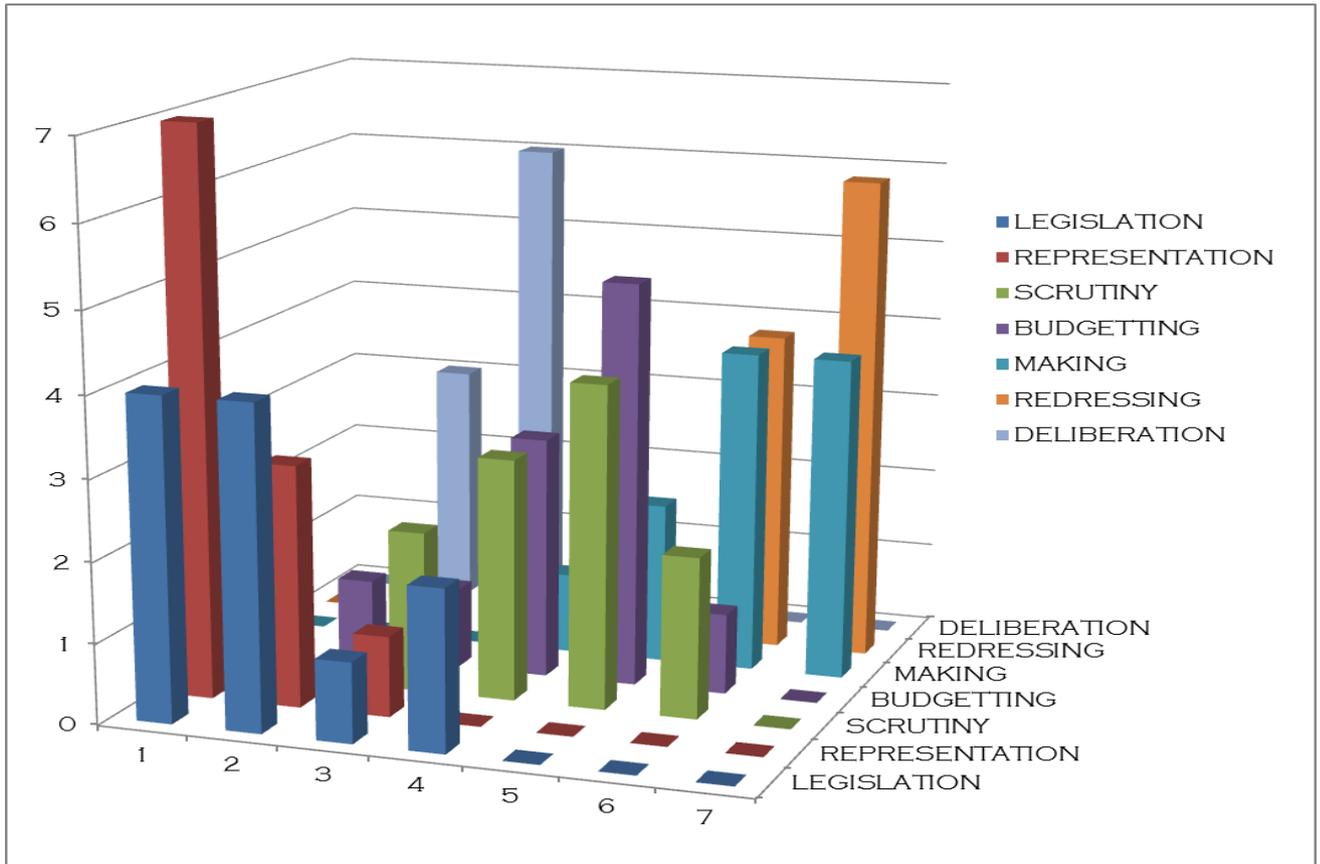
5.5.1.3 Training Needs as Expressed by the Tongan MPs

Again closed questions were set for MPs asking them to rank seven parliamentary roles provided to them in order of importance. It can be seen from Figure 5.4 below that less than half the interviewees (four out of 11 MPs) ranked the legislation role as the most important and second most important parliamentary role. This ranking can be explained by the ongoing, albeit not wholly fulfilled, desire among democratic elements in Tonga to see major constitutional reforms (Banks, et al., 2010; Campbell, 1994; Hills, 1991; James, 1994; Leslie & Heather, 2007). It is not surprising, then, that when asked an open question on the roles that MPs felt less prepared to do, and therefore would like training programs to focus on, the response of the majority (seven out of 11) cited the parliamentary role of legislation.

It is interesting to note, though, that while a substantial number of those interviewed (seven out of 11) ranked highly the legislation role, only two mentioned the process of formulation, introducing and scrutinising legislation as the most important roles they should perform. This could be explained by the fact that nearly all of the interviewed MPs (10 out of 11) feel that, due to the dominance of the nobility in the parliamentary structure, the parliament may not be the avenue they can utilise to bring about democratic reforms. This is because the structure of the parliament is such that the wishes of the nobility always prevail. It should be noted, though, that this strong bias of the interviewed MPs towards a reform agenda may be explained by the fact that majority of those interviewed were commoners.

Importantly, however, a considerable number of those interviewed (seven out of 11) ranked the representation role as the most crucial parliamentary role. This may be due to the fact that the majority of MPs in Tonga (17 out of 26) are popularly elected and a political party system is non-existent. As explained in Chapter Two, the weaker party system, coupled with the presence of the first-past-the-post electoral system, prompts MPs to be more responsive to their constituents and thus to attach high value to the representation role (J. Johnson, 2005). Ironically, slightly more than half of Tongan MPs (six out of 11) ranked the redress of grievances role last. This, as repeatedly explained in previous case parliaments, is the result of MPs feeling that their voters may be demanding too much from them (Fraenkel, 2002; Larmour, 2006).

Figure 5.4: Role Ranking by Tongan MPs



The training needs of Tongan MPs included training in areas such as: (i) parliamentary procedures; (ii) leadership skills; (iii) interpersonal skills; (iv) training on how to secure funds for constituency development; (v) how the parliament relates with the executive government; (vi) how to scrutinise the budget; (vii) training on IT; (viii) drafting legislation; and (ix) training parliamentary staff.

5.6 The Parliament of the Republic of Vanuatu

A total of 15 MPs were interviewed in Vanuatu or 29% of the total number in the Vanuatu parliament. The choice of the MPs to be interviewed considered both gender and the political party affiliation of potential interviewees. Consequently, the only female MP in the Vanuatu parliament was included in the sample. Furthermore, the interview covered MPs from 11 different political parties represented in the parliament. The large number of political parties and the apparent increase in number of independent MPs reflect the political and social fragmentation facing the parliament (Ambrose, 1996; Banks, et al., 2010; Morgan, 2005a; Van Trease, 2010). This party fragmentation, coupled with party indiscipline, which causes a constant shifting of allegiances among MPs, has only served to fuel corruption. This is because the situation has reduced the parliament to a corrupt system of trading support from MPs (money changes hand constantly) so as to create 'stable' government in the country (Van Trease, 2010). Indeed, at the time of interview, the ruling coalition consisted of a total of 15 smaller parties and four independents (Van Trease, 2010). The implication of this state of affairs is that Vanuatu's parliamentary democracy has been reduced to a struggle game for MPs and survival of executive governments.

The average length of terms served by the interviewed MPs is two (ten years). However, this figure is largely inflated by the number of terms served by a veteran MP who has served since the inception of the parliament. In actual fact, the majority of those interviewed (nine out of 15 MPs) were serving their first-ever parliamentary terms. Furthermore, out of the nine first-termers, two had just entered the parliament via a by-election in 2009. This followed a long court battle protesting a rigged election. Once again this result confirms the literature on Pacific parliaments (such as Connell, 2006; Henderson, 2003; Morgan, 2005b; Reilly, 2000), which has consistently stated that the turnover rate of Pacific MPs is well above 50% in each and every election. The implication of this result is that the parliament of Vanuatu lacks

adequate institutional memory in the form of experienced MPs who theoretically could be charged with the task of transferring KSAs to newly elected MPs. This explains why the majority of those interviewed (11 out of 15) said they were never mentored when they first entered parliament.

Importantly, four out of 11 MPs who claimed to have been mentored stated that they were mentored at the party level, normally by party leaders. This information is important, because it implies that training programs may need to be extended to political parties in Vanuatu. This suggestion is consistent with attempts to remedy the almost impossible state of affairs in the parliament in which MPs are sharply divided on narrow party lines, as the party-level trust among MPs or potential MPs could be relatively higher than elsewhere in parliament. It follows from this line of thought that mentoring processes at the party level may be more effective than at the parliamentary level.

As in previous case parliaments, the majority of those interviewed (13 out of 15) worked as civil servants prior to entering the parliament. Likewise, there seems to be a correlation between a public service background of MPs and the possibility of MPs perpetuating old and undesired cultures learnt while working as civil servants. Consistent with this argument, Larmour (2000) and Larmour and Barcham (2006) report high levels of corruption in Vanuatu, fuelled particularly by the desire of MPs to first enrich themselves and retain their seats in parliament through bribery.

5.6.1 The Impact of Training on the Performance of Vanuatu MPs and their Parliament

Performance at both individual and parliamentary levels is measured by perceptions of MPs (Freeman, 1983). Training, on the other hand, has been conceptualised and measured as the amount of training received by MPs, as explained by the average number of training days available to MPs each year (Wright, et al., 2005). Using the absolute measure, the average amount of training received by Vanuatu's MPs is four days a year. Also, the number of training days available to MPs ranged from zero to 14. Note that the MPs who had zero training are those that entered the parliament following the by-election. Therefore the number (zero) has an insignificant value in terms of explaining the amount of training available to MPs. In general, though, experienced MPs in the parliament tend to have access to more training programs than the newer ones. As the researcher observed during interviews, while the latter generally depend on training programs taking place locally, the former quite regularly attend training programs taking place abroad.

5.6.1.1 Individual Level Performance of Vanuatu MPs

Training provided in the parliament has generally been perceived by MPs as ineffective. Specifically, 12 out of 15 adjudged training programs to be too ineffectual to have a positive and significant impact on their individual performance. The main reasons behind such a damning assessment of parliamentary training programs by the majority of MPs can be traced to the flaws in designing and delivering these programs.

Chief among factors that have led to the ineffectiveness of programs is the lack of a comprehensive TNA. This has resulted in a situation where resulting training programs are poor from the beginning. For instance, the majority of those interviewed (10 out of 15) cited that most training content is out of context, because cultural and constitutional realities in

Vanuatu are often ignored in these programs. According to one veteran MP, this situation is brought about by the fact that training programs such as those pertaining to standing orders are ‘copied and designed following parliamentary models of advanced nations such as Australia and New Zealand’. Note that Australia and New Zealand follow a Westminster system of responsible government, which is considerably different from the semi-presidential system of responsible government adopted in Vanuatu (Banks, et al., 2010).

Relatedly, the lack of a comprehensive TNA has meant that most training programs available in parliament consist of general knowledge presentations which do not necessarily translate into specific tasks that MPs are expected to do. This is reflected in the assessment by one of the experienced MPs, who described training programs ‘irrelevant’ as far as parliamentary roles in Vanuatu are concerned.

Moreover, just as in the Timor-Leste parliament, the language barrier provides another challenge to effectiveness of training programs in the parliament. This is important, as the Anglo-French MPs (Banks, et al., 2010) struggle to comprehend programs which are normally given in English. Indeed, even the English-speaking MPs would rather be trained in Bislama, the language every MP understands more fully than English. It is in this context that a considerable number of MPs (10 out of 15) have proposed that in future training materials should be passed to locals or trainers fluent in Bislama, if training in the parliament is to have any impact on MPs. More of this discussion about local trainers can be found in Chapter Eight of this thesis.

In addition, MPs have roundly (12 out of 15 MPs) criticised training programs as being too didactic. They, just like MPs in other case parliaments, suggest that training programs be

more hands-on, using techniques such as simulations and mock parliaments. It is not surprising, then, that engaging training techniques, such as the use of group discussion and question and answer sessions have also been strongly supported by those interviewed.

The frequency and timing of training programs are issues also raised. On the one hand, good timing in relation to when the training session takes place is important, as scheduling properly can raise attendance rates of MPs. MPs also argued that if programs take place on a more regular basis than is currently the case, there may be an increased possibility that the transfer of KSAs can be maximised.

5.6.1.2 The Performance of the Vanuatu Parliament

MPs have the most scathing perception of the ability of the available training programs to affect the performance of their parliament. Specifically, 14 out of 15 consider the programs to have failed in affecting the performance of parliament in any significant way. Several factors were responsible for this view, as discussed below.

The main problem facing the parliament is political instability (Morgan, 2006). Indeed, successive governments have barely survived for more than a year after being installed (Van Trease, 2010). As a result, the parliament has been reduced by numerous political parties to just another platform for wheeling and dealing for support to form the government. Ultimately, the parliament barely finds time to perform its other roles, aside from making and un-breaking government role.

As explained in Chapter Four, the Anglo-French colonial legacy is largely blamed for sharp and polarising political settings, which divide parties and MPs into English and French camps (Van Trease, 2010). This division has not only led to a situation where many political parties exist, which results in in-fighting among MPs, It has also resulted in a situation where no concrete policy making takes place in the national interest of Vanuatu in the parliament (Chutaro & Heine, 2003).

Relatedly, indiscipline and lack of adherence to standing orders have weakened the performance of the parliament. Government ministers barely respond to questions posed by backbenchers; instead ‘they turn their supposed responses into mocking the MPs who put forward questions’, as one MP claimed. On the other hand, habitual non-attendance and lateness of MPs at parliamentary sessions have often hindered important policy processes as a result of failing to reach a quorum.

Moreover, the committee system is near-dysfunctional, as only the PAC seems to be operational to any extent. This has very greatly affected the ability of the parliament to provide robust scrutiny of successive executive governments, as explained also in previous case parliaments.

Finally, the majority of MPs (10 out of 15) pointed out that the poor performance of the parliament is partly due to poor staffing in their parliament. This is because they think parliamentary staff have failed to provide valuable technical support to them when needed. This situation is worsened by the high turnover of MPs, which stood at more than 70% in the last election, which means that the majority of MPs in Vanuatu are new to their roles and

responsibilities. Parliamentary staff with quality KSAs could provide a vital contribution towards ensuring that new MPs are capably assisted in executing their roles.

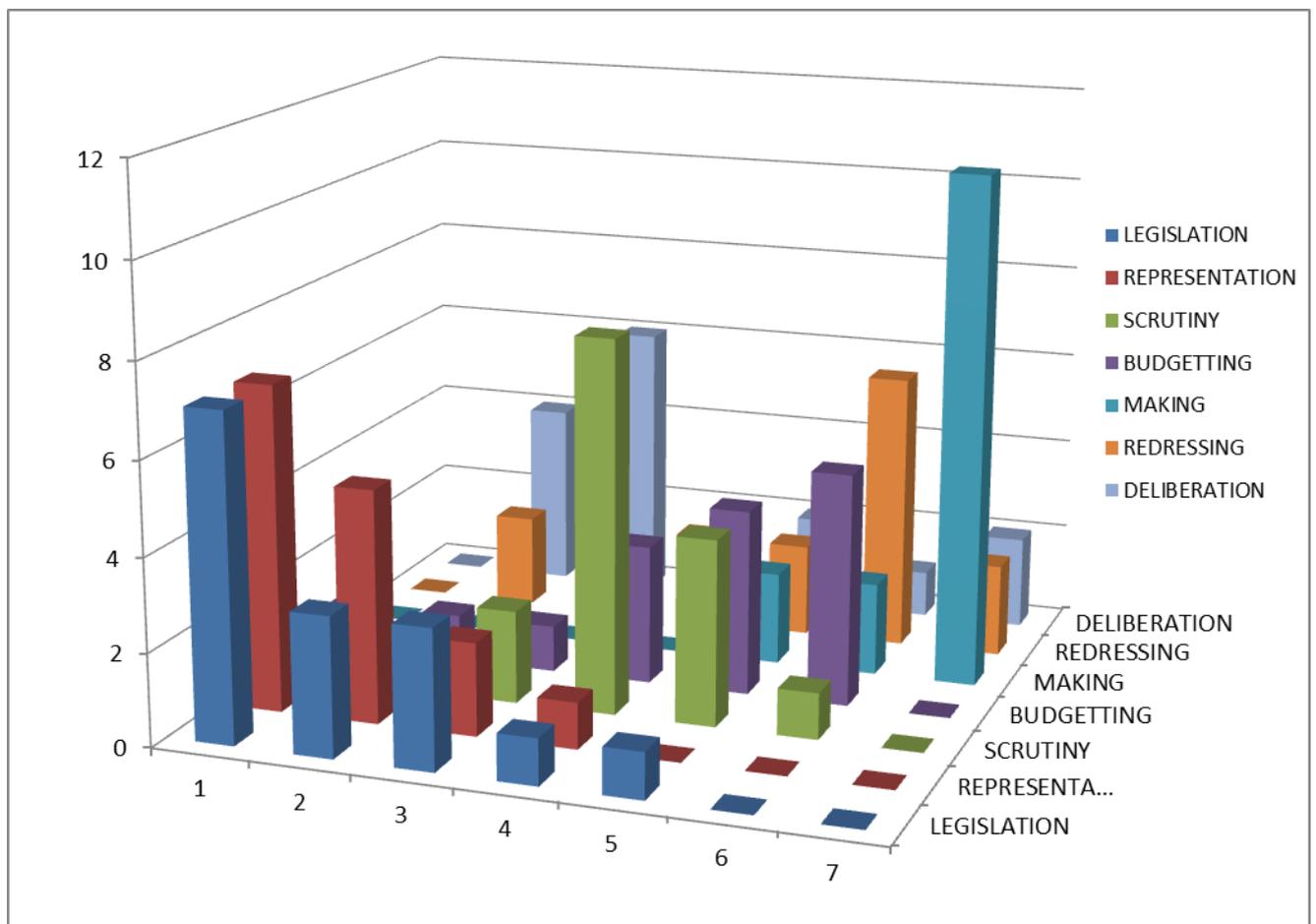
5.6.1.3 Training Needs as Expressed by the Vanuatu MPs

As with previous case parliaments, a closed question was set for Vanuatu MPs to rank seven parliamentary roles provided to them in order of importance. Slightly less than half of those interviewed (seven out of 15) ranked legislation and representation as the most important parliamentary roles. Importantly, though, another five out of 15 ranked representation as the second most important role. Note that, as was the case with PNG, MPs in Vanuatu see representation as a role requiring them to provide projects in their constituencies so as to lift the living standards of constituents. This interpretation of and the subsequent appreciation of the representation role by MPs in both PNG and Vanuatu suggests that the representation role is deeply entrenched in Melanesian culture.

As with interviewed PNG MPs, when asked an open question on the roles they felt less prepared to do, the response of slightly less than half the MPs (six out of 15) was the ability to lobby for funds and subsequently use them to implement projects in their constituencies as the single most difficult role that they faced and continue to face. This is because, just like their colleagues in PNG, Vanuatu MPs receive CDFs from the government (Morgan, 2004). Unfortunately, these MPs are given funds without necessarily being exposed to training programs that could assist them to understand how to plan, implement and manage the funds. Considering the relatively low level of education among these MPs and the *wantok* system in Vanuatu, mismanagement and corruption are almost an inevitable result. It follows from this situation that training programs on basic project management skills, targeting Vanuatu MPs,

could be necessary. Indeed, according to a veteran Vanuatu MP, ‘Training should only focus on equipping MPs with KSAs that can help them to ably deliver projects in their constituencies. This is because such a move would guarantee longevity of MPs in parliaments (since voters like projects), which will in turn give them opportunities to learn other roles by doing’.

Figure 5.5 Role Ranking by Vanuatu MPs



At the opposite extreme, a majority of those interviewed (11 out of 15) ranked the making and unmaking government role last. This is ironic as hardly any government in Vanuatu has

survived a vote of no confidence in its first year in power, let alone the whole term, since independence. In fact, according to Van Trease (2010), the only Vanuatu government to have survived the vote of no confidence in the history of Vanuatu did so by promoting the culture of corruption and impunity. The ranking could therefore imply a symbolic disapproval of the outcome of breaking governments (that is, legislative stagnation and endemic political instability) in Vanuatu among MPs. This is because the over-use of this role has practically paralysed the smooth operation of successive governments over the years. For instance, between November 2010, when the researcher was in Vanuatu for data collection, and early June of 2011, three different governments were installed by the parliament, following constant votes of no confidence.

While a number of political researchers (such as Alasia, 1997; Chand & Duncan, 2004) have argued for a blanket strengthening of political parties in Vanuatu and elsewhere in the Pacific region, the failure of such initiatives to bring about positive results in countries like PNG and Timor-Leste suggests that the situation is more complicated than it seems. Indeed, while, as we have seen in Timor-Leste, strong parties can hinder robust debates in parliament due to partisanship, the democratic right of MPs in Vanuatu to cross the floor whenever they wish is not tailored to the creation of party discipline. It follows from this argument that training MPs in Vanuatu and elsewhere in the Pacific about the importance of stability in governments, and how the functioning of other branches of governments depend largely on each other, could have a greater impact on their behaviours.

Once again it can be seen from Figure 5.5 above that the majority of those interviewed, just like their Melanesian PNG counterparts, do not rate the redress of grievances highly. This, as suggested above, is a result of the *wantok* system in Melanesian society, in which ‘big men’

(such as MPs) are expected to provide for all the needs of voters in their constituencies. To this, one of the interviewed Vanuatu MPs suggested that, for corruption to be a thing of the past, training on accountability and transparency should be provided to voters, as they ‘encourages a bribe culture among MPs by continuing to ask for it’. However, Vanuatu MPs are equally responsible for encouraging corruption culture through making unrealistic promises to provide tangible benefits to their voters during election campaigns (Rich, 2008).

Other common training needs expressed by the Vanuatu MPs, which are common across other case parliaments, include training in areas such as: (i) asking questions and debating in parliament; (ii) leadership skills; (iii) people management skills; (iv) training on how to develop networking; (v) training on IT; (vi) training parliamentary staff; (vii) basic financial budgeting, reporting and management; (viii) basic auditing; (ix) basic asset management; and (x) how to secure and channel funds to constituencies.

5.7 Themes on Training Programs

It is important to state that there are good intentions behind all training programs that have been provided to Pacific parliaments, including those outlined above. These programs are theoretically meant to equip MPs with relevant KSAs, which in turn are expected to improve the performance of individual MPs and eventually parliamentary performance. However, from time to time these programs need to be evaluated with the view to improving their suitability. This section casts a critical look at these programs so as to determine their suitability.

Six themes have been captured from interview data. These themes, which address the issues of type and suitability of training programs provided in case parliaments, were arrived at the content analysis discussed in Chapter Three. They are described in question form. The questions include: (i) Why is training needed? (ii) What is training supposed to achieve? (iii) What is unsatisfactory with the performance of MPs? (iv) What types of training programs exist in Pacific parliaments? (v) What is wrong (if anything) with existing training programs? And (vi) What type of training do MPs generally want? The themes are discussed further below.

