Australian National University
Department of Pacific Affairs

Discussion paper
2024/2

The Presentation of Academic Identity at a Papua New Guinean University: Agency and Liminality in Postcolonial Higher Education

Peter Nasale and Jeanette Baird

DOI: 10.25911/0PDP-B828
22 February 2024

Introduction

Awareness of one's academic identity, and the confidence to actively shape this identity, are pivotal in navigating careers in higher education. In this Discussion Paper, we explore the struggles of presenting and communicating an academic identity for lecturers in a young faith-based university in Papua New Guinea (PNG). In doing so, we aim to showcase the voice of academics who are under-represented in traditional accounts of academic identity, which mostly have focused on academics in developed nations of the Global North and an implied universalisation of academic identity. We argue that the formation of academic identities among Papua New Guineans may be hindered as much as it is helped by unrealistic expectations to conduct research (Breier et al. 2020; Chipindi and Vavrus 2018; Yang et al. 2021). More generally, this paper reinforces a need for government and institutional policies to support academic identities that are proudly 'place-based' (Nordbäck et al. 2022), and responsive to local contexts and needs, while acknowledging international conventions of academia.

The findings discussed here come from a wider study on the ways in which academic staff at one PNG university present, construct, maintain and adjust their academic identities, in circumstances of generally low resources and weak networks (for example, Baird et al. 2021). The country of our research, Papua New Guinea, is a postcolonial society, with deep and manifold cultures of its own. It is the world's most linguistically diverse country with strong local collectivist values (Triandis et al. 1986). The nation is of course influenced by trends in global governance and commerce but also deeply marked by Global North colonial structures and dynamics of the 19th and 20th centuries. In this complex context, it is timely to consider how PNG's higher education institutions and academics are negotiating their own paths — not necessarily those previously laid down by colonial authorities — given the continuing dominance of the education structures and values of the former colonisers (Crossley and Tikly 2004; Papoutsaki and Rooney 2006).

The critical frameworks of postcolonial and decolonisation studies are helpful to decentre assumed knowledge and offer fresh possibilities for interpretation and argument grounded in PNG academics' own worldviews. We use the critical lens of postcolonial theory to indicate relations of acquiescence, adaptation, hybridity or liminality in respect of dominant academic norms.

Research findings indicate that at this university, academic staff find teaching rewarding, know they 'should' undertake research but do not, and perhaps undervalue their considerable achievements in severely resource-constrained circumstances. An identity centred on teaching is asserted by some academics. Others, however, believe they must subscribe to the view that an academic has a doctorate and conducts research, despite their own lived focus on student learning and a desire to position themselves as a professional role model. Further reflexive exploration of these complex dynamics may support PNG academics to use both local and global 'orders of worth' (Boltanski and Thévenot 1991) to shape their identity and agency in PNG's postcolonial society.

The paper starts by identifying a critical framework, that of postcolonial higher education, and framing our study within an established body of writing on academic identities, mostly from a Global North perspective. We then provide a brief background on PNG and Divine Word University (DWU), before describing the method used for the research. On the question of whether DWU lecturers themselves claim an identity as an academic, we identify three main patterns of response or themes: a need to explain affirmative or negative answers; using alternative terms; and a relationship with professionalism. There is evident liminality in the state of many academics, who wish to undertake research but do not, and so do not assert the legitimacy of their actual positions as academics. The final sections of the paper discuss the implications for academic development and models of academia at DWU and the need for further studies.

Postcolonial higher education and academic identity studies

Our research draws on two bodies of writing on higher education that (perhaps surprisingly) have yet to fully develop their interconnections: postcolonial theory, including decolonisation, and the construction and manifestation of academic identities. The scholarly

literature on both these topics, especially the latter, has been generated and dominated by academic paradigms and authors from the Global North (see, for example, Tülübas and Göktürk 2023). Although the globalisation of higher education logically seeks accounts of diverse knowledge cultures and learning experiences, our study of academic identities is situated within a context that privileges particular views of what counts as knowledge and how to generate it.

Over the past 50 years, awareness of the different higher education systems operating around the globe has intensified rapidly, as has awareness of globalising practices in markets, public policy and the exchange of information (Burden-Leahy 2009; Marginson 2022; Peters 2019; Tikly 2001; Wu and Zha 2018). Although there is widespread acceptance of a dominant Global North (Anglo-American and European) model of higher education, there are established critiques of the unequal power relations manifest in this model and its neoliberal and neocolonial underpinnings (Dawson 2020; Nguyen et al. 2009; Sadler 2011).

Postcolonial theory, in broad terms, asserts the need to reflect critically on the effects of colonisation on the societies, cultures, people and groups subject to rule by European or other nations over the past several hundred years. These effects include responses by colonised groups and the study of economic and social relationships of power and resistance, both historical and current.

Higher education, as a field primarily concerned with the preservation, transmission and generation of knowledge, and therefore the reproduction of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1998), has a particularly central place as a target of postcolonial studies. As Peters observes:

> From the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, a period of well over four hundred years, colonial universities were set up and operated as 'institutions of empire' that became the site for centers of law and administration within the colonies. (2019:142–43)

Global North dominance thus is trebly inscribed in the higher education system of postcolonial nations such as PNG: through colonisation and introduction of higher education; then through valorisation of particular epistemologies and types of educational institutions, for example Anglophone universities; and further through business practices, that is, bureaucracy and neoliberal managerialism.

Authentic postcolonial pedagogies have been developed by those living and working in postcolonial societies such as the Pacific Islands (see the examples in Boon-Nanai et al. 2022) but the focus of interest in postcolonial higher education studies frequently turns towards the accommodation of postcolonial perspectives within existing Global North epistemologies. Even fruitful concepts from postcolonial studies, such as hybridity (Bhabha 1994), in their application use dominant modes of research and discourse as their yardstick.

Similarly, while a current trend in critical studies supports decolonising academia, considerable emphasis has been on decolonising curricula in developed countries (Andreotti et al. 2015), with some exceptions. Too often, the voices that are heard are not those of postcolonial academics (Jeater 2018). Only recently have discussions on how to decolonise academic identities been reported and even here, the issue tends to be discussed in the context of universities in the Global North (for example, Reyes et al. 2021; Wimpenny et al. 2021).

Research since the 1990s on academic identities has been predominantly a concern of Anglophone and Global North researchers (Barrow et al. 2020; Drennan et al. 2017), driven in large part by the challenges of neoliberal approaches to higher education and associated managerialist practices (Harris 2005; Shams 2019). A well-worn theme in the literature is the growing contrast between the autonomy and respect for expertise of an imagined scholarly career (Billot 2010) and the reality of often low-status, over-scrutinised and precarious employment in universities in highly affluent societies (Skea 2021). This theme and its assumed knowledge of the importance of academic reputation and 'prestige economies' (Blackmore and Kandiko 2011) may have little resonance in low resource higher education systems. Another predominant theme is that of socialisation into the academic profession, often assumed to be through doctoral studies in a long-established university (Keefer 2015), a rarity for many academics in the thousands of universities in the world that do not participate in the major global rankings.

Current research shows a growing recognition that context and changes in environment have significant effects on how academics' identities are configured and styled (Anikina et al. 2020; Djerasimovic and Villani 2019; Li 2021), especially in emerging research cultures where aspirations are high but opportunities are limited. Further studies are now emerging of narratives of academic identities across a wider range of cultural contexts (for example, Badiozaman 2020; Mathe 2018; Szelényi and Rhoads 2013; Zeng and Fickel 2021) and the identity tensions in balancing global and national values.

These perspectives inform our research, firstly by providing concepts through which to understand the ways in which academics in postcolonial higher education institutions construct and explain their identities, and secondly, by the emergence of 'place-based' studies of academic identity that over time could lead to richer understandings of what it means to 'be an academic'.

