Report on Research undertaken during a visit to Yasawa Islands, Fiji, September 2005
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Ecotourism Research Project 2005

Report on research undertaken during a visit to Yasawa Islands, Fiji, September 2005

Edited by Dr Rik Thwaites

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Cover photos: Safe Landing Resort beach, welcome dance in Naisisili village, traditional bure in Naisisili village. All photos, R. Thwaites.
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1.1: Introduction

This report provides a summary of research undertaken by students from Charles Sturt University during a visit to the Yasawas Islands, Fiji, in September 2005. The subject ‘Ecotourism Project’ is offered during final year for students in courses BAppSc (Ecotourism) and BAppSc (Adventure Ecotourism), and the double degree BAppSc (Parks, Recreation & Heritage)/BAppSc (Ecotourism). Ten students spent two weeks in Fiji, staying at Safe Landing Resort on Nacula Island. The students worked in pairs, and thus five separate research projects were undertaken with operators, local villagers and visitors.

The report is intended to provide a summary of the major outcomes of the research projects undertaken by students while in Fiji. The students were asked to present a full research report outlining their project proposal, reviewing the relevant literature, describing the methodology adopted, presenting the data and their analysis and conclusions from the data. The capacity of students to present their work in a way that is readable and sensibly interprets the data gathered varies greatly. While some of the following data discussion has used the students’ writing with very little change required, some of the research reports have had to be completely rewritten. For the purposes of future similar projects, all students will be required to submit a 4 to 5 page Executive Summary. These Executive summaries can then be compiled together to form a research report.

1.2: The subject

In 2005, a new subject was presented as part of the final year studies in degrees in the School of Environmental and Information Sciences at Charles Sturt University. The subject ‘Ecotourism Research Project’ was offered as a part of the degrees BAppSc (Ecotourism) and BAppSc (Adventure Ecotourism), and the double degree BAppSc (Parks, Recreation & Heritage)/BAppSc (Ecotourism). The subject is designed to provide students with a strong link from their theoretical studies to the practical realities of applying ecotourism principles, and thus providing a bridge from studies to the professional workplace. It achieves this by requiring the students to undertake a practical research project, exploring an issue of interest to them related to ecotourism.

While Australia is seen by many as a world leader in ecotourism planning and management, ecotourism is of vital importance in many other countries of the world, and the issues faced may be quite different. In an earlier subject, students covered issues and challenges arising from the implementation of ecotourism principles in Australia, as well as in other parts of the world. Specific questions were asked regarding issues in less developed countries, and potential differences in the challenges faced in less developed countries compared with Australia. The research project subject provided students with an opportunity to identify their own research project in a location of their choosing. As part of this, a trip to Fiji was proposed, offering the chance for students to explore issues in a physical and cultural environment distant from that to which they are accustomed. While some students chose to undertake research of interest to them in their own part of Australia, a number of students were keen to participate in this trip to Fiji. The added bonus of undertaking a trip such as this is the extra educational opportunities offered, by expanding the students’ horizons and introducing them to new cultures and new issues. For some students, this was their first trip outside Australia, and so presented them with a whole new set of ideas, issues and personal challenges. The difficulty of undertaking such a trip with often inexperienced students should not be under-estimated, though for the diversity of learning experiences presented, this would have to be worth the effort.
1.3: Developing the project

A preliminary visit to Fiji by Dr Rik Thwaites in December 2004 drew attention to a number of potential research issues, while discussions with Mr Andrew Fairley of Turtle Island Resort raised other opportunities. A wide range of research issues and topics were presented to students to encourage them to start thinking about their own research interests. Proposals put to students included:

- Visitor expectations and experiences
- The Nacula Tikina Tourism Association as an operator’s partnership
- Perspectives of operators on sustainability and best practice
- Tourism and change in the Yasawas
- Economic opportunities associated with tourism development.

The research exercise included requiring the students to decide for themselves the focus of their research, enabling them to follow a line of enquiry of particular interest to them. Through the subject, the students were supported in the development of the research topic, and the methodology to answer identified questions. Assessment tasks for the subject included individual stages of the research process, including: research proposal and methodology, literature review, data presentation and analysis, and submission of a final integrated research report including data interpretation and implications.

While some projects changed from initial proposal to implementation in the field, the broad interests of the students did not change.

This was the first such visit to the region with students, and though some previously published work was available related to tourism in Fiji, or in other Pacific Island destinations, little was known about the specific issues that were chosen as the subject of the students’ research. As a result, the five research projects were all exploratory in nature, and students all adopted qualitative research approaches.

1.4: The trip

Ten students from Charles Sturt University studying the subject ‘Ecotourism Research Project’ visited Fiji in September 2005. Landing in Nadi, we spent one night on the mainland before taking the Yasawa Flyer out to Nacula island where we spent 10 nights at Safe Landing Resort. From here, we were able to travel around the region for the purposes of the student research. As part of the research, we visited Nacula and Naisisili Villages, and seven resorts that are members of the Nacula Tikina Tourism Association: Safe Landing Resort, Oarsman’s Bay Lodge, Kingfisher Lodge, Coral View Resort, Otto and Fanny’s Resort and Nanuya Island Resort. During our stay, we were also able to visit a number of other resorts, and participate in a diversity of tourism activities, including snorkelling the reefs, hiking around Nacula Island, and taking organised tourist activities, such as visiting the villages and ‘shell markets’ and visiting the limestone caves. We were also invited to visit the primary school at Nacula Village and the secondary school on Turtle Island, both of which were very interesting and educational experiences. During our stay, we were also lucky to be invited to a wedding in Naisisili Village, and to the annual Rugby 7s competition on Turtle Island – both of which enriched our own cultural experience. At the conclusion of our time at Safe Landing Resort, we returned to Nadi for another night, from where some returned to Australia, and some students set out for a few days on their own in Fiji.
1.5: Limitations of research presented

All research must seek to achieve validity and reliability via a range of methods to ensure accuracy in representation of the situation being researched. It should be noted that the research presented in this report was undertaken as a research training exercise, and to provide the students with an opportunity to explore issues of interest, thus expanding their own knowledge and understanding of issues. The research was undertaken as a single subject of study, and thus had to be strictly limited in its scale and its scope. In fact, one of the greatest challenges as a supervisor of these projects was to ensure that the students were adequately focused in their conceptual planning of the research questions, and remained focused throughout the field research process. In the process of reviewing literature, students have a tendency to try to cover all issues and questions of interest, rather than to retain a central focus. The discipline required for this is also necessary once in the field where a myriad of issues and problems are presented, yet the student is required to remain focused on the central issue of their research. This is particularly an issue for students unaccustomed to qualitative research. In this methodology, students set out with a set of questions in mind – this may be a detailed set of questions, or a rough interview guide, but the students must be able to respond to the information they are given, rather than blindly moving on to the next pre-set question. In this way, a greater level of detail is gathered leading to deeper understanding of the individual informants’ perspectives, experiences or attitudes. In this way, the informant can play a key role in defining the shape of the interviews, the emphasis placed on certain issues, or even defining which issues will be discussed. This of course has the added danger that the interviewer can be led away from their topic of interest by an interviewee, and if the student is not on the ball, an interview can lose its focus, and thus may not contribute greatly to asking the initial research questions.

Another limitation of the research data presented here is also related to the nature of the exercise. In any student exercise, some students will perform better than others. As a training program for students, these research projects are of varying quality in their conceptual development, in their field implementation, and in their writing up. Some students have a better capacity to understand and apply theoretical concepts in research design, and in interpretation of the data. Some students have a better capacity to communicate with informants and gather relevant information. Some of the following research discussions have required a considerable editing input, or even near total rewrite to allow for extraction of relevant data and analysis.

With these limitations in mind, the results presented in this report seek to as accurately as possible present the perspectives on identified issues as offered by selected informants. The results are limited in the range of people interviewed, the time over which interviews took place, as well as the capacity of students to adequately develop and implement their research project and accurately present the data gathered in a research report. This summary report draws largely on the individual reports of the students, and thus does not seek to overcome these limitations.

1.6: The research projects

Ten students participated in the field trip to Fiji, and working in pairs undertook five research projects. This report compiles information presented in methodology and conclusion sections of the students’ final research reports. A summary of the projects is presented in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Aim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Andrew Griffiths, Karen Retra</td>
<td>Cultural impacts, Nacula Village</td>
<td>Explore local people’s perceptions of the impacts of tourism in Nacula Village, Fiji, with particular focus on socio-cultural impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Amanda Coute, Cassie Henderson</td>
<td>Cultural impacts, Naisisili Village</td>
<td>Find out the economic and social implications of tourism growth and development on the local communities of Naisisili in Fiji.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Lydia Cousins, Tiffany Reilly</td>
<td>Environmental practices, NTTA operators</td>
<td>Investigate sustainable practices used by Nacula Tikina Tourism Association (NTTA) associated resorts and identify limitations and barriers encountered in the development and implementation of these practices.</td>
</tr>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>Code of Conduct implementation, NTTA operators</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Tim Benstead, High Cartwright</td>
<td>Visitor experience, Safe Landing Resort</td>
<td>Investigate whether well traveled tourists are more likely to seek immersion in Fijian culture than their less traveled counterparts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each project from A to E will be presented separately, with a description of the project, the methodology undertaken, and a presentation of outcomes and interpretation. All these projects were qualitative in nature, and the data gathered is thus in the form of words: text of interviews, observations, descriptions etc. A complete presentation of data would require pages of transcripts and field notes. This data is not presented, but in some cases, quotes may be used to illustrate the nature of responses.
Title: Local perceptions of change in Nacula Village.

Students: Karen Retra, Andrew Griffiths

2.1: Aim:
To explore local people’s perceptions of the impacts of tourism in Nacula Village, Fiji, with particular focus on socio-cultural impacts.

Objectives:
In order to achieve this aim, our objectives were to undertake a qualitative investigation of:
- residents’ perceptions of changes (in the village and to their lives, in living memory) and which, if any, of these changes they attribute to tourism;
- the attitudes of residents toward these changes. That is, do they perceive these changes to have had positive, negative or no (neutral) impacts;
- residents’ attitude toward tourism overall; and
- residents’ ideals for the future scale of tourism in this location;

through the development, implementation and analysis of results from at least six in-depth, semi structured interviews with residents of Nacula Village.

2.2: Methodology:
This investigation took the form of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with six Nacula village residents between the 19th and 24th of September 2005. Before beginning the interviews, approval to conduct research was sought from the Nacula village chief, Ratu Epeli Vuetibau. He agreed and appointed a young woman from the village to assist us with identifying and approaching potential interviewees, as well as to accompany us within the village and provide translations if required.

Before beginning each interview we introduced ourselves and explained the nature of our research and checked that they understood this and were still willing to participate. Most of the interviews were conducted in private, however, one interview was conducted in a shelter near the centre of the village with approximately five adults and children listening to the proceedings.

In addition to the above interview process, some supplementary information was gathered from observations and informal conversations with other residents of Nacula village during our time staying on Nacula Island (in all from the 17th to the 26th September 2005). We also received presentations to our whole research group (ten students and a lecturer) about tourism issues generally. These presentations were made by our research assistant, who gave an overview of life in Nacula village, and one of the local staff of Oarsman’s Bay Resort, who also discussed changes to life for people in the Islands over the years and some background on the resort. Both these events occurred before any interviews had been conducted, making them useful for gathering background information, but less specifically focussed on the particular areas of our research objectives.

A total of six interviews were conducted with local residents, including a village chief, village elder (male), village woman, reverend, fisherman, teacher. Information was also gathered from the presentations made by one resort staff and one village woman. For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, identifying information has been removed from most of the following discussion, and these eight individuals have been randomly assigned a letter from A to H for the purposes of this report.
The following is a direct extract from the final report of student Karen Retra, with some minor alterations.

2.3: Results and Discussion:

2.3.1: Life in Nacula Village before tourism
Most interview participants gave descriptions of aspects of life in the village prior to tourism. A description used most commonly by these participants was that the life was ‘hard’, which C, E, A, G all used. Participants’ reflections on this life were all quite similar and compatible.

The people of Nacula had very limited opportunities to earn an income and worked hard to grow and gather food before tourism. It was ‘very scarce [rare] to get sugar and flour’ in the village in those days, and they only ate what they could grow. They would collect coconuts and catch fish to sell but had to take them to the market in Lautoka, on the mainland. This journey was undertaken in a sailing boat and could take two to three days each way, depending on the wind. This made selling fish difficult. A trip to the market did not usually generate much of a profit as the costs of the boat fare, getting to the market and staying in Lautoka used most of the income. Generally this small return would be spent on necessities, meaning there was no opportunity to save money or bring some back to the village. According to one informant, ‘The money is all used in Lautoka, when we come back, we come back without money.’ Another said, ‘we couldn’t buy enough things, like clothes’, during this time. This lack of paid work on the island meant people had to move to the mainland if they wanted an income. With no secondary school on the island, students had to go to the mainland for their education. This was difficult as they would spend the whole semester on the mainland, and although they would often stay with relatives, it was prohibitively expensive for many would-be students and their families. One informant noted that when their generation went to the cities and urban areas often ‘they can’t find work in there so they get into troubles.’ In these so-called ‘olden days’, we used to build the houses with the thatched roof, using local timber and grasses.

2.3.2: Life in the village since tourism
The interviewees identified a range of changes in the village and their own lives that have occurred since those times. All participants considered there to have been significant amounts of change. This was typified in comments such as ‘There have been big changes’ and ‘our daily lives have changed’. One informant suggested ‘it’s about lots of little changes, but those little changes lead to big changes’, and this seems to be supported by the range of changes identified by participants in the study.

Most commonly, they expressed directly, and/or implied when talking about the past, that life is easier in the village now than it was before tourism, although a wide range of changes were identified as contributing to this situation.

This report will now outline these changes, looking first at those changes perceived positively by participants and then at those perceived to be negative or neutral. Where participants specifically attributed these changes to tourism, this will be indicated.

2.3.3: Changes perceived positively
The participants identified a range of changes they perceived positively, that is, they were perceived to have brought benefits, or positive impacts, to the village and its residents.
Income and money
By far the most commonly mentioned positive change was an increase in income and money. All participants noted that tourism provided them with income and money that was previously difficult or impossible to obtain. One effectively summarized this saying, ‘It’s [now] easy to earn money. And that means they [locals] can buy what they want’. Another felt that income contributed to the community in a range of areas, including the church and religion, the vanua (local social group), education, social development and health. Other participants also mentioned some of these areas, for example, ‘Money from the tourism is really helping us [in] education, and the church and prosperity to the village’. ‘These days people need money. And no matter if you’re the Chief or a very low member of the public, you still need money. That is why tourism is very important because every ages [sic], from six to first year child to the oldest is getting some sort of money or assistance from tourism.’

So while the participants were quick to respond that it was increased money and income that was the biggest change in their lives, underlying that was the value they placed on the changes that this increased income enabled them to make to their lives. This was reflected in some of their other responses.

Amenities, consumer goods and the opportunity to have ‘savings’
The participants noted that tourism income had resulted in a range of changes in the village, many of which were seen to contribute to the relative comfort in the way of life, of which amenities, consumer goods and the opportunity to have ‘savings’ were some.

H and D noted some of the facilities tourism income had enabled locals to install and run, and which made life easier. For example, H said a diesel generator provided electricity in the village between six and nine each evening and as well as having a water pump, well and tanks for rain water, the village had tap water every second day. She also noted that all houses have toilets, either flush or drop style. D noted that tourism income made running the generator affordable and contributed to the ‘commitments of the village’, such as entertaining. H and C noted that many of the bures in the village are now made from concrete (making them more resistant to hurricanes), with modern features (such as having the whole house including bathroom and toilet under one roof) and are affordable through tourism income where previously they were too expensive. B, E and D also noted that income from tourism helped to build or maintain community buildings, such as the school, new community hall and the churches. C thought that it was a positive change that they now had more than enough money to buy necessities, which means they can save money for when they need it.

Other participants said that tourism had provided them with the opportunity and income to buy items such as clothes, ‘sugar and flour’, TVs, and ‘kava and cigarettes’. H noted that this had led to a further change, as due to sufficient demand for various supplies ‘the village [now] has a small shop’, so residents no longer need to travel to the mainland to make all purchases.

Improved local employment opportunities
The participants also positively perceived changes in employment opportunities for village residents. Where previously there were very few paid jobs locally, tourism is widely perceived to have turned this situation around. Particular tourism related jobs mentioned in the interviews include working in and even owning the resorts, conducting shell markets, entertaining visitors in the village, growing crops such as kasava and bananas and fishing to sell to villagers and/or the resorts. One suggested that local boys had even obtained employment playing rugby after tourists saw them play in the local competition, also noting that other events or permissions generate income for the village, such as mooring fees (whenever the Blue Lagoon boat drops anchor in village-owned waters) and access fees (such as when tourists visit particular beaches or picnic
spots). E said ‘Even kids can earn $10 here and there in the resorts’, expressing the opinion that there are now plenty of employment and income opportunities for village residents.

Retention of village residents
As well as the perceived benefits from what that income can buy (as discussed below), several participants noted that the availability of local employment as well as education (see below) means more people are staying in the village, or even returning to live in the village from the mainland.

Improved education opportunities
One interviewee indicated that economic benefits from tourism meant that education was now more accessible because it provided the funds to support children at school and buy necessary supplies. B noted that money from tourism had funded a $27,000 upgrade of the local primary school’s toilet which would otherwise have meant the school had to shut down for failing to meet operating standards. E noted that instead of having to travel to the mainland for school beyond primary level, ‘Now there is an opportunity to go to secondary school locally’, which was attributed to tourism. E also said that through tourism-related employment and income, local young people ‘can afford to pay to learn [and] to teach their own people the skills necessary to run the resort, like chefs.’