5.7.1 Why is training needed?

As explained in Chapters One and Two, the need for training in Pacific parliaments can be explained in two ways. Firstly, it comes from the realisation that strong parliaments are indispensable if good governance is to be achieved in any democratic country (Hudson & Wren, 2007; Pelizzo, 2010; Power, 2008; Reilly, 2000). Since exposing MPs to effective training is regarded by many parliamentary stakeholders (e.g. Beahan, et al., 2010; Hudson & Wren, 2007; Kunnath, 2011; O'Brien, 2011; Pelizzo, 2010; Power, 2008; Stapenhurst, 2004) as one of the most effective ways to strengthen parliaments, making it available in Pacific parliaments is vital. Indeed, the assumption underlying this view is that well-trained MPs are expected to be equipped with suitable KSAs which are in line with improving their performance. In turn, as referred to in Chapter Two, improved performance by MPs through being exposed to effective training programs is expected to be reflected in the overall performance of parliaments, thereby strengthening the institution (Hudson & Wren, 2007).

The second source of the need for training in Pacific parliaments emanates from general agreement among parliamentary stakeholders that MPs in the region possess limited capacity to carry out their roles and responsibilities (Saldanha, 2004). Indeed, several political researchers (e.g. Larmour & Barcham, 2006; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005b; Reilly, 2000; Rich, 2002; Saldanha, 2004; Standish, 2007) have claimed that MPs in the Pacific region lack the ability to adequately perform their roles and responsibilities. In this context, training is considered by parliamentary stakeholders such as training providers to be one of the most potent means to redress the situation (Henderson, 2003).

Interestingly, most MPs sampled from the case parliaments largely concurred with this. However, they mostly view their inability to adequately perform their roles and responsibilities as a direct result of the weaknesses inherent in support structures in their parliaments. Specifically, most MPs interviewed (42 out of 63) blamed the dysfunction of their parliaments on the inability of parliamentary staff to aid MPs in performing their roles and responsibilities through, for example, conducting relevant research needed to help MPs make informed policy decisions.

For an average MP in the case parliaments, what they mostly strive to achieve is to win elections. In other words, most of those interviewed (42 out of 63) were convinced that, following an election victory, it is mainly the job of parliamentary staff to ensure that MPs make correct decisions in and outside the parliament in terms of their parliamentary role. It follows from this line of thinking that for most interviewed MPs the main need for training in the region originates from the inability of parliamentary staff to aid MPs to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively. Consequently, Pacific MPs feel that it is parliamentary staff and not they themselves who should be vigorously targeted for training.

While this unique view of case Pacific MPs about the need to enhance capabilities of parliamentary staff will be further discussed in Chapter Eight, it is worth noting here that training in Pacific parliaments should not be treated as an either-or issue. Instead, training providers need to ensure that they strike the right balance between training MPs and parliamentary staff. This is important, for as much as there is a considerable strength in suggestions provided by case MPs about the need to train parliamentary staff, MPs remain the main actors in parliaments (Kunnath, 2011; Opello, 1986), and thus they need to equip themselves with KSAs that can be augmented by parliamentary staff. This is because ultimately, as Kunnath (2011) rightly argues, the effectiveness of parliaments relies on the quality of the KSAs that MPs possess.

5.7.2 What is Training Supposed to Achieve?

Training providers hope to use training as a means to equip MPs with KSAs that can enable them to adequately perform their roles and responsibilities (Power, 2008). In turn, improved performance from MPs is theoretically expected to translate into improved parliamentary performance and the strengthening of parliaments (Burns, 2002, p. 306). Thus, as Stapenhurst (2004) suggests to training providers, training of MPs is but a means towards the end, which is strengthening parliaments. It follows, then, that training in this instance is intended to affect the behaviour of MPs in a manner that is consistent with improving both the performance of MPs and their parliaments (Morgan, 2005b).

While most of those interviewed strongly agreed with the theoretical expectations associated with training, most (49 out of 63) believe that involvement of local parliamentary

stakeholders could make training programs more relevant and effective. This is mainly because the type, content and delivery of programs in Pacific parliaments have to date been mostly inadequate.

5.7.3 What was Unsatisfactory with the Performance of Pacific MPs?

The inadequacy in the performance of MPs in the Pacific region has been well documented among parliamentary commentators (e.g. Larmour & Barcham, 2006; Meleisea, 2005; Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005a; Pelizzo, 2010; Robert, et al., 2007; Saldanha, 2004). Mellor and Jabes (2004), for instance, talk of the inability of MPs to perform their roles as the source of poor policy output in Pacific countries. Standish (2007) points to the ease with which bills pass through parliaments in the region due to the inability of MPs to adequately scrutinise them.

Saldanha (2004) points out that MPs lack an understanding of their roles, powers and rights. Furthermore, Morgan (2002b) argues that, not only do MPs lack the ability to assist in the drafting of legislation, they also lack ability to comprehend bills tabled before them and the implications of legislation formulated in parliaments. This has resulted in the situation where executive governments of the day bulldoze parliaments and reduce them to rubber stamps (Rich, 2002). Such situations make the establishment of good governance in the region crucial but very difficult.

However, Pacific MPs do not regard themselves as incapable political players. This is because, they argue, they are elected parliamentarians, which in practice makes them ‘qualified’ enough to perform well as MPs. It is, they believe, the responsibility of

parliamentary staff to assist them in attaining the highest possible level of effectiveness. In fact, one MP from Vanuatu went so far as to suggest that the poor attendance of various training programs by MPs, particularly those that do not involve study tours abroad, was partly due to the fact that MPs expect parliamentary staff to ‘learn for them’. Nonetheless, since MPs ought to at least have a basic knowledge on how to perform their roles and responsibilities, they cannot afford to avoid training programs made available to them or expect parliamentary staff to perform for them. This, as previously stated, is because MPs are central to the operations of parliaments, and thus their ability to effectively perform their roles is crucial for improved parliamentary performance (Kunnath, 2011; Opello, 1986). It follows that Pacific parliaments and other stakeholders should work together to find ways to attract MPs to training programs. This argument is discussed further in Chapter Seven.

5.7.4 What Type of Training Programs Exist in Pacific Parliaments?

The classification of training types in this thesis is based on Pascual-Leone and Irwin’s (1998) categorisation of training, which includes six types of training: reality, authority, imitation, didactic, mediated and self-mediated. In essence, this categorisation is based on whether a particular form of training is based on experiential and concrete learning techniques, such as authority, imitation, mediated and self-mediated, or on abstract types of learning which is a didactic training method.

With the exception of an innovative parliamentary committee training in Timor-Leste, the overwhelming majority of interviewed MPs in case parliaments (60 out of 63) revealed that most of the programs provided to them are didactic in nature. Didactic types of training exemplify learning processes that take place in formal education establishments such as

schools. They involve transmission of instruction in which understanding depends on the learner's ability to interpret the message from the instructor. While this form of learning may have a place particularly for MPs with learning abilities that require pedagogical encounters, such as those with little if any academic qualifications and for newly elected MPs, who in the first instance need to be given basic information about the role of MPs, most adult learners, as suggested by adult education and training scholars (e.g. Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000; Husain, 2003; Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 1993; Mezirow, 1978) feel uncomfortable with a teacher-student relationship. This is because MPs, just like other adult learners, are attracted to training programs that put them at the centre of training. This is evidenced in some of the direct quotes from MPs. It follows that training programs for Pacific MPs should necessarily expose them to actual parliamentary tasks by first guiding them on how to perform them before letting MPs engage in self-mediated types of training such as imitation.

5.7.5 What is Wrong with Existing Training Programs?

Most training programs that are available in Pacific parliaments are didactic in nature. The pedagogical nature of these programs is the main source of discontentment about current programs. MPs primary concerns are captured in five main areas and encapsulate what they see as flawed methodology, the inflexibility of content, language barriers, the general nature of the curriculum, and the lack of consideration of the unique characteristics of trainees in these programs. These areas are further discussed below.

5.7.5.1 Flawed Methods Training Programs

Interviewed MPs in all five case parliaments have firmly challenged the suitability of the types of training programs provided. Specifically, nearly all of the interviewed MPs (60 out of 63) thought training programs are too theoretical. For instance, one of the MPs in Timor-Leste's parliament called for programs to be 'more task-oriented and less theoretical'. A similar sentiment was echoed in Vanuatu, where an MP claimed that he is unconvinced with current training programs because 'they are not practical'.

The downside of the didactic approach is that some MPs feel patronised by it. This feeling was much in evidence throughout the region. A Timor-Leste MP summed up his frustrations well:

*Training should be participatory. MPs are adults and thus they deserve to be trained as such and not as University students. Present to them training materials then let them participate in the form of discussions.*¹³

Of more concern to the methods used to provide training to Pacific MPs is the fact that some MPs get offended by the level of 'teaching' involved in programs. This was evidenced by a Tongan MP, who pointed out that most training programs provided are 'too childish to most educated MPs in the country'. A similar view was echoed by an MP in the PNG parliament, who expressed his frustration at the tendency of trainers to 'spoon feed' MPs during training sessions.

¹³ Most of quotations in this thesis are unattributed in order to keep the identity of the interviewees confidential.

As a result of making Pacific MPs feel patronised, and to a certain extent offended, these didactic training programs have been largely blamed for poor training attendances throughout the region. Indeed, the tendency of MPs to absent themselves from training programs due to the use of inappropriate types of training was also evidenced in the Marshall Islands, where an MP bluntly stated that he always skips training to avoid ‘too much lectures’. Similarly, most of the interviewed MPs in PNG (10 out of 11) cited the amount of ‘lectures’ in these training programs as one of the main reasons that force them to stay away from training.

In addition, didactic types of training seem to partly result in poor knowledge retention by MPs after training. Indeed, according to an MP from the Marshall Islands, training sessions make him feel so sleepy ‘because they are full of lectures’. In support of this view, an MP in Vanuatu recommended that trainers should emphasize activities such as group discussions as a means to ‘keep MPs interested and therefore learn’ from these training programs.

Overall, interviewed MPs throughout the case parliaments consistently called for task-oriented, practical and participatory types of training in place of the lecture-laden training programs which have been dominant in the region. It should be noted that the views coming from MPs about methodology are consistent with adult education theories, analysed in Chapter Two, which largely advocate for experiential types of learning environments in which adults are encouraged to subject every theory to questioning, based on their real-life experiences (Burns, 2002; Dewey, 1933; Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 1993; Mezirow, 1978). This argument also resonates with Hossain’s (2004) humorous argument in his training manual for Bangladesh MPs, that MPs are adults and therefore they should not be treated like ‘tall children’ by being exposed to pedagogical instead of andragogical types of training

programs. The logic behind this argument is that, as adults, MPs possess considerable knowledge acquired in their pre-parliament life experiences and thus training to them should facilitate how they can use their relevant experiences to solve current and future problems. This approach is in line with Dewey's theory of adult education that informs this study (Burns, 2002; Dewey, 1933).

5.7.5.2 Inflexibility of the Training Programs' Content

Another concern emerging from the didactic nature of training programs provided to Pacific MPs is the inflexibility of content. This state of affair seems to be a direct result of two main factors. Firstly, in most training sessions, training providers are said to allocate very little or no time for MPs to ask questions. This prevents MPs from asking pertinent questions so they can get clarification on materials that are apparently new to them. Secondly, the inflexibility can be seen through the commonly flawed assumptions from training providers that all parliaments in the Pacific region follow the Westminster system to the letter. This has caused considerable confusion and has attracted scorn from MPs. For instance, during the interviews a Marshallese MP pointed out that 'most of training programs are simply a waste of time', since they consist of too many 'irrelevant lectures'. A similar view was articulated by a PNG MP, who categorically stated that training programs available to them are not flexible enough to accommodate the realities of parliamentary affairs on the ground.

The need for training programs to be flexible enough to reflect local context is further explained by another Timorese MP, who persuasively argued for local MPs to be allowed to contribute to training content by citing common mistakes by training providers in the region, particularly when giving training on standing orders. For instance, most interviewed MPs

from the Timor-Leste parliament (11 out of 13) argued that the content of standing orders provided to them was considerably different from the standing orders that govern the Timor-Leste parliament. To make matters worse, a Timorese MP argued that, since most time during training session was allocated to what he calls ‘lectures’, there was no time left for MPs to make the point that the content was not relevant to the Timorese context.

Of more concern in terms of this issue is the belief that inflexibility has sometimes raised a lingering fear that training programs only serve to plant ‘western ideologies’ in developing countries. This general view is well articulated by one of the Timorese MPs, who said:

Most training programs are provided using the wrong training content. They come with fixed ideas and we MPs are just told to accept them. There has to be a room for us MPs to share our side of story.

Similar views regarding the inflexibility (and wrong headedness) of training materials have also been aired in Vanuatu, PNG, the Marshall Islands and Tonga. It is argued, however, that the unnecessary tension between MPs and training providers could well be avoided if training providers took a participatory approach to training, that is, if they involved local parliamentary stakeholders in determining the content and delivery style of training programs (as proposed in Chapters Seven and Eight). This is because pedagogical approaches have only served to raise questions in Pacific parliaments. The fact that little time is allocated to discussion and question and answer sessions means that most issues of concern to MPs are not addressed. This in turn fuels unnecessary suspicion and mistrust between MPs and training providers.

5.7.5.3 Language Barriers

The issue of language barriers was also raised by MPs from case parliaments, particularly those from Vanuatu, which is officially an Anglo-French speaking country, and Timor-Leste, which is officially a Portuguese-speaking country. In fact, language barriers are the main reason why MPs in the case parliaments consider the persistent use of ‘lectures’, mostly in English by training providers, to be counter-productive to their ability to learn. This was evidenced by a Vanuatu MP, who lamented that the use of lectures in English has made it difficult for him to grasp most training programs as he is ‘a French speaker and trainers only use English’. Relatedly, an experienced MP in Tonga complained that ‘trainers use very difficult vocabulary during training so that it is difficult to understand what they want to say’.

A significant majority of the interviewed MPs (54 out of 63) suggest two ways to circumvent the lecture and language barrier challenges. These are by entertaining more discussion and other forms of interaction among MPs during training sessions and involving local trainers in training design and delivery. Indeed, according to one MP in PNG, group discussions can make training ‘simple and understandable’. This is because during discussions MPs have an opportunity to assist each other in raising and answering pertinent questions that emanate from training programs. The idea that MPs learn better by sharing their understanding among themselves is supported by another Marshallese MP who argued that ‘networking is the best way to train MPs’. Nevertheless, one should be cautious here, in that sharing can only be beneficial if the MPs involved possess both the right KSAs and good will to share what is right. As Norton (2000) suggests, senior MPs, particularly policy domineering parliamentary whips, may deliberately bias their arguments along party political lines, regardless of the validity of claims they make in relation to their main role of representing interests of the

constituents. It follows that, if concerned MPs do not possess KSAs that can enable them to critically re-examine information they get from other MP mentors prior to internalising it, they may be misled. That is why suggestions to involve local trainers in training design and delivery makes sense, as this will help to ensure that Pacific MPs are trained in parliamentary-related issues correctly and that they are trained in the language they understand. This approach increases the likelihood of KSA transfer during training sessions. It is in this context that Norton (2000) argues for MPs to be equipped, through effective training, with KSAs that enable them to work independently.

5.7.5.4 Generality of Programs

Another concern to emerge from the didactic nature of training programs is the fact that training programs in Pacific parliaments are considered by MPs to be too general to have any practical relevance. The point here is that while programs address relevant areas such as roles and responsibilities of MPs and the operation of committees systems, there is not enough specificity in them. This reduces training programs to general knowledge sessions which cannot necessarily be directly applied by MPs within the parliamentary context in which they work. This concern is consistent with arguments by Kunnath (2011) that in most cases parliamentary training around the world rarely goes beyond general information dissemination and therefore it generally fails to bridge the gap between theory and practice. This situation has prompted one of the Timorese MPs to call for training programs that are ‘more task-oriented and less theoretical’.

The issue that training designed in a way that can enable MPs to directly apply the acquired KSAs to their day-to-day roles has also been echoed in the Marshallese parliament. Indeed,

according to one MP in the Marshall Islands, one of the reasons why training providers should encourage group discussions during training sessions is that discussions may encourage Marshallese MPs to engage constructively in parliamentary debates, thereby shunning the temptation to engage in personal attacks, as is the case currently. Similar sentiments have been echoed in PNG, evidenced by suggestions from one MP there that ‘trainers should cover practical aspects such as training on how to use ICT facilities for practical improvement of researching skills of MPs’.

The lack of specificity in training programs in Pacific parliaments has also attracted negative reactions from case MPs. For instance, an MP from Vanuatu claimed that there is no use in attending training programs because ‘they are not practical’ and hence no MP can apply their material contents anywhere. In the end, MPs in the Pacific region desire to be exposed to training programs that, rather than being too general, are task-specific and practical enough to allow for the direct application of material content to real life parliamentary roles and responsibilities facing a typical MP in the region. Indeed, as one MP from PNG put it, ‘training should mirror activities done in the parliament’ for it to be useful to MPs.

5.7.5.5 Ignoring Trainees’ Characteristics.

One of the most pressing concerns captured from the interviews shows the inability of training programs in Pacific parliaments to accommodate diverse characteristics of MPs, particularly in terms of experience and educational background. Indeed, according to an MP from PNG, ‘training should consider differences in educational levels of MPs’. This is important because of a paradox in training adults which can be explained in two ways. On the one hand, when training programs are didactic, they tend to bore the more educated MP who,

as explained before, may feel patronised and offended. On the other hand, the less educated adults, particularly the less educated, newly elected MPs, may require a certain level of didactic training so as to help them understand the basics of their roles and responsibilities. Indeed, following Merriam's (2001) logic in adult training, pedagogical approaches are highly recommended to start with before more self-directed types of training are introduced to MPs with little or no formal education background. Thus, as Merriam suggests, adult learners, in this case MPs, should be exposed to a fine mixture of training from trainer-directed to MP-directed, so as to accommodate differing abilities among MPs. This brings into question the type of training programs that Pacific MPs may find to be most suitable. This issue is addressed briefly within the next theme.

5.8 What Type of Training do MPs Generally Want?

Nearly all MPs in case parliaments (60 out of 63) demand programs with a content that directly reflects the actual roles and responsibilities facing them on a daily basis. These training programs should, however, be provided by largely deploying hands-on types of training techniques, such as role plays and simulations. This approach is best explained by a Timorese MP, who argued that:

The best approach to training MPs should have three stages. You start with a very brief presentations, then group discussions and finally simulations.

Of paramount importance here is the fact that these training programs should be tailor-made in such a way that they accommodate local cultural, political and economic contexts. In other words, programs should consider subtle differences in the working of parliaments in the

region. Finally, these programs should be a product of a thorough training needs assessment which, among other things, should try to address the issue of differing experience and educational backgrounds of MPs. A much more detailed discussion on the types of training programs suitable for Pacific MPs is provided in Chapter Seven, where a comprehensive parliamentary training model that could be used in Pacific parliaments is proposed.

In sum, it should be pointed out that case MPs agree that they need training. To donors' credit, a number of training programs have been provided to MPs in the Pacific region over the last decade. However, the didactic nature of these programs has consistently hindered the smooth transfer of KSAs to MPs. It follows, then, that there must be deliberate attempts by training providers to design new programs that are mostly task-oriented.

5.9 Conclusion

Training programs that have been provided in the Pacific parliaments have largely failed to attain their intended objectives. It is, however, important to acknowledge the fact that, despite the general failure in case parliaments, training programs have had varying, albeit weak, impact in every case parliament. This can be explained using three major groups that the author has drawn from case parliaments based on the presence of similar characteristics in each of these groups. The groups include: (i) the parliament of Timor-Leste; (ii) Melanesian parliaments (PNG and Vanuatu); and (iii) parliaments in chiefly cultures (the Kingdom of Tonga and the Marshall Islands). Following this discussion, specific features that arose from case parliaments are examined.

The weakest impact of training was in the Timor-Leste parliament. This result could be explained in three ways. The first is the higher education levels of Timorese MPs. This is because, being more educated, Timorese MPs are more likely to be critical of the training programs than MPs elsewhere in case parliaments, especially because of their didactic nature. The second is the lack of technical support from parliamentary staff. Timorese MPs do not have access to adequate technical support. This makes it extremely difficult for MPs to perform their roles effectively. The last and probably the most obvious way to explain findings in Timor-Leste is by exposing the language challenges in the country. Timor-Leste is a Portuguese-speaking country. The fact that the majority of training programs and training materials, such as CDs and pamphlets, are provided in English may play a major part in derailing the impact of training on their performance and that of their parliament.

Considering the sub-region grouping factor, the Melanesian parliaments of PNG and Vanuatu recorded the least impact of training programs. This also can be explained by three major reasons. The first is the low education level of MPs from this Pacific sub-region. This is mainly due to the fact that it is generally expected that MPs possessing relatively low education qualifications are not expected to acquire as many KSAs during training sessions as more educated MPs (see Hirsch & Wagner, 1993). The issue of lack of support of parliamentary staff also explains the result, as Melanesian MPs have thus far been receiving little or no adequate technical support from their staff, thereby hampering their ability to execute their roles more effectively. Finally, and particularly with respect to Vanuatu, language is a barrier for the transfer of KSAs to MPs. Indeed, since the majority of training programs are delivered in English, the issue of a language barrier is always bound to surface.

Relatedly, the presence of annual disbursement of CDF in Melanesian parliaments suggests that managing CDF is a new role (outside the seven given by Hazel) that a contemporary Pacific MPs sometimes has to perform. This means that future training programs need to address the issue of project management skills among MPs in the region. This is because, even in Pacific countries where the CDF is not entrenched by law, MPs reported that they are spending on assorted projects (consumption expenditures); such as paying school fees for voters. The need to instil project management skills among Pacific MPs should therefore be given priority by prospective training providers in the region.

The third group of case parliaments that helps to explain the findings on the impact of training on performance involves the ‘Chiefly’ cultural societies of the Marshall Islands and the Kingdom of Tonga. Parliaments from these countries recorded relatively higher impacts of training programs. This is explained in two ways. Firstly, since the average education levels of MPs from the two countries were relatively high, the logic inherent in the HRD model can be used to explain why the transfer of KSAs during training sessions was also comparatively high. Secondly, there have been major constitutional reforms over time in both countries. These reforms have gradually shifted power from the nobility to commoners. It is this shift of power that the researcher believes that MPs from the Marshall Islands and Tonga relate to the better performance of their respective parliaments in recent years. For instance, according to one commoner Tongan MP, the performance of Tonga’s parliament has improved ‘because the number of commoner MPs has increased from nine to 17 due to the 2010 reforms’. Similarly, the three MPs in the Marshall Islands who claimed that their parliament has significantly improved its performance cite the increased number of commoner MPs in parliament and the fact that a few years ago the country for the first time had a commoner PM. These views are to be expected from commoner MPs, however, given

the past domination of nobles in politics in both countries. But it is highly questionable whether the arguments for improved performance raised by these MPs are valid. This, as explained in Chapter Nine, is because having large numbers of commoner MPs in parliament does not guarantee improved parliamentary performance.

