

Servant Leadership and Cultural Alignment to Teacher Education in Samoa

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Abstract

Servant leadership is multifaceted, relational and cross-cultural in its philosophy. The article deliberates on the presence and application of servant leadership qualities as perceived at the Faculty of Education of the National University of Samoa. The influence of servant leadership in education is considered a western type of leadership; however, indigenous organic Samoan leadership approaches have existed for centuries on care and service which are critical components of servant leadership. Greenleaf's Servant Leadership concepts are aligned to the cultural leadership approaches that are the cornerstone of Samoan society. Though the servant leadership philosophy has been widely documented in the past thirty years, indigenous organic Samoan leadership have been practiced by villages and families as an integral part of its cultural norms and a way of life. Schools and teachers on the other hand need to assess in light of this alignment the importance of the two as workable leadership approach towards coexistence in educational practice. It connects humanity and transcends physical borders and cultural orientations.

Keywords: Servant leadership, indigenous organic leadership, holistic approach, cultural, integrated, influence, teacher educators.

In Samoa, teacher educators are perceived as leaders, and the students they teach are followers. Exploring servant leadership practices of teacher educators at the Faculty of Education (FOE) of the National University of Samoa (NUS) was a motivation as the art of teaching and learning has far reaching consequences for future generations. Servant leadership as proposed by (Greenleaf 1970) is the basic desire to help others develop. His argument is based on the premise that one serves first and then leads. He posed the following questions; *'Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?'* (p. 15)

The focus of servant leadership is to provide guidance and direction for student teachers to ensure they possess the necessary competencies for the teaching profession. Faculty members' conceptualisation of servant leadership was investigated. The study hinged on the approach as conceptualised by Greenleaf (Banutu-Gomez 2004; Bjugstad et al. 2006; Blackshear 2004; Melchar & Bosco 2010; Nwogu 2004; Spears 1996; Taylor et al. 2007) highlighting the roles of leaders and followers. Greenleaf's philosophy of servant leadership addressed both the leader's and the followers' roles, suggesting that meeting the needs of the followers and encouraging the input of followers in the decision-making process would allow leaders to overcome the challenges faced by modern organisations (p. 15)

The construct of servant leadership from the Samoan context "has great promise for higher education with its emphasis on service, people and the greater good" (Wheeler 2012: xiv). This is in contrast to the selection of leaders based on qualifications and experiences. For Greenleaf a servant leader is one who guarantees other people's needs are being met first. (Avolio 2011: 8) reiterates the notion "that a leader role model for followers how to successfully influence others, he is inevitably boosting his followers' agency or efficacy to lead". (Sendjaya 2015: 1) also provides a working definition for servant leadership that is focused on a "holistic approach to leadership that engages both leaders and followers". It pivots on service, trustworthiness, relationships, ethicality, higher levels of motivation and transformation.

Background

The education system in Samoa has a colonial heritage, which has steadily been changing. Schools were introduced with the coming of the Europeans (Thomas 1993). This resulted in the indoctrination of the people from a collective whole to individualism. It was evident that competition and originality as opposed to the cultural values of collaboration, cooperation and conformity were becoming the norm in Samoan society (Duranti 1990; Helu 1991; McKinley et al. 1992; Ochs 2014; Tavana 1997 and Thomas 1978). The teaching and learning processes conducted within the classrooms were in many ways disconnected from the reality of the home and village life of many students (Utumapu-McBride et al. 2008). Retrospectively, there was little evidence of servant leadership which espoused Samoan's cultural values and approaches.

Cultural Practices versus Education

Samoa is a collaborative culture and family is foundational to village and local development (Gilson 1970 and Thomas & Postlethwaite 1984). The education system, however, is perceived as an individualistic entity (Afamasaga 2002). Cultural practices are integrated into the education system, but in so far as ensuring that the physical facilities are built and the wellbeing of staff in the schools is protected. The classroom is the prerogative of the teacher, and parents do not venture into that arena, although it has gradually changed. This paradoxical view of education has guided practice for years. Most teachers have gone through a similar system and uphold it as right and just for teachers know best the art of teaching.

