STRUGGLES OF RURAL YOUTH
FACTORS THAT EMPOWER AND DISEMPOWER
YOUTH IN RURAL VILLAGES – CENTRAL
PROVINCE, PNG

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Abstract

This research explores the multifaceted issues affecting youth who come from dysfunctional families and live in rural villages in the Central Province of PNG. The discourse of such rural youth accentuates the focus on institutional power relationships between the young and the older people of the village community.

The research explores the hardships encountered by youth in rural villages, hardships that I argue are rooted within theoretical discourses and, in light of an ecological systems approach, emphasize a collaborative relationship to empower youth and enhance an inclusive partnership. Interviews from the study highlight contrasting views about the interactions between the youth and elders in rural villages. The data identified that although legislation stipulates and expresses an inclusive and communitarian approach (bottom up) by the village, service delivery is in reality non-compliant with the views and needs of the youth. The research argues that to ameliorate youth relationships with older generations, repositioning the power relationships of the rural youth is required to integrate cultural elements in development programs to improve and influence their livelihood.

Keywords: Youth; rural village; ecological system; power relationships; discourse; empowerment; social exclusion.
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Chapter One – Introduction

"No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts off from its youth severs its lifeline." -- Kofi Annan

Introduction

There are three sections to this chapter: section one discusses the problem statement, the aim of the study and highlights the research questions; section two describes the contents of each chapter in the thesis; and section three articulates the research context of the study and situates the topic in Papua New Guinea by giving a brief history of the country. This short history subsequently leads to the discussion about the actual context of the study.

Section I – problems statement, aim of the study and research questions

In spite of the fact that PNG is blessed with abundant resources, it nevertheless has a history of dependence on foreign aid which continues, and has, over the years, created issues and problems that affect young people and their families in rural villages. Although the National Statics Office (2000) clearly shows that 47% of youth live in rural villages, service delivery to support such youth is far from ideal. The dichotomy of PNGs abundance in natural resources and the continued decline in socio-economic indicators within rural villages across the country is deplorable.

While the National Youth Commission has embraced and adopted the Medium Term Development Strategy 2005 – 2010 (MTDS) in its policy – the National Youth Policy
Document 2007 – 2017 is unrealised in rural villages. While the church, well-established in the villages, offers its assistance for pastoral services, these are often limited to its specific ministries. Therefore, support services for young people are not readily available within rural villages. Although Local Level Governments are commissioned to deliver these services to the villages, clearly these links are not communicating tangible developments for young people. Also, while the church may have pastoral programs pertinent to biblical teachings for young people, youth development approaches that incorporate cultural skills also need to be established at the community level.

Despite the fact that young people are culturally empowered in the sense of traditional land ownership and resources, they still face struggles in rural villages. For this purpose, this thesis is focused on young people from dysfunctional families in Rigo, in the Central Province of PNG, as the study site. Rigo District is near the capital city of PNG, Port Moresby, where most services are available but support services for young people are often difficult to access. Rural young peoples’ response to the struggles they encounter in their villages brings into focus how PNGans are responding to globalisation and changing national and international power relationships. Here I explore the discourses that impact on the young people at all levels in their search for better livelihoods in rural areas, whilst at the same time attempting to maintain the cultural values, skills and practices needed to create a way forward within an alternative bottom-up approach (Shannon & Young, 2004).

**Rationale of the Research**

My interest in this thesis germinated from popular media news-flashes depicting the discourses of youth - for example, their engagement in illegal activities, and their
depiction as victims of family problems—and also my engagement with young people in rural villages. My curiosity was stimulated further by my involvement with the Salvation Army-PNG during fieldwork where I observed young people in court: two sisters taken by YWCA as a result of child abuse and a daughter who was constantly abused by her father in the village and subsequently bore his children, who were then murdered at the birth site after being born. This violence did not inhibit me from extending my inquisitiveness further to seek answers in the legislation; to explore why young people experienced problems; and to see if support networks were available in rural areas. Furthermore, the National Youth Policy (2007) highlights “empowering young people”, and reform in governance (NRI, 2006), while PNG’s eight point plan talks about the importance of “integral human development” which also directed me to research youth. Hence, my curiosity relating to these issues prompted me to further research youth in rural villages.

**Research aim and key questions**

The aim of this thesis, then, is to contribute to the literature and knowledge on the discourse of rural young people in PNG and the impacts at all levels (micro, meso and macro) on these young people. How can these impacts be embraced or changed to enhance the relationship of young people in their environment?

Young people are vulnerable; they compose 47% of the population (National Statistics Office, 2000) in rural villages and are the most important social group in the nation (Kidu, 2000; Mills, 1989). Therefore, this thesis seeks to bring into focus the elements that disempower young people in rural communities and bring to the fore relationships and network supports at the local level to help empower youth who are socially excluded. Unless the relationships are enhanced at the local level, strategies and workable
programs for rural young people and legislations will not be realised. Therefore this research study explores the questions below:

1. Why are youth empowered or disempowered in rural settings?

2. Why and how do youth struggle in rural villages, and what support mechanisms are provided to alleviate the problems that they face?

3. How do the problems of youth have an impact on the family and the community?

**Section II – Layout of the chapters**

This section outlines the contents of each chapter in the thesis. There are six chapters in this thesis.

Chapter one seeks to situate the study by looking at the background of the research setting and the background to youth in rural villages.

Chapter two reviews the literature on issues of youth in rural environments in the Western, Pacific and PNG contexts. This review seeks to identify the commonalities of issues that affect the young people in rural environments. This chapter is divided in two: section one discusses common issues, including youth, rural, poverty, unemployment, education and youth culture. The second section discusses relevant theories including ecological systems, alternative approaches, globalisation, youth empowerment and social exclusion; articulating the embedded issues that impact young people from dysfunctional families in rural villages.

Chapter three discusses the methodology of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodological procedures followed in each step of preparing, collecting and
analysing data to answer the research questions. This chapter also offers justifications for using these particular methods for this research.

Chapter four presents the results of the interviews with the young people; the elders of the community; and officers from NGO and National Youth Commission. The emphasis of this chapter is to capture the difficulties young people encounter in their everyday life; to correlate the perspectives of the older people in the village; and to explore these perspectives in relation to policy.

Chapter five analyses the results focusing on discussion on power relations and discourse; thematic discussions of relationships; and the ecological model. This chapter highlights not only the contrasting discourses of the respondents but also the common ground, and situates differences within an overall theoretical framework in order to suggest ways that the relationship can be flexible and responsive to the needs of the young people.

Chapter six summarises the research investigation and highlights specific points that will assist young people in rural communities. Here I argue that the power relationships in rural communities already have the potential to enhance the support networks for the young people.

The next section will provide a brief overview of PNG, giving a backdrop for the issues that will form the discussion of the thesis.

**Section III - Context of the research setting**

This section describes the background of the research environment, providing a framework in which to locate the topic of the research. In order to understand the context of the research it is essential to recognise the geographical location and the
historical and cultural background of PNG as a milieu of the issues that will form the discussion and situate the topic of the thesis. This section also highlights the form of the partnership that youth can establish in order to address the social problems they encounter in the villages.

Papua New Guinea

![Figure 1.1: Map of PNG showing the Provinces](image)

**Location of PNG in the World**

PNG is situated in Oceania in the south western Pacific Ocean. It occupies the eastern half of Irian Jaya with Indonesia to the western side and shares a border with Solomon Islands to the east. It lies 150 kilometres across the Torres Strait from Australia. To the north and east are the islands of Manus, New Britain, New Ireland and Bougainville, all part of PNG. PNG is the largest island in the Melanesian region and within the South Pacific Island nations.

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1Sources: National Online Project (www.nationsonline.org)
**Composition of PNG**

PNG is comprised of four regions, although these do not constitute primary administrative divisions: these include Southern or Papuan Region, New Guinea Islands Region, Highlands Region and Momase Region. These regional groups are significant in daily life because they form the territories for organisations of government services, corporate operations and sporting competitions. PNG has 21 provinces (see appendix G) that constitute primarily administrative divisions of the country. The provincial governments are branches of the national government, each being divided into smaller districts that are themselves divided into one or more Local Level Government areas. The province that is of particular interest for this study is the Central Province.

The majority of the population of PNG live in traditional societies and practice subsistence-based agriculture. These societies and clans have unequivocal acknowledgement within the nation’s constitutional framework. The constitution of PNG articulates the desire for traditional villages and communities to remain as viable units of PNG society (PNG Constitution, 1975).

**Central Province**

The focus of this research is the Central Province; more specifically the Rigo district, which is located on the southern coast of the country. Port Moresby is the capital and the largest city in the Papua area. This region occupies a total land area of approximately 29,500 square kilometres (Davis & Ridge, 1997). The province has four districts; Abau, Rigo, Kairuku/Hiri and Goilala. The land is equally divided among the five districts.
As per the map in figure 1.2, Rigo District is situated in the south east of Central Province and stretches from the coast up into the Owen Stanley Ranges on the border of Oro Province.

**Brief history of Colonisation**

The history of colonisation and globalisation of PNG takes us back to its first discovery by Europeans in the sixteenth century. Ancient peoples migrated from Southeast Asia between 50,000 and 70,000 years ago and subsequently settled the islands. However, not much is recorded about PNG before the 19th century, even though Europeans arrived in the islands in the 16th century. Jorge de Menezes, the Portuguese explorer, discovered the main land of New Guinea and named it ‘Papua’, a Malay word meaning ‘darker, fuzzy-haired’ people (Rannells 1990:117). In 1545, a Spaniard – Ynigo Ortis de Retes – arrived on the island, giving its name ‘New Guinea’ as he saw a resemblance between the people and those in New Guinea in Africa.

German and British arrivals began to settle the region in late 1800s, when Germany took possession of the northern coast. The German imperial government assumed direct

---

Figure 1.2: The map of Central Province

2Source; NRI, 2010
control of the territory and called it ‘German New Guinea’. In 1906, Australia formally took responsibility of the British Protectorate – that is the southern coast - and called the area ‘Papua’. During World War 1, in 1914, Australia also seized the previous German territory called New Guinea (Crocombe, 2007). In 1920, after the war, Australia was given a trusteeship over New Guinea by the League of Nations.

Following this trusteeship, Britain transferred its rights to British New Guinea to a newly independent Australia and the name was changed to the Territory of Papua. In 1942, New Guinea and Papua were invaded by Japanese forces. After being liberated by the Australians in 1945, they became a United National trusteeship, administered by Australia. While Papua was a separate administration territory from New Guinea until 1949, however, after World War II both were combined and called the Territory of PNG. This territory remained under the jurisdiction of Australia until 1975 when it gained full independence and became the sovereign state of PNG (Waiko, 1993; US State Dept, 2007). The Australian civil administration of Papua and New Guinea was restored under the PNG Provincial Administration Act (1945-1946) and the two parts of the country became a combined administrative union.

**Emerging trends of employment inline with colonisation**

The German administration initiated indigenous employment. ‘Luluais’ is a term established by the government representatives of the German administration for those personnel who acted as an extension of the administrators’ influence on the indigenous people. The luluais assisted the administrators to recruit young men as carriers, labourers to construct roads, and to plant coconuts in plantations. Men were also appointed by the German Administration to learn Pidgin so that they could become ‘tultuls’ (interpreters) for the government. Luluais and tultuls were considered
government personnel in New Guinea. Similarly, government agents in Papua included the village constables and village councillors, young men being recruited as policeman by the colonial administrators (Waiko, 1993). As a result, colonial rule was a catalyst for social, political and economic change in the village way of life (Kituai, 1988:84).

The economic transformation as a consequence of colonialism transformed the traditional lives of men engaged in wage labour under the colonial administration. These men were paid for their labour from which they could in turn pay the government head tax.

**People and culture**

PNG is a diverse country in world terms, consisting of 800 indigenous tribes (US Department of State, 2007). It also comprises approximately 1000 communities, with a couple of hundred inhabitants in each community. These communities are separated by languages, customs and traditions (CIA, 2013).

Those that live in rural villages rely heavily on their land to earn their livelihood. PNG’s society ranges from such traditional village based life, dependent on subsistence and small cash crop agriculture, to modern urban life in the cities. Most societies in PNG, however, regard land as an important element to their culture as it provides their sustenance and brings prestige within society. Land is customarily owned and passed on through descendants, especially the male siblings who own the land, as is typical in a patriarchal society. As this suggests, PNG is largely a patriarchal society: this is significant in terms of roles in the formal and informal systems of power, in which men are at the lead in successively maintaining ownership of the land.
As in all other societies in PNG, culture plays a substantial role in the lives of the people in the Central Province. Upholding and fulfilling customary responsibilities is, therefore, an important and significant part of everyday life in rural villages, especially through the cycle of feasts and exchanges. One significant cultural aspect of the Central Province is bride price. Bride price ceremonies are a customary practice that has been in existence for centuries (Buga, 2010). These ceremonies include large cash components, together with both traditional items of values such as shell money, yams, bananas and pigs and modern elements such as rice bags, flour and sugar gifted to the bride’s family by the groom’s family. The families in the village areas work hard in their gardens to harvest large yams and bananas to complement the cash components. One disadvantage of these ceremonies is that a lot of expense is put into these events and they are a burden to every individual because they are increasingly influenced by the emerging cash economy.

Another significant component of the culture is the customary leadership of the clan. Central Province is a patrilineal society, and the leadership of the clan is usually given to the first born male child, who is then recognised as a leader within the community.

Generally, structures of organisations and governance in the community are shaped by the influence of modern representative forms of leadership alongside the impact of the church. However, the systems of relationship entrenched within the clan structure remain important, even if they too are changing and adapting within a complex social and political landscape (Local-Global, 2009:100). This means that village elders remain fundamental in decision making and the affairs of the community.

The barter system is another cultural aspect of the society that reduces poverty as much as possible. This is a form of exchange that historically guaranteed diversity of food for
the people across the villages and communities. This system also conserved and maintained relationships across the villages. Conversely, the emerging cash economy is now substituting the traditional form of barter exchange, and people’s own garden produce is supplemented with rice, tinned protein and other goods bought from stores.

Language

PNG has more than 1100 different languages (Scott & Murray, 2009). The main national languages spoken include English; the official language, Motu; and Pidgin. Motu is spoken by people from the southern part of PNG. English is typically spoken by those who are educated. In the Central province alone, 34 languages exist and are spoken by 22 different ethnic groups across the five districts.

Population

Table 1.1: Estimated number and per cent of young people by age and sex in PNG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>(%) of Total popn</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>425 000</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>397 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>360 000</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>339 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>311 000</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>295 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>286 000</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>274 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>260 000</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>247 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 642 000</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1 552 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Proportion was calculated based on 2010 population estimate of 6 858 000

PNG has 7,059,653 people, an increase of 36% since the last PNG’s population count in 2000 (Kenneth, 2012). As these figures are preliminary, figures for youth in PNG for 2012 are not indicated; however, according to the 2010 population, figures for the population

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of young people were 3,194,000. Table 1.1 above indicates that young people make up 47% of the population.

A large percentage (87%) of the population lives in rural areas. A considerably larger number of young people live in rural areas (85%) than in urban areas (14.8%) (PNG NSO, 2000). According to the 2000 census figures, the Central Province (CP) population consists of 189,983. The table 1.2 below shows the distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abau</td>
<td>19,819</td>
<td>18,559</td>
<td>38,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigo</td>
<td>20,504</td>
<td>18,972</td>
<td>39,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kairuku</td>
<td>20,923</td>
<td>19,173</td>
<td>40,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiri</td>
<td>26,629</td>
<td>18,059</td>
<td>44,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goilala</td>
<td>14,187</td>
<td>13,158</td>
<td>27,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102,062</td>
<td>87,921</td>
<td>189,983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2: District general population distribution

However, in relation to the preliminary 2012 statistics, the population for the Central Province has reached 237,016 (McManus & Pritchard, 2000). This is an indication of population increase in the province. While table 1.2 gives us a generalised picture of the population in the Central Province, it is also necessary to understand the statistical facts pertinent to the young people in the Central Province drawn from the 2000 census. The population of youth between the ages of 12 – 24 is comprised of 183,983: 96062 male and 87921 female (National Statistical Office, 2000).

**Economy**

The major components of the formal economy are agriculture, forestry, fishery, manufacturing and mineral resources (Aka, 2001). Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for people in rural villages. Small plots of land are cultivated for gardens to

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4Source: Centre Province Education Plan 2010 - 2016
meet the household consumption; any surplus is sold or bartered. Meanwhile, the formal sector provides a slim employment base within PNG (AusAID, 2012).

Although the mineral sector of the economy contributes to a major role in PNG’s development strategy (Aka, 2001), PNG still relies on aid mostly from Australia as a result of its geographic proximity and historical links. This relationship is reflected in the development corporation programs within Australia’s bilateral aid programs. For 2012 - 2013 Australia’s bilateral aid program to PNG totalled $493.2 million (AusAID, 2013).

In 2012, real GDP was projected to grow at 8%: effectively 10 years of uninterrupted economic growth. This growth is supported by a recovery in mining output and construction activity connected with the PNG Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project. Inflationary pressures continue, although monetary tightening in 2010 slowed inflation to an annualised rate of 7% at the end of the year, down from nearly 10% in the second quarter of 2011 (AusAID, 2012). According to AusAID (2012), the ExxonMobil led – PNG-LNG project represents an enormous growth opportunity for PNG and could contribute to an increase of 15 to 20% in GDP per annum. The PNG-LNG project has large facilities situated in Port Moresby.

The Central Province has two thirds of its private sector involved in agriculture and timber (Birch, 2009). It also produces two thirds of the country’s rubber. Timber logging is also spread around the province which also has the third largest livestock industry (Aka, 2001).

Religion

PNG is predominantly a Christian country. The dominant denominations within the Central Province include Roman Catholic, United Church, Seventh Day Adventist (SDA)
Church, and the Salvation Army Church. As indicated above, churches play an important role within the village (Wardlow, 2007; Local-Global, 2009), and many community activities are organised by and through churches, particularly the United Church, SDA and the Salvation Army. Through the churches, villages contribute resources and income to build communal assets; such as new churches. The Government does not directly assist to fund such activities.

Given its presence and influence, the church has a significant effect and plays a major role in the organisation and governance structures within the villages (Local-Global, 2009). The Elders are chosen by the congregation within their clans and anointed by the Church Minister, and while the people may have the influence, it is the Elders who carry the most power.

**Government and Politics**

PNG is a constitutional monarchy. It has three levels of government: national, provincial and local. Members of parliament are elected from the 21 provinces and also from the National Capital District of Port Moresby. In 1995, Parliament introduced reforms to change the provincial government system with regional (at-large) members of parliament becoming provincial governors, while retaining their national seats in parliament.

**Central Provincial Administration**

In 1980, an Act of Parliament separated the Central Province and the National Capital District (NCD). Formerly, the NCD was part of the Central District but following its separation and the National Capital District is now a separate province.

The Central Province has a provincial assembly, four Open Electorates and one Provincial Seat based on electoral boundaries. These four electorates are the Kairuku/Hiri, Rigo,
Abau and Goilala electorates. Under the four electorates there are 13 National Executive Council (NEC) approved Local Level Governments (LLG) and 205 wards in the province.

Under the PNG constitution, Central Province is mandated to operate and maintain its own affairs and serve the people at the village level. The NEC is the policy-making body of the Province.

The Division of Community Development is responsible for the implementation of youth development policy, plans and the programs for the province. One significant section of the Community Development office is the Youth Office; it collaborates with the National Youth Commission and establishes the Provincial Youth Council. The Provincial Youth Council facilitates the five District Youth Councils in the province. Subsequently, the district Youth Councils facilitate the election of Ward youth councils in their respective districts. It is at this level that the relevant Councils should support youth groups at the village with project initiatives; disseminate governmental policy and guidelines; and provide service delivery and support to young people. Despite being so close to the National Capital District/Port Moresby, however, Central Province is still underdeveloped.

A key objective of the 1995 Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local Level Governments was to ‘improve’ service delivery by transferring significant responsibilities and funds to the provincial and local level government. However, since passing of the Organic Law, service delivery has not been realised at either the Province or at Local level (Central Province Education Plan). The institutional capacity to deliver services to all Local Level government is described as “grossly inadequate”. Thus, young people in rural villages are economically marginalised as a result.
Social services and government services serving the area

There are three local level governments in the Rigo District: Rigo Central Rural, Rigo Coastal Rural, and Rigo Inland Rural. In this district alone, there are 72 village communities. Some villages in the Rigo district have access to Port Moresby, with public motor vehicles running this route daily, as well as servicing Kwikila, an administrative centre in the region which boasts a large outdoor market, a supermarket, some canteens and a petrol station. The Rigo District also has a Medical Clinic, police station, secondary school, vocational school and Salvation Army Headquarters. Apart from the Salvation Army Provincial headquarters, the facilities are not well equipped and most have recently been run down like all other district services in the Central Province.

For some people to access these services means walking for hours or days along the bush tracks. Communication networks have for a long time been dependent on the passing of oral messages through people travelling between the villages. But in Central Province, the extension of the mobile phone network has seen an increasing number of people able to communicate with people outside of their village.

Apart from these problems with services, education is a major issue confronting many village people. Beyond the formal education system, communities have had relatively little in the way of skills-training or other community development workshops (Local-Global, 2009). As agriculture is the major component of their daily activities that contributes to their livelihood, workshops and skills-training should be organised to meet the needs of the people in these villages. Training in agriculture should be a key priority for the village young people. As logical as this sound, however, the administration officers in the Central Province fail to address the needs of the local young people. Many
people therefore become marginalized as the population increase outstrips the nation’s capacity to provide formal services to the communities (Kidu, 2000).

Some efforts funded from national and international organisations to improve the governance are in place (AusAID, 2012). However, social indicators, deteriorating physical infrastructure, poor planning and the coordination mechanisms required combined with unequal access to benefits of natural resources are impeding efforts toward rural development. Therefore, Central Province like all other provinces in the country has weak service delivery systems. Generally, PNG is confronted with significant challenges in implementing a sustainable development strategy which gives young people access to health, education and protection services; provides employment and income generating opportunities; and simultaneously utilises the natural resources. Over the years the government has struggles to implement such a strategy, and has instead created issues and problems that significantly affect families living in rural areas (Kidu, 2000).

**Summary**

This chapter provides an introduction to the study topic and lays the foundation for this thesis, including the rationale, purpose and research questions that form the basis of the discussion.

Included in this chapter is a brief summary of each chapter that makes up the thesis.

The context of the study is identified as Rigo District, located in the Central Province of PNG. Here, I have also provided a brief description of the people, religion, culture, languages and governance of the province.
Chapter Two – Literature Review

Introduction

The aim of this research is to investigate the struggles of rural youth in PNG and how impacts of family structures and associated socio-cultural factors (such as unemployment and low income) impose difficulties on youth. It also identifies factors that both endow and deprive youth living in rural villages. In addition, in collaboration with the community and other stake holders, it seeks to strengthen the community to alleviate the problems faced by youth within the locality.

The focus then narrows to discuss the importance of youth and community development programs that can be established in rural communities and ways in which youth can be engaged in employment and up-skilling opportunities. I also discuss the ways in which community development can play an important role in connecting and building the skills of youth in the transition to adulthood.

Section one - Global and Pacific concepts

This section addresses the diverse definitions and perceptions of youth and the interpretations of ‘rural youth’ in different contexts, with an emphasis on community development as the central player for support avenues for rural youth. In addition, it explores social problems which will be discussed according to the scheme of The Western, Pacific and Papua New Guinea views. The themes that will be discussed include;

- Rural environment
- Definitions and discourses of youth
poverty
unemployment
education
youth culture

Section two – Theoretical perspectives

This section is devoted to the theoretical perspectives underpinning this research.

Despite the diverse circumstances between western and developing countries, there is a large degree of commonality amongst youth throughout the world; especially in terms of the issues that they face. Different countries have developed different community and youth development approaches to solve (and sometimes fail to solve) the issues related to youth in their countries.

Struggles of rural youth in perspective

Western views of rural youth

This literature discusses variations of the youth cohort (UN, 2003; UNICEF, 2011; World Bank, 2008; UNESCO, 2005). According to UN (2003) statistics and indicators (LABORSTA), young people are identified as those between the ages of 15 to 24. “Youth” are variously identified as those between the ages of 15 to 24 (UN, 2003; UNICEF, 2011), 14 to 25 by (World Bank, 2012) and 16 to 25 (Hart et al, 2004) and in India 15 – 35 (Curtain, 2004b) or from 10 -15, or 10 – 35 (Bokova, 2011). This is clarified by Mallan & Pearce (2003) who note that such categorisations can extend on both sides although UN, WHO and UNICEF claim that this cohort, as a phase of life, takes place within these boundaries. According to Skott-Myhre & Arthur (2008):
Youth as a social category is in constant mutation, both definitionally and temporally. Its boundaries have been notoriously malleable, ranging from the advent of puberty (a shifting target in a world in which young women of some countries enter puberty at age eight or younger) to entry into adulthood (a similar mutating targets that ranges from ages eighteen to thirty) (p.9).

Mallan & Pearce (2003) argue that attempting to locate youth within set parameters is futile. On the contrary, Bucholtz (2002) states that the categorisation of youth lacks clarity in its definition because in some cases youth may be defined on the basis of one’s social circumstances rather than chronological age or cultural position; while in a given culture, preadolescent individuals may count as youth, but may also include those in their 30s and 40s. Clearly, even though terminologies such as ‘adolescent’, ‘teenager’ or ‘young adult’ may provide specific limits to age, the application of these terms may vary in different contexts.

The use of terminologies such as ‘child’, ‘adult’ or ‘elder’ may similarly shift to include members of the youth category (Bucholtz, 2002). Nevertheless, the categorisations and dimensions of youth are established specifically to satisfy institutional and policy purposes (Mallan & Pearce, 2003).

UNESCO (2005) highlight that there are two definitional issues pertinent to the concept of youth and describes the two concepts as: “definition” relating to the boundaries of youth and “youth in transition”, or the shift from one phase to another as in, for example, the shift from school to work, the shift between youth to adult, and any spatial shift from rural to urban areas.

The UN (2003) asserts that boundaries are not static, but for their and others statistical purposes, the “young people are grouped together to form a statistical entity, which makes it possible to produce comparative data”(p.7). Hence, for convenience, most
studies define youth using age definitions, even though, as shown above there is no consistency between countries. Different cultural assumptions support different definitions of youth in particular countries and cultural, institutional and political contexts (O’Higgins, 2001).

O’Higgins (2001) also clarifies the assumption that age defines the boundaries of a group which exhibits some homogeneity of attitudes. On the contrary, Noble et al (2011) claim that youth is a socially constructed concept to a large extent and has less to do with age than with status and behaviour; they argue that youth is, instead, fundamentally linked with the idea of transition from childhood to adulthood. Nonetheless, Noble et al (2011) agree that youth is a phase of life and that individuals at this stage need protection, sheltering and guidance to achieve self-determination, maturity and accountability. This definition extends youth to include those aged from 25 to 40. Wallace & Kovatcheva (1998) illuminate the relationship between youth culture and social construction of youth, and state that “youth cultures and consumer identities have therefore been very important in the social construction of youth in different global contexts, but this has often taken the form of a ‘post-modern’ antithesis to official attempts by dominant cultures to construct youth as an age category” (p.153).

In almost all the countries, youth are categorised as those within the ‘youth bulge’ (UNDP, 2011; UNICEF, 2011). Hart et al (2004) refer to the youth bulge as being disproportionately large relative to the adult population, while the World Bank (2012) defines youth bulge as “…the rapid growth in youth population” (p.1). The UN (2004) however, emphasises that the “youth bulge is the demographic terminology in which the proportion of young people is significantly larger in comparison to other age groups” (p. 9). As a result, the various understandings of the youth bulge from country to country
raise both a concern and a need to develop appropriate policies and developmental programs to address the issues and challenges facing youth (World Bank, 2012; UN, 2004; O’Higgins, 2001; UNESCO; 2005).

The literature (Commins, 2004; Farrugia, 2011; Harrison, 2007; O’Higgins, 2001; Tonts & Larsen, 2002; UNICEF, 2011) states that in any country or context, youth struggle to make a smooth transition to adulthood. While the definition of transition is highlighted, UN (2004) and White & Young (2004) echo similar sentiments to problems of transition, here an aspect of the process of “becoming independent” as a significant aspect of youth. Because of the loopholes that result in failing to meet the needs that then lead youth to independence, youth become continuously dependent and hence described as victims of “crime and violence” (Brown, 2005; Cartmel & Furlong, 2000), “unemployed” (Jeffrey & McDowell, 2004; O’Higgins, 2001) and are labelled as problem makers in society (Devlin, 2005). Thus youth fall into ‘being problems’ and becoming trapped in the negative discourses of society. Ferguson and Harwood (1998), for example, report that children with serious problems in adolescence are characterised by:

- a combination of social disadvantage, dysfunctional family circumstances, exposure to impaired child rearing environments, parental psychopathology and difficulties, impaired parent/child relationships, educational failure or under achievement and the formation of relationship with deviant peers in adolescence (p.28).

Erickson (1959) states that adolescents’ development is affected by the society and the culture prevalent in the environment they live in. Erickson argues that youth develop through a predetermined unfolding of their personalities in eight stages in which successful advancement to the next stage depends on the young person successfully tackling the entire social and culture needs in their current stage. This is not to say that they cannot move on to the next stage at all, but that their progress through each stage is...
in part determined by their success or failure in all previous stages. Dumont & Provost (1999) posit that individuals experience major physical, cognitive and socio-affective changes including other life events (e.g., family structure changes, urban-rural migration) as they develop. According to Bronfenbrenner (1976);

Learning and development are facilitated by the participation of the developing person in progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal activity with someone with whom that person has developed a strong and enduring emotional attachment (p.160).

These factors play a part in developing a youth’s personality and the type of individual they turn out to be in the future, including factors such as; sense of self-worth, self-esteem, their values and approach to life, or if the young people are skilled and confident to move through the transitions of life solving their own problems. Nagar et al (2008), furthermore, highlight that children from dysfunctional families typically experience difficulties finding their identity and have a low esteem.

Boyd (1992) and Schultz (1961) identify dysfunctional families as having strained and unnatural relationships between the parents and children. Often this is because a family member is going through a problem that impacts other family members. All the members of the family feel thus feel constrained to adjust to uncommon roles within the family to allow the family as a whole to survive (Boyd, 1992; Harwood & Ferguson, 1998; Nagar et al, 2008). Nagar et al (2008) argue that the transition from childhood to adulthood is a turbulent period confronting young people thus it is important for family members to provide family support in order to increase a sense of stability and security.
Pacific view of rural youth

In defining youth for the Pacific Island Countries, ADB (2001) draws on the blanket definition by the UN for the Pacific Island Countries and distinguishes the difference between children (0-15) and youth (15-24). However, McMurray (2006) argues that the UN definition for children is all ages less than 18 years, but there is clearly an overlap between the two categories. Similarly, Kick (2001) draws from the UN definition and identifies youth as a cohort of individuals aged between 15 and 24. As identifying the category of youth is as difficult as defining youth itself: the World Bank (2008) highlights the difficulties recognised in defining youth, pointing out, for instance, that in the Solomon Islands, traditional customs have no reference for youth; although the rite of passage marking the shift from childhood to manhood or womanhood did exist, the period of adolescence or youth was not observed. The World Bank (2008) therefore maintains that ‘youth’ is a new and problematic category.