Specifically, it should be noted that, while many factors have been attributed to the general failure of training programs to have significant impact on the performance of MPs and that of case parliaments, this section only refers to the major factors. Indeed, case by case analysis of the five sampled Pacific parliaments has shed light on the main facts that are summarised in this section. Firstly, the analysis has shown that there is an urgent need for training providers in the region to direct a considerable amount of their resources into conducting a needs assessment prior to providing training to MPs. This will not only ensure that more effective training programs are provided to Pacific parliaments but also it will address the issue of duplication of programs from advanced parliaments that is wasting the scarce resources of donor agencies and discouraging attendance of MPs at training sessions due to their contextual inadequacy.

The second fact that can be deduced from the case by case analysis of the sampled Pacific parliaments is obvious similarities found in parliaments with similar cultures. Indeed, on the one hand, the Melanesian MPs in PNG and Vanuatu overwhelmingly see themselves as project managers, and therefore perceive training programs that could enhance their abilities to plan, implement and manage projects in their constituencies as indispensable. On the other hand, the chiefly/monarchy cultures in the Marshall Islands and Tonga have said that the commoner MPs in the two countries play a human rights and reformist role. Consequently,

training programs geared towards enhancing the KSAs of MPs in these two countries to understand better the constitution, amend and draft new legislation are highly rated by MPs.

The third fact which can be inferred from the across-case analysis of the sampled parliaments confirms the argument put forward in Chapter Two, that electoral systems do affect parliamentary performance (J. Johnson, 2005). Indeed, while proportionally elected MPs in Timor-Leste hardly rated the parliamentary role of representation, popularly elected MPs from the rest of the case parliaments rated it highly. This has an implication for future training programs in Pacific parliaments and probably beyond the region, in that electoral representation systems could be used to determine whether or not to put an emphasis on areas that adequately address the parliamentary representation role in designing programs.

Fourth, the case by case analysis of the sampled Pacific parliaments has shed light on the fact that programs presented in the English language is one of the biggest barriers that Pacific MPs face in training sessions. Particularly in the case of Portuguese-speaking Timor-Leste and Anglo-French Vanuatu, the predominant use of English in training sessions and other parliamentary materials has only worked to hinder MPs from grasping the core materials (KSAs) these training programs intend to transfer. Attempts to train local trainers in the preferred local languages could assist in achieving better understanding of training materials by Pacific MPs.

The fifth fact is that parliamentary staff in all case parliaments lack KSAs that can enable them to adequately provide technical support to their MPs. In view of the fact that parliamentary staff play a prominent role in the developed countries' parliaments (Roblin, 2003; Romzek & Utter, 1997), it can be argued that Pacific parliaments, just like their

counterparts elsewhere, cannot afford to work without them. This fact has two implications as far as training programs in the Pacific region are concerned. Firstly, MPs in the region ought to be given regular training to enhance their KSAs so that they can compensate for the absence of technical support, which should under normal circumstances have come from parliamentary staff. Secondly, training providers in the Pacific should re-think their training strategies and begin to deliberately target parliamentary staff so as to enable them to perform their traditional duties, as the discussion in Chapter Eight suggests.

Sixth, the case by case analysis of the sampled parliaments has highlighted the need to design training programs that take into account ethics and codes of conduct. Note that the importance of ethics and codes of conduct in training programs was directly raised by Timorese MPs. This is an interesting result simply because, on a comparative basis, the interviewed Timorese MPs reported less unethical conduct among themselves than the interviewed MPs from the rest of the case parliaments. This state of affairs provides strong evidence of the need to design training programs that treat ethics and codes of conducts as cross-cutting issues.

Lastly, the across-case analysis has indicated that the logic employed in HRD models may not be compatible with parliamentary careers. This is particularly true given the weakest impact of training on individual and parliamentary performance in the Timor-Leste parliament, despite the fact that Timor-Leste MPs are both highly educated and were exposed to more training days than MPs from the rest of the case parliaments. Since HRD models suggest a completely opposite result (see Hirsch & Wagner, 1993), this finding raises a question as to the suitability of these models for parliamentary careers. It should, however, be

noted that a quantitative study that tests the HRD model on parliamentary careers is needed to draw a more conclusive deduction on this matter.

There is a general view among the majority of case MPs that training programs available in their parliaments are too ineffective to affect their individual performance or the performance of their respective parliaments. These results are consistent with findings by Saldanha (2004, p. 32), who concluded that training programs provided to Pacific parliaments are mostly ‘too modest and inadequate’ to produce desirable outcomes. This means that training providers in these parliaments have failed to respond to the salient KSA needs of case MPs.

The comments by MPs across all case parliaments, seven years after the first known assessment conducted by Saldanha (2004) in Pacific parliaments, shows that training programs in Pacific parliaments are yet to improve. This raises three questions. Firstly, given the genuine concerns among case MPs about the suitability of training programs provided to them, what reforms should be adopted by training providers in the region to improve the effectiveness of programs? Secondly, in the view of the fact that MPs across all case parliaments have identified the inability of parliamentary staff to adequately provide them with technical support, could concentrating training programs on parliamentary staff be a better strategy towards strengthening Pacific parliaments? Lastly, could cultural and constitutional complexities be mostly responsible for the poor impact of training programs on the Tongan parliament? The next three chapters attempt to answer these questions.

CHAPTER SIX: Reforming Approaches to Training Pacific Parliaments

6.0 Overview

Chapter Five has demonstrated that training programs provided to Pacific parliaments have generally failed to produce the desired impact on Pacific MPs. Core reasons provided by interviewed MPs for this failure point to the way training programs were formulated and delivered. In light of these findings, the background to Chapter Six attempts to set out a parliamentary training model that could be adapted to specific training programs in Pacific parliaments. To do this, the chapter begins by providing a brief discussion on why a new training model is needed for the region. It examines recent parliamentary training models in other jurisdictions and identifies features that corroborate ideas raised by Pacific MPs, Clerks and external training providers during interviews. The chapter then suggests a training model for Pacific parliaments, using the four stages that authors such as Lam (2011) and Kunnath (2011) suggest a complete training cycle should go through. This discussion is followed by a brief explanation of benefits that can be associated with developing such a model.

6.1 Why Build a Model of Training for Pacific Parliaments?

As argued previously in this thesis, performance in parliament largely depends on the ability of MPs to effectively undertake their roles (Kunnath, 2011; Morgan, 2001). It follows that providing relevant training to MPs to enhance their performance is an important exercise. The discussion in Chapters Five, however, has indicated that training programs provided in

Pacific parliaments have not been effective in that they have not significantly impacted on the performance of MPs. This situation has resulted from factors pertaining to fundamental flaws in the design, delivery and evaluation of these training programs.

To begin with, the design of these programs is inadequate. As this study has found, parliamentary training in Pacific parliaments tends to be constructed on an *ad hoc* basis. The content of these programs is also failing to respond to MPs needs and tends to struggle to move beyond conveying general information. Also, the interviewed MPs and Clerks in case parliaments overwhelmingly stated that, since these programs fail to capture differing abilities and experiences of MPs, they tend to produce mixed and largely negative reactions from MPs. For instance, while some of the less experienced and less educated MPs tended to regard training programs as too difficult to understand, most of the more experienced and educated considered them too basic to positively affect their performance.

One of the most obvious reasons for the poor design of these training programs is that, according to MPs and Clerks, they rarely result from a comprehensive Training Needs Assessments (TNA). Related to the processes undertaken to design training programs is the contentious issue of the tendency of training content to largely ignore cultural and constitutional contexts of case parliaments. This problem, which was identified by the majority of interviewed MPs, not only confuses parliamentarians but also makes them suspicious of such programs and adds to the general belief of many MPs that these programs only serve to ‘impose western values’ on Pacific nations.

The delivery side of these programs also leaves much to be desired. While most programs are too short to allow for the smooth transfer of KSAs, according to most of those interviewed

they also tend to provide too much information for MPs to grasp in such a short time. As a result, they are perceived as being too intense, leading to information overload on the part of MPs, which in turn affects their ability to process training content and subsequently build on KSAs the programs theoretically convey. In addition, MPs and Clerks have expressed their dissatisfaction with the inability of training providers in the region to apply adult education and training approaches to training. As they explain, lectures seem to be the preferred mode of training delivery. The problems relating to the lecture approach are further complicated by the fact that, in most instances, MPs find English (the common medium of communication during most of these training sessions) a difficult language to understand. This situation further hinders the effectiveness of training programs in improving KSAs.

Not only are Pacific MPs dissatisfied with content and delivery, all Clerks and some training providers complained that no comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has ever been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of training programs provided in Pacific parliaments. As a result, there has never been a proper program review that could be used to inform programs in the region. This has in turn severely hindered the ability to improve their effectiveness. Because most training models currently available in Pacific parliaments have failed to bridge the gap between theory and practice, their effectiveness for improving the performance of MPs are perceived by MPs and their Clerks as negligible.

These findings strongly suggest the need for a more comprehensive training framework for Pacific parliaments that goes far beyond the *ad hoc* programs that external providers in the region have so far provided. It is against this background that this chapter attempts to provide a model for training Pacific MPs based on their views and those of Clerks and some of the interviewed training providers. The proposed model also draws some of its features from

contemporary models of parliamentary training from parliaments and parliamentary training institutions elsewhere. To this end, the next section discusses some of these models, focusing on their applicability for training in Pacific parliaments.

6.2 Parliamentary Training Models

In an effort to improve parliamentary training, parliaments such as those in Pakistan (Goraya, 2011), Vietnam (Lam, 2011) and South Africa (Kunnath, 2011), and parliamentary stakeholders such as the World Bank Institute (WBI) (O'Brien, 2011) and the Hansard Society (HS) (Fox & Korris, 2011), have developed comprehensive training models with a view to enhancing the performance of MPs and parliaments. As indicated previously, these programs are the result of the general view among MPs and parliamentary stakeholders that programs in most parliaments are too superficial to be effective (Kunnath, 2011; Lam, 2011). This section analyses some of the more recent parliamentary training models with the view to adapting elements of them to Pacific parliaments. The analysis first looks at training initiatives in Pakistan, Vietnam, and South Africa, before looking at two models developed by the WBI and the HS.

6.2.1 The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services

To consolidate training activities, the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) was established in 2008 by an Act of Pakistan's parliament (Goraya, 2011). In addition to conducting training, the institute conducts legislative research to equip Pakistan's MPs with KSAs that can enable them to effectively and efficiently perform their traditional roles. PIPS' training model consists of orientation and induction programs. Specifically, PIPS conducts a

one-day orientation session and a two-day induction program at the beginning of the current parliament, covering the roles and functions of the parliament, rules of procedures, business of the house, question time, parliamentary committees, and core issues regarding parliamentary business.

Predictably, Goraya (2011) indicates that this program, which is still in its infancy, has not yet produced desired impact on performance of MPs. This is because of the shortness of the program and information overload resulting from trying to squeeze too many modules into a short time. The program, though, had some positive features which could well be adapted to Pacific parliaments. Firstly, PIPS' program resulted from a TNA (a survey on Pakistan MPs) that was conducted six months prior to parliamentary elections (Goraya, 2011). This at least allowed for the inclusion of relevant content in the training program, which is necessary for ensuring the effectiveness of such programs.

Goraya (2011) also shows that training sessions took place concurrently with parliamentary sessions. This maximised attendance of MPs as the timing of training ensured that all MPs were available at the parliament, thus minimising the percentage of absent MPs. The experiential approach adopted in these programs, which, for instance, encouraged group discussion and group presentation, helped to make the programs more interesting (Goraya, 2011). Another important lesson that can be drawn from the PIPS' model is its preparation and distribution of up to 21 bilingual modules on core parliamentary issues such as rules and procedures, law making, assessing a bill, effectiveness of committees and budget analysis to both MPs and trainers (Goraya, 2011). This approach has two implications. Firstly, by distributing handbooks, PIPS is potentially cultivating self-mediated learning approaches suggested by adult learning theorists such as Pascual and Irwin (1998) in which adult learners

such as MPs engage in the independent and self-directed acquisition of KSAs. Secondly, by ensuring that the training modules are written in both English and Urdu, which is the national language of Pakistan, PIPS accommodates those Pakistan MPs who may not be comfortable with English. This helps to overcome the language barrier that might have existed should they have persisted with using only the English language as is the case for most training programs provided to Pacific parliaments. This suggests that training providers in Pacific parliaments could benefit from the Pakistan approach that recognises and responds to the fact that English is often not the first language of MPs. External providers should thus provide training materials to MPs in the languages they understand best.

6.2.2 The Training Centre for Elected Representative in Vietnam

The Training Centre for Elected Representatives (TCER) was formed in 2005 in an attempt to improve the effectiveness of parliamentary training in Vietnam, (Lam, 2011). TCER has since developed a five-year parliamentary training model for Vietnamese MPs that consists of foundation training programs, frequent update seminars, specialised seminars and various learning materials for self-study (Lam, 2011).

The structure of the TCER parliamentary training model is unique in that it is deliberately spread across the entire parliamentary term (Lam, 2011). Specifically, the model is divided into three main phases (Lam, 2011). The first which takes place in the first year of the parliamentary term consists of some basic training that covers the general aspects of parliamentary business, such as standing orders and other parliamentary procedures. The second phase of the model, which covers two years, consists of more advanced programs that address core competencies needed by MPs, such as oversight, budgeting and debating. In the

last two years of a parliamentary term, the model provides for training programs that aim at consolidating training in the previous two years, including a more integrated approach to training on issues such as good governance, review of legislation and public consultation, including topics such as chairing meetings, working in committees and media skills (Lam, 2011). Importantly, the third and final phase of the TCER model strives to promote self-learning among MPs through specific training and the distribution of study materials (Lam, 2011).

While the TCER model is still in its early stages and therefore has yet to be comprehensively tested, it highlights two important issues that interviewed training providers and the literature in adult education identify as important to effective training. Firstly, the model uses adult education and training principles such as promoting self-mediated learning among MPs. This helps in providing a desirable approach to training which has a potential to produce positive results which could be adopted in Pacific parliaments.

Secondly, and reflecting an issue that was unanimously raised by the interviewed training providers, the TCER model of parliamentary training is spread throughout the parliamentary term. This in turn allows training programs to be provided in such a manner that trainers start with the most basic level of parliamentary modules and gradually build on this knowledge base by providing more advanced training modules that can enhance the transfer of more specialised KSAs to MPs. This style of training delivery has the potential to more effectively accommodate MPs with different educational levels and experience. This is because such a model allows MPs to choose training sessions they can attend over the course of a parliamentary term, depending on their levels of experience and expertise. This is facilitated by TCER, which provides a schedule of training activities, identifying location, dates and

programs. This information is sent to MPs in advance, so they can integrate training programs into their busy schedules ahead of time, should they need to up-skill by attending a particular training session (Lam, 2011). Pacific parliaments would certainly benefit from adopting such an approach to the training of their MPs.

6.2.3 Parliamentary Training Model used in the Parliament of South Africa

The training model that is currently used in the parliament of South Africa was first used in the third parliament of democratic South Africa (Kunnath, 2011). This model, which has since been improved and used in the Ugandan Parliament (Kunnath, 2011), takes a long-term view of parliamentary training, which suggests a similar approach to the TCER model discussed above. Indeed, according to Kunnath (2011), the model was created with the view that it takes at least two years for new MPs to know their way around the parliament.

The South African parliament model factors in important aspects of parliamentary training, such as taking into consideration the fact that MPs possess differing experiences and educational standards. It further emphasises the importance of a TNA and the M&E of training programs. Specifically, Kunnath (2011) indicates that the South African parliamentary model consists of three stages based on what is perceived to be the immediate professional development needs of MPs. The KSAs that are expected to be transferred to MPs during training programs in those three stages range from the most basic needs to the more specialised KSAs needs of MPs. In summary they are: (i) KSAs that an MP immediately needs to settle and function in parliament; (ii) KSAs that an MP needs to understand the way parliament works including processes; and (iii) KSAs that MPs need to function efficiently and effectively in committees.

Like TCER, the South African parliamentary training model has important features that could be valuable in Pacific parliaments. These features include the emphasis on a TNA and M&E, taking a long-term view of training and acknowledging differences in experiences and educational standards among MPs. However, the fact that the model relies heavily on the involvement of political parties¹⁴ in a TNA process, the design, delivery and even M&E of training programs makes it unsuitable for Pacific parliaments. This is because the political party system is either non-existent in countries such as Tonga, or very weak in remaining Pacific parliaments (Alasia, 1997; Chand & Duncan, 2004). This makes it almost impossible for political parties to play any significant role. Thus a model that relies on parties to play a significant role in Pacific parliaments would be futile.

That said, the South African model provides what seems to be a very potent parliamentary training model, as, according to Kunnath (2001), it has produced early positive results both in the South African and Ugandan parliaments, particularly in allowing new MPs to settle in to parliament. Thus, the challenge rests in adapting parts of the model, bearing in mind that, unlike South Africa and Uganda, political parties should not carry the responsibility of formulating a parliamentary training model in the Pacific.

¹⁴ A well-structured party system in South Africa that includes well-established political parties, such as the ruling African National Congress, and the main opposition party, Democratic Alliance, allows this model to work effectively.

6.2.4 The World Bank Institute Model for Parliamentary Training

The WBI model of parliamentary training takes a more specialised approach to training in parliament, as it attempts to enhance the KSAs of MPs by linking international and regional parliamentary competencies with the view to fulfilling the KSAs of local parliaments around the world (O'Brien, 2011). The model is specialised, in that it uniquely uses parliamentary networking as the sole learning tool for MPs. Specifically, the WBI model suggests a five stage parliamentary strengthening model that seeks to transfer global and regional parliamentary KSAs to local parliaments via parliamentary networks.

The first stage introduces the WBI as a coordinator or connector of parliamentary networks, which are assumed in the model to have a rich base of competencies within themselves. The second stage involves the process (coordinated by the WBI) to enhance parliamentary networks to enable MPs from parliaments around the world to share KSAs. The model suggests that this sharing could take a south-south, south-north, north-south form of KSA exchange (O'Brien, 2011). The third stage involves development of portals that connect MPs and parliamentary staff to KSAs available world-wide and relevant data. Stage four involves strengthening the ability of parliamentary networks to use available KSAs and data, particularly for enhancing oversight and committee performance, which are two of WBI's priority areas. The final stage of the model involves strengthening the ability of these networks to formulate plans that can enhance stronger coordination between oversight committees and local accountability stakeholders such as civil society organisations and the media. The model is structured in such a way that the fifth and final stage, which is informed by research and experience of parliamentary practitioners, guides stages two, three and four as the model continues to be used (O'Brien, 2011).

The WBI model is innovative in that it recognises how enhancing parliamentary networks can provide a unique opportunity to facilitate the transfer of KSAs to MPs such as those in Pacific parliaments. Granted this idea is not entirely new to Pacific parliaments, since already there are eight twin relations between state and territorial Australian parliaments and a number of Pacific parliaments (Pacific Parliament Network, 2011) that are intended to particularly strengthen the performance of Pacific parliaments in question. However, the WBI training model is innovative in that it proposes parliamentary networks between parliaments at similar levels of development (e.g., south-south networks), an approach that could be the key to solving the problem of ineffectiveness found in the above-mentioned twin relations. Indeed, most of the interviewed training providers admitted that generally the twin relations are not functioning desirably mainly because of the large gap in political, social and cultural development between Australia and Pacific nations, thereby making it difficult for the arrangement to work. Allowing for south-south relationships to be nurtured, that is creating an environment in which Pacific parliaments can have relations among themselves or with other parliaments at a similar level of development such as those in Africa, could potentially yield more positive results, since, *ceteris paribus*, the willingness to improve using these models is in this case matched with the ability (given similar levels of resources) to move in that direction. Also, the fact that South Pacific cultures are ‘closely related to African groups’ (Lahr & Foley, 2005, p. 53) in terms of traditions and customs may also serve to enhance mutual trust and understanding between Pacific and African MPs, a vital ingredient for a successful networking venture.

Despite the positives of the WBI model, it has three major flaws that need be addressed before one attempts to apply it to Pacific parliaments. The first issue is that the portal the

WBI model uses to connect parliaments is web-based. This has to be dealt with, because generally Pacific MPs have limited access to the internet and other ICT resources.

Secondly, even if Pacific MPs had that valuable access to web-based resources, their limited ability to use ICT presents another challenge. Indeed, throughout case parliaments, most MPs together and Clerks raised time and again the need for training on how to use ICT. This problem was exemplified when a capacity building attempt by one parliamentary strengthening organisation in the Pacific region provided laptops to all 65 MPs in the Timorese parliament, only to realise that less than 5% of MPs knew how to use them. Pacific parliaments require at least some basic ICT training before engaging in e-learning approaches to parliamentary training.

Relatedly, giving access of ICT resources and enhancing the ability to use them would be a necessary but not sufficient condition for the WBI model to be beneficial to Pacific MPs. Indeed, embedded in the model is the assumption that MPs have the ability to self-direct their learning process and that having access to the portals is sufficient to allow KSAs to be transferred to MPs. As was indicated in the literature review chapter, and when discussing other parliamentary models of training such as the TCER's and South African approach, advanced forms of learning such as self-mediated learning should only be undertaken in the latter phases of training and after the more basic and core training programs have equipped MPs with self-directed learning KSAs. In other words, making data available to Pacific MPs and expecting them to utilise it effectively, without some form of facilitation is expecting too much of them. This is particularly so given that most of parliamentarians will be new MPs, due to high turnover in Pacific parliaments. Once again lessons can be drawn from the Timor-Leste parliament. Despite receiving a fully furnished parliamentary library from one of the

major parliamentary strengthening organisations in the region, MPs rarely make use of its resources due to the language barrier issues, discussed previously. Reflecting on this debacle, one experienced MP in Timor-Leste pointed out that ‘sponsors should not just hand in resources and leave; they have to firstly train MPs on how best to use those resources to their advantage’.

The final concern with the WBI model relates to the objectives the model attempts to achieve. According to O’Brien (2011), the model was constructed with a view to enhancing KSAs that relate to the oversight function of parliaments and MPs. This is understandable, given that the overall objective of the World Bank as an institution pertains to oversight-related matters. While this study does not attempt to downplay the importance of the oversight function, the limited focus of the WBI model is not ideal, as it excludes the rest of traditional parliamentary functions (representation and legislation), which are equally important. In fact, the data presented in Chapter Five clearly shows that Pacific MPs value the representation role the most, and so neglecting its importance in training programs would discourage good attendance by MPs at training sessions, thereby seriously undermining the purpose of training.

