

Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor Research

RESEARCH newsletter

Issue No. 1 | February, 2019

▶ FNU Research News February 2019

2019 begins with a research seminar presented by our Vice Chancellor, Professor Nigel Healey.

FNU Academics this year will be able to develop their research portfolios with four research funding schemes: Research Preparatory Fund; Seed Funding Scheme; Industry Collaborative Funding Scheme; and International Visiting Fellowship Scheme.

Journal publications are encouraged by supporting conference attendance, and new incentive awards have been introduced to recognize research achievements.

▶ Research Seminar

The Importance of Research for your Career and for FNU
Professor Nigel Healey, Vice Chancellor, Fiji National University

Abstract

The core mission of a university is to create knowledge (through research) and disseminate knowledge (through teaching). Both academics and universities are, accordingly, judged on the quality and impact of their research. For an individual academic, promotion at his or her own university is largely determined by research productivity. For staff seeking to move to another university, nationally or internationally, a strong research record becomes even more critical, since the new university can easily judge the quality of research outputs, but has much less information about a candidate's teaching effectiveness.

For universities, quality is often judged (e.g. in global and national league tables) by the average citations per academic, by the number of PhD completions or by the external research income generated. For public universities, their government grants are increasingly linked to their research output, which is measured by a regular national research assessment exercise. The quality of research papers, as reflected by the acceptance rates and impact factors of the peer-reviewed journals in which they are published, is being increasingly evaluated alongside the societal impact of the work, as evidenced by advances in technology or impact on public policy.

For anyone seeking to build a successful academic career and support the development of their own institution, it is critical to develop a clearly focused research agenda which can be sustained over time, with the aim of contributing to knowledge and society and establishing the academic as an intellectual leader in a definable field. Publishing in a scattergun way in predatory journals and presenting at worthless predatory conferences is a waste of energy and money and undermines the credibility of an academic with his or her peers.

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Research Seminar

Biodata - Professor Nigel Healey

Professor Nigel Healey is Vice-Chancellor of Fiji National University, a position he took up in mid-2016. He has previously served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) and Head of College at Nottingham Trent University in the UK and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) and Dean at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand.

His current research interests are in the internationalization of higher education, transnational education and higher education policy and management and he publishes and presents regularly on his work (see <https://fnu.academia.edu/NigelHealey>). Professor Healey has managed multinational research and economic development projects in Europe and the Asia-Pacific. He is presently chair of the QS-APPLE international academic conference committee, which organizes an international education conference each year in the Asia-Pacific.

Professor Healey holds a BA (Hons.) Economics from the University of Nottingham, an MA Economics from the University of Leeds, an MBA from the University of Warwick, a DBA from the University of Bath and a PhD Management from Nottingham Trent University. He is a Chartered Manager, a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Management and a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Time: 2:30pm – 4:30pm | **Date:** Friday 22nd February, 2019

Venue: Valelevu Lecture Theatre (LT01), Nasinu Campus and via video conferencing at the Library Conference Room, Natabua Campus

RSVP: Ms. Ashweeta Sharma | **Email:** ashweeta.sharma@fnu.ac.fj **by COB 14th February, 2019 for catering purposes.**



Research Funding News

Research on Cognitive Analysis of Mental Health Tools

Principal Investigator: Dr Odille Chang, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

Research Team: Dr William May and Dr Wayne Irava, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

Full Title of the Project: Cognitive analysis of use of Mhealth tools by community health nurses for early identification of depression and suicide risk in Pacific Island Countries

Collaborative Partners: Professor Sriram Iyengar (Texas A&M University) and Professor Vimla Patel (New York Academy of Medicine)

Project Description: This research is a pioneering exploration into a new paradigm for the design of mHealth technologies for task shifting to Community Health Nurses (CHNs). Specifically, it will identify and compare cognitive processes of CHNs underlying utilization of both paper and mHealth tools. This mechanistic insight is critical if mHealth potential is to be fully realized in low resource settings. It is expected that this research will result in mHealth tools that will be immediately acceptable to CHNs, enhance their effectiveness, decrease perceived workload, and will have high impact on mental health outcomes. Such tools are urgently needed. The partnership between Fiji National University and Fiji Ministry of Health and Medical Services extends a long-term collaboration. The training component of this project will be the cornerstone of capacity building on mHealth research and development in Fiji. Training to sustain the current and future mHealth researchers of Fiji will improve the overall health of Fiji population and support eventual extension of mHealth tools to all PICs.