As with the categories, young people’s participation in their own societies (UNICEF, 2012; Vakaoti, 2012) is often unnoticed. O’Collins (1984) and Vakaoti (2012) concur that youths’ own descriptions of the transition from childhood to adulthood and their relationship with the elders portrays their individuality in relation to their societies and the responsibilities they perform and engage in depicts their conduct of maturity. Hewlett (2012) differs from this and contends that youth is a cultural concept, mainly distinguished from puberty, the process of physical maturation, and hence indicates cultural variations in the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Nevertheless, McMurray (2006) argues that the cohort (15 to 24) is a principal description for all the Pacific countries. The UNDP (2011), however, attests that the definition ranges...
from 12 – 34 across different PICs depending on their description of youth in their respective National Youth Policies. The definition of youth may well be inclusive of those who are in their 30s and 40s. In writing its reports (UNDP, 2011) generalises the definition of youth across the Pacific, which includes PNG. According to this definition, youth who are employed and those who are married but still dependent on their parents are excluded, regardless of them being within the age cohort.

O'Collins (1984) resonantly describes youth as a ‘restless year’, referring to the events that they engage in which forms their identity. This includes ‘their time of experimentation and relative freedom before taking on family and community responsibility’ (p.1) as a result, O’Collins (1984) argues that youth ‘upset the balance and peace of a society’: as in Western societies, the South Pacific concept of youth was realised only some decades after problems pertinent to youth conduct became an issue and,

...no one felt impelled even to define ‘youth’ as a concept. Only when young people began to behave in a ‘problematic’ way...did the word ‘youth’ come to be used generically. And a youth movement, in the very general sense ... only exists when young people feel at odds with older people who see them as disrespectful, rebellious and revolutionary (Heer 1974: 7).

Nobel et al (2011) focuses on urban youth in the Pacific National Studies and show that there is a general consensus that youth in the Pacific countries face universal challenges such as unemployment, high rate school leavers, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and crime and violence. Similarly, McMurray (2006) contends that there are a high number of young school leavers who are unable to find necessary employment, a situation which leads them to engage in substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and contract HIV AIDs. O’Collins (1984), however, argues that the juxtaposition of young
people and the effects of changes in their societies vary widely between regions and therefore generalisations may not be completely true for every region. Although, we may take into consideration the varying value systems that are based on culture in the Pacific region (Crocombe, 2005), it is undeniable that, while there is certainly cultural diversity in the Pacific, there are also similar values and practices (Firth, 2006). Making generalisations to represent the ‘overall’ picture of the Pacific regions may therefore be irrelevant. Needless to say, there are significant differences in the perspective and experiences in rural and urban areas (World Bank, 2008).

**PNG view of rural youth**

The PNG National Youth Policy (2007 – 2017) defines youth as young people in the age range of 12-25 years. They highlight the difficulties in defining the terminology, identifying it as the transition from childhood to adulthood as it is unclear (in the definition) exactly how to pinpoint the onset and the end point in the transition from childhood to adulthood. Although the PNG National Youth Policy is aware of the formative years of education for children, by the age of 12, children are still in the middle of Primary Education (PNG Education Policy) and are far from the transition to school examinations. Thus the PNG National Youth Policy argues that programmes are devised to inspire the learning processes of young people, and therefore young people beyond 25 years are also encouraged to participate in these programmes.

For the purposes of this research, I will draw from the UN perception and extend that young people can be unmarried or married, living with and financially dependent on their parents. However, this means that here I extend the cohort (14 – 24) established by the UN from 14 to 35 as this range fits with my description of rural youth in this investigation.
Furthermore, by the age of 14, some rural youth in PNG will have discontinued formal education. Therefore, I will begin the age range from 14 rather than 12 years because by then, most children at 12 years should still be in Primary school. I will also not isolate the concept of transition (Bokova, 2011) because in terms of this research the transition period highlights the focal point of the challenges experienced by youth.

Youth in PNG face similar problems to those in other South Pacific Nations and these include unemployment, teenage pregnancy and high levels of school dropout — problems which are similar to those in the western countries (UNDP, 2011; UNICEF, 2005; ILO, 2009). Hebe (cited in NYP, 2007) also notes that young people worldwide struggle for identity and recognition. In terms of this research, I will draw from Boyd’s (1992) definition of dysfunctional families in order to show that young people who come from dysfunctional families — such as those from single parent families, one income families or no income families — are disempowered and socially excluded from mainstream activities (Nagar et al, 2008; Beavers, 1982) resulting low esteem (Nagar et al, 2008; Api & Mafile’o, 2009) and therefore are more likely to fall into antisocial behaviours and drop out of school.

Figure 2.1 indicates that there is a rising population in the youth cohort in PNG, which contributes to the fact that the government is unable to contain and control the many issues facing young people. The community and media in PNG (Post Courier & The National) typically publicise negative constructs of youth related to law and order problems in PNG, coverage in which PNG youth are referred to as ‘raskols’, (Roscoe, 1999; Sykes, 1999). Roscoe (1999) defines ‘raskols’ as a term used to refer to a member of predatory gang given to organised thieving, rape and murder. The former Prime
Minister of PNG, Michael Somare (Kelola, 2009) instead contends that the perception of youth among people should be changed because ‘youth are the untapped potential in our community’. Within traditional PNG life, young people hold an important place in the culture: ‘they are the source of group strength, identity and other kin-related values and the future of the tribe’ (Local-Global, 2009).

Rural Environment

Western Rural young people’s environment

As ‘youth’ as a term is problematic, so is ‘rural’ also a contested term (Black, 2005; Rye, 2006). Rye (2006) highlights that while debates on how to define ‘rurality’ are never-ending, two clear concepts do arise in defining rurality, that is; the demarcation of the term by defining ‘the rural’ as ‘particular types of (overlapping) territories/societies according to some objective measures’, and a process of describing and explaining the ‘social interaction taking place in these areas from a variety of theoretical perspectives

Figure 2.1: PNG Youth Population, 2012

Sources: CIA Fact Book
and approaches to an understanding of defining matter of the discipline’ (p409). As a result, Rye (2006) contends that researchers conceive rurality as subjective and a sociallyconstructed concept in people’s minds rather than a material or objective reality. In a similar vein Halfacree (1993) defines rural in terms of ‘disembodied cognitive structures which we use as rules and resources in order to make sense of our everyday world’ (p.23). Although Rye (2006) attests that rural indicators may differ from person to person and from society to society, there are claims that open landscape and sparse settlement structure is an accepted generic characteristic of rurality.

Alston & Kent (2009) highlight that the context of rural — for example in Australia — can be linked to and identified by the complications of the vast geographical areas and a sparse and the dispersed population across the inland. The myths of the rural abound: the so called “country life” is commonly associated with pleasing simplicity and pastoral landscapes. In relation to rural youth, the myths also suggest that these individuals have distinctly pleasant childhoods where they play safely in wide open spaces, they are healthy, sheltered and invulnerable (Pruitt, 2009). Rural life is conceived as being more ‘natural’ than life in the cities and this quality of ‘the rural’ is positively valued and often perceived as its major advantage (Orderud, 2003:310 cited in Rye, 2006:410). Despite the claims of rural spaces as carefree places to live, the rural also comes with disadvantages and lack of services that have a great impact on the lives of rural youth. Rural places often fall far short – socially, culturally and economically – from urban standards (White & Wyn, 2004 and Crockett et al, 2000).

In comparison to rural and city dwellers, Tonts & Larsen (2002) and Ray (2006) advocate that the population in rural and remote areas have traditionally been disadvantaged in employment opportunities, income, service provisions and access to welfare assistance.
Services and agencies that are typically found in urban areas are lacking in rural areas (Ziegler, 1986). For example, Marston and King (2006) identified that rural residents (children and their families) in Canada face more difficulties getting health services and support than their urban counterparts. One of the vulnerable sectors identified by Tonts & Larsen (2002) was youth, and they suggested that the cohort needed “urgent attention from the government”.

The burgeoning literature on rural experience (Tonts & Larson, 2002; McManus & Pritchard, 2000; Walmsley & Weinand, 1997; Black et al, 2000) highlights the socio-economic problems encountered by rural residents. Tonts & Larsen (2007) and Rye (2006) argue that rural people experience low income, poor health, a lack of formal education and higher levels of unemployment. Moreover, rural people encounter problems in accessing services as a result of geographic, economic, and cultural factors, especially in sporadically populated areas. In addition, travel expenses increase the cost of both providing and obtaining care (Marston & King, 2006). Key services in education, health, housing and financial services are lost, and thus it is unarguable that the residents of rural and remote areas or people living in “the bush” (McManus & Pritchard, 2000; White & Wyn, 2004) are a concern that require attention by the government.

It is also important to note that there are similarities in the impacts of socio-cultural and economic hardships faced by other Western nations such as United Kingdom (Woodward, 1996), Norway (Rye, 2006), Canada and United States (Furuseth & Ilbery, 1998). In comparison to Australia, rural areas in the United Kingdom experience falling incomes, rising levels of poverty, homelessness, and service withdrawal. Australia also has its fair share of issues: Tonts & Larson (2002) argues that the rural context of Australia (Black, 2005) is similar to the situation in North America, where the challenges of isolation and
distance make providing basic services to many rural communities in Canada and the United States difficult. However, White & Wyn (2004) contends that the difference between Australia and other Western countries — particularly Europe, North America and other industrialised countries — is that rural areas in Australia are characterised by a low-density population. Meanwhile Tonts & Larson (2002) and Black (2005) imply that the reason for the similarities seen in severe socioeconomic hardship is the high population of indigenous people in rural areas. The major problems experienced by Australia, the United Kingdom and North America are social exclusion, homelessness, unemployment, basic services, poor housing and low income (Krüsi, Fast, Small, Wood, & Kerr, 2010; Tonts & Larsen, 2002). Nevertheless, there may be differing levels of extremity experienced between different countries.

Youth and associated problems impacting on youth and society are widely discussed in the literature (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Geschiere & Gugler, 1998; Karabanow, Hughes, Ticknor, Kidd, & Patterson, 2010; Lakin & Mahoney, 2006; Urdal, 2004), which treats issues such as homelessness (Vissing, 1996), economic and social changes (Roger, 2008), poverty (Coleman & Coleman, 2004) and impacts of social and development features (Conchas & Vigil, 2010). However, Crockett et al (2000), Shucksmith (2004) and Coomber et al. (2011) agree that less attention is focused on rural youth as a subgroup except in psychology (where adolescents are recognised as a distinct developmental subgroup); little attempt is focused on how to determine how and to what extent rural youth differ from their urban and sub-urban counterparts (Crockett et al, 2004). However, the literature highlights that there are mutual challenges encountered by rural youth (White & Wyn, 2004; Rye, 2006). Despite the fact that the literature discusses the structural transformation impacting rural young people, White & Wyn (2004) also points out that
“structural transformation is so disruptive to the traditional ways of livelihood that young people can see no place for themselves” (p.59). For this reason, older people in some communities are finding ways to stop rural/urban migration of young people.

White & Wyn (2004) and Crocket et al (2004) agree that the compound problems impacting the lives of youth during the transition phase, when they are in search of independence, mean they are deterred from fulfilling their potential. As a result, youth attempt to deal with their situations in different ways, for example, to prove their status or to seek new ways and purposes of living. While in the process of meeting the challenges and making the choices that shape and mould the nature of youth, individuals must negotiate significant social change — change which simultaneously shapes their experiences of youth.

As suggested above, young people are faced with many challenges in the process of transition (White & Wyn, 2004). While Skott-Myhre et al (2008) argue that the increasing social, economic and demographic changes have an impact on, and raise risk levels for, rural youth, other changes such as technological advances, global competition and spreading urbanisations are also contributing to and transforming the settings, scope and ways of rural life radically. Davis and Ridge (1997) agrees that “in rural areas, children and young people find themselves in a very particular social environment where there may be powerful adult groups [affluent incomers and early retirees seeking and idyllic rural lifestyle] who can dominate in a struggle for space and resources; where children and young people can be socially very visible and yet find their needs both invisible and unmet” (p.3). Young people may be unable to find a social space in their communities to congregate and communicate with their peers. Davis and Ridge (1997) contends that the lack of communal space for young people to congregate results in them being highly
visible in their communities and therefore become subject to adult scrutiny, and in many cases disapproval. As a result of such adult scrutiny, young people are seen as a problem rather than as contributors to the community (Davis & Ridge, 1997; Checkoway, 2011).

Durkheim (1975) states that social solidarity — the cohesion of people within a group and as a form of solidarity — is strongest when people contribute a range of different skills, functions and roles to their society’s prosperity. Similarly, Crockett et al (2000) contend that traditional communities have a high social capital, on the basis that social relationships serve as resources for individuals to use when implementing their goals. In these cases, social capital is dependent on the compounded ties in the family, locality and its institutions. Rye (2006) echoes similar notions, explaining that:

The feeling of community is stronger and people seem to be closer to each other, partly due to the transparency of rural life that ensures that ‘everyone knows everyone’...people care for each other and are more willing to engage in others’ lives...‘community spirit’ facilitates collective action. When the community faces a challenge, everyone makes his/her contribution...tranquillity, calmness and peacefulness of rural life, as opposed to the restlessness of urban life (pp. 410-411).

Despite these idyllic assumptions of (Durkheim, 1975), such a vision is not plausible in rural settings for rural youth because their daily negative experiences are exacerbated and they themselves are not supported by the so called bounded communities or social solidarity (Rye, 2006). While social networks and adherence to traditional values are regarded as elements that provide security and certainty and are highly treasured by some young people, for others, these qualities may be negatively experienced (White & Wyn, 2004; Rye, 2006). Rye (2006) argues that rural people express their objections about the rural social fabric that surrounds them even despite an apparent acceptance of the idyllic version of rurality. For example, rural youth’s perceptions of rurality bring to
the surface the dark sides of the rural, showing that young people — especially females—identify a negative side to the transparency of rural social fabrics, indicating that ‘stronger social ties foster not only caring communities but also a culture of strict social control’ (Rye, 2006:411).

Regardless, the commonality that is expressed within the extensive literature on rurality documents structural, social and cultural factors that both constraints and contributes to youth transition. It is inevitable that young people in rural habitats associated with lack of access to transport, health, education and community services, accommodation and employment experience an immense shift on their transition to independence as adults (Crockett et al, 2000; Shucksmith, 2004; Rye, 2006; Skott-Myhre et al, 2008). Rye (2006) outlines notions that young people perceive rural communities as ‘traditional’, ‘underdeveloped’, ‘backward and old fashioned’. Therefore, young people will not subscribe to idyllic rurality as it provides fewer opportunities, poor access to education, and limited range of public and private services (Rye, 2006). Although young people like living in rural communities because of the security in knowing people within the locality and being away from the problems of the city, the idyllic projection of rural life is far from reality (White & Wyn, 2004, Crocket et al, 2000).

**Pacific Rural young people’s environment**

The notion of rural is defined by the spatial description across the Pacific (UNICEF, 2011). Cahn (2006) refers to the rural as the ‘remote parts of the island’ and extensive literature (Cahn, 2006; ADB, 2006; Jones & Lean, 2007, IFAD, 2008) describes these places as ‘vulnerable’ or ‘disadvantaged’, while rural communities or ‘villages’ (Jones & Lea, 2007) are often defined by lack of services, poor infrastructure and long travel times to reach
services. For example, Carr (2004) states that many rural communities in Samoa, when compared with urban areas suffer from poverty of opportunity and unequal distribution of benefits.

Chan (2003) identifies villages as ‘small island states’ or communities with homogenous populations that are dependent on subsistence agriculture and fishing as their main source of income (Jones & Lea, 2007; Nilan, 2009; IFAD, 2008; AusAid, 2012).

Young people migrate to urban areas because living conditions and services in such communities are not satisfactory (ADB, 1996). Some rural young people prefer to live in urban areas because they see clear and very real differences in the services provided. In contrast, in a survey, 65% of youth surveyed in the Solomon Islands have a preference to live in rural villages, although 30% still believed towns had an improved standard of living while 31% indicated that their family wanted to find employment in urban settings (UNICEF, 1998:13).

PNG Rural young people’s environment

While there is no precise definition given to rural PNG, Gibson and Rozelle (2003) and Bourke et al (2005) both give a spatial definition of rural in which PNG’s rural landscape is described in negative terms:

...mountainous and rugged terrains, the country suffers from a fragmented system of transportation...In poor areas, however, a high proportion of PNG’s rural residents live many hours from nearest basic social services (p.159)

Like the neighbouring countries in the Pacific, Gibson & Rozelle (2003) assert that rural areas of PNG are faced with infrastructure problems, where ‘access to services, markets, and transportation, measured in travel time is much better in cities’ (p. 160). Kaman
(2003) argues that the rural population therefore migrate to the city in search for better opportunities such as education services and employment.

PNG National Statistics shows that 28% of the population of PNG is in the age category between 12 – 25 years, which indicates that 85% of youth live in rural areas while only 14.8% live in urban areas (PNGNYP: 2007 - 2017). The PNG National Youth Commission recognises the difficulties encountered by young people in rural areas.

For the purposes of this research, I will draw from the Gibson & Rozelle’s (2003) description of the rural and add that rural villages are places with homogenous populations.

**Rural Poverty**

**Rural poverty among Western youth**

Poverty is prevalent among rural youth (Curtain, 2004). Pruitt (2009) and Curtain (2004) concur that poverty rates are higher in rural areas than in urban centres. Children and young people are particularly vulnerable and often experience life-threatening poverty in rural population.

Connell (1994) and Curtain (2004b) assert that poverty is a complicated phenomenon, ‘not a single thing nor a simple concept’. Within this concept, the needs of rural young people are often overlooked (Commins, 2004). Curtain (2004) posits that young people are overlooked in poverty assessments because of the nature of collecting data, and that they are then omitted from benefiting from economic growth. Moreover, young people are unable to get jobs because they are unable to access them, while and communities that function poorly have inadequate access to schooling and health services (Hughes,
Shannon and Young (2004) and Pruitt (2009) agree that poverty is the basis of many social problems that complicate and contribute to a number of health issues (Mooney, Knox, & Schacht, 2012). Hughes (2008) also highlights that poverty is associated with low skills and unemployment, conditions which can lead to dysfunctional family life accompanied by violence and crime.

Commins (2004) and Harrison (2007) argue that poverty is difficult to measure while Shannon and Young (2004), define poverty as a “state” of insufficient resources while simultaneously expressing the difficulties inherent in defining the term. Shannon & Young (2004) suggests simplifying the concept poverty by unpacking the complexities that surround the term: these include ‘the type of poverty, the indicators of poverty being employed, the unit of analysis (individual or household), equivalence scales used (comparing different sized households), and how to understand the extent of poverty’ (p.61).

Connell (1994) maintains that poverty results from the effect of unequal distribution of resources — not the effect of absolute level of resources. The concept of poverty stems from low income, where the level of income capacity depends on how much employment, together with the level of employment, one is engaged in. The economic situation of people depends on their possessions and the incomes they earn. Therefore Connell (1994) contends that wealth distribution is noticeably unequal compared to distribution of income. Thus, the measurement of poverty simply by way of income earned can undervalue the severity or magnitude of deprivation. Curtain (2004) notes that it is commonly acknowledged that poverty does not only refer to income alone. For instance, the Government of the Republic of Mozambique defines poverty as:
the lack of basic capacities, such as illiteracy, malnutrition, low life expectancy, poor maternal health, prevalence of preventable diseases, together with indirect measures such as access to the necessary good, services and infrastructures necessary to achieve basic human capacities – sanitation, clean drinking water, education, communications, energy, etc. (p.11)

Two concepts are widely used by researchers (Commins, 2004; Harrison, 2007; Hughes, 2000; Shannon & Young, 2004) and statistical agencies to address different situations. Harrison (2007) explains these two concepts as being ‘absolute poverty’ – that is, lack of resources a person requires to live — and ‘relative poverty’ – that is, a measurement of the resources and living conditions of parts of the population in relation to others. In comparing the two descriptions of poverty, Harrison (2007) states that absolute poverty includes acute deprivation, hunger, premature death and suffering and requires immediate measures to rectify the problem, which is common in less developed areas such as Africa and Asia (ibid). In contrast, relative poverty is regarded as a matter of social equity which, in association with policy development, aims to reduce disparities and create ways to compensate for the gaps in wealth, living conditions and opportunities. This is especially common in developed and industrialised countries (Harrison, 2007).

Hughes (2000) claims that while absolute poverty can be directly compared among countries relative poverty levels differ from country to country. Therefore Hughes (2000) contends that poverty is meaningless when both the figures from absolute and relative poverty are compared between countries. Hence, studies of poverty in different countries suggest that the Human Development Report (UNDP, 1997) poverty series are misleading (Hughes, 2008). Although the definitions of poverty are generally focused, as this suggests, the impacts it has on youth vary from country to country (Connell, 2010; Connell, 1994).
Commins (2004) states that “rural poverty is also prone to cultural invisibility where there is a tendency to regard rural living as idyllic or ‘problems free’ or the existence of problems is contested by ideologies which romanticise rural life and the rural environment”. While Bradley et al (1986) also state that rural deprivation is obscured by myths, they argue that discourses (such as ‘commitment to community, nationalist spirit, hard work, and hostility) towards welfare state dependency; and the legality of social hierarchies at work, in the home and in the community describes the dominant values of the village; collectively with the ‘aesthetic visual appeal’ of the village excludes the attention of the discontentment of the village community’ (Commins, 2004). Commins (2004) reasons that the media illustrates poverty issues in individualistic rather than structural terms, effectively therefore hiding poverty on the basis of objective criteria. Consequently, rural cultural norms influence people to consider deprivation as a result of “personal failing and to strive for respectability in the face of poverty” (Woodward, 1996).

The common characteristics of rural poverty highlights that poverty is a complex issue that affects people from all walks of life and varies from country to country (Commins, 2004; Curtain, 2004b; Hughes, 2000; Shannon & Young, 2004). Commins (2004) draws our attention to the characteristics of poverty and social exclusion in rural areas and stipulates that rural poverty is widely dispersed, rather than being limited to certain geographical areas. Besides, the better-off people living in rural areas may migrate to the towns to seek better opportunities because they can afford to (Curtain, 2004). However, Curtain (2004) argues that although rural urban migration can continually decrease the per capita income levels of rural areas, this transition may lower national poverty but rural poverty will increase. The effect of rural/urban migration has similarities echoed by
Kituai (1998) who argues that some common state of consciousness—like morality—need to be established for solidarity in the community. He suggests that institutions like the education system will generate a commonality among the people. In this process of modernisation, however, the strength of social stability could diminish, thereby weakening the people’s sense of community, and in turn generating feelings of isolation.

Poverty is a problem within the experiences of young people (Headley, 2004). Headley (2004), Bucholtz (2002) and Connell (1994) agree that rural youth feel alienated and isolated from services and sometimes feel embarrassed to talk about sensitive issues concerning them, such as sexual behaviours. Headley (2004) posits that poverty also leads to poor nutrition among youth and homelessness (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Farrugia, 2011; Gross, 2008). For example, Colman and Colman (2004) describes the hardship poverty has on young people, particularly when they have to work long hours in order to meet the high costs of living. Hence, overcoming poverty leads young people to work in night clubs as sex workers and strippers to meet the high costs of living. Harrison (2007) argues that poverty makes it difficult for poor families to invest in their education, health and training of their children, thus condemning the next generation to the vicious cycle of poverty. Most people with low incomes also work as long as they are able to contribute to the household economy (Hughes, 2000).

Children who come from families in crisis tend to live on the streets (Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Rizzini & Butler, 2003), for example, those from low-income families, single mother-centred households; and those with limited extended family or social networks (Cochans & Vigil, 2010). Cochans & Vigil (2010) contends that children from such homes frequently attend school with physical and emotional habits that negatively impact their learning and behaviour. McLoyd (1989) suggests that such children are likely to have
increased risk of socio-emotional problems and deviant behaviour, alongside reduced aspirations and expectations. Although young people care about schools and education (Checkoway, 2011; Keith, 1982), this is mainly because they spend substantial amounts of time in them (Hendry, 1993; Keith, 1982). Checkoway (2011) and Connell (1994) argue that young people from lower income participate less in school compared to those that come from higher incomes. In many ways, this assumption is consistent with the view of youth as “resources”, which contrasts with news media portrayal of youth as “victims of poverty” and “problems in society” (Checkoway, 2011:341).

Young people fight for recognition and esteem in different ways and different settings (Howarth, 2002, Connell, 1994). In a study of 44 young people between the ages of 12 and 16 in Brixton, Howarth (2002) concludes that success in the struggle for recognition and esteem is attained by being assisted and encouraged by the social relations and institutional cultures. Howarth (2002) argues that school and family members play an important role in motivating and encouraging the self-esteem of young people. In addition, the child will not build the confidence and the emotional strength to challenge stigma alone given that self-identity appears inter-subjectively, that is, in relationship with the "generalised other" (p.251). Thus, the gatekeepers of young people — especially the family, school and the relatives or those around the child — will either assist or hamper that child in building their self-identity. Clearly, the identity and self-esteem of young people are at risk unless they are encouraged by family and their teachers (ibid). However, if a child is being raised within the family but without a parent they face different arrays of conflicting issues for that child. Such children can live with much suffering and under enormous pressure (Connell, 1994, Cochans & Vigil, 2010). For instance, a child may not complete their education because their parent is not alive to be
able to pay for their schools. This is a hardship some children will struggle to comprehend.

Along with poverty, economy change (McLoyd, 1989) and financial hardships (Flanagan, 2006) also impose strain on families in Western societies. This involves children when their parents become dislocated from their jobs. Flanagan (2006) exemplifies that the 1980 recession had an enormous impact on communities in United States where rollbacks of wages, job terminations, cuts, and employee concession were endemic. Dew et al (1987) show that unemployment has deleterious effects on the mental and physical health of workers and their spouses and, parallel to this, it also impacts children. The social problems and economic hardships encountered by parents have a direct influence on the behaviour of children and youth. Kituai (1998) assumes that under such economic conditions, individual people are pushed about by forces outside of their control. Their ways of behaving are determined by forces outside of the individual’s command so that people are powerless and have limited choices in terms of ways of behaving.

In relation to the financial hardships discussed above, Schissel (2001) asserts that poor people often perceive gambling as a resort to escape from poverty. Youth gambling is a significant and growing problem in many cultures (Stinchfield & Winters, 1998; Derevensky et al, 2003; Stinchfield, 2002). Gambling is also typically connected with risk-taking behaviours such as drug and alcohol use. Schissel (2001) and Derevensky et al (2003) attest that gambling is a formidable social problem among youth because of their socioeconomic marginality and general disempowerment; young people are highly vulnerable to gambling as a consequence of their situation. Stinchfield & Winter (1998) indicate that although research (Jacobs, 1993; Shaffer & Hall, 1996) suggests that youth gamble on a social and recreational basis; spend less money on gambling than adults; and
that activity has no adverse effects on them (Stinchfield, 2002), there are nevertheless significant effects gambling has on youth—they may experience, for example ‘violence, [being] rejected by their family members, negative school experience, [the need to] borrow money for gambling, steal, smoke cigarettes and drink’ (p.175). As this indicates, gambling has an obvious impact on individual, families and communities (Korn & Shaffer, 1999).

**Rural poverty among Pacific youth**

While extensive reports discuss poverty in general across the Pacific countries (Abbot & Pollard, 2004; ADB, 2001; UNICEF, 2009), it seems that there is inadequate literature relating specifically to poverty among young people in the Pacific. Poverty is, however, frequently discussed in general; for instance UNICEF (2011) highlights poverty in the urban Pacific. Although UNICEF (2011) notes that poverty is more prevalent in urban areas than in rural areas, this thesis addresses the impact of poverty among rural youth, which highlights that appropriate literature for rural youth is inadequate. In the absence of specific literature, therefore, this segment will discuss poverty in general in the Pacific.

Poverty is a recent and currently accepted concept in the Pacific, even taking into account as the difficulties in defining the terminology of poverty in the Pacific (Abbot and Pollard, 2004). For instance, in the Solomon Islands, poverty is described as hardship (World Bank, 2008). Abbot and Pollard (2004) similarly contend that the perception of poverty alters when applied to people in different time and locations. This is because the societies in the Pacific are known for their traditional culture of caring for, and sharing with, family and clan (Abbot and Pollard, 2004; Crocombe, 2005). Pacific Island peoples
and the governments therefore resist the notion that poverty exists due to the perception that poverty equates with images of chronically starving children.

Jones & Lea (2007) argue that poverty is poorly measured and understood. Abbot and Pollard (2004) define poverty as ‘inadequate levels of sustainable human development through access to essential public goods and services and access to income opportunities’ (ix) adding that, poverty is conditional: either absolute or relative; either temporary due to devastation, or long term resulting from unemployment, sickness or disability. Abbot and Pollard (2004) classify the types of poverty experienced in the Pacific; these include ‘absolute – when an individual or family is unable to meet basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, health care or education. It is commonly referred to as income of less than US$ 1 per capita per day; destitution – extreme form of absolute poverty. It describes the poorest, those who are unable to meet the costs of even a basic diet and shelter and relative – experienced by those whose incomes might be just sufficient to meet basic needs but are still below the national average or norm’(p.2). Similarly, Jones & Lea (2007) argue that poverty incorporates more than just income; rather, it comprises the desire for people to gain access to urban infrastructure and services. Nevertheless, Abbot and Pollard (2004) contends that it is inappropriate to define poverty by the level of an individual’s income because many economies in the region are based around high subsistence production.

As this suggests, even though Pacific Island countries are urbanising, most Pacific societies are still rural and rely on subsistence agricultural lifestyles (Jones & Lea, 2007). However, Abbot and Pollard (2004) and Firth (2006) concurs that times are changing for the Pacific Island countries and the need for cash income to purchase imported goods and food is a greater demand. Traditional social and community obligations both in
urban and rural areas now involve money. Abbot and Pollard (2004) and Jones & Lea (2007) agree that poverty is prominent among urban dwellers because there is less access to subsistence production. A lack of income is not the only contributing factor to hardship but ‘lack of access to basic services, lack of economic opportunities and inability of individuals realisations of their aspirations’ also contribute to hardship. Hence, Abbot and Pollard (2004) maintain that the suitable definition of poverty relevant to the Pacific Island countries is that it;

does not mean starvation and destitution; instead, poverty is generally viewed as hardship due to lack of poor services, like transport, water, primary health care, and education. It means not having a job or source of steady income to meet the costs of school fees or other important family commitments (p.3).

**Rural poverty among PNG youth**

There is burgeoning literature that discusses poverty in PNG (Allen et al, 2005; Gibson et al, 2004; Gibson & Rozelle, 2003; Commack, 2007; Story, 2004). In contrast, it is also argued that poverty does not exist because PNG has a ‘wantok’ system, or a system of customary owned land alongside a strong tradition of subsistence production and cultural norms about redistribution (Morauta, 1981). These two conflicting views are highlighted by the Ministers of PNG; The Prime Minister, Somare maintains that

there was no Papua New Guinean starving and dying of hunger. That it was true people in rural areas lacked material wealth but that they were not short of food and water. (Post Courier, 2009)

While Kidu (PC, 2009) contests that poverty is prevalent in PNG, and on numerous occasions states that
“...right now as we speak there are people who have not eaten, there are many hungry people and people without food in my electorate”. ...poverty was already a big problem in Port Moresby and many people were going without food (Legei, Post Courier, 2009)

Allen et al (2005) argue that the consequences of inequality in market factors is not the source of poverty, rather, poverty results primarily from environmental conditions that constrain people from engaging with global and local markets. Allen et al, (2005); Gibson & Rozelle, (2003); Care, (2011); Gibson et al, (2004) all agree that PNG’s environmental conditionals such as extensive swamps, large rivers and rugged mountains contribute to poverty because they result in fragmented transport networks.