6.2.5 The Hansard Society Parliamentary Training Model

Following the parliamentary expenses scandals in UK, the Hansard Society (HS) developed a parliamentary training model which is a product of the 2005 study of induction programs in the UK parliament. Three surveys and interviews were conducted in 2010 and a subsequent comparative study with the parliaments of Wales and Scotland by Eireann and Murphy was undertaken (Fox & Korris, 2011). The resultant model provided an improved program for UK MPs that consisted of orientation and induction programs.

The orientation program was inventively titled the four Ps, that is, introducing new MPs to their passes, post and pay (otherwise known as PCs), including also a general briefing on chamber matters (Fox & Korris, 2011). While these matters may sound very basic, a quick introduction on such issues, particularly for new MPs, is a valuable exercise. Indeed, the need for basic training is universal as parliamentarians in both established and emerging democracies, such as those in the Pacific region, need assistance to understand context and basic requirements. They also require help settling into a new physical environment.

The HS model encapsulates several innovative ideas. Firstly, the training consists of multiple formats of delivery, which include but are not limited to the use of podcasts and downloadable materials (Fox & Korris, 2011). Relatedly, training sessions are delivered in a flexible and rolling manner. These two related approaches to delivery are innovative in that they are designed to accommodate MPs' tight schedules and therefore may potentially attract higher levels of MP participation. While this may work well in the UK, such a model is not easily transferred to other parliaments such as Pacific parliaments. Indeed, podcasts and other web-based resources may not be suitable for Pacific parliaments at present, for the same reasons outlined when discussing the WBI model, since there is a lack of KSAs in relation to the use of IT.

Also, the HS model is unique, in that before its introduction it was tested on several fronts. According to Fox and Korris (2011), both prospective trainers and the training content were subjected to pilot training sessions with MPs. Furthermore, the final iteration of the model was made available to political parties so they could contribute to the model. This approach is important because it has the potential to instil a sense of ownership in training programs. The

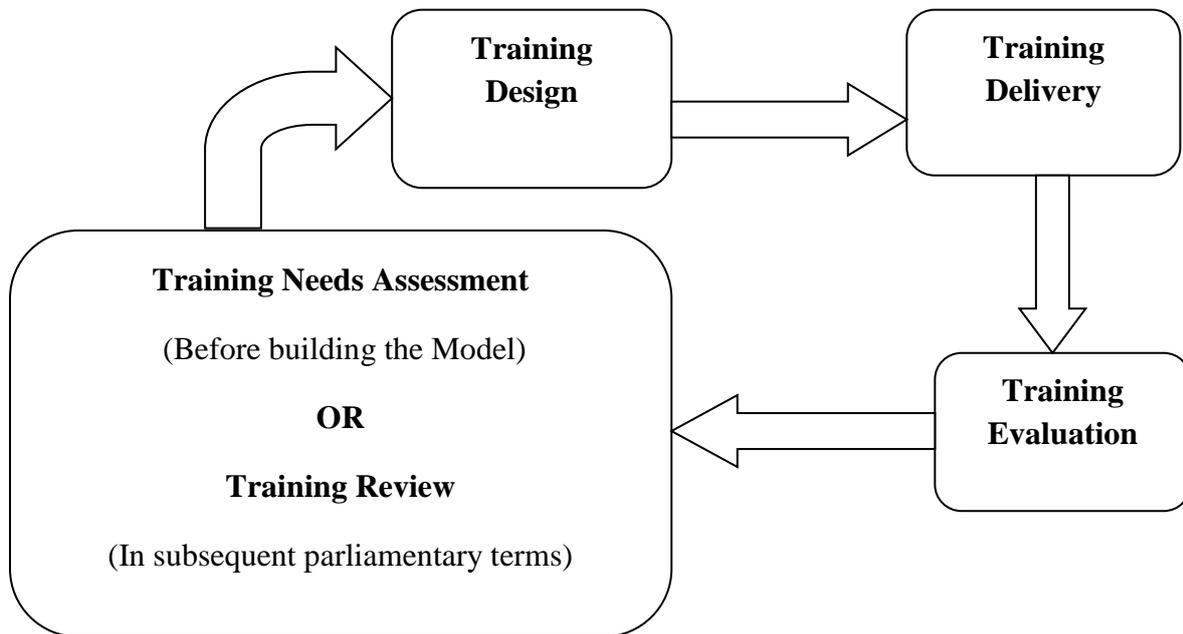
importance of this has been repeatedly stated by the majority of the interviewed training providers as one of the most critical factors that determines program acceptance and ultimately effectiveness.

6.3 A Proposed Training Model for Pacific Parliaments

This section proposes a parliamentary training model for Pacific parliaments. While the model draws on some of the best aspects of models used in parliaments elsewhere, its core features consist of ideas that came directly from Pacific MPs, Clerks and training providers during the interviews conducted for this study. The discussion uses typical stages of training cycles to delineate features that should necessarily be considered in building a model for parliamentary training in the Pacific region.

It should be noted that while authors such as Hossain (2004) propose up to six stages in the Training Cycle (TC), this study, consistent with most studies in the area, such as that of Lam (2011) and Kunnath (2011), proposes a TC that consists of four stages: training needs assessment, design, delivery and monitoring and evaluation, as depicted in Figure 7.1 below. This is because the additional two stages (post-training utilisation and impact analysis) argued for by Hossain (2004) are unnecessary extensions of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation. The TC stages and important features that ought to accompany them are discussed further below.

Figure 6.1: The Training Cycle



6.3.1 Training Needs Assessment Stage

A TNA is a systematic procedure required to determine the KSAs needed to perform a given role within acceptable organisational standards (Hossain, 2004). It provides the first stage in developing a training model, in that it seeks to bring out the main areas that a particular training program should focus on. It follows that a TNA is ultimately an indispensable tool in building training models since it provides training program designers with a road map that can enable them to limit their model development to those areas that need the most attention, something that can have a significant bearing on the effectiveness of the training model in question.

As explained in Chapter Five, most problems that have consistently led to the failure of training programs in Pacific parliaments can be traced back to the lack of a comprehensive

TNA prior to formulating the programs. It follows that this stage of a TC has to be given significant priority in the design of future training models in Pacific parliaments. The literature (e.g. Fox & Korris, 2011; Hossain, 2004; Lam, 2011), and responses from interviewed training providers, generally highlight three main areas TNA should focus on. These, according to Lam (2011), specifically include: (i) policies and laws governing the country; (ii) institutional outlook of the parliament; and (iii) individual capacity of parliamentary actors.

In regard to policies and laws, a TNA is intended to identify cultural and constitutional frameworks, including decrees and resolutions that provide the legal framework within which MPs and the parliaments in general operate (Lam, 2011). In other words, a TNA should, in this case, point out how MPs can perform their roles without overstepping the legal framework governing a particular country. This focus is absolutely crucial, particularly in the Pacific region, because ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ systems of governance have been allowed to co-exist in the constitutions of most of Pacific countries (see Chapter Four). It is therefore expected that individuals performing a TNA will familiarise themselves with the constitutions of individual Pacific countries, as well as the standing orders, rules and procedures of their parliaments, including local cultural issues, so as to ensure that training programs resulting from any TNA does not overlook these important legal and cultural frameworks.

The second focus of a TNA covers the institutional framework of parliaments as organisations. At this level, institutional matters such as the structure, goals and objectives of the parliament must be examined (Lam, 2011). The recent trend for parliaments to prepare their own corporate plans dictates that a person conducting a TNA should read and analyse

this document. Finally, a TNA at this level has to uncover the goals and objectives a particular parliament has set for itself and identify the KSAs needed to achieve them.

Lastly, and perhaps the most obvious focus that a TNA should cover, is the individual capacity of MPs. At this level, a TNA looks at the functions that MPs are expected to perform so as to identify the KSAs they need to perform them efficiently and effectively. A point to note here is that the functions of MPs differ, depending on whether a particular MP is a front or backbencher, whether he/she holds a position in parliament such as the speakership, committee chair, whip and so on. Any TNA is thus expected to highlight the KSAs that MPs require, regardless of the position they hold in the parliament.

Information needed for conducting a TNA can be gathered at three levels: legal, institutional (parliament) and individual (Fox & Korris, 2011; Hossain, 2004; Lam, 2011). At both the legal and institutional levels, two tools can be used to collect information. At the legal and institutional framework level two tools can be used: (i) opinion surveys by MPs and (ii) the use of official documents such as the constitution, corporate plans, Hansard and handbooks on standing orders and procedures.

The tools that can be used to extract information from individual MPs include: (i) interviews; (ii) questionnaires; and (iii) what Hossain (2004) calls a diary method, in which a person records their observations pertaining to the performance of MPs over a period of time, based on acceptable standards of performance as prescribed in a parliament's corporate plans or any other official document that spells out the roles and responsibilities of MPs. Note that while the third tool, the diary method, can be subjective, it can also be extremely useful, particularly in Pacific parliaments, should the person responsible for doing it be effectively

trained. This is because continuous and independent observation can get around the problem of biased responses often associated with interviews and questionnaires (Sutton, 1997). This tool may also provide the cheapest of the three options if parliamentary staff already on the pay roll of a particular parliament could be trained and then assigned with the responsibility of conducting a TNA of this nature. However, should MPs be resentful and resist the idea of parliamentary staff undertaking such a task, an independent person, perhaps a former (and respected) MP, could be chosen to perform this role.

Responses from the interviews conducted with training providers identified several crucial areas of focus when conducting a TNA. These include, but are not limited to: (i) procedural needs; (ii) administrative needs; (iii) the KSAs needed by MPs to perform their roles both in parliament and in their electorates; (iv) KSAs needed to function properly in committees; and (v) the KSAs needed by Pacific MPs to function well in the absence of the resources available to MPs in advanced parliaments. These suggestions are consistent with the KSA framework provided in the South African model that identifies areas of training focus by looking at what KSAs MPs need to effectively function at both the chamber and committee levels (Kunnath, 2011).

In summary, a TNA is a stage in the TC when training objectives (needed KSAs) are determined. Importantly though, as Hossain (2004) rightly suggests, a comprehensive TNA has to clearly state improvements that the training is expected to bring to trainees. This is important since it aids the monitoring and evaluation stage of the TC. Furthermore, even though a TNA should draw most of its information from MPs, experienced trainers should also be allowed to have input into deciding some of the needs new MPs require. This will help get around what Lam (2011) calls a common challenge in conducting a TNA: the failure

of MPs to distinguish between their training wants and training needs. An experienced and effective training practitioner would be in a position to help tease out the differences. For instance, one of the training needs that was suggested by all of the interviewed training providers for Pacific MPs relates to the need for them to grasp the concept of nationhood, as selfish motives and constituency-based ambitions have often made it impossible for the parliaments to formulate coherent policies that address the national interest. Such recommendations for inclusion in training programs should be considered whether or not MPs have raised them during a TNA.

6.3.2 Training Design Stage

The second stage of the TC is training design. According to Hossain (2004), a comprehensive training design has to originate from a well-conducted TNA analysis that is based on the objectives of the parliament and roles of MPs. It follows that, in designing training programs, separately determined KSAs needs are, at this stage, coordinated in such a manner that allows for the formulation of topics that can be combined to create a theme or several themes (Hossain, 2004). These themes are grouped together to form modules for training programs. While the process of designing training programs may seem straightforward, several issues have to be taken into consideration if the content is to produce desirable effects.

Firstly, the design process should necessarily involve the target group, in this case parliamentary actors themselves. Lam (2011) makes this argument by pointing out that there is a growing realisation that for parliamentary training to have significant impact, there has to be a sense of ownership of these programs. MPs need to feel that programs are for them and are going to improve their performance. This is a very sensitive issue, particularly in the

Pacific region, as often good intentions are perhaps wrongly mistaken for the imposition of ‘western ideology’. One Clerk expressed this view very clearly by saying that ‘nobody should come to our parliament and tell us what to do’ when referring to the current situation in which external training providers, mainly from Australia and New Zealand, go to Pacific parliaments and conduct training without first of all conducting a TNA, and, secondly without involving local stakeholders in the training content. To get around these types of sensitive issues, the training content must be linked to local issues, and that can only happen if participatory methods of training design are applied. The use of key parliamentary, governmental and/or traditional leaders in designing training may be crucial for the success of these programs in Pacific parliaments.

Training design should also acknowledge the differences in experience and expertise among MPs and provide content that reflects that situation. This will lessen the mixed reaction from MPs following training. Indeed, in all case parliaments the researcher observed that, while some MPs regarded programs as too basic, there were a good number who complained that the programs were too difficult to understand. To address these different perspectives, training should be designed in such a way that it starts with the most basic essential information and work its way through to advanced levels, with graduated modules spread over a long period. This will allow MPs at different levels of KSAs to find appropriate modules that suit their level of experience and expertise. This way, MPs can choose to attend only training sessions that suit their level of expertise throughout the parliamentary term.

Relatedly, a comprehensive training model has to be designed in such a way that modules are spread over the entire term of parliament. Indeed, according to one interviewed training provider, training should be ‘continuous and cover the entire parliamentary term’ if it is to

have significant impact. This point, which was raised by most providers during the interviews, is consistent with both the South African and the TCER training models, in that MPs are given training on the assumption that it takes at least two years for a new MP to find his/her way around the parliament (Kunnath, 2011; Lam, 2011). Consequently, training programs should be designed in such a manner that programs start at the most basic and progress to advanced levels before venturing into more specialised training programs towards the later stages of a given parliamentary term.

Important also in designing programs is the fact that the roles of MPs are, according to one provider, who is also a retired MP, 'skill rather than career or academic based'. As Lam (2011) explains, training content should, therefore, reflect this fact by avoiding the trap of focusing more on the knowledge side of training than skills. The importance of skills is exemplified by the political career of the Hon. Paul Keating, who, despite his lack of tertiary education, was praised by one provider as one of the most successful MPs in Australian political history. Indeed, limited academic qualifications did not prevent Keating from being promoted to senior cabinet positions in Australia, eventually becoming prime minister between 1991 and 1996. The success in Keating's career suggests that Pacific MPs may yet have a chance to be effective in performing their roles if exposed to skill-oriented training programs. Recall that this approach to training is consistent with the TAFE technique of training discussed in the Chapter Two. It is in this context that this thesis argues for skill-oriented programs to be prioritised in the design and delivery of training programs in Pacific parliaments.

One of the biggest concern expressed by the majority of the interviewed MPs and Clerks was that the same training programs are provided to different Pacific parliaments. According to

one Clerk, 'training should be adapted to specific needs of each parliament'. This should necessarily include accommodating various cultural contexts that underlie a particular Pacific parliament and should focus on providing ways to improve the local parliamentary system, rather than trying to make them resemble the broader Westminster system. This argument is consistent with suggestions by Kunnath (2011) in his paper on the South African parliamentary training model. It is also consistent with the work of Lam (2011) who insists that training content should be based or adjusted to representation systems of a particular parliament. These arguments highlight the important fact that parliaments, while they are representational institutions, differ according to the legal and cultural framework within which they operate. This is why conducting a TNA is vitally important to the success of training programs.

Furthermore, training content has to include real life examples from similar parliaments to make clear sense to MPs. A point to note here is provided by one training provider, who said that these examples should in all cases be drawn from countries which are more or less at the same stage of parliamentary development as Pacific parliaments. Consequently, taking a case study of an African parliament, for instance, is more to be encouraged than using examples from Australian or New Zealand parliaments. In other words, the design should emphasise relevance by taking into account the practicality and locality of training. The inclusion of relevant examples in training programs is important, as one provider pointed out, because 'practitioner based programs have generally been more successful in the region than academic and theoretical ones'.

Finally, just as the HS model was tested (Fox & Korris, 2011), there is a need to test training content following the development of the first program. At this stage, the material should be

piloted with parliamentary stakeholders such as MPs (serving and retired) and parliamentary staff to determine suitability. Feedback from this pilot should then be used to finalise the training program for MPs.

6.3.3 Training Delivery Stage

Having designed and tested training content and ascertained that it is suitable for use in its existing form, the next stage of the TC is to deliver it to the intended target. This stage is extremely important since it does not matter how good training design is, if delivery of training is poor, all can be lost as far as the transfer of intended KSAs is concerned. It is therefore absolutely crucial that training delivery is conducted after answering the following key questions: (i) how much to deliver; (ii) how to deliver it; (iii) when to deliver it; and (iv) who is best equipped to deliver a particular training program. These questions are dealt with below.

After the TNA and training design stages have ascertained ‘what to deliver’, the next important question is how much content should a training provider deliver in one particular training session. This is a very important issue to address, since, according to most of the interviewed Pacific MPs, the training sessions they attended were generally too short and too intensive to allow one to retain KSAs. It is against a similar background that Kunnath (2011) warns that such situations could lead to frustration on the part of MPs and hence dissatisfaction with training programs. It is therefore very important that training providers in Pacific parliaments take deliberate steps to ensure that the dissemination of information in each training session is done in such a manner that MPs are not overloaded with too much material that they struggle to digest.

The second question to deal with in the training delivery stage is how to deliver it. This question addresses the issue of methodologies that ought to be used in providing training in Pacific parliaments. One cannot overemphasise the importance of choosing the right training delivery methodologies, as all the interviewed Pacific MPs (experienced and new) had issues with the tendency of most providers to deliver programs in ‘lecture mode’. The point here is that, while a few minutes of lecture-style presentations can be necessary to establish the basic facts for further training in a particular session, andragogical rather than pedagogical approaches to training are mostly preferred by Pacific MPs. This argument is strongly made by Lam (2011), who proposes that training delivery should take into consideration adult education and training approaches, rather than simply adopting the form of workshops and seminars.

As explained in Chapter Two, training delivery of MPs should adopt adult education and training approaches that, among other factors, emphasise that training should: (i) be a two-way process, with trainers adopting a facilitator rather than teacher role; (ii) be learner (MP) centred, in that it should be in accordance with how MPs perceive effectiveness and not the other way round; (iii) be relevant to actual roles that MPs play; (iv) keep MPs interested and thus engaged in the learning process through interactive modes of teaching such as group work, question and answer sessions and mock sessions; (v) be practical in such a way that MPs can go on to apply directly the KSAs learnt in real life situations; and (vi) seek to enhance self-learning KSAs.

The latest literature on parliamentary training delivery (such as Fox & Korris, 2011; Hossain, 2004; Kunnath, 2011; Lam, 2011) strongly supports the adult education and training

approach for the delivery of training to MPs. Indeed, while Lam (2011) stresses that training delivery ought to focus on equipping MPs with self-learning KSAS, Fox and Korris (2011), insist that training delivery should be experiential, adopting role play and simulation types of delivery techniques. In the end, training providers should be creative enough to employ multiple techniques of training delivery such as those mentioned previously (Fox & Korris, 2011; Kunnath, 2011).

One of the most common modes of training delivery is mentoring. This could take the form of mentoring among MPs within the same parliament or MPs across different but similar parliaments. However, there is a potential problem in adopting a mentoring approach in Pacific parliaments as the process of matching mentors and those to be mentored could be problematic. This is because, in reality, effective mentoring can only exist where there is a rapport between the mentor and the person being mentored. This may not be possible in Pacific parliaments given party fragmentation (and party indiscipline) and self-centredness issues surrounding MPs in these parliaments discussed in previous chapters (Ambrose, 1997; Feeney, 2005; Hawksley, 2006; Reilly, 2008; Van Trease, 2010). Besides, with high rate of turnover of MPs in Pacific parliaments, it may be asking too much of experienced leaders in Pacific parliaments to find time to share their experiences and expertise with the high number of new MPs. Experienced MPs tend to get cabinet positions and other senior positions within the parliament, which often means they have little spare time to engage in mentoring. Moreover, some Pacific parliaments such as Tonga's do not have official party systems, making it difficult for mentoring to take place, as mentoring more often than not takes place at the party rather than the chamber level. It is therefore difficult to assume that mentoring can be systematically used in Pacific parliaments. This is evidenced by the data from

interviews discussed in Chapter Five, which clearly shows a low percentage of mentoring relationships in case parliaments.

Cross-mentoring (mentoring relationships across parliaments) could thus provide an alternative option. However, one experienced provider warned that cross-mentoring may produce undesirable outcomes if MPs come from vastly dissimilar parliaments in terms of institutional development. It follows from this that the south-south networks proposed by the WBI model could provide the best option for Pacific MPs. Cross-mentoring is, however, not without its challenges, as the geographical distance between MPs across parliaments can hinder the effectiveness of mentoring programs. The development of suitable ICT resources, and training of MPs to be able to use them to establish networks, is a necessary initiative that has to be adopted to bring Pacific MPs ‘closer’ to MPs from elsewhere, thereby allowing them to improve their KSAs through a mentor-mentored approach to training.

A successful approach to training delivery that this thesis proposes for adoption throughout Pacific region is the one that involves real life committee training, as conducted in the Timor-Leste parliament. According to most interviewed MPs there, the training was effective because it involved the practical facilitation of drafting and presenting to the chamber a bill that was later passed as law in parliament. This approach to training was roundly applauded by MPs because it provided them with tangible benefits: attending the training session produced legislation that was the product of that particular session. The success of this approach to delivery prompted the Vice President (Deputy Speaker) of the Timor-Leste parliament to declare that ‘most training should be directed towards a particular bill and should be done at the committee level before the bill is tabled in parliament’. Given the success in this innovative approach to delivery, it is proposed in this study that training

should, where possible, go beyond simulations and mock sessions and venture into the real life happenings of a particular parliament. Reflecting on this issue, one provider involved in this delivery approach pointed out that, for the effectiveness of training, ‘Topics should be relevant to current debates in a particular parliament’. While this approach may be problematic at times because of the number of committees in a parliament, it provides a realistic option that the Pacific parliaments should embrace.

The third question that arises in delivering training to Pacific MPs is when to deliver a particular program. This question is important because it has implications for maximising the attendance of MPs. The data in Chapter Five indicate low attendance rates of MPs at training sessions in Pacific parliaments. It is thus imperative that the timing for scheduling these events is appropriate. This is important because, while Pacific islands are relatively small, they usually consist of atolls which are tens to hundreds of miles apart, making it difficult for MPs to travel to parliaments at short notice. For instance, Kiribati, a small island of slightly more than 100,000 people, is made up of atolls that are so far apart that it is the only country in the world whose territory stretches in all four hemispheres (CIA, 2011). This situation is worsened by the combination of high costs of travel and unpredictability of the transport industry in the region (Bailey, 1994; Main, 1989). According to Bailey (1994), the inadequacy of the travel industry in the region necessitates that islanders (and indeed tourists) make their travel reservations well in advance, as the small carriers available are more often than not booked to capacity most of the time. In addition, competing pressures, such as the need to serve in constituencies, often consume a lot of MPs’ time off (Fox & Korris, 2011; Lam, 2011). The need to travel to a training location necessitates that MPs know ahead of time when training programs will take place. Proper scheduling of training sessions has to be given priority to ensure maximum attendance.