Research studies from a postcolonial perspective report the adoption of traditional academic norms, or hybridising adjustments by academics (Jones et al. 2022; Kothiyal et al. 2018), or alternatively a state of liminality (Breier et al. 2020), where lecturers without doctorates find themselves not able to advance their academic status. These studies, like ours, come from discrete institutional settings across diverse contexts: their findings are suggestive rather than generalisable. We believe our research is one of the first studies

of accounts by academics of their identity in PNG or across most Pacific Island nations (see, however, Ng Shiu and Iosefo 2021). The paper therefore adds to a developing body of research, offering an additional and novel setting, although the paper raises more questions than it answers.

The context: Papua New Guinean tertiary education and Divine Word University

When Papua New Guinea achieved independence from Australian colonial rule in 1975 (Dorney 2016), two public universities had been established, the University of Papua New Guinea (1965) and the PNG University of Technology (1967). From a situation in the 1960s when even Grade 12 schooling was not available in PNG, these new universities, modelled on postwar Australian institutions, from one perspective made a major contribution to educating PNG's first generations of leaders and thinkers (Weeks 1993).

In 2023, there are eight recognised universities in PNG, two of which are faith-based. All the universities together can accept only around a third of annual Grade 12 completing students, on a gross enrolment rate for secondary education of less than 50 per cent (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2021). There are also nursing, technical and teacher training colleges plus other vocational training institutions. Much work has been undertaken over the past decade to establish and consolidate an identifiable tertiary education sector, but most Papua New Guineans are unlikely to have experienced or engaged personally with a university.

The PNG higher education system, and the education sector generally, continues to be under considerable strain (Namaliu and Garnaut 2010; MacWilliam 2014). It is increasingly less able to cater for a rapidly rising population of more than 9 million in 2023. While all universities are expected to conduct research, the resources to do so are limited (Baje and Itaki 2022) and the number of PNG academics with doctorates or undertaking doctoral studies is insufficient to replace exiting academic leaders as they retire.

The study site for this research is Divine Word University, which was established as a university in 1996 from the former Divine Word Institute, established by the missionary Catholic order the Society of the Divine Word. The university's vision is to be recognised nationally and internationally as an innovative university, open to all, serving society through quality research, learning and teaching, and community service in a Christian environment.

Divine Word University educates students from all over PNG as well as a small number from abroad. The university has five campuses; the three that were included in this study host full-time residential, mostly undergraduate students: Madang with around 1700 students, Wewak with around 1000 students, and Rabaul with over 500 students. There are also part-time postgraduate and undergraduate students studying in blended learning mode through programs offered by the university.

There were around 160 academic staff in 2021, Papua New Guineans and those from other countries, mostly living on campus. The university's total research output is small although there is a longstanding multidisciplinary research journal. Most academic staff are full-time on contract and may have housing provided: to this extent, their situation can be more secure than that of academics in precarious, casual employment in developed countries (Mauri 2019). Lecturers at the university typically teach three or four units a semester, a comparatively heavy load that leaves little time for research or other scholarly activity, especially given their family and cultural obligations. Until 2019, there was little formal induction to the academic role at DWU.

Academics with doctorates comprise less than 10 per cent and of these, most are in academic management positions. As a consequence, there is not a great deal of capacity for mentoring of junior academics, while opportunities for developing research collaborations and networks are constrained.

The standard position description for a DWU academic at lecturer level has three main role statements:

1. To prepare, deliver and support units within programs as directed by the Head of Department.
2. To work with colleagues in the ongoing development of units and programs and in the development of new provision using various media as directed by the Head of Department.
3. To undertake research, individually or as part of a team, and produce research outcomes.

While this third requirement is a laudable aim within an international higher education context, it is questionable whether this is a useful expectation for all academic staff of a young university in a developing nation (Chipindi and Vavrus 2018). Promotion to senior lecturer or higher academic positions requires a doctorate, which few academic staff have or are able to pursue, despite incentives at DWU and the availability of international scholarships.

The approach and method for the study

As noted, the research findings discussed in this paper are drawn from a wider study on the ways in which DWU academic staff present, construct, maintain and adjust their situated academic identities. The theoretical approach to these findings is that of social constructivism, employing postcolonial theory 'as a reading practice, which analyzes the continuing resistances, appropriations, and transformations of dominant, (i.e., "imperial") discourses, institutions, and methodologies by colonized and formerly colonized societies' (Ashcroft 2017:3).

We focus on role identity (Barrow et al. 2020; Caza et al. 2018), in this instance the role of 'academic', which is broader than a mere label (Rosewell and Ashwin 2019). Our approach accepts that academic identities are shaped by organisational, professional and personal influences but that individuals are far

from passive in this process. The research assumes that academics at DWU have agency and are actively engaged in 'identity work' (McLean and Price 2016), defined as 'the many ways in which people create, adapt, signify, claim and reject identities from available resources' (Brown 2017:298). That is, academic staff exert agency and choice in how they describe themselves and locate themselves as members or non-members of a group and how they wish others to see them (Billot and King 2017).

The interviews with 57 DWU academics that provide the basis for the analysis that follows were conducted between July 2018 and May 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project received clearance from the DWU Human Research Ethics Committee in early 2018. Academics from the three campuses of DWU volunteered to participate. We used a convenience sampling strategy with expected maximum numbers of interviewees for each campus. Over one-third of the university's academic staff members were interviewed.

The semi-structured interviews consisted of a series of 21 questions that were developed by the initial research team (the authors of this paper and three others). We asked about academics' journeys to DWU, what they describe as core academic values, how they identify as academics, and other questions on the internationalisation of higher education and the influence of a Christian ethos at the university.

Interviews were conducted in English, which is not the first language of most of the interviewees but is the language of instruction in PNG. Participants included both experienced and new academics across DWU's four faculties, with Education over-represented due to primary teacher education campuses in Wewak and Rabaul. All interviews were undertaken with Papua New Guinean academic staff: 34 interviewees were from the main campus at Madang, 11 were from Wewak Campus, and 12 were from Rabaul Campus. Most of the academics in our study did not have a doctoral qualification and were not studying for one.

The research described in this paper addresses a subset of the responses to questions most directly relating to the presentation of academic identity. Participants were asked to share what they thought about themselves as an academic, including responding to the following specific queries: 'Do you consider yourself to be an academic?'; 'What are some of the reasons as to how you perceive your role as an academic?'; and 'Considering your role at the university, how do you describe yourself to family and friends?'. By including these particular questions, the study sought to explore if an identity as an 'academic' was explicitly 'claimed' (Lepisto et al. 2015; McLean 2012) and used by the interviewees. To give context to the accounts provided in response to these questions, interviewees were asked two other questions: 'What are the characteristics of an academic?' and 'What do you believe are the key values that an academic should uphold?'

The method of analysis is reflexive thematic analysis of the transcripts of the interviews (Braun and Clarke 2019). The research team took turns in reading the transcripts from the data collected, and from this activity, potential categories of response were developed inductively and coded using QDA Miner software. A few categories were slightly refined after initial coding. Each of the researchers from the team provided a summary of the major themes they identified from individual questions through detailed coding of each question, to share with others. From these write-ups the team was able to present the key findings from the study to the DWU community in early 2021, for their further discussion and reflection.

To critique our own methodology, we are aware that our semi-structured interviews may not have allowed our interviewees an opportunity to present their own narratives fully or in a style that they chose as most appropriate. There is thus a disjuncture between the formal structure of this research and authentically decolonial research methodologies (Kessi 2017; Smith 1999). Assumptions were made that the concept of an 'academic identity' would not be wholly unfamiliar to DWU lecturers, especially as a professional development program on 'Becoming an academic' was conducted at DWU in 2019, quite independently of this research. We recognised that our interviewees may have adapted their descriptions of themselves in anticipation of a 'correct' response to the interviewer but on reflection this did not appear to us to be the case. In the extracts below, our intent is to respect the voices of Papua New Guinean academics and enable these voices to reach an international audience.

There is considerable variety in DWU interviewees' accounts of whether or not they consider themselves to be 'an academic', the reasons why they perceive their roles to be those of academics, and how they describe themselves to others. In the next three sections, we present the three most prominent patterns of response, or themes, we identify from the interviews.

Explanations of why to claim or not to claim the label 'academic'

Significantly, only about half of our DWU interviewees claim an identity as an 'academic', sometimes qualifying their accounts or only reluctantly agreeing with the proposition, while the other half tend to answer 'not yet' or 'not fully' or describe themselves in another way.