Radio Australia (2012) also reports concerns over child labour in PNG and argues that poverty is the main reason why young people are working. Fatiaki (2012 cited in Radio Australia) claims that,

...children were found to be involved in hazardous work, including chopping firewood for sales, moving furniture, loading and unloading boxes from containers, controlling traffic, scrap metal scavenging, working very long hours, and being subjected to physical and verbal abuse. Children were also engaged in illicit activities, and working in activities such as begging, stealing and selling drugs. There are other reasons, such as family breakdown, parental neglect, abuse, peer pressure...but poverty, as well as a lack of opportunity for parents, and children who have dropped out of school, has been the main reason.

Although poverty maybe a phenomenon in urban areas (UNICEF, 2011), it is a cycle that also impacts rural people who migrate to urban areas.

The UN Human Development Index’s (2011) ranking for PNG is 0.466%, placing the country 153 out of 187 countries. Its social indicators — that is, health and education — are by far the lowest in the Asia Pacific region and poverty is reported to be increasing.

According to the UN Human Development Index (2011) and Gibson (2000), the World
Bank poverty survey conducted in 1996 found up to 40% of people living in poverty: on less than one dollar a day (less than 3.22 Kina). The recent analysis of poverty is based on the 1996 National Household Survey. Rural poverty is now double the estimate of urban areas (Care, 2011; Gibson, 2000). Since 1996, there has been limited data regarding poverty in PNG in general and young people in poverty in particular. Both the literature and country reports (Care, 2011; UNICEF, 2010), however, highlight the implications poverty has on young people.

**Rural unemployment**

**Unemployment in rural western young people**

In the previous section, I discussed poverty, and, as shown in that discussion, unemployment is usually associated with poor and socially excluded people (Commins, 2004), or those who suffer most from all types of social problems.

Cartmel and Furlong (2000) explain that youth unemployment is well-researched; however, the majority of these studies have focused on urban youth. Cartmel & Furlong (2000) and Crocket et al (2000) agree that the experiences of young people in rural areas are diverse compared to their urban counterparts; nevertheless, information about youth unemployment overall is derived from studies of urban youth.

Hood-Williams (1988) contends that the term ‘unemployment’ is used vaguely and thus obscures different experiences in which “the unemployed” do not have experience, they are not isolated individuals thus the experiences of unemployment does not have an effect on pre-existing structures of social relations. Shannon and Young (2004) argues that unemployment is a recently invented term, thereby highlighting the fact that the
first authors writing on unemployment — Gatay (1978) for example — wrote about unemployment policy rather than aimed to define unemployment itself. Moreover, Shannon & Young (2004) classifies three traditional forms of unemployment: “fictional unemployment”, due to a time lapse between jobs; “cyclic unemployment”, caused by various wave movements in the economy; and “structural unemployment”, caused by loss of employment in declining industries” (p.105). They acknowledge that these definitions are identified as causes of unemployment. They draw on the ILO standardised definition of unemployment to mean “a person who is not in a paid employment for at least one hour a week, is currently available for work and has sought work in the past four weeks” (p.110). Although ILO gives a broad definition which states that the unemployed population

...is made up of persons above a specified age who are available to, but did not, furnish the supply of labour for the production of goods and services. When measured for a short reference period, it relates to all persons not in employment who would have accepted a suitable job or started an enterprise during the reference period if the opportunity arose, and who had actively looked for ways to obtain a job or start an enterprise in the near past (p.110).

O'Higgins (2001) asserts that this definition is ambiguous for reasons that students within the youth cohort (15-24) are considered to be outside of the frame of the labor force, giving the example that young people in Norway may be included only if they are actively looking for employment. Though I may draw from the ILO definition, I am mindful that rural young people are unemployed on a long term basis because employment opportunities do not arise in their context. Hence, they are not actively seeking employment as they do not see possibilities of getting employment. This is as a result of economic conditions that need to be addressed (O’Higgins, 2004).
Young people from all walks of life are affected by being unemployed (Cartmel & Furlong, 2000). O'Higgins (2001) affirms that unemployment is significant and one of the many challenges facing our societies. Hughes (2000) argues that although technological change leads to accelerating economic growth, pushing production ahead of population growth and resulting in rising employment and increasing standards of living, unemployment is still high in many countries because of inappropriate economic policies. The common economic enterprise in rural areas worldwide is mainly agriculture (Ziegler, 1986). Moreover, O'Higgins (2004) argues that if the society has not produced adequate jobs, it is not simply because people lack the skills and qualifications to enable them to obtain jobs.

The International Labour Organisation (2012) confirms that there is an increasing unemployment rate in the world, describing the levels of unemployment in young people as three times more than adults, with more than 75 million youth world-wide searching for work. The OECD (2012) has produced evidence that high youth unemployment rate is common in all countries. Among other countries’ figures for youth unemployment 2011, Australia and New Zealand, for example, showed 11.3% and 17.3% respectively. Hence, a country’s macroeconomics performance coupled with rise in youth population and policy weaknesses can still be overcome if the country has sustainable economic growth.

Unemployment raises many issues, not least financial insecurity, among young people (UN, 2004). O'Higgins (2001) verifies that as a consequence of unemployment, young people frequently delay long-term establishment of stable relationships, marriage, and even postpone accepting responsibility in raising children. Related to limited or no economic prospects, joblessness is linked to young people being likely to fall into extremely negative social behaviour such as drug trafficking, violent crime, vandalism or
gang warfare and gambling (Schissel, 2001). Moreover such young people may participate in anti-social behaviour such as unsafe sex, potentially spreading HIV/AIDS. Increasing levels of unemployment contribute to alienation and social unrest. Discontented young people are, therefore, typically the main force behind disorders in the society (O’Higgins, 2000; Headley, 2004).

Alston & Kent (2009) note that although young people migrate to the cities in search for employment, urban opportunities are slim and have even declined in the major cities. This is because many young people do not have sufficient skills to be engaged in paid employment. However, Ziegler (1989) contends that there is a gap between vocational or job training and job creation; effectively, there must be an equilibrium in the vocational training and job creation in a given locality. Also, despite the fact that young people from rural and remote areas may actively seek technical skills training, the need to travel long distances is a difficult barrier to overcome, especially if they do not have any accommodation in the city to access the facilities they require (Alston & Kent, 2003; Conchas & Vigil, 2010; Corbett, 2005; Ziegler, 1986). Nevertheless, Ziegler (1980) argues that whether a young person lives in rural or in an urban area, ‘institutional barriers’ are concomitant to employment problems. These institutional barriers include poor schooling; lack of industrial/commercial enterprise; inadequate government programs; together with’ structural barriers’, individual or personal, and family conditions that impede rural youth from obtaining full employment. Despite the fact that there may be adequate transportation, it is implausible for many rural young people to find and obtain secure employment because they may be in poor health, prone to drug or alcohol abuse, or come from distressed families (Ziegler, 1980, Cartmel & Furlong, 2000). Ziegler (1980) also contends that it is frequently impossible for young people to transit from school to
employment due to lack of vocational assistance, a lack which makes it impossible for youth to understand job markets or their own possibilities, while inadequate schools fail to equip young people with basic personal and intellectual skills that are appropriate for employment. It is also important to note that there are fewer job opportunities in rural areas than for urban youth (Ziegler, 1980; Cartmel & Furlong, 2000).

Parton (1999) also argues that child labour is typically framed as an economic phenomenon rather than considering the behavioural context in which child labour occurs. People lack understanding regarding why families might send a child into labour. Kane (2009) asserts that family behaviour at critical coping times drive the household head to make decision to send their children into labour.

**Unemployment in rural Pacific young people**

International reports and publications (World Bank, 2008; UNICEF, 1998) highlight a general overview of youth in the Pacific and echo similar conclusions (World Bank, 2009; ILO, 2009; UNICEF, 2005, UNICEF, 1998) that there is a significant increase in the youth population of this area, which leads to limited employment opportunities, which in turn are invariably higher for young people than in other population groups (ILO, 2009). The World Bank (2008) notes bluntly that insufficient formal employment exists for rural and urban youth. Abbot & Pollard (2004), however, contend that the concept of unemployment is difficult to ‘define, measure and compare’ because subsistence activities are still significant across the societies in the Pacific. The World Bank (2009), in its review “Pacific Youth”, recognises that there is insufficient data on the social and economic impacts of youth unemployment and underemployment. However, the World Bank (2009) and UNICEF (2011) both agree that poor employment opportunities
constitute one of the main issues facing the Pacific Island countries, particularly in combination with a lack of decent employment overall and poverty.

The World Bank (2009) draws our attention to the unemployment rate among Pacific Island Countries; at this time, the Solomon Islands registered the highest with 32.1%, while the Marshall Islands was rated second with 30.9%. The World Bank (2009) and Abbot & Pollard (2004) maintains that young people are unable to find employment because they have limited education and skills. However, Kick (2001) contends that not all youth who go through tertiary education get employed, implying that higher education in itself is not a guarantee in securing employment. AUYS (1996) highlights that in Samoa, 28 % of tertiary educated youth did not secure employment. Young people who complete secondary schools score the worst in securing employment.

Nilan (2009) and Kick (2001) argue that school-to-work transition is dismal for young people when they fail to continue with education or find employment, and instead return to the village. UNICEF (2011) notes that young people disengaged from active employment are commonly dependent on their wage earning relatives, mostly their parents. UNICEF (2011) reports that although there are high rates of young people only completing secondary education, some do continue to tertiary education. In contrast, UNICEF (2005) points out that ‘...in most countries young people are not completing secondary education and/or finding suitable employment [and] are vulnerable to engage in activities such as consuming drugs and alcohol, unsafe sex, or crime and therefore are unable to meet their full potential” (p.5).

As I have outlined above, the inability of governments to provide opportunities for young people is not balanced against the growing population in young people, despite economic
growth (World Bank, 2009). Ware (2004), for one, therefore argues that providing employment opportunities for young people who dislike working as subsistence farmers and fishers will create problems for the Pacific Countries. Providing opportunities for young people to earn cash income to supplement their needs beyond subsistence farming has also led Pacific Islanders to migrate to other countries, which also constitutes an indirect factor in unemployment. Gaining a better education for their children is a wish for most parents, likewise obtaining a white collar job is a priority among all Pacific Island parents (Nilan, 2009; Kick, 2001; Vakaoti, 2012).

**Unemployment in rural PNG young people**

Unemployment is becoming a prevailing problem in PNG, affecting mostly youth (PNGNYP, 2005; Pitts, 2001; UNDP, 2011). Pitts (2001) claims PNG has the world’s highest unemployment rates. Although PNG is endowed with natural resources such as gold, copper, and timber, unemployment and/or underemployment is a concern and a problem that affects all ages and, genders across the provinces of PNG (UNDP, 2011; Pitts, 2001). PNGNYP (2005) contends that young people are faced with many problems including unemployment, substance abuse, dropping out of school, teenage pregnancy and health related issues. Levantis (2000) perceives that youth unemployment is also connected to the problem of urban crime. Unemployment and inadequate education are the two most discussed topics among the youth living in rural villages. These two factors are major contributing causes and factors of joblessness and poverty among young people living in rural villages. As the research above indicates, the result of these factors leads them into criminal activities among others (PNGNYP, 2005).
Rural youth benefit only when there is a job to be done within the villages (Inape, 1996). For example, Inape (1996) highlights that between 1990 and 1993 the Works Department (PNG) engaged 60 groups of rural youth on roadside cleaning contracts. The Department of Works PNG however, ceased offering this opportunity when it was facing financial constraints. Similarly, LNG (2010) reports that when the PNG LNG plant was built in Caution Bay near Port Moresby, job opportunities were available. People from the four most affected villages received preferences but most of them had no relevant experiences. The Construction Training Facility therefore took unskilled people from the four neighbouring villages and trained them as construction workers. In contrast, the LNG project also raised unrealistic expectations of employment amongst young people in the Central Province; in reality, however, the project has only benefited the young people in the immediate surrounding areas of the LNG project site (LNG, 2010).

Ware (2005) and Pitts (2001) argue that the most significant source of income in rural areas of PNG is subsistence agriculture. Great distances separate rural residents from jobs, services and each other, yet public transportation is rare and inefficient (Pruitt, 2009; Ware, 2005). Employment within the local area is therefore the most logical and viable option.

The ILO (2010) and UNESCO (2007) agree that there are diverse and complex issues related to youth unemployment; one of the factors is the structural challenges aggravated in recent years as a consequence of globalisation. The global economic crisis has also had a real impact on the lives of rural PNG, increasing unemployment rates within the country to critical levels. Despite the global economic recovery, the unemployment rate in PNG still remains high. Port Moresby, for instance, has one of the world’s highest unemployment rates (Pitts, 2001). There is no relevant and appropriate
data to quantify the unemployment rate and discuss the disparities between urban and rural youth. However, there is a consensus view that unemployment among youth is burdensome to the nation overall. Kidu (2000) attests that the major source of employment is subsistence gardening. Pitts (2001) suggests that the pool of unemployed youth will deplete if incentives are established for youth to learn practical skills and produce genuine income for themselves for example within the agricultural industry.

**Education for rural young people**

**Western view of education for rural young people**

There is growing literature highlighting a strong link between lack of access to education and social exclusion among young people (Alston & Kent, 2009; Monsell-Davis, 1998; Olaleye, 2010). Alston & Kent (2009) and Commins (2004) concur that young people in rural areas are unable to fully participate in the key activities of society not because of their own inabilities but because of widespread systems failure. Shucksmith (2012) posits that the pace of change and the dependency on systems and institutions will make our ability to survive and to prosper precarious; the risks will be unequally distributed in society where particular levels of risk will become associated with particular social classes. Shucksmith (2012) and Alston & Kent (2009) note that accessible services such as education are highly dependent on governments allowing rural young people to participate, and, as such, hardships often result because these services are inadequately and unequally distributed, placing a barrier in the path to access. Poor people are short of resources, individually and jointly, and this includes many resources that are deployed in education.
Access to secondary education remains at lower rates for rural young people (Alston & Kent, 2009; Shucksmith, 2012). Pruitt (2009) claims that educational attainment is lower in rural areas where there are fewer educational opportunities, fewer incentives for educational advancement, and a lesser ability to afford tertiary education. These factors, in combination with a dearth of high-skill jobs and the low cultural value placed on formal education, contribute to a significant educational gap between urban and rural residents (Cartmel & Furlong, 2000). Perhaps one of the most significant factors in the lower rates in education is that parents struggle to send their children to local schools and therefore the children delay their education and opt to continue by distance mode. In places where there are no accessible high schools children remain in boarding schools; however, many parents struggle to meet the payments (Alston & Kents, 2009:97). Moreover, Alston & Kents (2009) reports that because of financial constraints on parents, school leavers who are able to continue to university often decline that offer. It is also important to note that young people depend on their parents for allowances, another financial factor dependent on their parents’ income and assets. Considering the fact that often these parents own farmland, such parents may draw little during drought periods (Kents & Alston, 2009). Therefore, the children themselves are forced to get employment to earn sufficient fees to support their studies at university. However, a significant downside of being at university and working simultaneously is the impact on their lifestyle and grades. The high cost of education and the lack of financial support therefore have an immense impact on rural young people, who frequently discontinue and delay their education.

Shucksmith (2000) asserts that education is one of the critical factors that facilitates or restricts young peoples’ access to the global marketplace. He argues that those with lower levels of education are confined to local markets and their life chances are
consequently reduced. In support of this, Alston & Kent (2003) draw from the Social Exclusion Unit (1999) in its report to the Government to establish a link between young peoples’ access to education and to social capital as a whole, and argue that those who lack access to education suffer different types of social exclusion.

Wallace et al (1998) argues that education is one of the most significant institutions structuring modern societies, in which the increasingly complex division of labour in modern industrial societies leads to the need for ever-changing skills and retraining or re-education throughout life. The changing needs of the economy poses constant challenges for education systems which in turn interact with selection processes to filter young people into an occupational hierarchy. Consistent with White & Wynn’s (2004) research, young people’s biased understanding of learning and work challenges the traditional view that learning only materialises at school. Smith (1999) says that colonisation process along with globalisation of knowledge and western culture constantly reaffirms the West’s view of itself as the centre of legitimate knowledge (p. 63).

**Pacific view of education for rural young people**

Kick (2001) and Abbot & Pollard (2004) highlight that education in the Pacific does not meet the needs of rural people, especially where skills for self-employment in rural settings are limited. Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo (2002) concur that there is greater educational disparity between urban and rural schools. Eseta and Matamua (2009) argue that students are leaving school with inappropriate skills to secure sustainable livelihood. Most Pacific Islanders do not complete secondary schools, and some do not complete primary schooling, UNICEF (2011 & 2005) and Kick (2001) identify a significant lack of
support and information for young people in their transition from education to entering labour market. Although Kick (2001) contends that non-formal education can provide necessary skills, UNICEF (2011), World Bank (2008) and McMurray (2006) note that options within vocational training are minimal — to the extent that many programs are not linked with employment outcomes. Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo (2002) emphasise that most rural children fail to continue in the education system or drop out of school and are unable to find employment.

In spite of the fact that a large percentage of Pacific people live subsistence or semi-subsistence lifestyles and have low incomes (McMurray, 2006), the overwhelming majority of children are inadequately trained to prepare them to be productive in rural traditional subsistence economy (Kick, 2001; World Bank, 2009). Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo (2002) echoes similar views highlighting a missing link between education and life in rural villages, stating that:

> The schools, with their emphasis on Anglo-European knowledge, inevitably prepare children for urban lifestyles and expectations. As most children fail or drop out of school after the early primary grades, they return to the village ill prepared for the rural life they must lead (p.401).

Eseta and Matamua (2009) contend that Samoan parents, for example, expect their children to succeed academically rather than vocationally, thus children leave school with inappropriate skills with which to base sustainable livelihoods. The World Bank (2009) argues that education is crucial for all children to learn necessary skills at primary and secondary level in order to overcome the skill barriers that spread underdevelopment and poverty.
In comparing rural and urban areas, McMurray (2006) points out that young people who live in rural areas have worse experiences because of the unequal distribution of basic services: the urban areas get more attention in secondary education and also provide greater employment opportunities. Similarly, Abbot & Pollard (2004) posit that urban-rural disparities are increasing with primary schools in rural areas lacking books and other teaching materials. Equitable shares of public resources devoted to education are not obtained by schools and students, nor are access to quality facilities and teaching standards: these are by far the weakest in rural areas and the outer islands (Abbot & Pollard, 2004).

High unemployment rates and leaving school early (Kick, 2001; UNDP, 2011, UNICEF, 2005) are interconnected indicators of two core problems: fixed education systems moulded for white collar work, and unfair distribution of economies which lack sufficient employment opportunities for young people (McMurray, 2006). While UNICEF (2011) attests that disadvantaged young people are excluded from jobs due to a lack of literacy, even those with basic literacy are often confined to unskilled jobs. More so, even a proportion of those who complete their education and have obtained the necessary skills remain unemployed (UNICEF, 2011).

McMurray (2006) along with Puamau and Teasdale (2007), confirm that formal education systems were established by the missionaries in the 19th century in the Pacific. Initially, the teaching was focused on reading and writing in the local vernacular to develop community participation in religious gatherings. Puamau & Teasdale (2007) emphasise that:

Educational apparatuses can be described as hegemonic because once structures such as curriculum, assessment and school organisations become entrenched and
institutionalised; they have a totalising effect on society. Education deeply saturates the consciousness of a society and becomes unquestionably what parents want for their children (p.271).

Nilan (2009), Puamau and Teasdale (2007), and MacIntyre (2008) all concur that every Pacific Island parent desires their children to succeed at a ‘Western type education’ (Puamau & Teasedale, 2007) irrespective of its cultural relevance and appropriateness. In a similar vein Abbot and Pollard (2004) emphasise that better education is a factor to higher income and good health.

Regardless of free education introduced by some governments such as PAH in Pohnpei (Abbot & Pollard, 2004), Nilan (2009) and Abbot and Pollard (2004) agree that primary and secondary school children are dropping out of school because of practical factors such as the cost of bus fares, school materials, uniforms, and poor roads coupled with irregular transport services. The World Bank (2008) attests that young people who come from poor families exit from the education system simply because their parents are unable to pay for their school fees.

**PNG view of education for rural young people**

Kidu (2000) argues that many people are marginalized because PNG’s capacity to provide formal education is outsored by population increases. When the missionaries introduced Western-style education in the 1870s and 1880s, children were taught technical skills and knowledge by the village elders or parents within the village settings (Le Fanu, 2012). Rees-Miller (2000) highlight that observation and imitation are the traditional methods of learning. Vulliamy (1981) and Le Fanu (2012) draw our attention to the fact that at this stage of PNG’s history, education services were predominantly provided by church organisations. In that, English language was the main medium of
communication in the pretext of ‘modern economic development and participation in cash economy’. However, the effectiveness of this medium is widely debated for reasons such as the fact that the English language is a foreign language and that the curriculum is irrelevant, being unable to assist the children in their transition from school to village (LeFanu, 2012; Vulliamy, 1981; Avalos, 1985).

Vulliamy (1981) speculates that gaining a modern model of education supersedes the traditional skills of learning. Earning money has become the prime interest, unlike in past rural communities, in which a “batter system” was common. This leads to fully-fledged perception of wage employment as the pivotal economic goal in the minds of all rural people (Local-global, 2010).

The PNG Education Policy (2005) promotes universal education and attempts to provide education for a majority of children to reach Grade 10 and Grade 12. Ninety percent of the schools, however, are in rural villages (Post Courier, 2012). Conversely, Kaman (2003) argues that a percentage of the rural population migrate to the city in search of better services – namely, education and employment. Although education is a priority in PNG and the government ensures that children have the opportunity to access education and be educated till Grade 8 (DoE, 2004), schools in rural villages are coping on very limited resources, which clearly makes learning very difficult. This has an impact on youth in terms of progressing to further their education.

Children are the focus of our work in the education system. Parents with the support of the community, teachers, and agencies strive to provide a better future for our children. The prime objective of this Plan is to provide a basic education for all. This means that all of our people will be literate and numerate and be able to contribute towards an improved quality of life in their communities this will lead to a better future for all (p.v).

Kaman (2003) highlights that PNG education is, however, experiencing numerous challenges, such as a lack of modern classrooms and appropriate resources for schools (Kent & Barnett, 2012); issues of OBE (Outcome Based Education) curriculum as providing inappropriately low quality of education (Hayes, 2012); and poor access to schools. WHO (2010) and Kaman (2003) argue that young people also face significant challenges; rural children find it difficult to attend school due to the distance between the village and the school (Kari, 1990; Gibson & Rozelle, 2003); financial constraints - such as school fees costs - impact families heavily (Avalos, 1992, Kaman 2003); there is a widespread lack of transport and inadequate boarding facilities (Kari, 1990); and many parents find it difficult to provide sufficient food and clothing (WHO, 2010). In its effort to provide opportunity for all, Holloway (2004) states in the PNG Educational Plan that:

On completing nine years of basic education our young people will have a number of pathways available to them as they move through adolescence into adulthood. All students who complete their basic education will receive financial assistance for their future education or training, some academically inclined students will be selected to receive special finding to enable them to progress as far as their ability allows. Those with different talents will have opportunities offered through revitalised vocational centres and a restructured distance education system. The vocational centres will extend their role and offer courses that are relevant to the community as a whole. Adults will be encouraged to enrol in short courses designed to improve the quality of life and to provide them with income generating opportunities (Holloway, 2004: vii in PNG Education Plan).

In contrast, the PNG National Youth Policy (2005) highlights that even well-educated young people lack employment, which then leads them to become dependent on their
parents (Avalos, 1992; Vulliamy, 1985). Bokova (2011) highlights the importance of education and in light of the PNG National Education Policy, the former Prime Minister, Michael Somare (cited in PC, 2009), indicates an increase in the funding for vocational schools and establishing schools for young people who have discontinued formal education. According to the Department of Education, an estimated 80,000 young people leave the school system early (PNGNYP, 2005). Hence PNGNYP (2005) asserts that the alarming rate of school leavers contributes to socio economic issues – unemployment, increased use of alcohol and drugs, prostitution, crime (Goddard, 1995), risk taking and influx of urban migration.

There is no data to differentiate school leavers between the urban and rural schools, or specifically on rural young people who discontinue their education. Avalos (1992) highlights that deteriorating law and order problems are recognised partly due to young people who have discontinued their education and who have exited from different transition points in the education system.

*Difficulties of the OBE systems*

Hayes (2012) compares the traditional form of learning with the current OBE system that has repercussions: in traditional forms of education, for instance, individuals learnt from their elders, however, the current system requires the students to learn for themselves. Avalos (1992), however, also highlights positive benefits of OBE, such as lengthening the primary school experience by providing nine years of basic education in the hope that it will produce more mature school leavers who will be productive in rural environments or be able to continue in their education. Hayes (2012) argues that the current education system, outcome based education (OBE), has seen many students discontinue with
education who are now unemployed. The PNG Education Department (2005) perceived that the implementation of OBE would prepare the students for their future in the process of transition to adulthood. Hayes (cited in Post Courier, 2012), however argues that OBE, the new way of teaching in PNG, is not relevant for the developing nation, especially when the current curriculum requires more resources within the classrooms. Moreover, OBE will not function regardless of how much money is spent. Neither the school nor the parents are able to meet the resource requirements for the students as the OBE curriculum requires a lot of resources within the classroom.

Discourses of formal education

People develop constructs about their world that organise and systematise events, people and the environmental context (Ivey & Ivey, 2002). These constructs constitute our ideas and representations of the world, our ‘world view’. In this way, the generated notion of gaining appropriate formal education is a priority for all rural families. However, even the preparation of 10-12 years of formal education does not assist young people to gain a well-paid job. Hence, they are referred to as ‘school leavers’ who live the rest of their lives in the villages. Ivey (2002) argues that individuals constantly engage in processes of actively constructing and reconstructing the meaning of their life experiences. Youth are marginalised (Post Courier, 2011) and therefore feel the need to express their emotions in the form of violence to capture the attention of the government. These school leavers, dropouts or young people, however, are PNG’s human capital and a powerful national asset (Post Courier, 2011; France, 2007) that should be harnessed. Alston and Kent (2009) argue that the failure to invest in human capital leads to an increase of socially excluded young people in rural areas (p93). Bokova (2011) also emphasizes the importance of education, stating that:
Education is the most basic insurance against poverty. Education represents opportunity. All ages, it empowers people with the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to shape a better future (VSO, 2011:3)

The PNG National Newspaper (2012) posits that the education system of PNG has failed the young people who leave school in either grade six or grade ten after the national examination process, who are not given the opportunity to continue their education (Avalos, 1992) because their parents are not able to meet the costs (Kari, 1990). Conversely, the introduction of the ‘free education’ policy by Governor Ipatas (Enga Province) in fulfilling the NDoE (National Department of Education) policy of ‘basic human rights to an education’ has brought a positive note to the Enga province; showing high intake into tertiary institutions across the country (PNG Post Courier, 2007).

**Cultural Dominance in education**

As I have indicated above, gaining an education is an expensive exercise for those living in rural villages. O’Collins (1984) and Avalos (1990) contend that cultural practices also privilege males and restrict females from continuing their education. Siddiqi and Patrinos (1995) argue that when a female discontinues her education in Grade six, ten or twelve, families in rural villages look forward to seeing their child helping out in their gardens. They are raised to take over or assist in the household duties rather than being encouraged to continue with their education because rural families do not have the finances for school fees (O’Collins, 1984). Ali (2005) agrees that it is an obligation and expectation for children to contribute to the economy of the family and assist with household and agricultural responsibilities.

The PNG NYP (2005) and PC (2012) highlights that it is common that, although young people have certificates, they do not have suitable employment that they can rely on;
even if they have certificates, this does not guarantee them a job. The education system has pushed many of students on the streets (PC, 2011, Avalos, 1992). They are disempowered from having jobs for the future. Lack of employment opportunities for school leavers has become a major concern and is clearly a challenging problem for PNG (UNICEF, 2005).

**Youth Culture**

“When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years”. Mark Twain

**Western Views of Youth culture**

The extensive literature on adolescence highlights that this time is a period of growth and development (Ng & Hall, 2011; White & Wyn, 2008; Skott-Myhre, 2008; Erickson, Newman & Newman, 2011). This period is often a time where a number of milestones are experienced in exploration of self-identity (Ng & Hall, 2011). Ng & Hall (2011) furthermore explain that the adolescent’s environment (including family, friends, and larger social contexts) are part of the filter through which the adolescents experience life. Newman & Newman (2011) and Wallas & Kovatcheva (1998) postulate that culture influences and shapes the adolescents’ development and individuals also creatively construct and modify the cultures, styles and fashions around them. Wallace and Kovatcheva (1998) define youth as demarcated ‘by distinctive cultures and consumer markets and following postmodern tendencies, such as cultural factors, become increasingly important for understanding social groups’(p.153). Similarly Ng & Hall (2011) perceive culture as ‘a shared system of values, beliefs and attitudes that shapes an
individual’s perceptions and behaviours’ (p.44). It is to this extent that young people create their own culture to explore their identity in any given environment (Wallace & Kovatcheva, 1998).

In so far as youth culture is a common theme (White & Wyn, 2008). Wallace & Kovatcheva (1998) contend that youth culture is a phenomenon connected with urban areas where there are places to meet, cultural scenes to colonise, and common places for communication which allow fashions to spread. In contrast, Wallace & Kovatcheva (1998) argue that these trends are uncommon in rural areas, for example in rural parts of Europe, mainly because rural young people are involved in local community activities. For instance young people’s involvement in agricultural labour limits their recreational time (Wallace et al, 1994).

However, White & Wyn (2008), along with Wallace & Kovatcheva (1998), also emphasise that youth culture is perceived as a youth domain and develops in the vicinity of popular music such as hip hop (White & Wyn, 2008) and consumer markets. Wallace & Kovatcheva (1998) and Mallan & Pearce (2003) posit that ‘subcultures are espoused in opposition to mainstream or official culture and each generation of young people is able to creatively construct new styles and fashions’ (p153). For instance, the new communication technologies and devices – iPods and iPads, mobile phones, computers, DVD players, x-box —are avenues which young people use to create, modify and communicate their subcultures (Wallace & Kovatcheva, 1998, Mallan & Pearce, 2003).

White & Wyn (2003) assert that youth culture is viewed as ‘monolithic and unidimensional’; comparable to the multiplicity of textual and visual metaphors of youth, youthful identity resists a clear and firm meaning. Mallan and Pearce (2003) enunciates
that youth are perceived in multiple ways ranging from the celebratory to the terrifying to the sympathetic. White & Wyn (2008) and Skott-Myhre (2008) contend that the notion of subcultures shifted to identity where the major emphasis lies on the subjective understandings of individuals rather than the affiliations of young people’s engagement in defined groups, social structures or organisations.

Also the concept of youth culture has gained currency in terms of analysing young people’s consumption patterns in recent times (Muggleton, 2000; White & Wyn, 2004). Music, for instance is one area where the phenomenon of youth culture was first conceived. White & Wyn (2004) state that;

> contemporary music was provided a medium for the development of music and expression of distinct sets of sensibilities, meanings, symbols, and practices. Music, produced by and for young people, has provided successive generations of youth with cultural forms that have marked their age group and distinguished them from their parents since the 1950s. Music features in young people’s lives in various ways, often as an omnipresent feature of their daily lives. Different strands of music have been seen as constituting youth subcultures. (p.189)

White & Wyn (2008) also highlight that ‘straight edge’ music — also known as ‘cultural collectivity’ (Wood, 2003) — is demarcated alongside mainstream forms of music. The main character of straight edge is its resistance to the use of drugs, both legal and illegal, alcohol and casual sex. However, White & Wyn (2008) contend that local music events such as hip hop (in UK) overall provide an avenue for young people to construct their own space.

White & Wyn (2004) state that, in many countries, young people mimic and adapt hip hop to suit local contexts. Popular music can have negative effects on young people, depending on its themes. Similarly, the elusiveness of identity is comparable by the shifts in self-image. Thus young peoples’ perception of themselves and how they are perceived...
by others are not direct forms of mediation and knowing, hence the reflection of youth in different forms at different times may never be representational of the future youth (Mallan & Pearce, 2003).