It is crucial therefore that training providers plan ahead of time for the delivery of training programs in Pacific parliaments. Lam (2011) suggests that training providers should schedule their training activities, setting out the location, dates and programs they intend to provide, and make that information available to MPs well ahead of time (at least one month before), so that MPs can integrate the programs into their busy timetables. Similar suggestions have been provided by Kunnath (2011) in the South African context and Fox and Korris (2011) in their HS parliamentary training model. Importantly, the same idea is expressed by MPs, Clerks and training providers interviewed in this study. In fact, one provider suggested that information about all training programs that are expected to take place in an entire parliamentary term should be sent to MPs as soon as the first parliamentary session of their term in government begins. This suggestion resonates with one provided by a Timor-Leste MP, who argued for training to be in parliament's annual schedule. He pointed out that 'Training should be integrated as one of the parliamentary activities, as only then can standing orders be used to enforce attendances'. These suggestions are consistent with Hossain's (2004) argument that for training to be more effective in parliaments it should be made a management function and entrenched in the parliamentary calendar, just like other programs within the parliament. One way to do this is to adopt the approach in the TCER model, making sure that training sessions only take place just before, during or just after parliamentary sessions.

The final question that needs addressing before delivering future training in Pacific parliaments is who are the right persons to provide training? This is a sensitive issue, as interviewed MPs have generally shown their opposition to providers who are neither serving nor retired MPs. Also, providers from outside the Pacific region have often been seen by

Pacific MPs and Clerks alike as people who only serve to impose ‘western values’ on their traditional systems of governance. It is not surprising then that one of the Clerks is of the opinion that ‘local trainers are more effective than foreign ones’. The reason behind this type of sentiment is the belief that local trainers are able to close the language, cultural and local knowledge gap between themselves and participants in a way that outsiders cannot. Locals in this sense means better. This issue forms the central part of the next chapter and will be analysed in detail there.

6.3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

Monitoring and evaluation of training programs is the final and a crucial stage of the TC where feedback is analysed and suggestions to improve training programs are implemented. According to Hossain (2004), monitoring and evaluation is an important stage because it assesses the progress of programs during and after training delivery, thereby enabling correction measures to be adopted to ensure that objectives are better met in future. According to most providers, in order to get a better sense of effectiveness of training, evaluation of programs should take place in six months or a year’s time following the delivery of a particular training program. This approach has been lacking in Pacific parliaments and has hampered genuine attempts by training organisations and providers to improve programs.

Hossain (2004, p. 26) further argues that the monitoring and evaluation of parliamentary training programs can be done through any of the following five ways: (i) conducting end of course evaluation, in which participants are given a questionnaire immediately after the completion of the course; (ii) collecting baseline information by administering a

questionnaire before and immediately after training, and attributing the differences to training impact; (iii) using a progress review, in which participants are asked to produce a report about their perceived impact of training on their performance several months after training has taken place; (iv) assigning an independent body to conduct performance evaluations of participants months after training; and (v) using the diary method, in which case officials are assigned the task of observing and recording any changes in the performance of an MP following training by assessing the degree in which skills learned during training are subsequently applied by MPs in their roles. For instance, an official may look at parliamentary debates and assess whether discussions are more to the point, and that a concise message is delivered in the allotted time following training in these areas.

Note, however, that while the first two ways of conducting M&E listed above are, according to the interviewed training providers, widely used in Pacific parliaments because they are relatively easy to apply, they can be misleading in that they do not allow MPs to be evaluated on whether they applied, in real life, the KSAs they should have gained during training. It is for this reason the last three methods of conducting M&E are the more preferred and perhaps more accurate methods and therefore the ones that should be adopted in Pacific parliaments.

Out of the three preferred methods of conducting M&E, the third method, which requires MPs to produce progress reports in six months to one year after attending training, resonated with suggestions from some of the interviewed training providers. The general argument was that it is 'high time' that training in Pacific parliaments was accompanied by responsibility and accountability. Specifically, one provider argued that, unlike the current situation, 'Trained MPs should be obligated to produce a progress report a few months down the line'. In other words, training should be outcomes-oriented and should seek to demonstrate that. However, to achieve triangulation of data drawn from M&E exercises, more than one method

should be used at any one time (Knollmayer, 2002). Thus it may be necessary to make use of MPs' reports and parliamentary staff diary records to confirm or disconfirm the data. Importantly, since these methods of M&E make use of 'low-road learning approaches' discussed in Chapter Two, they can easily be adopted.

M&E can be undertaken at three levels. These according to Hossain (2004, p. 13) include: (i) the 'reaction level', which looks at the reaction of trainees (MPs) to various aspects of training programs such as course content, training methods, location etc.; (ii) the 'learning level, which uses pre-determined tests to assess the level of learning against pre-determined standards; and (iii) the 'confidence level', which looks at the way training can raise the confidence level of MPs to perform effectively their roles post-training. As explained above, the confidence level M&E is mostly preferred as it involves conducting M&E after the event, and thus it is the only level at which one can ascertain whether training actually assisted MPs in performing their roles or not. This is important since it will help training providers to draw much better conclusions on the relevance, practicality and ultimately effectiveness of a particular training program.

Nevertheless, the above-mentioned methods of conducting M&E may not always be sufficient for determining the effectiveness level of training programs. This is because sometimes it is difficult to separate the impact of training on performance of MPs from other factors, such as improved performance of parliamentary staff in assisting MPs to perform their roles, which could also be responsible for performance improvement. This issue arose during interviews because some MPs initially perceived their performance to have been improved by training but on further questioning admitted that it is probably their experience in parliament (they were all in their second or more terms in parliament) rather than training

that led to improvements. In these circumstances, it is necessary for the more advanced methods of M&E, which use regression analysis, to be used so as to separate the impact of various factors on the performance of MPs (Hossain, 2004).

6.3.6 Why Build a Training Model for Pacific Parliaments: The Benefits

Several benefits can be associated with the decision to formulate a comprehensive parliamentary training program for Pacific parliaments. The first and obvious benefit is that a comprehensive model that involves input from MPs tends to produce positive results (Kunnath, 2011). Inclusive models that are the result of research and practical experience identify the training needs of MPs and help to ensure they are met during and after training.

Secondly, since many such models originate from local parliamentary actors, they produce a sense of local ownership among target groups. This is an important factor in program acceptance and ultimately the effectiveness of training programs.

Thirdly, a comprehensive parliamentary training model provides a ready-made tool for parliaments to use to secure donor funds, as they provide a detailed action plan covering the entire parliamentary term, and, importantly, the plan has buy-in from MPs.

Finally, according to Kunnath (2011), comprehensive training models have a potential to encourage innovation through repetition, something that is crucial for transfer of KSAs.

6.4 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has pointed to the fact that parliamentary training is not and therefore should not be treated as ‘a one shot event’, as Hossain (2004, p. 10) rightly puts it. Rather, parliamentary training, particularly in Pacific parliaments, has to be construed as a cycle which begins with a TNA and concludes with M&E which allows for lessons learnt in a previous cycle to be incorporated into the first phase of the next cycle. This is vital not only for making training programs more effective but also for increasing acceptance levels of these programs by MPs. Strict adherence to all salient features of the four stages of the TC should thus be obligatory to training providers in the Pacific region if desirable outcomes are to be realised.

That said the genuine concern by Pacific MPs and Clerks over who should deliver training, needs to be addressed. This is because external providers have dominated the parliamentary training sector in Pacific parliaments in the last decade. The result, rightly or wrongly, is suspicion that this is used as a means to impose western values. Also, the use of English by most external providers in training materials and the delivery of programs has only served to hinder the smooth transfer of KSAs to MPs, since parliamentarians, particularly those from Timor-Leste and Vanuatu, do not understand the language. These factors continue to work against external providers’ credibility in the region. It is not surprising, then, to observe that there seems to be a consensus among Pacific MPs, Clerks and even some external trainers that there is the need to shift training responsibilities to local trainers. However, who among local parliamentary stakeholders can do this effectively? The next chapter looks at this question and attempts to provide a suggestion based on data from Pacific MPs, Clerks, training providers and recent literature.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Return on Training Investment in Parliaments: The Need for Change in the Pacific Region

7.0 Overview

The previous chapter presented salient reforms that approaches to training in Pacific parliaments should consider to achieve desirable parliamentary performance. This chapter goes further by arguing that for parliamentary performance to improve in the Pacific region there should be a greater concentration on the training provided to parliamentary staff. The chapter begins by presenting the background to this argument. It then analyses the way training of parliamentary staff should be undertaken before outlining the benefits associated with such a move. The chapter concludes by providing recommendations on the way forward.

7.1 Background

There has been substantial investment in the training of Pacific parliaments for more than a decade by donors such as the Australian Government and the United Nations Development Program (see Centre for Democratic Institutions, 2011; United Nations Development Program, 2011). However, despite that considerable investment, parliamentary performance in the five parliaments the subject of this research, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu, has hardly improved. Indeed, political researchers such as Larmour and Barcham (2006), Meleisea (2005), Morgan (2005a), Pellizo (2010) and Robert et al., (2007) report that the performance remains generally weak. According to Saldanha

(2004, p. 32), a significant reason for this can be traced to the fact that most of training programs are 'too inadequate' to effect, in any meaningful way, improved parliamentary performance. Seven years on, the interviews conducted for this research confirm Saldanha's argument.

One of the options that could be used to redress this failure is improving the design, delivery and evaluation of training programs provided to Pacific members of parliament (MPs) as shown in Chapter Six. However, in view of the high turnover of MPs in every election (Connell, 2006; Panapa & Fraenkel, 2008), and differences in local constitutional and cultural contexts, including language issues which vary throughout the region (Boege, et al., 2008; Richardson, 2009), focusing training programs on parliamentary staff in the first instance has the potential to produce a greatly improved training impact. This approach offers a longer-term solution to strengthening parliaments, because effective training of parliamentary staff, coupled with improved recruitment processes could enhance their ability to provide improved technical support to MPs. It would also help address the problem of institutional memory that arises from the high turnover of MPs. This would have the added advantage of allowing external organisations to concentrate more of their resources on supporting civic education, a proven approach to strengthening parliaments (Beetham, 2006; Hudson & Wren, 2007; Milner, 2002; Olson & Norton, 1996; Power, 2008).

This chapter examines the competencies of Pacific parliamentary staff, the average length of time MPs serve and the need to involve parliamentary staff in designing, delivering and evaluating training programs provided to their parliaments. It also argues that greater concentration on the training of parliamentary staff should involve the adoption of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table (ANZACATT) model. It

should be noted that the author is not advocating for the replacement of training programs that already exist¹⁵ in parliaments. Rather, he is arguing for an additional measure that complements existing training programs by focusing to a far greater degree on the training of parliamentary staff. Importantly, while this chapter focuses on only the five case parliaments mentioned above, the arguments it raises are relevant to other developing countries in the Pacific region and beyond.

7.2 How training should be undertaken

As explained in Chapter Two, the view that training parliamentary actors can potentially strengthen Pacific parliaments is strongly supported by the literature in both adult education and training fields (as depicted by scholars such as Delahaye, 2000; Peterson & Provo, 2000) and in the Human Resources Development (HRD) field (as shown by authors such as Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003; Tharenou, Saks, et al., 2007). The theoretical logic found in both fields of study suggests the existence of a positive relationship between training parliamentary actors, such as parliamentary staff, and improvement in the performance of their respective parliaments (Orton, et al., 2000). Consistent with these theories, recent studies in the Ghanaian national parliament (see Stapenhurst, 2004) and the Bangladesh national parliament (see Hossain, 2004) indicate that training in parliaments can improve performance at both individual (MPs and parliamentary staff) and parliamentary levels.

¹⁵ CDI, for instance, supports the research and analysis functions of parliamentary staff, including the creation of good working relations between Pacific parliamentary staff and their MPs (Centre for Democratic Institutions, 2011)

Parliamentary staff are generally categorised into two major groups: procedural and administrative (Besly, 2010; Reynolds, 2003). Just like in other organisations, professional development of parliamentary staff has traditionally involved formal and/or informal training, which takes place while staff continue to perform their day-to-day duties and responsibilities (McClelland, 2006). However, unlike employees in other institutions, parliamentary staff, particularly those involved in procedural matters, perform a unique role, and the nature of that role means that the training required does not build directly on the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) these staff acquired in previous occupations or professions. (McClelland, 2006). For example, providing technical support to parliamentary chambers on matters such as parliamentary standing orders and chamber-related procedures is unique to the institution of parliament (McClelland, 2006). This reality, coupled with the fact that parliamentary staff require a degree of specialist KSAs to effectively and efficiently perform their roles and responsibilities (McClelland, 2006), necessitates that they be exposed to a thorough induction program and continuous professional development. The latter is as important as the former, since continuing professional development has been successfully used by many parliaments around the world to ensure parliamentary staff have up-to-date specialised KSAs, which they in turn use to enhance the performance of MPs in their parliaments. It follows from this that Pacific parliamentary staff need access to more training.

In recognition of the important role parliamentary staff play in ensuring the smooth operations of parliaments, the Australian and New Zealand governments (the most developed countries in the Pacific region we consider in this study: (Stringer, 2006) constantly expose their parliamentary staff to training programs (C. Johnson, 2008; McClelland, 2006). Traditionally, training of parliamentary staff in these two countries took the form of on-the-job training, with career progression determined largely by the longevity of a particular staff

member's career (McClelland, 2006). However, the need for creating specialised KSAs among parliamentary staff required a more structured training program and this in turn led to the formation of ANZACATT in 2001 (McClelland, 2006).

ANZACATT plays a central role in ensuring parliamentary staff in Australia and New Zealand are equipped with KSAs that can enable them to effectively perform their duties (Besly, 2010; C. Johnson, 2008). Specifically, ANZACATT was established to promote ongoing professional development of Clerks and parliamentary staff and to enhance the knowledge and principles of parliamentary systems and procedures, including the administrative competencies necessary for the smooth operation of parliaments (C. Johnson, 2008). In addition, ANZACATT publishes a bi-annual bulletin that reports on procedural and administrative issues which are of interest to parliamentary staff (C. Johnson, 2008).

To achieve its objectives, ANZACATT trains staff in two distinct but complementary ways, which the author suggests could be adapted and used for improving the performance of Pacific parliamentary staff. The first component of the ANZACATT model consists of a two-day annual seminar and workshop which provides an important platform for staff to share professional experiences and the challenges they face in their parliaments (C. Johnson, 2008).

Creating an ANZACATT-like forum in which Pacific parliamentary staff can meet annually and address challenges that are relevant to their parliaments, increases the potential for them to perform their roles more effectively. This is because professional experience sharing taking place in such fora can potentially advance the KSAs pertaining to foundations and principles of parliamentary systems and procedures, as well as administrative practices, that parliamentary staff in Pacific parliaments ought to possess to ensure effective governance of

human and material resources that are essential to the smooth operation of parliament (McClelland, 2006). The annual seminars are also expected to induce collegial exchanges among member Pacific parliamentary staff which, if encouraged, could bring about sustained sharing of professional experience and knowledge (KSAs) on matters of common interest among member parliamentary staff (J. Johnson, 2005; McClelland, 2006).

Importantly, the likelihood of success of the proposed annual seminars is high, since they involve parliamentary staff from countries facing similar challenges. This argument is consistent with the World Bank Institute's view (see O'Brien, 2011) that the south-south networks (networks among individuals from developing countries) are more likely to achieve better outcomes than the north-south networks such as that existing between state and territorial Australian parliaments and a number of Pacific parliaments (Pacific Parliament Network, 2011). This was evidenced in this study when most of the interviewed training providers and Pacific MPs admitted that generally the twin relations between state and territorial Australian parliaments and a number of Pacific parliaments are not functioning desirably due to a considerable political, economic, social and cultural development gap between Australia and participating countries, which, among others, include PNG, Tonga and Vanuatu. Allowing for south-south relationships to be nurtured can therefore create an important platform in which Pacific parliamentary staff are given an opportunity to engage in discussions on matters of common interest, including fostering consultation and collaboration among member parliamentary staff as a coordinated approach to their training and development.

The second component of the ANZACATT model involves an ANZACATT-sponsored short course provided at the Queensland University of Technology, the Parliamentary Law,

Practice and Procedure (PLPP). This course covers fundamental topics in parliamentary studies such as the effects of the constitution, separation of power, membership of parliament, election and appeal mechanisms, structure and function of parliament, powers and privileges of legislative chambers, parliamentary/committees' investigations, committees systems and parliamentary practice and procedures (C. Johnson, 2008; McClelland, 2006). Generally, the PLPP course is intended to introduce new parliamentary staff to basic issues pertaining to the way parliaments operate.

A basic course on parliamentary studies such as the PLPP could be introduced at the University of the South Pacific (USP), the biggest university in the region. This is important because, as explained previously, it is usually the case that parliamentary staff do not possess prior experience in basic matters regarding parliaments, such as standing orders and procedures, which they need to effectively and efficiently perform their duties. This type of course for other Pacific countries would provide a much-needed induction program for new Pacific parliamentary staff. Moreover, the use of a local academic institution such as the USP is important as it could help to remove a lingering concern in many Pacific countries that such training programs only serve to impose 'western values'.

In sum, the formation of an ANZACATT-styled training model could transform the professional development of Pacific parliamentary staff because it introduces a more in-depth and coordinated training programs which supplements in-house training that has traditionally been the mainstay in most parliaments in the region and beyond (McClelland, 2006). Importantly, a variant of the ANZACATT model is the best fit for training Pacific parliamentary staff because it provides a complementary approach to training. Indeed, on the one hand, the seminar component of the ANZACATT-like model provides a less structured

and more flexible format of training. This is crucial, as such a model is generally well received by adult learners (see Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 2001). On the other hand, the second component of the ANZACATT-like model, which involves a course on fundamental issues pertaining to the way parliaments operate, is important, as it provides a more structured approach to training staff, particularly those who may lack basic knowledge of parliaments (McClelland, 2006).

In addition to creating a variant of the ANZACATT training model in the region, Pacific parliamentary staff should be exposed to programs (potentially from the USP) that can prepare them to be trainers of their MPs. This should necessarily include training on how to design, evaluate and review training programs aimed at MPs. This will ultimately enable parliamentary staff to assume the role of trainers in their parliaments in the nearby future, thereby addressing the issues of cultural and constitutional conflicts during traditional training programs brought about by the use of external trainers in Pacific parliaments, many of whom have not taken such matters into account when designing the training programs they offer to these parliaments.

Furthermore, Pacific parliaments need to address the issue of the quality of parliamentary staff that they hire. This is because parliamentary staff are usually few and, as Morgan (2005a) points out, largely incapable of doing their job effectively. A common problem is that Pacific parliamentary staff are generally recruited on the basis of patronage (see Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan, 2005a). In contrast, in Australia's national and state parliaments staff are recruited in accordance with public sector guidelines, which involves advertising for positions where applicants are required to meet certain minimum criteria to be called for interviews and merit selection applies (C. Johnson, 2008). Improved recruitment policies

similar to those in neighbouring Australia and New Zealand (C. Johnson, 2008) could therefore prove crucial in attracting quality parliamentary staff.

The majority of the interviewed MPs concur with the central argument of this study that parliamentary staff need to be exposed to more training programs. Indeed, according to the case by case analysis conducted for this study eight out of 13 Marshallese MPs, seven out of 11 PNG MPs, 10 out of 13 Timorese MPs, seven out of 11 Tongan MPs and 10 out of 15 Vanuatu MPs strongly advocated the need for urgent change in the way training programs are provided in Pacific parliaments, arguing for more training programs to be made available to parliamentary staff. The benefits of concentrating training on Pacific parliamentary staff are discussed below.

7.3 Benefits

This section identifies and analyses the improved competencies (KSAs) that could be acquired by Pacific parliamentary staff as a direct result of being exposed to continuous professional development. These competencies include the ability to: (i) provide improved technical support to MPs; (ii) provide greater institutional memory to parliaments; (iii) enhance the capacity of Parliamentary staff to actively engage in designing, delivering and evaluating improved professional development programs intended for Pacific MPs; and (iv) the potential for external organisations to invest more resources toward civic education. These are discussed in detail below.

The rationale behind training parliamentary staff stems from the fact that, when well equipped with specialised KSAs, they can potentially enhance the ability of MPs to perform

their duties and responsibilities more effectively (Romzek & Utter, 1997). In turn, since MPs are central to the operation of parliaments (Kunnath, 2011), improvement in their effectiveness is expected to enhance the general performance of their parliaments (Besly, 2010; Romzek & Utter, 1997).

With regard to providing technical support, parliamentary staff can use their expertise (KSAs) to ensure that legislative processes undertaken by MPs run smoothly. One of the ways they can do this is by providing non-partisan confidential advice to MPs (Besly, 2010; Thomas, 2003). For instance, Besly (2010) states that all principal parliamentary players in Australia's House of Representatives, such as ministers, shadow ministers, other members of the opposition, backbenchers and independent MPs, draw parliamentary law advice from the Office of the Clerk. This seems to be a common practice for parliamentary staff in most other parliamentary democracies. For example, parliamentary staff in Canada, through the Office of the Clerk of House of Commons, are also responsible for assisting MPs, including the Speaker, on matters concerning interpretation of rules, precedents, practice and all other parliamentary procedural matters, including keeping the records of all parliamentary proceedings (Besly, 2010). The central position of parliamentary staff is even more pronounced in the US Congress where, according to Romzek and Utter (1997), virtually nothing is done by Congress members exclusive of parliamentary staff. While the situation in the US Congress is not comparable to most other parliaments in the world, it remains that, when equipped with specialised KSAs, parliamentary staff such as those in the Pacific parliaments can play an important role in ensuring the smooth functioning of parliaments by the virtue of providing technical support and advice to MPs.

Another possible benefit that can be realised from increasing training to Pacific parliamentary staff is continuity of service (Thomas, 2003). As rightfully suggested by Romzek and Utter (1997), parliamentary staff represent continuity in parliaments, in that their careers are more stable than MPs because they are not subject to re-election. This continuity is important, as it provides adequate competencies necessary to counter-balance expertise readily available in executive governments (Besly, 2010; Romzek & Utter, 1997). For instance, parliamentary staff in Australia's Senate are responsible for managing parliament's resources such as libraries (Besly, 2010). Similarly, Reynolds (2003) reports that parliamentary staff in the Northern Ireland Assembly provide institutional memory to both the MPs and the Northern Ireland public on matters pertaining to parliaments. The point here is, as custodians of institutional memory, parliamentary staff provide a cushion for lost KSAs when MPs lose their re-election bid, which, given the shortness of most parliamentary terms, is problematic for the smooth running of a parliament. This is especially important in Pacific parliaments since they experience one of the highest rates of MP turnover in the world, averaging at more than 50% in each election (Connell, 2006; Morgan, 2005b). The need to train parliamentary staff to counter the effects of the high turnover of MPs was roundly supported by the majority of training providers interviewed, and who expressed their frustration about potentially wasted training in MPs since most are usually not successful in their re-election bid. Their arguments were also reflected by one of the interviewed Timorese MPs, who pointed out that training programs should be concentrated on parliamentary staff. He stressed that 'training MPs cannot help significantly because of high turnover in the parliament'.