Also related to education was the perception, expressed by several participants, that hosting tourists in the village, at the school and at the resorts gave the children opportunities to practice and improve their English and to experience and learn from other cultures. However, E acknowledged that some village elders see this as a negative change and are worried about children ‘catching’ bad examples from Western tourists. B also expressed a belief that improved education would provide a positive impact in that it would enable residents to be able to potentially secure positions within the government, where decisions that affect the community are made. B saw residents’ traditional lack of education as a barrier to this previously.

Diet
C noted that since tourism it was easier to get food produced in other locations, such as flour and rice, although he thought that most people ‘still eat mainly traditional types of foods … in the morning’. B suggested that children ‘want to have peanut better, they want to have jam, they have marmalade, vegemite or they want to have Milo’ rather than traditional foods of yams and kasava and soups made from them. He thought that ‘we need to change, to go forward’ by giving the children what they want (and changing their diet). D noted that a donation of two cows would change the students’ diets because they would not usually drink milk and he viewed this positively. Later, when thinking aloud about negative impacts of tourism he said ‘Food, no, we don’t really have any bad changes through tourism of the food.’

Transport and communications
Several interview participants noted changes in the availability, affordability and journey time for transport between Nacula and the mainland. While income from tourism has enabled village residents to purchase boats, probably the more significant change according to the participants was the advent of the Yasawa Flyer, which runs a daily service between the mainland and Yasawas. C said that this had cut the journey time to the mainland from up to several days sailing down to a few hours. Income from tourism makes the fares on the flyer more affordable for locals, but they also receive concession or complimentary fares if they have a medical certificate and need to travel for treatment. The development of this transport was not perceived as solely due to tourism. B, however, did perceive that improved transport as a result of tourism provided direct benefits to the village people, claiming that seven lives had already been saved by using the Turtle Island seaplane to evacuate sick locals to medical assistance. Similarly, D thought that tourism gave village people access to communication systems that they would not otherwise have had or been able to afford, through the resorts and thereby funded by tourism.

Report on research undertaken during a visit to Yasawa Islands, Fiji, September 2005.
Donations
An apparently large contributor to changes in the community, on several levels, was the role that tourist donations play. These donations include money, goods and even advice, made by various groups and individuals who had visited the school and/or village as tourists. At the school, such donations included ‘repair of the dorm … furniture for the dorm, bunks, mattresses, lino … food for the kids’, money for clothing, uniforms, bedding and even a $1,000 donation by one lady to buy two cows to provide fresh milk for the children. In the village tourists have also provided substantial donations, including ‘one American visitor [who] donated $40,000 for the construction of a new health centre for dispensary’ because prior to that villagers had to travel ‘very far to the nurse so they can be treated’. Other tourists have donated water tanks for the school and the community and made donations to help repair the church. Some donations mentioned were more service based. For example, ‘some tourist [sic] are doctors and have treated people here’, using their own knowledge and equipment in the absence of local assistance. ‘And also the tourism gives a lot of advices [sic] to the community of how to dig in their drains, to make their toilets’, perceived by the informant as an important contribution by tourism to changes (improvements) to village life. D considered all these donations, attributed directly to tourism and tourists, as key contributions to the community. ‘So it’s like a family or a parent treating or providing everything for their own. Tourism, it’s a big parent to this community’.

Independence from government funding
C, E and B noted that tourism income meant they were no longer reliant on the government to fund things like the school and houses. B saw this as a positive cultural change away from a reliance on ‘handouts’, while the others seemed to value this more because their tourism income could provide more than the government ever would have.

Tidiness in the village
Another change identified by B and D was that the village is now cleaner than it used to be. They viewed this positively, but seemed to value this change for its contribution to attracting tourists and meeting their expectations (and thereby contributing to economic benefits), rather than being valued by the local culture. This change was directly attributed to tourism by the participants.

Renown in other countries
F felt tourism had brought Fiji to the world’s attention, as, ‘Without the tourism industry no one would have know[n] about Fiji’, and he saw this as a positive change because he was proud to share knowledge of his land and culture with the world.

2.3.4: Changes perceived negatively
On the whole, participants discussed far fewer changes that they thought brought negative impacts compared to the number of positively perceived impacts from changes they identified. D and G identified the majority of these negatively perceived impacts. E, H, B and C did not discuss any negative changes, and while they acknowledged some of the changes D and G identified, they perceived these to be neutral rather than negative. F implied that he thought there were negative changes directly attributed to tourism, commenting that, ‘Without tourism there’d be no bad, undesirable changes’ but the only two ‘bad changes’ he could be drawn on were that ‘Everybody is now in a hurry because of money’ and ‘More and more people [tourists] are visiting everyday.’ The underlying reasons for these negative perceptions were not revealed.

Changes to residents’ values
Many of G concerns related to his perception that there had been a change in villagers’ values, and that this was negative. He was concerned that ‘tourists bring another ways [sic] of life’ and that the people of the village were sensitive to being negatively influenced by tourists and Western culture.
G had strong opinions as to the value of the Fijian culture and the need to preserve and protect it, saying ‘That our ways of living, of Fijian’s, are a good way of life.’ G was concerned that recent times had brought changes to individual Fijian’s values and motives, where younger people were increasingly self-centred and money-focused, rather than what he saw as the traditional community focus and balanced life between work and other commitments.

G was not critical of the desire to earn money, as he thought money ‘is very, very good’ and necessary to improve their standard of living. However, G was concerned that values about tradition and family life were being lost as some villagers ‘are concentrating just on the money’.

Other participants did not share all these perceptions. B, D and H felt there was still a strong sense of community in the village. B said ‘If it’s somebody’s problem, it’s everybody’s problem … Not like in Australia [where] your problem is your problem.’

*Less time for family and spiritual life*

A key implication of this for G was that villagers are no longer finding the time to spend with their children and family. ‘They have money with them. They have property with them. But they don’t have enough time to sit with their family, with their children … [nor for] their religious life, their spiritual life’. He said it was common for people working in the resorts to be away from home, often at another island, during the week and only spend the weekends at home with their family. He acknowledged the contribution the money they send home makes, but was worried about ‘what’s the use of getting the property [or money] when the families have been breaking down and divorce and all the children have been scattering?’ He thought that ‘Children want to see their father, hear the voice from their father, maintaining their children and their family.’ He did not see money (or specifically tourism) as the reason for this change in priorities, but rather it was attributed to the motives of the individuals. G also thought changes to the motives of individuals were eroding some people’s sense of traditional obligation to the village and the community. G’s perspective may be supported by F’s comment that ‘Everybody is now in a hurry because of money’. However, these opinions were not necessarily shared by other participants. We asked D whether he thought villagers had enough time to spend in the village with their community (when working in tourism), and he said, ‘We still have time to have time in the village, yes.’

G thought the motives and values of individuals had been influenced by Western culture (which he sees as more individualistic) and by political events, such as the coups, which he thought were conducted by people copying Western ways that they saw on TV or in film. He thinks that older people, who lived during the colonial time in Fiji, were more respectful and community-focussed. People of his age were brought up after Independence but are adaptable to both the colonial views and values and more recent developments. The youngest generation, according to G, born since the coups, believe strongly in individual rights and are least concerned with traditional values. G sees conflict in the community due to the different perspectives of these three types of people.

*Loss of traditions*

G also thought there had been a loss of tradition, which he saw as a negative impact. He attributed this in part to tourism. ‘When the Western effect bring by the tourism reaches us also, plenties [sic] of our young people now are been drifted to that mode of life which is void or … null on tradition.’ He thought that the effects were strongest for ‘those who have been near to the affected area’, with the interaction with tourists by workers at the island’s resorts bringing some changes to the people of the village. He was concerned about people in the village copying Western hair cuts and ways of dressing that are ‘for fashion’ not ‘to cover’.

G had obviously thought about these issues before and said he was involved in initiatives that he thought would help to preserve the culture. He was working with the village social committee and
the government to host a seminar educating locals about values, family life and what is at stake when they adopt Western culture. G believes that a lack of education is a key factor that has influenced the move toward more Western values and is keen to address this. He was concerned that local people were adopting Western ways of life without realizing the negative impacts of these ways of life. He hoped to help them make an informed decision instead.

While B also acknowledged the importance of culture and tradition, he was less adamant that all aspects of these should be preserved. Rather, he suggested some aspects of the traditional culture, such as protocols regarding ceremonies, should be changed in order to better reflect the times and allow his community to participate in the modern world. He thought, ‘Our protocol is something that is holding us back … we got to think about it and start to think what we should carry on and what we should throw away’. C thought that this was already happening, because they condensed the various ceremonies and events for the funeral while we were there into a single day, rather than a series of events over many days from the funeral day. More broadly, E did not believe tourism affects their culture [in any way].

Clothing and hairstyles
D also thought there might be some negative cultural changes, though he was less emphatic than G. D thought this was ‘a slight change of culture’, involving the way people dress and their haircuts. However, D did not think that tourism was the only influence over these changes. He noted that TV, newspapers and even visiting places where people have more Western ways, also contributed to these changes. He did note, however, that for people in the village the only ‘form of media they get every day’ was tourists. D noted that unlike other places in the Yasawas, TV was not all that popular in Nacula. C also talked about changes in dress in the village toward more Western styles, but did not view it negatively. He did note that a ‘spokesman’ had told locals ‘not to wear so much Western [clothing] because tourists come and they want to see the traditional culture.’ D said he had ‘been trying to maintain our culture by stopping such practice[s] like wearing pants, short pants and hairstyle.’ He thought it was important to maintain these aspects of their culture because it is key to their image and identity. Culture, he said, is ‘another area where you will be known to other parts of the world and other people’.

Introduction of crime
Both D and the G expressed some concern that another negative change was the advent of crime in the village. G told of a robbery in the village, presumed to have been conducted by other locals, which was the first incident of its type. His perception was that such an event could only be the result of Western thinking and loss of community values, and saw it as an ominous sign as to the direction their society was heading.

D spoke tentatively about drugs; ‘I’ve just heard, but I haven’t seen any proof’ and ‘very rare cases’, but he thought this could be a negative change brought by tourism. D also told of an incident where a local girl was raped and it was thought the perpetrator was a tourist.

Loss of traditional skills
D said that many of the traditional skills, such as thatching bures, cropping methods and fishing techniques (which were both a way to gather fish and a social and cultural activity) were no longer passed on or used. In the case of fishing, he said ‘they have not time’ to spend the several days it takes to make the nets and take them fishing. D thought ‘we have to keep up the skills’. He thought this was important for the community, but his main focus was that these skills could be useful in attracting tourists. He was confident that some skills would be revived, such as thatching for bures, because it could contribute to the cultural differences that made Fiji an interesting tourist destination. He did not say whether this would also see traditional fishing and cropping methods revived. Other participants did not mention the loss of these skills.


Exposure to culturally inappropriate behaviour

The final negatively perceived change, attributed directly to tourism by D, involved local people being exposed to behaviour by tourists that is culturally inappropriate in the village. He gave the example of a couple kissing on the verandah in front of children during a school visit. ‘I really felt bad’, D said, ‘In front of the kids. This is new to them. What can I say? It’s not allowed’. He was also concerned about tourists wearing inappropriate clothing around the children (particularly), at the school, in the village and at beaches that locals were using. D explained that they have rules for tourists visiting the village and school, and he, like several other participants, thought that this was a successful way to control the behaviour of tourists and ensure it was culturally appropriate. Other participants (C and A) felt that these methods of ‘controlling’ tourists worked well and did not perceive any conflict in this area. However, D acknowledged that on occasion, the rules were ignored and inappropriate behaviour occurred. This seemed to be backed up by our experience while visiting the school where some other tourists seemed inappropriately dressed and their guide showed neither concern nor guidance. At the same time, D felt that through education at school and at home, children knew the difference between their culture and what tourists did and so the children did not seek to emulate everything they saw. He thought that ‘when we are on our own, we still go back to the usual way’. He said that if this was a problem, the village meeting would provide a forum where such a problem could be raised, but none had been. This view was not shared by G who felt that people were changing without thinking or knowing about the implications.

2.3.5: Other changes

In addition to the negatively and positively perceived changes and impacts, one change was viewed as both a negative and a positive by equal numbers of participants.

Changes to the chiefly system

G said that while they have retained the chiefly system, it does not operate in all the same ways as it used to. He said ‘before when someone don’t [sic] follow the rules … we have the punishment. But now days, we don’t do that. No more’. He seemed to think this was a negative change, possibly due to his strong values relating to preserving traditions. He did not indicate whether he thought this was related to tourism or to other factors. The chief noted that he was different to other chiefs and was keen to give his people the chance to participate in decision making, and this also appeared to be an alteration to the traditional chiefly ways. He was positive about this change.

Due to our particular interest in socio-cultural change, we prompted participants to reflect on some aspects of change that they perhaps would not have provided as much detail about without our lead. The two aspects of change this applied to are discussed below.

Change in the occurrence of traditional dances

C noted that before tourism the traditional dances, now used to entertain and welcome visitors multiple times a week, would only have been done for special occasions, such as ‘gatherings like the marriage ceremony’. C said he still liked to do the dances, but his reasons focused on the role the dances now play in entertaining tourists and the importance of this, rather than for cultural or enjoyment reasons. As a result, C had a neutral opinion of this change. A, too, said she enjoyed doing these dances, but we did not ask what made it enjoyable.

Changes in other traditional activities

We specifically asked A and C if there were any traditional activities that used to be done before tourism but were no longer practiced since tourism. A did not think there had been much change in this regard. C said ‘yes a little bit change, but still we want to keep that [traditional things].’ The examples of this that he gave were the change to some Western clothing styles and foods (both discussed above). However, he also said he believed that there is now a good balance, that things have not changed too much.
Changes before tourism
Both F and G noted that even before tourism visitors from other (Western) countries have influenced or changed Fijian culture. They mentioned the contributions that missionaries made to the culture (developing the sense of community, as well as introducing conservative ways of dressing and formal education).

Finally, there was another theme found in analyzing the transcripts, which although not expressed directly by participants, seemed to be of interest to our study. This related to how tourism concerns and interests have become a key factor in decision making in the village. That is, decision making in the village as a community and on an individual level, now takes into account the desire to attract tourists and meet their expectations, where before tourism this was a non-issue. For example, D thought that some traditional skills that have not been being passed on, such as thatching on bures, might be revived in the future because tourists prefer traditional style bures to modern ones.
Changes relating to cleaning up the village, the frequency of traditional dances and not wearing Western style clothes in the company of tourists, were all reported as being motivated by tourism.

2.3.6: Types of change and impact
Although we were most interested in socio-cultural changes and impacts, we did encouraged participants to discuss all the changes they perceived, be they economic, socio-cultural or environmental. In order to better understand the place of each of these impact types, we classified each change into one of these three broad impact areas, according to the emphasis it was given by participants. It is acknowledged that these categories are broad and overlap with each other, making this a subjective classification.

Table 1: Classification of impacts as economic, socio-cultural or environmental

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change or impact</th>
<th>Impact type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income and money</td>
<td>economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved local education opportunities</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities, consumer goods and the opportunity to have ‘savings’</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved local employment opportunities</td>
<td>economic / socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of village residents</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved transport and communications</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in dress and haircuts</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>economic / socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence from government handouts</td>
<td>economic / socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidiness in the village</td>
<td>economic / socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renown in other countries</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to personal values</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to family and spiritual life</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of traditions</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of crime</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to culturally inappropriate behaviour</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of traditional skills</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to the chiefly system</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in the occurrence of traditional dances</td>
<td>socio-cultural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By far, the changes identified were discussed in terms of the socio-cultural impacts they had. However, several changes (‘income and money’, ‘improved employment opportunities’, ‘donations’, ‘independence from government handouts’ and ‘tidiness in the village’) were perceived to have economic impacts, often in conjunction with socio-cultural impacts. None of the changes identified were perceived by participants to have environmental impacts.
2.3.7: Factors other than tourism influencing change

While some changes were perceived to be directly attributable to tourism (as noted above), other changes were perceived to be influenced by other factors, either independently or in conjunction with the influence of tourism. Most participants thought there were influences other than tourism that contributed to the changes in village life.

Despite his assertion that ‘Without tourism there’d be no bad, undesirable changes’, F thought that ‘without tourism these changes happen. Even if there were no tourists, we watch TV, you can’t avoid seeing Western ways of life, and people copy.’ As noted above, D thought that media such as TV and newspapers contributed to changes, as did G, who added films. But they both also thought that to some degree changes depended on the individual. G in particular, thought the time into which people were born and their experiences relating to that time influenced their motivations to preserve or alter the traditional culture. D also noted that people were influenced by what they observed in other places and that many people had travelled beyond the Yasawas. He also thought some degree of change was due to technology and ‘the time’, in which ‘the whole life is changing’.

To allow for easier comparisons of the findings of themes discussed, Table 2 provides a summary.

Table 2: Changes and impacts: their frequency, perception, attribution and classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants that perceived this change</th>
<th>Number of participants that disputed the change</th>
<th>Participants’ perception (positive (+), negative (-) or neutral)</th>
<th>Attributed to tourism?</th>
<th>Attributed to other factors?</th>
<th>Impact classification*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income and money</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>EC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved local education opportunities</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities, consumer goods and the opportunity to have ‘savings’</td>
<td>all</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved local employment opportunities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>EC / S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of village residents</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved transport and communications</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>EC / S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence from government funding</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>EC / S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidiness in the village</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>ENV / S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renown in other countries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to personal values</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>- and neutral</td>
<td>partly</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less time for family and spiritual life</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>partly</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of traditions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>partly</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in dress and haircuts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- and neutral</td>
<td>partly</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of crime</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>partly</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of traditional skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to culturally inappropriate behaviour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to the chiefly system</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>both + and -</td>
<td>unclear</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in the occurrence of traditional dances</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>S-C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* EC – economic impact, S-C – socio-cultural impact, ENV – environmental impact
Notes:
When considering the data for ‘number of participants that perceived this change’ and ‘number of participants that disputed this change’, it should be remembered that only issues discussed in the interviews were included – thus additional participants may agree or dispute a particular change, but unless it was mentioned in the interview, these opinions will not be represented.