White & Wyn (2008) and Mallan & Pearce (2003) also note that visual display of identity is concomitant with the increase of consumption and relates material goods with selfhood. Young people construct the desired image; as a result they purchase styles, brands and products which may satisfy the image they perceive to have. These behaviour ranges from clothes and accessories to the body itself. Having the perfect body is equally imperative to having the right clothes in order for young people to fit into their peer groups and express their individuality; young people identify with their peer groups and clothes as important sources of individuality (Muggleton, 2000). Nevertheless, in spite of the commercialisation around many elements of youth, popular cultural contexts and practices in particular, youth both resist and accept these cultural expressions (Mallan & Pearce, 2003). These avenues open up opportunities for young people in their efforts to portray the connotations of their lives, and in terms of their desired dreams and fears; in exploring these areas, they test the boundaries of current teachings, understandings of good or ethical behaviour, and sexual discourses (Mallan & Pearce, 2003). Bucholtz (2009) echoes similar sentiments but goes on to state that youth culture is predominantly a male preserve, pertinent to the issues of masculinity. However, Wallace & Kovatcheva (1998) argue that the consumer markets ‘blowout’ youth cultural styles in all areas so that ‘global culture’ is formed throughout the world.

Pruit (2009) identifies that substance abuse is significant in rural America despite popular notions of it being an urban phenomenon. Ng & Hall (2011) identify that substance abuse includes illicit drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Rural youth abuse most substances at higher
rates and at younger ages than their urban peers, with substance abuse (including cocaine and methamphetamine) in particular being a major problem among rural youth (Pruit, 2009). Ng & Hall (2011) claim that youth involved in substance use are also typically involved in risky sexual activity, violence and aggression. Some researchers (Skott-Myhre, 2008; Pruit, 2009; Ng & Hall, 2011) suggest that increased alcohol and substance abuse is a result of trying to link with majority culture. Miller et al (2010) also state that young people in rural areas are most at risk of increasing rates of alcohol consumption and young offending.

Romer et al. (1994) examine social influences on youth and identify HIV infection as a leading cause of death among youth living in urban minority communities in America. Youth living in poverty are at greater risks of contracting HIV and of teenage pregnancy.

**Pacific Views of youth culture**

The concept of different identities among young people in the Pacific Islands is a growing phenomenon (Hewlett, 2012). Hewlett (2012) argues that young people are caught in the dilemma that stems from the range of cultural circumstances they are introduced to within the environment they grow up in. While young people are expected to follow and accept the traditional customs of the society at home, attractive images that dominate public spaces that conflict with the values of their upbringing are challenging their loyalty to their parents and the family background (Hewlett, 2012). Van Meijl (2012) also argues that the daily practices and activities of young people in the Pacific are changing from the way they are expected and accepted by their people in their community, parents and extended family.
The concept of urbanisation in the Pacific leads young people to ‘live’ and ‘act’ out new identities (Vakaoti, 2007). Urban centres are places where young people imitate new culture and are given the chance to create and live out sub-cultures (UNICEF, 2011). The Secretariat of the South Pacific Community (2009) contends that young people lack tradition and historical culture and therefore hesitate to participate in, and disregard gaining knowledge of, traditional cultural practices. Young peoples’ consumption patterns and indulgence in popular youth culture is common among youth in urban centres because:

...many young people are attracted to the freedom of an urban youth culture and the chances to forge a new sense of personal identity. They are able to choose friends and social networks based on common interests and activities (SPC, 1990:27).

Van Meijl (2012) asserts that the impact of television and marketing on the growing desire of young people to participate in global consumption patterns of information, technology and fashion are fundamental social and economic changes impacting on their parents. Vakaoti (2012) and Hewlett (2012) identify that young Pacific Islanders express and develop new ‘music, communications, dance, ways of speaking, fashions and the arts as forms of popular culture’. The influences of Afro-American youth culture also has an impact on the Pacific Island young people in their dress, slang, body language and music – particularly hip hop and rhythm and blues. Another significant influence is the Rastafarian movement, especially visible in young Pacific peoples’ dreadlocks and adapted reggae sounds.

**PNG Views of youth culture**

Kidu (2000) asserts that youth gang culture is a significant reality, especially in Port Moresby. This eventuates when youth struggle for identity and recognition (Hebe, 2007).
Post Courier (2007 & 2012) highlights that young people and school children roam the streets aimlessly, consume homebrewed alcohol and smoke marijuana. Noble et al (2011) also discusses cult groups or cults in school as a recent phenomenon in high schools, likewise particularly so in Port Moresby. These cult groups are comprised of male and female youth who worship evil spirits and enter into supernatural practices. Students display the results through negative behaviours such as bullying, drug and alcohol abuse and offering sexual favours. They join the cults groups for a sense of belonging and group support (Noble et al, 2011: 80; PC, 2013).

The introduction of information and communication technology in rural villages has revolutionised the perceptions and behaviours of youth. While these technologies allow the sharing of knowledge across the boundaries of geography and culture, they also exploit the minds of youth.

Young people operate in a multi-layered value system in a socio-cultural setting; including PNG’s traditional cultural values such as Christianity, good governance, opportunistic/exploitive, sorcery and warrior values.

**THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDINGS**

**Conceptualising the theories underpinning rural youth**

In this section I will discuss the theoretical underpinnings of rural youth including social constructivism, youth empowerment, and social exclusion. I will also outline how social institutions and relations have direct impact on young people’s lives.

Jorgensen & Philips (2002) and Foucault (1980) provide a preliminary definition of discourse as a particular way of talking about and understanding the world or an aspect
of the world. Jorgensen & Philips (2002) states that discourse analysis can be applied both to analyse different social domains and in exploration of the role of language use in broad societal and cultural development. Crotty (1998) defines constructionism as ‘the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context’ (p.42). Crotty (1998) elaborates further in his discussion of constructionism; ‘there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world. There is no meaning with a mind. Meaning is not discovered, but constructed’ (pp.8-9).

I will draw from Opie’s (1997) view of constructivism to address the views that underpin rural youth. As discussed in my previous section on rurality and youth, the literature ascribes certain values to the rural as a place that is remote with little or no services or resources that young people can access easily. Crotty (1998) argues that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. The terms ‘rural’ and ‘youth’ did not exist in traditional times. The comparison of rural and urban emerged only after observers identified the disparities between them. The literature distinctively recognises that the urban areas are equipped with goods and services which are not accessible by people living in rural areas. The only means of getting to these services, for those living in rural areas, is by having appropriate transportation— but even then the time to arrive at the destination may be longer than anticipated (Cadwell & Toua, 2002; Kidu, 2000; Muller et al, 1998; Rye, 2006; Allen et al, 2005). The rural was perceived as, for example, a village where people with
homogeneous culture and attitudes congregated, lived and shared their culture and their
daily activities (O'Higgins, 2001; Rye, 2006).

Similarly, the concept of youth or young people did not exist in traditional times and nor
were the problems seen now relevant. The categories of youth discussed in the previous
section are current notions which were not specifically identified in the past. As Crotty
(1998) notes ‘it is not the case that individuals encounter phenomena in the world and
make sense of them one by one’ (p.54). White & Wynn (2004) posit that young people
forge their identities through their engagement and association with local and global
realities, and hence make meaning out of new social realities different from traditional
customs and culture. They arrive in a social environment where a ‘system of intelligibility’
prevails. As described in the literature, the youth cohort was known as a group in
transition from childhood to adulthood. Nonetheless, they are the source of group
strength and identity, together with other kin-related values: they constitute the future of
the tribe. Therefore in the past, young people were highly regarded within the society.
They were expected to abide by the customs and behave accordingly. Since the inception
of colonialism, modernisation and globalisation, however, the perceptions of people for
the betterment of their lives have changed to the extent that traditional cultures are also
fading away. Accordingly, different sets of meaning are emphasized, created and
recreated because we come into being in and out of the give and take of social existence
to serve hegemonic interests.

Ballard and Smith (1998) state that the development of a child occurs when they engage
in activities and relationships with others and continues to state that,

Children’s’ development is profoundly affected by other people, culture and the tools
of culture (especially language), institutions and history. Cultures too are changed by
the development of individuals, because the discoveries and inventions of one
generation can be transmitted to the next (p.2).

In a similar vein the ecological view (Bronfenbrenner, 1972) accentuates that
development is affected by contexts, that is both children’s immediate existing
environment (home, school or neighbourhood) and the environment beyond the
boundaries of the home, which influence how the caregivers and the teachers act towards
them.

In spite of the realities that exist, the changes brought about by colonialism and
globalisation are perceived to be a positive outcome despite the impacts that they have
on rural young people, such as being labelled as drop outs and problem makers in society.
Moreover, according to social constructivism, the meanings that people come up with
supports the existing power structures, and do not necessarily move forward to reach
greater equity: instead it creates oppression, manipulation and other types of injustice
and no freedom.

**Ecological system theory**

In reference to ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 2000) and development from
infancy to adulthood (Ballard &Smith, 1998), the process of development in a young
persons’ life is influenced by the environment in which the individual is raised. Ballard &
Smith (1998:1) argue that,

...development taking place largely through social interactions and communication in
children’s daily lives through play, everyday shared tasks, and close relationships with
caring but demanding adults and peers. At the same time children are seen to be
vulnerable (at worst) and receptive (at best) to the influences of the wider world,
which affect how their caregivers treat them. Children are viewed as actors in their
own right, who are not simply passive recipients of their environment, but who
actively interpret and experience their lives within their own unique culture, family and society.

Bronfenbrenner (1972) argues that our focus should therefore not only be on the child but encompass the environment that they live in and in which they develop. Bronfenbrenner (1972) conceptualises the environment at different levels and defines the ecology of human development as:

Ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded. (p.21)

He notes that the ecological environment ‘is conceived as topologically as nested arrangement of concentric structures each contained within the next’ (p.22). The concentric circles include:

1. **Microsystem** — is the first level which includes the immediate setting. Within this setting the child participates in activities and relationships with others and is anticipated to achieve certain roles.

2. **Exosystem** — the setting that indirectly affects the child such as the support network of family and friends; the father or the mother’s job.

3. **Macrosystem** — consistencies, in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist, or could exist, at the level of subculture or the culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology underlying such as consistencies. For example beliefs about culturally appropriate activities or behaviours of males and females.
4. **Mesosystem** — interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing persons actively participates (such as, for a child, the relations among home, school and neighbourhood peer group; for an adult, among family, work and social life)

5. **Chronosystem** — a term used to describe environmental influences on individual or family development over time. This includes effects that can be events associated with individual life transitions such as going to school, or the effects of cumulative sequences of developmental transitions over the life course within the particular historical time in which we are embedded (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:20-29; Smith, 1998:13-14).

Shannon & Young (2004) adds to the ecological system and draws our attention to the embedding theories in the three levels that may explain the struggles that empower and disempower young rural people and may also assist in providing methods for action. For the purposes of this research I will draw from Shannon & Young’s (2004) concept of using the three main ecological systems in terms of holistic view of young rural peoples’ problems. These include the personal level (micro level), social level (macro) and organisational level (meso). For the purposes of this research I will focus on the macro level theories as it is most appropriate to community development. Community development and community action projects by their very nature, promote social change.

i) **Micro** — interpersonal level; how unemployment, poverty, lack of education, lack of resources, and deconstruction of their family affects young peoples’ relationships and interactions and how they react to it.
ii) **Macro** – social level; why young people go through the problems and how to change these situations. Community development exists at the macro level. The theories that exists for the macro level includes:

a. Classical liberal theory
b. Industrial society (Welfare state/Keynesian Theory)  
c. Socialism (Marxism)

   d. Alternative (constructivist theory)

iii) **Meso** – organisational level; how delivery of services affects young people.

For example, the system of education does not provide young people with skills that should equip them return to the village. Similarly, there are not enough jobs for young people to go to when they complete their education.

The macro theories provide an analytical framework which can be used to describe some of the many factors involved in community development. Young people are confronted with barriers, inequalities and injustices everyday within their communities. Some of the key concerns of the community caused by rural young people such as crime (Goddard, 1995) and violence, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol can be understood and described using the macro theories at the community level. The notion of entropy among young people and community development can similarly be understood using these theories. Therefore in attempting to identify the struggles of rural young people who come from deconstructed/dysfunctional families and community development, I investigate using the macro theories and the practice models or the ‘intervention theories’ – how to make changes. To do this, although the macro level has four theories liberal, industrial, socialist and alternative (see figure 2.2), I will mobilise only one of the
four macro theories; the alternative, which is most pertinent to community development and the practice models (Compulsion, Persuasion, Class Struggle and Participation).

I argue that in rural villages, community development strategies are vital to assisting young people while at the same time taking into consideration the cultural and traditional norms of upbringing. One particularly valuable alternative approach that can be implemented to satisfy the village communities of the PNG is Selby’s (1995) model. As discussed in figure 2.3, Selby (1995) outlines the idea that the focus of the attention is the whanau in the Maori society, where the Tangata whenua are whanau, hapu and iwi. Their collective rights are paramount. Perhaps the relevant approach to PNG society is the collective - village.

Figure 2.2: Community Development Theory – Social (Macro), Theories and models.

Source: adapted from Shannon & Young, 2004:27

I argue that in rural villages, community development strategies are vital to assisting young people while at the same time taking into consideration the cultural and traditional norms of upbringing. One particularly valuable alternative approach that can be implemented to satisfy the village communities of the PNG is Selby’s (1995) model. As discussed in figure 2.3, Selby (1995) outlines the idea that the focus of the attention is the whanau in the Maori society, where the Tangata whenua are whanau, hapu and iwi. Their collective rights are paramount. Perhaps the relevant approach to PNG society is the collective - village.
Alternative (Constructivist theory)

The Alternative theory focuses on the holistic view of social life based on the community – collective. The main element of social development and change is mutual participation and control of decision making. Participation in this is related to power, and decision making should be taken to the lowest possible level, with everyone involved and participating in the community in which they belong. Most decisions are also made at the lowest level, apart from those issues that the local community considers to be relevant to more regional, national or global levels.

Alternative theory claims that the definition and differences between the three systems (economic, political and cultural) is one view of the world which suits certain powerful interests. The purportedly unconnected systems should instead be incorporated at the community, regional, national and international levels. Decision-making is ‘bottom-up’ in a system of deliberative democracy rather than ‘top-down’. This means that the people at the local level join the unit to which they relate and everyone is involved in decisions about the control of the resources at the local level. Appropriate and relevant matters can be dealt with at the next level (Shannon & Young, 2004: 32-34).

Figure 2.3: Tangata Whenua and Tauiwi models of Whanau and client

Source: adapted from Selby (1995:21)
**Practice model for Alternative – Participation**

This approach is founded on the notion of self-determination where people decide what they want for themselves in their society because they are knowledgeable as to what is best for them in their community (Ruwhiu, 1994: 126-143).

Foucault (1990) claims that ‘power is everywhere’. Power is invisible and does not take a constant form (p.93). According to Punch et al (2007), power is the main emphasis of ‘analysis and contemporary’ views. The notion of power is debated; it exists and varies from organisation to organisation and individuals (Opie, 1997; Moffat, 1999). Low (2005) posits that power is used to amplify justifications of social difference (cited in Punch et al, 2007:205). As this suggests, there are many ways in which power is conceptualised and that power is an object or control where individuals and institutions embrace, harness and use to lead others, in this case, rural young people. Power is exercised by those who ‘have’; such as the schools, parents, elders of the community, who then impose it on the ‘have nots’; as Punch et al (2007) note, this defines the negative perceptions of power and the dominating process that disempowers, oppresses, or creates disadvantages.

Foucault (1990) states that power as a relational phenomenon cannot be held, and neither can it be bought like products and services. However, power is embedded in adults in the village communities, and, although it may be transferred by the genealogy of the traditions in our societies, it may be hard to harness the privilege as it does not give the adult definable powers.

Discourse is defined as structures of knowledge, practices and claims through which we decide and explain things where reality is constructed (Parton, 1999; Mills, 2003). Multiple discourses are privileged over others (Healy, 2005). For instance, young people
are constructed as significant social problems (Sanders & Munford, 2003). Within rural communities, the discourses of youth can be heard in family conversations, particularly when youth are seen to be doing something out of the norm such as gambling or experiencing homebrew-related problems. However, it becomes complicated when young people who behave in this way are said to be the reflection of the parents’ upbringing and therefore should be the responsibility of the family and not someone from outside the family.

Discourses are structures of knowledge (Parton, 1999), and knowledge is linked to power (Irving, 1999). Rees (1991) identified three types of power: external authority, internal authority and anonymous authority. Internal authority operates on a daily level in the lives of people (Stewart, 1991) and occurs when an individual uses their power within their community (Rees, 1991). Power relations also determine the issues of inclusion and exclusion (Opie, 1997). The location of a person within a more or less powerful discourse will define that person as more or less powerful. Partnership is therefore inextricably permeated with relations of power. Opie (1997:261) suggests that dominant discourses together outline reality through the representations of it which they offer, and thus result in the construct of social practices, behaviours and truth affects expressing the realities they have defined. The dominance of a particular discourse can be challenged and altered by other discourses within different representations of reality. As this suggests, many discourses are active in a society.

**Globalisation**

The process of globalisation is fragmenting the socio-cultural togetherness once enjoyed by local people (Bellamy & UNICEF, 1998). Local people were knitted together via family links, blood ties, and traditions of taking responsibilities communally when in need
UNICEF, 2011; Kidu, 2000). Fook (2002) examines the different aspects of the effects of globalisation such as economic, technological and political and emphasizes that they have, in a holistic way, had an impact on the livelihood of rural people. Pugh and Gould (2000) suggest seeing globalisation as inevitable, however, pre-empts possibilities for change.

Traditionally, cultural norms guided us to in terms of doing our everyday activities and behaving in certain ways; for example, having respect for the elderly and someone older than you. In present times, the cultural norms are now fading, for example when a need to take on responsibilities such as caring for an orphan, or an obligation to care for the destitute child becomes a burden rather than a cultural responsibility, which would historically be seen as a link to enhancing family relationships, in present terms these ideas are far from reality.

The world economy is a characteristic of the process of globalisation. Globalisation refers to the “compressing” of the world through economic and technological means, including political and cultural repercussions of this (Cox & Morrison, 2004). The consciousness of the world intensifies as internal economies become more independent let alone the communication and transport systems more efficient (Fook, 2002). Similarly, developing countries— including PNG— want to be in the race with the rest of the world and therefore grab opportunities to meet the demands of their people, taking these opportunities in the guise of development and reaching the people living in rural villages for the betterment of their lives. There are advantages and disadvantages of globalisation. Fook (2002) argues that one upside is that it allows new expressions of identities and a broader awareness of global responsibilities when there is a breakdown of boundaries and parochial thinking. In contrast, the downside is disintegration of old
certainties and structures that in turn lead to the epidemics of conflict between marginalised groups. Another disadvantage is that, “globalisation can be seen as a type of ‘capitalist imperialism’ in which the economic and political structures of the West are imposed on the rest of the world in the guise of ‘development’” (Hogan, 1996, cited in Fook, 2002, p.19). The process of colonisation, together with globalisation of knowledge and western culture, frequently reaffirms the West’s view of itself as the centre of all genuine knowledge. The elements of both the positive and negative views of globalisation have an impact on the lives of youth in PNG. This is where I would like to take the lead in addressing the factors that empower and disempower youth living in rural villages of PNG.

Schultz (1961), writing in view of the modern theorists, regards investment in education as a prerequisite for economic growth, and therefore disregards traditional methods of pedagogy as irrelevant and counterproductive to the achievement of developing countries’ economic and political goals. McDowell & Jeffery (2004) argue that gaining a formal school education is itself an aspect of globalisation and it is becoming a prominent ambition among young people and their parents. People perceive formal education as a means of combating entrenched privilege and creating human capital. I argue that, on the contrary, formal education is creating failures as a social label.

According to Giddens (1991) globalization can be defined as ‘the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events many miles away and vice versa’. While there is a wealth of literature on globalisation, youth and identity and its impacts on youth and society (Milbourne, 1998), Harvey (2003), in contrast, suggests that globalisation should be primarily regarded as being about the interdependence of societies on a world scale.
Bourn (2003), Punch et al (2007) and White & Wynn (2004) posit that young people are directly affected by globalisation and that they are experiencing globalisation on an everyday basis through different mediums such as "employment patterns, the friendship groups they develop, their usage of the internet (particularly for social networking) and wider cultural influences on their lifestyles. They are surrounded by a 'dazzling array of symbolic resources dislodged from traditional moorings', are the main targets of global consumer cultures and are increasingly targeted with messages concerning global social problems’ (Dolby & Rizvi, 2008). Smith (1998) clearly states that the development of a child occurs when they engage in activities and relationships with others. Smith (1998) argues that:

> Children’s’ development is profoundly affected by other people, culture and the tools of culture (especially language), institutions and history. Cultures too are changed by the development of individuals, because the discoveries and inventions of one generation can be transmitted to the next (p.2).

Postmodernism allows us to engage with elements of knowledge and power (Hasenfeld, 2000). It is a descriptive theory as well as a framework that critiques theories that claim to be universal and allows for a multiple construction that gives to some culturally defined discourses over the others (Hasenfeld, 2000).

**Youth Empowerment**

Youth empowerment is a concept that is receiving increasing attention (Olaleya, 2010; Zimmerman, 2000; Rappoport, 1987). The PNG National Policy (2000 – 2012) aims to empower more youth who are “dropouts”. Most governments in the world are looking for, or have found, new ways and approaches to combine the potential of their youth and
address the problems facing them. Likewise, The PNG National Youth Policy (2008 – 2012) was adopted to empower PNG’s young people.

By most definitions empowerment means to enable people to help themselves fit into the community. Reiss (1988, cited in Olaleye, 2010:104) defines youth empowerment as involving young people in decision-making processes on issues that affect them, as well as entrusting them with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively and meaningfully participate in society. In addition, empowerment occurs when individuals, communities or organisations gain mastery over their lives and participate democratically (Zimmerman 1995; Luttrell & Quiroz, 2009; Jennings et al 2006). Furthermore, Rapport & Zimmerman (1988) elaborates that empowerment:

... is a construct that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviours to social policy and social change.

Jennings et al (2006) state that empowerment is encompassing, a process by which individuals, families, organisations, and communities gain control and mastery within the social, economic and political contexts of their lives, in order to improve equality of their lives. It is seen as a multi-layered construct that consists of practical approaches and applications, social action processers, and individual and collective outcomes (Jennings et al., 2006: 32). Rowlands (1997) asserts that:

An enabling definition of power is not simply the ability to gain power over something but is a process which includes the development of power within, as well as the ability to enhance one’s power with others who find themselves in a similar marginalised situation (Bunch et al, 2007:208)

Lakin & Mahoney (2006) evaluated the impact of a community service program with sixth grade whose ages ranged from 10 to 13 years old, at an urban elementary school, and showed that youth who embrace empowerment and a sense of community build skills to
become healthy, productive adults. Empowerment recognises that powerless individuals
can practice power in their own ways either individually or as a group. Marginalised
individuals or groups come to see themselves as having the ability and the right to act
and have influence.

**Social Exclusion**

Social exclusion is a contested area and one of growing importance in the post-modern
world (Fook, 2002). Burchardt (2009) defines social exclusion as the inability of people to
participate in key activities in society through no fault of their own. On the contrary,
social inclusion is dependent on having access to the resources necessary for personal
wellbeing and growth (Reimer, 2004). The inclusion of differences is becoming more
valued. The concept of social exclusion germinated from ideas of poverty rising from
amore divided society in which the poor do not fully exercise their full rights as social,
cultural and political citizens (Fook, 2002). Social exclusion incorporates an array of
differential access issues. New categories of social exclusions have been illuminated as a
result of cultural and social injustice, these include cultural domination – “some people
are excluded because they are subjected to ways of interpreting or communicating which
originate from a culture which is not their own, and which may be alien or hostile to
them”; non-recognition – “some people are excluded because they are effectively
rendered invisible by the dominant cultural practice”; and cultural disrespect – “some
people are excluded because they are routinely devalued by stereotyping of public
representation or everyday interactions within the dominant cultural context” (Fook,
2002:24). A classical example, in the case of rural young people in PNG, is the ways in
which the education system pushed young people out onto the streets (Post Courier,
2012). This is the representation of a “system” failure rather than the fault of the
individual (Commins, 2004). Rural young people who have not gone further in their education can be seen as socially excluded because they are not included in mainstream opportunities and experiences. Thus rural young people become powerless.

Similarly, Leyshon (2003) states that young people in rural villages are marginalised because of the lack of services that are available compared to those in the urban cities. Leyshon (2003) argues that young people are marginalised not just because of lack of services or the physical distance and transport, however; rather, they are denied their own space because of power-laden connections with peers and adults within the village. Culturally, marginality is part of the adult surveillance and the norms of the activities and spaces in the villages (Leyshon, 2003). Social exclusion is therefore created as a result of adult surveillance and scrutiny within the villages and everyday interactions of young people by way of cultural practices and through social construction of identity and symbolic capital in social and lay discourses (Bunch et al 2007, Skott-Myhre, 2004).

Different governments of different countries (Olaleye, 2010, PNG National Youth Council, 2007; UNDP, 2011; Nasreen & Hoda, 2006) have new approaches to harness the potential of the young people and address their problems. Many young people face many challenges in the PNG Society. For example, in terms of unemployment and lack of education, young people in rural villages are hardest hit because most of them lack money to purchase western goods. These impacts are manifested in young people’s diminished hopes for the future. As a result, young people fall for criminal activities to express their need for recognition.

Consistent with Bunch et al’s argument (2007), power is dispersed from the centre of networks of actors; individuals, organisations and technologies. Foucault (1990) notes
that it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible not to engender power. Young people may display their knowledge through alternative or subversive means such as engaging in public places. Punch et al (2007) contends that ‘knowledge is power’ is the basis of many grassroots status quo movements that aim to disrupt the status quo and raise awareness of inequality and marginalisation.

There is a dearth of literature that highlights the fewer resources, limited services, higher unemployment and reduced job opportunities for young people that push them to migrate to urban centres (Skott-Myhre et al, 2008) and make them subject to disconnection (Conchas & Vigil, 2010). Saunders and Munford (2005) identifies that young people are not encouraged to participate in defining the solutions to the problems they cause. Therefore, it becomes a challenge for young people to participate successfully. Public discourse commonly constructs marginalised young people as social problems. Young people are excluded from participating in mainstream activities and community life. Saunders & Munford (2005) argues that education is the main pivotal point of exclusion for young people.


Conchas & Vigil (2010) argues that students’ schooling and learning are affected by multiple factors. Students may not have a solid foundation in their culture. Some may form subcultures and adopt a lifestyle that includes criminal activities and substance abuse (Skott-Myhre et al, 2008), together with school absenteeism (Conchas & Vigil,
Youth are plainly marginalised (Post-Courier, 2011) and therefore feel the need to express their internalised emotions in the form of violence to capture the attention of the government. However, in contrast, this gives an impression that the village societies are not up to building and restoring the order of the village. While the community leaders have the power to find solutions to these causes, they fail to address the situations that occur. The village communities are the very institutions that should be working with our youth to develop their skills.

Port Moresby City Mission New Life skills Training Centre (NTCSL) employs 100 young men between the ages of 16 – 24 years, most of which are given a second chance to achieve practical skills that will assist them in the future. They are trained and assisted to find permanent employment. These young men, who are perceived as rascals (Goddard, 1995); are taken of the road, and travel long distances to attend this institution. The City Mission, like all other organisations (Salvation Army, YWCA, and Ginigoada), is focused on meeting human needs and developing human potential. These institutions strive to alleviate poverty and to liberate vulnerable and disempowered people in order to promote social inclusion. The young people are those who are facing barriers in their lives and see that there is no other hope other than getting an informal education to get a paid employment.
The aims of the organisation are to enhance social participation of young people in the community, reduce long-term dependency on family members, and help individuals to be empowered to live a dependent life. These organisations have a combination of purpose, technology and auspice (Hasenfeld, 2000). The principle function is to protect, maintain or enhance the personal well-being of individuals by defining, shaping, or altering their personal attributes (ibid).

Organisations are seen as organisms, which adapt and grow to survive by acquiring external and internal requirements (Jones & May, 1995). External requirements include the resources, such as funding, needed for an organisation to carry out its goals. The City Mission should therefore have an interdependent relationship with the government, through the Department of Community Development, Youth and Religion, to pay the wages of youth. Internal resources should include staff such as horticulturalists, where these officers should be well-trained.

Young people also have a desire to see change in the community and the country as a whole. The change strategy in the National Youth Policy’s and the Medium Term Goal

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*Fig. 2.4: Young men from City Mission*: Photograph by City Mission

6 Learnt the skills and completed a project. They built a concrete house for a staff of the City Mission.
likewise establishes a commitment to social action for sustainable change at micro, meso and macro levels. Payne (1997) enunciates that empowerment and advocacy are significant perspectives, informed by the relational dimensions of respect, empathy, curiosity and time as a model of practice. Milner (2005) argue that there must be an intuitive understanding of community as being something possible through the creation of shared meaning amidst the complexity of the youth lives and the intersection of local and global economic policy (ibid). These changes in the policy which should trickle down to the village level can have major impacts in the development of the community and the society. Changes should also take place within the village setting while maintaining the traditional cultures and norms. The traditional cultures and norms of the society are the main foundations of the village, which signifies the distinctiveness of the society.

This research, therefore, seeks to address the struggles of youth, taking into consideration the perspectives and influences from the holistic model and its impacts on the livelihoods of youth in rural areas. Also, I investigate appropriate community development approaches and strategies that could be developed locally to address social problems.

**Research Questions**

The literature review discusses the factors that affect rural young people who come from dysfunctional families and clearly sets the scene for the thesis. Current rhetoric emphasises the struggles that rural young people encounter while at the same time aiming to satisfy the traditional responsibilities that they are required to uphold, which come into conflict with the parents and the community.
The second section of the literature provides a broader understanding of the issues affecting young people. This section includes social constructivism, ecological system, globalisation, empowerment and social exclusion.

Consequently this research identifies and seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Why are youth empowered or disempowered in rural settings?
2. Why and how youth struggle in rural villages and what support mechanisms are provided to alleviate the problems they face?
3. How do the problems of youth have an impact on the family and the community?
Chapter Three - Methodology

Introduction

The methodology chapter will outline the basis of my research and responses, alongside the dilemmas I encountered while in the process of doing the research. I have organised this chapter in accordance to the method used when doing my research: I therefore discuss qualitative research design: the case study research method and the focus group research method; one-on-one interviews; the use of the research design and the samples of both case study and focus group; and data analysis. In the qualitative research, three methods of inquiry were used to collate data from the research participants. This research method is also approached from my view as an insider and thus I include ethical considerations in this section.

Qualitative Research Design

There was a debate in identifying the research methodology suitable to collect my data. Both quantitative and qualitative are appropriate methods to use. However, as much as I had wanted to use quantitative research method I had to consider and identify the much needed ‘felt needs’ of the individuals rather than quantify what people said; conversations between people cannot be reduced to numbers (Walker, 2010), value free (Alston & Bowles, 1998) and are not quantifiable (Holliday, 2007; Silverman, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) also highlight that:

...quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. Proponents of such studies claim that their work is done from within a value-free framework (p10).
Therefore qualitative research was the appropriate choice. The research design methodology was appropriate for gathering the data that captured the thoughts, feelings, issues, meanings, and individuals’ sensitivities of participants. They also include an exploration of values, processes, experiences, languages and meanings, among other things (Jones & May, 2004). From the social worker’s perspective, qualitative research is said to stem from and in turn address issues of “social work values, knowledge and skill” (Shaw & Gould, 2002:15). The qualitative method therefore clearly suited the purpose of the study and type of data. However, most approaches depend on one type of data-collecting method – but not exclusively (Bell, 2010). Thus, a careful construction of the research was necessary to satisfy my topic, and careful planning allowed quality data collection.