Over the years, parents, politicians and the general public have lamented that education has been failing in its duty to provide students with the appropriate knowledge and skills to pursue further education and reduce student attrition. Moreover, school leavers that do not make it to places of higher learning lack expected behaviour, skills and attitudes to contribute productively to society (Afamasaga, 2002). Practising teachers believe the problem lies with the graduates that exit FOE (E. Iopu, personal communication, 18 July 2014)

Samoa Society and Education

Parents and teachers alike want their children and students to complete their education and exit to be productive members of the community (Frick & Spears 1996; Spears 1996). However, there seems to be an inconsistency in terms of parental expectations of the role of the school. Parents want their children to appropriate knowledge from the system to progress while at the same time, retain their cultural identity. While this may seem contradictory, it demonstrates the need for an approach that could merge knowledge gained from the western system of individuality, independence, unconventional and outspokenness to cultural understanding. The western servant leadership approach, conceptualised by Greenleaf, could resolve this dilemma.

These perceived disparities, if addressed, would ensure that students leave with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute positively to the community, society and the global world.

The majority of students entering the teaching profession come from strong cultural backgrounds that practice the norms and values upheld in the villages. This dramatically impacts their assimilation into the university and the world of academia. Student teachers at the FOE face problems, which are attributed to lack of motivation and disinterest but this, could be rooted in teaching being alienated from the cultural context. It becomes pertinent and paramount that a focus on servant leadership incorporating indigenous organic Samoan leadership concepts could contribute to effective teaching and learning at the FOE.

Samoan Culture

Historically, Samoan culture is collaborative. The village (*nu'u*) work together to plant the land (*fanua*), fish (*fagota*), construct house (*fale*), build canoe (*vaa*), weave (*lalaga*) artifacts, and participate in cultural ceremonies. In Samoan society, families elect their chief (*matai*) through patriarchal or matriarchal lineages (Holmes 1980). Their functions as leaders of the family (*'aiga*) are to look after the affairs of the *'aiga* and serve the family regarding *fanua*, titles (*suafa*) and the overall wellbeing of the family concerning village governance, disciplinary actions and protocols. (Mead 1928: 494) claims, "It is for its intricacy and complexity of social organisation that Samoan culture is particularly conspicuous". The bestowal of family, chiefly titles, is usually for life unless the titleholders can no longer execute their duties. Selection of the chiefly system ensures the untitled men (*aumaga* or *taule'le'a*) of families in the village are initiated into the rituals of service (Meleisea & Meleisea 1987). The *aumaga* assists the *matai* through their labour, and loyal service is rendered through the day-to-day activities (Mageo 1989; Mead 1928; Tiffany 1974).

Traditional Samoa

In traditional Samoa, service to the *matai* usually culminated in the appointment of a new chief when the incumbent steps down. Criteria used in the selection are based on consanguinity, service and personal qualities (Tiffany 1974). At present, the selection process practised is quite different and had been instituted in the years following European contact. Family *matai*s of the extended family select the new *matai*s. In most villages, anyone who is kinship regardless of gender or age is eligible (Holmes 1980). The servant-leader concept of consultation, collaboration and probable equality of opportunity is evident here.

Concept of Service in Samoa

Samoan society is based on the concept of service – service to family, church, community and nation. The idea of service as embedded in the fabric of Samoan society includes service to parents (*matua*), *matai*s, elders (*tagata matutua*) and those in authority and is sanctioned by tradition and culture. This is perceived as essential for the continuity of cultural values and familial relationships. With the advent of education, leadership took on a new meaning and indirectly a contrast to the hierarchical leadership structure of Samoan culture and tradition (Mageo 1989; Mead, 1928). Inadvertently, teachers came to be placed in a prominent position in the hierarchical structure, not through culture but by the nature of their job in serving the community.