2.3.8: Attitude to tourism
All the participants had a positive attitude toward tourism overall, which was evident not only from the transcripts of their comments but also from the enthusiasm with which they discussed the positive changes they perceived tourism to have brought them. Even for those participants who identified negative changes and impacts associated with tourism, on balance they thought the positive aspects (predominantly economic and economically derived benefits) outweighed the negative aspects. G said ‘To me, I not feel good with the negative aspect but on the positive, yes. ‘Cause if you put on the scale, one is on top and one is down’ [meaning the positive aspects outweigh the negative aspects]. He was still keen to try to address the negative aspects too though and suggested that better education of both tourists and locals could lessen the negative impacts. Despite identifying a range of negative changes and impacts related to tourism, D too felt that on balance tourism offered more positives than negatives.

Unsurprisingly, those who perceived only positive changes and impacts or few negative ones had a positive view of tourism overall.

2.3.9: Ideals for the future scale of tourism locally
All participants also said they would like to see more tourism in the future and most wanted as many tourists as possible to come to the island.

C said he would like to see ‘more tourists but we have to build a place for them, like accommodation. They like to come and see us and we like to see them too because of the money coming to us. So we have to look after them.’ A also said ‘We would like to have more tourists.’ Asked if this would result in more resorts, or the expansion of resorts, A said, ‘yeah, [and] the village will expand too’. F asserted that he would like to keep tourism growing, to make it get as big as it can, because [local] people want and need the money it brings in. He suggested that there should be education for local people in culture and money so that they can make the most of tourism.

G also said ‘We want more tourists.’ However, he qualified that a little with other changes he would like to see accompany more tourists. He added, ‘But for my negative views, I would like to see more education to be done to our own people … so they don’t easily migrate to … what they see.’ He would also like to ‘educate tourists to be more sensitive’. D was not only enthusiastic about the prospect of more tourism in the future, but he was planning to develop his own business in the form of a tourism resort. It seemed he was not only hoping that tourism would grow in the future, but he was counting on it doing so.

None of the participants expressed any concerns or even perceptions that there could be a maximum amount of growth in tourism that the island or village could support. We asked two of them about this directly and their responses seemed to suggest it was not something they had thought a lot about. We asked C ‘Do you think there’s any sort of limit [to tourism]? Could it get too busy ever or do you think that would never happen?’ He seemed a bit uncomfortable with the question and was unsure of the answer. He thought ‘it would take a long time to do research on that’. His response focused on his belief that ‘the more they [tourists] are happy the more they come’ and he seemed to think that there was not a limit so long as the local people looked after the tourists properly and ensured they were entertained. A, on the other hand, when asked if she thought there
will ever be a time where there are too many tourists coming, said that yes, she did. When asked if this could make problems A said ‘it might make problem to the kids now, but to us it’s still good, because … [for] now it’s better, [we] get to work in the resorts and stay in the village’. This may suggest that A was more focused on the benefits in the short term than the long term viability or issues for tourism.

Two of the participants felt that tourism either could not or should not be stopped, even if they had personally wanted it to be. F said that ‘Even if I wanted to stop tourism it’s not possible. We’ve been exposed to the world. We’re in the guidebooks. People want to come.’ C thought that it would be ‘bad luck’ to stop tourists from coming to Nacula ‘because they want to come and see us and it’s the money they bring that help us.’

### 2.4: Discussion and conclusion

This section will focus on each of the research objectives for the study and present the findings for each objective as well as compare these findings with previous research and theories.

**Objective 1: Investigate residents’ perceptions of changes (in the village and to their lives, in living memory) and which, if any of these changes they attribute to tourism.**

Approximately half of these categories of change were perceived by three or more participants. Over half the changes identified were directly attributed to tourism, with the remainder either partly attributed to tourism (that is, other factors in addition to tourism were thought to have contributed to the change), not attributed to tourism, or it was not made clear by the participant.

The study participants all agreed that there had been considerable changes in the village and a majority of these changes were attributed to tourism; so much so that many participants discussed life in the village in terms of ‘before tourism’ and ‘since tourism’. In very broad terms, tourism was seen as contributing to a significant change in the village from being essentially a subsistence existence, which was difficult and had limited local opportunities for employment and income, to one which is perceived to be much easier. In total, participants’ responses revealed 20 areas or categories of change (see table 2).

By far the most mentioned change was an increase in money and income, which all participants discussed. This change was a key factor in many of the other changes identified by interviewees. That is, the increase in income and money in the village (both as a whole and on an individual level) had led to or enabled many of the other changes mentioned to occur. For example, the next two most discussed changes, again mentioned by all participants, both related to what participants saw as improved amenities in the village that money from tourism had financed.

These two changes were ‘improved local education opportunities’ and ‘amenities, consumer goods and the opportunity to have ‘savings’’ which were among the several areas of change which participants identified as contributing to the relative comfort in the way of life, including material items of consumption but also health, recreation and social services.

The next most mentioned changes (cited by three or more participants) were:
- improved employment opportunities;
- improved transport and communications;
- retention of village residents;
- diet;
- changes in styles of dress and haircuts; and
- independence from government funding.
Of these changes, all except for ‘improved transport and communications’ and ‘changes in styles of dress and haircuts’ were attributed directly and solely to tourism. These two exceptions were partly attributed to tourism and partly attributed to other factors (discussed below).

Changes mentioned by less than three participants were:
- donations;
- renown in other countries;
- changes to residents’ values;
- less time for family and spiritual life;
- loss of traditions;
- introduction of crime;
- exposure to culturally inappropriate behaviour;
- loss of traditional skills;
- changes to the chiefly system; and
- change in the occurrence of traditional dances.

Of these changes, only ‘donations’, ‘renown in other countries’, ‘exposure to culturally inappropriate behaviour’ and ‘change in the occurrence of traditional dances’ were solely attributed to tourism. The category ‘loss of traditional skills’ was the only one out of all 20 types of change identified which was not attributed to tourism at all. This change was only mentioned by one informant who perceived it to be due to other factors, namely ‘not having time’ to do things such as fishing the traditional way. However, it could be argued that this lack of time may be related to tourism, such as work commitments, although this was not explored in the interview.

Three participants identified a number of factors other than tourism thought to have influenced some of the changes. Mostly these related to changes that involved moves toward things that were considered ‘Western’, such as clothing and hairstyles. For example, they thought that media such as TV, film and media were alternative sources of knowledge about Western culture and practices that could influence village residents. One also observed that many locals had travelled to places where people have different ways and trends, which they may then copy.

Interestingly, many of the alternative factors residents perceived as influencing change could be either directly or indirectly related to tourism. For example, access to TV, film and newspapers in the village, seen as other ways to learn about and copy Western ways, would be the result of tourism income and transport systems that only developed in response to tourism demand and funding. The same could be argued about students’ opportunities to travel to other places and observe alternative cultural practices. This is interesting in terms of which factors are perceived as being influenced by tourism and which ones are not (which is discussed further below). It also supports and demonstrates the assertions of Brunt & Courtney (1999), Mathieson & Wall (1982) and Mair (2005), who note the difficulties in trying to assess the degree to which tourism and/or other factors, such as processes of modernization that are occurring simultaneously to tourism, contribute to change.

We were curious as to whether there were aspects of local culture that had been retained, cast off and/or developed despite or as a result of tourism. This question was partly answered by the interviews, but could probably benefit from study in its own right. G thought that there had been a loss of traditions, which may represent a ‘casting off’ of cultural practices, although this is difficult to ascertain without know the particular traditions he was referring to. Furthermore, three other participants disagreed with this assertion and felt they retained all the aspects of their culture, regardless of tourism. Other aspects of culture that were identified as being cast off were the traditional skills D mentioned are no longer passed on. However, he suggested that perhaps some of these would be revived to attract tourists in the future. B expressed the desire to cast off some of the

*Report on research undertaken during a visit to Yasawa Islands, Fiji, September 2005.*
cultural protocols, although he said this had yet to occur. C thought some protocols had already changed, but saw this as a consolidation of the processes rather than entirely casting off the traditions. The only evidence of an aspect of culture being developed as a result of tourism within the interviews was the change to the occurrence of traditional welcoming dances. As noted by C, where once they would have been for specific special occasions and authorized by the chief, now they are conducted every time a tourist group visits the village. None of the participants raised any concerns about this. On some level, all the changes and impacts classified as socio-cultural in table 1 could be included in such an investigation.

It is interesting to note the diversity of changes perceived by the participants. While some changes were noted by all participants, half of them were mentioned only by one or two participants. While not all participants may have discussed every change they perceive to have occurred in the village, this data is still useful as it gives an indication of the changes that are most prominent in the minds of participants.

The findings in this section are consistent with accounts of the changes to the way of life from subsistence to tourism in the Yasawas (Stanley 2005) and the expectation that local residents’ perceptions of change would be varied (Gursoy & Rutherford 2004). While the types of changes identified by participants were consistent with those identified by other studies (Green 2005; Besculides, Lee & McCormick 2002; King, Pizam & Milman 1993), the extent of contributions by donation was unexpected. It would be beneficial to investigate whether the lack of acknowledgement of this contribution by other participants was due to a lack of knowledge of it or whether they perceived it as part of the other economic and ‘quality of life’ type issues raised. This might mean they did not feel the need to differentiate between whether these were achieved via income from tourism or donations from tourists.

Objective 2: Investigate the attitudes of residents toward these changes. That is, do they perceive these changes to have had positive, negative or no (neutral) impacts?

As this objective relates to changes and impacts relating to tourism, the changes relating to ‘loss of traditional skills’ and to ‘the chiefly system’ will not be considered in this section as the former was not perceived to be due to tourism and it was unclear whether the latter was perceived to be due to tourism.

Participants’ attitudes toward the identified changes were found to be determined by their perception of the impact/s that the changes had. For this reason, not all participants’ attitudes toward the same change were necessarily the same. For example, when considering a change toward Western style of dress and hairstyle, G thought the change had a negative impact, eroding a tradition or value for modest clothing, D thought it was ‘a slight [negative] change of culture’ that should be prevented, while C thought the same change had no impact and was unconcerned about it.

On the whole, more positive impacts, or benefits, were identified by participants. All participants identified at least four positive impacts, whereas four participants did not mention a single negative impact. The dominance of positive impacts was also true in terms of both the number of positive impacts identified (11) compared to the number of negative impacts (6), and when looking at the number of people who mentioned each of those impacts. Of the changes identified by three or more participants, all but one (changes in dress and hairstyles) were considered to have had positive impacts. Even for the change in dress and hairstyles, although three participants discussed this change, two perceived it to have a negative impact while the other viewed it neutrally. For three of the changes G considered to have negative impacts (‘changes to personal values’, ‘changes to family and spiritual life’ and ‘loss of traditions’) there were two or three other participants who made statements which disputed these perceptions.
It is also interesting to note that of the positive impacts, all but one were solely attributed to tourism. The one other positive impact, ‘improved transport and communications’, was attributed by most participants to tourism, but D thought there were other influences, so it was categorized ‘partly’ attributed to tourism. In comparison, only one of the negative impacts was solely attributed to tourism (exposure to culturally inappropriate behaviour), with the others all attributed to other factors as well.

This suggests that participants are aware of the positive impacts tourism is having, but generally do not identify many (and in many cases, any) negative impacts. Interestingly, the two participants who identified negative impacts had different connections to tourism than most of the other participants and also had other experiences that may have contributed to their perceptions. While the other participants were more directly employed in (and therefore gaining economic benefits from) tourism (including the fisherman, who sells fish to the resorts and in the village to residents who earned their money through tourism jobs), these two, teacher and the Reverend, were not directly employed in tourism. Admittedly, their jobs could be at risk if the village population fell significantly (as their employers may not feel there are sufficient people to justify a Reverend or a teacher), but they are somewhat more removed from tourism than most of the other participants. Also, both of them have travelled and have higher levels of education than all the other participants except the Chief. This may mean they have seen tourism in later stages of development and/or witnessed impacts from tourism that other participants have not, and are therefore more mindful of any sign of these impacts beginning to occur in the village. It may also have contributed to their understanding of the differences between Western and the village culture, which may explain their desire to preserve that village culture.

The Chief does not fit easily into this theory. He was the most travelled of all the participants and also held the most qualifications, meaning he has had a range of educational and other experiences. Unlike teacher and the Reverend, the Chief was keen to bring change to the community and culture, seeing this as necessary to bring the village in line with the ‘modern world’. He acknowledged the importance of culture and tradition and felt they were very strong in this community, but also felt aspects of them were holding them back and that these aspects needed to be changed. An explanation may be that having spent 27 years away from the village, he feels that the village now has the opportunities to ‘move with the times’ and achieve the standard of living he has experienced in other places. However, while he wants to preserve some aspects of the culture, he did not give any indications as to how he would achieve this while simultaneously capitalising on tourism opportunities to support this development.

We were also interested in whether there were any trends in the relationship between particular types of impact (economic, socio-cultural or environmental) and participants’ attitudes towards those impacts (positive, negative or neutral). As seen in table 1, across all the changes identified, the most common type of impact was socio-cultural, followed by economic impacts, although several changes were categorized as both of these, because participants referred to different aspects or impacts of the change. Across all the changes, not one environmental impact was discussed. Of the changes attributed to tourism, it is interesting to note that all the economic impacts were positively perceived whereas socio-cultural impacts had equal numbers of positive and negative perceptions with a few thought to be neutral (see table 2).

These findings are broadly in line with other studies on these topics; however, some variations are noted. As discussed in the previous section, differences between participants’ perceptions of changes have also been identified in other studies (Gursoy & Rutherford 2004) as well as variance in participants’ perceptions regarding any particular change having positive, negative or neutral impacts (Tosun 2002).
The dominance of positively perceived impacts may support a number of previously identified trends in this area. Given the involvement of most participants in tourism (and the lack of negative impacts perceived by those receiving direct economic benefits from tourism), these findings are consistent with others that have found that those who receive economic benefits from tourism have the most favourable opinions of tourism (Williams & Lawson 2001; Korca 1998; Besculides, Lee & McCormick 2002). However, results from this study do not support Tosun’s (2002) findings that residents who benefit from tourism identify a greater number of positive impacts than those who do not benefit, as the teacher and the Reverend identified many of the positive impacts the other participants noted, as well as several that they did not.

The lack of environmental impacts and overwhelming majority of positively perceived impacts differs from most studies, which have tended to find participants identify all three classifications of impact type (socio-cultural, economic and environmental). While positive impacts may also dominate in other studies, it seems this study is somewhat unusual for the number of participants who did not report any negative impacts at all. This could be due to insufficient trust in the researchers and fear of negative repercussions for tourism in their area if they report any ‘whinges’ about tourism. However, equally, this could support other theories, which suggest that the perception of impacts varies with the stage and extent of tourism development in a particular area (Korca 1998). The relatively early stage in the lifecycle of tourism in the Yasawas may mean there are fewer negative impacts of any type at present (Butler 1980; Hall 2003). (See also related discussion below).

These findings are consistent with many other studies that have found economic impacts are most likely to be perceived positively (Tosun 2002; King, Pizam & Milman 1993; Korca 1998; Green 2005). However, they do not necessarily support previous findings that socio-cultural and environmental impacts are more likely to be perceived as either negative or neutral (Tosun 2002; King, Pizam & Milman 1993; Korca 1998; Green 2005). In this study, there were equal numbers of socio-cultural impacts perceived positively and negatively and no perception of any environmental impacts at all.

These findings also contradict findings by Crick (1989 in Brunt & Courtney 1999) and Mathieson & Wall (1982), who suggest that because tourism is highly visual it has often become the scapegoat for socio-cultural changes. On the contrary, in this case, tourism was perhaps somewhat seen ‘through rose-tinted glasses’, with changes perceived positively attributed solely and directly to tourism, while changes that were perceived to have negative impacts were, in the majority of cases, attributed to tourism only in conjunction with other factors.

**Objective 3: Investigate residents’ attitude toward tourism overall**

Unsurprisingly, given the dominance of positive changes and impacts over negative ones identified by the participants, the overall attitude toward tourism was also strongly positive. In several cases, participants did not identify any negative impacts, and therefore they only discussed positive aspects of tourism, and in turn had a positive attitude overall.

However, even for the participants who identified both positive and negative impacts, there was consensus that on balance, the positives outweighed the negatives, and tourism overall was perceived positively. In particular, participants felt that the economic benefits, and the changes they supported in terms of the quality of life in the village, outweighed the socio-cultural impacts that were identified. This finding is consistent with many previous studies, where economic benefits have frequently been found to outweigh any perceived socio-cultural or environmental costs in the minds of residents (Gursoy & Rutherford 2004; Krippendorf 1999; Tosun 2002; Korca 1998).
Also consistent with other studies was the finding that residents’ perceptions of negative impacts did not prevent them from having a positive attitude toward tourism overall (King, Pizam & Milman 1993).

A number of additional observations about this particular case may also be worthy of consideration. First, some of the most commonly reported factors influencing negative perceptions of tourism were not raised during this study. An example is conflict, which is often reported where tourism benefits are inequitably distributed within the community, typically where tourism developers receive most of the economic returns at the expense of community members who have to live with the costs of tourism in their lives. This is not currently an issue in Nacula, where virtually all members of the community receive or have the opportunity to receive economic (and other) benefits from tourism.

Second, tourism is mostly locally owned and run in this area at present. In the case of Oarsman’s Bay, the Chief is a director of the resort and is active in the management of it. This puts this community in a better position than many in terms of negotiating the form that tourism takes and controlling its nature. For example, several participants noted that they thought there were few or no problems with tourists visiting the village and school because they had made rules about dress and ensured that visitors are always accompanied by a guide in the village, which prevents conflicts that might otherwise occur. That is, they felt they controlled the tourism and tourists. This may be consistent with early stages of Butler’s (1980) concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution. This concept suggests that in these earlier stages of tourism, local people are likely to have greater control over tourism, gain more of the benefits and perceive few negative impacts (Butler 1980; Hall 2003). The model goes on to suggest that as tourism develops, there is likely to be less local involvement and control as entrepreneurs and external investors seek to capitalise on the area’s popularity and/or resources (Butler 1980; Hall 2003).