The empirical data sought was the exploration of youth’s struggles, comparing and contrasting their experiences in order to identify the causes, and the elements affecting how they live in rural villages, as they interact and are influenced by/with each other, their family and the elders of the community and make sense of their living environment. In relation to this, Denzin and Lincoln (c2005) sets the scene for qualitative research and the study approach I will embark on:

Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasise the value laden nature of the inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning (p.10).

Qualitative researchers believe that ‘reality’ depends on how people experience and interpret life (Alston & Bowles, 1998). Alston & Bowles (1998) argue that reality is socially constructed and so cannot be separated from experience or measured from the outside; instead, the challenge is to understand reality from the inside, from other
people’s perspectives (p.9). The advantage of qualitative research is that it ‘can support values of decreasing inequalities and increasing life chances of citizens where the inequalities in their lives can be documented and precisely analyse how social structures and social policies enhance and restrict opportunities for individuals and groups’ (Shaw & Gould, 2002). Youth living in rural communities struggle for various reasons and are portrayed in different ways; as a result, multiple discourses are constructed and interpreted by people (Denscombe, 2002) to make meaning out of them. So, the participants were selected as their responses are a representation of the social reality of their family and the community.

Quantitative methods did not serve my intentions for youth living in rural communities. Hence, it was inappropriate to implement in this research because we cannot count the social realities of interactions (Denscombe, 2002): the responses of the participants are not objective reality as represented. Alston & Bowles (1998) define this as:

> based on the idea that there is an objective ‘reality’ which can be accurately measured, and which operates according to natural laws which can be ‘discovered’ by rigorous objective research (p7).

Careful planning and construction of the research design was the utmost priority for me in order to elicit data that was deep and rich in its context. More so, I also wanted to extricate information that would provide me with an understanding of the participants involved in the case studies, focus group, and with those whom they interact and those who have an influence in their lives. Qualitative research therefore, is suitable because such studies seek to gauge deeper views and understanding than those that quantitative research can provide (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, Alston & Bowles 1998, Holliday 2007). Qualitative studies work with much smaller numbers of research participants and gather
much more detailed data. They seek to understand the complexities of the topic. Qualitative methods are therefore the most appropriate ones for exploring such a subject as the one addressed in this research.

The questions aim to investigate the struggles of the young people; their perceptions of life in the rural village; the impacts of the socio-economic factors; and what the community can do to develop their community that will satisfy their needs.

The quality of data is dependent on the research design rather than on the type of methodology. The quality of the data is deemed rigorous when the data are valid or reliable. There are two main ways of evaluating the usefulness of our variables: checking their validity and reliability. The data I present here will adopt the concept of validity and reliability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Silverman, 2011; Holliday, 2007; Yin, 2011,) to examine the rigour of this qualitative study. Like quantitative research, the concepts of making valid inferences from data and the consistency of the data are also important issues in qualitative research.

**Validity of data collection**

Validity in qualitative research is used both to determine whether the research measures what it is intended to measure, and to approximate the truthfulness of the results. Ultimately, the validity of a variable depends on how we have defined the concept of measurement (Alston & Bowles, 1998). Yin (2011) describes a valid study as:

... one that has a properly collected and interpreted its data, so that the conclusions accurately reflect and represent the real world or laboratory) that was studied. Conversely, studies in any field are worthless if they arrive at false findings (p78).
This approach adopts a post-positivist approach: the post-positivists believe that people construct their own view of the world based on their perceptions of it (Trochim, 2006) in order to understand their environment. It is these constructs which stimulate a response rather than the external world itself. Thus the mental constructions of those in the world become the research focus and designs are employed which can incorporate these perspectives (Crotty, 1998). Post-positivists emphasize the importance of multiple measures, observations, and the need to use triangulation across multiple sources to get a better insight into what is happening (Trochim, 2006).

There are two types of validity identified by Denzin & Lincoln (2005:11); internal validity, or “the degree to which findings correctly map the phenomenon in question”, and, external validity, or “the degree to which findings can be generalised to other settings similar to the one in which the study occurred”. To disregard validity is to put the trustworthiness of the research into question and to also call into question confidence in its results. Validity is safeguarded through the methods of data collection and analysis. Therefore, in this research, firstly, the validity of findings of the research was ensured by sending the interview transcripts to the respondents to re-check and make sure that the transcripts were correct and free of error. Secondly, as several authors have pointed out, using multiple methods can help facilitate deeper understanding and confirm its validity. McGloin & Widom (2001), for instance, argue that in order to grapple with multiple domains and levels of measurement, multiple sources of information are required.

I therefore used multiple methods of data collection (including case-study interviews, focus groups interviews, one-on-one interviews, and source documents) to understand the social realities of youth living in rural villages. Silverman (2000) postulates that
certain methods of data collection such as interviewing, can have the disadvantage of allowing the interviewer’s bias. For this reason, one strategy in qualitative research that aims to reduce this potential source of bias is warranted in order to ensure that the respondents’ perspectives are presented accurately.

**Triangulation**

The use of multiple sources, called triangulation (Roundtree & Laing, 1996), gives the study its robustness. Multiple sources in this study included policy documents, observations, and interviews. Triangulation serves the purpose of clarifying meaning by identifying different ways the case is being seen (Stake, 2005) and overcoming deficiencies that stem from one single investigation or method (Patton, 2002). Many qualitative researchers use triangulation to ensure that their findings are valid (Yin, 2011; Alston & Bowles, 1998) and make it more robust (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I was interested in the diversity of perceptions of rural youth and the multiple realities within which youth live in their communities and the influences of different sources. The use of multiple sources helped to identify those realities and, moreover, the findings were highly credible because they were drawn from multiple sources. These multiple sources ensured that my data was rich, robust, comprehensive, well-developed, and met the requirements. The principle goal was to seek multiple ways to verify or corroborate particular facts or descriptions. This serves as another way of strengthening the validity of this research whilst also capturing the contextual reality.

The multiple sources included:

1. **Case study interviews**—This method was used as a means of investigating youth living in rural villages and fitted my intensions of the research. This method
involves collecting information from a variety of sources which have an impact or influence on the individual (Rountree & Laing, 1996), in this case, youth living in rural villages. I had two case studies, one a male and the other a female. My focus was to talk to people with whom these youth are connected to in some ways. Youth living in rural villages are connected to older siblings, elders, clan leaders and the church. Participants had similar experiences while in the village.

2. Observation — On-going observation is important, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasise that researchers are open to:

   ... multiple influences – the mutual shapers and contextual factors – that impinge upon the phenomenon being studied, the purpose of persistent observation is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail (p. 304)

In terms of these case studies, on different occasions, a time was scheduled for me to observe the respondents in their daily activities and have informal conversations. I was thus able to make cross comparisons from each case study. Fortunately, towards the end of my data collection, the village community organised a Youth Council meeting for all neighbouring villages. This meeting was organised through the United Churches of the local communities. I sought permission from the church elder (Pastor)—again consulting the village elder—if permission could be granted for me to sit in for a day to observe the meeting processes and discussions. During this meeting youth leaders from different villages gathered to discuss issues relating to the impacts of running their programs smoothly in their village. They also discussed and shared what programs were helpful to engage youth in the activities.
3. **Focus group interviews** — a focus group is a small homogenous group representative of the target population and in which the group of people who have knowledge on the topic are interviewed. Three focus groups were used in this research and were composed of four females and four males respectively. Of the three focus groups, one group was comprised of four females and two groups included four males. One group of the male focus group was not engaged in development programs while the other was engaged in skills development program with potential for future employment. I wanted to gauge the views of youth who were purely from the village and contrast them with those youth from the City Mission, who were also from the village but are engaged in the skills development program. I was unable to recruit females from City Mission because the institution is entirely for the male population. There are no similar organisations in PNG that cater for the needs of rural females. The purpose of using focus groups was to discuss how these youth feel about living in the village; their struggles; and views about being actively involved in community activities. The recorded transcripts were analysed to compare and contrast the views, thoughts and experiences of different individuals, and also to compare and contrast what can be done in the villages to develop such opportunities.

4. **One on one interview** — I conducted interviews with individual rural young people; the elders of the community; Salvation Army officers and the Youth Commission Officials. The one-on-one interviews with youth were undertaken privately as I thought it was essential, especially when some of the questions were individualised and I wanted to obtain and explore the responses in depth. I wanted to explore the position the respondents wellbeing in the community and if
the community assisted youth who had similar problems. Problems that youth go through are sometimes sensitive and therefore need to be dealt with delicately. For instance, if a child was molested by a family, youth will certainly not want to discuss this problem in a focus group.

My interest in interviewing the organisations one-on-one gave me the benefits of listening to how they work in leadership roles in terms of making an impact in remote rural villages. I wanted to explore how they implemented the programs and policies they create in their organisations for youth. I also wanted to explore how they made decisions in their organisations. To fulfil this object it was necessary to talk to them individually as they are experts in their own field and are faced with challenges in their organisations as well.

5. **Policy documents** — reports/ newsletters and sources of data analysis. As an insider I had links to other organisations; these links were established during my Social Work placement, I was able to gain access to policy documents, reports and newsletters. Some of the reports were gathered from the public domain. These documents were very important for my concepts of youth being impacted by the macro system, especially given the nature of the research as holistic, that is, taking into consideration the ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and that youth are influenced at all levels (that is, on the micro, meso and macro levels).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggests that interactions with others and the environment are key for development; especially given that everyone experiences more than one environment. Five environments were identified: the microsystem – “the immediate environment were the person operates”; the mesosystem – “the interaction of two microsystem environment; the exosystem – “the environment in which an individual is
not directly involved, which is external to his or her experience, but nonetheless affects him or her; the macrosystem – “the larger cultural context, including issues of cultural values and expectations; and the chronosystem – “events occurring in the context of passing time, these events may have an impact on a particular birth cohort” (p.21-26,).

Young people — or anybody — move through and are affected by a range of systems of relationships (Shannon & Young, 2004), therefore social workers must take into account the understanding of what they bring into the situation. These situations are addressed or rectified at the three levels of change. Therefore, this study is concerned with micro – “at the personal level”, macro – “at the social level”, and meso – “at the organisational level” (Shannon & Young, 2004) as a framework to give an explanation of the struggles of youth.

Doing a qualitative research using case study, one-on-one interviews and focus groups, has particularly raised interesting issues at some instances, including information from respondents that was so similar that I cross checked and discovered I had collected the same views from different individuals. These issues will be discussed in the later chapters.

**Reliability**

Reliability refers to the “ability to replicate the same results using the same techniques that is to provide results that other researchers could repeat” (Guthrie, 2010: 11). From this basis, I would simplify the term and define it for my understanding by saying that: reliability occurs when the results are constant over a length of time, given the accurate representation of the total population studied. If the results/ outcomes of the study can be reproduced using the same methodology, then the research instrument is seen to be
reliable. Having this definition in mind, it is not possible to replicate the same results in a qualitative research; because qualitative researchers do not measure the richness of verbal conversations and that their observations are an interpretation of their setting; they do not escape from the burden of subjective interpretations in what is observed (Holliday, 2002). Stenbacka (2001) argues that reliability issues concern measurements and so they do not have any relevance to qualitative research. However, Lincoln & Guba (1985) state that “there can be no validity without reliability, a demonstration of the former [validity] is sufficient to establish the latter [reliability]” (p.316). Patton (2001) also states that reliability is a result of the validity in a study.

**Credibility**

Validity concerns the accuracy or truthfulness of the findings. This characteristic is termed as credibility. Credibility or truth value involves how well the researcher has established confidence in the findings based on the research design, participants, and context. When the different procedures or different data sources are in agreement, there is corroboration and therefore evidence of credibility.

**Qualitative design and the topic for investigation**

Researchers have used case study methods for many years across a variety of disciplines (Holliday, 2007; Rountree & Laing, 1996; Yin, 2002, c2009). Social scientists in particular have made wide use of this qualitative method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods (Soy, 1997:1). Flyvbjerg (2001:173), in support of using case studies, argues that “practical rationality and judgement evolve and operate primarily by virtue of deep-going case experiences” and to maintain concrete examples because the way to re-enchant the
world “... is to stick to the concrete” (ibid). Case study research excels at bringing an understanding to a complex issue and can add to what is already known. It emphasises detailed contextual analysis of limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Case study approach involves gathering information from a variety of sources (Roundtree & Laing, 1996:104). In support of this, Flyvbjerg (2001: 136) enables us to clearly identify what it means when using this method and states that, “the minutiae, practices, and concrete cases which lie at the heart of phronetic research are seen in their proper contexts; both the small, local context, which gives phenomena their immediate meaning, and the larger, international and global context in which phenomena can be appreciated for their general and conceptual significance”. The focus of my study is on rural young people who are from multiple structures of family such as orphaned children, single parent families and blended families. This also allowed me to make connections to the parents and people whom they associate with, such as their relatives’, cousins, and the church or the village elders who know them.

**Interview Process**

Before embarking on the field work to collect data, I had to correspond with participants, including the NGO and Government Organisations, seeking their participation in the project.

A time, date and venue were set for me to convene each interview, taking into consideration travelling time, and cost. On several occasions I was unable to conduct the interview, for the following reasons:-
Communication system

PNG is a developing country. Modern technology such as mobile/cell phones or mobile communication was only introduced to the population in July 2007. Although extensive network coverage exists throughout PNG and has brought coverage to rural areas, this network coverage is unreliable: it sometimes does not work or the reception is unclear. In addition to that, it is difficult to maintain the continuous top-up required to make long calls to people. I was in this situation at times when I did not have sufficient funds to top-up my phone to make calls. Sometimes, rural stores would also run out of top-up vouchers.

Bad weather

Extreme weather conditions in rural villages can prevent commuters from travelling into Port Moresby. This is because the roads can be muddy and the vehicles can easily be bogged or bridges can be washed away which halt the whole process of travelling. There are also high incidences of road accidents. Sometimes, therefore, although I had made an appointment to travel for my interview, I was unable to make it to my destination because vehicles did not make their trips. Further arrangements had to be made when this eventuated.

Election period

I arrived in PNG at the start of the election period and left at the end of the election period. Sometimes the election period in PNG can be very risky because there is tension in the parties of the candidates. If a candidate loses, there is likely to be fights and killing in the community. This was not a convenient time to arrange an interview because participants were at their election booths to cast their votes or had travelled to their
villages for that purpose. Therefore, alternative arrangements had to be made to suit the purposes of the research. During this period, however, I had the opportunity to observe the behaviours and conduct of youth in the community. According to the election criteria, youth who were 18 years and above were eligible to vote. However, there were some youth who did not vote because their names were not on the common roll of the community. This created tensions among the voters and those that took the census. People gathered in small groups and were hoping that their votes were valid as they had suffered for a long time. The people in general wanted development to materialise in their village.

**Sampling**

Identifying youth in rural villages was easy — but I was not just going to recruit any ordinary youth living in the villages. I had a particular interest in youth who came from disrupted family structures; this included youth who were orphans; youth who came from broken families; youth from single parents unemployed parents; unemployed youth; and those who did not continue their education. These were types of youth I was looking for to satisfy my criteria. Therefore, I adopted snowballing techniques of sampling to select my young participants. Snowballing is considered as a form of accidental sampling (Babbie, 2010) and refers to the process of accumulation that results as each subject suggests other subjects. Snowball sampling occurs when the researcher collects data on few members of the largest population he or she can locate, and then asks those individuals to provide the information needed to locate other members of that population whom they happen to know (ibid). From this process I had two case studies qualify for this research.
I began my interview with a village elder, explicitly describing the nature of my research. He pointed out and suggested two people who eventually became my two case studies. In the event, other youth were mentioned who met the criteria for recruitment, and in total 8 youth were gathered. These youth were divided into two groups depending on their gender, so these two groups became my focus groups.

During my field placement at the Salvation Army for four months, I was privileged in that I was given the opportunity to work with youth and visit the prison camp at Bomana (in PNG), and also given the chance to attend court hearings of youth who had committed crimes and youth who were abused. These gave additional data to my findings and related it to a new dimension in terms of the factors contributing to youth struggles in PNG. Additional information, such as policy documents, Youth Commission Act, PNG Millennium Development Plan (MDP), Juvenile Justice Policy, were also provided. These were important sources that I could draw on and link youth with the services that they lacked in rural villages.

The Salvation Army had a working link with the Justice Department, Young Woman’s Christian Association (YWCA), City Mission, House Ruth, European Union and Hohola Remand Centre for Juveniles. I was particularly interested in City Mission - New Life Skills Training Centre (NLSTC) because it had its set up in the Central Province about 20 minutes (drive) East of Port Moresby, and 30 minutes (drive) from my research site. I made an appointment to meet the Manager to organise an appropriate time to conduct interviews with the youth. Particular specificities were not outlined at this stage as to the type of youth’s family background; I only mentioned “youth”. He selected these youth in the morning assembly. Interestingly, during the interview, it turned out that youth he selected fitted my criteria — by coincidence. This group became my third focus group.
Research participants from the Salvation Army, City Mission and National Youth Commission were selected on the basis of their involvement with young people within rural villages in Central Province.

**Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army has had a significant impact in the lives of people and their communities in the Rigo area. They have an office located in Kwikila in the Rigo District. Kwikila Station is the central location for the Rigo. Salvation Army officers have travelled to the remote areas to bring services and community awareness on social issues. Staff participants and Officers for Youth were selected because the Salvation Army is the only active NGO in this area and they have brought services to remote villages and deal with the issues of young people. They have experience in associating with and bringing awareness to local communities.

**City Mission**

These youth were selected on the basis that they had gone through struggles in their lives while living in the villages and have now found an opportunity to develop their skills. The beauty of it is that the organisation will also assist them to find employment. Also, City mission is located east of Port Moresby on the Magi Highway in the Central Province. This centre provides rehabilitation programs for young men to have an opportunity in life. These young men are between the ages of 16 and 23 years old.

**National Youth Commission**

Staff participants, including the Program Manager and the Policy Director, were selected for their involvement in developing the National Youth Policy. They have the power to develop policies and distribute tasks to the Provincial Offices, power which in the end will
have an influence on young people. I was interested to investigate how much influence they had on the rural programs and to explore whether they have a voice for the rural youth. I also wanted to identify how the funds are distributed for the rural village programs.

**Interview Procedures**

When identifying my participants, I was mindful of the fact that I needed to collect rich, in-depth data, and that, although time would limit my collection of data, it was important to collect quality data rather than a large number of samples. As this suggests, I was selective in identifying what I wanted to fulfil this study.

The research participants were given a written description of the study in line with the ethics process: this included information about the study; what questions were going to be asked of them; and how the data would be managed to preserve anonymity.

Prior to this arrangement, however, I had approached potential participants with my intention to recruit them as my participants. Relevant village elders were approached and I discussed my intentions and the nature of the study with them. Village elders (clan leaders) were selected on the basis that they knew their community well and are well versed with the cultural norms and obligations, and know their people. They play a vital role in regulating the resources of the community. I identified their superiority within their society as they make decisions that benefit their community.

Within the village, I chose a place that was away from all other houses so that other youth or people would not interrupt the interviews. Also in order to maintain confidentiality, interviews had to be conducted in private places. This is because the respondents needed to speak freely. However, I was aware of the fact that, even though
I selected a secluded area for my purposes, people in the village spread rumours about what I was doing: they were suspicious of whom I was going to talk to and what I was going to say. Even though I wanted to disguise my presence, young people were curious and wanted to be part of the research, which had a domino effect.

The information sheet had to be read out, and simplified in meaning so that the young people could understand what was going to happen and was expected from them. This was followed by signing the consent form. All the participants gladly accepted to take part in the research in the hope that changes could happen at the community level and their struggles could be recognised.

Unfortunately, the perceived dates (February to May) to collect data did not eventuate because of the delay in the ethics approval. However, during this time, I was preparing the scene for the process of the interviews. These eventually, took place in June, in a three weeks period. I made sure at this stage that sufficient data was collected from the young people and village elders, NGO and Government officials. Research which takes place within an organisational context requires a process that causes the least intrusion and disruption to service delivery (Munford & Saunders, 2003). Methodological choices were thus shaped by the requirement to keep demands on participants to a manageable level, while simultaneously enhancing their involvement and developing practical results.

Tape recording was one of the requirements for my data collecting methods in the ethics for this research. As I was going through the information with the respondents, I sought permission from them for its usage through the interview. All the respondents gave me permission to tape record the interview. Although some youth participants looked hesitant and ashamed that they were going to be tape recorded, they looked confident as
the interview progressed, especially as I concealed the presence of the gadget in between me and the respondent. The conversation and interaction therefore flowed freely throughout the entire interview, without me having to write as I spoke. I also observed that, when writing notes, that the respondents were curious about what I wrote and were distracted from it. Having the tape recorder both freed me from writing tediously and maintained the flow of the conversation. After the interview, the recorder material was transcribed and sent to individual respondents to cross check and correct or add what I had missed out in the interview.

I was aware of three factors when doing the interview. First, speaking in modest terms; speak less than the other person. Probing questions were asked to extend the dialogue in order to understand the nature of what they were saying; this did not mean, however, that I was interrogating my respondents but purposely designed to keep a healthy conversation going and to demonstrate my interest in the conversation. Secondly, I was aware to stay neutral throughout the interview. This means that as much as possible, the content and mannerisms of my responses to the respondents’ queries did not convey my own biases or preferences that in turn could affect their subsequent replies. Lastly, maintaining rapport; here I realised that maintaining a good rapport with the respondents was very important because it was my responsibility to avoid conversations that might do harm to the other person.

A semi-structured format was used in the interview. The interviews were 60 to 80 minutes (at most). The questions were based around the themes of community development activities in the rural community; impacts of their family structure and socio-economic factors; and their own perceptions of their struggle, unemployment and educational opportunities. These questions were the same for all the participants.
although specific wording differed to fit the roles of the community gate-keepers, NGO workers and government workers. As outlined above, interviews were recorded, transcribed and checked for accuracy. Thematic categorisation of the interview transcriptions was then performed. Interview data were initially coded based on the themes, and substantive codes were then applied to categories/themes based on the initial codes. Interviews were done in different locations were the participants felt comfortable and secure. Rich and thick data was elicited when allowing the participants to narrate their own lived experiences, employing the research design of open questions and case-study methodology.

In-order to collect the data, I had to position myself in the field so that rich and quality data had to be obtained. This brings me to discuss the notion of “insider” and “outsider” and my state as a researcher in the field.

**Positionality as a researcher in the field of study**

**Insider and outsider**

This study is conducted using two approaches, that is, as both an “insider” and an “outsider”. Oliver (2010) describes these two broad categories as “insider research – tend to be familiar with the research field already” and outsider research – “... acting externally to the research context, and looking in at it in an objective and scientific way”. Bartunek & Louise (1996), describe insider and outsider as “people who are insiders to a setting being studied often have a view of the setting and any finding about is quite different from that of the outside researchers who are conducting the study” (Patton, 2001: 267).
It is worth noting the two terminologies relating to insider and outsider: similar terms are coined by Ethno semanticist Pike (1954), namely ‘etic’ and ‘emic’; these terms were used to tell the difference between classification systems that were reported by anthropologists based on an etic approach – “the categories created by anthropologists based on their analysis of important cultural distinction”, and the emic approach – “the language and categories used by the people in the culture studied” (Patton, 2001: 267).

The etic approach involves standing from afar or outside of a particular culture to see its separate events, primarily in relation to their similarities and their differences, as compared to other cultures (ibid). Both approaches are valuable and contribute in different ways to data collection. Researchers do not only observe what is happening but feel what it is like to be part of the setting. Both these categories overlap and they are therefore not mutually exclusive terms, for example, even though an insider is familiar with the field, they may remain an outsider by virtue of collecting data about the other people present in that field.

**Advantages and disadvantages of insider and outsider**

The advantages and disadvantages of insider and outsider research are opposite to each other and are highlighted here. Since the insider researcher is familiar with the context of the field, it makes it easier to choose a sample and they will normally appreciate many of the intricacies of the field and can therefore collect rich data — unlike the outside researcher. Because the insider is aware of certain aspects of the field they are able to take the advantage of this knowledge to pursue the research aims. On the other hand, because the insider research is familiar with the setting, it is sometimes likely that the researcher will oversee some features of the data which the outsider will acknowledge. In other words, some things can be taken for granted in terms of observation because the
insider is familiar with the research environment. On the other hand, while an outsider can explore issues in a composed and balanced manner when they are in an unfamiliar setting, they may remain unaware of many of the distinctions of the subject they are researching. For example, if an outsider went into an unknown cultural setting, the respondent might not be giving honest responses or they might be exaggerating the facts from the reality and the outsider would not know. With an insider, the respondents will be aware that the researcher is aware of the culture therefore, honest and positive responses will be shared.

**My status in the research**

This research is approached from my worldview as an insider; a PNGan, with the lenses of my own experiences living in the rural village and as a teacher who spent some time teaching in a rural National High School. I was brought up in the city most of my life, but have also lived in different societies of PNG, and I also have experiences of living in western society. Also, my teaching in rural high schools enabled me to understand and deal with students who came from villages who had similar experiences to my own. At some stages of my life, I have lived in rural villages and perceived similar experiences in different villages in the Central Province of PNG. Lankshear et al.(1997) explains that ‘whatever particular set of institutions and social relations a given human being is born into, s/he is thereby born into cultural milieu, a discursive universe’ which provides resources with which ‘to engage in meaning-making activity’ (cited in Holliday, 2007:11). These views and factors experienced also influenced me in doing this research.

As an insider to both the rural villages and to the Non-government Organisation (NGO) and the Youth Commission, the conversations I had with participants had to be guided, avoiding as much as possible contributing my knowledge and perceptions. All
participants echoed similar views that they were limited in terms of access to many resources and wanted to see my research bear fruit in addressing the issues of rural young people.

I was at an advantage as an insider. While my insider connections were helpful in interpreting the experience of participants, however, they were also potential sources of bias in that I might look for evidence that reinforced my pre-existing views. Also positively, my knowledge of the culture and norms of the society enabled me to view and relate to the experiences of youth clearly and knowledgeably; they were in no way going to side track or make up their own stories.

Social, cultural, political and interpersonal factors can limit the nature and degree of participation in participant observation (Patton, 2010). For example, if all the respondents know each other very well it is likely that they may object to an outsider trying to become part of their closer circle. In specific cultural settings, and especially in the patrilineal society which I come from, gender can create barriers to participant observation. Females for instances, are not allowed to participate in male-only activities as it is against the cultural norms. Females doing fieldwork in non-literate cultures may not be permitted access to male-only councils and ceremonies.

My research experience would be different if I was an outsider in terms of being an expatriate or a PNGan from a different society with a different cultural background.
The factors that make me an outsider

As much as I dislike talking about myself in this medium, for the purpose of this study and clarification of my stance as an insider or outsider to achieve my aims; I regard myself as an outsider from different perspectives; as a graduate from New Zealand education institution, an employee living away from home, a senior officer within a PNG institution and with a lot of working experience — all traits which qualify me to be an outsider.

My father was a teacher and later a school inspector who travelled to many places in his career; later he was employed in the Education Department (PNG) and settled in Port Moresby. As a result of this, my five brothers and I were raised in Port Moresby. We attended state schools and moved on to tertiary institutions in different provinces. In this way, we were disconnected from our culture and village norms and activities. We only came together during the Christmas holidays for a short while. I moved further away because of my studies overseas in New Zealand on two occasions (for undergraduate and Post Graduate studies).

My employment site and career also contribute to me being an outsider. Leaving home and gaining my qualifications and eventually finding employment has similarly disconnected me from the community; however, the benefits are that I have gained multiple cultural understanding of different societies and people with different cultures. As a researcher who has gained research skills from an overseas institution, together with my associations with different people, I now have the multiple lens of an outsider’s perspective, and therefore I view this research in many ways from an objective perspective. All these forces have an impact on my research.
**Ethical Issues**

This research received ethical application from the University of Otago Ethics Committee; see Appendix A. Qualitative research has not been without controversy. The literature (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, Alston & Bowles, 1998) highlights many of these debates over qualitative research. One of the critiques of such methodologies is that they ignore larger social structures and forces that influence existence by concentrating only on the “microcosm of human experience” (Alston & Bowles, 1998). Other issues include ethical questions raised against the “participant observations” whereby the researcher participates without the awareness or the consent of the people themselves (ibid). Having this in mind and even though I had spent weeks in the setting to begin my research, approval had to be granted. However, within that time frame, useful links and networks were enhanced for the smooth running of the research.

Communication about the research was established with young people and with elders of the community to gain approval in doing the research within the community. As an insider, a child of a known elder, and having worked with young people for a number of years, in some ways gaining ethical approval did not seem necessary. But the logistics of gaining ethics approval was a prime factor to safeguard my actions in the research. I learnt that the ethics is the vital part of every research (Alston & Bowles, 1998) regardless of whether or not I am an insider in the research scenario.

A dilemma regarding the confidentiality of the recorded interviews was also experience: refer to Appendix B. The respondents were informed of the nature in which the recorded interviews were going to be stored and that no one was going to have access to them until such time when the stored interviews were subsequently going to be destroyed. The respondents were also informed that their interviews were going to be kept
confidential and not discussed with anyone apart from my supervisor and the conference presentation. The principal of autonomy — which includes the right to privacy, the right to withdraw from the process at any stage and to refuse to answer certain questions if the participant wishes, the right to anonymity and the right to confidentiality — also had to be established and clearly understood by the participants at the beginning of the research. My research as a whole was built on and respected the concept that rural youth best know the struggles in their lives; their experiences living in the village is totally different from where I was brought up, and thus their experiences and challenges in the rural village are their expertise. Maintaining trust and gaining confidence from my respondents was important. This had to be established in order to get a rich data from the respondents. When this trust was established, the expressions on the faces of the respondents literally displayed a sigh of relief. One respondent said;

“...because this is confidential and I do not hesitate to express this, I hope you do not say it to anyone”

My two case studies were chosen on the basis of trust to create a picture of the method used in this study. The two case studies represent youth from dysfunctional families living in the village. In saying that, I am obliged to protect the identity of the participants, the place and the location of the research. Trust is a classic concern. A relationship had to be built between me and the participants for the success of my project and for others. It was my responsibility not to damage the field for others in the sense that potential research subjects become reluctant to participate in further study. The respondents had to be reassured again as per the ethics: I clearly mentioned that whatever was discussed by any individual was not for discussions with other people, but rather for the purposes
of the research. This concept had to be mastered and expressed carefully so that information was not shared with people.

One important ethical consideration was the issue of benefits for the participants. I was aware and anticipated a potential question relating to the benefit from the research, which was: will we benefit from this research? What will happen after you do this research? Research findings have a potential to lead to change, inform people and organisations. Participants are knowledgeable in their own communities and offer invaluable time in the hope of improving themselves and their environments. Questions pertaining to this were responded to by stating that the findings can contribute towards influencing those at the decision-making level and that while we are likely to see changes in the long term, immediate actions may not be possible. However, meetings with village elders for youth programs can possibly be organised at the local level, for their implementations to see effective change. The willingness of individuals to participate and contribute their knowledge is rich and valuable; hence, it is culturally appropriate for them to be compensated rather than be ignored.