Concept of Caring in Samoa

Caring is a significant element in the servant leadership concept. Relationship between people at home, part of the extended family or other institutions of society is an integral part of Samoan life. The Samoa expression *teu le va* meaning take care of the relationship is of great consequence (Anae 2010; Duranti 1997) which reflects the importance of maintaining peace and harmony, especially during conflict negotiations. Extending the concept to teaching is a prerequisite for a productive teacher-student relationship. As (Jones 1994: 41) points out “leaders who dismiss the need for a more democratic approach set their demise by encouraging uncaring, non-learning organisational cultures, with unethical working and learning practice, which stifle creativity and innovation, leading to poor quality of performance”

Servant Leadership and the Tautua Culture

In the Samoan cultural setting, the concept of servant leadership may reinforce the traditional view of service to become a leader, not the leader as servant first. As a perceived servant leadership society, faculty members have yet to take advantage of integrating indigenous organic Samoan leadership approaches and concepts in practice. An overarching operative framework of Samoan culture and the world of academia could provide faculty members with an alternative model to guide practice (Esera et al. 2010). Samoa embraces the service (*tautua*) culture, which can be equated to a scaffold for safety and protection. It is a form of reciprocity, a feature of the Samoan way (*fa'asamoa*) and significant to the *tautua* protocols of giving and taking. In the analogy, *tautua* is giving as in serving, but it is through giving that one receives greater rewards. (Grant 2013: 10) argues that “Givers succeed in a way that creates a ripple effect, enhancing the success of people around them...the difference lies in how the giver creates value, instead of just claiming it” More importantly, is how the giver-leader infuses value into the process. (Greenleaf and Spears 1998: 37) place a lot of emphasis on the role of institutions such as the church and the university. They believe these institutions can contribute much to society “because of their concern for values and the continuity of the culture, and because of their capacity for nurturing the serving qualities in both individuals and institutions”

Samoan Society A Servant Leadership Culture

Servant leadership principles articulated by Greenleaf are perceived to be similar to the teachings of Christianity that Samoa also embraces. Moreover, the application of servant leadership antecedents “is based on the dignity and self-worth of all people and emanates from the democratic principle that a leader’s power is generated from those who are led” (Neill & Saunders 2008: 396). Thus faculty members’ construction of servant leadership and how servant leadership worked is translated into practice. Inevitably, approaches and application of faculty members’ knowledge and understanding of indigenous organic Samoan leadership approaches and application were scrutinized. Samoan culture, despite its hierarchical structure, is believed to display a servant leadership culture, yet there is a perceived mismatch in schools. It demands the role of higher education in facilitating the concept of servant leadership in the schools and the community. Wheeler (2012: 176) proffered “Higher education deserves and needs servant

leaders now more than ever” indicating that institutions of higher education have an essential responsibility to its young people and society. Additionally, the inclusion of reflective practice is sanctioned in the *faasamoa* and legitimised in the servant leadership model.

Teacher Educators and Servant Leadership

In Samoa teacher education has a historical reputation of being collaborative a fundamental aspect of Samoan society. Its establishment and practice mirror the service background. The people in the village highly regard teachers they serve; hence, they are accorded the customary leadership honorifics *feagaiga*, literally meaning a covenant. The term had previously been bestowed to one other group, the religious ministers who are placed at the same level as the *matais* in the traditional hierarchical structure of Samoan society (Holmes 1980; Mageo 1989; Mead 1928). However, the term is the designated birthright of females in the family, a form of status where they are cared, served, and protected by male kinship (Amosa 2012). Conspicuously, the privilege given to teachers in the field denotes a relationship with the village to ensure safety, respect and wellbeing. Presumably, this view of teachers in the community is that they are leaders – and to the society, those who serve their children are leaders as children emulate and model their teachers.

There is evidence to suggest teacher educators who exhibit servant leadership principles in their teaching will have teacher graduates demonstrating similar attributes in the schools (Drury 2005; Hays 2008; Melchar & Bosco 2010; Wheeler 2012). Likewise, these attributes are also manifested across cultures (Hale & Fields 2007; Hannay 2009; Mittal & Dorfman 2012; Sendjaya 2015). (DePree 1989: 12) asserts that “the signs of outstanding leadership appear primarily among the followers” (Greenleaf et al. 1996: 13) claim that “The test of any kind of leadership is if leaders enjoy a mutual relationship with followers” . Indeed, a competent cadre of teacher graduates can be attributed to exemplary faculty members. If servant leadership and indigenous organic Samoan leadership approaches can translate and transform teacher educators’ practice it would herald in a progressive change.