Increased training of Pacific parliamentary staff can also ensure that there is sustainability and local ownership of training programs intended for Pacific MPs both in terms of design and delivery. In other words, training of parliamentary staff can be used as a means to prepare

them as future trainers in parliaments, should the current foreign-supported arrangements be considerably reduced or cease to exist. This idea is strongly backed by Morgan and Hegarty (2003), who argue that, for the sake of sustainability of training programs in Pacific parliaments, training providers should aim to develop training templates that can be easily used by Pacific parliamentary staff, who should in turn train MPs in the region. This argument is consistent with suggestions provided by one prominent Pacific parliament trainer, who pointed out during interview that ‘external providers should aim to equip locals. The aim should be sustainability of the programs’. In addition, the argument was echoed by one of the interviewed Pacific parliaments’ Clerks, who pointed out that ‘Training MPs alone does not allow for retention of knowledge in parliaments. If trained as trainers, parliamentary staff can help in ensuring sustainability in Pacific parliaments’. These suggestions are consistent with the argument by Belisle and Joseph (2009), who point out that the use of external trainers in parliaments should be discouraged, since it may provide artificial and unsustainable results because the expertise and inspiration are not internally driven. However, given the current inadequacy of capacities (KSAs) among most Pacific parliamentary staff, external trainers should be allowed to continue to provide training in Pacific parliaments with a view to equipping parliamentary staff so that they can take over training duties in the foreseeable future.

Training Pacific parliamentary staff to take over the mantle of training Pacific MPs, has the potential to make training programs cheaper for donor countries/agencies and more demand-driven, as providers would be local parliamentary staff already on the payroll of Pacific parliaments. Training programs could more easily be demand-driven, because as part of the parliament, parliamentary staff have the potential to better identify areas of weakness in their parliaments that training programs could address. This is important, since during interviews

MPs from all five Pacific parliaments repeatedly expressed their frustration with the fact that most training programs are on an *ad hoc* basis, using training materials that may apply to advanced parliaments such as those in Australia and New Zealand but not necessarily to Pacific parliaments.

Reflecting this argument, one Tongan MP lamented that training provided is ‘too general because it is highly borrowed from New Zealand and Australian model of parliaments’. This sentiment was again expressed by a prominent trainer, who pointed out that ‘training should be tailor-made for specific parliaments and this is the major reason as to why locals should be involved in training programs design so as to avoid gaps’. The view by Pacific MPs about *ad hoc* driven training programs is also reflected by Saldana (2004), who points out that training programs provided to Pacific MPs are designed and delivered without training needs assessment being conducted. The presence of unique features within each Pacific parliament suggests that local trainers such as parliamentary staff may be in a better position to understand MPs’ needs, and to address them during training delivery sessions, than are external trainers. Transferring or initially involving Pacific parliamentary staff in designing training programs is a way forward.

In addition, Pacific parliamentary staff have an advantage over external training providers in that they are locals. This can be explained in two ways. Firstly, the ability of parliamentary staff to speak local languages such as Tetum in Timor-Leste or Bislama in Vanuatu has the potential to ensure that Pacific MPs understand fully what is being delivered during training sessions. Indeed interviewed MPs, particularly those from Timor-Leste and Vanuatu, overwhelmingly pointed out language (English) barriers as one of the greatest hindrances to their acquiring KSAs during training sessions. For instance, one Vanuatu MP suggested that

‘external trainers should pass their materials to local trainers who speak Bislama to conduct it because that is the only language that all of the MPs understand fully’. It follows therefore that the use of parliamentary staff that are fluent in the local languages would be extremely beneficial. Secondly, being familiar to MPs in their parliaments, parliamentary staff may provide the best possible trainers. This is because MPs may feel more comfortable asking questions during training sessions than they would with a complete stranger speaking in a language foreign to them. Indeed a Vanuatu MP lamented that he could not understand anything from the training session and was too shy to ask any questions because ‘it was given in English’ and he is a French speaker.

Another benefit that can be realised from engaging parliamentary staff as trainers can be explained by the need to avoid duplication of training programs provided by ‘competing’ programs offered by international organisations in Pacific parliaments. As one training provider put it, ‘the problem here is that training providers compete for funds so they can provide training in Pacific parliaments. The emphasis is on getting funds at the expense of other training providers; therefore it does not matter whether training programs are duplicated or not’. Evidence that supports this disturbing statement is found in the considerable number of interviewed Pacific MPs complaining that they are tired of being repeatedly taught about standing orders. For instance, a Marshallese MP pointed out that duplicated training programs on standing orders and codes of conduct are frustratingly too general. He further argued that standing orders and codes of conduct are ‘very different across parliaments in the world, and therefore when training, training providers have to ask themselves how their materials apply to the Nitijela’. Arguably, the use of parliamentary staff as trainers can more readily remove the duplication of training programs and eliminate the ‘competition for funding’ that

currently keeps various international organisations ‘busy’, to borrow the phrase used by one of their own.

Also, training Pacific parliamentary staff effectively may enhance their ability to constantly monitor, evaluate and eventually assist in reviewing training programs provided to Pacific MPs. As one Timorese MP argued, ‘There must be a mechanism to constantly measure the performance of the parliament to be in place for there to be improvements in performance of MPs and parliament’. It should be noted that the lack of monitoring, evaluation and review mechanisms in training programs in Pacific parliaments is probably the single biggest reason why the impact of programs is negligible. This is because the same programs, which have over the years failed to produce any significant impact, are recycled year in year out. It is not, therefore, surprising to see that the impact of these programs is, to say the least, poor. The training of parliamentary staff to monitor, evaluate and review training programs will thus enhance the potency of such programs in the longer run.

Interestingly also, a number of training providers (four out of seven) seem to support the idea of trainers in Pacific parliaments being locals. Their major argument is based on the need for external organisations to allocate most of their resources to investing in civic education, which is important for strengthening parliamentary democracy, as alluded to previously (Beetham, 2006; Hudson & Wren, 2007; Milner, 2002; Olson & Norton, 1996; Power, 2008). For instance, the deputy director of one of the organisations that support parliamentary strengthening efforts in the Pacific region suggested that the lack of local trainers hinders the long-term ambition of his organisation to shift their efforts from parliament to the broader community in Pacific countries by investing in civic education. The rationale for such a move is that an informed public can induce optimal policy choices through both electing the right

candidates (MPs) and scrutinising their decision-making while in parliament (Milner, 2002). Equipping Pacific parliamentary staff to take over training in parliaments can therefore pave a way for these organisations to improve civil literacy, thereby improving parliamentary democracy in the region.

In sum, the literature covering Pacific parliaments overwhelmingly supports the idea of training parliamentary staff in the region (Mellor & Jabes, 2004; Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). Indeed, according to Morgan and Hegarty (2003), more emphasis should be placed on the possibility of involving more Pacific parliamentary staff in designing training programs. They further argue that, when strengthening the capacity of Pacific parliaments, not just MPs but parliamentary staff should be included (Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). This is because the reliance on international experts in some Pacific parliaments is neither sustainable nor desirable (Mellor & Jabes, 2004).

7.4 Conclusion

This study explains why, despite the provision of training programs to Pacific MPs, performance has not significantly improved. Because there is a high turnover of MPs at every election in the region, coupled with factors such as language barriers and cultural issues that inhibit the smooth transfer of KSAs to MPs during training, this study has argued for a re-think of training strategies. Specifically, it argues for a change in approach. Rather than concentrating overwhelmingly on MPs, future training programs should significantly increase training provided to parliamentary staff so as to enable them to more ably assist MPs to perform their duties more effectively. The study also points out that such a move can also be beneficial to parliamentary democracy in the region, as it could allow external sponsors to

concentrate resources on supporting civic education, which has been proven to be one of the most potent approaches to strengthening parliaments.

In addition, the chapter argues that training should be accompanied by improved recruitment processes for future Pacific parliamentary staff. This will help to ensure that future staff have basic KSAs that are necessary for them to ably perform their roles. This is consistent with the HRD literature (e.g. Brunello & Nedio, 2001) that higher educational background enhances the ability of potential employees to not only seamlessly assume their roles but also learn better when exposed to training.

The argument for making available more training to Pacific parliamentary staff should not in any way be interpreted as arguing for less access to training for Pacific MPs. Instead, the point that this study is making is that training MPs can only yield maximum outcomes if their acquired KSAs are complemented with adequate technical support from parliamentary staff. In other words, equipping Pacific parliamentary staff is only valid up to the point where their acquired specialised KSAs can augment those that MPs already possess. This is important, because in the end MPs and not parliamentary staff are the main actors in parliaments, and Pacific parliaments are no exception to this conventional understanding.

That aside, recall from the discussion in Chapter One, that there are four approaches to strengthen parliaments. The chapter argued that, while training is an effective tool that can be used unaccompanied, the use of a combination of techniques is, in most cases, the better option to adopt if desirable outcomes are to be realised. This is because the performance of parliaments depends, among other things, on factors such as the constitutional framework that govern their operations.

It is against this background that the next chapter uses the case study of democratic reforms in Tonga to demonstrate this reality and to argue that deeper reforms are needed to achieve better results.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Improving Parliamentary Effectiveness in Tonga: Why reforms should be prioritised

8.0 Overview

This chapter demonstrates that parliamentary performance does not depend solely on the quality of KSAs possessed by MPs. It contends that in countries such as Tonga constitutional reforms are also needed in order to create an environment in which the parliament can operate more effectively. To substantiate this argument, the chapter begins by presenting a brief discussion on the current levels of effectiveness of Tonga's parliament. It then explains why training alone will not enhance the efficacy of that parliament. Constitutional reforms are also needed to improve the effectiveness of the parliament.

8.1 Effectiveness of training in Tonga's parliament

Findings on effectiveness of training in Tonga's parliament provide an informative example of the inability of training alone to positively affect the performance of the parliament. This is mainly for two reasons. Firstly, more than half the interviewed MPs (six out of 11) were at least in their second term. This means that slightly more than half the serving MPs had at least one term working as parliamentarians at the time of interview. This issue is important, since experience is considered by adult educationists to be one of the main contributors to the

smooth transfer of KSAs during training sessions because past experiences are regarded as a necessary condition for adult learning (Burns, 2002; Dewey, 1933). It is therefore paradoxical that, despite parliamentary experience, seven Tongan MPs still perceived training to have failed to enable them to perform their roles more effectively.

Secondly, the findings from the parliament showed that the majority of MPs (10 out of 11) possess a university degree or higher qualification. These findings were expected to be consistent with higher levels of KSA transfer since higher educational background, is according to HRD theorists (e.g. Brunnelo & Nedio, 2001; Hirsch & Wagner, 1993), associated with enhancing the ability of adult learners to absorb training materials.

The next logical question that one can ask is why, despite favourable conditions for it – that is parliamentary experience and education qualifications – has training failed to achieve its objective in Tonga’s parliament? The next section examines issues that may explain this conundrum.

8.2 Why training alone cannot transform Tonga’s parliament

Training, as explained throughout this thesis, is usually a potent tool for strengthening parliaments. Empirical evidence pertaining to the impact training potentially has on the performance of parliaments, such as that reported in Ghana’s parliament (Stapenhurst, 2004) only serve to validate this point. However, as explained in Chapters One and Two, while training can sometimes be used alone as an approach to strengthening parliaments, the simultaneous use of at least two of the four main approaches is the best strategy to adopt (Hudson & Wren, 2007; Kunnath, 2011; Pelizzo, 2010). Using Tonga’s parliament as an

example, this chapter provides such an instance where, in order to attain maximum possible impact on parliamentary performance, training programs need to be accompanied by significant constitutional (democratic) reforms.

Numerous parliamentary reforms have been undertaken in Tonga from as early as the 17th century (Marcus, 1978; Ward, et al., 2009). These culminated in the New Zealand-sponsored 2010 reforms, which have been heralded as the most crucial and deepest so far (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2010; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2011). Importantly, for the first time, on paper at least, the reforms transfer executive powers from the King of Tonga to a parliament-elected Prime Minister (PM), who also handpicks his/her own cabinet (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2010).

However, the 2010 constitutional reforms, like many others before them, fall short of addressing crucial areas necessary for fostering parliamentary effectiveness. It is not surprising then that training has failed to improve the situation. Indeed, the main reason behind the failure of training can be traced to the structural powers the Tongan monarch and, by extension, the nobility have over the parliament. These powers are prohibitive since they prevent MPs from positively and significantly influencing and/or effecting parliamentary outcomes, regardless of the KSAs they possess. The structural powers are divided into four main themes. These are: (i) the make-up of the parliament; (ii) the influence of the monarch in selecting nobles, and thereafter influencing who among the nobles gets to become an MP (iii) the veto power possessed by the monarch; and (iv) eligibility for the Speakership.

The first structural power that prevents the parliament from functioning more effectively is the make-up of the parliament itself, and more specifically the way nobles become MPs.

Preserved intact from the 1875 constitution is a provision that guarantees the inclusion of nine noble MPs who are selected, largely based on who the King approves to be an MP (Maloney & Struble, 2007), by 33 members of the nobility appointed by the King (Fonua, 2009). The point of contention here is that, as long as nine MPs have to be selected from among the nobility, they almost always act in a manner that preserves their positions in the nobility rather than being responsive to the needs of the general public (Hills, 1991; Marcus, 1978; Sodhi, 2006). This means that, regardless of the KSAs the noble MPs possess, their decision-making routines are tied to fostering the interests of the monarch and the rest of the nobility. Training alone is therefore an inadequate tool for improving the effectiveness of the parliament.

Moreover, the guarantee of having nine MPs provides the monarch and the nobility with an advantage politically, particularly when it comes to forming the government and dominating the parliamentary policy agenda. This is because, in a parliament consisting of only 26 parliamentarians, nine MPs makes up more than a third of the total. Consequently, it takes only five MPs to cross the floor to join the noble MPs (as happened in the 2010 elections) for them to form government. It thus does not matter how knowledgeable Tonga's MPs are, as long as the constitution continues to guarantee nine seats to nobles, it is difficult for the parliament to arrive at outcomes that do not protect the interests of royalty.

Relatedly, and to reinforce this point, despite the fact that 33 nobles select noble MPs, the King is central in determining who among the nobles get to be elected as MPs (Hills, 1991). Coupled with the financial and other intangible benefits that come with being an MP, this means that noble MPs are always loyal to the King (Hills, 1991). They are thus bound to act in a manner that serves the interests of royalty. The KSAs they possess are therefore

inconsequential as long as the King continues to indirectly control their entry into parliament and subsequently the parliamentary agenda.

Also, traditionally the King reserves the power to replace disloyal noble MPs at any time (Maloney & Struble, 2007). Consequently, given his power to reverse noble MPs appointments, the King possesses an indirect power to dictate parliamentary policy regardless of individual abilities and policy inclinations of a serving noble MP (Maloney & Struble, 2007). An example of the power of the King over the noble MPs was evidenced by the decision of King George Tupou V¹⁶ to add four more nobles to the 33 existing body of nobles, thereby lessening their chances of being selected as MP, only a few weeks prior to the 2010 parliamentary elections without consulting any sitting noble, even though his decision stood to affect the outcome of as far as who, among the nobles would later become an MP (Motulalo, 2011). Predictably, this move angered the then sitting nobles (Motulalo, 2011). Nevertheless, when asked to comment about the King's decision, the then Speaker, Lord Tu'ilakepa replied, 'If that is the King's wish, what else is there for us [nobles] to decide?' (Motulalo, 2011). The then Solicitor General had a similar reaction to the abrupt decision, pointing out that 'when the King appointed them [the new nobles], they became nobles' (Motulalo, 2011). It should not come as a surprise, then, when noble MPs are bound to ensure that 'the country is still ruled by chiefs for the King' (Salmond, 2003), implying that their KSAs play an insignificant role, if any at all, as far as their performance as MPs is concerned.

The third structural power that prevents the parliament from functioning more effectively is the veto power that the monarch possesses. In traditional parliamentary systems, such as those in Canada, New Zealand and Australia, the Queen or her representative (the Governor-

¹⁶ Sadly, King George Tupou V suddenly passed away on the 19th of March, 2012

General) has a constitutional power to veto legislation at her informed discretion (Banks, et al., 2010). However, neither the Queen nor the Governor-Generals of these countries have been known to exercise this constitutional power (The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009). The monarch in Tonga has, however, used his veto power regularly over the years. Indeed, as recently as December 2011, King George Tupou V withheld his royal assent on an arms and ammunition Act which was overwhelmingly passed by the parliament. The King's reason was that the Act was 'inimical to welfare, wellbeing and safety of his subjects' (Parliament of Tonga, 2011). Sincerity in vetoing the Act aside, the regular use of the veto power by the Tongan monarch implies that, regardless of the KSAs possessed by MPs, their parliament is weak and may continue to remain so, given that the Crown possesses and uses a constitutional power to veto any policy the parliament wishes to advance (The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009).

Finally, another structural power that affects the effectiveness of the Tongan parliament is the eligibility criterion for choosing the Speaker. This is a problem because the constitution stipulates that the position of Speaker can only be held by a noble MP (Fonua, 2009). The need for control of this position arises because the Speaker chairs debates and controls the inclusion of the parliamentary agenda in parliament. Thus, limiting this position to noble MPs alone means that the monarch and by extension the nobility exercise absolute control over the parliamentary agenda and outcomes. It is not surprising, then, that a commoner MP argued that a 'stronger speaker who is not biased to the nobility' is needed if Tonga's parliament is to improve its performance. This demand is based on the fact that, regardless of their KSAs, commoner MPs are not given the opportunity to influence the parliamentary debate. However, this may not happen any time soon, as noble MPs want to continue to dominate in the parliament so as to protect their interests and those of the Crown. Indeed, according to

one noble MP, his role as an MP is ‘to protect the interests of the nobles and the King by ensuring that their rights are not violated in any way’.

The inability of commoner MPs to influence and/or formulate legislation is evidenced in their view that the parliament does not provide them with a platform to raise issues pertinent to their constituents. For example, there have been a number of instances where commoner MPs have resorted to going to court rather than debating salient issues in parliament. This is because of the limited opportunities provided to them in parliament. For instance, according to a number of commoner MPs interviewed there is credible evidence that the soft loan provided by China to rebuild areas which were destroyed during the 2006 riots have been diverted to other areas, including T\$32 million that was spent to extend the King’s palace without the government seeking assent from the parliament as should be the case (MP 53, Tonga). As a result, 10 commoner MPs signed a resolution in 2011 proposing to take legal action against the government for misuse of public funds. While this issue remains *sub judice* and therefore one must be cautious in not pre-empting the final verdict, the fact that, in a parliament of 26 MPs, ten MPs cannot influence what is debated speaks volumes in terms of the difficulties commoner MPs continue to face when trying to have important matters relating to the use of public funds debated in the parliament. It is not surprising, then, that commoner MPs use the courts as a platform in which their concerns can be raised and heard. To redress this situation, the constitutional restriction on the position of the Speaker will have to be amended so as to ensure that future Speakers can be drawn from the parliament as a whole rather than the current situation where they are tied to the influence of the King.

Given the restricted influence they have in parliament, it is not altogether surprising, then, that four interviewed MPs have already ruled out the possibility of recontesting the 2013

elections. This is because they are generally frustrated by their inability to influence public policy. For instance, one MP stated that the reason why he would not seek re-election was the ability to speak 'louder and [more] freely outside the parliament than inside it'. He claimed that, being a 'mover and shaker', and given that 'there are a lot of hurdles in parliament to create changes'; he could not afford to sit in parliament and 'babysit the government year in year out'. Yet another MP added to the reasons some commoner MPs' have decided not to seek re-election by pointing out that he had realised that 'nothing has changed as far as the monarch's domination of policy agenda is concerned'. Perhaps the greatest sign of frustration was displayed by the demand of most interviewed MPs (eight out of 11) that the researcher attach their names when quoting them, even though the researcher had explained to them that ethics considerations only permitted anonymity of respondents when disseminating the data. The implication is that commoner MPs are in search of a platform to voice their policy agenda and seemingly even the 2010 constitutional reforms failed to provide it.

In sum, this section has demonstrated that, given structural deficiencies within the constitution of Tonga, training cannot improve the effectiveness of the parliament. Indeed, in Tonga's case, while the improved ability to perform parliamentary roles is necessary for MPs to be able to execute their roles more effectively, it is not a sufficient condition for enhancing the effectiveness of parliament. This is because the way noble MPs and the Speaker are selected and the regular exercise of the Crown's veto power make it difficult for all MPs to function in a manner that responds to the interests of Tongans more generally. It is therefore imperative that reforms that address this situation be undertaken if genuine improvement to the effectiveness of the parliament is to be achieved. It is in this context that the next section suggests reforms which could aid that effectiveness.

8.3 Suggested reforms which should be undertaken

This thesis recommends four constitutional reforms which, if undertaken, may enhance the potential of Tonga's parliament to be more effective. Firstly, it recommends that a second (upper) chamber of parliament which resembles that in the neighbouring Marshall Islands (Banks, et al., 2010) be introduced in Tonga. This chamber would comprise noble MPs whose sole task would be to advise the lower house only on matters pertaining to the traditions and customs of Tonga (Fraenkel, 2002). Then, as in the Marshall Islands, any other noble who wished to be part of the lower house would be popularly elected in the same way as are commoner MPs. Such a move would help to ensure that all MPs in the lower house are accountable and therefore responsive to the people of Tonga, as opposed to the King, as is the case at present with noble MPs (Hills, 1991; Marcus, 1978; Sodhi, 2006).

Alternatively, if the option for establishing the second chamber is not attractive to the Tongan people, the constitution should be amended to ensure that all MPs, including prospective noble MPs, are popularly elected. As explained previously, this potentially removes the influence of the monarch on the parliament because the Crown will no longer have a significant influence on who becomes an MP.

Thirdly, the constitutional provision that restricts the position of Speaker to noble MPs should be amended to allow all MP to be eligible. This would potentially ensure that the office of the Speaker is as neutral as possible. Such an amendment would signal a new direction in the Tongan parliament and society at large, because it would help to remove a discriminatory and

potentially elitist constitutional provision that excludes part of the population from the right to seek the position.

Finally, as is in parliamentary constitutional models such as those in the neighbouring Australia and New Zealand where the Crown is represented by the Governor-Generals, the Tongan King's power should mostly be ceremonial (Banks, et al., 2010; The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2009). This should necessarily include restricting the Crown from actively affecting legislative outcomes via veto power currently vested in him. In Turn, this could help to ensure that Tongan MPs are more responsive to the needs of Tongan people.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the salient reason behind the failure of training to affect the effectiveness of Tonga's MPs and parliament in general. Despite a century of reform, the lingering control that the monarch has over the operations of the parliament, through noble MPs, has continued to hinder the effective and responsive operations of the institution. To borrow the words of a commoner MP, 'despite the notion that the King is no longer active in running the daily operations of the Tongan government, the cultural, economic and political settings of Tonga provide him with the same powers he had prior to the 2010 constitutional reforms'. This has, in turn, limited the ability of MPs to perform their roles independent of the monarch and by extension of the nobility. It is in this context that this chapter has set out four principal reforms that, if adopted and combined with continuing effective training for MPs, could result in the better performance of the parliament.