**Ethical dilemma**

The ethics application Clause 12 (f) states; “please specify any payment or reward to be offered”, I responded to this clause by saying:

“in order to motivate the participants to contribute to the discussion, I would prefer to give the culturally appropriate morning/afternoon tea, biscuits, cigarettes and betelnuts”

This became an ethical dilemma as the University of Otago Ethics Committee disapproved of me supplying betelnuts and cigarettes to my respondents and suggested I offer biscuits and tea instead. However, from my stance as an insider I knew it was culturally
appropriate to offer betelnuts to the respondents as it motivates them to talk and also appreciate the company of the interviewer. It is the view of the local people that conversations become sweeter and longer when betelnuts are offered, it keeps them alive. Even if I was to offer biscuits alone, the local villagers will still appreciate it if betelnut was provided. The University of Otago Ethics Committee did not understand the cultural stance that I took in rewarding the respondents in this way. However, for the purposes of setting the records straight, this was dealt with by avoiding betelnuts and cigarettes as I also had to consider the health issues relating to the consumption of cigarettes. Eventually the ethics was approved after removing the cultural elements of motivating people. Given this situation, our cultural ways of doing things do not always satisfy modern norms and therefore we have to always adjust our ways of doing things. In most cases, the perceived cultural ways of doing may come into conflict with modern ways of thinking.

**Research dilemmas**

I was in Port Moresby to do my Field placement with Salvation Army from September to December and aimed to continue to do my research (data collection) from February to May. This meant that I would complete my placement and data collection before returning to Dunedin, New Zealand in May. However, this did not eventuate: although my placement was indeed completed, there were some problems with transiting to the research component. It took longer than anticipated in organising ethics application and approval from Port Moresby, especially as communication between myself and New Zealand was not effective. Hence, the scheduled months for data collection were not feasible and I arrived in New Zealand having achieved only one thing but not my data for my Master’s program — clearly a significant dilemma.
Home Located research funding (return travel to your home country together with a research allowance) is only permissible once under my NZAID Scholarship Guideline, and I had accessed this fund when I applied to do my placement in PNG. Thus, it was impossible for the Otago International Students Office (OISO) to deliberate on the issue as it was to be discussed with MFAT (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade). OISO emphasised that it was highly unlikely for MFAT to approve my request to obtain funds to collect data in PNG. In the meantime, my supervisor and I were working frantically, searching for funds if NZAID was unable to. But, much to our relief, funds were approved for the research to begin.

It has been an obvious challenge having to leave my baby at only four months old and relocating my family to a rural village, with my husband having to take care of the “motherly role” in my absence. It was equally challenging for my children to settle in the village environment and for them to go through verbal abuse and mistreatment from their immediate relatives without the presence of my caring nurture. The thoughts of these were very unsettling and consumed my valuable time; however, I managed to get some work done.

I was at a great disadvantage in terms of accessing technology, resources and support networks while in the rural community. This hindered me from fast-tracking my work, which also resulted in delays in completing my work.
Research Procedure

The value of the case study method

Case study research is a method of investigation that assists the researcher to make direct observations and collect data in natural settings, compared to relying on “derived data”. Yin (2003) posits that case study research enables you to investigate important topics not easily covered by other methods. The holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events are maintained. To illuminate a particular situation and to get a closer (in-depth and first-hand) understanding of it, the case study was my prime source of identifying the struggles of youth.

Stake (1995) classified cases into three categories: intrinsic – “often exploratory in nature and the researcher is guided by her interest in the case in self rather than in extending theory or generalising across cases”; instrumental – “the case itself is secondary to understanding a particular phenomenon. The difference between an intrinsic and instrumental case study is not the case but rather the purpose of the study”; and collective – “the case study involves the exploration of multiple instrumental case studies”. Researchers typically have multiple research interests and thus engage in both intrinsic and instrumental case research (Stake, 1995:445). Like the intrinsic case, the instrumental case offers thick description of a particular site, individual and/or group. Having in mind the matrix of influence at micro, meso and macro impacting on rural youth in PNG, it seemed only fair to view the struggles of youth holistically.
Interviews

The emphasis of the interviews was to understand youth and elicit their views about their experiences living in rural villages. The latitude of the interview allowed the participants to reflect on their experiences, examining the factors that empower and disempower them. In doing so, questions were asked to enable them to talk about the struggles and hardships they encounter in their daily experiences and the reality that shapes their experiences in the light of not getting support from different sources. The participants were also asked to discuss the impacts on their lives from not being able to continue in their education. These themes and sub-themes can be described as:

1. Struggles of youth living in the village
   a. Rural Unemployment,
   b. Rural Poverty: why do you say you are poor?
   c. Hindrance to completing school: why?
   d. Cultural silence: how does it have an impact on youth?
   e. Cultural obligations: why and how does it matter?

2. Youth up-skilling strategies for rural youth
   a. Cultural skills; elders,→parents→children, what skills are taught to youth?
      How are they taught?
   b. Vocational skills: how is this appropriate? How can skills be incorporated in their communities?
   c. Village community training;
   d. After school training programs levelled at the rural village

3. Community support for struggling youth
   a. Support mechanisms in the village: how does the village support youth?
b. Support mechanisms directly to the village: what support does the village get from outside sources?

c. Support services from the church: how does the church support youth with problems?

d. What youth programs does the church have?

The case study participants were invited to take part in the research, and I highlighted that the Information sheet (see appendix B and C), containing a written description of the study and how the data and interview were going to be kept in a confidential place to preserve anonymity. Because the information was written in English, I translated the information to the respondents and emphasised what was important. A consent form was given to them for their approval in participating in the research. There were two consent forms for participants and young adults under 18 years (see Appendix D, and E).

The participants were given the opportunity to select a location they thought fit for the interview to be conducted. The participants wanted a place where no one was around to hear what they were going to say. I could see that they cared about maintaining confidentiality and I respected their views. They shared their stories in great depth. As I outlined above, the case studies were carried out using a semi-structured interview technique, together with an in-depth analysis of interview and participant observation. After the interview, I spent some time in different occasions observing the activities of the young people.

The interviewees felt the comfort of their home was important and opted to have the interview done at their home.
Focus group

The focus group approach is widely used across all disciplines (Fern, 2001; Morgan, 1996; Yin, c2011) as a method of qualitative research data collection. A focus group constitutes an interview on a topic with a group of people who have a knowledge about the topic (Denzin & Lincoln, c2005; Holliday, 2007). The focus group discussions provides the opportunity to stimulate discussions and interactions between a relatively small number of people from similar sociocultural backgrounds or a pre-existing cluster such as friends or course mates. It is the characteristics of focus group discussions that they are focused on an area of interest (Fern, 2001; Holliday, 2007; Morgan, 1996).

The data collected are socially constructed within the group as they talk; a constructivist perspective. Patton (2002) explains:

Unlike a series of one-on-one interviews, in a focus group participants get to hear each other’s responses as they hear what other people have to say. However, participants need not agree with each other or reach any kind of consensus. Nor is it necessary for people to disagree. The object is to get high quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views of others. (p386)

Using focus groups had its own richness and beauty. I got a good idea of how people know about a series of issues that affected them and the impacts of socio-economic circumstances with the country. By this, I mean the individual participants in the group spoke without stopping; the group gave them the freedom to talk freely, expressing the hardships and struggles of not finding employment or sufficient education because either their parents were employed but earned little, or because the parents were unemployed.
Focus groups also have their disadvantages. Group dynamics affect the interaction between the respondents. Some of the respondents can be more vocal in their views than others, and individual members may not voice their true opinion (Alston & Bowles, 1998).

**Interviews**

Focus group interviewing provided its own richness in data. Participants for the focus group were young, unemployed youth who live in the village with no means of income. I made sure that these respondents fitted the criteria. A written description of the study including the information was distributed all the respondents. Because the information was written in English, the information sheet was translated to the respondents and highlighted what was of important. They were then given the consent form to sign to confirm their agreement to participate.

While acknowledging limitations of the methods of data collection, in this way I collected a substantial variety of experiences. Some of the experiences are similar across the participants and some were unique; however, they all offered depth and richness to the study and will be discussed in the later chapters.

**Data Analysis**

Recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed. Each interview from the respondents had to be carefully heard and written out as they constituted invaluable data expressing the respondents’ views and knowledge of what they make out of their context. As much as possible, every word of the participant had to be written down. Words are powerful and they make up the knowledge of the person. The transcribed
notes were then read to identify themes and common words that emerged. Notes were made on the transcript when common terms or themes surfaced.

The data analysis for this study was done using thematic deconstruction of the interviews and the source documents.

**What would the researcher do differently?**

The time allocation to conduct the research was too short (3 weeks): ideally I would have had longer to do my field work. I would request to conduct the field over a spread of 4 weeks or more. However, taking into consideration that while I was doing my Social Work Field placement, I had sufficient time necessary for the research preparation, the given time frame was appropriate to confirm my previous observations.

The length of time in conducting the investigation could be modulated to suit the time of the day rather than having the meeting before lunch time: this was not an effective time, as the participants were aware of their lunch time. Considerable time should also be allocated for the meeting.

My questionnaires were written in English; however, some of the respondents were illiterate and could not understand what was asked of them. Although the questions were written in English, translation to the local dialect was necessary for their understanding.

I would secure sufficient funds to do the research if I was to do this again. I was living in the research site (village) for the duration of my research. The research site is 134.2 km South East of Port Moresby and it is about 50 minutes’ drive to travel into Port Moresby, which, when I needed to collect other relevant materials and documents or attend to
another interview, proved tiresome and expensive. It was also expensive travelling back and forth between the village and Port Moresby taking into consideration the cost of the Public Motor Vehicle fee to travel within Port Moresby. By the time I got on the bus to travel to a location, I would either be late or the person whom I made the appointment with was not there because of the continuous stops along the bus route. The stops and delays from the bus result from the bus drivers wanting to collect more passengers to fill the bus.

**Conclusion**

This chapter explains the methodology employed in this research and provides a discussion of the research methods that were applied; these include case-study, focus group and one-on-one interviews.

This process has given me invaluable experience of applying qualitative research in the context of identifying the struggles of rural youth and the influences from other sources impacting their lives. My decision to use case studies, focus groups and one-on-one interview (qualitative research) was well justified because of the expected and unexpected outcomes in the overall research plan.

This research could not have been possible without the generosity of the respondents who gave their time wholeheartedly. I am thankful and greatly privileged to be given the trust and confidence to share the deeper meaning of their stories, and for them providing necessary documents and support to assist in the research. Other gestures were also meaningful, for instance, providing a vehicle to take me to the destination for the next interview and providing a meal. This was a luxury, a meaning in itself, showing confidence in the work being done.
The research could not have been possible if NZAID had not approved my second request for Home Located research. OISO themselves could not see funds coming in for me to do the research, so I thank MFAT who approved the second set of funds.
Chapter Four - Results/Findings

Introduction

This chapter discusses the participants’ responses to the study that was conducted to investigate how rural young people from dysfunctional families defined their struggles. I have pulled out information from the thematic deconstruction of the interviews to discuss the hardships rural young people experience.

The data was collected through interviews. Each participant was interviewed in-depth and asked a set of questions. I also gathered information through informal conversations, as they were also valuable. Quotations from the interviews amplify and illustrate the meanings created by the individuals as they answered the questions.

Here, the words and thoughts of the individuals interviewed have been allowed to come to the fore as much as possible. My comments in this section are merely orchestrated to guide the reader through the issues and the thoughts involved.

In order to protect the respondents’ privacy, their names have been replaced with “Virginia”, “George”, “Florence”, “Yvonne”, “Peter”, “Paulo”, “Fred”, “Donald”, “Ben”, “Geoff”, “Stewart”, “Jessie”, “Thomas”, “William”, and “Jonathan”.

The background of the participants

Participants were mainly those who came from dysfunctional families; single parent families, and no income earning families. Most of the young people interviewed were from rural villages and had experienced living in rural communities. In my dialogue with the young people, I paid particular attention to the information that was shared and how
the knowledge was developed and used. Elders of the community also shared their perspectives about the young people within their community, while the project also included Government workers and a NGO worker. The themes focused on the hardships the young people experienced and their interpretations of living in the village and observing the breakdown of the culture of network support as it encounters modernisation. For the Government workers and the NGO worker, their participation in and contribution towards the activities and programs of the young people and the community shed much light on their roles. The themes here are the same as those discussed in the literature review.

**Youth**

As discussed in my summary of the literature, the definition of youth is a contested one. Different countries have varying views of young people and children. Similarly, the PNG National Youth Policy itself identifies that the definition of youth was difficult to simplify and define; however the identification of youth they have adopted is by way of the transition that youth make into adulthood.

PNG has a diverse culture and therefore does not have a set definition that can categorise youth. However there is a general understanding within the PNG National Youth Policy that youth is a cohort between 12 and 24. This cohort can be extended beyond 30, while young people who are still dependent on their parents are also regarded as youth. Youth is a conceptualised terminology, however, that does not fit well with the traditional perception of youth. Certain local vernacular terminologies are used to identify the categories of young people. People from these categories have to fulfil their cultural and customary obligations and values to identify their maturity. Sometimes youth as young
as 15 years old are married or forced to get married. Those who are married at a tender age take on adult responsibility and are still expected to fulfil the cultural obligations of a married person.

George described the categories in their village and highlighted that young boys and young girls were identified by the onset of puberty and not by age, usually by their physical appearance and statues.

**George:** Melovala – boy girl – children

Gologawato – young boy and young girl

Tau vavine – married man and married woman - adults

Baraki – elderly people, old people

Gologawato is usually the stage that the concept of youth falls in. It is at this stage that young people are seen as not married and are seen as single. And that they have to fulfil their cultural obligations and prepare themselves to getting married. This group of people are those who are going through the stage of puberty. In the traditional times young people had to really abide by our customs.

**Jonathan:** The definition of Youth is “Anyone who is still dependent on the adults. The age factor does not come in... is anyone who is still dependent on adults. They are trying to capture a good number of issues for example...there are some young people who are married when they are only 12 and 13 years old and so are they still classified as youth? Or not? These are some of the questions we are still asking. They are still youth because they are still dependent on their parents for emotional and physical support, there are some who are in their 30’s but are still dependent on their parents, family members and the community for emotional and physical support. So ... the age should not be a factor so when you are looking at youth, you are looking at anyone between the ages of 12 to about 35.

Jessie also confirmed that youth are people who are dependent on their parents for support.
Jessie: Today the average youth is any person between the ages of 15 and 30 that live with their parents and are reliant on their parents. Largely unemployed and without proper education. No! Youth should be unmarried. I am still a kid (21 years old).

It was interesting to note during one interview that George described a 31 year old man as a kid:

George: See that kid going there, even though he has two kids he is engaged in that sort of thing.

Perceptions of youth and identity

Young people draw much of their behaviour from the cultural norms in the society. Sometimes it becomes a burden to the parents as they struggle to live with the desired trappings of prestige. In most cases, people in the community create discourses to explain how the behaviours of the young people reflect a lack of parental guidance or discipline. In order for harmony to prevail within the community, the parents should act to contain the behaviour in children as it is their prime responsibility. While the respondents all created different discourses as to why young people behaved negatively within their community, they all agreed that young people should abide by the cultural norms, take some responsibility, and show respect within the community as it is their cultural responsibility.

Yvonne described that many of the problems caused in the village stemmed from boys. The boys are seen as the trouble-makers within the community, while the females were unhappy with their parents because they are required to fulfil their everyday obligations in terms of the household chores:

Yvonne: Not much of girls but male especially they get drunk and cause a lot of trouble.
We complain when there is a lot of work in the house. Our parents want us to work a lot in the house. It is a cultural obligation for girls to work. If we do not work they get angry with us.

Florence: Drinking alcohol is the cause of the trouble. There is a lot of work to be done in the house. Our parents get angry. They tell us that we were born to be girls so it is our obligations to work. You do the job in the house but our parents want us to do everything in the house. They just stay in the house do nothing. Our parents talk too much when we do not work in the house.

All the respondents agreed that young people should help their parents work in the gardens to combat the problems they face in the community. They described young people who did not work as individuals who do not help but “eat and sleep” – lazy! The male respondents also agreed that all the young people should make their own gardens to help themselves:

Yvonne: Young people should really be helping their parents. They should help their parents go to the gardens. Some of them stay in the house all the time. They do not help them wrap the bananas.

Florence: Because young people are lazy. They just want to eat and sleep.

Peter: They must make their own gardens...so that they can look after themselves. They must sell their food products at the market just so that they can look after themselves.

George and his counterparts agreed that the young people nowadays are lazy, comparing what the older generation did in the past to now. Young people in their (the elders’) days were busy with activities even after school. They also had cultural obligations which they had to fulfil and help their parents:

Our days were filled with activities even after school. We helped our parents to cook, go fishing and make gardens. We did what our parents and grandparents did. We followed them where ever they went to. If our grandparent, parents and uncles went fishing; sea is far from here, and after school we would run to where they are to help
them carry their load. Now a days young people eat and sleep, they stay on the road, talk and make plans of what they want to do until they arrive at making plans to steal....these days, ...too hard these days for them, they just want people to bring the things out and eat only.

Young people now a days walk up and down the roads, scream and shout from one end of the road to the other, stop vehicles and steal from the passengers. We never stole from people. It was so strict. If we saw a coconut on the ground by the tree that did not belong to us, we would leave it by the coconut tree for the owner to pick it up. It was customary, we were told not to touch other peoples things. My father was a farmer (tavoga tauna) he had lots of betelnuts, he had lots of coconuts. If he told us to get betelnuts we would go to his betel plantation, cut the betelnuts. On our way back, we would walk through the village and cut off betelnuts and share them with our aunties until we arrived at our house. We listened to our parents.

William made a comparison between rural and urban youth and articulated that youth in the urban areas laze around while those in rural areas are self-sufficient:

Young people here in the urban setting laze around. They are not creative, not innovative, they are just following if you go and play sports, this is the scenario you will see in the urban setting. In the rural setting you will see families or individuals. Now it is individuals, it is not a family group, tribe or a community; individual people are coming up with initiatives that is in the rural setting in a very remote setting.

When problems are created by young people in the village, the burden falls on the parents. Yvonne and Florence, for instance, mentioned that parents are to be blamed because they do not teach their children proper ways of behaving:

**Florence:** When problems arise in the village, the blame goes to the parents. The parents are not looking after their children.

**Yvonne:** Parents get the blame for everything.

**Peter:** We kind of live it to our parents. We give our parents more head ache. We are still kids and our parents take on that problem.

**Paulo:** We give more head ache to our parents and they tell us not to do the same mistake again.
Jessie clarifies why young boys fight and cause trouble in the village. He argues that it is not their doing that they end up in these fights but rather because they are blamed for things they do not do:

**Jessie:** Yes, most of these problems are caused by this group of clan boys [clan named]. They get drunk and stop the vehicles along the highway, they break the vehicle glasses. When all these activities are completed and once we walk out on the road and when they see us, the next day, when the rumours goes around in the village, our names are called out. The problems come to us and they are free. That is the reason why, when we see each other again on the roads we fight again. It is their fault that our names are called out. It is for these small reasons that we fight.

The problem is not solved in a proper way. We fight and it makes it worse. The problem does not stop; we fight almost every day whenever we find each other.

**Cultural obligations**

As the discussions above indicate, young people are required to fulfil certain obligations within their society: everyone is supposed to help in the food gardens, or go fishing or hunting to combat hardship. Apart from this, young people are taught by the older generation to show respect to other members of the community and to assist in every activity that is organised, such as bride-price rituals or other village feasts. Most of the respondents agreed, however, that young people do not show any respect for anyone in the community.

Virginia commented that, in her case, knowing culture taught her how to respect others in the community:

What I learnt in culture is my identity. I have learnt that when you learn and know about your culture and customary belief you have identity in your community. Like to know where you are from, you have to know your culture and your customary beliefs...I have to know my language. I have to know how to live in the village... there are customary beliefs and customary works and practices. So you have to know how to live and how to associate with village people. It taught me my identity and also respect
in community. There is discipline in the community in families. There are restrictions in certain things, there are certain things you have to do and respect the community.

George also highlighted some cultural duties that young people are expected to do. These were very strict rules that young people had to follow. In most cases young people were required to help their parents work in the gardens, go fishing, hunting or building houses. Young people were expected to work and learn the traits of the older people:

Young man never walked out to sit around with the older people. Nowadays young people sit around with the older people, they eat together….they want to be the bosses….and elders….they steal…young boys were not allowed to walk out in the village arena, it was ok for the girls to walk but no the boys. The boys had to walk behind the backyards of the houses were nobody saw them. During the day and at night young boys were not allowed to walk around the village. Young girls and boys were not allowed to eat certain thing. If they did eat the food, they will break the taboo; if their hair was not shiny, people would say, oh! The parents are not abiding by the culture and not looking after the child that is why his/her hair is not healthy. We had so much respect in those days.

People are not sharing their kills or food. In the past every clan brought put together all their harvest and put them together and shared them among all the people including the widowed, and the orphan. All had equal share.

Female participants affirmed that as females they have specific cultural obligations to fulfil. Their parents also expect them to abide by what they tell them to do. Virginia commented that:

**Virginia:** I was told that a female should stay with the mother in the kitchen to learn how to cook and should not be associating a lot. Kept busy with house chores, going to the garden and should be giving limited time to hang around to associate with friends. At that time, I did not think that it was fair but again looking back…it did help me a lot because, I grew up matured enough to at least know my youth life more.

**Florence:** There is a lot of work to be done in the village. Our parents get angry. They tell us that we were born to be girls so it is our obligation to work. You do the job in the house but our parents want us to do everything in the house. They just sit in the house do nothing. Our parents talk too much when we do not work in the house.
Yvonne: We complain when there is a lot of work in the house. Our parents want us to work in the house. It is a cultural obligation for girls to work. If we do not work they get angry with us.

Apart from the daily obligations and duties males and females should do within the village, the villages also have cultural activities that people participate in, for instance bride price obligations, death ceremonies/feasts and church activities. These cultural activities often operate to deter young people from advancing in other form of activities such as further education, employment or even business. As these activities involve money (unlike in the past), parents in rural villages may use what little money they have saved for the purposes of their children to assist in these occasions instead. Similarly, although they may envisage starting a business, they do not get assistance from bank sources and are limited in sourcing funds. Meanwhile, the cultural attributes are such that all the feasts require you to spend money, with much of it spent to fulfil status requirements. Therefore, services should be introduced to help young people to build their capacity to source funding so that they can become financially independent:

Though PNG youth may not be financially included, but they are culturally included...the banks are trying to make their services available to youth, in PNG our priority should not be encouraging the financial institutions to make their financial services available but because there are cultural factors that contribute to how enterprising our youths because, our youths are part of the family, part of the extended family and sometimes when we exclude the family, if they are trying to get into business, their businesses easily break down. What we need is to build the capacity, not only youth; it should not be exclusion but inclusion of youth. To prepare the extended family and youth to embrace the free market economy because if we do not prepare them, if we do not build the capacity, to be fully engaged in the free market economy than the cultural factors are going to pull them down...so that if the son or daughter is successful, the family will say that he or she is greedy but whatever benefit he or she get from that business will trickle down to them.

So if you build the capacity of youth really well, then they can be able to deal with those cultural factors and even their family members, our cultural setting is inclusive.
If you want to help youth, you must help the parents and their family members so that they can support them, this is the real asset, their social security is their family.

**Drowning Youth Voice**

As discussed in the literature review, youth are culturally expected to keep quiet in decision making or even in problem solving processes, while parents should take on responsibility in disciplining the misconduct of children in the community. The respondents all agreed that they are told to keep quiet, follow their elders and obey what they are told to do, as this is seen as an obligation and a way of showing respect.

When asked if young people share their problems with other people, the respondents remarked that they do not share their problems or feelings with others because they do not trust the person or, if they did share the problem, it gets out of proportion and becomes a matter of gossip:

**Jessie:** Parents solve them but when they get together they talk about these things but we are not there. We do not know about these things so when we find each other again we fight. It is like a cycle. If our parents put us together in their conversation, maybe it would solve it. We do not know what they are talking about.

They do not let us know. Our parents share their own views. We have no views.

Young male were asked if they were given the opportunity to make decisions and talk in the family and community meetings. They all commented negatively and expressed that they do not contribute to the conversation, or do so only if they are asked to comment, otherwise they are told to shut up. In most cases young people are chased away from the meeting arena:

**Donald:** My parents have told us not to stand in front so much. We must not be too obvious in the community. They say, if we do, in our custom, people will poison us or take our lives. Sorcery is common in our society. My mother does all the talking for me.
Ben: They never gave me the opportunity to talk. They allowed me to talk if it concerned me. For example on one of the land that belonged to me, I was given the opportunity to say something, when my grandmother told them that that particular land belonged to me.

Peter: We do not talk in our family conversations. We shut our mouths because we are considered as small kids. We are given the opportunity to talk during the Sunday school and youth meetings. We are not given the opportunity to talk in a whole village meeting.

Paulo: They call me underage. Sometimes you can talk sometimes they tell you to shut up.

Fred: Yeh! We shut our mouths. They sometimes chase us. Sometimes they do not. They chase us especially when there are big people in that group. They do not give us the opportunity to talk.

George and his older counterparts enunciate how much respect they had for their elders in the community and how they worked very hard in their community:

We never sat around with old people. We had so much respect for them, we never talked back, and we never contributed to whatever decision making they had. But we followed what they wanted us to do. We worked together with the older people. There were certain thing we did and certain things we did not do. If we did things wrongly, we were scolded badly. We never stayed around in the village. Young people were not allowed to stay around and eat with the older people. Nowadays young people eat together with the older people; they only go for the protein. The eldest child was never passed. The eldest child was so respected.

George also made a valid point in highlighting that young people do not have the ownership of their land in order to take the responsibilities into their own hands. He argued that the parents should give their children responsibility to make their own gardens so that they can look after themselves and have some freedom:

Make them look after pigs, poultry or make gardens. They should make big gardens especially to grow crops. Young people do not have the means to make their gardens whatever gardens they go to, belongs to their parents only. The youth are becoming useless. They help their parents but they do not have ownership over the garden.
Especially when they want to get some crops from their garden, the parents have to give the final say. So they have no freedom to get the garden crops for marketing.

Some of these elements clearly describe social exclusion. According to the literature outlined above, young people are often socially excluded in different ways and social exclusion itself comes in different forms. Young people commented that they were excluded from decision making and sometimes also excluded from activities. When the respondents were asked what activities were helpful for young people in the communities, they mentioned that they played volleyball in the community. What caught my attention from this string of conversation was that, although Fred was capable of playing, he was not permitted to take part:

**Peter:** We played volleyball games in the community. I do not think it is about the age. They take into consideration how you play...if you play well they pick you to, if not they will tell you not to play.

**Fred:** Yeh! we play. In my case, they said I was a small boy so I did not play they put me at the side. I am 14 years old. And maybe that is the reason why I did not play.

**Donald:** She tells me to take the back seat and observe all the time. When my mother shuts my mouth, it does not go down well with me. Maybe it is good when I was a small kid but now at my age it does not fit well with me. But I respect her, she has looked after me. The main thing is that she does not want me to die early. If she tells me to shut my mouth, I do listen to her.

As this suggests, youth do not participate fully in their communities even though it is critical for youth to participate in their communities. This is not only because their experiences can bring insightful ideas in terms of the development of the community, but also because to enable them to exercise their rights as citizens and contribute to a democratic society. It also promotes their personal development, and provides them with substantive knowledge and skills. However, youth are socially excluded and disempowered in community decision making and in some community activities. While
some youth may participate in some activities, some may not, depending on their status within their society and their status as individuals. This builds a mind-set that youth are not good enough in their community. Although PNG is a democratic society, female/woman, including youth, are denied democracy as a consequence of cultural dominance and power imbalances.

From observation of and responses from the young rural respondents, it was clear that young people are not represented well at all levels of planning and decision making, especially in the government arenas. When asked why older people still represented youth, the government workers explained that although young people may not be included in the budget of the government they are culturally included:

> We are trying to monitor the activities. We are trying to get some information of what they are doing. Between 1990 and now, the commission was not really aware of what we are doing, we realised that youth do not have a voice, when the mandate was handed over to their provincial Government.

> They are not given a voice that is why we have come up with the National Youth Policy and we are trying to find ways to help them. Even at the District level they do not have a voice, so we have realised it that we could establish that network and empower this and make sure they have reps, a voice and the government that is the LLG – Local level Government. When we are able to get youth representatives in the LLG level then some differences should come, that is when they will start talking, and from there we should be able to have youth reps at provincial level. At the moment some Provincial Government are doing that. That depends on their creativity of their Provincial Government.

> Just because they are appointed by the government, they do not really have the voice to speak out against the Governor policy but if they are elected by the Youth at District Level at the LLG level, they know that they have the backing and the constitution which guides them to speak.

William described the communication process they follow when pursuing programs for youth in rural villages in response to being asked how they develop programs to address
youth problems. He commented that while they do not have direct input in the affairs of youth, they do have an input at the district level. The affairs of youth are the responsibility of the provincial government based on the functions that are decentralised:

If there is a youth program that the provinces identify through their own network, in provinces or whether at district level, LLG level or the ward level they have to do a request to the office at the Youth Commission to assist officers at the Provincial level in terms of capacity building for officers at the Provincial level or other areas of identifying small projects, small income generating projects or in a sense that they have big project scales, we identify stake holders we can link them with other developing partners or other government agencies, for instance, the National Planning, Finance, Treasury.

We do not directly deal; The Youth Commission directly deals at the District level or the Ward Level. Our contact person at the District level is the Community Development Adviser that is our main stake holder.

The other areas, you can identify is we have the youth network, youth groups, community youth groups that makes up the warding council after the warding council you have the LLG Youth Council, you have the Provincial Youth Council, and the National Youth Council, that is the channel of communication from our office to the community groups at the Ward level.

**Suggestions**

The respondents suggested that the young people should be given responsibilities to take care of and work on their land so that they can take care of themselves. They should be assisted to start their own projects such as start a piggery, run poultry or be given tools and seedlings to manage their own plots of land.

**Youth summary**

This section highlights an array of perceptions of young people and how they are seen in the village. Village communities define young people according to their cultural standings and statutes; by which they are expected to abide by and fulfil cultural obligations. The
discussion of youth highlights that there are many different views of youth. This reflects that different societies have different ways of viewing youth depending on the context it is addressed given the categories indicated in the literature.

Young people are said to be behaving outside cultural norms and as lacking respect and discipline because they are not taught the cultural norms. The respondents agreed that parents are blamed for not disciplining their children; it is seen as the responsibility of the parents or the caregiver to maintain the behaviour of their children. It is perceived that most problems that occur in the village community are caused by males, who are referred to as the troublemakers. The females are confined to working in the kitchen under the tutelage of mothers and grandmothers. Nevertheless, young people are expected to live by the norms of the culture and respondents agreed that respect should be maintained.

Young people are not allowed to take part in decision making as they are seen as too young to do so. It was revealed that young people are given little opportunity to speak; they are instead required to listen and follow the instructions that are given to them by the older generations. Although the male young people are the owners of their land by birth-right, they still do not work independently on their land.

**Rural**

**Village life**

As discussed in the literature, rural communities are identified by their remoteness and lack of services. In PNG these communities are referred to as small villages (vanua) with little population; they share a homogenous culture and are related by blood. The
participants referred to the village as where they belong and expressed the idyllic conditions they experience in comparison to the urban areas. Some of the respondents agreed that they liked living in the village because they have their relatives and there is no pressure. The respondents agreed that although living in the village is free, they still have to work hard to survive, and there were some aspects of living in the village that were not pleasing as they compared life between rural and urban areas. Nevertheless, elements of socio-cultural and economic hardship experienced in their community are also expressed in their dialogue:

**George:** Living in the village is number one. We do not worry about nothing. We do not worry about water. We do not worry about electricity bills. It is much better living in the village than anywhere else. The young people experience a lot of freedom, water is free, light is free, food is free. All the food is supplied by their parents, they are living in freedom. They have no input what so ever.