Relevance to Fiji: The Pacific region has very high rates of depression and suicide and few trained mental health specialists. The existing community health nurses in Fiji are not all trained in mental health. A potential solution is to provide screening tools on mobile phones enabling them to perform early identification of those at risk for depression and suicide. In order to design these tools and comprehend their effectiveness, there is a need to understand the cognitive processes of the nurses as they assess people who may have these mental health problems.

Funding Body: United States National Institute for Mental Health Grant

Amount: USD 103,453.29 for 2 years

Research on Bio-markers of Pre-eclampsia



Principal Investigator: Dr Gausal Azam Khan – College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

Research Team: : Dr Iqbal Alam, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, Dr Abhirup, India; Dr MGM Khan, Dr M Ali, Dr Fong, Dr Litia, Dr Pushpa

Full Title of the Project: Early detection of bio-markers for pre-eclampsia

Collaborative Partners: Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, India

Project Description: Pre-eclampsia is a major cause of maternal mortality & morbidity particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Multi-faceted factors including hypoxia, inflammation of undetermined mechanisms impact the onset & progression of this disease which cause immunological alteration of placental micro-environment & impaired angiogenesis. However, the major challenge in modern obstetrics is the lack of early cost effective method of prediction & prevention. Patients with no clinical sings of inflammation i.e. sterile inflammation

Research on Bio-markers of Pre-eclampsia

(SI), but suffering from pre-eclampsia is poorly understood. Therefore, it is proposed that: (1) Early detection of SI molecules (i.e. eDNA, eRNA, HMGB1, vWF, HSPs, uric acid, ATP etc.) as biochemical indicators of pre-eclampsia, (2) development of diagnostics kit from the positive candidate molecules, could probably help early diagnosis, prevention & intervention of target population at risk.

Relevance to Fiji: Preeclampsia is a leading cause of maternal mortality and morbidity in Fiji. As per the present data, it accounts for 10.6 per 100000 live birth of maternal mortality rate in Fiji (FJPH, Maternal Mortality in Fiji 2008-2012 May 5, 2016, Authors: Bythell M, Nand D, Fong J, Vuadreu R). So, early detection is the best possible way of prevention & management of this problem. Therefore, the low cost diagnostic tool with higher predictive value at an early stage of preeclampsia will be preferable.

Funding Body: Grant Challenges Canada (GCC), Canada | **Amount:** CAD 94,889.00

Research on Healthy Child Promising Future



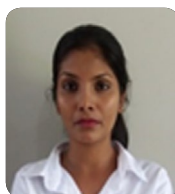
Principal Investigator: Dr Pragya Singh
College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences



Research Team: Top Left - Bottom Right: Dr Aneley Getahun, Ms Solene Bertrand, Dr Masoud Mohammadnezhad, Dr Iliasapeci Kubuabola, Mrs Sabiha S. Khan and Ms Arishma Prasad

Full Title of the Project: Healthy Child Promising Future: Promoting health in Primary School Settings

Collaborative Partners: *Technical and financial partners:* FNU, Pacific Community (SPC), Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts, Ministry of Health and Medical services, Wallis & Futuna (Agence de santé et direction de l'enseignement), New-Caledonia (Agence sanitaire et sociale).



Project Description: The 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) identified prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer as one of the major challenges for the health sector by 2030. These diseases pose real social and economic

burdens for countries and present obstacles to the development of nations. Risk factors leading to the emergence of NCDs include overweight and obesity, which are very common among Pacific populations, especially children.

Obesity and overweight are associated with an imbalance between calorie intake and energy expenditure. Several factors contribute to the occurrence of obesity in children as such changing dietary patterns and food supply, reduction in physical activity as well as the modification of lifestyles.

Obesity in children causes cardiovascular diseases, hypertension and orthopaedic problems in adulthood moreover around 40% to 70% of obese children become obese adults.