Indigenous Organic Samoan Leadership

Indigenous organic Samoan leadership styles are pertinent as teacher educators are raised, educated and interact culturally in a society where leadership is imparted through osmosis. The term organic refers to leadership that has evolved as part of a particular culture’s behaviour, practice and performance. It is a hybrid leadership paradigm that is focused on humanistic, compassionate and communal approaches (Pirson & Lawrence 2009). (Jing and Avery 2008: 72) refer to a leadership paradigm that “relies on reciprocal actions” Indigenous organic leadership is a relational approach and encompasses the attributes of servant leadership. Culturally, leadership training is provided through the structural agencies of the women’s group (*aualuma*) and the mens group (*aumaga*) that teach activities, functions, and protocols of Samoan society through active participation.

Cultural Leadership Approaches

The cultural leadership approaches are obtained from idioms of the Samoan way of life, depicting how Samoan decision-making is conducted, *ua fetau fola*, the floorboards fit perfectly meaning there is a consensus (Schultz 1980). In a unanimous decision, *ua se fau e ta'i* refers to the intricate twisting of a cord that despite difficult and sometimes convoluted discussions, amicable decisions are achieved. Additionally, in matters requiring majority input, *sa'a faaoti le utu a le faimea*, let the fisherman empty the net signifies all should provide input to arrive at the right decision (Schultz 1980). (Thaman 2013: 100) claimed the "content of learning was sourced from life itself and drawn from a knowledge system and epistemology that had existed for thousands of years" Significantly, the Samoan concepts embrace the notion of duality, oneness and unanimity embodying care and service.

Indigenous Organic Samoan Leadership Approaches

With the advent of formal education and western influences permeating Samoan life, indigenous organic cultural leadership concepts and approaches were observed and applied in the clarity of thought (*tofa manino*) and the shared decision making (*soalaupule*). Although these are often referred to and practised, the two concepts are inclusive of other leadership approaches. *Tofa* is a respectful term for thoughts and is usually given to leaders, *matais* or high ranking chiefs (*tamali'i*). These include the visionary (*tofa mamao*), seeking truth and knowledge (*tofa saili*), in depth knowledge and understanding (*tofa loloto*), flexibility and open mindedness (*tofa fetala'i*) [flexibility and open mindedness], and reflective practice (*tomanatu*).

The Samoan concepts of leadership are hardly registered and chronicled in leadership discussions. More often, references are made to leadership styles developed as part of western philosophy, theory, dogma and dialogue. Tamasese (2005) draws a parallel of western ballads and melodies that Samoans draw inspiration from instead of traditional songs, chants and dances. Forestalling this trend and capturing the meanings associated with Samoan art forms can be significant for ethnic pride and personal development. Dissonance among faculty members in terms of leadership styles sees the adoption of western approaches in the academic setting and the traditional ones in the cultural environment.

Leadership interpretation in Samoa is preoccupied with those elected into position; the *matais* of families and villages, members of parliament, the ministers of churches, and principals of schools. However, current trends of lateral leadership deal with breaking barriers and empowering people as leaders that influence others (Avolio 2011; Bass 2000; Broom 2015; DePree 1989; Gershon & Straub 2011; Northouse 2013).

Five Dimensions of the Tofa Manino

In Samoa, the *tofa manino* is equated with wisdom and more recently has been used to coin those who have been awarded Doctors of Philosophy from universities. Le Tagaloa (1996) articulated the five elements deemed essential requirements for the *tofa manino*.