**Objective 4: Investigate residents’ ideals for the future scale of tourism**

All participants said they would like the future to bring more tourists to their area. Most said they would like as many tourists as possible to visit the island. G was the only one to include any type of qualifier for this assertion. He did not identify any type of limit to the extent to which he would like to see tourism expand, but did make suggestions as to how the negative impacts that he had raised could be addressed. Only one participant expressed any concern or perception that suggested they had considered that there may be a maximum amount of tourism or tourists that the island and/or village could support, even when questioned directly about this issue. However, the participant who did believe that there may be a time when there were too many tourists coming did not seem inclined to address this issue. Rather, this participant thought it should be left to the generation it would effect to solve and in the meantime, they should take advantage of the continued growth of tourism.

One additional interesting finding within this topic area was that two of the participants felt that tourism either could not or should not be stopped, regardless of residents’ preferences. One felt that it was inevitable that tourists would visit the island because tourists had heard about the island and wanted to come, while the other thought it would be ‘bad luck’ to stop tourists coming and to miss out on the money that they bring the community.

Given the strong support for tourism overall, as discussed under the previous objective, many of these findings are unsurprising. They do, however, offer some additional insights into the participants’ awareness of tourism’s potential impacts and issues for tourism management. While in previous sections participants’ tendencies to report mostly positive impacts or benefits may be attributed to these impacts actually outnumbering negative ones, rather than an unawareness of these impacts, in this case the unqualified support for tourism growth does seem to suggest a lack of awareness of the potential problems that uncontrolled tourism growth can have (Pearce 1989; Hall 2003).
2003). This is a concern, as without awareness of existing and potential impacts it is very difficult to manage them so as to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs, which is crucial to achieving sustainability (Hall 2003).

As in the discussion of the previous objective, and also consistent with previous studies, this research has found that residents’ perceptions of negative impacts did not prevent them from supporting further tourism development (King, Pizam & Milman 1993).

2.4.1: Conclusion
In summary, this study has investigated Nacula village residents’ perceptions of the impacts of tourism on their community and their lives, with particular interest in socio-cultural impacts and changes. The many findings across the four areas of interest have, in many cases, been compared with findings from similar previous research and been found to either support or contradict these findings. Suggestions have been made as to the factors that may have contributed to these results. Very broadly, it has been found that the participating Nacula village residents identified many changes which they attributed to tourism in varying degrees. The residents perceived these changes attributed to tourism to have had a range of impacts on their lives and community, with the majority of these impacts being considered positive (that is, they were thought to provide a benefit) and either economic or socio-cultural in nature. Residents’ attitudes toward tourism overall were found to be positive and their ideals for the future scale of tourism in this location were for it to expand as far as possible. Of course, this is a simplification, and the preceding sections should be referred to for the full detail of the study and findings.

The final section of this report will discuss the implications of these findings in terms of managerial practice, contributions to the current literature and potential areas for future research.

2.5: Implications
The findings of this study have a variety of potential applications. This section will outline how the findings may contribute to managerial practice, to the current literature and to potential future research. These areas will be addressed in turn.

2.5.1: Managerial practice
These findings could be used in future tourism planning and development in Nacula village and surrounds, or, potentially in other locations with similar characteristics. In particular, they provide insight into the perceptions of residents of the impacts of tourism and this can be an important contribution toward the goal of sustainability of tourism in this location. Future tourism planning and development in this area should seek to maximise the positive impacts from tourism and minimise the negative impacts.

There are a number of key ways the findings from this study could be applied in this process. First, it provides a snapshot of residents’ current perceptions. Second, this provides a focus on the areas that may need addressing to improve or maintain residents’ attitude toward tourism. Third, it highlights areas not currently perceived as an issue by residents, but which other research suggests may potentially develop or exist now without recognition.

The findings of this study suggest that the economic benefits are very important to residents and are influential in their overall attitude to tourism. Managerial practices that protect these benefits should be investigated and implemented. From a tourism management perspective, the dependence on tourism economically presents a risk in times of downturn and methods to address this risk would be highly advised (Hall 2003). Where negatively perceived socio-cultural impacts have been identified, attempts should be made to ameliorate their effects. This is likely to require education of residents about tourism and potential socio-cultural impacts, to enable them to participate in
decision-making about the changes they are willing to accept and aspects they value and want to protect. As noted in this study, residents felt that they already control some aspects of tourism and tourists within the village, and value this control, but such decisions are difficult without a full understanding of the complexities and interrelationships between impacts from tourism. It would also allow them to make proactive decisions about tourism, rather than having to react to problems after they have developed. It should also include the environmental impacts of tourism, which are interrelated to other impacts and were found to be beyond the perceptions of participants in this study. Education of tourists, as suggested by one participant, may also be an option in helping to address socio-cultural impacts of tourism, should the community decide this is a key issue.

2.5.2: Contribution to current literature
As noted throughout the discussion, this research has identified a number of findings that support or contradict the existing literature. Broadly, some of the findings that supported other studies included:

- there is variety in residents’ perceptions of tourism and its impacts within the same community and even toward the same issue;
- a tendency for economic impacts of tourism to be perceived positively and outweigh concerns about other impacts in developing an attitude toward tourism overall;
- that residents’ perceive other factors, in addition to tourism, to contribute to change in their lives and community;
- that awareness of certain negative impacts does not lead to opposition towards further tourism development; and
- that those who receive economic benefits from tourism have the most favourable attitudes towards tourism.

Some of the findings that contradicted other studies included:

- that socio-cultural impacts were found to be as likely to be perceived positively as negatively, rather than predominantly perceived negatively or neutrally; and
- that residents who benefited from tourism did not identify a greater number of positive impacts than those who did not benefit directly.

This study also identified that tourist donations, in the form of goods, facilities, advice and skills, had made contributions to both the ‘quality of life’ in the village and the attitude towards tourism generally. This factor was not revealed in the literature review for this study, and it may represent an additional element influencing resident perceptions of tourism impacts and attitudes toward tourism generally in other locations as well.

2.5.3: Potential future research
This study has identified a number of areas that may be of interest for future research. Although this study made some preliminary investigations of the aspects of local culture that had been retained, cast off and/or developed despite or as a result of tourism, this could become the subject of a separate study in this community. Such a study may provide useful information to the community as to other impacts tourism has or is having that they are or are not aware of, and in turn, provide further suggestions as to how negative impacts can be minimised and positive impacts maximised. This information may also be of interest to other communities and managers of tourism in locations with similar characteristics to Nacula village.

This study suggests that the village’s reliance on tourism is a potential risk in times of downturn or unforeseen events. It suggests ways to minimise this risk should be sought, but does not identify methods to achieve this. A future study could involve attempting to identify such methods in terms of either or both diversifying sources of income beyond tourism and developing contingency plans to deal with such circumstances.
This study could also be broadened into a larger study of the Yasawas to see if the situation in Nacula village is unique or if similar issues relating to tourism impacts are found throughout the area. This may provide opportunities for villages and resorts to pool their resources and skills to improve the sustainability of tourism in this area.

Finally, if a gap in existing research is revealed, a study could be conducted into the role of donations (such as those identified in this study, of goods, facilities, advice and skills) in influencing residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts and their attitudes to tourism generally. It may also be of interest to identify in which types of tourism destinations such donations are likely to occur, attempt to evaluate whether there are opportunities for other communities to benefit from donations and how this might be achieved.
3: Project B.

Title: The economic and social implications of tourism growth and development on the local communities of Naisisili in Fiji.

Students: Cassie Henderson, Amanda Coote

3.1: Aim:
The main aim of this report is to find out the economic and social implications of tourism growth and development on the local communities of Naisisili in Fiji?

Sub questions and additional aims of the research project are to:
- Gain greater understanding of the effects, if any that tourism development has had on local villagers in Fiji.
- Identify the implication/impacts of tourism growth in the area.
- Identify what changes tourism development has lead to.
- Discover which tourism changes the local Fijian people feel have had a positive or negative effect on their lives and why.
- Understand the villager’s views and opinions of the future of tourism growth.

Objectives:
- Conduct surveys with local people in Naisisili village that will share their opinions.
- Observe and analyse the local communities to determine what changes have occurred due to tourism development in the area.
- Build trusting relationships with subjects to ensure we gain full and honest results.

Expected Outcomes:
- To find that tourism development has lead to economical change in the village.
- To find that tourism development, as well as economical improvement, has lead to social and cultural changes in the local village.
- To discover whether or not the local people want tourism to continue to develop in their area.

3.2: Methodology

The research method adopted for this project was a qualitative approach because we wanted to understand the hows and whys of the question. The qualitative approach combines a range of data collection methods including semi-structured one-on-one interviews and personal observations, but also allows time to think about the meaning of the information gathered, interpret it, and then reflect on what has been found. This enables the research to be modified over time, as key themes are identified, to focus on areas of interest or areas that remain unclear, and also allows for a deeper exploration of some issues and a more thorough understanding of the topic.

This fieldwork was conducted over an 8-day period in September 2005 on Nacula Island in Fiji. Numerous visits were made to Naisisili Village, and a total of eight interviews were carried out. Three of these were with people not from Naisisili Village, one with someone involved in tourism development in the Yasawas, but living on the mainland, and two from people involved in tourism, but living in Nacula Village. Five interviews were undertaken with people from Naisisili Village, including the village ‘Mayor’, village ‘Chief’, a local small business owner generating income from tourism, a young man who has previously worked in tourism but is currently unemployed, and a
woman who sells in the shell markets. The first interview was with the Mayor, and he agreed to assist with the research process, acting as a ‘gatekeeper’ to the village, providing access to people and organising meetings.

Unless otherwise stated, these informants referred to below are from Naisisili Village. For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, most identifying information has been removed from the following discussion. Some personal comments and criticisms have also been removed from the report and its presentation of the data.

The following is a direct extract from the final report of student Cassie Henderson, with some minor alterations.

3.3: Results

This section is a presentation of the results from the analysis of our data. Analysis of the research data has clearly identified a number of recurring themes and common patterns. Many of these themes are related to the support of tourism development in the area, some oppose tourism development, and some of the results show mixed or contradictory views. This section aims to explain and interpret these different themes in a way that clearly identifies our research findings. To do this the results have been split into four different sections; background information, positive tourism impacts, negative tourism impacts, and a section that looks at other issues. The information used in this section is from the interviews and any quotes used come directly from the interview transcripts.

3.3.1: Background information
Tourism in the Yasawa Islands is relatively new, still in the early stages of development. Nevertheless, the Yasawa Islands are very popular and ever since the first tourists started visiting the area, the number of tourists has continued to grow ever year. Even the local Fijians living in the villages are noticing the constant increase in tourism development, ‘the number of tourists and the amount of tourists development is growing and increasing all the time’.

There are now 34 resorts in the Yasawa Islands with even more being planned. They range in size and quality with some accommodating only one or two people, whilst others can accommodate up to 50 guests. Safe Landing resort is one of the larger resorts with facilities to hold approximately forty guests. In the past the only way to get to the resorts was via Turtle Airline or small boats. Consequently, the access into the resorts was very limited. South Sea cruises saw the opportunity to increase the transportation system throughout the islands and so they started using large catamarans. This has been very successful for both South Sea Cruises and the resorts because as the transportation improved, the number of tourists to the resorts increased.

3.3.2: Positive tourism impacts
A very common, but broad, theme from the data was that the local people of Naisisili village are very positive and accepting of the changes brought on by tourism development in their area. In most cases the interviewees identified a range of benefits and improvements that have occurred in direct relation to the development of tourism near their village. As one informant states ‘tourism development in the area and the increase in the number of resorts have had a big impact on Naisisili village. And it’s definitely been a good impact’. The following sections outline the major positive changes identified by the local Fijian people, that have occurred as a result of tourism development.

Economic improvements
One of the most recognised benefits from tourism was the economic improvements it has on individuals as well as the entire community. Tourism brings money directly into the villages to the
local people and because of this their economic situation has improved along with a number of other areas of their lives. ‘The best thing is the money we get from tourism, it improves so many aspects of our lives’.

All interviewees identified the main reason for the improvement as increased employment and they saw this as a very important thing. Even the unemployed informant stated that the biggest change he has noticed has been that more people are employed in tourism. ‘We all used to fish and grow crops but now the majority of us work in the resorts’ Another informant said that ‘most people on the islands are now employed and the majority are employed in tourism’. The chief explained that tourism development has meant that people now have much more secure jobs and women are getting more work than they used to which is a very positive thing for the village.

As a result of increased employment, the local people now make more money. ‘In general, tourism has been very good for us. We never used to have much cash and employment in tourism has changed that’. Consequently, local people can now save money and use their savings to improve their lives, whereas before tourism development saving money was virtually impossible. One informant identified that being able to save money means ‘they can purchase things they need and things they want. But more importantly it means that the village can save money and put it towards improving the village, rather than waiting for grants or handouts from the government’.

The increased wealth has also lead to people within the village being able to improve their living conditions by building better houses. For example, the construction of new homes is a major change in the villages. ‘Most people are now building brick homes rather than the traditional Fijian Bures’ because they can afford to use the more expensive materials to build with. The money from tourism has also helped to improve other facilities within their communities. For example, one informant from Nacula suggested the extra money has meant that they have enough money saved to build a new village hall. Likewise, a Naisisili informant recognised that the ‘money from tourism is allowing us to improve the churches, village halls, and even build a kindergarten’.

The money from tourism is also being spent on education. Many more children are now going to both primary and secondary school because their parents have the money to send them. For example, the view was expressed that before tourism development in the area it used to be very difficult and expensive to send your children to school. ‘Now it is much easier to give them an education because we have a lot more money to spend on those important things’.

**Improved transportation**

The improvement of transportation to and throughout the islands was another major theme identified during the interviews. As mentioned earlier, transportation before tourism development was very limited and often difficult. However, the growth of tourism in the area has resulted in the development of an improved transportation system. The local people can now use the tourist boats to travel to the mainland and to travel to other islands in the Yasawas. An example of the dramatic improvement in transportation was offered by one informant: ‘Before the yellow tourism boat we would maybe go to the main land once a month, but now we can go whenever we want. It’s faster, safer, more comfortable and reliable’.

Improved transport has also increased the amount of travel the Fijian people do because the easier access to the mainland has opened up more opportunities for travel. One informant claimed that more and more local people are going overseas for holidays and some people are even travelling to work overseas.

**Easier lifestyle**

Another significant benefit of tourism development has been the increased ease in the lifestyle. All the benefits mentioned earlier are contributing to an overall easier life out on the islands. ‘Life isn’t
so hard on the island anymore because there are more jobs and therefore more money’. Related to this is the fact that more and more people from the main land are moving back to the islands to live. The chief was of the view that more people each year are choosing to come back to live on the island because the ‘money has made it easier to survive’.

3.3.3: Negative tourism impacts
One the other hand, not every change caused by tourism development was recognized as a positive thing. There were a number of changes and developments that were identified as causing a negative effect on individuals and the village. The following section will outline the negative impacts that the local Fijians identified during the interviews.

**Loss of community**
Tourism development has impacted and changed the way the community of Naisisili interacts, and many of these changes have been negative. There has been a loss of community togetherness largely due to the fact that people are now so much busier. One explained that the local community used to have a much stronger bond but they are slowly drifting apart and losing their closeness. Previously, ‘if any body within the village needed help the entire community would pitch in. But now that everybody is working it’s much harder to have time to help others in the same way we used to’. For example, it used to take only one week to build a bure because so many people would help. But now it could take anywhere near a month because everyone is busy working in the resorts. Consequently, people are starting to pay other people to do the jobs they don’t have time for and this means their lives are much more focused on, and controlled by, money. The feeling was expressed that this is making the people in the village lazier because they can pay other people to do work instead of doing it themselves.

Similar effects of tourism on the local community were expressed by a number of informants, for example the perception that people are too busy with work commitments to come to any community meetings and events and therefore the village is no longer as tight knit, or that ‘people in the village aren’t working as hard as they used to’ as the money coming from tourism is ‘making the local people lazy and this is a very negative change’ being caused by tourism in the area.

**Loss of tradition**
A loss of tradition was the other major negative theme that arose. The loss of traditional clothing was one of the issues that received mixed views. The two informants with some authority, the mayor and chief believed that the changes in clothing were not a problem at all. However the other informants from Naisisili all made negative comments regarding the influence of tourists over the way people in the village dress, especially the young children. ‘We teach our children to dress in traditional clothes and to cover up, but then they see the tourists doing the opposite and this influences our children. It’s not what they are taught’. One other issue that was mentioned by the unemployed informant, (also the youngest interviewee), was the loss of respect for the elders in the community. ‘We are losing the traditional language and the younger ones are no longer respecting the elders of the village’.

3.3.4: Other issues
A number of other issues arose from analysis of the interviews.

**Distribution of funds**
One of the major contradictions in the results we found related to the distribution of sevu-sevu, which is money given to the chief by the tourists when they visit the village. The Chief said that the sevu-sevu goes towards improving the village. In particular, ‘a lot of it goes on developing the village and therefore I feel it is distributed evenly’. However, one informant wondered where the
sevu-sevu is being used. ‘The chief must use it for himself because we don’t see any of it. It would be good if it were put into a bank or in a children’s fund. That way we could save up and then use it on things that would improve our health and education systems’.

Another issue that was mentioned was that a number of the resorts are owned or managed by foreign people. Two informants felt that this is a downfall with the way the resorts are run. Louisa said that when ‘foreign managers own the resorts there isn’t a good relationship between them and the Fijian people, therefore it’s good how Safe Landing is run because the local people see the benefits’.