The project involves two countries of the Pacific: Fiji and Wallis & Futuna and was carried out in 4 phases:

1 - Pre-test phase:

A consultation meeting with representatives from the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (Fiji), Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts (Fiji), Sanitary and Social agency of New Caledonia's (ASSNC), Depart of Education (Wallis & Futuna), Department of Health (Wallis & Futuna) to discuss the need for developing new health education tools suitable for children.

2 - Pre intervention phase:

Pre intervention phase entailed Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) questionnaires given to the children and their parents were asked to respond. Focus group discussions were conducted for the parents and children in both the countries to better understand children's eating habits.

3 - Intervention phase:

Intervention was conducted for a period of six months in both the countries using health communication campaign comprising of messages given in weekly sessions to the children and in monthly sessions to the parents in the schools. Every day 30 minutes of physical activity session was also conducted for the children in schools.

4 - Evaluation phase:

For determining the efficacy of the project the same KAP questionnaires used at the time of pre-test were administered again in both the countries. Anthropometric assessments (weight, height and waist circumference) were also conducted in the same way as at the pre intervention phase. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) organized with parents in randomly selected one school in Wallis and Futuna was organized. FGD was also conducted with the invited parents in Samabula Primary in Fiji.

Relevance to Fiji: A first intervention study conducted in Fiji for children and health education material especially designed for the children was made available in Fiji.

Funding Body: French Pacific Fund 2017, FNU, SPC | **Amount:** FJD 132,890.00



Principal Investigator: Dr Salesh Kumar – College of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries

Full Title of the Project: Enhanced fruit production and postharvest handling systems for Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga

Collaborative Partners: University of Sunshine Coast; University of Queensland; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; Ministry of Agriculture of Fiji;

Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forests and Fisheries of Tonga; Nature's Way Cooperatives

Project Description: This project will support the development of resilient tropical fruit value chains in Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga. Five regionally significant fruit crops which are papaya, pineapple, mango, breadfruit, and citrus fruits have been selected for this project.

The overall aim of the project is to increase the economic and disaster resilience of selected tropical fruit value chains. The four objectives of this project are to increase the efficiency of fruit value-chains through improved productivity and postharvest handling practices, improve climatic resilience of breadfruit through improved canopy management and investigating the diversity of breadfruit tree form, provide targeted capacity building to private sector and government extension services in support of identified fruit value-chains and enhance the engagement of smallholder farmers and communities in functional supply chains to maximize poor-poor and livelihood resilience outcomes.

Relevance to Fiji: Fruit production in the Pacific represents less than 10% of the overall horticultural output, despite favourable climates and increasing market opportunities. In part, this situation can be attributed to a prevalence of low-intensity and semi-commercial fruit production systems, poor postharvest handling practices and limited value chain development.

This Project intends to support Fiji's pineapple and papaya exports with enhanced sea freight practices.

Funding Body: The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)

Amount: AUD 46,050.00

Research Achievements

Howell, J., Pedrana, A., Cowie, B. C., Doyle, J., Getahun, A., Ward, J., & Malani, J. (2018). Aiming for the elimination of viral hepatitis in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands and Territories: Where are we now and barriers to meeting World Health Organization targets by 2030. *Journal of Gastroenterology and Hepatology*. DOI:10.1111/jgh.14457 – Q1

Latu, C., Moodie, M., Coriakula, J., Waqa, G., Snowdon, W., & Bell, C. (2018). Barriers and Facilitators to Food Policy Development in Fiji. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*, 39(4), 621-631. – Q1

Raj, L. K., Creaton, A., & Philips, G. (2019). Improving emergency department trauma care in Fiji: Implementing and assessing the trauma call system. *Emergency Medicine Australasia*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1742-6723.13225> – Q1

Reiher, A. & Mohammadnezhad, M. (2019). A qualitative exploration of factors affecting mothers of malnourished children under 5 years old in Kiribati [version 1; referees: awaiting peer review]. *F1000Research*, 8(83). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.17732.1> – Q1

Shah, S., Moroca, A., & Bhat, J. A. (2018). Neo-traditional approaches for ensuring food security in Fiji Islands. *Environmental Development*, 28, 83-100. – Q1