Importantly, however, this chapter does not in any way suggest that training should be abandoned as a tool for enhancing the effectiveness of the Tongan parliament. On the contrary, it strongly argues for the simultaneous use of training and constitutional reforms in the quest for enhancing that effectiveness. This is consistent with the argument by Kunnath (2011) that the KSAs of MPs are crucial for effectiveness of parliaments because parliamentarians are central to their operations. Furthermore, the proposition to combine training with constitutional reforms in an effort to improve parliamentary performance is in line with the arguments advanced by practitioners such as Pellizo (2010) and Hudson and Wren (2007).

The next and final chapter concludes the thesis by discussing the findings of the thesis as a whole and their implications.

CHAPTER NINE: Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

9.0 Overview

This chapter begins by examining the research findings of the thesis. Firstly it discusses the theories of adult education and training and Human Resource Development (HRD) in relation to the performance of Pacific MPs and their parliaments. It then provides a case by case analysis of findings before proposing the best possible model for strengthening Pacific parliaments. The chapter then discusses the implications of the findings for researchers, donor countries (including aid agencies) and practitioners. Finally, it concludes with an assessment of the limitations of the research and suggests directions for future research.

9.1 The role of adult education and training and HRD in parliamentary performance in the Pacific region

The main purpose of this thesis has been to describe and evaluate the relationship between training and performance of Pacific MPs and their respective parliaments. Specifically, the study identified types of training programs available in the case parliaments and assessed their impact on the effectiveness of MPs and parliaments. This was conducted with reference to adult education and training and HRD theories.

As noted in the methods chapter (Chapter Three), this study has met its research aims by triangulating primary data (interview data) with secondary data, such as constitutions and

corporate plans of the parliaments in question. Triangulation was deployed in order to enable the study to draw conclusions based on a pooled analysis from various sources of data (De Weerd-Nederhof, 2001; Yin, 2009). Semi-structured interviews enhanced the reproducibility of the findings, given that they entail standard coverage and structure of questions (Brugha, et al., 1999; Dearnley, 2005). It is against this background that the next five sub-sections present what the results indicate in relation to how training, as explained by theories of adult education and training and HRD, can be used to positively and significantly affect the performance of Pacific MPs and their parliaments.

9.1.1 Training in the Republic of the Marshall Islands parliament

MPs from the Marshall Islands describe training provided to them as failing to positively and significantly affect their performance and that of their parliament. This is contrary to what theories of adult education and training (Dewey, 1933; Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 2001; C. Smith & Pourchot, 1998) and HRD (Tharenou, Saks, et al., 2007; Wright, et al., 2005; Yarnill & McLean, 2001) suggest. The results were mainly attributed to what MPs described as poorly designed and delivered training programs, which are often too short to be effective, too general to be relevant or reflect actual roles, too pedagogical to be interesting and too *ad hoc* to consider the differing academic and parliamentary experiences of participating MPs.

According to Marshallese MPs, programs leave a lot to be desired principally because they do not result from a comprehensive undertaking of a training needs assessment. The majority of concerns of these MPs, such as those explained above, could have been addressed had a comprehensive TNA been conducted prior to designing and delivering programs. This is

because a comprehensive TNA can identify the main areas that a particular program should focus on (Hossain, 2004).

The ability of external trainers to design and deliver training in the parliament is also questionable. This is because trainers with basic experience in what they do are expected to at least appreciate the fact that adults are almost always uncomfortable with didactic types of training delivery techniques (Hossain, 2004; Merriam, 2001). That the technique, at least according to Marshallese MPs, is still widely used raises a question about whether parliamentary trainers in this country possess standard qualifications and experiences necessary for them to train Pacific MPs.

The failure of training to significantly and positively affect the effectiveness of the Marshall Islands parliament is also affected by factors other than the KSAs of MPs. For instance, Marshallese MPs have strongly blamed a lack of discipline among parliamentarians as one of the main reasons for the ineffectiveness of their parliament. According to them, parliamentary sessions are, more often than not, dominated by unnecessary infighting which leads to poor quality of debate. This is coupled with poor attendance at parliamentary sessions, and this usually involves MPS attending but a small part of a parliamentary session. This then often results in the lack of a quorum. As a result, the Marshall Islands' parliament has had minimal policy output and this has created a negative image of the institution in the eyes of the Marshall Islanders (Jacklick & Ueno, 2010). Note that the lack of an official political party system may have contributed to the lack of discipline among Marshallese MPs, because in the absence of parties there is no authority parliamentarians feel they are accountable to between elections.

Another challenge hampering the effectiveness of the Marshall Islands parliament is the lack of significant technical support that MPs receive from parliamentary staff. This is caused by inadequacy in both the quantity and the quality of such staff (Morgan, 2005a, 2005b; Morgan & Hegarty, 2003). This problem, coupled with the fact that there is high turnover rate of MPs at every election, has meant that there are little if any institutional memory and mentoring opportunities in the parliament. As a result, MPs in the Marshall Islands almost entirely depend on on-the-job experience and training for acquisition of the KSAs. As training is also not adequate, the lack of quality parliamentary staff in the Marshall Islands has had a negative impact on the effectiveness of the parliament. The urgent need for improving the quality and quantity of Marshallese parliamentary staff is essential to improving the performance of the parliament.

9.1.2 Training in the Republic of Papua New Guinea parliament

MPs in Papua New Guinea (PNG) overwhelmingly adjudge training programs to have failed significantly and this affects their performance and that of their parliament. Parliamentarians in PNG described their perceptions as resulting from the fact that the programs they receive are poorly designed and delivered. Specifically, they point out that training sessions are too short to be effective and too general to be relevant to the cultural and constitutional context of PNG. They also describe the timing of training sessions as poor, since they prevent MPs living in remote islands from attending sessions at short notice. Moreover, while some MPs describe the programs they receive as being too basic to improve KSAs, the majority of new MPs perceived these programs as too complicated to understand. Once again, just as in the case in the Marshall Islands, the source of all these problems can be traced to the lack of a comprehensive TNA prior to designing and delivering training programs (Hossain, 2004).

Furthermore, training tends to only take place immediately after elections, with little taking place thereafter. This has resulted in a situation where a great deal of material is transmitted during training, leading to informational overload. In turn, this has meant that MPs are faced with the difficult task of trying to process much material in a short time. This, and other problems explained previously, raise once again the issue of the credibility of the trainers. Indeed, seasoned trainers should have been able to identify some of the basic issues, such as the poor delivery of training materials. This is because research in adult education and training (e.g. Dewey, 1933; Hakim, 1987; Hossain, 2004; Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 2001) has for over half a century shown very clearly how to train adults such as MPs. There is, therefore, no justifiable excuse on the part of trainers to continue to use didactic techniques for training delivery, as the majority of MPs in PNG said was the case.

Lack of discipline among MPs has also played a significant role in preventing them and the parliament from being more effective. This can be seen in various forms. Firstly, MPs have pointed to poor attendance at training sessions and parliamentary sittings. This has limited the ability of the parliament to function effectively. For instance, according to the majority of MPs, the parliament of PNG, like the parliament in the Marshall Islands, has in a number of instances lacked the required quorum to pass legislation. Secondly, party indiscipline among MPs has led to a situation where the parliament is reduced to a platform where MPs scramble for support to form the government. This detracts from parliament's capacity to be a policy making/influencing body. This situation is evidenced by the fact that no government has survived a vote of no confidence since PNG gained independence in 1975, thereby leaving PNG in a constant state of political instability (Feeney, 2005; Hawksley, 2006; Reilly, 2006). It is not surprising, then, that, according to a senior MP, the parliament usually sits for fewer

days than those stipulated in the constitution, in a veiled, politically motivated attempt by successive governments to avoid the almost inevitable vote of no confidence.

The inadequate technical support that MPs get from parliamentary staff has also played a significant role in hindering MPs (and the parliament) from executing their roles effectively. Once again, inadequacy on the part of parliamentary staff is compounded by the fact that the turnover of MPs at every election is very high in PNG (Banks, et al., 2010; Dinnen, 2002; Panapa & Fraenkel, 2008). This has meant that the parliament continues to lack sufficient institutional memory that is urgently needed for it to function effectively. This can be evidenced by the fact that the majority of interviewed MPs reported that they had never been mentored by another MP in their entire parliamentary careers.

Another factor that affects the effectiveness of the parliament as reported by MPs is committee dysfunction. Lack of material and human resources have been blamed for that dysfunction. This has resulted in a situation where very little if any scrutiny of the government occurs. As explained in Chapter Four, this has led to incoherent policies being formulated in the parliament (Feeney, 2005).

Finally, interviews identified a new parliamentary role that involves securing and managing Constituent Development Funds (CDF). Specifically, MPs overwhelmingly identify CDF acquisition and management as one of the main roles that they ought to perform. A well-designed training program in the parliament should, therefore, equip MPs with project management KSAs to assist them to efficiently and effectively distribute these funds.

9.1.3 Training in the Republic of Timor-Leste parliament

The majority of Timorese MPs consider training programs to have failed to affect positively and significantly the effectiveness of their performance and that of their parliament. This finding is ironic as, unlike in other case parliaments, MPs in Timor-Leste; have, on average, longer parliamentary careers (approximately two terms per parliamentarian) and higher educational qualifications. Note that the average length of terms served by MPs, a little less than eight years, is interesting, because the Timor-Leste parliament was only in its second term at the time of interviews. The data collected from the interviews also shows that MPs have been exposed to more training days than MPs in other case parliaments. Since the factors surrounding MPs are favourable to the smooth transfer of KSAs from training (Hirsch & Wagner, 1993), it was expected that their perceptions would suggest that training had been effective. However, as explained previously, this was not so. This raises a question as to whether the logic governing theories of HRD is compatible with parliamentary careers.

Interestingly, some of the reasons reported by Timor-Leste MPs in attempting to explain the failure of training in their parliament are the same as those given in previous case parliaments. Chief among them is the overwhelming feeling that the programs provided are poorly designed and delivered. Indeed, according to MPs, programs are more often than not too short and infrequent to be effective, too irrelevant to be practical, the content too superficial to capture the constitutional and cultural context of Timor-Leste and the delivery technique too didactic to transfer meaningful KSAs to MPs. Once again, the lack of a comprehensive TNA which can potentially make these programs more relevant, practical and therefore more effective has been reported by MPs as the main reason for this failure. Again the didactic techniques used by external trainers and the continual recycling of failed training

programs in case parliaments raise questions about whether training providers themselves receive adequate training prior to taking on the difficult task of training MPs.

In addition, the issue of MPs lacking adequate technical support from parliamentary staff surfaced in Timor-Leste. However, unlike other case parliaments, the majority of Timor-Leste MPs went a step further in recommending more training be provided to parliamentary staff rather than MPs. Interestingly, even though the turnover of MPs in Timor-Leste is the lowest among case parliaments, they cite the fact that their careers are not permanent as the main reason why training should be concentrated on parliamentary staff. This, they argue, would ensure that the parliament is always supplied with the institutional memory it lacks currently.

However, unique to challenges facing case parliaments is the issue of the language barrier in the Timor-Leste parliament. Specifically, while the national language is Portuguese, the language used by the majority of MPs is the local pidgin, Tetum. As a result, the majority of training programs, which are given in English with a few in Portuguese, are usually ‘lost in translation’. This was the overwhelming sentiment expressed by MPs. Relatedly, the lack of specialised KSAs to interpret and enforce standing orders, as well as other parliamentary regulations, is made worse by the fact that most MPs cannot understand Portuguese, the language used in all official documents in Timor-Leste. There is, therefore, a need in Timor-Leste for both training and documentation to be in Tetum so that the maximum impact in relation to enhancing parliamentary effectiveness can be achieved.

Unique structural challenges have also been cited by MPs as the reason training is ineffective. These include the ability of the Prime Minister (PM) to appoint ministers from outside the

parliament at his/her own discretion. This has often increased the gap between the executive and the parliament, as ministers feel more accountable to the PM than to the parliament (Shoesmith, 2008). In addition, the constitutional power accorded to cabinet, which allows it to issue a decree independent of the parliament (see Shoesmith, 2008), provides a disproportionate power to the executive in relation to the parliament. This, in the end, forces the parliament to almost always adopt a subservient role to the executive. In turn, this has severely curtailed the ability of the parliament to scrutinise the conduct of the executive.

9.1.4 Training in the Kingdom of Tonga parliament

Results from this study have shown that the majority of Tongan MPs perceive training programs provided to them as too ineffective to enhance their performance and that of their parliament. As in the case of Timor-Leste, this result is somewhat paradoxical. This is because, only slightly less the case than in the Timor-Leste parliament, the Tongan parliament is comprised of highly educated MPs (an average of a bachelor degree per MP), who on average serve longer terms in parliament (an average of two terms per MP), compared with the other three case parliaments. This implies that many Tongan MPs have both the required parliamentary experience and educational qualifications needed for the smooth transfer of KSAs during training sessions (Hirsch & Wagner, 1993). However, results from Tonga reported previously tell a different story. Tongan MPs provided several reasons that explain this paradox. They are discussed below.

As in other case parliaments, Tongan MPs cited the poor manner in which training programs are designed and delivered as one of the main factors that makes them less effective. They specifically point to the fact that training sessions are too short and irregular to be effective

and content too universal to be relevant to Tonga's cultural and constitutional context. They further indicated that training programs were too general to accommodate MPs with differing academic backgrounds and parliamentary experience, and delivery techniques too pedagogical to smoothly transfer relevant KSAs. Once again, just like their counterparts elsewhere, Tongan MPs overwhelmingly recommended the use of a comprehensive TNA in order to adequately address the concerns they raised.

The issue of the inability of parliamentary staff to provide adequate technical support to MPs resurfaced in the parliament. More concentration on training of parliamentary staff was suggested by MPs as the best way to address the situation. This, as argued previously in this thesis, is because, when equipped with specialised KSAs, parliamentary staff can potentially enhance the performance of MPs and hence that of their parliament.

Unique to Tonga is the fact that the failure of training to have a significant and positive impact on the performance of MPs and parliament is directly linked to its constitution. This is because the constitutional arrangement provides the King and the nobility with a major political advantage over the parliament and the rest of the population. This political advantage derives from the guarantee in the constitution that the nobility has a minimum of nine MPs in parliament and that the Speaker is always a noble MP (Banks, et al., 2010; Fonua, 2009). Since the King of Tonga has a direct influence on who among the nobles become MPs and can dismiss them at will (Hills, 1991), he indirectly controls the parliamentary agenda. As a result, regardless of KSAs that noble MPs possess, they are almost always inclined to act in a manner that protects the interests of the King. This can negatively affect the effectiveness of the parliament to adequately scrutinise the government. It follows that, unless constitutional reforms that reduce the powers of the King in relation to

the appointment of noble MPs and the way they are elected, are implemented, the effectiveness of the parliament may never improve. It is in this context that this study proposes a two-pronged approach to strengthening the parliament which involves simultaneous application of constitutional reforms and training of parliamentary players (MPS and parliamentary staff).

9.1.5 Training in the Republic of Vanuatu parliament

In a same manner as other case parliaments, Vanuatu MPs overwhelmingly adjudged training programs as having failed to significantly and positively enhance their performance and that of their parliament. As was the case in other parliaments, Vanuatu MPs squarely laid the blame for this on the poor manner in which programs are designed and delivered as one of the main reasons. They specifically point to the fact that these programs are too general to be effective, training sessions too irregular to have a significant impact and delivery techniques too didactic to allow for smooth transfer of KSAs. Once again, the need for a comprehensive TNA, to be conducted prior to designing and delivering programs, was highlighted by MPs as a possible solution to this problem.

Also, in a similar manner to Timorese MPs, parliamentarians in Vanuatu blamed, in part, language barriers as one reason behind the failure of training. According to them, the constant use of English during training sessions was unwise as Vanuatu is a bilingual country (Anglo-French), meaning that some of the MPs cannot understand English nearly as well as they understand French. In fact, even MPs from English-speaking regions pointed out that they would prefer training to be in the local pidgin, Bislama, because they also had not fully mastered the English language. It is not surprising, then, that the majority of MPs

recommended that training materials be translated into Bislama and only trainers who can speak Bislama be allowed to train them. This, they said, was necessary for future programs to have a greater impact on the effectiveness of parliament.

Moreover, as was the case in its Melanesian counterpart, PNG, the effectiveness of Vanuatu's parliament is also severely affected by political instability. Indeed, party indiscipline (constant crossing the floor by MPs) coupled with the chronic Anglo-French divide, which is a legacy of the colonial era in Vanuatu (Morgan, 2001), has meant that the parliament spends a disproportionately large amount of time in forming and breaking governments. This has, in turn, paralysed the ability of the parliament to function effectively, because it prevents it from performing other roles, such as legislating and representing constituents. This divide has also affected the functioning of parliamentary committees, which theoretically aid the scrutiny function of parliaments. According to most MPs, the committee system in their parliament is non-existent.

The issue of the lack of technical support from parliamentary staff explained in the other case parliaments also resurfaced in relation to the Vanuatu parliament. This, according to Vanuatu MPs, has prevented them from functioning effectively. It is not surprising, then, that they overwhelmingly recommended that their staff be exposed to more training than they currently receive.

Finally, as was the case with their Melanesian counterparts in PNG, Vanuatu MPs identify the management of CDF as one of their main roles. This means that CDF management is accepted as being a formal role of MPs in this society. It follows, therefore, that future

training design, particularly in Melanesian parliaments, should seek to reflect this reality by covering project management aspects of KSAs.

9.2 Summary of the main findings

This study sought to identify types of training programs available in case parliaments and analyse their association with the performance of MPs and their respective parliaments. The case by case analysis overwhelmingly points to the fact that training programs have failed to significantly and positively affect the performance of case MPs and their parliaments. The common reason that explains this failure can be traced to how poorly these programs are designed and delivered. Indeed, according to the majority of interviewed MPs (60 out of 63), training programs provided are too theoretical to be effective. The study found that this problem is further affected by the inclination of most training providers to overuse didactic or pedagogical techniques, as opposed to employing hands-on training techniques such as andragogical approaches.

These findings are consistent with research in adult education and training (e.g. Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000; Husain, 2003; Knowles, 1973; Merriam, 1993; Mezirow, 1978), which argues that adults such as MPs learn better when exposed to experiential types of training that make use of their past experiences than when exposed to didactic types of training. A training provider in this case plays the role of a facilitator which allows an adult learner to be the centre of the learning process, because past experiences of an adult learner and a flexible approach are necessary conditions for the best learning environment for adults (Burns, 2002). Pedagogical styles of training, such as the use of too much lecturing, which trainers in case parliaments seem to be using, are bound to have limited success as they involve abstract

instead of concrete techniques that are focused on achieving a specific understanding. Not surprisingly, then, the majority of case MPs (60 out of 63) suggested that programs should, among other techniques, involve simulation, question and answer sessions and group presentations. Overall, findings from the first research question posed in this thesis confirmed the hypothesis that the way adults learn, otherwise known as andragogy, is significantly different from the way children learn, which is commonly referred to as pedagogy (Delahaye, 2000; Merriam, 2001).

These findings are consistent with the work of Saldanha (2004, p. 32), whose study concluded that training programs provided in Pacific parliaments are too ‘inadequate’ to affect the effectiveness of those parliaments. Importantly, these results indicate that seven years after the study by Saldanha trainers have failed to improve the programs they provide to Pacific parliaments.

9.3 Towards building an effective training model for case Pacific parliaments

The discussion above has highlighted the insignificant effect of training on case MPs and their parliaments. However, findings from this thesis suggest that, if training programs result from a comprehensive TNA and apply andragogical delivery techniques, and if an independent evaluation of these programs was undertaken at the end of every training cycle (preferably at the end of the parliamentary term), the effectiveness of training in Pacific parliaments could be significantly improved. If the basic steps found in the Training Cycle were adopted (training programs that result from a comprehensive TNA, delivered by trainers who are familiar with cultural and constitutional aspects of a particular parliament and the use

of andragogical techniques to training), the outcomes of MPs' training programs could be significantly enhanced (Hossain, 2004; Kunnath, 2011). In addition, a thorough monitoring exercise should be undertaken between training sessions to ensure that sessions are achieving desired objectives (Hossain, 2004). Finally, in order to update future programs, at the end of each training cycle a comprehensive and independent evaluation of the program should be undertaken.

The similarities in perceptions of case MPs on the impact of training and the reasons for such an impact highlight the need to train parliamentary trainers before they are allowed to deliver programs in Pacific parliaments. That similar problems are copied and repeated in a number of countries raises the question of how responsive the current trainers are to the KSA needs of Pacific MPs. Indeed, seasoned trainers are expected to constantly watch and work on verbal and non-verbal feedback from their trainees during training sessions and to adjust their content and delivery style accordingly. The findings in this thesis suggest that this may not have been happening in many instances.

Relatedly, training in Pacific parliaments should take on board unique local characteristics. For instance, training on special KSA needs, such as project management skills, should be prioritised in parliaments in which managing CDF is considered to be one of the main roles. Also, with the high turnover rate of MPs, it makes more sense for programs to be concentrated on parliamentary staff whose careers are more stable. This also helps to maintain institutional memory in these parliaments. Moreover, in order to avoid cultural and constitutional problems, and to address the issue of language barriers in countries such as Timor-Leste and Vanuatu and attend to the inability of all MPs in other case parliaments to master the most used language during training sessions, English, the use of trainers who are

familiar with local languages and culture is imperative. This implies that, in order to achieve maximum possible impact of training in Pacific parliaments, local individuals such as parliamentary staff should be deliberately prepared to take up training duties in the future. To avoid the perceived imposition of external values, a local platform, in the form of an ANZACATT, should be formulated in the Pacific region and be used as a tool for providing continuing professional development for Pacific parliamentary actors.

Training should, however, never be seen as the only tool for strengthening these parliaments. As the case of Tonga suggests, effectiveness of parliaments may depend on factors other than the abilities of MPs to perform their roles. It follows that as far as possible training programs should be used in conjunction with other approaches, such as embarking on constitutional reforms, to strengthen parliaments. In turn, the use of a combination of approaches to strengthening parliaments is expected to improve the likelihood of enhancing parliamentary effectiveness.

The findings in this thesis prompt several recommendations. These include the need to reform training programs in Pacific parliaments as far as designing, delivering and evaluating programs are concerned. The findings also confirm the need to combine training with other approaches used to strengthen parliaments in order to achieve the maximum possible outcomes. Finally, findings from this thesis offer several implications for the scholarship and approach used in training programs as well as for donor countries/agencies and organisations providing that training. These are discussed further below.

9.4 Implications of research findings for scholarship

This thesis set out to discover whether existing training programs in Pacific parliaments have a positive and significant impact on performance of MPs and their parliaments. To answer the research questions, the theories of adult education and training (i.e. Dewey's theory) and HRD theories (i.e. HCT) were deployed. In this process, evidence pertaining to both the abovementioned theories and the special case of Tonga emerged during interviews with case MPs.