**Kava**

Kava was a topic mentioned in many of the interviews and a number of people felt that kava was being drunk too often. The Mayor said he thought it was a big problem in the village. ‘It used to be only for special events like weddings, funerals and meetings but now people have it for no reason. …. it’s losing its tradition and is no longer as special’. The informants identified that increased tourism was the problem because more people have jobs; therefore more people have money to spend on kava. Interestingly, the Chief thought ‘Kava is not a major problem, yes people are drinking more of it but that’s because we have more money now. We probably have kava two nights a week’. However, opposing views were also expressed, including that kava is in fact drunk every night.

### 3.4: Discussion

This discussion is based on the results in the previous section and it will indicate how the findings serve our research objectives and expected outcomes.

Our main objectives were as follows:

- **Conduct surveys with local people that will share their opinions**: As the results show, we did a number of interviews during our time in the village. We managed to interview a range of different people all of whom had slightly different thoughts about the effects of tourism. I feel that the majority of people we interviewed were very willing to share the views and opinions they had about tourism development, and this was very important because it will mean our result are much more accurate.

- **Observe and analyse the local communities to determine what changes have occurred as a result of tourism development in the area**: The results show that tourism development in the area has resulted in a number of different changes. These changes have been economic, social, cultural and environmental. The majority of changes identified were related to positive change such as increased employment, better education, increased wealth, improved transportation and facilities etc. However the local people also identified a number of changes that have affected their lives in negative ways. These include loss of tradition, loss of culture, uneven distribution of funds etc.

- **Build trusting relationships to ensure we gain a full and honest result**: I felt that in almost all of the interviews we managed to gain full and honest answers because of the way we structured the questions. The interviews were semi-structured and much more like a relaxed conversation, therefore we could build a relationship as the interview progressed. As a result of this, in most interviews we were able to uncover the interviewee’s honest opinions. In one interview, the informant was otherwise pre-occupied with his children, and gave only brief responses, and thus we felt like we did not have his full attention, and felt like we didn’t get full and honest responses.

The key outcomes we expected to discover were as follows:
- To find that tourism development has lead to economic change in the local village.
- To find that tourism development, as well as economical improvements, has lead to social and cultural changes in the village.
- To discover if the local people want tourism to continue to develop in their area.

So were any of these outcomes correct?

Based on the results in the previous section it can be said that tourism growth and development has generally had a positive economic effect in the village of Naisisili in Fiji. As the results show, there was a lot more focus on the positive outcomes that tourism development creates, rather than the negative social, cultural or environmental effect that are often associated with tourism development. We often felt as though the people we interviewed couldn’t see past the economic benefits created by tourism such as increased employment opportunity, and therefore increased income. As was clearly stated, ‘we get money and better employment from tourism development and that’s the most important thing’.

On the other hand, a number of negative changes associated with tourism were identified in our results such as loss of tradition, loss of sense of community and uneven distribution of funds. However, even when these problems were recognized the main focus was still on the positive aspects of tourism development and the improvements it has made to the lives of people in Naisisili village. In other words, the benefits outweighed the negatives. This came as no real surprise because the previous literature on the topic revealed that it is economic improvements associated with tourism development that are the most sought after by the local people in developing countries. Other than tourism they have very few economic opportunities and therefore, they are more likely to put up with the negative consequences of tourism development (Shackley, 1996). The majority of the local people in Naisisili are dependent on the tourism industry as a source of employment and consequently, they see tourism development as a good thing and a saviour to their problems. Other reasons for the focus on the benefits of tourism development could be that the local people aren’t educated or aware of the negative impacts brought about by tourism. Or, a more likely explanation could be that ‘tourism in the Yasawa Islands is only very new’. For this reason, the unsustainable and harmful effects of tourism that we have come to expect may not have reached noticeable levels.

Furthermore, based on the results it can be accepted that the people of Naisisili village want tourism development to continue in their area because if tourism grows then so too will the benefits of tourism such as employment and income. As one informant put it, ‘I would like to see tourism continue to grow because it helps me and my children’.

Other significant findings were the conflicting results. The most evident disagreement was over kava and whether or not it is becoming a social problem within the village. People within the village are now buying and drinking more kava than ever before. The increased employment from tourism has given them more money and as a result, people are choosing to spend a lot of this money on kava rather than necessary things. The Chief felt that this was not a problem at all and that people were only drinking kava two nights a week. However other members of the village gave differing opinions on the topic, one stated that people are drinking kava every night of the week. The view was expressed that kava is losing its tradition and that the people drinking too much are becoming lazier. These differing opinions over the level of use of kava, and its impact (and the way they were expressed, not described here) is an indication that there is some level of conflict in the village over the use of kava, which has resulted directly from the income and lifestyle resulting from tourism in the islands. The issue also touches on loss of traditions, and on respect for the traditional village hierarchy.

The results also show that the distribution of tourism benefits was an issue. The interviews identified differences between the Chief’s views and the views of some village members regarding
distribution of funds. The Chief felt that the benefits, such as sevu-sevu, were being evenly distributed throughout the village. Yet, one informant could not see how the money was going towards improving the village. This issue was raised in the previous literature where it was found that the distribution of tourism funds often don’t go to the people that need it most. Haukenland (1984), identified that in developing countries the benefits from tourism are not often shared in an even or equitable way within small communities and this may be the case in Naisisili, though the view expressed came from only one informant who may not have known where sevu-sevu money is spent. The view may also relate to the loss of respect for the traditional village hierarchy. In general, the economic benefits of tourism do seem to be broadly spread through the community.

3.5: Implications

So what does all this tell us? Well the research has told us that tourism in the Yasawa Islands is a growing industry. Every year more people travel to the area and as a result of this more and more resorts are being built to accommodate them. However, the research also tells us that a number of changes within local villages are occurring because of tourism development in the area. These changes are affecting the way the local people live, and whilst many of the changes have been positive, there have also been a number of negatives ones too. It appears quite clear that tourism is going to continue to grow and this could be a great thing for members of Naisisili village because it increases their job opportunities and their ability to earn a reliable income. However, having an understanding of other similar situations tells us that further down the track it is possible that increased tourism development could have damaging effects on the village’s culture, social behaviour and the environment. This understanding of the possible negative effect of tourism can help us to better manage the situation by ensuring that these negative effects don’t ever become a major issue.

Things that should be done include:
- Educate the resort managers how to implement sustainable resort practises,
- Educate visitors of sustainable tourism practices,
- Ensure visitor are informed and educated about how to dress and act when visiting the village,
- Ensure tourism benefits are distributed evenly throughout the village, and
- Always explain to the local people why they have to do things in a particular ways because if you just tell them to do something and not explain why, they will be less likely to adopt the new method. For example, in Naisyili I feel it’s important that the people in the resort start to use more interpretation to improve their activities. However, if you don’t explain to them why then they will find it hard to see the benefits of doing it that way. In doing these types of things it will lessen the possibility of Naisyili following the footsteps of so many other developing tourist areas, which ultimately become destroyed by tourism development.

A way that we can use this research to help the local people in Naisyili is to inform them of our research findings and results. This will identify to them the areas of tourism development that are causing problem, such as inappropriately dressed tourists entering the village. If they are aware of the issues that need to be addressed, then they can start to improve them. Hence, this research report can be used to help the local people of Naisyili and their situation.

Overall, this research report has identified a range of economic benefits that tourism growth has lead to, but at the same time it has identified a number of other key areas that could be improved in Naisyili. What is more, the results of this project raise additional research questions. Some of these include:
- What is the best way to go about reducing the negative effects caused by tourism development?
- Is the situation going to get worse in Naisyili, will tourism development create more problem in the future?
- Should the drinking of kava be managed and if so, how?
- Are there any benefits of tourism development that the local people of Nasisili are missing out on, and if so why?

3.6: Conclusion

The research problem we explored in this report was; what are the economic implication of tourism growth and development on the local community of Naisisili in Fiji. Overall the entire research project has been an excellent experience and I have learnt a lot. From start to finish was interesting and challenging, but more importantly it was exciting. It can be concluded that, in general, tourism development has lead to improved economic conditions for the people of Naisisili village. The growth of tourism in the area has been seen as a major positive occurrence due to changes such as increased employment and increased wealth throughout the village. Tourism development was also recognised to have contributed to negative changes, such as loss of culture and loss or tradition, but to a much less degree. Hopefully these results can be used to improve any negative aspects of tourism development in Nasisili and strengthen the positive changes that are already being recognised.
4: Project C:

Title: NTTA resort operators and sustainable practices

Students: Lydia Cousins, Tiffany Reilly

4.1: Aim:
To investigate sustainable practices used by Nacula Tikina Tourism Association (NTTA) associated resorts in their day-to-day operation and identify limitations and barriers encountered in the development and implementation of these practices.

Objectives:
- Identify what sustainable practices are implemented and how they might minimise environmental impact;
- Identify limitations or barriers that the resorts may have encountered in the development or implementation of sustainable practices and technologies

Sub-Questions:
- What environmental issues/impacts are present in the surveyed area?
- What sustainable practices are being adopted?
- What constraints or limitations are experienced in development and implementation of sustainable practices and technologies, and what has been done to overcome these constraints?
- Are the resorts operating under the guidelines and code of conduct of the NTTA?

4.2: Methodology

This research project adopted a qualitative approach incorporating site visits, observations, informal discussions and semi-structured interviews. A qualitative approach allowed us to explore the motivations and reasons behind resort manager responses, but also to verify their responses through other sources such as observations.

The research began with a visit to seven NTTA member resorts in the vicinity of Nacula Island to introduce ourselves and request follow-up visits and interviews. The return visits and interviews were undertaken between 19 September 2005 and 25 September 2005. Resort managers were interviewed at Safe Landing Resort, Kingfisher Lodge, Coral View Resort, Oarsmans Bay Lodge, Otto and Fanny’s Resort and Nanuya Island Resort. While Sunrise Lagoon Resort was visited initially, it was not possible to organise an interview with the manager during our limited time in the field. These interviews were undertaken by four students, as two related projects (C and D in this report) sought responses from operators related to their NTTA membership and environmental practices.

The following results are taken from the work of student Lydia Cousins, with some also taken from Tiffany Reilly. While identification of resorts is necessary in some parts of the following discussion of research results, in places, identifying information is not provided to ensure privacy in relation to opinions expressed.
4.3: Results

4.3.1: Environmental Impacts

The first question identified in the methodology was ‘What environmental issues/impacts are present in the surveyed area?’ From our interviews with resort owners/managers and from personal observations we were able to develop a broad picture of some impacts that are or may be present (Table 1). As can be seen in this table, the presence of different environmental issues varied between resorts. Our knowledge of potential environmental impacts also grew as the interview process progressed and thus, our knowledge of impacts at some resorts is incomplete. In this instance the comment section is marked ‘unsure’.

Table 1: Actual and Potential Environmental Impacts of Resorts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Impact/ Activity.</th>
<th>Safe Landing</th>
<th>Kingfisher</th>
<th>Coral View</th>
<th>Otarsman’s Bay</th>
<th>Otto and Fanny’s</th>
<th>Nanuya Island</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using non-sustainable building supplies, such as slow growth wood.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Unsure.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of ‘mini-dumps’ or pits where slow to biodegrade waste is buried.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other piles of rubbish that is not tied down and subject to movement by wind.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Unsure.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of septic sewage systems, which has the potential to seep into the sea and into freshwater supplies.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of rubbish washed up on shoreline as a result of ocean currents.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of a bore water system, which may lower the freshwater table.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Unsure.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table gives a general idea of the environmental issues and impacts that resorts generate and are faced with. Further presentation of data, which discusses the nature of these impacts and also
discusses the attitudes of the resorts’ spokesperson to these issues, is necessary. This will help
develop a clearer picture of why these impacts are occurring (or why they aren’t in some cases) and
what the resort managers value when trying to minimise negative environmental impacts.

At each resort surveyed there were varying understandings of the nature of environmental impacts
and environmentally damaging activities. However the managers of each resort also shared some
common concerns including the health of the coral and methods of waste disposal.

**Coral reef health**

There was general concern about the health and destruction of coral reefs, with the condition of
reefs deteriorating over time. Some managers expressed the opinion that the health of coral and fish
was very important and the current health of the coral is not how it should be. Concern for the
condition of the reef was often expressed in terms of the expectations of tourists: ‘the people that
come here pay to see the coral and the fish’ and one manager who was constantly asked by the
resort guests to try and ‘do something about the boats that are cutting through the coral when they
drive straight through it’. A couple of managers expressed a more personal interest, wanting to see
the coral as they remembered it decades ago when it was much healthier. A number of the resort
owners associated coral destruction with the use of boats, but that this does not relate to tourism, but
to the habits of local people. Some felt there was little more that they could do about this problem,
they already tell their staff to drive the boats around the reefs, and hand out coral reef care
brochures to visitors, but local people don’t understand how fragile the reefs are and don’t listen.
‘We do talk to the locals about it but they do not seem interested…’

The use of explosives to catch fish (‘dynamite fishing’) was also mentioned as a problem. ‘The
problem is not with the tourists to the area, they pose no threat, it is with the locals. They use
fishing methods such as dynamite fishing which destroy the coral.’ There seemed to be some
frustration amongst the resort managers at their inability to protect the reefs from local people’s
practices. Coral bleaching has also been a problem in some places, associated with oil spills.
‘Coral bleaching was a huge problem a couple of years ago, it wiped out more than one quarter of
the total coral within the area and it’s taken until now to slowly come back.’

Some managers felt it wasn’t just the local people’s fault that the health of the local coral had
deteriorated but it could also be attributed to tourism and other industry practices. Two managers
expressed the concern that other resorts who were members of the NTTA were endorsing the
collection of coral.

It was interesting to observe that the appearance of the coral in the sea adjacent to some resorts that
had been operating for longer periods, including those off Tavewa Island was much less colourful
and less dense, and one manager indicated that there were a number of dead patches of coral in
front of Tavewa Island.

**Waste disposal**

Also of concern to managers spoken to at most resorts was the impact of waste disposal on the
environment. Four of the resort managers raised the issue of rubbish disposal as a serious issue that
the region had to deal with. While different resorts adopt different approaches, there seems to be
little commitment to recycling of any sort, and no clear method has been established to enable the
resorts to move away from the traditional method of burying all rubbish. Most managers were
aware of the impacts that the dumping of rubbish in shallow pits can have on the environment.
However, one manager was not aware of the seriousness of simply dumping rubbish in shallow pits.
He unashamedly admitted to doing this. While the front of this resort along the beach was kept
relatively clean, the pits were just behind the huts and rubbish on the surface and blowing about was
easily visible to visitors.
Another form of waste disposal of concern to the environment is sewage management. Most resorts were unaware, or at least did not express awareness of problems related to sewage. ‘We use a sewage tank, but no, there aren’t any negative environmental impacts as a result of this. Well, we haven’t seen any.’ This issue has not yet caused visible or recognizable impact, so was not generally considered to be a problem. At the same time, some of the same managers indicated that once they have enough money, one of the first things they would like to change in the resort would be the septic system. Perhaps this indicates that they do recognize problems with septic systems and the potential benefits of alternative approaches.

Two resorts on Matacawa Levu Island also expressed a problem they have with rubbish washing up on the beach. ‘The amount of rubbish that ends up along the beach is incredible, we clean up every day and yet by morning it’s back.’ While this is a management issue to ensure a clean environment for visitors, it is not something that they can control. A view was also expressed about the difference in attitude to rubbish between tourists and local people (including staff). ‘Tourists are generally very good, they pick up the rubbish along the beach if they see it. Our staff on the other hand … the local have always just chucked their rubbish in the bush or on the ground… so we find it very difficult to get even our staff to pick up their rubbish and place it in a bin.’

Other areas of concern.
The issue of weeds was raised by one resort manager, who thought that they were ‘more of a visual problem than environmental’. This concern for the appearance of the weeds would seem to relate to a concern for the visitor experience rather than for any environmental impact that the weeds may have.

Water supply is an issue that the resorts do not seem to have adequately considered. All resorts except one use bore water as their main supply. Although not visible, this method of extracting water from the freshwater table under the island could lead to negative environmental impacts if they are not occurring already. Although most of the managers were concerned that a drought could occur and that water might become scarce, they didn’t consider this to be an issue. Most expressed the idea that they would like to invest in alternative forms of extracting water but this was not emphasised as much as those issues that were literally visible at the moment.

Sea level rise is an environmental issue that was not really covered in the research. Most resorts are characterized by very narrow strips of sand on the beachfront and there is little room to move if sea levels were to rise even 50 centimetres. However, this issue was not raised by any manager.

4.3.2: Sustainable practices implemented by resorts.
The attitudes of the resorts managers towards environmental impacts and environmental sustainability have been explored further by identifying what technologies and practices they have implemented and used to reduce their impact on the environment. The next theme to be explored considers management responses to environmental issues and also identifies whether there are other influencing factors behind decision to implement sustainable practices.

The table on the following page presents a checklist of the sustainable practices and technologies that resort management can implement to help minimise their impact on the environment. It was developed by considering sustainable practices mentioned in literature and other practices that the NTTA code of conduct considers important and also other practices that the certain resorts have implemented themselves in order to combat environmental issues.
1. **Table 2: Sustainable practices implemented by the resorts’ surveyed.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable practices:</th>
<th>Safe Landing</th>
<th>Kingfisher Resort</th>
<th>Coral View</th>
<th>Oarsmans Bay</th>
<th>Otto and Fanny’s</th>
<th>Nanuya Island</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waste Management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement recycling programs in each resort by separating waste and returning bottles, tins and plastics to town monthly</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure each resort has installed best practice sewage disposal facilities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate staff on what is biodegradable and compostable and to establish a composting program</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a weekly clean up of all litter on beaches, in sea and around resort generally</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimising water use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use water saving devices on taps, showers and toilets</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store rain water in tanks</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>???</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected hours of water consumption</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand wash clothing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>???</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filter and recycle water</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desalination systems</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of bore water</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fijian Culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate guests on Fijian customs important to the Villages and Yasawas including appropriate dress, sevu-sevu, ceremonies and mekes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train staff members to provide interpretation of local Yasawa history, and to explain operations of village social structure and cultural protocols</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect privacy of Fijian Villages and to visit Fijian Villages only on Sunday to attend church after permission has been granted</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only use beaches and other islands where permission has been obtained</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protection of Ecology and Environment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop selling shells and precious marine resources and to substitute this income with sales of woven baskets, coconut oil and fruit</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate guests and staff on fragility of marine resources and encourage responsible usage</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimise impact of buildings and structures on the natural and visual environment</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have concern for the environment of other properties, other beaches and other islands in Nacula Tikina</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe proper practices in marine resource management including not catching undersize fish</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement a program for de-sexing unwanted dogs and cats to eradicate stray and malnourished animals around properties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The practices of resorts vary greatly, as we expected. In a nutshell this table shows what environmental issues the resorts are focused on combating. In light of what the resorts’ managers mentioned as the most pressing environmental concerns this table can help identify what specific concerns managers are concentrating their efforts on.