Several interpretations were offered of 'being an academic' and of how these interpretations support the statement of being an academic or, conversely, are used to justify reasons for not being a 'real' academic.

Claiming an identity as an 'academic'

Those who claim identity as an academic may already be in more senior positions or have a doctorate. However, in claiming their identity many of them justify this by reference to how long they have been teaching, their ability to be able to understand the needs of students and do research to prepare teaching and learning materials in aiding them to deliver to the students:

> I see myself as an academic because of the knowledge and skills that I've learnt, I feel that

> I have to deliver that to the students. And I'm also doing like, ongoing, like, research just to find out their need areas that's why I feel that I'm an academic ... (W#1)

> I can be seen as an academic, because I always try to, you know, teach to the best of my abilities, like I want to give the best ... I spend my time doing research, getting bits and pieces here and there, to you know, to see what each different book and text and like the internet is saying about a particular concept or idea or something ... (K#5)

A number of the interviewees suggested that as they had been in academia for quite some time, they considered themselves to be an academic, because they are well versed with the teaching pedagogies in their discipline and how they go about preparing the materials to be delivered to the students:

> I've taught for after four years, I can say that I'm an academic, after preparing lessons and delivering them and with the challenges of students, I think I can handle the situation now. (W#13)

> I consider myself to be an academic in that I do a lot of teaching and learning ... (K#3)

> Firstly, yes, I regard myself as an academic. As I said earlier, I'm the type of person that I want to [...] find out more about information that will actually help myself as a person, and also, if I'm able to disseminate that information to others ... And having the drive to, especially with our young ones, help our young ones to have that knowledge as well. (V#4)

Some respondents perceive themselves as academic because they teach from experience and use lived experiences as inspiration to deliver knowledge to their students:

> I do consider myself an academic in the sense of sharing and imparting knowledge to younger people, to students in that their lived experience is not long enough and they will have to develop that, they will come up to knowing the world at a more later [time] and I consider [I'm] an academic in the sense of some of the knowledge has been gained through my growing up in the community, in the village and through my interaction with the outside world ... (M#25)

Some academics present their academic role as a late-career giving back to the community by imparting the professional knowledge and skills that they possess:

> I am an academic and a humbled teacher ... people didn't expect me to come here of all places and become an academic and I tell people, although the salary is not as good as what I was earning, I come up with this rationale that this is my community service. You know we have to [give] back and transfer, there's no point just practising, practising ourselves without transferring what we know to the next generation ... (M#23)

Qualifying or not claiming the designation

In general, academics who claim the designation assert that they have sufficient authority and experience to justify doing so. However, a significant minority qualify their presentation of themselves as 'an academic':

> That's a question that is, like yeah, I am an academic but I want to be truly an academic by doing research ... (W#5)

> To be an academic, honestly, you got to do research and teachings. These two needs to go hand in hand. If you are just teaching, my personal feeling is that, anyone can do any teaching. So my feeling is that you got to do research around what you are teaching. (M#10)

> Okay with teaching and learning, yes. I, I see myself as an academic, maybe because of the level I'm teaching at, but as I've said, it is the research that will prove me that I'm at this level. (K#1)

Those who do not feel fully 'qualified' to use the term are not confined to junior or less experienced DWU staff. Certainly, the traditional imperatives are well understood:

> As an academic you must, you teach. At the same time, you must do research and do your presentations and get involved with community engagement ... (W#4)

However, a lack of research activity or experience causes many interviewees to reject an identification with the term 'academic':

> I have my reservations regarding that, one of my shortfalls in that, to really say that I'm an academic is that I really honestly speaking, I really lack research skills ... (M#10)

> I would not say I am fully an academic ... in terms of knowledge I would say yes I consider myself as an academic, because I fully engage in teaching and delivering the content and all that, but the other aspects of academia which is research and engaging in research and information sharing, that's the area where I don't see myself as fully or grasping that meaning of academic in an academic institution. So, I only fulfil certain aspects of being an academic and that is mostly to do with teaching because I haven't published anything, I don't have a track record of things that qualify me to be a full academic. (M#18)

The separate activities of research, teaching, and service contributions are unevenly constituted in conceptions of what an academic at a university should be (Flecknoe et al. 2017). The valuing of research over teaching is a well-known phenomenon in higher education in developed societies (Rogers and Swain 2021; Rosewell and Ashwin 2019) and finds echoes in the views of academics at DWU. Many DWU participants hesitate to describe themselves as academics because they feel they only engage in one or only two of the three 'benchmark' pillars of being an academic. This hesitation may be due to the way in which 'being an academic' is communicated — explicitly

or implicitly — to members of the DWU community as always involving 'research'. Whatever is stated explicitly in formal position descriptions and by university leaders about research, DWU academics are likely to learn from their colleagues and their lived experience that an aspiration to do research is a more realistic position to embrace than actually trying to implement a research project, especially during teaching periods.

Two patterns of postcolonial positioning among DWU academics can be seen in this theme, neither of which matches the traditional description of a 'teaching and research' academic in the DWU job description. In one position, interviewees claim themselves to be academics based on authority, experience, a love of finding out new things, and a broad attitude of valuing knowledge. The transmission of knowledge to the next generation, which resonates with the communication of traditional knowledge and skills, tends to be emphasised, providing justification and pride in academic activity. This positioning we suggest could reflect a form of hybridity (Bhabha 1994), in which accepted PNG cultural hierarchies are drawn on to equate being an academic as both a seeker of knowledge and an authority, an expert.

In a second positioning, other DWU interviewees partially or wholly reject describing themselves as an academic, based on their absence of published or active research. This 'lack' places them in a liminal situation, as they are unlikely to be appointed to senior positions without a doctorate or other evidence of research. Breier et al. (2020) note that it is common in developing countries to encounter the 'liminal' situation of non-PhD academics, where individuals often are recruited to become academics for their practical experience and knowledge. They may never feel quite 'legitimate' as academics without a doctorate yet may never be in a position to complete one or to conduct their own research projects. Such academics show 'simultaneous identification and de-identification' with the academic ideal of research (Winkler and Kristensen 2021:333), acquiescing in the acceptance of an idealised and possibly outdated concept of an academic that places them forever in the situation of needing to apologise.

We observe that in postcolonial societies such as PNG, the arguably exaggerated importance ascribed to research by some universities may subtly delegitimise and demotivate national academics, and certainly may not give due credit to their crucial role in providing advanced learning for national development.

Widespread use of alternate descriptions

Rather than claiming or not claiming the designation 'academic', many interviewees propose other designations for themselves, indicating alternate conceptualisations of 'being an academic' but also a need to 'translate' the term to their families and communities. For some, the term 'academic' is felt to be a large claim to status that they are uncomfortable in sharing outside the university setting. For others the term does not serve to convey a meaningful idea to their family, friends or clan. In general, interviewees seem more assured using a description of an occupational role, such as teacher, tutor, or referring to their workplace, when giving an account to those in their personal networks. Some of these designations are explored below.

An academic is a teacher

The presentation of oneself as a teacher is common to many DWU participants in the research:

> Firstly, I see myself as a teacher and my role as teaching and leading young people in their learning. And so with that I try to prepare myself well. Very well in my knowledge that I will share, in the new knowledge I may learn. That I can also use, I am excited when I find new knowledge that I can use … (M#12)

> Because sometimes people, they don't [understand] 'academic'. So, we bring our level down, and we tell them that we are a teacher and then they understand us. (W#3)

> I like to use the word teacher, one of the reasons for that is my parents are also teachers, so I just like to keep it at that, teachers. An academic for me is like the word is too big so I would just like to stick with teacher. (M#15)

Additionally, participants may describe themselves to family and friends as a teacher because they feel that they have not fully met the three pillars that underpin what an academic should be, as discussed above:

> That's a big question, good question there. If only I do something extra I would tell them that I am an academic, like with more researching, in mainly in the field of education, in the field of what we are teaching, then I would say that I am a real academic. But I am now struggling myself to really do my studies to make me as an academic. So, I should be writing more papers to really qualify me that I am academic. But, … when I teach, I tell them that I am a teacher … (M#19)

> When I went to [Australian university] and we were introducing ourselves in the master class, I chose the word teacher instead of lecturer because to me I felt the word teacher was unless … I mean for a lecturer they say you are a big academic, you research and you [have] published and all of that so I said that I'm a teacher until they asked me 'oh so you teach, you know what school do you teach, high school or advanced?' and then when I say university they are like okay, so you see they get that. (M#7)

Several participants from the Education Faculty respond that they describe themselves as a teacher rather than an academic at a university, as they are in the business of education and they teach students in a classroom setting. They tend to feel that family and friends or others around them would not understand what they do if they described themselves as an academic or a lecturer, and so they believe that others can easily understand what they do at the university

if they simply describe themselves as a teacher. Academics are educators; most are first and foremost teachers, and that is what many respondents perceive their role at the university to be.