Firstly, and as already argued, respondents reacted negatively to the programs that were provided. As stated previously, this was largely because the programs were mostly didactic in nature. This conclusion is consistent with theoretical underpinnings found in theories of adult education and training, which propose that adults such as case MPs are more likely to learn when exposed to concrete types of training that involve techniques such as simulation than when subjected to pedagogical modes of training (Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000; Dewey, 1933; Merriam, 2001). Thus this study has provided empirical support for theories of adult education and training which propose that an adult learner should occupy the central position in the learning process with a trainer playing a facilitator role (Burns, 2002). In other words, the way MPs and other adults are trained should differ significantly from the way children are trained.

Secondly, respondents suggested that education is not a significant factor in assisting MPs to acquire KSAs when exposed to training. While this finding is consistent with Alabi's (2009) study on the Ugandan parliament, which found no correlation between possession of higher academic qualification and the ability of MPs to learn, it contradicts the central assumption of

HRD theories. Indeed, HRD theories propose that employees (in this case MPs) with higher education qualifications hold an advantage over those without them, as far as their ability to acquire KSAs during training is concerned (Hirsch & Wagner, 1993). It was thus expected in this study to find that the case parliament with the most educated MPs, Timor-Leste, would record the best results as far as the impact of training on effectiveness of parliaments is concerned. However, the fact that the Timor-Leste parliament recorded one of the lowest results in terms of the perceptions of MPs on the ability of training to aid performance contradicts this assumption. It follows, albeit not conclusively at this stage, that this finding suggests that HRD theories may not be that relevant to parliamentary careers.

Thirdly, findings from Tonga confirm the need for simultaneous use of at least two approaches to strengthening parliaments to achieve maximum possible outcomes. This finding is consistent with, among other parliamentary scholars, the work by Hudson and Wren (2007) and Power (2008). The findings are also in line with a strategic approach to professional development in HRD, which treats training as a part of many other inter-linked measures that include recruitment processes employed with the view to improve organisational performance (Holton, 1996; Tharenou, Saks, et al., 2007; Wright, et al., 2005; Yamnill & McLean, 2001).

9.5 Implications of research findings for donor countries and/or aid agencies

The results of this study have very important implications for donor countries and aid agencies such as AusAID that wish to achieve greater value for their aid money as far as their efforts to strengthen Pacific parliament are concerned. Donors need to develop auditing

capabilities which will be responsible for evaluating how their contributions are reflected in the performance of targeted parliaments and in the content and delivery of the training programs that they fund. This is important, as contemporary auditing principles have moved beyond financial auditing ('balancing the books') to efficiency auditing (Glynn, 1985; Radcliffe, 1999).

According to Glynn (1985), efficiency auditing measures the effectiveness of individual programs by examining the economy, efficiency and effectiveness that has resulted from the use of financial resources. In other words, auditing of programs has increasingly become a process where project activities (in this case training sessions) are categorised and reported as efficient or inefficient (Radcliffe, 1999). This approach to auditing is known as value for money auditing or comprehensive auditing, because it permits efficient audits in addition to traditional financial auditing (Glynn, 1985). It is in this context that this thesis recommends that donors should audit more rigorously the effectiveness of the training programs they support in Pacific parliaments.

Aspects of capabilities in this sense would include donors' ability to monitor and ascertain whether or not their efforts are rewarded by the intended objectives being met. In this case, donors should develop capabilities to assess the impact their contributions make on the effectiveness of Pacific parliaments. They could alternatively outsource this function to independent consultants. In the end, donors should avoid a situation where they are perceived to be throwing their money into a bottomless-pit without holding those who use the funds on their behalf accountable for what they promise to achieve.

9.6 Implications of research findings for training organisations

Findings of this study also have implications for organisations providing training to Pacific parliaments who are eager to see to that the effectiveness of Pacific parliaments improved. Firstly, organisations that provide such training should ensure that the programs they provide are a result of a comprehensive TNA. This is because a TNA is the only way these organisations can identify the main areas that a particular training program should focus on (Hossain, 2004) as far as KSAs are concerned. It also highlights cultural, constitutional and language issues that need to be considered when developing a training model.

Training organisations should also ensure that there is full involvement of locals in designing training programs. This will not only create the sense of ownership of programs among locals, and therefore the possible sustainability of these programs in the longer term (Belisle & Joseph, 2009), but will also help in ensuring that training content is in line with local cultural and constitutional provisions. Locals could also assist in translating training materials into languages that can easily be understood by prospective trainees and thus help them in the learning process.

Secondly, donors and training organisations should seriously consider who they involve as trainers. While it is almost the norm to find that sitting and/or retired MPs are used as trainers, training organisations should ensure that these individuals have the necessary KSAs for the training task. For instance, are these individuals trained as trainers? Such questions are important, because being a sitting or retired MP does not guarantee that an individual can competently provide training to MPs. As Jones et al. (2001) suggest, training, and particularly

interactions with potential trainees, is essential for effectiveness in adult training. This view is supported by Lewis (2011), who warns that training programs for MPs are generally provided by individuals who have not received formal instruction in the delivery of training, something that can jeopardise the effectiveness of these programs. Indeed, the fact that after more than a decade training has mostly failed to produce a positive and significant impact on the effectiveness of Pacific parliaments, suggests that training organisations are using trainers who do not have fully developed training KSAs. Trainers should also constantly monitor their audiences' reactions, so they can use feedback to alter their training techniques throughout a training session. The fact that the majority of case MPs complained about the same basic issues suggests that external trainers have failed to adjust their training content and techniques to the actual needs of their audiences. Organisations may therefore wish to expose their prospective trainers to training the trainer courses before they consider sending them to train Pacific MPs.

Relatedly, this study has suggested advantages in using local rather than external trainers in Pacific parliaments. This proposal is predicated on four reasons. They include the need to ensure that the prospective trainers are aware of (i) cultural, (ii) constitutional, (iii) linguistic, and (iv) sustainability aspects of training programs in the region (Belisle & Joseph, 2009). Consequently, organisations are advised to train local future trainers, preferably parliamentary staff, for the task. This could help to avoid the problems that inadequately trained trainers face and to address the many of the other issues raised in the thesis.

In the longer term, however, this study proposes that training organisations should consider expanding their horizons by venturing into civic education so as to improve political and civic literacy among Pacific islanders. As long as Pacific islanders are uninformed about their

rights and democracy in general, they may keep on voting for ‘greedy’ and at times unfit candidates as MPs. Indeed, a study by Milner (2002) has found that civic literacy is both the cause and outcome of optimal policy choices and helps to make democracy work. This suggests that, regardless of how effective training and other initiatives to strengthen Pacific parliaments are, as long as electors keep on voting for unfit MPs, through ignorance of their rights and the tenets of democracy, Pacific parliaments will inevitably stay stagnant. This, as explained previously, is because ultimately the effectiveness of parliaments depends on the quality of MPs (Kunnath, 2011). It follows that efforts to educate communities in the Pacific region to understand better the consequences attached to their vote could produce MPs and consequently parliaments that are more attentive to public interests than personal gain. In addition, voting for people who are responsive and accountable to voters may contribute to creating an environment that could allow for improvement in the effectiveness of parliaments. In other words, real and lasting changes in the region can only be brought about by the people and any effort to educate them will ultimately change the region for the better. It is in this context that this thesis recommends that training organisations venture into civic educational activities, such as developing syllabuses at school level and helping to create civic-related programs for radio and television stations in Pacific islands.

Finally, findings in PNG and Vanuatu identified the management of CDF as an emergent principal role that MPs in some parliaments are increasingly expected to play (Allen & Hasnain, 2010; Morgan, 2004). Since almost all respondents admitted to lacking KSAs to perform this role, there is a need for parliamentary practitioners in the region to look into the issue. This is particularly important given the fact that currently there is no evidence that suggests the existence of any formal training program aimed at equipping MPs with project management KSAs needed to perform the role.

9.7 Limitations of research and future research directions

The research must be interpreted with several limitations in mind. Firstly, the fact that the study used cross-sectional data may have a bearing on the findings. This is because this type of data is collected at the same point in a particular time, thereby potentially neglecting the effect that different times may have on the kind of responses that interviewees provide (Bound, Brown, Duncan, & Rodgers, 1994). Indeed, at a different time, respondents might have provided different responses to those that were given at the time of interviews. Also, the effect of using cross-sectional data in this study was limited by the use of archival materials to support interview data in a process known as triangulation (see Yin, 2009). Future research in the area needs to make use of longitudinal data for more conclusive findings. Longitudinal data results from repeated observations of the same event (in this case, MPs) over a period of time and hence it solves the time difference problem found in cross-sectional data.

Secondly, this study has suggested, albeit in an inconclusive manner, that HRD theories may not adequately explain the factors affecting human resource development in the special case of parliamentary careers. To have conclusive evidence, future research should collect quantitative (and longitudinal) data to test whether the hypothesis holds. This is because only this kind of data can produce a more rigorous inference about causal relations implied in any particular study (Cole & Maxwell, 2003). This is important, as it will better inform parliamentary practitioners on the 'dos and don'ts' when it comes to training MPs, not just in the Pacific region but more generally.

In sum, this study began with the aim of understanding whether training could help improve the effectiveness of Pacific parliaments. Following an open-ended deductive approach, this study made use of theories from several disciplines, including political science, adult education and training as well as human resources. The evidence gathered, mainly from 63 case MPs, found theories of adult education and training (e.g. Burns, 2002; Delahaye, 2000; Dewey, 1933) to be compatible with effective training of Pacific MPs. The findings of this study provide guidance for MPs, parliamentary staff, donor countries/aid agencies and the trainers in achieving more effective parliamentary training in the region. These practical reforms could be adopted by parliamentary stakeholders for the betterment of peace, stability and economic development of the Pacific region.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter requesting interviews

<<NAME>>
<<ADDRESS>>

<<DATE>>

Dear <<NAME>>,

Re: Parliamentarian (legislator) training and professional development research – request for support

My colleagues and I would be very grateful if you could assist our research project ‘*Parliamentary Careers: Design, Delivery and Evaluation of Improved Professional Development*’. Funded by the Australian Research Council, AusAID and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the project investigates training and professional development for parliamentarians in selected representative national parliaments. Within the project, Mr. Abel Kinyondo has been awarded scholarship to undertake research with parliaments in the Pacific region including your parliament if you agree. One core element for the research team based at Monash University (Melbourne, Australia) is examining training and professional development for parliamentarians, as delivered by a range of providers, including chamber staff and non-parliamentary aid/donor organisations.

The central aim of the research is to improve advice and guidance for parliaments and others who help parliamentarians develop their parliamentary skills, improve their own performance

and bolster the effectiveness of their parliament. Results of this unique project will be distributed at a conference associated with the IPU Assembly in October 2011, key outcomes will be sent to national parliaments and a handbook based on the project's findings will be published. These will inform policy and practice for the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to the progress of parliamentarians' careers.

Among the assemblies selected for the project, is the Parliament of Tonga and we aim to conduct a survey with a random selection of parliamentarians within the next few months. We also aim to organise short expert interviews with several key representatives of the assembly (such as Clerk/secretary-general, official responsible for the training of parliamentarians), and up to 10 members representing the leading parties. We are aiming to administer the survey in the first half of 2010 and complete interviews by the end of 2010.

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee requires that all project participants with an explanatory statement (a copy of which is attached to this letter), outlining the details of the research planned. Among the information provided on this statement should be the contact details of the Parliament of Tonga's Clerk/Secretary General to offer interviewees a point of contact within their own country. The purpose would be to receive and transmit any concerns or other contact related to the research and we are thus seeking your assistance in this matter. Please do let me know if your office would agree to be listed as a point of contact on the statement and if so, the person or office who should be explicitly nominated for this purpose.

For a project of this nature establishing and maintaining good contacts with parliamentarians in the country is vital and if you could assist with this in any way, we would be happy to rely

on your assistance in this matter as well.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely



(Associate Professor the Hon Dr) Ken Coghill PhD
Project Leader

For Chief Investigators: Associate Professor Ken Coghill; Dr Ross Donohue; Dr Peter Holland; Associate Professor Colleen Lewis
Partner Investigators: The Hon Kevin Rozzoli AM; Mr Andy Richardson; Associate Professor Graham Hassall; Ms Yeshe Smith
APAI scholar: Mr Abel Kinyondo
Research Fellow: Dr Katrin Steinack

Appendix B: Explanatory statement

(for parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, parliamentary training providers and donor agencies)

Project Title: ‘Parliamentary Careers: Design, Delivery and Evaluation of Improved Professional Development (APAI - Pacific)’

This interview is being conducted as part of a research project undertaken by a team of researchers at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia in partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, AusAID, the University of Sydney and Victoria University of Wellington. It is funded by Australian Research Council International Linkage Grant. The purpose of this study is to examine parliamentary training, with a view to assisting in the provision of improved training for parliamentarians worldwide. This will involve identifying induction and competencies desired by parliamentarians and the extent, nature and effectiveness of orientation, induction and on-going professional development programs; evaluating the extent to which professional development programs affect individual and collective chamber performance and methods for evaluating efficacy as well as determining factors influencing the effectiveness of programs supported by donor agencies, with special reference to the Pacific region.

The researcher is Mr Abel Kinyondo who was awarded an APAI scholarship at the MONASH University, Caulfield Campus. The interview is addressed to training providers and parliamentary staff, and will be conducted from June, 2011, with the aim of collecting information about training, performance and human resource development outcomes related to parliamentarians in the Pacific region.

You have been contacted using publicly available information. The interview is expected to take up to one hour and will involve answering questions addressed to you by an interviewer in English, translated by an interpreter if required. The list of questions is included here for your information. Interviews are usually audio recorded but please advise the interviewer if you prefer not to be audio recorded. We are aware that completion of this interview may put extra pressure on your schedule; however we would greatly value your input in this project which aims to make a major contribution to assisting parliamentarians in your and other parliaments. Note that this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participate. However, if you do consent to participate, you may only withdraw prior to the interview.

The research findings will be published in aggregate de-identified format, to ensure anonymity of all respondents. The publications may be refereed journal articles and/or online discussion/research papers. To protect your right to privacy, the completed questionnaire will be kept in a confidential file within a secure facility, accessible only to the researchers assigned to this project (details as above). These records will not be made available for any other research or use. The recorded information will be retained for a period of at least 5 years, after which time it will be disposed of in accordance with University regulations. Paper records will be shredded.

Any further queries or any urgent concerns can be addressed to Mr Abel Kinyondo (student researcher) at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED] or his supervisor, Associate Professor Ken Coghill, at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED].

Should you have any complaint concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee at the following address:

Executive Officer

Monash University Human Ethics Research Committee (MUHREC)

Building 3E, Room 111

Research Office

Monash University VIC 3800

Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 3831

Email: muhrec@adm.monash.edu.au

Alternatively, if you require assistance in your native language, this can be organised by contacting one of the following:

The Ambassador

Embassy of Australia

<Address Line 1>

<Address Line 2>

Tel: <Telephone No>

Email: <Email Address>

Appendix C: Case study protocol

Overview

The case study protocol provides for a road map to be followed in the processes of administering interviews. In other words, a case study protocol contains not only interview questions but also procedures and set of rules that guide data collection process (Yin, 2009, p. 79). Yin (2009, p. 79) stresses on the importance of a case study protocol in that it is one of the main ways to enhance reliability of the case study design as it directs a researcher in data collection phase. Yin (2009, p. 79) continue to argue that while it may not be necessary to use a case study protocol in a single case scenario, it is critical that the same is used when conducting a multi-case study such as this one. The logic being this is that a case study protocol guides a researcher to conduct all interviews with much more consistency. Since this multi-case study is conducted to explore the impact of training parliamentarians on the performance of both parliamentarians and their respective parliaments, the protocol focuses on abilities of parliamentarians and parliaments at large to fulfil their various respective roles.

Targeted Participants

All interviews will involve parliamentarians from selected parliaments. These will include:

- Backbenchers
- Frontbenchers

The emphasis will be placed on interviewing parliamentarians that reflect gender, experience as well as political party affiliation dimensions of a particular parliament.

The interview questions were constructed using both the available literature on the subject at hand and a follow up pilot study which involved among others retired parliamentarians and renowned academicians. The main questions regarding the performance of parliamentarians and parliaments were informed by their main roles which include:

- Legislation
- Representation
- Oversight
- Deliberation
- Budget setting
- Making and breaking governments
- Redress of grievances

Before Commencement of the Interview

- **Self-introduction by the researcher**
- **Presentation of an Overview of the Study**
 - Governance has generally been accepted as a one of the most potent means to enhancing political, social as well as economic development of countries around the world.

- Governance is largely a function of effective parliaments. However, parliamentary effectiveness is among other factors subject to technical abilities of political players within parliaments, chief of which, parliamentarians.

- Nevertheless, the brief nature of parliamentary careers, coupled with other factors such as limited supply of competent parliamentary staff makes it necessary for parliamentarians in the Pacific region to have maximum KSAs to be able to fulfil their duties and thereby improve both the performance of parliamentarians and parliaments.

- Therefore there is a need to train parliamentarians to acquire KSAs that will allow them to potentially fulfil their roles. Nonetheless, there has been a dearth of theory grounded studies that link micro-level (individual parliamentarians) with performance of parliaments (macro-level).

- This study seeks to conduct an exploration of types of training that are provided to parliamentarians in the Pacific region and find how they impact performance of both parliamentarians and parliaments in the region.

- **Confidentiality of the views of the interviewee**

- Participating to the interview is on voluntary basis and an interviewee and may choose not to participate in part or in the entire project, or withdraw prior to the interview.

○ Personal details and responses from the interviewee will remain strictly confidential. However, the information gained from the interviews may be availed for publications in refereed journal articles and/or online discussions/research papers.

○ No monetary remuneration will be provided for participating in the interviews.

• **Tape-recording of the interviewee**

○ Permission to be requested to allow for recording of the interview to enable a thorough review of the content at later times.

• **Interview questions**

A. Personal Details

1. Name of interviewee, title and employer organisation:

B. General

2. Rank the following roles of Parliament in your order of importance:

Representation
.....

Legislation
.....

Deliberation
.....

Scrutiny
Budget setting
Making and breaking governments
Redress of grievances

3. What in your opinion are the roles and responsibilities of a parliamentarian in today's society?

4. What aspects of the parliamentarian role are new members usually least prepared for at the time of entering parliament?

5. Could mentoring by a more experienced parliamentarian improve the performance of parliamentarians? If so, in what ways?

C. Needs and Skills

6. What are the skills parliamentarians need/require to perform effectively in their role?

7. What skills from parliamentarians' prior experience tend to be relevant to their new role?

8. What skills do you think parliamentarians need to enhance in order to progress in their parliamentary careers?

9. Based on your experience and observations, what skills do you believe are required at different levels of a parliamentary career (for example: committee member, committee

chairperson, Speaker/President of Chamber, parliamentary secretary minister/secretary of state, etc.)?

10. How would the skills acquired as a parliamentarian be relevant in future work roles outside of parliament?

11. What are these skills and how do you anticipate each could be relevant?

D. Training Needs Analysis

12. Were training needs assessed prior to developing the content of the training? Please circle as appropriate:

Yes – please answer **questions 13 to 16**

No – please answer **question 17**

13. If **yes** to question 12, what processes were used to assess participants' training needs?

14. If **yes** to question 12, what were these training needs?

15. If **yes** to question 12, how did the training needs analysis inform the content of the training modules?

16. If **yes** to question 12, were experienced parliamentarians consulted regarding their needs as new parliamentarians?

17. If **no** to question 12, how was the content of the training determined?

E. Motivations and Incentives

18. What is your opinion of making training for parliamentarians compulsory?

F. Trainer networks

19. Have you or your organisation (Chamber) liaised, networked, collaborated or otherwise worked with other organisations in the development or provision of training for parliamentarians? If so, please provide details.

20. Have you directly organised and/or provided training for parliamentarians? Please circle as appropriate:

Yes

No

If **yes**, please also respond to all *Schedule A* questions below.

SCHEDULE A

Note: These questions are to be addressed **only** to those interviewees **who (or whose Chambers) have organised and/or delivered formal training** for parliamentarians.

G. Extent of Training

21. Please estimate the total number of training days (hours) offered by your organisation (Chamber) to parliamentarians in the last 12 months.

22. Please estimate the total number of training days (hours) offered by your organisation (Chamber) to parliamentarians in the last 5 years.

23. Could you please indicate what training content and types your organisation has offered to parliamentarians?

24. (For Secretaries-General only) Did you collaborate with other training providers? If so, what other training providers did you work with, and what was the extent and content of your collaboration?

H. Evaluation

25. Is the training evaluated?

Yes - go to **questions 26 & 27**

No - go to **question 28**

26. If **yes** to question 25, what processes are used to evaluate the training?

27. If **yes** to question 25, how is this evaluation information used to inform future training?

28. If **no** to question 25, why isn't the program evaluated?

29. What aspects of the training program(s) worked well and why did they work well?

30. What aspects of the training program(s) could be improved and how could they be improved on?

31. Overall how would you describe the effectiveness of the training program(s) in improving the following:

- Individual performance of MPs
- Overall, parliamentary performance
- **In concluding the interview**
 - Inform the interviewee that you are done with questions
 - Ask the interviewee to add any other comment or ask you a question.
 - Reiterate your commitment to confidentiality
 - Thank the interviewee for his/her cooperation

Appendix D: A Complete list of Pacific countries

	Country Name	Type of Regime	Type of Parliament	Number of MPs	The Main Ethnic Makeup
1.	Federated States of Micronesia	Modified parliamentary system	Unicameral parliament	14 members: from popular votes	Micronesia
2.	Fiji	A dictatorship			Melanesia
3.	Kiribati	Modified presidential system	Unicameral parliament	46: from popular votes	Micronesia
4.	Marshall Islands	Modified parliamentary system	Bicameral parliament	33: from popular votes	Micronesia
5.	Nauru	Modified parliamentary system	Unicameral parliament	18: from popular votes	Micronesia
6.	Palau	Modified parliamentary system	Unicameral parliament	71 members: from popular votes	Micronesia
7.	Papua New Guinea	Modified parliamentary regime	Unicameral parliament	109: 89 from popular votes and 20 from provincial electorates)	Melanesia
8.	Samoa	Modified parliamentary regime	Unicameral parliament	49: Popularly elected	Polynesia
9.	Solomon Islands	Modified parliamentary regime	Unicameral parliament	50: from popular votes	Melanesia
10	Timor-Leste	Semi-presidential regime	Unicameral parliament	88: Voted in, on proportional basis	
11	Tonga	Hereditary constitutional monarchy	Unicameral parliament	18 members: from popular votes	Polynesia
12	Tuvalu	Modified parliamentary regime	Unicameral parliament	15: from popular votes	Polynesia
13	Vanuatu	Semi-presidential regime	Unicameral parliament	52: from popular votes	Melanesia

Source: Larmour, 2008; Banks et al 2010