**Conservation of sea life.**
As mentioned all resort managers considered the conservation of coral and fish species important. Practices which can improve the health of coral and preserve it include dissemination of coral friendly snorkeling brochures to staff and guests, discouraging guests to purchase coral products from people in the village, use of environmentally friendly cleaning products, maneuvering boats carefully through coral, development of coral farms and not allowing sewage to seep untreated from holding tanks.

There was a varied commitment to these practices. Each resort partook in a different combination of these practices but overall there was a low level of commitment to an integrated approach to managing coral health. For example, some resorts made available the Coral Friendly Snorkeling Guide and take care when maneuvering boats but at the same time endorse the purchase of coral at

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable practices:</th>
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<th>Nanuya Island</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only use cleaning and chemical products that do not damage or harm the environment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of buildings to take advantage of natural lighting and heating/cooling</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimising energy use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement solar power systems for heating, lighting and water</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of diesel generators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selected hours of energy and power consumption ie. 12 hour rotations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record and monitor energy consumption</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Safety and Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure all boats used for guest transportation are seaworthy and contain all necessary safety equipment</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate staff on safety procedures in the event of fire or cyclone and to provide written safety instructions for guests</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide sufficient drinking water storage for both guests and staff to go through a dry spell</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train all staff in provision of basic first aid and to have essential first aid equipment on hand; To maintain high standards of hygiene in food management and in bar and dining areas</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate key staff members on which products in the resorts can be used safely for specific purposes; train key staff members to deal with difficult guest circumstances including dissatisfied guests, emergencies and cyclones</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mostly</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize V.H.F. radio frequency between surrounding resorts to maintain communication on guest and safety issues</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the markets held in the village. All resorts reported that guests were frequently given the opportunity to learn about appropriate snorkeling practices. Only one resort mentioned using environmentally friendly cleaning products or how they would manage sewage without letting it seep into the sea.

**Disposal of material waste.**
Many of the resort managers also mentioned waste disposal as a major issue that all tourism operators in the region have to face. There were varied responses to how the disposal of rubbish was being managed. At one resort, where the manager did not consider recycling or sustainable waste management important, paper was burned, pigs given compost and the remaining waste buried. Similar practices were followed at other resorts, such as burying bottles and cans, though some managers believed that burying rubbish was not a positive thing to do to the environment. The managers of these resorts were unsure how to recycle the rest of the waste considering their financial situations. One manager expressed concern that if the waste is taken to the mainland for recycling, it will in fact not be recycled but instead be buried in a shallow pit on the mainland, thus simply transferring the problem.

A different approach is taken on one resort where nothing that would not biodegrade quickly is buried. All bottles and cans are returned to the mainland, for which some money is received. Another resort adopts a similar approach, but bottles are ground up in a concrete mixer and the end product (sand) is returned to the beach. Interestingly at the resorts that did aim to recycle waste by returning it to the mainland, there existed no systems that encouraged guests to separate their waste, rather, resort staff separate the waste. Two resorts are faced with rubbish that washes up on the shore as a result of ocean currents. In order to combat this, the resorts involve themselves in cleaning up the beach and return what can be recycled to the mainland or bury it on their land along with their own waste.

**Minimising water use.**
Compared with the two issues discussed above the conservation of water was not considered as important by resort managers. There were however some methods employed by resorts to combat water wasting and water extraction. One resort takes no bore water, preferring to use a desalination plant to generate fresh water. Sewage was also recycled and treated until it was clean enough to be used on the resort’s gardens. Water saving fittings were also used at this resort as well as at two others. One resort saves water by using composting toilets rather than flush toilets. At some resorts, water conservation did not seem to be a high priority, where constant leaks from showers and taps were observed.

**Sewage management.**
At all except two resorts, flushing toilets are connected to a septic tank system but the waste is not recycled and used for any other purposes. On one resort the waste is treated and reused on the gardens whilst composting toilets at the other allow waste to be used as fertilizer on the gardens. Two resorts with septic tanks were keen to implement a waste treatment system as soon as they could afford it.

**Attitudes towards sustainable tourism development.**
The interview process not only indicated what sustainable practices the resorts were utilizing but also why they had implemented them. One resort manager admitted that he wanted to see the environment managed in a way that other people could enjoy it in the future. He also said that the numerous sustainable practices that he had implemented would save him and his family money in the long run.
A number of issues or concerns were considered in the same way by resort managers. A number of managers explained their desire to improve the health of the coral reef for the sake of tourism – to ensure that tourists will continue to come to their resorts. Such an issue has been discussed at NTTA meetings, but is also reinforced by the presence of the Coral Friendly Snorkeling guide.

The responses of managers suggest that they are concerned with, and seek solutions to, issues or problems that are made clear to them, or which are clearly visible to the human eye. Rubbish disposal is a visible issue and so is damage done to coral from snorkeling but the slow affect of nitrogen rich chemicals on coral health is not easily visible, so does not appear to have generated the same level of concern. Managers also responded favourably to implementing sustainable development technologies/practices that will show benefits to their business operations not just to the environment.

This section shows that one barrier to implementing sustainable development practices is the limited range of information made available to resort managers. Resorts are essentially responding to what they are made aware of both through visual reminders and education. Currently much of the information presented to the resorts is regarding coral health. Other barriers faced by resorts in the implementation of sustainable practices are considered in the next section.

4.3.3: Barriers to achieving environmental sustainability.
This section is based on the assumption that the NTTA resorts surveyed are seeking to achieve environmental sustainability through their business operation. This was not the main aim of the resorts surveyed. This section will outline factors that impede the resorts from implementing environmentally sustainable practices and technologies, in relation to the perspective and knowledge of the authors as university students, what may be possible to implement.

The nature of education in the region.
The level of awareness of the resort managers of the effect that human activity can have on the environment is very limited in most instances. One resort manager, however, showed a complex understanding of the environmental issues faced in the area as a result of human activity. Limited education about the negative impacts of tourism in the region has been disseminated, and this mostly in the past four years since the NTTA was developed in 2000 and the NTTA Code of Conduct was developed in 2001. The organisation and the Code of Conduct was developed to increase awareness about local environmental issues and to encourage good environmental management practices. But it appears from the comments of the resort operators that membership is not taken seriously because of the sporadic nature of the dissemination of information by the organisation, the lack of regular meetings, and because solutions to issues discussed between members are hardly ever put into practice.

Certain issues are also pushed to the forefront whilst others are regarded as less important so methods of achieving certain environmental practices are not identified or are not integrated. As mentioned, there has been much focus on the Coral Friendly Snorkeling guide but no information provided on pamphlets on how to minimise other activities that caused coral damage and other environmental affects.

It was also the opinion of one operator that the instigators and meeting officiators of NTTA were more concerned with forcing ideas than encouraging the Nacula Tikina tourism operators to work together or be instrumental in solving their own problems. This operator indicated that forcing information and ideas onto the local people, rather than working with them, is not the appropriate
method to change their habits. He says that ‘you have to make them feel like the solution to a problem was their idea even if you were hinting at it long before’.

The managers themselves were not focused on educating line staff about what they learnt at NTTA meetings or making them aware of environmental issues besides coral health or of the need to not cut down trees. This presents a barrier to change because, if the implementation of sustainable technologies and practices is to occur then the people that will be involved in its implementation need to be aware of the need for change and not be directed aimlessly towards goals that they are not congruent with.

Financial barriers.
Some resort managers at Safe Landing, Oarsman’s Bay Lodge and Kingfisher Lodge mentioned a number of sustainable technologies that they would like to implement but also mentioned that these things were quite costly and would probably not occur until their initial financial loans from Turtle Island had been paid off. Oarsmans Bay Lodge has foreign managers to ‘put the resort on track to operate at a profit so the loan can be paid back’ and that because of this there is little money that can be budgeted for such things as sending bottles back to the mainland. The manager at Safe Landing said that he would like the sewage to be recycled ‘but not until the loan from Richard is paid back’. The manager at Kingfisher Lodge shared a similar opinion and was keen to implement a desalination plant, sewage treatment system and send plastic bottles to the mainland for recycling. Some other resorts that were adopting different technologies were different in that they were not in debt and could afford to be less restricted in where they spent their money. The managers of Nanuya Island Resort were able to draw on private funds in establishing the resort, allowing the implementation of many technologies that minimised the resort’s impact on the environment.

The current focus of the managers’ resources.
As mentioned above some resort owners are focused on repaying loans. Some owners are also very focused on simply trying to get the fundamentals of hospitality to a level that is acceptable by guests. Three managers described how they were trying to do things that make the guests happy and satisfied. In one case this took up a lot of time because the resort also grew most of its own produce and had a bakery to run. One manager appeared to be employed on the sole basis of his public relations skills and thought that his primary role as manager was to ‘cheer the guests up… make jokes… and put on activities each evening for the guests’. The manager of Safe Landing identified the main priorities when their loan is paid off as ‘build new bure, a new dining hall and a new kitchen’. This manager also seemed to be more focused on these structural improvements and aesthetics of the resort than on delivery of service and gauging of customer satisfaction. One resort displayed a strong concern for keeping guests happy by seeking to resolve those environmental problems identified by guests, but not those problems that the guests weren’t aware of. For some resorts, the need to pay off a loan as quickly as possible allowed little focus beyond the short term financial gain.

Other barriers to change.
Other factors also appear to impede sustainable tourism development in the Yasawas. While a lack of education about sustainable tourism clearly has an influence on the awareness of tourism employees, a lack of government support and encouragement limits the ability of resort managers and owners to undertake appropriate sustainable practices. A number of operators mentioned this issue of lack of government support, and difficulty of dealing with government when trying to achieve change.

According to one manager, another issue related to education is the ‘mentality of the local people’ who make up most of the resorts’ staff. They have a ‘throwaway mentality’ and are so used to their
traditional consumables being fully biodegradable that they assume that this is also the case of westernised packaging such as glass and plastics. A number of managers described the difficulties of continuing to remind resort staff of the need to put rubbish in bins and to convince them of the merits of recycling.

4.4: Discussion.

4.4.1: Sustainable practices implemented by resorts.
The literature review identified some methods that can be used to achieve sustainable tourism development including environmental auditing (Stabler & Goodall 1996) and the development of sustainable tourism indicators (Twining-Ward & Butler 2002) and (Kokkranikal, McLellan and Baum 2003). None of the resorts use these methods to try and achieve environmental sustainability. Instead, most resorts had simply implemented technologies and practices by responding to issues that they believed were the most significant. Most resort owners/managers were using an ad hoc approach to planning which UNEP (2002) says should be avoided in the process of sustainable tourism development. On the other hand, one resort in this research had spent more than two years in the planning process whereby the construction of the resort was based on research which identified appropriate technologies that could be implemented to minimise the impact of the resort’s operations on the environment. Nonetheless, the other resorts had implemented some practices and technologies that reduced the level of impact that tourism was having on the environment. In many cases these technologies and practices were implemented because they resulted in giving the guests what they wanted or because they were the most practical options (such as installing solar heating panels to heat hot water instead of using generators to produce electricity).

Management of sea life.
As mentioned, overall the most common concerns that resort spokespeople had for the environment was for the health of the coral. All of the resorts promoted the coral friendly snorkeling guide developed by the NTTA and the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL).
Overall the commitment by resorts to reduce their effect on the health of coral was quite limited. Most resorts weren’t committed to an integrated approach to minimising their environmental impacts on the coral. Most resorts made little effort to minimise the level of nitrogen rich discharge released into the sea, which can lead to algal growth and subsequent coral death (Hall 1996 cited in Hall & Page 1996). Two resorts implement sewage waste systems that did not leech nitrogen rich nutrients into the sea, one had followed this course to provide a source of compost for the produce grown on the resort, the other explained their approach as seeking to minimise the impact of the resort on the environment. A couple of managers did not see sewage as a problem as their were no visible signs of algal growth or impact on coral health. All but one resort used cleaning products that could contribute to coral smothering through algal growth.

Rubbish management
In order to combat the problem of rubbish disposal numerous approaches had been taken. A combination of burning, burying and recycling was used to dispose of rubbish. All but two resorts buried some non biodegradable rubbish. Recycling involved sending plastic and glass bottles and cans to the mainland on a barge boat. One resort explained they don’t recycle because the financial budget does not allow for the costs and another doesn’t recycle because the manager doesn’t believe that burying rubbish causes any negative effects on the environment.

SPREP (2002) says sustainable methods of waste disposal are not common in Pacific Islands because in rural isolated communities there are no rubbish collection services and that many people feel that rubbish disposal is not their problem. Also Fiji has no recycling program except for those
services that ship waste to other countries, mainly Australia, to be recycled. The attitudes towards waste disposal are therefore very understandable. The lack of government support and the nature of the recycling system combined with the ‘throwaway mentality’ (identified as being a result of the local people’s life before tourism introduced non biodegradable materials), all contribute to the current attitudes towards waste management in the area.

Water management
Availability of fresh water in the Yasawas Island group is considered an important issue by Watling and Chape (1992 cited in Levett and McNally 2003) because this area experiences many dry spells and often water is lost through leak fittings and faulty storage facilities. Most resorts surveyed do not use sustainable methods of collecting freshwater. Extraction of bore water can damage the environment by causing salt water intrusion which can lead to vegetation death and to altering of the landscape. Only one resort uses no bore water, instead having a desalination plant. Some water conserving methods observed at the resorts included hand-washing clothes and encouraging staff and guests to have short showers. At some resorts, for some guests, only cold water is available for showers, which may result in less water being used, but also leaking fittings were observed, resulting in a loss of water.

Overall there was very little implementation of technologies and practices by the resorts to try and minimise the effect of the tourism operations on the environment. Most commonly the resorts implemented practices and technologies in response to guest needs and because they were the cheap option in the short term.

4.4.2: Barriers to achieving environmental sustainability.
Our observations showed that the major barriers impeding the resorts from achieving a greater level of environmental sustainability were educational barriers, financial barriers and the current mentality of resort managers, which is very closely related to education.’

Quality of education.
The most obvious barrier to achieving environmental sustainability was the lack of education that was disseminated to resort managers and owners that promoted sustainability and identifies methods to achieve this. The literature review did not identify this as an issue but it definitely is in the Nacula Tikina. In this region of Fiji, Indigenous people’s involvement in tourism is very high. This is not a common situation according to WTO (1998) who says that the host communities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) generally have only minor involvement in tourism and that employees are often recruited from big cities and neighbouring countries because there is a lack of manpower in the host community suitable for the employment tasks. But although the host communities in the Nacula Tikina seemed to be able to provide the manpower necessary to complete the basic tasks required to satisfy guests’ needs, resort staff, including managers and line staff (in particular) had little exposure to education that promoted the importance of sustainable tourism or which gave practical and realistic suggestions of how to achieve this.

McKercher (2003) says that communities pursue tourism without understanding fully its implications. This appears to be the case in some of the local initiated resorts surveyed. In general, there appears to be a low understanding of environmental issues amongst resort staff and managers. However, on the positive side, our observations in local schools visited indicates that the global interconnectedness of environmental issues is a component of the education curriculum. This is a sign of something good according to WTO (1998) who says that education about sustainable development must begin at a primary school age. But obviously there needs to be more education and information resources disseminated to the older generations both to those who work in resorts and those who don’t.
It would appear from observations and interviews undertaken that there is a greater need for education that indicates how sustainable tourism can be achieved given the financial restrictions of most of the resorts. This is further discussed below.

Financial barriers
At a local scale some managers mentioned that their main business priorities at the moment were to pay off their loans to Richard Evanson from Turtle Island as soon as possible. This left little money to set aside for implementing technologies that could improve their environmental sustainability. It was interesting to note however that more sustainable practices were not implemented in the initial construction phase of these resorts.

At a national level McKercher (2003) believes that the Fijian government is more focused on pursuing economic growth than conservation and so less support is given that promotes conservation than promotes economic growth. This would appear to be reflected in the Nacula Tikina because there are virtually no government-initiated services and there was no mention of the presence of any government concern by the resort managers for the actions of the resorts. However, we were advised in an interview with a tourism industry figure on the mainland that the government commonly gives financial grants to tourism operators where a 1:2 ratio of contribution is requested of the tourism developers with little accountability expected of the tourism developer.

On the other hand UNESCAP (2000) states that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) simply do not have the financial means to invest in projects that require large capital such as adaptation to sea level rise, recycling and sound disposal of wastes, tourism infrastructure and telecommunication infrastructure. From this it can be noted that many of the resorts spend an awful lot of time on tasks that with improvement of infrastructure could be spent on other pressing environmental issues. Just trying to get tasks done such as ordering the month’s foods supply or finding ways to dispose of waste, all takes a lot longer without infrastructure that many westerners would take for granted, including the lack of the humble fax machine to submit orders on.

Lack of government legislation that influences sustainable development.
According to Berno (2004) there is minimal legislation in Fiji requiring sustainable practices in the tourism industry and McKercher (2003) says that there is a lack of a strong national sustainable development framework under which tourism can fit. It seems that the main people influencing tourism development in the Nacula Tikina are Ratu Epeli (the Chief of the Nacula Tikina) and the partners in Turtle Island who have loaned much of the money needed to develop some of the resorts who are members of the NTTA. This could be considered as a barrier to change because currently education about environmental sustainability is delivered in a ‘top-down’ style without suitable accompanying information that indicates the processes that are involved in achieving desired outcomes. Legislation may provide one-way to ensure environmental standards, although it would only be useful if properly policed, promoted and the local people educated as to the purpose.