An academic is a facilitator

Being able to facilitate the learning of students is how some of the respondents described themselves when they were asked whether or not they consider themselves to be an academic:

> We only give them the directions, we facilitate, so that, it's sort of a self-exploratory. Where they do a lot of research, they find, they search for information. So, I facilitate, that's the role that I do. Because I see that, in here, that's what I, I think I like that idea. The idea of you, you know, imposing knowledge, you, like you expect students to see you as a knowledge bank or some ATM where they can withdraw. But it's not that. Because I don't know a lot of things. So sometimes I don't have all the time to, you know, deliver, or even I don't have some information that they can find elsewhere. So I tell them, I don't have all the information and so you can... I can do as much as I can, so I'm facilitating you do yourself, self-taught, self-discipline, discipline yourself. (W#8)

Minimising self-aggrandisement

Some Papua New Guinean academics feel that the use of 'fancy words' to describe what they do at the university may be perceived by others in the community as inappropriate self-promotion, and so they describe themselves to others as simply a teacher, someone who teaches at the university:

> To tell you the truth I feel ashamed to tell them what I do so all I say is I teach. Because in PNG setting if you talk a lot they'll say that you are trying to show yourself off or something ... most times they don't know what I'm doing here ... (M#14)

> ... tell them I am a teacher. I don't tell them I am a lecturer. I'm a teacher because I like teaching. (W#1)

Descriptions of oneself vary by context

Some interviewees describe themselves by giving the specific titles of their roles at the university. In the quote below, the speaker also provides a marker about institutional structure that reflects continuity but also a subtle change:

> Yes, I use the word lecturer. I'm lecturing at DWU Rabaul campus. I tell them because they, many of them they still have that teacher-education, that information that was, I mean, that was what it was before ... (K#2)

A number of respondents indicate they give various descriptions to people depending on who is asking about what they do at the university:

> To family and friends I would say two contexts. To my nationals I would say yes I teach ... students at DWU. I don't tell them that I am a lecturer because of that definition of a lecturer, I see a lecturer as somebody who has to balance academic and lecturer is associated with academic. For my international colleagues I am very scared to tell them that I am an academic and if they tell me you are a lecturer I don't see myself as a lecturer similar to an Australian lecturer ... (M#18)

It is noticeable that only two interviewees mentioned being a scholar or scholarship, indicating that this term — or the concept — is not one they regularly use. To describe oneself as a scholar is to describe oneself as being a 'well-established' academic, meaning one who has been teaching at a university over a length of time and has extensively done research and published. It is this notion that can scare academics away from identifying themselves as a scholar: to PNG academics teaching at DWU, a scholar is a huge title, not earned simply by teaching at a university. They tend to feel that there are a lot of requirements one needs to check off in order to be called a scholar, including but not limited to being an expert in a particular field. The term 'an intellectual' was used by a small number of interviewees to describe themselves. This term may be more widely known in PNG than 'scholar' and may suggest an attitude towards knowledge rather than a set of achievements.

There are social challenges for DWU academics in communicating their university workplace identity among their personal networks in a nation where only a tiny proportion of people attend higher education. The main pattern of response evident through this theme is an implicit recognition of 'academic' as a high status term that does not feel appropriate to many DWU lecturers to use about themselves outside the institution, although to present oneself as a teacher may also not seem quite the right 'fit'. On balance, the authors conclude that the use of alternatives such as 'teacher' is most likely to reflect DWU lecturers' comfort with the connotations of this alternative term and its widespread use in PNG society.

The academic as a professional or as a different kind of professional

There is some evidence from interviewees that claiming an academic identity is tied to the concept and values of professionalism:

> ... so an academic is a profession, it's just like being a pilot, it is a profession, and then academic is doing, because before you even, ... you know we see them as teachers, before you even go and deliver, you need to do research. (M#22)

Consistent with some references to academics as experts, a small number of DWU lecturers make reference to acting professionally, recognising that being an academic is a profession of its own or making reference to their own journeys:

> ... I came here ... maybe not to be sort of academic ... I really want to work with young

> people. We should be professional in the way we deal with others. (M#1)

Terms such as being a 'leader' were used by a couple of interviewees and there were references to displaying good qualities and good personal traits, reinforcing an ideal of an academic as someone possessing sound ethical standards. There were also references to being a 'role model' for students, particularly from academic staff involved in teacher education:

> With responsibility I think academics need to keep in mind that we have a huge responsibility to the students, not just passing on what we have but becoming role models to them through our actions as well, not just what we say. (M#29)

Thus, having special knowledge and skills, or being expected to demonstrate a high standard of conduct, is viewed by some interviewees as an important element of being an academic.

Many DWU academics mentioned 'integrity' as a key characteristic of an academic. This sense of adhering to a high standard of moral or right conduct is implicit in concepts of professionalism and was expressed by a number of interviewees:

> Academics should be seen as professional people with professional conduct. All are focused on their duties and responsibilities of the institution where they are performing their task either by lecturing or tutoring, teaching. (K#8)

Given worldwide concern about academic integrity in higher education (Denisova-Schmidt 2017), the academics at DWU show an advanced sense of the need for an ethical approach to academic life. While descriptions of being an academic assume 'integrity' as a required virtue (Tomicic 2019), this understanding has not been explicit in traditional Global North universities. Of course, the particular character of Divine Word University, with its emphasis on Christian values and ethics, may explain why this concept was so readily mentioned by our interviewees as a desirable characteristic, although not one that was used to justify claiming the description 'academic':

> The notion of disciplinary expertise, being an 'expert', was mentioned quite frequently; for example, the use of a professional identity: 'I'm a nurse educator. I educate nurses to be nurses' (V#2).

There are others, however, who draw a distinction between an established professional identity and a new academic identity. A considerable number of DWU academics from the three campuses come into academia from industry or various professional disciplines, including teaching and nursing. For some professionals, academia is viewed as a profession of its own with certain standards and characteristics, which at times poses a challenge for the transition of these individuals into an academic role. As one participant in a professional discipline expressed when asked whether or not they consider themself to be an academic:

> … that's a challenging question, I'm still finding my way around to see myself as an academic. (M#18)

Others explained they have learnt on the job, reframing their identities in the context of academic life:

> To be honest, when I first joined … I didn't consider myself to be an academic … No teaching background, but, as I continued to engage myself into teaching roles and being with the students, going through everything that an academic, a teacher would do, I came to, like, understand the job itself and how to deal with the students and all that. But … personally I still feel that I need more training … (V#1)

Reconciling a professional and an academic identity in higher education has been identified as an issue for nursing and other academics in developed and in developing nations, where one challenge is to understand which attributes of professionalism and expertise are most valued in different contexts (Barrow 2023; Findlow 2012).

Discussion

As described above, we identified three broad patterns of response to questions about claiming an identity as an academic, each of which highlights a particular challenge in constructing and maintaining a coherent academic identity at DWU:

- Claiming or not claiming the description 'academic': teaching, knowledge and curiosity are presented as reasons for claiming the title whereas a lack of research is presented as the main reason for not claiming it or only 'half-claiming'
- Using alternate descriptions: teacher, lecturer, facilitator, expert are terms more widely used, especially when talking to family or friends, whereas the word 'academic' can either sound too 'grand' or not convey a meaning, depending on the audience
- Relating to the concept of professionalism: the need for academics to be professional is accepted but the actual transition from the practice of a profession to an academic role is not very clear.