Sohail, M. (2019). Job Satisfaction among the Library and Information Professionals in Fiji A Survey. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 39(1), 47-53. <https://doi.org/10.14429/djlit.39.1.13330> – Q2

Sohail, M., Maksood, M. and Salauddin, N. (2019). Use of Electronic Journals by Research Scholars and Postgraduate Students of University of Delhi and Jamia Millia Islamia: A Comparative Analysis. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 2137. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/2137> – Q2

School of Education Research Writing Retreat

The School of Education Research Writing Retreat was held from the 17th to the 19th of January 2019, at Vuda Hideaway Resort.

The Retreat was led and coordinated by Professor Eileen Honan and attended by twenty staff members who are enrolled in PhDs or Masters by Thesis programmes in the School of Education. The program included four key plenaries. A welcome address by Pro Vice Chancellor Research Professor Mohini Singh, a motivational address by Dean of College of Humanities and Education Dr Eci Nabalarua, an overview of Fijian and Pacific Theoretical Frameworks by Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, and an overview of post structural and postcolonial theories by Professor Eileen Honan.

The program focused on helping staff develop techniques for reading and writing more efficiently and effectively. These strategies included the use of a Pomodoro Technique, which is a structured and timed sustained silent writing activity. This proved to be a successful part of the program, contributing to a focus on writing achievements. Over the three days, writing sessions produced a total of 35,621 words written by the twenty participants.

Another featured activity was the use of an Achievement Board. At the end of each day participants wrote, on sticky notes, their achievements for the day and added them to a display. This allowed the organizers to see the increase in focus and purpose throughout the retreat. An examination of the

School of Education Research Writing Retreat



achievements listed indicates a focus on developing theoretical frameworks for research proposals, and on reading and re-reading important texts. Forty two papers including journal articles and book chapters were specifically mentioned and listed in these achievement notes.

These reading and writing activities were supplemented by physical activities such as walking on the beach, swimming, kayaking, and water volleyball. The careful balance of study and leisure time activities, together with a menu planned around healthy choices, contributed to the successful outcomes of the retreat.

Upcoming Events

FNU Research Seminar

Title: 'The Importance of Research for your Career and for FNU'

Presenter: Professor Nigel Healey, Vice Chancellor, FNU | **Time:** 2:30pm – 4:30pm | **Date:** Friday 22nd February, 2019

Venue: Valelevu Lecture Theatre (LT01), Nasinu Campus and via video conferencing at the Library Conference Room, Natabua Campus

RSVP: Ms. Ashweeta Sharma | **Email:** ashweeta.sharma@fnu.ac.fj by **COB 14th February, 2019 for catering purposes.**

Pacific Resilience Meeting

- The Pacific Resilience Meeting brings together the Pacific Climate Change Community, the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management, the low carbon development community of practice and the Pacific Humanitarian Partnership. The PRM will showcase and promote the principles of the FRDP that:
- Puts risk and resilience into a development perspective;
- Protects human rights;
- Builds genuine and enduring partnerships;
- Prioritizes the needs of those most vulnerable;
- Integrates gender and social considerations;
- Regards culture, faith and traditional knowledge as valuable resources;
- Focuses on sustainability.
- Focuses on building resilience in the pacific

Date: 30th April to 2nd May, 2019 | **Venue:** The University of the South Pacific

Contact Information:

Email: Alisi Tuqa alisit@pipso.org.fj | **Email:** Anais Rouveyrol anaisr@spc.int | **Email:** TeeaTirateeat@forumsec.org

External Research Opportunities

Global Korea Scholarship

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea will invite two (2) nationals of the Republic of Fiji for the “2019 Global Korea Scholarship: Korean Government Scholarship Program” to be conducted in Korea for the academic year 2019 - 2024. The scholarships are meant for graduate studies (Master’s or Doctoral) and research (postdoctoral, professor exchange, or professionals of education, science, culture and international fields) programmes.

Website: www.studyinkorea.go.kr | **Closing Date:** 15th March, 2019

Please refer to FNUPR: MIRP – 184/2019 – Global Korea Scholarship for further details.