**Jessie:** It is good to live in the village. Everything is free. But the bad thing is that if you cook food without protein (meat), some of us will eat it while some of us wont. At least we must have some protein on our plate. If not we will not eat the food...leaving in the village has some good sides. You can eat anything. When you walk into the bush, at least you can find food to eat.

**Donald:** Staying in the village, everything is free. If you work and make garden you can eat. If you do not make any garden and steal from people’s gardens, if they catch you, you are in trouble.

**Virginia:** The good thing that you live in the village is that you learn respect in the village communities. There is a lot of respect in the village communities.

In contrast, Jessie explains that living in the village is very hard. Other young people confided to me that Jessie was one of those ‘trouble makers’ in the village, however, I was also informed and stayed mindful of the fact that Jessie’s mother died when he was a baby from an unknown illness. He was taken care of by his maternal grandparents and father. I could see the stress and pain clearly on his face as he described the hardship he
faced while living in the village and yet he could not express it openly. But he hinted when saying, ‘you know my mother’: I could understand that maybe if his mother was alive, things would be so different for him:

It is very hard living in the village...let’s say when I stay in the village I face a lot of problems in the village. My house people do not want to send me food. They want me to avoid all those problems but I cannot. Because these problems come about when I am walking around the village. It is a head ache just talking about them.

Apart from the views expressed by rural participants, William, a government worker, articulated similar sentiments but referred to the difficulties they encounter in communicating with other governmental officers in rural locations:

They are not communicating the right information to the villages. The geographical features in the country, location of our setting is complicated. Accessing information across is difficult for most of our young people in the rural areas. The only means of communicating is through the radio networks that we have in our country...they have to travel hours to the nearest town to access that information.

People struggle to come to this office (Youth Commission) in terms of travelling in and out because having to come here, you have to pay more.

**Hardships encountered in the village**

Although everything is free in the villages, the participants agreed that people are faced with difficulties in trying to meet their needs. While they may have some services, such as electricity, people in this society will still have to work hard for in order to pay for power. One of the significant difficulties they encounter is water. Virginia described that, while they may be happy everything is free, life becomes tough when there is no water in the community, highlighting especially that drought seasons make life difficult for people living in the village. At these times, people have to walk some miles down the mountain to the well to fetch water and return. Most of the respondents agreed that the village
lacks basic services and it becomes a problem for them because they have to travel some
miles for such services and this is costly:

**Virginia:** Most people in this community have tanks. Not some, but when there is
drought season, the creeks are dried up and the rain does not fall. Meaning that there
is no water in the tank. We usually go to the creek to dig water well so they collect
water from the well, wash clothes and bring water. We leave up on the mountain so
you have to carry water up and down the mountain. The disadvantage is that it is up
on the mountains we do not find water here so we have to walk down to the flat area,
where they dig well. So you collect water from there and you walk up the mountain.

**Florence:** We should have a hospital in our community. Some good things should
happen in our village. It is good living in the village but some of us do not have tanks
and you will have to fetch water and shhhhhhh (sighs and scratches the head). Life is
just too hard.

**Fred:** I do not have a tank. If I do not have any water, I run to my friend to help me. I
also have doubts when I get to my cousins to fetch water.

**Young people from dysfunctional families in rural villages**

There is a consensus among all the respondents that not all concepts of care and support
of the family within the cultural norms actually exist in reality. Cultural obligations such
as taking care of the orphans or even those children from deconstructed families are
slowly fading away due to the burdens experienced by the grandparents and possibility
also the nuclear family network. The family should remain a potential strength in the
upbringing of the children who fall into these categories, because strong extended family
ties (conceptualised as those with a sense of mutuality, reciprocity and active
participation of members) are linked to improved wellness of individual members of the
collective. The pattern of supportive extended family networks may not be true in all
families, however, many of whom are now too loosely connected to be helpful:
**Donald:** Since when I was a baby, I was removed from my parents have since then being taken care of by my grandparents. I like my grandmother the most because she is the one who really cares for me and looks after me. Although she gets angry with me, she still cares for me.

**Ben:** When I was living with my parents, they use to look after me well until I came to do Grade 5 when the both of them died. My cousin helped me to do Grade 6 and 7 but he also died since then. I did not go to school. My father was a business man. Our culture is like this, if you are a business person, they get to poison you. Since then I have been living the way I have being, I live on the street ...I hang out with the boys and did all sorts of things with them, criminal activities.

Virginia similarly expressed that she was taken care of by her extended family members since the separation of her parents. The separation of the parents had a great impact on her upbringing and she highlighted the differences in terms of what might have happened if she was taken care of by her natural parents. She states that it was unfair on her relatives having to take care of her and claims that there is nothing to be proud of about this time if she was to look back some years later:

**Virginia:** Yeh...the family bringing up it really did affect me in some cases. And some.....mmmmm there is different types of family members. There are different types of family members and immediate family are your parents. There is a feeling between a parent and family member providing for you. For my case, most of my time it was a family member providing for me. It was OK! But I did not take it as fair because I was a youth and I needed my parents. So I can look back and know that I have support from my parents. And from my family member, I did not take it as it was fair upon them. It did not go down very well with me my youth living because...what will I say...in looking back I’d say I did not have a parent to live and look upon. And say oh! This is how I lived my life. My parents have supported me like this and that, I took as my family members were my parents, which it was not really that ....

She felt uncomfortable and depressed when her caretaker complained of unfair treatment towards her and the children:

**Virginia:** Yeh! I think, In my case, I was mostly with my aunts. There is a part where, when you look at it, I have parents. My aunt has a family. And she has children to look
after too. It was not fair to them if she provided that much for me and for them too. So the feeling did not go well. Like I had a feeling that, my aunt is providing for me and aaahhh! ...the husband... would say why are you providing this much for her and what about our children. Maybe for some people it would be ok but for me it did not go down well for me. It made me stubborn by not listening to my parents. I wanted them to support me. It even killed my moral.

They might not have taken it well, me living with them. ... She wants to help me but her family members take it as not fair.

Similar opinions were shared by Donald. He comes from a single parent family and has no knowledge of his father. He described how he was treated by his mothers’ immediate family when he lived in her village:

**Donald:** Not even her brothers or sisters helped. They had their own children to worry about. But they would comment and say that I would not help my mother if I did well. He is a child of someone else, he will go to his village, you are wasting your money. My mother, use to think of what they say. She gets sick when she thinks of these a lot... When she was sick too, no one went to see her. I was the only one that went to see her and she had a hard time, no one went to see her in her sick bed...I stayed in the hospital to look after her for a week. She was then sent to Port Moresby to get some treatment, she then felt better after two days. I think what I can weigh out is that her relatives do not have any trust in me.

As discussed by Bronfenbrenner (1972), the environment in which a child lives has a significant impact on their development. It has a part in developing youth’s behaviour and personality. Virginia highlighted how she was shut down by the treatment she received and how she reacted to the situation. George described unequivocally how children from broken families are treated in the village. He states that the children’s upbringing would be very different if they were living with their parents and condemns the treatment the children receive:

**Virginia:** For my case I got shut down. For example, I did not want to listen to some people. And I gained respect for certain people. I became very selective over certain people. In the situation, the way of living I was brought up. There were certain people
that looked after me well whether, good or bad they had faced problems. I learned to look upon them what they have done for me. And continue on living and in life and remember and in the future. I would like to do something for them.

I was aware that George was an orphan. His parents died when he was a toddler and he was raised by his uncle. He commented on what he saw as the unacceptable way in which the young people were raised:

George: ...they are staying ok but their upbringing they are receiving is not good. Their parents would look after them well, they would ask freely if their parents were there by them, but they do not have that sort of treatment. If they ask their grandparents, they have fear. If they ask their uncles, they have fear. Anybody they talk to, they have fear. They do not have any freedom of choice. They do not have the freedom to ask.

So when they make any mistakes, their uncles’ fight them, the second child went to live with his mother. Sometimes they get chased away by their grandparents or their uncles that is not the way. They do not get the upbringing that they should be receiving. When their grandparents are hungry those children are also hungry. The grandparents are angry with their daughter because their daughter does not send any sugar or rice for them. At the same time, their daughter is not working. She is relying on her husband (second). That is causing problems...but I am seeing that that sort of upbringing is lacking (has tears running down his face).

George emphasizes the coldness that grows at the heart of a child when their needs are not met:

How she would ask her parents is not the same as if she was to ask the guardians. She won’t let her demands known to her, whatever that happens to her will not be made known to us. When these kids eat lollies, she has none so she thinks of other things. Her thoughts are cold. (He has tears in his eyes and looks away)

Caregivers of youth in rural areas have also struggled to maintain the wellbeing of youth, as they are economically burdened where support mechanisms are not readily available to alleviate the problems. George explains that young people will have to work hard in
order to provide for and meet their needs; unless they work hard, young people will not have a future:

For example, some people in the community sell little things, because they want to buy things or they want to think of their own future. It is hard for the parents, the parents will not give them anything, for example those children I mentioned, their grandparents are not going to give them anything, he won’t buy and give them a vehicle or a radio, for example. They will have to struggle to get find those things for themselves. They will have to struggle to buy their own mobile phone or radio. If they stay for nothing in the community that means they will not find those things. They will not have a future, maybe, if they find a job, they will surely have a future. But if they stay for nothing and eat and sleep, they will not have a future.

In a patrilineal society and according to PNG culture, a male child has ownership over the land. Respondents agreed that life is difficult for males from single mothers. Because they do not have ownership of the land, the immediate relatives of the mother are in constant disagreement when their mothers work on the land. Donald expressed hopelessness and pain at the thought of his relatives despising him even though he was assisting his mother take care of the land, therefore he feels disempowered living in the village:

When I lived with my mother, my mother has all sisters and only two man. One of them is has not being married. He is also an educated person but when he went to the village he started to make guns and got involved into sorceries. He ... threaten my mother, fire the gun to the house. ... Sometimes, he would burn the house down. We would find escape routes to get out of the house...Even if I go back to the village, I do not know if I can be able to find a good life or not. I do not see any hope for me in that. He always wants to fight with me. He does not like me to stay in the village ... He does not want me to look after that land or the house...The big problems he has created are burning the kitchen and the house. He has burnt all the good things we have. We built a new house ... when he sees me anywhere he will stub me, he shows me the gun or fires the gun at me, I run to avoid the bullets. He has missed me twice so far... I did not feel good staying in the village... I am the only child she has... I am not safe when I am in the village.
When asked why certain young people in the village are neglected, some respondents commented that young people were neglected because of their negative attitudes resulting from a deconstructed family. They highlighted, for example, the laziness in young people and the effects of peer influence also contribute:

**Virginia:** They are neglected because of their behaviour and attitude. It is because when a parent dies, especially when the mother dies, or both parents die most families cannot afford to look after the extra or the orphan.

Another is because they laze around. They are not very helpful. Also, because they do not know how to stop their children from taking up bad peer influence. They just neglect them. They just do not know how to stop it, they do not know how to control it. They do not know how to support and help their children to stop this alcohol and drug abuse.

**Stewart:** I have seven sisters, all have married and have gone their own ways. I live with some of my sisters. They do not look after me well. They have children too so they concentrate on their children rather than me. I see that life is difficult, so when my friends go to steal I follow them. We go steal, that is how we survive and I am used to it. This has been going on for a while now and the people in the community do not like me. This was continuing until two of my friends were shot dead. The bullet missed me and got the other person.

**Community network support**

Despite the fact that a rural village shares a homogenous culture and the inhabitants are related by blood — a situation in which you would perceive that a network of support exists — the respondents all expressed that they do not get any support when they were prompted to indicate if they received any support from the community:

**Virginia:** They just ignore them. Most people do this...they see them as they do not exist. They don’t try to be helpful, they try to say come here...counsel them or talk to them. They just let them go. Leave them how they leave. Or they watch, they do not try to help stop or give awareness...or you smoke this, this is what happens to you. They continue until some get mentally affected, some start throwing stones into houses. That is how they are neglected instead of trying to counsel or set up an
association or a church group to look to concern and focus on this type of people, they just let them. That is how I see most of the cases happening here in the village.

**Jessie:** They are fed up with us boys. No! They just watch us...they say you want to stay in the village so just stay only. We do not get any support from the people of the village. They just watch only.

**Donald and Ben:** No, nobody assisted me. No one recognised my need. No services were brought to our community.

Two female respondents also commented that the community does not help the young people with their problems. The parents get the blame when the young people get into trouble or have problems; sometimes when they get pressured by their parents, they get angry and leave to find some place to cool off. They do not feel comfortable sharing their problems with other people because they do not have any trust in others:

**Florence:** We do not get any support from the village community. When the problems arise in the village...The parents get the blame. The people say, the parents are not looking after their children. I go to my uncles and leave with them for a while then I return to my home. If I think I am not satisfied I go to Moresby and live there. Even though I go away to Moresby the problems still stay there. I sometimes ignore the problems. I share my problems with my aunties only. If we shared our problems with other people, they won't listen to me.

**Yvonne:** The village community does not assist us in our problems. Parents get the blame for everything. I get angry! I sometimes go away. Sometimes I go to my aunties, they tell me, you can get angry but these are your parents, you must only listen to what they say. I only think to myself and say...never mind they are looking after me so it is ok...let them carry out their anger.

Virginia expressed that she was lucky to have generous family members who supported her, because some extended family members are not able to help the young people in their families:

Young people do have a future if they, if we young people use our head. We do have a future but it is just the wrong choices we do have. There is not enough parenting guidance going on here. Not so much concern in the community. They don’t try to
address these issues. They just let it go. Not enough support unless a relative is generous enough to give that support. One good example I have, there was someone at the back of me in the family that can help me, while some families cannot afford to do that and some people cannot do that.

When George was asked if the young people in his community get some support from the community, NGO or the government, he agreed with the younger people that they do not get any support from anybody apart from the community as a whole getting minimal assistance:

Nothing at all! Some communities do get some assistance. We did not get some assistance. Sometime ago, we asked for water, they did give us water but I think they have muddled it up. The water pump is installed here at the bottom while those people living in the main village (on the mountain) are without it. So they come down here to fetch water. … the Pastor down here (village below the mountain) is using his tank so that is good. There were two tanks that were given to the village. One is not being used because it has a hole. While the village Pastor does have one but it does not have a lid. So the government is helping the community but there is no support for the youth. There is no support for the youth. Individual parents take the responsibility to help their own children.

Despite the evidence that rural participants gave in light of community, NGO and government support, in contrast the government workers and NGO gave contradicting comments. I wanted to gauge the views of government workers and NGO to identify whether they had any plans to give, or if they gave, any support to the village communities. The government workers commented that they provide advisory roles for youth issues and youth activities to the government and provide technical assistance to the provinces. William and Thomas gave an account of the function of the Youth Commission and how it extends its services to the community but by and large; I found that the provincial government and district services should work harder to distribute community assistance to youth in the village communities. While the Youth Commission
does have a link between the NGOs and other government bodies, the network between
the village communities is still far from visible as rural respondents described it:

**Thomas:** We have links with the Provincial Administration. National Youth
Commission, mainly to give advice to the National Government and the Provincial
Government and stake holders. We do not have the mandate to give out funds. That
has been given to Provincial and LLG, organic law and Provincial Government.

**William:** Our roles and responsibilities is that, under the organic law, LLG, some of the
functions have been decentralised to the Provinces so in terms of our responsibility at
the National Level is to provide advisory role in terms of youth issues and youth
activities to the government and provide technical assistance to the provinces.

Our stake holders with the Community Development Officers of each province, they
are the ones that we deal with; we do not directly deal with any young people...we
develop the Policy for provinces to have ownership. They design programs based on
the National Policy.

**Community programs**

The female participants (Florence and Yvonne) were asked if there were any programs in
the community that were helpful for them. They explained that they were not happy and
the village was a boring place to live for reasons that community activities were rarely
organised:

**Florence:** There are no school holiday programs. During ...Christmas and one of the
event ‘Ano Pala cup’ the village was filled with happiness. The village was filled with
life. People in the village were happy. People who live in Moresby also came to the
village to be part of the event. The Ano Pala Cup was an event that brought together
four villages. You will see that the four villages do not always put themselves
together. This was a social event that helped to build a good relationship among all
the four villages. There were some people we did not know and during that time we
were able to know and identify which people lead individual community.

**Yvonne:** We are not happy. It is really boring in the village. The village should make us
happy. If the programs are not organised we are not happy. They should create small
programs as mentioned because in a way it will keep us very busy and occupied. Our
minds will be preoccupied and this will avoid problems.
With reference to playing sports, as highlighted by Florence, and in response to whether playing sports was a core component of youth programs, William articulated that sports was for urban young people and rural young people should be more business orientated:

Playing sports is not a program. Sporting activities is trying to help young people participate in activities that keep away unnecessary activities like drinking and smoking drugs. This is a program that is suitable for the urban youth. Because most of the services and infrastructure are all here and they can have access to. I see that there is no one in their community that is taking the lead to organise activities much better than that. Sporting is one area. Everybody is playing sports. Is there another area apart from sports? People should be business minded.

The male participants affirmed that the community does not have community programs for youth; outside sources do not get into the community to help them. Even though there are some assistance and awareness in the village community, it is mostly only for the older people, and the young people are left out:

Peter: We only had the Bank South Pacific awareness, but this is for older people who are selling their products at the market. They have come to assist the older especially the women to open their accounts so that they can deposit their money in the account. This is so that they do not go to Moresby to deposit their stuff.

Given these responses by rural respondents; the government workers and NGO shed light on the activities they conceive to be contributing to the lack of services. With reference to community programs, William explained that provinces are responsible for creating programs for their youth with the assistance of the community development division in the provinces. In the future, Youth Friendly Centres will be developed in the District levels for youth to have access in order to address their issues:

To really identify their programs in rural settings, it is the responsibility of the provinces with the assistance of the community development division of the provinces not from us at the National level. All the programs or issues that are recognised at the provinces are captured in the national policy.
National Policy we have nine key strategic areas, this is where most of the programs can be developed...we can partner or link them with other NGOs, development partners or other Government agencies to actually run some of the programs that can address all the problems young people face at the rural setting. So the rural villages should go to the District offices or to the Provincial Officers.

When the National Policy was launched, we now have a trend “Youth Friendly Centre” it is through that concept that we are now going right down to the rural areas trying to assist them in terms of, having that centre organised so that it becomes a centre where all the other programs can be fitted into that centre.

In the same way that youth are silenced from airing their views and deprived from sufficient and accessible services, they are also overlooked in budget planning. William also explained that the Youth Commission do not deal with the distribution of funds, however the provinces are delegated to budget the funds appropriately so that the programs of the young people are funded:

In terms of funding, provinces do their own budget every year and once they do that budget for the year, they have to cater for that. The current trend is that, they do not give youth as a priority so most young people or the youth programs in the provinces missed out on that.

Conversely the NGOs — especially the Salvation Army — has a direct communication link with the local village communities through the church. Jonathan highlighted that their programs for young people in the villages was organised through the village Pastors. Although they do not get any funding from the Government but access money from their main church, they are able to fund the activities affecting people in the rural village:

We have a good working procedure here. I can get the information form the village here...we pass the information through middle management who then passes the information to the Church Pastor or whoever concerned. We have a good communication channel where, I can get the information through to the village level. To have these programs happen, I travel to all the territories and discuss the needs or the problems that need to be addressed in the programs. This is the opportunity where we get the information across to the young people. We have middle
management that passes the information to the church. I communicate with the middle management; the person relays the message to the village. The communication is very effective.

While the Salvation Army is an NGO helping disadvantaged people around the country, William explained that there were other organisations; and development partners encapsulated in the National Youth Policy to address the issues of the young people. Though William stated that the Commission was mandated to look after the youth issues in the country, it does not actually monitor or evaluate the functions and projects that are carried out in the country:

Most youth programs are all NGO oriented, so you have organisations like World Vision, Child Fund, Anglicare, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, Youth Friendly Centre, World Visions and Child Fund. Some of these organisations are captured in our policy so those development partners are our stake holders.

Yes, we have a database directory...we are still working on it to develop it further, that any of these development partners have to report to the Youth Commission. Because the Commission is mandated to look after the youth issues or issues affecting the young people in the country. It is a requirement that they have to send whatever program that deals with young people, all these development partners.

William also underlined that the organisation have agendas and objectives that arise that the Youth Commission is not aware of. One reason why they do not monitor their progress is because the NGOs have their own money to run their projects:

Some of the problems that arise are that, they have their own agendas and objectives. For instance, if a K500 000 is given for a youth project; the commission does not know about it, it is their objective for their project. It is their money. It is not through the government purse. It is international NGOs that contribute, or other party’s organisations, certain European countries, because they have their own criteria and their own money so that reason we do not monitor them.
The government workers also highlighted some loop-holes disadvantaging young people in rural areas. While women may have a policy for health services, young people are missing out on that vital service:

The Health department is looking at Adolescent Health policy. The adolescent are neglected. The bulk of the population, those that people complain a lot about is the youth, so they are coming up with a policy. The hope is that with the policy established then they create some sort of division or section that will address those needs. With HIV Aids, we do not expect those young people to walk into another team, culture also has an impact on that, that is why the National Youth Policy is trying to help Youth Friendly Centres then we should have in all the districts, building called Youth Friendly Centre, so in that office we have counselling officers or provide some sort of services to the young people so when it comes to counselling they do not have to look for places, or look around and see some older people who will criticise them.

One obstacle confronting the Youth Commission is the (non) availability of funds. Although they have programs that can be used, there are impediments that inhibit the implementation of these programs:

We can have the programmes developed here but we do not have the government funding. Programs can be developed but they cannot be implemented. We can develop a budget but when we take that budget up, they do not give us that money, so this is very sad. This is one struggle we face here. We can come up with good programs to assist the people but it must have the find and also it must have a political will to actually push for that. Political will in terms of, you have provincial and open electoral members, even youth groups in coming up with very interesting program, but it is systematic.

The electoral member is the Chairman of the Joint District priority committee; this is issuing the government mechanism. You can identify that particular program/project at the community level or the ward level, he must give the blessing he has to sign and authorise that.

Therefore, given due processes and as highlighted by William, Thomas was sceptical as to whether the government was going to support the notion of having a youth policy for health in the district services implemented:
This is one thing in the policy where we are trying to encourage the Provincial Administration to try to look into it and capture it. I am not sure if they will support the initiative...they are aware of what we are doing, they have copies of our policy...they know what that means to the youth.

**Suggestions**

In the process of the interviews, young people also gave suggestions that they thought were important for them and the community:

**Virginia:** I would prefer youth counselling and having someone that is youth development programs that sort of thing, awareness, setting up association, involving youth in community, employing youth, setting up training institutions at least a grade 6 or a grade 10 drop out can at least go further, helping setting up scholarship, an association which can help youth get back help then further education so there should be no one neglected in the community.

There should be also parenting counselling in and around here. There are so many issues about parenting in this village.

**Florence:** I think it is the village councillors and pastors who are responsible for the programs in the village. They should organise camps. The councillors should make programs for instance, clean the cemetery, the roadsides. They should come up with these plans for the youth and in return we should be paid a little money.

**Peter:** Young people should be assisted. For instance we should be told to do some good things in the community. To run the community...Our community does not have any PMV, we get on PMV's from other villages, and our educated people should buy some of this. We do not have many stores in this community. For example, see that store (pointing at the store), if he closes during the day, there is no other store that can be open for us during the day to go to.

Our educated people should help us build an aid post or put a water pump. It should be made possible for the village people to fetch water. We do not have any good youth programs for our community. The counsellors are not working together; our roads and the tracks are not clean.

Jessie highlighted that although the community had some activities for young people, they were not managed well by the leaders:
There are some activities that are organised for the young people but the leaders just foul everything up.

George commented on some factors that may contribute to strengthening young people within the community:

Youth group help with the running of the youth camps and the parents assist their children. Or they do fundraising for their children. We do not have any playground for the community. Every young person loves to play but they do not have a playground. We should have a playground. Our standards of playing in games also do not improve. The people’s interest should also improve on that, games. There is nothing to boost their moral or their thoughts of living in the village should be improved.

**Fred:** Young people should be assisted. For instance we should be told to do some good things in the community, to run the community.

Jonathan suggested an effective way to capture the attention of the young people and get the parents involved was by linking with religious activities. He mentioned that church programs can be intertwined with awareness and then brought to the community:

I think one of the things we need to do is ‘Awareness’ if there are issues that are really affecting the lives of the young people. We really need to get back to the villages and point out issues that are affecting young people. We should have parallel programs going that is have sports at the same time while making awareness. You cannot get young people to do one thing because they will not be interested. If there is anything to do with the parents we need to address that with their parents as well. The church programs are very effective when we want to bring parents at the community level, some parents do not go to church, but with the influence they can go to church they can be involved in that.

**Rural summary**

As highlighted in this section, learning and development are facilitated by those people surrounding the child. Negative perceptions are built in the young person when they are brought up in fear, and they may eventually lose their self-worth. Children from
dysfunctional families experience extreme difficulties in subsequently restoring their identity and self-esteem.

The interpretations of family connectedness are changing rapidly within our societies as a result of modernisation and individualism. The family is supposed to mean interdependence and provide a source of support mechanisms. This means that living with the family or within the village should provide interconnectedness, where knowledge is transferred from generation to generation, and oral knowledge and lineages of connectedness are bonds and ties to our origins that make us unique. Also, the skills of survival and ceremonies, and norms of our conduct as citizens within our societies are expounded through the teachings of the elders.

**Education**

It was interesting to note that all the participants had similar responses when they were asked to identify why young people were struggling and living in the village. Their responses all linked to education. Most of the young people that live in the village are school drop outs for varying reasons — not only because of school fee problems, but also as the result of not finding appropriate skilled jobs. Some young people were unable to complete their education because their parents could not complete paying their school fees. Another contributing factor captured in this section was that, although some young people completed their education, they were not able to collect their certificates because schools impose a policy that parents have to complete paying the school fees before the students can collect their certificate. Although young people may complete their education, therefore, they still have to pay the outstanding fees in order to collect their certificates. It is significant that young people are affected by lack of education as a
consequence of financial constraints and associated factors. As discussed in the literature, young people who are disengaged from formal activities are frequently drawn to engage in criminal activities. These elements and themes are also captured in this section.

**Lack of school fees**

Virginia highlighted three factors that contributed to young people not continuing with education: lack of school fees, lack of school infrastructure and lack of interest, which more or less is associated with lack of infrastructure and insufficient provision of meals by schools:

**Virginia:** Most youths do not complete their education in the village because not enough funds for the child to continue. They do not want to continue. Influenced by peers because they go to High School but our High School facilities are not so good. Most children give up on the way. They are not fed well like how they are fed at home. Those with stronger will, they do. But others give up on the way because of the living standards in High School.

When asked about financial problems relating to school fees, Virginia commented that parents encounter problems trying to find funds for the children to go to school. She mentioned that sometimes the parents rely on their relatives to assist in paying school fees:

**Virginia:** That is mmmmh! At this time parents face a lot of problems finding funds for their children’s school fees and funding them with lunch money and whatsoever. It’s another problem to parents. They have to work hard to earn that money. It’s not easy to make that money to make that funding. They have to go to the garden to those who can make garden some can hunt and sell …kill and sell. Others they depend on their relatives who are working.

Ben commented that the reason why he did not attend school was because he felt tired, did not have the interest and he felt he was not competent to attend school:
My parents would send me to school. Sometimes I would go to school while sometimes I never went to school. Would pretend to go to school wearing uniform but I would give up...and run away and hide in the bush. I would go to the house when it was time. I would feel tired in the school. That is why...when the teachers asked the students to do something; they would do the things with confidence. I would weigh this and feel I was not competent. For this reason, I did not complete my school.

Jessie was unable to continue with education or find employment because he did not get his certificate. Although he completed his education he did not get his certificate at the time of graduation because he had outstanding school fees which needed to be settled before collecting his certificate:

**Jessie:** I stayed in the village for two years. My friends got their certificates so they look for jobs. For my case it is difficult. I can write my application letter but it is my certificate. I am trying my best to get certificate. I want to get my certificate because I want to go back to school.

### Results of lack of school fees

Clearly, many caregivers or parents struggle to send their children to school because of financial constraints and are therefore unable to meet the school fees. The participants described how they were unable to continue with their education, a situation which then resulted in them involving in criminal activities or cause trouble in their communities:

**Donald:** I never finished my grade 9 and had not gone back to school because I did not have any school fees. I was not in school since.

**Ben:** I completed school in grade six. I did nothing and followed other youth around the place and getting into trouble. I have lived in the village all this time. My parents have never taken care of my school fees. When I was sent to school, my grandparents struggled to pay my school fees, my school bag and books. They struggled to get lunch money. The struggle for them to get me educated was a big struggle for my grandparents.
Geoff: I did Grade 3 in 2006. There was no school fee then so I stayed at home. I used to stay on the streets and be with my friends. I was hanging around on the streets most of the time.

Stewart: I did grade five; I was 12 years old when my parents died. I was a very bright boy in class. I have since then never went to school. ... my cousin brother sponsored me to do grade six. But my cousin brother died. I did not go to school,...after he died there was no one there to support pay my school fees... I hang out with the boys and did all sorts of things with them, criminal activities.

Given the situations discussed by the respondents, George also affirms that parents and caregivers struggle to finance their children’s education which results in young people behaving out of the norm. He commented that free education was one option that could help the parents in rural areas:

Today, Grade 6 to Grade 7 to Grade 8...if they pass they go to high school, once they reach Grade 10, our children do not advance. Some parents do help their children while most of them do not. If their education are to continue to grade and they get their certificate, than that is good and proper. Their interests fade away because of this.

In relation to free education, when one respondent was asked about his view on free education he commented that proper policies should be created to guide the parents to institutions relevant to their children:

William: Relevant agencies need to come up with appropriate policies that will be able to guide the stake holders or even parents. There should be some kind of guide that will be able to guide the parents to lead their children into institutions. They may not be bright but gaining the skills is relevant. These skills have to be looked at through proper policies.

Apart from lack of funds for school fees, the female respondents commented on some other aspects that contributed towards them not being able to perform well in school. Florence highlighted that she does not have study facilities at home which contributed to her compromised academic performance. It is common in rural villages that homes do
not have proper study facilities for their children, making it difficult for the children to study effectively. Because parents themselves are not educated enough, they are also unable to assist their children with their homework:

Florence: If you look at this community, most of the young people, we don’t really put our minds in schools. It looks like we are just playing around. ...Our parents do not assist us in our education as well, especially when we bring our homework or assignment. They do not help us. We struggle to do this all on our own. We do not have enough study facilities in our home.

In contrast, Yvonne commented that individual children should work hard and not rely on their parents for help: they should concentrate on doing their work themselves:

We individual children should also be committed in doing our work and not really relying on the parents. Now a days, students are not concentrating on their work...they do not concentrate in their school work.

However, the female participants all agreed that cultural obligations also distract them and prevent them from concentrating in their school work. More so, the parents place their priorities on cultural obligations rather than improving their children’s education:

Florence: We have a lot of activities in our community such as bride price. Sometimes we do not live on our own, we also have extended family members come to stay with us. Most of the time life is not really good in terms of food, gathering.

Yvonne: We have a lot of disturbances in our homes...when it comes to bride price he (father) withdraws so much money. He is never busy with our school needs.

**No bridge between learning in school and rural life.**

The school in the local community caters for children aged 6 years old to 15 years old; that is, elementary to Grade 8. At the end of Grade 8, students sit an examination to qualify for Grade 9. The education department panel performs a selection on the results: if they perform above the cut-off mark students are selected to do Grade 9 but if they do
not perform well in the examination and gain scores below the cut-off mark, these young people are not selected and return to the village. The school does not provide Grade 9 for those who do not do well: it then becomes the responsibility of the parents to find a vocational school or opt for their children to stay in the village.