A majority of the interviewees nominate 'research' as a characteristic of an academic. They accept that being an academic requires one to be continuously doing research and publishing, and using that knowledge to enhance their teaching. The answers given by respondents communicated that being able to publish, as well as to conduct research, signifies one to be truly an academic, by proving that the knowledge created is credible enough to be shared with other people. There is thus a considerable gap between the way many interviewees present their ideas of 'being an academic' and the way they position their own identities. DWU academics take pains to demonstrate their understanding that being an academic involves research and publishing, even if they are not doing either of these activities. For some, this contradiction represents an identity dilemma that is difficult to

escape except by rejecting the ascription. Others, however, find other ways to navigate this obstacle.

Interviewees affirmed very strongly a love of teaching in their descriptions of their roles and of desirable characteristics of academics. National academics in our study stated they find it enjoyable to transfer knowledge to students to prepare them to go out into the 'real world'. Possibly this approach reflects a distinctively Melanesian sense of generational 'mission' among Papua New Guineans, although it may also reflect enjoyment of choosing to share knowledge with others. Traditionally in PNG, knowledge is shared and transferred from elders to young children in formal ways. This transfer of skills and knowledge is shared as a mission; done with the intended purpose of preparing the young ones to be able to fend for themselves when they come of age, hence elders take pleasure in doing so.

The concepts of reflection and improvement (Light et al. 2009:39) were quite strongly evident in descriptions of staff seeking to improve themselves or being driven to learn new things. There is also a sense in which being an academic is an aspirational endeavour, as in this quote from a lecturer in primary teacher education:

> They must be teaching vibrant, research, creative, energetic people who are all the time finding new ways of delivering information, getting difficult concepts, look for ways that they can break it down and teach it to like the students here at DWU … who will then take these new kinds of teaching methods, approaches and implement those in the classroom. (W#4)

Interviewees tend to describe themselves to family and friends as a 'teacher', in part because they do not want to be seen as self-aggrandising, or possibly because they feel that they have not fully met requirements that underpin what they feel an academic should be. A need for academics to be professional is stressed but, personally, some interviewees feel uncertain about their transition from a prior professional occupation to an academic role.

The variety in the patterns of response also shows some interrelatedness: not claiming an identity as an academic and not wishing to appear to overstate one's role may be reflective of a similar sense of modesty; describing oneself as a teacher may promote an identification with the role modelling expected of good teachers. One striking feature of the responses, to us, is the sense that academics at DWU are mostly navigating these ambiguities of 'being an academic' on their own, without conversations with their peers or other sustained socialising influences.

Conclusions

The findings show many DWU lecturers actively struggling to stabilise their identities as academics. Some are confident in claiming the badge of 'academic', but for others, the amount of 'identity work' required to align expectations and actual behaviour is considerable. Not all DWU academics seem confident in presenting an academic identity that they find valid and convincing.

Nonetheless, many DWU lecturers are actively integrating their academic identities, as teachers, as finders out of new things and, ideally, as role models. They find teaching rewarding, know they 'should' undertake research but do not, and perhaps undervalue their considerable achievements in severely resource-constrained circumstances.

In actively 'shaping' their role identities, the priorities asserted by DWU academics place value on the civic and cross-generational worth of teaching that stands in contrast to the valorisation of individual fame as a researcher (Boltanski and Thévenot 1991) in Global North higher education. That is, DWU academics assert the value of teaching and relationality, which we take as an act of postcolonial 'hybridity' in combining PNG values with introduced practices and acceptance of a need for graduates to be employable internationally.

Resolving the inconsistency between an assumed requirement for research and their own lack of such research forces some DWU academics to acquiesce in their 'subordinate' position of 'not yet' being an academic, although they may feel confined by their state of liminality (Breier et al. 2020). Such subordinate positions are reinforced by institutional policies on research and promotion criteria at DWU, which are based on assumptions that all academic staff engage in research. Opportunities are limited for career advancement based on skill in teaching. However, it appears that institutional anchors such as the university's Christian ethos and a comparative lack of precarity (Mauri 2019) serve to allow many DWU academics to maintain a relatively stable situated identity.

Our research indicates the variability of academic identity stressors in different contexts, from the issues faced by academics in research-intensive corporatised universities to those in fledgling institutions seeking to bring advanced education to under-served populations.

The presentations of academic identity among DWU academics are likely to resonate with academics in postcolonial developing nations, particularly among academics in new universities as found in Pacific Island countries and other Small Island Developing States and in African nations. Some of the concerns of DWU academics will be recognisable more widely to academics or professional practitioners in emerging and middle-income countries, especially in Asia, just as our research has been informed by studies of their dilemmas (for example, Yang et al. 2021).

Clearly, it is no longer adequate for the scholarly literature to discuss academic identity in a decontextualised and ahistorical fashion, assuming that the situation of one privileged group — such as tenured scholars in a world-ranked university — is reflective of that of the majority of academics. Better understanding of the diversity of academic identities gives richness and nuance to the ways in which academics might seek to relate to each other, undermining the unconsidered academic

imperialism practised by many (Siltaoja et al. 2018). In the globalised sphere of academia, a better understanding of the 'relation between local communities and global influences' (Ashcroft 2017:4) adds to the possibilities for transformative knowledge production (Marginson 2022).

As a cautionary note, the findings from this research should not be taken as a full picture of academic identity presentation in PNG. DWU's culture is a product of its history in an environment where academic conventions are not generally well-known. It is entirely possible that a similar study of academics at other PNG universities, especially the longer-established state universities, would produce somewhat different accounts.

However, the study indicates the potential for national policymaking to pay greater attention to development of PNG's academic capital in ways that are proudly 'place-based' and that provide greater opportunities for socialisation of new entrants. Much is now known of ways to support Pasifika students in tertiary studies (Leenen-Young 2020) and these lessons might be applied to Melanesian tertiary education to advance PNG approaches to learning and teaching. Support could also be provided to encourage more intensive but also more critical engagement between PNG and international lecturers and scholars, to chart the relationships between local and global epistemologies and what 'counts' as knowledge and skills in a specific context.

At the institutional level, a sensitive understanding of the ways in which academic staff present their identity challenges can be used to reduce role strain and increase motivation (Winter and O'Donohue 2012). The development of DWU's educational philosophy has been modelled on a Global North model (Papoutsaki and Rooney 2006; Salonda 2008) but as the university matures it could start to address reflexively questions of local adaptation and hybridity (Peters 2019). Further, we suggest that the university has an obligation to seek to avoid a 'deficit' approach to academic development by taking more active pride in the achievements of PNG staff teaching and supporting their students in a low resource environment.

Practically, DWU could consider augmenting its developing activities for academic role socialisation through extended academic induction and mentoring (Billot and King 2017; King et al. 2018). Rather than encouraging a stark distinction between research and teaching, the university could help academics take a more nuanced approach to the concept of 'being an academic'; for example, by encouraging academics to develop postcolonial pedagogies or by adopting an academic model based on Boyer's (1990) four types of scholarship (the scholarships respectively of: teaching and learning; integration; application; and discovery).

Peters (2019:147) proposes that a postcolonial university should 'develop critical and historical perspectives of the colonial university as part of European colonialization, administration, ideologies and material culture' and 'rehabilitate local histories, language and indigenous languages and knowledge systems'. Such a project of recasting is embedded or under way in universities in Africa and other postcolonial nations (Vandeyar 2022) but is often contentious, as is the acceptance of epistemic diversity, particularly in science-based disciplines (Gobbo and Russo 2020). Debates in New Zealand over science education and mātauranga Māori (Hikuroa 2017) provide a case in point.

New universities such as DWU need to be attuned to 'international standards' and to undertake research but they also need to avoid mere mimicry by grounding their activities in unique local knowledge and experience (see, for example, Paraide et al. 2022). Further reflexive exploration will encourage DWU academics to use both local and global 'orders of worth' (Boltanski and Thévenot 1991) to shape their identity and agency. In these ways, the university can take further steps in becoming a critically aware and culturally innovative university.