4.5: Conclusions
The question that this research began with was ‘What sustainable practices are undertaken by NTTA associated resorts within their day-to-day operations that aim to minimise their environmental impact?’ From this we developed our hypothesis that ‘Resorts who are members of the NTTA in the Yasawas Fiji will aim to implement environmentally sustainable practices but will be impeded to some extent by barriers to environmental sustainability’.
This research process involving interviews and observations provided much insight into the themes that we were exploring and subsequently much information was gathered, which brought to our attention some issues and sub-themes or interest areas that had not been previously identified in the literature. The information discovered is summarised below.

4.5.1: Environmental Impacts.
Exploration of this theme involved identifying environmental impacts that the resort managers identified as important to them and why they were important, as well as considering other potential impacts not identified as important by resort managers. Commonly the resort spokesperson identified that the main concern for the environment was for the health of the coral. From our research we also identified the disposal of sewage and the extraction of bore water as also contributing to potentially negative environmental impacts. Overall it was concerning to see that there was limited awareness of the many potential impacts that tourism can have on the fragile island environment of the Nacula Tikina. There was also much more awareness of those impacts that were tangible or visible to the human eye, i.e. rubbish on beaches, coral damage and weeds than those that could be occurring slowly such as altering of landscape through sewage leaching or bore water drilling.

4.5.2: Sustainable Practices Implemented by Resorts.
This was our major focus theme but is obviously highly connected with the other themes. Our naivety made us expect that there would be more examples of sustainable practices and technologies implemented by resorts in order to reduce their impact on the environment. Most commonly, if sustainable practices had been implemented the motivation behind this was from mere necessity or driven by the attitudes and yearnings of the guests. The implementation of practices was rarely driven by the aims of the resort owners/managers to minimise their impact on the environment as the hypothesis suggested. The most common practices implemented were the dissemination or the hanging on the wall of the Coral Friendly Snorkeling guide for tourists. The resorts had also implemented solar hot water systems and some had regulations on times of diesel generator use. Some had implemented good sewage treatment systems, whereby any leakage of nutrient high sewage into the environment was negligible. Some resort owners mentioned that they would like to implement more sustainable technologies in the future, including de-salination plants and sewage recycling systems. There was definitely a need for the implementation of more technologies and practices that minimised the effects of the tourism operations on the environment. If the resorts keep operating with their current technologies, the literature indicates that there could be potentially dire consequences for the environment and therefore the tourism industry. Nanuya Island Resort provides examples of some of the technologies and practices that could be adopted.

4.5.3: Barriers to achieving environmental sustainability.
The most significant barriers that are impeding resorts from implementing environmentally sustainable tourism are educational and financial barriers. The reason most of the resort owners/managers and their staff are not aware of the impacts their tourism businesses could be having on the environment is that they have been exposed to little education which aims to inform them about the effects tourism can have on the environment let alone the idea of ‘environmental sustainability’. Most education so far seems to have focused on telling the people involved in tourism what best practices are being aimed for, without including them in much consultation in planning or by explaining how to reach these benchmarks in a realistic, non-ideological sense. As in any form of development finances or economics will play a major role. Three of the resort managers mentioned that they were restricted in implementing more technologies and practices because of their current commitments to paying loans. Better planning of resorts to consider environmental issues in the initial development of the resorts could have prevented many of these problems.

Report on research undertaken during a visit to Yasawa Islands, Fiji, September 2005.
4.6: Implications

Simply answering the questions developed in the research process has identified many interesting issues that effect sustainable tourism development in the Nacula Tikina. It is essential now to use this information to explore how this research can contribute to change and development in the Nacula Tikina by considering what would be realistic outcomes for the application of this research.

It is obvious from this report that the tourism operations occurring in the Nacula Tikina have a lot of room for improvement in the case of implementing environmentally sustainable practices and technologies, to minimise their impact on the environment. If nothing changes and most of the resorts’ keep operating in the same indifferent way towards the environment there will undoubtedly be unwanted outcomes in the natural environment such as those seen in other highly developed regions of Fiji.

At the ground level there is a great need for more effective, more frequent and more goal orientated education, to ensure that managers and resort staff have an understanding and an interest in environmental issues that will affect the resorts. Most of the people that work in the resorts as both staff and managers have not completed secondary studies.

The current method of disseminating information through the NTTA’s Code of Conduct, projects the assumption that people who read it will, one: accept and commit to the objectives of the code; and two: have adequate knowledge and analytical skills to be able to interpret the very general information and then identify methods for achieving the desired best practices in the code.

The Code of Conduct needs an immediate overhaul with the development of a new set of education guidelines. This may require further research aimed at identifying the best methods of communicating environmental education to local people. This would involve cultural research and would consider the most effective ways in which local people learn i.e. through practical learning or through verbal communication.

The development of a new form of educating local people should not exclude those people who work indirectly for the tourism businesses. At present the code of conduct encourages resort managers to stop encouraging the sales of shell and coral products, but hasn’t as far as could be seen, implemented any programs that encourage alternative income sources for local people who are essentially involved indirectly in tourism. A new code or educational process should be much more focused on integrating practices that minimise environmental impacts that are both tangible and obvious and those that are slower to occur but also just as important.

A new approach to educating local people should include more training workshops that do not simply encourage environmental sustainability but also teach basic hospitality skills such as first aid, OH&S, conflict management and food safety. It is no use assuming that resort managers are going to leap gung-ho into environmental sustainability if they can’t even satisfy basic guest expectations. Currently there is a huge variation in the skills of employees at the various resorts surveyed. If the NTTA or another body can lessen the divergence between resorts and reduce emotions such as jealousy they may have greater success in initiating environmental concern at the resorts.

There is also a great need to educate tourists in the region and guests of the resorts of the importance of sustainable tourism in the fragile Nacula environment. It is not acceptable that guests...
to the region are not educated about the many impacts that their presence is having on the environment. This research has shown that the guests have been influencing change in the management approaches at the resorts, so they present a huge potential to influence a change in the mindset of resort owners. The fijibudget.com website would be a great place to educate visitors about environmental impacts as a result of tourism. And this could hopefully be a catalyst for making decisions about where guest’s stay or what they request the resort managers to change.

These suggestions indicate that considerable investment (of human and financial resources) is needed in order to achieve these outcomes. This is probably the case and it would be suggested that both local Indigenous people and experienced researchers work together to pool their resource knowledge to achieve positive outcomes. It would be more expensive in the long run if nothing was to change.

There is a clear need for telecommunication services to more of the Nacula area, not just Turtle Island. The installation of this service on other areas will make business much more efficient, but will also open up more educational opportunities, including use of the internet.

There was also variation in the willingness/ability of the resorts to seek honest feedback from guests. Most provided a comments book but needed to provide an avenue for guests to anonymously suggest improvements that they would like to see. Oarsman’s Bay Lodge already does this and it seems to work quite well with some changes being made as a result of this.

A further suggestion would be that future financial dealings between Turtle Island and local resorts should include support for introducing technologies and stimulating practices that will be less damaging for the environment than the technologies that the current loan re-payers have implemented.
5: Project D:

Title: NTTA resort operators and the operator code of conduct

Students: Lauren Phillips, Tegan Sheffield

5.1: Aim:

The overall aim of the research was to ask the question “Do operators follow the Code of Conduct that they are expected to adhere to as members of the NTTA?” The research was broken into a number of sub-questions for exploration during operator interviews:

- Are operators aware that there is a code of conduct associated with the NTTA membership?
- Do operators follow the NTTA code of conduct, and what factors might influence this?
- Why did operators join the NTTA?
- Do operators consider the code of conduct to be reasonable?
- How do operators view the code of conduct?
- What concerns do operators have related to the code of conduct?

5.2: Methodology

This research adopted a qualitative approach to interview resort managers to find out their perceptions of the NTTA code of conduct. A qualitative approach provides the opportunity to gather a detailed understanding of a small number of cases, and provides the opportunity to modify the research, to ask deeper questions, to stimulate the expression of deeper feelings or opinions, and so was ideal for this research. A strong overlap in the objectives and the informant group for this project with that of another project, meant that this research was carried out in cooperation with students looking at the environmental practices of NTTA operators (project C in this report).

Initial visits were made to seven NTTA member resorts, but only six interviews were completed, with managers at Safe Landing, Kingfisher Lodge, Coral View, Oarsmans Bay Lodge, Otto and Fanny’s and Nanuya Island Resort. As we were working in combination with another project, we could not directly ask all our proposed questions, instead we engaged in a conversation with each operator and established a rapport that allowed us to ask questions related to our aims and objectives, as well as to gather information while walking around the resorts with the manager.

The level of knowledge amongst operators of the code of conduct, and their attitudes to its implementation was usually quite clear in the early stages of an interview. Working with the other students, we then focused more on establishing which practices were being adopted and attitudes to those practices. For the purpose of this report, the information presented previously in Section C will not be repeated. This section will focus on the responses and attitudes of operators to the code of conduct, and only deal with practices when they specifically relate to components of the code.

The following results are compiled from the work of Lauren Phillips and Tegan Sheffield, but also include some analysis from Dr Rik Thwaites drawing on the work of Tiffany Reilly and Lydia Cousins (Project C).
5.3: Results:

5.3.1: Are operators aware there is a code of conduct associated with NTTA membership?

All resort managers interviewed were aware of the existence of the NTTA, though two had never attended an NTTA meeting. One of these was unaware that the Code of Conduct existed. This interviewee was employed to manage the resort but thought his boss attended the NTTA meetings, and he could not recall ever being told about the Code of Conduct. The other five resort managers interviewed were all aware of the Code of Conduct, each claiming to have a copy easily accessible to them. Two resorts had a framed copy of the code easily visible to both guests and staff.

5.3.2: Do operators follow the NTTA code of conduct, and what factors might influence this?

While five of the six interviewed managers were aware of the existence of the code, it was clear that their awareness of the content was generally fairly low. One manager who was vague as to its content explained ‘I am a very busy man’. None of the managers felt that the Code of Conduct was required to be followed as a condition of their membership of NTTA.

The operator who had not attended an NTTA meeting and was not aware of the code, also had no understanding of environmental issues and impacts, stating simply “I don’t know” to a question on environmental impacts being experienced in the area. This suggests that neither environmental performance, nor the Code of Conduct are of interest in the management of this resort.

The other five resorts all had a greater or lesser awareness of the environmental challenges and of the content of the Code of Conduct, and were all adopting some elements of the code, though for a variety of reasons. The Code of Conduct seemed to play a role in helping resort managers to identify appropriate practices, as managers were aware of some connections between components of the code and what they were actually doing. However, it was clear that the code was not the driving force behind the decision to adopt these practices. The two key factors influencing adoption of environmental practices appeared to be recognition of a problem, and personal goals. Some managers related the need to adopt improved practices to their knowledge of a problem, a visible problem being recognized. This was particularly the case when guests had raised an issue or concern with the staff, highlighting an environmental problem. Some operators also placed their decisions regarding environmental practice in the context of personal beliefs and goals. One resort had clearly adopted a range of technologies and practices that were not considered elsewhere, spending considerably more money on such environmental management issues than might have been expected on the basis of minimum regulatory requirements. This manager was the most environmentally aware and knowledgeable of the interviewees, and had concern for the longer term future of the local environment, seeking to improve rather than just minimizing negative impact. He explained his reason for implementing a range of environmental practices as “because it makes me feel right… if I didn’t do it I would feel guilty”. He was also concerned about local attitudes: “local people are short sighted and only see what will work tomorrow, not in 3 or 4 years.”

A number of issues were raised that could be seen as barriers to adopting practices identified in the Code of Conduct. The most commonly expressed barrier related to finance, or the cost of practices. Some of the resorts are quite small, and operate on small budgets. Some of the resorts have outstanding loans to repay. This reduces their capacity to afford environmental practices that they perceive as not fundamental to their operation. Recognition of the need for certain practices (and understanding the components of the Code of Conduct and the reasoning behind them) is also related to a lack of environmental information and education. Many managers expressed a relatively low level of understanding of environmental issues that are not currently visible or affecting their operations.
Another issue raised was access – this might relate to access to technologies, to government services, but also to information to help make better environmental decisions. A final barrier identified relates to the time available, how busy managers are. One manager expressed that he did not have the time to investigate every item of the Code of Conduct and consider how it might be applied. This point, of course, relates in part to the previous point about recognition of importance of environmental performance, and education.

As well as speaking with managers, the research also enabled information to be gathered via observation, and through conversations with resort staff on some resorts. It seems that there was little awareness of the purpose of the Code of Conduct or its content by resort staff beyond those staff members that attend the NTTA meetings. On occasions when we asked less senior staff what they knew about the NTTA or the code they seemed uncertain how to respond. The most informed response suggested that it was important to not cut down trees and not ruin the coral.

5.3.3: Why did operators join the NTTA?
This question was rarely asked directly of operators, so analysis is in part based on general discussion of NTTA. One manager felt that it was an expectation upon the creation of NTTA that all resorts in the area would be members. The benefit of NTTA membership was perceived as keeping these resorts close together and being able to work together as a group. For some resorts, membership seemed to be tied to their financial status – holding outstanding loans to Turtle Island, they felt being a part of the NTTA was related to their loan. A number of other benefits of membership of NTTA were described and NTTA was generally viewed positively. Being a member was a good thing. As described by one manager, it provides many benefits including information on new products and practices that would be beneficial in the long and short term, hosted workshops and meetings that were often attended by guest speakers, and also introducing changes that provide benefit to the wider region, not just the resorts, such as initiating the establishment of a police post and doctor. One manager whose resort has introduced a range of advanced environmental practices, saw the NTTA as a forum for him to help educate other resort staff. However, another suggested ‘we discuss a lot of good ideas at the meetings but nothing happens after’ indicating some frustration that though the NTTA provides an opportunity to discuss these things, it provides no avenue for follow-up.

5.3.4: Do operators consider the code of conduct to be reasonable?
How do operators view the code of conduct?
These two questions have been combined in this discussion as they are similar, and the questions were not directly asked of operators, but students have written responses on the basis of inference from other comments.

The Code of Conduct is not directly followed by the resort managers interviewed. Rather, it provides a guide for operators to pick and choose the practices that they feel are relevant and affordable to them. One operator did note that though some of the practices identified in the code may appear reasonable to adopt, they are not ‘financially reasonable’. One manager had a considerably greater level of understanding of environmental issues, and a deeper pool of funds to draw on in establishing his resort. Even he did not follow the Code of Conduct for its own sake. He sees the code as having little relevance as he is already adopting practices that are important for him and his resort. He also felt that it was too much to expect smaller local resorts to adhere to the detail of the code when they have little access to funds. This perspective was reinforced by the manager of a smaller resort who believed the code provided a good reference for the foundation of implementing environmentally sustainable practices in his resort, but owing to a lack of funds, the code remains a reference and he is not able to apply individual components. Another manager felt
the code played an integral role in the development and promotion of environmentally sustainable practices within the resort, but because of a lack of funds, and a lack of knowledge and understanding of all the issues, the resort really only adopts certain practices from the code.

5.3.5: What concerns do operators have related to the code of conduct?
Clearly, one concern expressed by a number of operators is the cost of adopting practices identified within the code. A number of managers expressed some understanding of an issue, and the need for some practices, but indicated an inability to implement the desired practices or technologies owing to the cost.

Another concern mentioned related to how broadly the Code of Conduct is applied. It was felt that there was a contradiction in seeking to apply certain behaviours on resorts, that there was no means of applying to local communities. An example given was the shell markets. While resorts may see the importance of protecting the reefs, and not promoting the sale of shells to tourists, it was not possible for resort managers to tell local people not to sell shells.

5.4: Discussion

The research has provided some understanding of the perspectives of local operators towards the local environment and its management as well as their attitudes towards the NTTA and its Code of Conduct. The above results raise a number of questions worthy of discussion.

The research has highlighted the relationship between a lack of understanding of environmental issues and challenges and perception of the importance of those issues. Stabler (1997) observed that “only when awareness has been achieved is it possible to encourage the tourism industry sectors …. to adopt business practices and behaviour which may facilitate the attainment of the goals implied by sustainable tourism.” Thus a lack of education and understanding of specific issues can greatly affect the likelihood of any code being implemented. Amongst the NTTA operators interviewed, we have found a response to the code is to pick and choose practices, which is in part based on the perception of importance of those practices/issues, which is in turn related to the level of awareness and knowledge of the operators as well as their financial capacity.

The NTTA, according to some members, provides opportunities for them to learn about better practices and technologies, and work together. This is where the Code of Conduct is seen as a useful guide. A question arises of who is gaining the benefit of NTTA meetings and the Code of Conduct? While managers were generally aware of the existence of the code, their awareness of the meaning or purpose of certain elements contained within the code was often limited. At the next level of staff within the resorts, knowledge of the code and of environmental matters seemed to be minimal. Understanding of the code amongst staff often did not go beyond the need to not cut trees, and to protect the coral. Any awareness that managers may be deriving from NTTA meetings is not being passed down through their staff. As well, the meaning and purpose of the Code of Conduct is not being interpreted to the staff in an integrated sense. If the code is presented to staff at all, it is by selecting and focussing on a small number of specific but separate points of concern, such as protecting trees and coral.

Another question arising from the research relates to the role of the NTTA within the local tourism industry. While the NTTA has outlined a code of conduct for member operators, this code is not followed by members. While there have been discussions at NTTA meetings of individual issues, there appears to be little follow-up or assessment of the progress in implementation of the code. It seems that the members do not value the Code of Conduct as a whole, but see it as a guide only. It
is also a document that is seen by some as being of limited practicality and relevance to day-to-day running of the resorts. The research suggests that though some operators seem to enjoy NTTA meetings, they are seen as more of a social activity than leading to any real change or outcome.