Newton International Fellowships Scheme 2019

The British Academy is now inviting applications to the Newton International Fellowship scheme, which is run jointly with the Royal Society and Academy of Medical Sciences. Application form is now available online on the Flexi- Grant application system. The deadline for applications is Wednesday 27 March 2019, 3pm UK time.

2019 Taiwan ICDF International Higher Education Scholarship Program

This Program provides 70 scholarships for English-taught Master and PhD courses.

Website: <http://www.icdforg.tw/ct.asp?xItem=12505&CtNode=30316&mp=2> | **Online Application:** <http://www.icdforg.tw/ICDF/TSP/WelcomeStart.aspx> | **Closing Date:** 15th March, 2019.

Please refer to FNUPR: MIRP - 122/2019 - 2019 Taiwan ICDF International Higher Education Scholarship Program for further details.

ECCAM Scholarship Project

PhD Exchange Mobility. **Please refer to FNUPR:** FNUPR: MIRP - 127/2019 - Calls for Application for ECCAM Ph.D. Scholarship for further details.

FNU Internal Research Funding Schemes

Research Preparatory Fund \$1,000

- For the purchase of research material not freely available online or supported by the Library for the purpose of writing a funding application.

Seed Funding Scheme \$15,000

- A seed funding scheme of FJD 15,000 maximum for the duration of twelve months, providing preliminary funding for projects aligned to the University strategic priority areas, for developing a track record for a larger external fund.
- HDR candidates can apply for this fund jointly with their senior supervisors to cover the costs of their data collection.

Industry Collaborative Funding Scheme \$25,000

- FJD 25,000 maximum with a matching amount or greater from an external partner (Industry/Government/NGO) to enhance external funds for research at the University fostering applied research.

International Visiting Fellowship Scheme \$10,000

- FJD 10,000 maximum to bring in distinguished scholars and leaders to the University.

Converting Conference Papers to Journal Publications

- Staff member gets a paper accepted for presentation at a well-recognized high standard conference in their discipline.
- Staff member seeks approval for conference attendance for paper presentation from College Dean and Associate Dean Research.
- Staff member to convert the conference paper into a highly ranked journal publication, submit the paper to the journal, present a seminar on the [journal paper](#) to the College discussing the useful outcomes of presenting at the conference, and benefits of feedback received at the conference, within three months of attending the conference.

Research Support Services @ FNU Library

- **Endnote** – for reference and bibliography management (to be available soon).
- **NVivo** – for qualitative research.
- **Qualtrix** – for online surveys (to be available soon).
- **SPSS** – for statistical analysis of data.

Research Incentives

Incentive Awards for Research Outcomes

- Patents will receive an incentive award of FJD 8,000.
- Research Books will receive a base incentive award of FJD 8,000 determined by the number of pages and authors.
- Published Journal Articles will receive incentive awards according to journal ranks:
 - Q1- FJD 5,000
 - Q2- FJD 3,000
 - Q3- FJD 2,000
 - Q4- FJD 1,000
- Creative Works will receive an incentive award of a minimum of FJD 500 and a maximum of FJD 3,000.
- Book Chapters will receive an incentive award of FJD 500.
- Externally Funded Projects will receive incentive awards based on the amount of grant secured:
 - A grant of or above FJD 600,000 will receive an incentive award of \$3,000.
 - A grant in the range of FJD 300,000 to FJD 599,999 will receive an incentive award of \$2,000.
 - A grant in the range of FJD 100,000 to FJD 299,999 will receive an incentive award of \$1,000.

International Academics at FNU for Research Collaboration

Pro Vice Chancellor Research, Professor Mohini Singh welcomed Dr Patrick Rawstone, Professor Heather Worth, Dr Sophia Lin and Dr Adam Craig from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) for discussions on collaborative research with the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences (CMNHS). Dean of the College, Dr William May and Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching Professor James Pounder also participated in the discussion. The team from UNSW have worked with CMNHS Centre for Pacific Research on the Prevention of Obesity and Non-Communicable Diseases before, and were here to renew research collaborations between the two institutes. This is also an extension of the Memorandum of Understanding between FNU and UNSW for cooperative research and research capacity development.