Acknowledgement

The authors acknowledge with gratitude several anonymous referees, whose comments have helped us to improve the paper.

Notes on authors

Peter Nasale is a Papua New Guinean academic and social researcher. He is currently the Acting Head of Department for Foundation Studies at Western Pacific University in Ialibu-Pangia District, Southern Highlands Province. He holds a Masters of Research Methodology from Divine Word University and aims to pursue a PhD in the near future.

Jeanette Baird is a tertiary education consultant specialising in quality assurance and institutional governance. She is Adjunct Professor of Higher Education at Divine Word University in Papua New Guinea, where she is a former vice-president for quality assurance. She has worked with the PNG Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and with external quality authorities for tertiary education in several Pacific and Asian countries.

References

Andreotti, V., S. Stein, C. Ahenakew and D. Hunt. 2015. Mapping Interpretations of Decolonization in the Context of Higher Education. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 4(1):21–40.

Anikina, Z., L. Goncharova and A. Evseeva. 2020. Constructing Academic Identity in the Changing Russian Higher Education Context: Preliminary Perspectives. *Higher Education Research & Development* 39(5):855–68. doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2019.1704690.

Ashcroft, B. 2017. Postcolonial Theory. In *Wiley–Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social Theory*. Wiley Online Library. doi.org/10.1002/9781118430873.est0281.

Badiozaman, I.F.btA. 2020. Early Career Academics' Identity Development in a Changing HE Landscape:

Insights from a Malaysian Private University. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 41(3):424–39. doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2020.1793732.
Baird, J., P. Nasale and P. Gibbs. 2021. Melanesian Culture and Western-Style Higher Education: Reflections of PNG University Academics. *Contemporary PNG Studies: DWU Research Journal* 34:28–37.
Baje, L. and R.L. Itaki. 2022. Strengthening Capacity Building of Local Researchers in Papua New Guinea. *Contemporary PNG Studies: DWU Research Journal* 37:12–19.
Barrow, M. 2023. Ontological Congruence, Discipline and Academic Identity in University Schools of Nursing. *Higher Education* 85:637–50. doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00858-0.
Barrow, M., B. Grant and L. Xu. 2020. Academic Identities Research: Mapping the Field's Theoretical Frameworks. *Higher Education Research & Development* 41(2):240–53. doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1849036.
Bhabha, H.K. 1994. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge.
Billot, J. 2010. The Imagined and the Real: Identifying the Tensions for Academic Identity. *Higher Education Research & Development* 29(6):709–21. doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2010.487201.
Billot, J. and V. King. 2017. The Missing Measure? Academic Identity and the Induction Process. *Higher Education Research & Development* 36(3):612–24. doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2017.1288705.
Blackmore, P. and C.B. Kandiko. 2011. Motivation in Academic Life: A Prestige Economy. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education* 16(4):399–411. doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2011.626971.
Boltanski, L. and L. Thévenot. 1991. *De la justification: les économies de la grandeur*. Paris: Editions Gallimard.
Boon-Nanai, J.M., T. Manuel, W. Lagolago, T. Lefono, S. Zaveri and V. Ponton. 2022. Re-examining the 'Culture of Silence' through Peer-Based Pasifika Pedagogies in a New Zealand Tertiary Environment. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 44(2):185–207. doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2022.2037274.
Bourdieu, P. 1998. *Homo Academicus*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Boyer, E.L. 1990. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
Braun, V. and V. Clarke. 2019. Reflecting on Reflexive Thematic Analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* 11(4):589–97. doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806.
Breier, M., C. Herman and L. Towers. 2020. Doctoral Rites and Liminal Spaces: Academics without PhDs in South Africa and Australia. *Studies in Higher Education* 45(4):834–46. doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1583727.
Brown, A.D. 2017. Identity Work and Organizational Identification. *International Journal of Management Reviews* 19(3):296–317. doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12152.
Burden-Leahy, S.M. 2009. Globalisation and Education in the Postcolonial World: The Conundrum of the Higher Education System of the United Arab Emirates. *Comparative Education* 45(4):525–44. doi.org/10.1080/03050060903391578.
Caza, B.B., H. Vough and H. Puranik. 2018. Identity Work in Organizations and Occupations: Definitions, Theories, and Pathways Forward. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 39(7):889–910. doi.org/10.1002/job.2318.
Chipindi, F.M. and F.K. Vavrus. 2018. The Ontology of Mention: Contexts, Contests, and Constructs of Academic Identity among University of Zambia Faculty. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education* 4(3). doi.org/10.32865/fire2018437.
Crossley, M. and L. Tikly. 2004. Postcolonial Perspectives and Comparative and International Research in Education: A Critical Introduction. *Comparative Education* 40(2):147–56. doi.org/10.1080/0305006042000231329.
Dawson, M.C. 2020. Rehumanising the University for an Alternative Future: Decolonisation, Alternative Epistemologies and Cognitive Justice. *Identities* 27(1):71–90. doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2019.1611072.
Denisova-Schmidt, E. 2017. The Challenges of Academic Integrity in Higher Education: Current Trends and Prospects. CIHE Perspectives, No. 5, Boston College Center for International Higher Education.
Djerasimovic, S. and M. Villani. 2019. Constructing Academic Identity in the European Higher Education Space: Experiences of Early Career Educational Researchers. *European Educational Research Journal* 19(3):247–68. doi.org/10.1177/1474904119867186.
Dorney, S. 2016. *The Embarrassed Colonialist*. Lowy Institute, Penguin Special. Melbourne: Penguin.
Drennan, J., M. Clarke, A. Hyde and Y. Politis. 2017. Academic Identity in Higher Education. In J. Shin and P. Teixeira (eds). *Encyclopedia of International Higher Education Systems and Institutions*. Living edition. Springer. doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9553-1_300-1.
Findlow, S. 2012. Higher Education Change and Professional-Academic Identity in Newly 'Academic' Disciplines: The Case of Nurse Education, *Higher Education* 63(1):117–33.
Flecknoe, S.J., J.K. Choate, E.A. Davis, Y.M. Hodgson, P.A. Johanesen, J.O. Macaulay and G.M. Rayner. 2017. Redefining Academic Identity in an Evolving Higher Education Landscape. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice* 14(2). doi.org/10.53761/1.14.2.2.
Gobbo, F. and F. Russo. 2020. Epistemic Diversity and the Question of Lingua Franca in Science and Philosophy. *Foundations of Science* 25:185–207. doi.org/10.1007/s10699-019-09631-6.
Harris, S. 2005. Rethinking Academic Identities in Neo-liberal Times. *Teaching in Higher Education* 10(4):421–33. doi.org/10.1080/13562510500238986.
Hikuroa, D. 2017. Mātauranga Māori — the ūkaipō of Knowledge in New Zealand. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* 4791):5–10. doi.org/10.1080/03036758.2016.1252407.

Jeater, D. 2018. Academic Standards or Academic Imperialism? Zimbabwean Perceptions of Hegemonic Power in the Global Construction of Knowledge. *African Studies Review* 61(2):8–27. doi.org/10.1017/asr.2017.132.

Jones, D.R., T. Gardner and H. Bui. 2022. Vietnamese Early Career Academics' Identity Work: Balancing Tensions between East and West. *Studies in Higher Education* 47(6):1284–96. doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2021.1876651.

Keefer, J.M. 2015. Experiencing Doctoral Liminality as a Conceptual Threshold and How Supervisors Can Use It. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International* 52(1):17–28. doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2014.981839.

Kessi, S. 2017. Community Social Psychologies for Decoloniality: An African Perspective on Epistemic Justice in Higher Education. *South African Journal of Psychology* 47(4):506–16. doi.org/10.1177/0081246317737917.

King, V., J. Roed and L. Wilson. 2018. It's Very Different Here: Practice-Based Academic Staff Induction and Retention. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 40(5):470–84. doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2018.1496516.

Kothiyal, N., E. Bell and C. Clarke. 2018. Moving beyond Mimicry: Creating Hybrid Spaces in Indian Business Schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 17(2):1–18. doi.org/10.5465/amle.2015.0137.