Liuliu le tofa ma le moe

The first element *liuliu le tofa ma le moe*, is logic-based and backed with evidence, referred to as *lagi soifua* or *pine faamau*. This is rooted in land, titles and genealogy where claims to land and titles have to be proven. Samoa, a traditional oral society uses genealogy to substantiate claims, as titles are historically traced to property associated with a particular title. Moreover, there is cross-checking of lineages from various oral sources, a form of triangulation that the contentious rival parties have to establish and verify. One of the essential qualities of a leader in the *fa'asamoa* is having a well-grounded understanding of familial genealogical connections. (Tamasese 1994: 67) reiterates "Aside from language, a thorough grasp of genealogy, honorifics and names of, for example, house sites, land, villages and districts is essential"

Amio ma aga

The second element of ethics and identity refer to ethics (*amio ma aga*) and identity (*faasinomaga*) emphasising family and village are nurturing as contributing to one's ethical identity. Samoan culture has expectations of how people behave, and specific protocols have to be followed, one never walks in front of seated elders, and one has to sit when talking to them. The way people behave was seen as a direct reflection of one's parents, family and village which is, acknowledged in Samoa as one's *faasinomaga* or one's origins. As such, the leader is exceptionally conscious of societal expectations and their unique role. Leaders at all levels are aware of the interplay of one's ethics as shaping identity and vice versa. (Uperesa 2010: 288) aptly sums the situation "It is with the weight of genealogy, knowledge, and expertise that one's voice and actions are judged"

Onomea

Thirdly, the element *onomea* [aesthetics] is noticeable in Samoa with traditions in 'ava [drinking] ceremonies, and the art of building, weaving, tattooing and dancing. Family presentations of gifts during weddings, deaths, tattooing and conferring of titles testify to an appreciation of beauty and overall presentation. During these ceremonies, grooming is taken to another level, and families demonstrate to invited guests, visitors, friends and neighbouring villages elaborate displays of Samoan hospitality, artefacts, performance and banqueting. One of Samoa's most priceless artefacts is the *ietoga*, an elegant mat intricately woven by women for special occasions.

Usually, before a presentation visual exhibition *fa'asavali* meaning to walk the fine mats take place before these are bestowed. Also, inside and outside the *fale*, people take immense pride in making it attractive. Even before the recent introduction of art and craft in bouquet making, garlanding and wreath making women have long used hibiscus flowers, coconut ribs, banana leaves and shoots for home and village decoration. Though some presentations are modest and others ostentatious, leaders nurture in families an appreciation of beauty and this extends to the customary practice of aesthetics values evident in giving and taking.

Tuluiga o mea sili ona moni ma faamaoni

Fourthly is the *tuluiga o mea sili ona moni ma faamaoni* [metaphysics]. This goes beyond what is seen to unearth what is real and the need to seek the utmost truth that has practical application and implication

for the village and society. Deliberations on difficult decisions and the execution of disciplinary action summons leadership that adjudicates justice for all. Family and village dynamics are part and parcel of Samoan life regulated by the *matais* who act as the village council (*fono*) of law and order. As Keesing & Keesing (1956: 48) point out “*Fono* procedure at all levels has realism and interest for all Samoans. They know the rules of the game and are interested in the changes in those rules” The country’s legal system sanctions the village council with the *matais* working within the parameters of the constitution and the law. The decisions they make on all aspects of village life have consequences for implementation where discovering what the situation is and what is the truth is paramount to peacekeeping and maintaining village harmony.

Saofaiga

Finally, the *saofaiga* [social grouping], which includes the different levels of Samoan society the *matais*, the *taulele’a* or *aumaga* and the *auluma*. Fostering the various social groups contribute to the development and augmentation of family and village. The juxtaposition of the *saofaiga* within the framework of existing praxis illustrates the intricacies of leadership and its association in the various group dynamics. Interrelated and connected groups tend to reaffirm behaviour, attitudes and beliefs that are consistent with shared values. In this context, practice and application of the *tofa mamao*, *tofa saili*, *tofa loloto*, *tofa fetala’i* and *tomanatu* would most likely achieve the *tofa manino*.