This raises the question of ‘who is the NTTA’? Is the NTTA perceived by local operators as being their own organisation, established locally to achieve their own ends? To a certain extent the answer may be yes, as the value of building a local group for common marketing and learning was identified. But to some extent, the answer seems to be ‘no’ – some elements of the NTTA membership, such as the Code of Conduct, are not recognised as being locally driven, and owned, and thus have limited commitment. For a Code of Conduct to be implemented, it needs to be more closely connected with the experience of the local operators and their practical capacities. Perhaps there needs to be an effort to more directly relate environmental performance to business management and economic performance, for example by identifying the costs and benefits (economic savings) of adopting different practices and technologies at a local level. A Code of Conduct also needs greater ownership at a local level. This can only be achieved by working with local people (managers and staff) to identify the best local approaches to deal with certain issues, providing people with a commitment to identified solutions. Clearly also, from the above discussion, a code needs to be better connected to information provided regarding environmental issues, to a raising of awareness regarding more broad environmental problems, and presented across the island communities (staff and village residents) as an integrated response to broad environmental concerns (global, regional and local).

According to Weaver (2001) codes of conduct are: industry general, give guides to appropriate behaviour and membership requires no participation. Weaver considers them to be the weakest form of quality control because of their vagueness, assumption of self regulation, lack of any concrete time lines or commitments and the lack of any concrete time lines or commitments and the lack of any penalties for non-adherence. These drawbacks are definitely reflected in the application of the Nacula Tikina Tourism Association (NTTA)’s Code of Conduct. Statements such as ‘to only use cleaning products that do not damage or harm the environment’ and ‘to ensure each property has installed best practice sewage disposal facilities’ (NTTA 2002) are non-specific and would be fairly meaningless and confusing to someone with little understanding of concepts such as ‘best practice’ or who has no information on the link between cleaning products and environmental harm, or on alternatives available. Some statements are more direct and clear but they do not provide adequate information to inform members of the need for such practices. The development of this code has assumed that there is equal knowledge about environmental issues by NTTA members but this is definitely not the case.

The NTTA does appear to be a significant source of information about sustainability and sustainable tourism for member operators. It provides a focus for the gathering of information and a forum for discussion, but it provides little in the way of action. While it is clearly up to members to adopt policies, to implement the practices discussed, there was some frustration that the NTTA had not established systems to go beyond just talking. Another point raised that seemed to undermine some individuals’ commitment to the NTTA and the code was the sporadic and irregular nature of the NTTA meetings. They are scheduled to occur every two months but in the past six months, only one has occurred. This would undoubtedly lead to many stakeholders questioning the relevance and/or legitimacy of the organisation and therefore those things it tries to promote. According to one resort manger the meetings involve a lot of ideological chatting but the outcomes of the discussions are generally stalled projects or ideas that just fizzle out. This could also lead to the disheartening of members. The lack of consultation with local people and the non-specific and weakly applied nature of the Code could also contribute to a sense of disregard and disrespect for the NTTA code by the member resorts.
6: Project E:

Title: Tourists and their expectations of Fijian culture

Students: Tim Benstead, Hugh Cartwright

6.1: Aim:
This project sought to answer the question: “Are well traveled tourists more likely to seek immersion in Fijian culture than their less traveled counterparts?” In dealing with this question, the project needed to gather background information on tourists, such as their age, gender, occupation, education level, nationality and so on. The project also needed to investigate the tourists’ travel history and why they had visited Fiji and what they expected to do and see on their visit. This required exploration of such things as previous travel experience and experience of indigenous cultures, travel patterns, details of this trip including length of time away, but also their expectations of what they would do while visiting the resort(s) in Fiji. The hope was to build a picture of what the tourists desired and expected in relation to experiencing Fijian culture, and relate this to other factors.

6.2: Methodology

This research adopted a qualitative approach to gathering data, and consisted of undertaking face to face interviews with tourists on Nacula Island. This approach allowed time to be spent with the informants to gather a detailed understanding of their travel history, patterns and expectations. The approach also offered flexibility in the process to allow for prompting and further exploration of areas of particular relevance to individual informants.

A total of 7 interviews were undertaken with tourists. These interviewees were selected opportunistically, on the basis of who we met in and around Safe Landing Resort, and who had the time and interest to discuss their travel interests with us. Guests were generally busy during the day, so most interviews were conducted in the evenings after dinner was completed, with a couple of interviews being completed in the morning after breakfast.

We began the process with a detailed list of questions that we wanted to ask. After the first interview, we realized that the questions proposed were too narrow in their focus, and altered our approach and our expectations of the interviews. We developed a different approach to our interviews where we used key topics or headings as prompts for broader questions and discussion. These key topics included: personal background, motivations for visit, past travel experience and current travel plan, perceptions of Fiji culture, participation in Fiji and expected activities.

Following is a compilation from the work of Tim Benstead and Hugh Cartwright. The presentation of results and much of the discussion is based around a review of the original interview notes by Dr Rik Thwaites, as student reports did not adequately deal with the research questions. Part of the discussion draws directly from the work of Tim Benstead.

6.3: Results

6.3.1: Who were they?
The small group of informants were of limited diversity in background and demographics, though this does not necessarily reflect the spread of tourists on the island at the time of the research. All
informants were within the 20 to 30 year age group (1x20, 2x21, 1x29, 3x30), and mostly female (6 female, 1 male). Four of the informants were from Britain (one of whom is now living permanently in France), two from Canada, and one Australian. The informants were mostly university trained, with two recreational therapists, two recent graduates with degrees in History and Chinese studies and in Philosophy, a current student studying French and Italian, a graduate with a degree in European Politics now director of a commercial ski and snowboarding school, and finally a carpenter who completed a trade apprenticeship and a TAFE business management course.

6.3.2: Past travel experience
All the informants had previous experience of international travel. Some had quite wide experience, and had traveled to many different countries and continents, one had visited over 60 countries. The reasons for travel varied, including family, work, leisure and relaxation, sporting events, adventure, seeking cultural differences, broadening horizons and taking a holiday between seasons at work. While the informants came from only three countries (Britain, Canada, Australia), their travels had taken them to many countries. The most popular region was Europe, which was mentioned six times, while Asia was mentioned four times (mostly Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia). Other countries/regions mentioned as previous travel destinations included: New Zealand (3), Britain (2), Bali (2), China (2), Australia (2), USA (2), South America (2), Canada (1), India (1), Africa (1), and the Middle East (1). Only one of the informants had previously visited Fiji.

6.3.3: Nature of trip
Two of the seven informants were traveling alone, the other five traveling with their partner or a friend. The longest visit to Fiji was two weeks, the shortest 4 days, while the longest trip was two and a half months, compared to the shortest only the 6 days in Fiji. For most informants, their visit to Fiji was a minor element of a larger trip, not the main attraction. One visitor was on a 6 day trip from Australia, just to Fiji. One informant had won the ticket to Fiji in a raffle in Canada, and was spending two weeks in Fiji, with short stopovers in traveling to and fro. For the rest, Fiji was a brief stop-over on a journey involving other destinations such as Australia and New Zealand, that seemed as an afterthought rather than a primary objective. One informant reported that she had had to select an island stop-over somewhere in the pacific to get the cheaper fare, and had chosen Fiji. All of the informants were staying Safe Landing Resort when interviewed, but most were only staying there for two nights. It was common for informants to list two or three resorts where they were planning to spend a few nights.

6.3.4: Motivation for visit to Fiji
The only informant to have previously visited Fiji, reported that she had come to Fiji from Britain to unwind, to get a good tan and to meet people. An important motivation amongst the other informants was that Fiji was somewhere new, that this was a new place and culture for them to explore. Common motivations for travel in general for these well-travelled informants were to seek somewhere new, to seek adventure or engage in adventurous activities, to experience or learn about different cultures and to see family and friends. Visiting Fiji was mentioned in reference to all these motivations, although it was a side trip in traveling to see family. The Canadian woman who won the tickets in the raffle said she would not have come to Fiji, she likes the cold more than the beach, but that she had come to clear her head, and was seeking ‘adventure activities from different cultures, like in “The Amazing Race”’. Relaxation was mentioned by a number of informants, although a few informants indicated that they didn’t like ‘just sitting around’. The opportunity to ‘discover’ or ‘experience’ a different culture was mentioned a number of times, whereas one informant who was traveling to visit family and had added Fiji because a stopover was required, said this was her first visit to a tropical place and she could now say she had been to a tropical

Report on research undertaken during a visit to Yasawa Islands, Fiji, September 2005.
island. A number of informants also noted that they were motivated to come to Fiji because they thought it was cheaper.

The activities proposed (or engaged in) by the informants were as might be expected for visitors to the Yasawas. These included relaxing, reading, going to the beach, sunbathing, snorkeling, reef hopping, diving, boat trips, sailing, taking the cave trip, visiting a village and seeing dances or performances. For some these activities were limited by budget, one guest saying she could participate only in free activities, and this excluded many activities offered on the resorts.

A number of informants talked about what they would like to have done, but for one reason or another could not. These activities included hiking in the hills, kayaking the coast and sailing. Some of the desired activities were not available, but also, informants were often constrained by their travel partners. A number of informants indicated that other people have different interests or desires for what they want to do, and that traveling with a partner ‘compromises your activities’. There was also talk of cultural activities - what was desired and what was presented, but this will be considered in the next section.

6.3.5: What did they expect of Fijian culture?
The expectations and experiences of informants were discussed in relation to a number of things, activities as outlined above, and Fijian culture. Some interviews, however, seemed to become more focused on the experience as a tourist, what was or was not provided by resorts, good and bad elements of their visit. As a result, not all interviews specifically dealt with the issue of expectations of culture, and the manner in which culture was discussed varied considerably.

A typical response was that visitors would like some kind of cultural experience, to interact with local people in some meaningful way, to learn about the local culture. A couple of the informants said that they would like to have had the opportunity for a village stay, to eat with local families, stay in their houses, and be able to ‘view’ (and participate in?) daily activities. This expectation was described by one informant as being more than ‘just a village visit’. Another informant who was interested in a cultural experience ‘if it was available’, but said she did not want to see a ‘staged cultural show’ but ‘would prefer to see what it is actually like with a visit during the day’. One visitor expressed a desire to learn more about local history, and wanted to visit archaeological sites. One well traveled informant observed that going to the village will have an effect on the village, ‘especially the kids’, so she did not feel that she needed to do that, but would like to visit a school which would show more of the real culture. A couple of informants seemed to be not very interested in the local people. The focus of their visit was the beach, the tan, the snorkeling and so on. Three visitors identified the Lonely Planet guide as the source of their knowledge and expectations relating to Fijian culture.

6.3.6: The Fijian cultural experience
The informants expressed a range of positive views about Fijian people as being ‘laid back and friendly’, ‘happy-go-lucky’, ‘extremely friendly and don’t expect much in return’, and ‘welcoming and hospitable’. This last tourist compared Fijians to American hospitality in Los Angeles which is very hostile, and to Europe where ‘they are all up themselves’. One visitor considered that ‘the Fijians value you for coming to Fiji’. A different interpretation of this was presented by some informants, one who felt that while Fijians are happy people, they are not hospitable as it is all about money. This theme of money seemed to influence the views of a number of people. Even those with positive views of Fijian people offered negative comments on their tourist experience, and the experience of culture that related to money. While some expected Fiji to be a cheap destination, the experience was that it is more expensive than expected. This was particularly
highlighted by the additional costs incurred for activities, including cultural activities. Some visitors did not seem to understand the nature of sevu sevu, nor to see the reason for having to pay for every separate activity, dancing, village visit. Some tourists felt exploited by this, particularly in light of experiences at different resorts related to cost of activities, and additional charges. Having to pay for drinking water at one resort was seen as a negative part of the experience, as was having to pay a fixed price for food as a package. Being confronted with a credit card machine on arrival was also seen as a very negative part of the experience at one resort. By the time all the additional costs were added to basic up front costs (which were known before arrival), the visit was becoming much more expensive than some guests expected.

An alternative perspective on the issue of money was recognized by some informants. One experienced tourist recognized how tourists are seen by locals as bringing money, and that the value of money to the tourist is very different to the local. She was happy to spend money on things that she wanted and felt the prices were reasonable. Another visitor felt that most of the cultural experiences would be impossible to get ‘by yourself’, so she understood that you have to pay to participate in local culture. There was also some surprise expressed by some regarding the state of development of the local people. One visitor expected to see ‘poverty’ amongst the villagers, another did not expect to see concrete houses and even the basic services that do exist in the village.

Food, of course, was one focus of the cultural experience. When mentioned, this was seen as a negative. Some visitors had expected to eat traditional Fijian food, but were not clear on what this would be (‘I expected curries and Thai style food’). One visitor was disappointed that Fiji has become so westernized. She expected traditional food, and was concerned that she was not eating much fish or curries. One had hoped to have the opportunity to sit with the women, to help them cook, away from tourists, ‘to learn about culture…. To relax and eat good food’.

While some informants expressed disappointment that their experience of Fijian culture had not met the expectations raised by friends or by the Lonely Planet guidebook, a couple of informants reflected differently on the tourist expectations and Fijian culture. One noted that Fijian culture is hard to find as a tourist in these resorts, that what people expect of their visit is the beach and maybe a kava night. Another noted that the culture experienced on the resort is not the real Fijian culture, that sun, sand and surf is ‘not the Fijian way’.

6.4: Discussion

There is clearly a tension within many tourists between the desire for a ‘tropical island’ holiday, and expectations of local people and their culture. Some tourists appeared to have little knowledge of Fijian culture before they arrived, and little understanding of the nature of cultural opportunities or experiences that might arise in visiting a ‘resort’. While some mentioned such things as dancing and fire-walking as performances, generally performances for tourists were seen as being unauthentic - ‘the dances may have lost their meaning due to over-performance.’ At the same time, some tourists seemed to have unreasonable expectations of the experience that they might have as a tourist – for example the expressed expectation to spend time with local women and no other tourists, cooking, chatting, eating, relaxing, in other words, to be immediately accepted as part of a local community during a two-day visit. Part of the tension may arise for many because the primary motivation for visiting Fiji is the beach, the relaxation, the tan. Culture is a secondary motivation for some people, and thus their level of knowledge is low, they don’t know what to expect or what is available. The final question in the interviews was ‘What do you wish to gain from your visit to Fiji?’ Only two people responded to this with any reference to culture. It is also possible that the interviews stimulated their own bias. It seems likely that many of the interviewees had not really
thought about Fiji as offering a cultural experience, but were more concerned with their tan, and relaxing on the beach. The questions on culture and their cultural experience may then provoke poorly considered or ill-informed responses. These responses may not truly reflect tourist expectations of their visit, but do reflect the level and nature of the understanding of visitors, and the information they have gathered before their visit.

The nature of information provided through various promotional avenues is very important. Brochures, websites, and particularly the Lonely Planet guide influence tourists travel choices and expectations. Information on activities, and particularly opportunities for cultural learning and exchange, seems to be lacking in commonly available sources. A better informed visitor with more realistic expectations might be desirable, but the tourism industry in general and resorts in particular will need to consider how to achieve this.

Promotional material is also raising expectations, in some cases, that are not being met, by promoting activities that are rarely if ever offered. An example of this was the expectation that visitors would be able to engage in a ‘kava’ ceremony, but that the resort had not offered any such ceremony.

The availability of well planned cultural activities may also be a consideration for resorts and local communities. Some visitors perceived a lack of culturally oriented activities at the resorts, but when asked about what activities they would like, there was little understanding of what might be possible. There was also a general disappointment in the ‘staged’ cultural performance of after dinner dancing to taped music at the resort, this was not considered to provide any real connection to local culture. Yet, some tourists who had not experienced this dancing, expressed the desire for the resort to put on something. Given that most visitors only stay a few nights, there is a need for resorts to consider what opportunities they can provide for guests. And this needs to be considered in the light of the response of some guests to certain types of performance, and of some guests to paying extra money for any activity. There is also a clear need to consider the capacity of the community to provide performances more often, or to provide a greater variety of cultural exchanges with visitors, and the effect that these changes may have within the community.

The following discussion of the key research question is modified from the report of student, Tim Benstead.

6.4.1: Research Question
Our findings from analysis and interpretation of the data indicate that our hypothesis of ‘Are well travelled tourists more likely to seek immersion in Fijian culture than their less travelled counterparts’ is inconclusive.

Our objectives were to find out about the tourists’ life in relation to;
• education level,
• occupation,
• age,
• nationality etc.
• travel history

We then wanted to look at issues associated with their visit to Fiji, such as:
• motivations for travel,
• expectation,
• where they had been or
• where they are going and
• if they had participated in any activities at the resorts or planning to participate in any.

From all the tourists’ interviewed, all had completed a degree or trade qualification of some description in their chosen field. Some had been working in their field for a number of years, but some were only very recent graduates.

The second objective was to find out the participants’ travel history. All tourists’ interviewed had travelled overseas or internationally previously and on a number of occasions. This was to find out what sort of countries the tourist had travelled to previously and whether they were similar to Fiji and their motivations for this travel.

The motivations for travel over the years varied but for the majority of the interviewees’ it was for the purpose of discovery, culture, relaxation or family. For this particular trip most signified a cultural experience to be one of the motivators along with sun and relaxation. This and finding out what activities people where going to participate in or had participated in gave us the majority of our key findings’ to prove or dismiss our hypothesis.

Our findings indicate that all interviewees expressed a desire to participate in cultural activities but only one tourist actually had prior to their interview. Some indicated that later in the trip they wished to participate in cultural activities at other resorts, but in relation to location of a village from the resort interviewed at, I don’t believe that participation eventuated.

After fulfilling our objectives set out we could begin to look at proving or rejecting our hypothesis. Our findings’ showed that tourists’ would not necessarily participate in cultural activities even if they have had previous international travel experience, or experienced other cultures. It all depends on the;
• motivations for the trip
• whom they are travelling with
• whether clear activities are provided at the resorts
• perception of the culture
• perceptional of the cultural activities
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