Leenen-Young, M. 2020. Pasifika Students and Learning to Learn at University. *MAI Journal* 9(1):70–80. doi.org/10.20507/MAIJournal.2020.9.1.8.

Lepisto, D.A., E. Crosina and M.G. Pratt. 2015. Identity Work within and beyond the Professions: Toward a Theoretical Integration and Extension. In A. Desilva and M. Aparicio (eds). *International Handbook of Professional Identities*. Rosemead, CA: Scientific & Academic Publishing, 11–37.

Li, X. 2021. The China-Centric Era? Rethinking Academic Identity for Sustainable Higher Education Internationalization in China. *International Journal of Chinese Education* 10(3). doi.org/10.1177/22125868211045778.

Light, G., R. Cox and S. Calkins. 2009. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: The Reflective Professional*, second edition (Kindle). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

MacWilliam, S. 2014. Crunch-Time for the University of Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Journalism Review* 20(2):118–40.

McLean, N. 2012. Researching Academic Identity: Using Discursive Psychology as an Approach. *International Journal for Academic Development* 17(2):97–108. doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2011.599596.

McLean, N. and L. Price. 2016. The Mechanics of Identity Formation. A Discursive Psychological Perspective on Academic Identity. In J. Smith, J. Rattray, T. Peseta and D. Loads (eds). *Identity Work in the Contemporary University: Exploring an Uneasy Profession*. Rotterdam: Brill — Sense, 45–57.

Marginson, S. 2022. What Is Global Higher Education? *Oxford Review of Education* 48(4):492–517. doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2022.2061438.

Mathe, L.R. 2018. Narratives of the Construction of Academic Identities within the Lesotho Higher Education Milieu. Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa.

Mauri, C. 2019. Formulating the Academic Precariat. In F. Cannizzo and N. Osbaldiston (eds). *The Social Structures of Global Academia*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 185–204. doi.org/10.4324/9780429465857-11.

Namaliu, R. and R. Garnaut. 2010. PNG Universities Review: Report to Prime Ministers Somare and Rudd.

Ng Shiu, R. and F. Iosefo. 2021. Le Malaga Faigatā: Misadventures of An Accidental Academic. *The Journal of New Zealand Studies* NS33. doi.org/10.26686/jnzs.iNS33.7389.

Nguyen, P.-M., J.G. Elliott, C. Terlouw and A. Pilot. 2009. Neocolonialism in Education: Cooperative Learning in an Asian Context. *Comparative Education* 45(1):109–30. doi.org/10.1080/03050060802661428.

Nordbäck, E., M. Hakonen and J. Tienari. 2022. Academic Identities and Sense of Place: A Collaborative Autoethnography in the Neoliberal University. *Management Learning* 53(2):331–49. doi.org/10.1177/13505076211006543.

Papoutsaki, E. and D. Rooney. 2006. Colonial Legacies and Neo-Colonial Practices in Papua New Guinean Higher Education. *Higher Education Research & Development* 25(4):421–33. doi.org/10.1080/07294360600947434.

Paraide, P., K. Owens, C. Muke, P. Clarkson and C. Owens. 2022. Moving Forward: Overcoming Neocolonialism in Education in Papua New Guinea. In *Mathematics Education in a Neocolonial Country: The Case of Papua New Guinea*. History of Mathematics Education. Cham: Springer. doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-90994-9_13.

Peters, M.A. 2019. Manifesto for the Postcolonial University. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 51(2):142–148. doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2017.1388660.

Reyes, V., S. Clancy, H. Koge, K. Richardson and P. Taylor. 2021. Decolonising Globalised Curriculum Landscapes: The Identity and Agency of Academics. *London Review of Education* 19(1):1–13. doi.org/10.14324/LRE.19.1.26.

Rogers, B. and K. Swain. 2021. Teaching Academics in Higher Education: Resisting Teaching at the Expense of Research. *The Australian Educational Researcher*. doi.org/10.1007/s13384-021-00465-5.

Rosewell, K. and P. Ashwin. 2019. Academics' Perceptions of What It Means to be an Academic. *Studies in Higher Education* 44(12):2374–84. doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2018.1499717.

Sadler, K. 2011. Dominant Scholarship: White Neocolonialism and Academic Integrity. *The Vermont Connection* 32(1).

Salonda, L. 2008. Exploration of a University Culture: A Papua New Guinea Case Study. Doctoral dissertation, Victoria University, Australia.
Shams, F. 2019. Managing Academic Identity Tensions in a Canadian Public University: The Role of Identity Work in Coping with Managerialism. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 41(6):619–32. doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2019.1643960.
Siltaoja, M., K. Juusola and M. Kivijärvi. 2018. 'World-Class' Fantasies: A Neocolonial Analysis of International Branch Campuses. *Organization* 26(1):75–97. doi.org/10.1177/1350508418775836.
Skea, C. 2021. Emerging Neoliberal Academic Identities: Looking Beyond Homo economicus. *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 40:399–414. doi.org/10.1007/s11217-021-09768-7.
Smith, L.T. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books; Dunedin: University of Otago Press.
Szelényi, K. and R.A. Rhoads. 2013. Academic Culture and Citizenship in Transitional Societies: Case Studies from China and Hungary. *Higher Education* 66:425–38. doi.org/10.1007/s10734-013-9614-z.
Tikly, L. 2001. Globalisation and Education in the Postcolonial World: Towards a Conceptual Framework. *Comparative Education* 37(2):151–71. doi.org/10.1080/03050060124481.
Tomicic, A. 2019. American Dream, Humboldtian Nightmare: Reflections on the Remodelled Values of a Neoliberalized Academia. *Policy Futures in Education* 17(8):1057–77. doi.org/10.1177/1478210319834825.
Triandis, H.C., R. Bontempo, H. Betancourt, M. Bond, K. Leung, A. Brenes, J. Georgas, H. Hui, G. Marin, B. Setidadi, J. Sinha, J. Verma, J. Spangenberg, H. Touzard and G. de Montmollin. 1986. The Measurement of the Etic Aspects of Individualism and Collectivism across Cultures. *Australian Journal of Psychology* 38(3):257–67. doi.org/10.1080/00049538608259013.
Tülübas, T. and S. Göktürk. 2023. A Meta-Synthesis on Academic Identity in the Neoliberal Context of Academy. *Higher Education* 86:139–61. doi.org/10.1007/s10734-022-00906-9.
UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2021. Papua New Guinea.
Vandeyar, S. 2022. Decolonising Higher Education: The Academic's Turn. *Equity & Excellence in Education* 55(3):189–202. doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2022.2064388.
Weeks, S.G. 1993. Education in Papua New Guinea 1973–1993: The Late-Development Effect? *Comparative Education* 29(3):261–73. doi.org/10.1080/0305006930290304
Wimpenny, K, J. Beelen, K. Hindrix, V. King and E. Sjoer. 2021. Curriculum Internationalization and the 'Decolonizing Academic'. *Higher Education Research & Development* 41(7):2490–2505. doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2021.2014406.
Winkler, I. and M.L. Kristensen. 2021. Trapped in Limbo: –Academics' Identity Negotiation in Conditions of Perpetual Liminality. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management* 16(2):332–49. doi.org/10.1108/QROM-09-2020-2023.
Winter, R.P. and W. O'Donohue. 2012. Academic Identity Tensions in the Public University: Which Values Really Matter? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 34(6):565–73. doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2012.716005.
Wu, H. and Q. Zha. 2018. History of Chinese Higher Education. In M. Peters (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*. Singapore: Springer. doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_598-1.
Yang, S., D. Shu and H. Yin. 2021. 'Teaching, My Passion; Publishing, My Pain': Unpacking Academics' Professional Identity Tensions through the Lens of Emotional Resilience. *Higher Education* 84:235–54. doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00765-w.
Zeng, W. and L. Fickel. 2021. Exploring Collective Identity of a Group of Teaching-Oriented Academics amid Research Discourse: A Chinese Case. *Higher Education* 82:651–68. doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00728-1.