Soalaupule

The *soalaupule* [distribution of authority] is a much-used leadership approach. Extended families often come together to discuss issues that have implications for cohesiveness and unity. Despite individual differences and group undercurrents, families tend to exhibit to others that there is family solidarity. A Samoan adage, *a malu i fale, e malu i fafo*, refers to protection in the home ensures protection elsewhere. *Soalaupule* can be lengthy and time-consuming, but at the end of the day, it is the voice of the majority that carries. Even in such a democratic process, there is always the voice of dispute that is often appeased by the predominant, familial ties. At times decision making is deferred, and the *tamali’i*, the chief with the highest title will call for reflective time. In urgent matters requiring immediate attention, the *tamali’i* may decide on the spot. The approach is collaborative and cooperative as the teams function to achieve consensus in decision-making. It provides irrefutable evidence of what families, villages and society can achieve through a collaborative effort.

Predictably, the indigenous organic leadership approaches of *tofa manino* and *soalaupule* illustrate the basic fact Samoa is entrenched in the *tautua*, care and service for the *aiga*, *nuu* and *malo* [nation]. Moreover, leaders have utilised *soalaupule* personally and professionally. However, its practical nature in education should be further explored.

Samoa Education System

The arrival of the missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1830 saw the introduction of formal education (Afamasaga 2009). Pastor’s schools were built to educate and evangelise the population (Afamasaga 2007; Baba 1991). In the late nineteenth century, Germany became the colonial,

administrator but education remained the prerogative of the missionaries (Thomas 1993). This state of affairs was disrupted with the advent of World War I (1914-1919) after which New Zealand was mandated to look after the territory (Barrington 1973). Missionary monopoly of education continued (Bray, 1993) and the New Zealand administrator like its predecessor took a backseat. During these years, there was little evidence of educational progress and expansion (Barrington, 1973). After World War II (1939-1945) New Zealand was given trusteeship of Samoa until it won independence in 1962. The intervening years 1945-1961 saw a change in the development of education in Samoa. Primary education was expanded followed by the establishment of junior secondary schools, and in 1953 Samoa College, the first co-educational government college was established.

Primary education consists of eight years (Year 1 to Year 8) before students enter secondary school for another four to five years (Year 9 to Year 13). After leaving college students joined the workforce, go overseas, or enrol at the NUS. Admission to the NUS depended on results from the Samoa School Leaving Certificate examination.

Post-Independence Years

Samoa's education system has evolved over the years in its organisation, relevant curricula, and in policy and planning capability (Meleisea et al. 2012). Although progress has been made with some succeeding in the western transported education system, a vast majority of children do not make it to the higher echelons of academia (Kaye 1985). Although independence was achieved in 1962, Samoa has yet to fully shed the mentality of its colonial heritage (Bray 1993; Luteru & Teasdale 1993; Thomas & Postlethwaite 1984). Teacher educators' experience, knowledge and understanding of the world in which they have been educated, and the one they grew up in are in flux. (Thaman 2013: 98) argues, "all learners need competent teachers who are not only professionally qualified but also culturally competent. This is particularly so with teachers of indigenous students, who face the conflicting expectations of schools and those of their home cultures" A subtle gap exists in merging the two worlds to ensure education is meaningful and applicable in reconciling the needs of a globalised world and the local community (Kaye 1985; Puamau 2007). Effective and sustainable changes can only be supported by significant, conceptual structures that are appropriately contextualised as such faculty members can work towards strategizing for solutions to the cognitive dissonance by modelling coexistence in theory and practice.

Teacher Education in Samoa

An Act of Parliament established the National University of Samoa in 1984. Since its inception, it has grown from a University Preparatory Year (UPY) priming students for university in the rim countries, specifically New Zealand, Australia and Fiji to a university with six faculties.

These include the Faculty of Applied Science, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Nursing and Health Science (NUS Calendar 2017). Also, there are two centres, the Centre for Samoan Studies and the Oloamanu Centre for Professional Development and Continuing Education. These centres provide courses in the Samoan language and culture, and in areas to support job opportunities and employment respectively.

