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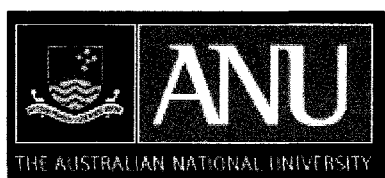
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Bridging The Gap:

The Changing Reproductive And Sexual Expectations Of Fijian Men

Miliakere Mate Kaitani

**A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the
Australian National University**

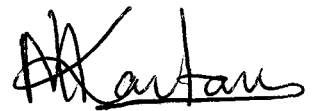


The Australian National University

October 2003

DECLARATION

Except where otherwise stated, this thesis is my own research work carried out from April 2000 to October 2003 as a PhD Scholar in Demography at the Australian National University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Kaitani', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Miliakere M Kaitani

October 2003

DEDICATION

To my late mother
Alowesi Lailai VOLAU
and
To my loving husband and daughter
Semisi and Ana KAITANI.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the many individuals whose contribution has enabled me to reach this stage and complete my work. Firstly I wish to thank the demography and sociology program for the support given to me through the years of my study in the program. The Program Head Professor Peter McDonald, thank you for the support and encouragement given to me when I always bother you at the start of the day. To all the staff at the program I also wish to thank you for your support.

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MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL

ABSTRACT

Although much has recently been written on the reproductive health of men, there is relatively little research material on the reproductive and sexual behaviour of young men in Fiji and there has been no research to identify factors influencing behaviour. In this study an empirical investigation on men's sexual behaviour before and after European contact is examined to enable an understanding of the changing cultural expectations and values of sexuality. Social factors currently influencing reproductive health knowledge, attitudes and behaviour are also identified.

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative research methods including questionnaire interviews, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, archival materials, informal interviews and participant observation to bridge this gap. Questionnaire interviews were statistically analysed using bi-variate and multivariate analyses identifying factors that influence reproductive and sexual behaviour. Different factors were found to influence different behaviour. The thesis identifies socio-demographic factors that influence sexual behaviour. These include the sources of information, education, age, religion and religiosity, area of childhood upbringing, parent's occupation, knowledge and attitudes to different sexual behaviours, and knowledge and attitudes to contraceptive use, use of available services, and risk behaviour.

The research findings shows that Fijian men in 2001 were aware that they play an important role in addressing the reproductive and sexual health issues of the community. However, they are seldom actively engaged in promoting reproductive health because culture dictates that women are responsible for reproductive health issues while men are the main source of income in the family. Traditional values have changed over time and these roles are at times modified or reversed. Western cultural practices brought to Fiji over the past 200 years have resulted in the mixing of culture and uncertainty about the appropriateness of competing values. Traditional institutions for the education of young people are fast being displaced and the traditional family system is crumbling. Alternative institutions have not emerged to offer adequate alternatives. This has resulted in young people being ill informed on sexual and reproductive behaviours. Knowledge and use of available services is very low. The condom is a commonly known contraceptive method but men are not aware of other methods. The

results show that contraceptive use is uncommon. Their knowledge is limited because they have a narrow range of sources of information on sexuality and they are misinformed about this taboo topic. The end result is a high incidence of teenage pregnancy and high incidence of STIs among the indigenous Fijian population.

Attitudes to sexual behaviour, including dating, premarital coitus, homosexuality, and commercial sex workers conform to society's expectations. Although these are not culturally acceptable they are becoming normal practice in society today. Religion influences social attitudes towards sexuality. The main influence is Christianity, introduced in the early nineteenth century. The research shows that knowledge and attitudes to reproductive health behaviour have little or no influence on behaviour but attitudes do influence engagement in risk taking behaviour.

In comparing the historical perspective on men's sexual behaviour to current behaviour, it is observed that the major changes in behavioural norms had already begun by the early twentieth century. Sexuality today is greatly influence by religion. There is a need to differentiate between the religious and cultural expectations of sexual and reproductive behaviours. The breakdown of the traditional institutions in society that look after sexual behaviour has led to young men having limited knowledge of sexual health, and also leads to increased risk behaviour. On the basis of this analysis, the thesis argues for institutional renewal to revive appropriate ways to educate men about safe and responsible sexuality. Educating young men about the risks of common sexual behaviours is highlighted as such education can influence behaviour for the better. The study concludes by exploring strategies that could be taken to encourage young men to engage in healthy reproductive behaviour.

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GLOSSARY:- FIJIAN TERMS AND MEANINGS

Term	Meaning in English
Boci	Uncircumcised penis/immature
bulubulu	Traditional ceremony for the burying of the hatch and asking for forgiveness.
bure	Fijian house
bure ni tagane	Men's house. This is a sleeping house for young men and all unmarried men.
bure ni sa	Men's house
ganena/veiganeni	brother and sister relationship
gauna	time
gauna e liu	past
gauna mai muri	future
iloloku	an offering to the dead soul
iyau	traditional items
kaivalagi	'European' or the 'white man'
liu or e liu	in front
malo	a piece of cloth that men wear to cover themselves. This is worn only when they are recognised as adults.
masi dakai	cleaning the gun, it also metaphorically means masturbating
muri	behind or back
tabua	whales tooth. It is a highly valued traditional item.
tavale/veitavaleni	cross cousins
tavi yadre/tuki yadre	slapping the forehead, it also metaphorically means masturbating
veidrotaki	elopement
veitabui	taboos that exists in a relationship
veitacini	brother to brother relationship, or a sister to sister relationship
waliwali	oiling one's self, also means masturbating
yaqona	kava, a traditional Fijian drink that is used during ceremonial functions. It is also a social drink today.
yavu sovu	finishing the soap, also implies masturbating