DPA Discussion Paper series 2015–2024

2015/12 Doug Porter, The Political Economy of the Transition from Logging to Mining in Solomon Islands
2015/13 Meabh Cryan, The Long Haul: Citizen Participation in Timor-Leste Land Policy
2015/14 Kerryn Baker, Pawa Blong Meri: Women Candidates in the 2015 Bougainville Election
2015/15 Meabh Cryan, Dispossession and Impoverishment in Timor-Leste: Potential Impacts of the Suai Supply Base
2015/16 John Logan, A Year in the Life of an Australian Member of the PNG Judiciary
2016/1 Scott MacWilliam, Indigenous Commercial Ambitions and Decentralisation in Papua New Guinea: The Missing Driver of Reform
2016/2 Rick Hou, A Day in the Life of a Member of Parliament in Solomon Islands
2016/3 Rick GraÇa Feijó, A Long and Winding Road: A Brief History of the Idea of a 'Government of National Unity' in Timor-Leste and its Current Implications
2016/4 Tony Hiriasia, Kin and Gifts: Understanding the Kin-based Politics of Solomon Islands — The Case of East AreAre
2016/5 Amanda H.A. Watson and Colin Wiltshire, Reporting Corruption from within Papua New Guinea's Public Financial Management System
2016/6 Tarryn Phillips and Meg Keen, Sharing the City: Urban Growth and Governance in Suva, Fiji
2016/7 Daniel Evans, Hard Work: Youth Employment Programming in Honiara, Solomon Islands
2016/8 Transform Aqorau, State of the Pacific — Slippery Slopes and Rough Rides in Regional Cooperative Endeavours in the Islands
2017/1 Shailendra Singh, State of the Media Review in Four Melanesian Countries — Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu — in 2015
2017/2 Manasupe Zurenuoc and Felicity Herbert, The Creation of Two New Provinces in Papua New Guinea — A Story of False Starts and Near Fatal Collisions
2017/3 Patrick Nisira, Leadership Challenges for the Autonomous Bougainville Government
2017/4 Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh and Anthony Regan with Simon Kenema, Artisanal and Small Scale Mining in Bougainville: Risk, Reward and Regulation
2017/5 Matthew Allen, Sinclair Dinnen, Meg Keen and Bryant Allen, New Pathways Across Old Terrain? SSGM Research on Resources, Conflict and Justice
2017/6 R.J. May, Papua New Guinea under the O'Neill Government: Has There Been a Shift in Political Style?
2017/7 Keali'i Kukahiko, Getting In: College Choice for Pacific Islander High School Football Players
2017/8 Richard Eves, Gender Challenges to Financial Inclusion in Papua New Guinea
2018/1 Nitze Pupu and Polly Wiessner, The Challenges of Village Courts and Operation Mekim Save among the Enga of Papua New Guinea Today: A View from the Inside
2018/2 Felicity Gerry and Catarina Sjölin, Timor-Leste and the Empowerment of Women: Access to Justice and the Future for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Survivors
2018/3 Nic Maclellan and Anthony Regan, New Caledonia and Bougainville: Towards a New Political Status?
2018/4 Anthony Regan, The Bougainville Referendum Arrangements: Origins, Shaping and Implementation — Part One: Origins and Shaping
2018/5 Anthony Regan, The Bougainville Referendum Arrangements: Origins, Shaping and Implementation — Part Two: Shaping and Implementation
2018/6 Denghua Zhang, China, India and Japan in the Pacific: Latest Developments, Motivations and Impact
2018/7 Scott MacWilliam, Coffee in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea: The Early Years
2018/8 Pierre-Christophe Pantz and Scott Robertson, Exploring the Kanak Vote on the Eve of New Caledonia's Independence Referendum
2019/1 Elise Howard, Effective Support for Women's Leadership in the Pacific: Lessons from Evidence
2019/2 Scott MacWilliam, Modernising Tradition: Elections, Parties and Land in Fiji
2019/3 Scott MacWilliam, The Search for Democracy in Fiji
2019/4 Hon. Ali'imalemanu Alofa Tuuau with Elise Howard, The Long Road to Becoming a Parliamentarian in Samoa: Political Apprenticeship, Learning New Language and Pushing Gender Boundaries
2020/1 Scott MacWilliam, Trapped: Smallholder Coffee Producers in the Papua New Guinea Highlands
2020/2 Amanda H.A. Watson, Jeremy Miller and Adriana Schmidt, Preparing for the Referendum: Research into the Bougainville Peace Agreement Telephone Information Hotline
2020/3 R.J. May, Politics in Papua New Guinea, 2017–20: From O'Neill to Marape
2020/4 Caroline Gravelat, L'ONU au service du processus d'émancipation de la Nouvelle-Calédonie / The Role of the United Nations in New Caledonia's Process of Self-Determination
2020/5 Anthony Tutugor, Incompatible Struggles? Reclaiming Indigenous Sovereignty and Political Sovereignty in Kanaky and/or New Caledonia
2021/1 R.J. May, Fifty Years after 'Act of Free Choice': The West Papua Issue in a Regional Context
2021/2 Elise Howard, Leftemap olgeta: Seasonal Work, Women and Leadership
2021/3 Denise Fisher, Uncertainties as New Caledonia Prepares for Its Final Independence Referendum
2021/4 Glen Mola Pumuye, Restricting Party Hopping in Papua New Guinea's Parliament
2022/1 Charlotte Bedford and Rochelle Bailey, Managing Worker Wellbeing during COVID-19: Pacific Seasonal Workers in Australia and New Zealand
2022/2 Shailendra Singh and Nilesh Lal, News Coverage of Fiji's 2018 General Election Campaign: Insights from a Content Analysis of the National Print and Broadcast Media
2022/3 Daryl Morini, Getting to 'Oui' in the Nouméa Accord's Final Status Talks
2022/4 Nic Maclellan, Oceanic Diplomacy: The Kéamu Accord, *Kastom* and Maritime Boundaries
2023/1 Graeme Smith, Daria Impiombato, Tarcisius Kabutaulaka and Henryk Szadziewski, Mapping PRC Companies in the Pacific
2023/2 Shadrach Himata and Ivan Pomaleu with Anthony Regan, Post-referendum Decision-making on Bougainville's Future Political Status: Two Policy Statements
2024/1 Jon Fraenkel, Zapping the Yo-Yo Man: OLIPPAC and the Consolidation of Executive Power in Papua New Guinea

For a complete listing of DPA Discussion Papers, see the DPA's listing in ANU's open access repository

Australian National University | Department of Pacific Affairs

The **Department of Pacific Affairs (DPA)** (formerly known as the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia program) is the leading international centre for applied multidisciplinary research and analysis concerning contemporary state, society and governance in the Pacific. Situated within the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, DPA seeks to set the international standard for scholarship on the region.

Since 1996, DPA has produced over 500 research publications across various publications series. These include the In Brief series, the Discussion Paper series, the Working Paper series, the Policy Brief series and research reports. DPA publishes books, often in collaboration with ANU Press. DPA jointly edits Policy Forum's Pacific In Focus website. Through our research publications, DPA seeks to address topics of interest to a wide audience of academics, policymakers and others interested in governance, state and society in the Pacific. Discipline areas include, but are not limited to, political science, anthropology, geography, human geography, law, gender studies, development studies and international relations.

All DPA publications are publicly available online, free of charge and in perpetuity, through the ANU Open Research Repository (ANUORR). Since the ANUORR was launched in 2012, SSGM/DPA Publications have been read or downloaded from this site over 100,000 times. Submissions to DPA's Publications series must be referenced in accordance with the DPA Editorial Style Guide.

ISSN 2209-9476 (Print)
ISSN 2209-9530 (Online)

Department of Pacific Affairs
Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs
ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 2600

E dpa@anu.edu.au
W dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au

DepartmentofPacificAffairs
@anudpa
DepartmentofPacificAffairs

Pacific Research Program *An Initiative of the Australian Aid Program*

Australian Aid | Australian National University | Department of Pacific Affairs | Development Policy Centre | LOWY INSTITUTE

We acknowledge the Australian Government's support for the production of this series through the Pacific Research Program Phase II.