Teacher Education History in Samoa

This is traced to 1939 when it was first established during the New Zealand administration (Western Samoa Teachers' College Commemorative Album 1996). Before joining the NUS and became the FOE in 1997 it was called the Western Samoa Teachers' College (WSTC) after the Primary Teachers' College (PTC) merged with the Secondary Teachers' College (STC) in 1991.

FOE and NUS Amalgamation

Since the merger of FOE and NUS, FOE has evolved to the present in its focus to expand and serve the needs of the local and national community. It offers preservice, postgraduate and masters qualifications for those who wish to upgrade their teaching qualifications in the profession. Currently, there are two departments; one is Education that introduces students to the traditional disciplines of human development, teaching and learning, measurement and evaluation and contemporary issues. Recent trends include inclusive education, early childhood education, ethics and values, effective pedagogy and critical thinking. The Teacher Education department caters for the curriculum and pedagogical areas including the expressive and practical arts area.

Teacher Education Recruitment Challenges

In recent years students have opted for teaching out of interest, parental guidance and a career pathway. Previously, the majority chose to teach as a second or last resort, and some would start the programme and leave as soon as better opportunities came up. (Nichols 2011: 3) articulates "Too many individuals pursue the teaching profession simply as a choice to another career, without any clear passion for students and their learning and development" As such, teacher educators need to play a defining role in sustaining, addressing and contributing to the development of teacher graduates (Esera 2002; Afamasaga 2006; Hunkin-Finau 2006).

Challenges for Teacher Educators

There is a concern that faculty members of the FOE like others before them have experienced a western-oriented system where values, philosophies, beliefs and ideas seem to run counter to their cultural value system. Student teachers' worldview is centred on the local context in which they have been nurtured. Therefore, upon entering FOE, they are exposed to a form of leadership that may run counter to their local context.

There are apprehensions about the disconnection between their cultural interpretations, expectations and perceptions and the western-oriented system which may result in some disequilibrium. As a consequence, faculty members' constructs of servant leadership and their practice of the indigenous organic Samoan leadership are crucial not to mention the interplay and influence of western leadership styles on their practice. The knowledge gap on servant leadership and indigenous organic Samoan leadership could be bridged with an integrated approach that would enhance faculty members' leadership practice.

Conclusion

FOE faculty members play a pivotal role in nurturing and fostering student teachers to serve the schools and their communities. Their conceptualisation of leadership and their leadership practice influence the teaching and learning environment. Also, western leadership and indigenous organic Samoan leadership approaches seem to influence faculty members practice. Teacher educators play a significant role in students' lives as their modelling and methods of teaching consciously or unconsciously impact their training of teachers.

The demand for effective teacher educators that link effective teaching to successful leadership is more pronounced today at all levels of society. (Hesselbein 2011: 113) points out, "Effective leaders know that communication...is the essential required for future confidence, credibility, and relevance". (Baron 2010: xvi) claims "Leaders need to understand the culture they create through their words and actions and the climate they set by their inconsistent behaviour – and especially the impact they have on those around them" Consequently, teacher educators have the vital task to ensure teacher graduates are imbued with the competencies to serve and become effective educators. Society expects teachers to be leaders, change agents and problem solvers (Wheeler 2012). Evidence on the successful implementation of servant leadership in primary and secondary education (Black 2010; Mahembe and Engelbrecht 2013; Russell 2013) and in higher education (Drury 2005; Hays 2008; Oyentunji 2013) indicated that servant leadership had a positive influence on participants Likewise, practices in business organisations (Flint Jr. 2012; Kouzes & Posner 2010, 2012) and non-profit organisations (Han et al. 2010; Silvers 2010; Williams 2009) on constructive servant leaders attributes could provide appropriate models for teacher education in Samoa. Research has indicated the relationship between teacher educators' servant leadership qualities and practices are more likely to foster attributes of servant leadership in student teachers (Baron 2010; Kouzes & Posner 2010; Lueneburger 2014; Wheeler 2012). The integration of servant leadership and indigenous organic Samoan leadership styles could be seen as a progressive way forward as both share similarities that are contextual and multidimensional.

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