When asked his opinion of the education system in his local community, one participant explained that there was no bridge between formal learning in schools and what would actually help young people when they leave school. He commented that the school curriculum does not prepare the young people well:

I think they should have grade 10. The children should continue to Grade 10. Nobody should be a failure. The curriculum is not interesting to the children. In the past, we use to have community things; we use to get out of the classroom in the afternoon. In this school, the children stay in the classroom until later in Friday where they play games.

There are no excursions. Our children do not know the names of our trees and leaves. This is what I think; the children do not have any interest. The curriculum should be done in the community as well. For example the manual arts or agriculture should be taught in the community. In this way the interests of the children should grow.

They are only working in the classroom. Subjects such as this should last for 1 whole day and not only 30 minutes. If the young people see the fruit of their planting they will surely be interested in it. They will be motivated to continue in the task. They will appreciate it. I am not sure if these are included in the curriculum.

Virginia confirms that although the village community does have some young people who completed Grade 10, they are also unable to continue with education as a result of the education policy or school problems. She also highlighted that young people do not have the skills in gardening because parents depend on educating their children to get proper jobs. This fails when they do not have the funds for continued schooling and yet the parents do not teach and prepare their children to learn to make gardens:
Youth do not get educated. There are a lot of Grade 10 drop outs and mostly do not have the skills for gardening. Parents depend on educating them until when there are no funds they get back with no skills in the village.

**Traditional and cultural learning in the village**

The consequences of modern learning are fragmenting the teachings taught by our elders. In the past, the elders trained the young people in skills that enabled them to be independent, to be leaders and to be respected. They were taught skills to hunt, make gardens, plant and go fishing. Although young people are still taught skills to equip them in the village by older people, many young people hesitate to learn the skills because they prefer having a white collar job and earning an income over working in gardens. George compared modern day skill learning to what they did in the past and disagreed strongly with the way young people behave now, regarding them as ‘lazy, eat and sleep’. “Eat and sleep” is a common phrase used about young people who do not contribute to the household chores:

We were taught how to plant yams; there are different types of yams and you have to plant them differently so that you can yield more, plant bananas, wrap bananas; there are different banana leaves you use to wrap the bananas. There are different types of baskets: ladies were taught how to weave the baskets even the handles had to be weaved. They learnt how to sew grass skirts. Nowadays everything has filled the world, people do not go hunting, we get things from the store now. We learnt by seeing and imitating, our parents taught us how to do the things. We participated with the old people, they taught us how to do things, we were always with them, cutting the trees for building the house. The teachings of the old ways have disappeared.

**Low education level**

One of the participants commented that not all the young people in rural villages attend school and that their education level is therefore low. Although the young people may be taught some things, they may not be able to read or, for example, understand the
manuals. Therefore he saw education as an important factor for rural young people. Jonathan also commented that young people lack the ability to communicate with people about their situations. Even if they are given manuals to read, the people in rural villages may not be able to read or pronounce words or understand what they are doing:

Jonathan: I think the young people especially Rigo inland, one of the things is Education. This has to be considered, we are still struggling. Not many young people attend school, I think I should point this out that our young people’s education is not very high it is very low. And I think this is one of the common issues.

The difficulties that we need to address...they are not taught how to manage or make the young people manage the affairs of the young people, communicate with young people when the situations are hard for them. We need to educate them on how to do that. We need to train them. Our training manuals need to be brought down to their levels. Otherwise they will not understand what we teach or what they are trying to pass on to them. I see that, many young people leaders have the potential to lead and know how to lead. If this much of the information is passed on to them, they are bored to read, you know the village young people, the village level. Young people do not understand some difficult words or even pronounce them.

Jonathan also mentioned that young people are not educated enough to take on leadership roles within the village:

We do not have well educated leaders to take on the Youth program roles. There are now few grade 10 young people now are able to carry out the roles. Many of our churches do not understand English materials.

Second Chance

As discussed in the literature review, the City Mission is an NGO that teaches young rural men who have left school and gives them a second chance. The City Mission teaches skills in the areas of carpentry, agriculture, animal husbandry and poultry-farming and tourism. Donald, Ben, Geoff and Stewart gave positive accounts about their engagement with City Mission:
Donald: We enjoy being here. It is like being in a college. You know how people attend college. Well the feeling is the same here. It is like a boarding school. I feel like I belong here. This is my opportunity here.

Ben: City Mission is a very good organisation. There is nothing such as this in PNG. This is the only one that is available. They are helping the youth like us. They put us on track. They give us good clothes, good bed, good food – three meals a day.

The respondents all agreed that the skills they have learnt are helpful and they were now prepared to go back to the village and implement the skills:

Donald: I want to make my business at home. In the village, I use to feel very lazy. I never like working in the garden. I would only follow my mum. Here I have the endurance to work until 11 am then we get the rest. Then we continue after that. We have learnt a lot, planting cabbages, tomatoes and other crops, from planting to harvesting. Some of our harvests are sold at RH (Rhimbunan Hijau shop) and some at the outside market. I have gained skills in various sections and I am really enjoying it.

Ben: I am enjoying it. I am observing how money is coming in and how it is going out. Learning how to look after chicken. I think looking after chicken is a very good skill. Learning the skills of looking after chicken will help me when I go back to the village. With the skills in the coffee shop, I think I can have my trade store and look after it myself. I feel confident to do my own thing after learning the skills here.

Geoff: I am beginning to learn how to plant the crops...some things I did not know, I am learning here.

Stewart: I am learning some things I did not know how to do. I can become a very good farmer in my community.

They commended the works of the City Mission and responded that organisations such as the City Mission should be more widely established and that the City Mission should therefore expand into other areas as well:

Donald: Yes, it is a good organisation and is helping the youth. It is creating people with skills. We do not have to sit examinations and worry about failing our exams.

Geoff: It is like helping us stand in a battlefield. It has given us the strength to withstand the hard jobs.
Suggestions

Given that many young people are unable to continue with their education, the respondents suggested that the community and the government should assist young people in various ways. Below is a brief summary extracted from their interviews of what they have suggested may work for them.

George suggests that the teaching curriculum should be changed to incorporate components that may bridge and equip young people with skills for rural village agriculture or farming:

**Virginia:** Set up associations,...set up training institutions....set up scholarships

**George:** Nobody should be a failure ...curriculum is not interesting.....no excursion...children do not know the names of the trees and the plants...agriculture should be taught in the curriculum... I am thinking of free education.  So I think education should not finish at grade 10. In fact, they should continue to Grade 12. Parents in this village do not have enough to sponsor their children for further education.

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7Picture by City Mission
Virginia and George were asked to identify some best ways to support young people in the community. They suggested that institutions should be built within the community to assist those children who discontinue from education and also suggested avenues that could help youth get back on track:

**Virginia:** Set up associations, involve youth in community work, employ youths, setting up training institutions at least a grade 6 or grade 10 drop out can least go further, as association which can help youth get back help them further education so that there should be no neglecting in the community.

**George:** The only way I am thinking of is build a vocational school. Where they can learn trade skills, they can learn to cook, learn how to sew clothes, or mend fishing nets, gain mechanics. These things will surely improve their lives. At the moment there is nothing in this village that can make them happy and make them take part in to help their parents or give assistance.

**Education Summary**

This section highlighted important aspects about why young people live in rural villages. The participants gave account of their voices and observations and echoed similar sentiments between them that education was an important factor. It was also recognised that most of the young people living in the rural villages have low educational levels and if manuals or leadership roles were given to them in their communities, they would be unable to manage or communicate situations. It was also found that there is a gap in rural education where young people are not equipped with skills for rural work.

Young people are not happy because there are no community activities that occupy their time. Cultural obligations also deter the young girls from committing themselves in their school activities. Furthermore, as a result of financial constraints experienced by parents, most of the young people who discontinue from school engage in criminal activities or behave out of the norm.
Unemployment

As discussed in the literature, young people are strongly affected by being unemployed. Although young people may get an education and receive their certificates, it is inevitable that there is lack of rural employment for these young people, which then results in lifestyle limitations and financial insecurity. The only means of employment in rural villages is subsistence gardening, and there is no means of formal income earning. Hence young people engage in undesirable social behaviour which in turn encourages negative images of them and their families.

Work hard to get an income

The majority of the respondents agreed that lack of employment caused struggles for many people in the community. Unemployment is one of the factors that contribute to the hardships that they face. In order for them to earn an income they have to work very hard:

Jessie: Yeh! Finance is a major problem

Virginia: Lack of employment, unemployment, earning money. Not every youth knows gardening. Sometimes it is difficult to cope with parents in gardening. They are not fit enough to live in villages. They have to work hard to earn that money. They have to go to the garden to those who can make garden...others depend on their relatives who are working. Most young people just enjoy, they do not know what the parents are facing to earn that money. ...they do not realise how the money is coming in.

George: Some young people in the community sell things, because they want to buy things or they want to think of their own future...struggle to find things for themselves...struggle to buy their own mobile phone or radio.

Florence explained that because her parents are unemployed she has to work hard and assist her parents to work in the garden:
I am living in the village. My parents are not working so my major concern is to work in the garden. Our gardens are mostly far from the village. Growing shallots is now our main crop because it is light to carry, pawpaw and tomatoes alike. When we get these things, we also think of selling them at a good market. So when we sell these things we want to buy our things too...we really struggle for these things.

Florence also commented that young people often look up to their parents for support. If their parents are lazy then they do not provide adequate supports:

We look up to our parents. They are the ones who provide for us. If they are strong we survive, if they are lazy than it is difficult for us.

**I have a certificate, no jobs**

Although young people may have the certificates to prove that they have completed their level of education, there are typically no jobs available for them. The respondents all commented that it was difficult trying to obtain a job. Some young people are lucky to get employment, but it is difficult for others. Even if they have sent their application to organisations, they often do not get any response despite waiting for so long:

**Florence:** Some have certificates and some do not have the certificate but you just stay at home. These days’ people want that certificate to be able to find an employment.

**Jessie:** Young people walk around aimlessly these days. Some are lucky while most young people just stay at home. Most of my year boys and girls stay at home. Some have certificates, they have it with them but it is difficult to come to Port Moresby to look for jobs. They do not get support from their parents. They just stay at home only. It is difficult to come to Moresby because we also consider who we will stay with. Those who have homes in Moresby, it is ok.

**Donald:** I went to the technical school and got my trade certificate, but it was difficult for me to find employment even when I got my certificate. I use to send my application to several companies or even drop off my certificate and application letter at some companies but I never use to get anywhere I do not get any offer.

Jessie highlighted a factor that affects many young people when they get to urban areas in search for jobs. Because they are coming in from rural villages, they leave their home to get to urban areas and live with relatives who have a home there. They do not have a
sense of freedom when they live with their relatives, while it also puts a lot of strain on urban relatives to feed them, which sometimes has negative effects in their relationship. George affirms that even though Port Moresby is near their village, young people are unable to find any employment. There are no appropriate jobs that can engage young people in work:

The city is in our land, young people look for jobs but they cannot find any jobs. They come back to the village and they go back again to Moresby to live with their relatives. They cannot live here in the village because the garden work becomes very hard for them.

**Disengaged from formal income earning activities**

Young people living in rural villages have highly restricted employment opportunities. The only form of income for them is to work hard in their gardens, go fishing; even if they have a plantation (such as coconut, betelnut) then they still have to work hard to yield good products to sell. They may be lucky if a relative is working that can assist them, but even in this case young people are required to work hard:

**Florence:** I am living in the village. My parents are not working so my major concern now is to work in the gardens. Our gardens are mostly far from the village. Growing shallots is now our main crop because it is light to carry, pawpaw and tomatoes alike.

**Virginia:** They have to work hard to earn that money. It is not so easy to make that money. They have to go to the garden to those who can make garden some can hunt and sell ... kill and sell. Most young people just enjoy, they do not know what the parents are facing to earn that money. And that is very bad. They do not realise how the money is coming in.

With regards to working in the garden, George remarked that young people do not stay healthy with their parents especially when they do not assist working in the garden — another of the hardships that young people face:
Young people don’t stay well because they do not help their parents. Sometimes, their parents do not give them food. The policy of “no work, no food” is implemented at their homes. They have no interest in the village, no way of obtaining money, clothes.

**Other activities to have an income**

Apart from working hard in the garden and selling their products to earn an income, young people can get involved in illegal activities that draw income to support themselves and their families:

**Paulo:** Young people in the village do not have any money. Some do criminal activities such as the road blocks or they steal. Some young people break and enter the village stores to feed themselves.

**Virginia:** It just comes to the village. Now you will be wondering where this person got this expensive phone, or how come he has a lot of money. There is now because there is already prostitution already in the village. It is already brought to the village. There’s money everywhere. You will see young people holding expensive phones. It is not that they are doing prostitution but it is that earning money has become easy nowadays.

Lack of unemployment also drives parents to use child labour. Child labour is a burgeoning phenomenon in urban areas and it is becoming an eyesore in Port Moresby. In the past children assisted their parents to work in the garden with the perception of “helping and learning the traits” of the older generation. However, now there is a phenomenon of using children to work on the streets to earn an income. Stewart remarks on ways in which he earned an income to support himself. His grandparents had a betelnut plantation: as it is a valuable commodity in PNG, people from outside of the village travel to the village to buy betel nuts (areca nuts):

I use to stay with my grandparents. If people wanted betelnuts, I would be called to get them. I was paid for what I did. I use to buy Plasta (Band Aid) and sell them. In the afternoon, I would buy biscuit to feed myself after I did the sales. If I did good sales during the day, I would use the money to buy other stuff and resell again. My mother
would beat me and give K5.00. She would tell me to buy some things to sell. She would tell me not to return to the house and eat at the house. We used to stay with our next door neighbour, I sometimes slept at his place. If I buy something for K5.00, after selling the product, I would get at least K20.00. So I would buy food with the K5 and leave the K15 to buy my things to sell. I sell plastic, ear bud, CD etc. I get a plastic of ear bud in it has 12 small packets. I sell each pkt for 0.50 toea. I get a profit of K12.00. If I buy an antenna for K7.00 I sell it for K12, CD for K3.00 and sell it for K10 or K20.

Figure 4.2: Image of Areca nuts (betelnuts) and mustards

Thomas also articulated that there were no employment opportunities in rural areas and that the only way forward was for young people to be self-employed. He also highlighted, however, that the European Union funded Urban Youth Employment and other infrastructures for youth:

Rural employment = self-employment...this will be looking at going into businesses. Financial services and infrastructure.

William felt that young people should be business-minded to generate income:

People should look at activities that can really generate or make your money/income. They are not looking at that area. Bereina for instance, young people are planting betelnuts because they want to make money. So the business idea is there in this
particular area. Young people should start planting buais. In terms of assisting the person would be buying bush knives and grass knives to clear the bush.

**Suggestions**

When the respondents were asked what their expectations were for youth living in the village or what they should do, Florence suggested that the government and the village councillors should organise some work for the young people and in that way they could be paid:

The government or the village council should organise some work for the people. I think if they do this we should be employed in this way, so the payment can come to us. This will help us, activities such as cleaning the road or cutting the grass along the road. This help is good. You cut the grass, they pay, you get that money and in return you use that money to buy and resell, in this way you are helping yourself.

**Unemployment Summary**

There are no employment opportunities in rural villages other than subsistence farming. This research found that young people are lucky to be employed if projects (such as mines or cassava projects) are within their locality. Although a proportion of young people may have certificates indicating they have completed a particular stage of their education, they are still not sufficiently qualified or there are insufficient employment opportunities. Therefore, young people who live in rural villages frequently engage in illegal activities to support themselves. Understandably, they feel disempowered and neglected when they are involved in such activities.

Parents and caregivers of young people are also economically depressed and so work hard in their gardens to earn an income to support their children. Likewise, they expect their children to follow them; however, many young people are unable to withstand such
labour or keep pace with their parents. As a consequence, children hesitate to learn the skills of gardening as they prefer white collar jobs and easy means of getting money.

**Poverty**

In the past, village people relied on their natural resources and harvested abundantly, sufficient for everyone. There was no such thing as poverty or stealing from other people's gardens, and, if someone had an abundant harvest, surplus was shared among everybody. The introduction of modern resources, education and white collar jobs, however, have created a generation that is seen as lazy and poor, a generation who steals from others. This was even prophesized by the older generation to their children and is a proverb commonly shared in the community: “gulugabi bogo gani tagitagi ni” (you younger generation will cry for food). Most of the participants in this study are from no income families and rely heavily on subsistence gardening and selling their food products. The consequences of these are inevitable and unimaginable. What use to be plentiful has depleted because the younger generation do not assist the older generation – according to parents and family members, young people have become lazy and avoid working on their land so much so depend on money to survive.

**Explanation of poverty**

Respondents were asked if there was poverty in the community. In response, they did not give a discrete definition of poverty; however, they related scenarios as poverty and actions that young people engage in to combat what they think is poverty. There was a consensus among young people that when dry seasons or flood sometimes impacts the village, the food gardens are damaged, leaving them with no food to eat:
People have to work hard to be able to withstand the situations. If it is yam season, people eat yam, if it is banana season, people eat banana. It is a hard life.

Fred: Some people eat food without protein. It is difficult living in the village.

Paulo: Family’s also have problems because people want to find goodness for themselves. When people steal from their gardens, they have arguments.

The respondents also explained that some are lucky when they have relatives or family members working because they get assistance from them. Some people are also intelligent and get good jobs, and therefore earn an income to support their families. They also supplement their diets with some protein when they are lucky, otherwise their meals consists of staple food which is available by the season:

Peter: Those people who are employed eat, while of those who do not have employment do not eat. It is difficult living in the village.

Paulo: Some people are intelligent while some are not. Some people struggle to look for food while some do not. They just live according to the standard of the village. Those who struggle do not solve their problems while some do solve their problems. Some people withstand it, they live according to the village level. Those who do not have gardens but have little money are able to solve their problems and they eat while some who do not have it struggle. They face a lot of problems.

Reasons for behaving negatively

A series of questions were asked as to why young people behave negatively: such as why young people steal, or break and enter in the village. The respondents all commented that young people were too lazy to make gardens and that they found stealing and criminal activities a viable option:

Virginia: Because there is not enough food on the table, People who do not have gardens, live without gardens live on money and it is very hard. They want something that they do not have.
Paulo: Young people live in the village so they do not have any money. Some do criminal activities such as road blocks or they steal. Some young people break and enter the village stores to feed themselves.

Virginia and George both remarked that young people and parents are envious of those people in the community who excel and earn an income. Virginia commented that when parents with high incomes purchase items for their children, other children from the community also want the same items; hence they get into activities which they think will get what they see:

George: young people whose parents do not work, envy other youth who do not have what others have, it brings problems to them. Some youth do not live in the village; they go to Moresby to live unnecessarily.

Virginia: Most of those influences come from mostly youth with parents who earn a lot. They have a lot of money. They can afford all this things. And now there is also an issue there is already developing in the village – prostitution.

People in the community are unable to do other things apart from going to the garden because they lack the materials. Therefore they become envious over those who have much while people with less must struggle to make ends meet:

George: The government banned the sale of cartridges, youth do not go hunting, they stay in the village, parents so not go hunting because there is no means of killing pigs, wallaby, not many parents have fishing nets. Some do not have fishing nets but things like mending nest are very hard. Because they have to buy strings to mend the net the other thing their parents whose parents are working, do have many.

Money is the source of survival

As suggested by the discussions above, money or earning an income is the source of everything. These days, people have to have the money to be able to buy food, buy clothes and obtain other resources they think will bring happiness. The respondents agreed that people in the village lack money and thus are unable to satisfy what they
want to do, such as buying detergent to wash their clothes. Many young people and parents in the community are faced with this circumstance:

**Peter:** It is not good. When we do not have any money, it feels bad. Because when we have money we buy food to.

**Paulo:** Some people struggle to look for food while some do not. They just live according to the standard of the village. Those who struggle do not solve their problems while some do solve their problems. Those who do not have gardens but have little money are able to solve their problems and they eat while some who do not have it struggle. They face a lot of problems.

**Fred:** Some people go to other people's garden to steal if not they go to other people to ask for help.

**George:** No money is one struggle, no clothes, same clothing. It is now election time, and the young people are running after the candidates to benefit from them...they want money from the candidates.

**Florence:** I go to my cousins. When my cousins see that I need clothes they give me. Sometimes, I sell garden products to buy my clothes...we find broken tools and our parents mend them for us to use.

Respondents also explained the effects and consequences of asking for money and having no money; they explained that it was embarrassing to ask from people when they were short of resources. It also reduces their self-esteem:

**Yvonne:** When we do not have anything we ask people to assist us. People make comments when we ask. Such as, is the father not working? Why are they asking too much? People gossip when you do this. We get embarrassed. It is a problem we are facing here.

**Paulo:** For those who feel embarrass all the time, stay in the house most of the time. For those who are not embarrassed do not worry so much about what they wear. For some people, if they have some money, they can be able to buy soap powder to wash their clothes.

**Peter:** We do not like hanging around with our friend when our clothes are dirty. When we were kids we did not worry so much about it. But now that we have grown,
we kind of feel it on our bodies too. It is not good when you are hanging around with your friends smelling. I think it is good when you do not smell.

Young people, especially young girls, are affected when their needs are not met. They become vulnerable in their health and can be lured into prostitution:

**Virginia:** There is a lot of needs that the girls want. Not really want it but they need it for hygiene and personal use. Clothing (she chuckles). If you are going out and hygiene, it is a must and need that you must have something with you for you to be comfortable when you are hanging around.

There is already prostitution in the village. It is free money. Before you have to work hard in the gardens...prostitution makes it easy to earn money. It just comes to your door step.

**Florence:** For female, when their needs are not satisfied they decide to get married. For instance when they are not given money, or their financial needs are not met or when their needs are not met. Maybe when they see that their friends have good clothes and they do not and they decide to get married...I ask my parents or older siblings to help me with some money to purchase what I want, we really struggle to buy girl things [sic].

**Gambling**

Gambling is becoming a common problem in village communities where young people gather to play cards. Playing cards also contributes to family problems when a spouse or a family member uses the last coin to play cards:

**George:** It is a very common problem. You see that kid going there, he is going to play cards. Even though he has two kids he is engaged in that sort of things. There is no easy means of finding money so that is how they go about it, they go and find bit of money to buy cigarette, betelnut and so on. You can stop it but there is no way to stop it because there is no other way of stopping it.

**Virginia:** these days young people do not go to the gardens, they sit around and play cards whole day. If they win they are happy, and if they lose you will hear them fighting or arguing.
Poverty Summary

Poverty is perceived in different ways and young people can be lured into engaging in illegal and criminal activities in order to survive. The participants described the hardships they encounter while living in rural villages and compared this to living in the city. They all agreed that living in the village was idyllic; they have free water and food. However they are also deprived of accessible essential services and improved facilities. The impact of drought and flooding during the year affects the food gardens, and, since they are reliant of their food gardens, such effects bring on hunger. It is unbearable for the people when they have no income or source of income to survive. The respondents claimed that living in the village is different because there is no way to earn an income to supplement their diet, buy clothes or pay for school fees. Participants also agreed that in order to alleviate poverty, they should work with the parents in their gardens rather than being lazy.

Youth culture

As discussed in the literature, culture connects individuals to common places and forms of communication. It connects young people to meet in particular cultural scenes to communicate with others near and outside of the boundaries of social spaces. Although it is primarily an urban phenomenon, it is also eating into the fabrics of rural villages, as is evident in the conduct of the young people. Their desire to have instant, modernised material belongings such as radios, music and fashion are forcing young people to behave in ways outside their cultural upbringing. The once held cultural identity and values of belonging, respect and hard work on the land are fragmenting. The young people have grown to be lazy and dependant on financial income.
Significance of learning the traditional culture

The respondents were asked why they thought young people behaved negatively in the community. They gave many reasons as to what may contribute to their behaviours, and some participants agreed that young people do not show any respect and are lazy. Virginia commented that culture forms the identity of a person and she appreciates learning the culture because it encourages her to be a better person. George, from his perspective as an older participant, commented that young people do not appreciate their culture because they like the modern way of living therefore, they hesitate to contribute to and participate in working in the garden or in cultural activities. Their comments highlight the global influences on young people. Virginia also mentioned that it was important to teach young people the culture as it shaped the individual person. Virginia remarked that the way parents bring up their children was very important as it contributes to the wellbeing of a person. Therefore, teaching young people the culture has a significant bearing in a person’s life:

**George:** because they miss contact with the cultural attitudes of the old people. They do not care about what the old people say to them. When you plan to go to the garden, they will mobilise and stay home with the friends, they will tell stories all day. It is the same thing, if you want to go hunting...Most youth, when they find their friends they tell stories all day. They will not do anything. They do not know how to make gardens, so if they go to the gardens, what will they do. Even if their parents tell them, they will not take part; they will only say they do not know how to do the thing. They do not try to do something.

**Virginia:** When you learn and know about your culture and customary belief you have the identity in your community. You know your culture and customary belief. It does not mean I am brought up in the modern way and I bring that level down because there are customary beliefs, works and practices.

But I believe if they are taught more of culture, it will give them respect and they will also respect the village in a way. Because that is where you learn and know where
your identity is coming from. When you do not know your identity that means you do not know where you are from.

Virginia described how she was disciplined by her parents and how it has moulded her as a person:

From my young days, it is like, from the age when I was born to when I was in the Primary School, I was with my parents. So the discipline from my parents was mostly very strict. Well now looking back, it really helped a lot. It made me gain respect and I respect my elders in the community. When you respect somebody, they will respect you in return. Meaning you gain respect. Also you respect others your neighbours. I was up brought in a very strong discipline parenting.

Today’s youth mostly do not listen. Most of them do not listen to their parents.

She commented that young people these days in the community lack discipline. Those youth who lack discipline are those that get into all sorts of problems. When there is no parental guidance and young people defy the traditional culture and ways of upbringing, they fall into problems. Virginia and George believe that because they do not listen to the advice of the older people and do not know the culture they are disobedient and behave negatively. George shared a common saying used in the village which portrays the behaviours of the young people:

Baraki geia guluakila bogo kamolagiani genai gemia maguli bege namoni – this means when you listen to the advice of the older people, your lives will be good in the future [sic]

Virginia expresses this by describing the way learning the culture has taught her to gain respect which is also reinforced by the discipline of her parents:

Looking at the community there are lots of children who lack discipline, they are not taught. They are probably disciplined but they play a lot, starting from small kids to big kids. It is those that are not disciplined when they grow they get into all sorts of peer pressure... drinking, smoking they even experience things they should not be at the age of 13,14 and 15 now young youths very young youths act as adults. When
you look at them it is just sickening. They think they are smarter than the bigger ones. When you look at them they just look stupid.

They just like running around hanging loose so like if parents are not strict and do not keep them in the house they experience more which they should not be experiencing...knowing how to drink, how to smoke, even taking up drugs.

**Modern Influence on culture**

Virginia and George affirm that young people’s behaviour is influenced by the modern ways of doing things in comparison to the past way of life:

**Virginia:** More youth are into modern influences like alcohol and all this things. When you look at the community at the village level most youth get out of hand.

Technology is growing, lots of expensive phones are around in the village, and they have access to internets. They are picking up lots of pornographic things, young youths are into pornographic, drugs, alcohol, home brew and it does affect the youth. Most youth especially those from the village do not know how to adapt to the modern level. So for village youth it is a fast effect on them, it twists them very quickly, they do not know how to control it. They do not know how to limit themselves on doing those things. They see it as an opportunity without knowing what effect may come to them.

**George:** If we have traditional dancing, our young people do not have any interest. When the village get into big jobs, our young people become spectators. Young people do not have any interest. If we put out videos or TV, young people will want to watch that, or if there is a dance, they will want to go and dance. It does not appeal to them. Say when I am singing my traditional song, this young person asks why I do this all the time. He has no appreciation of the traditional songs (kitoro), or if I sing, he will not want me to sing the songs. When he plays his modern songs, he will jump up and down in excitement. They have no appreciation for culture. I have stopped singing our traditional songs. It is the same thing with his father. When I sing they imitate me sarcastically. So my interest in this has also depleted.

Modernisation has also created young people disinterested in traditional forms of work, as expressed by George in his earlier comments highlighting the conduct of young people who hesitate to contribute in working in the gardens. Jessie confirms that they are modernised children who dislike working in the gardens:
George: - When you say you are going to the garden, this young man will not come, he does not know how to wrap the bananas. Even if you tell him to go to the garden to cut a banana he will not go. He likes hanging around with his friends. He likes telling stories with his colleagues and he even sleeps at their homes. He is not interested in the activities of the family.

Jessie: We are modernised children. We grow up with rice and flour. Most young people do not make gardens...It is ok, our parents do teach us. They tell us in the morning ... get up and lets go to the garden ...for our case we young people only say guuuushi! You go, it is your work, it is you old people's work. We only wake up and eat. It is very hard for us to learn how to make gardens when we are just waking up to eat and only. We find it hard to get into the garden to work (smiles and scratched his head).

Common problems in the community

As per the questionnaire, young participants were asked to identify common problems they encountered in rural villages. All the respondents echoed similar views that the common problems include: drug and alcohol, homebrew, smoking, teenage pregnancy, underage smoking, domestic violence, and stealing. The respondents considered this as bad because in these ways young people act out of the norm, against the cultural responsibilities:

Virginia: The bad things that go around in communities nowadays for young youth are that they associate around...there are some areas that bring them together in that smoking ...they get alcohol gatherings means they get into groups contribute, mixing home brew, maybe some do take drugs... Now a days there is a lot of teenage marriages.

Peter: Some young people smoke drugs and drink beer and they get mental. So if they think of stealing someone, they just do it without thinking. There are underage smoking in the village is common. The village does not have any HIV incidences... Yes, people think of being part of the group that is why they smoke.

Peter, Paul and Jonathan confirmed that young people behaved out of the norm because they want to be part of the group:
Peter: If you do not smoke drug than you do not belong to that group. So young people smoke to be part of the group... I think maybe because they want to drink beer or they do not have any food in their homes. Or maybe because they have problems with their relatives or maybe because when people booking (get food items of credit) for things and do not pay and that is the reason why they have arguments and they make it a very big thing.

Paulo: Young people take home brew and smoke because of their feelings. When they smoke they feel good, when they do not smoke they feel bad.

Jonathan: I think it is peer pressure, because when they grow up together with the friend, they want to be like that person. Take what their friend is taking. Peer pressure, their mentality is very young and they want to taste what their friend is taking. A lot of young people, if you influence them in a Christian way, their relationship with parents and with God is intact and it is difficult to get away with it. We have a lot of problems in the families. If something happens which I see will bring destruction to the family, I have to get or step in to solve it. We want to implement this in our territory (Rigo) we are aligning our policy with the Lukautim Pikinini Act.

Although Peter commented that there was no HIV incidences in the village, George argued that HIV/AIDS did exist in the village:

Many young girls are in the community are dying because of HIV/AIDS. I can count them for you. That is the problem faced by the young girls at the moment.

Related to the existence of HIV AIDS, young girls in the community are engaged in prostitution. Although prostitution could be discussed in the section on unemployment or poverty, I prefer to state it here as it is a practice that is out of the norm and reflective of the interrelated issues impacting on the lives of the young people:

Virginia: There is an issue that is already developing in the village, that is prostitution and that is an impact on the youth or young females...there is already prostitution in the village.

Jonathan: The development taking place in our area is causing a lot of social problems.

George commented that young people are neglected because their attitudes are not acceptable and they do not respect the older people within the community:

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8Just a point of note that the Rigo area has a Cassava plantation for bio fuel. This is managed by the Asians. The residue is deposited in the water. It is the only source was the village community can obtain water. More to this, young female are engaging in prostitution for an income
This is because they steal. Their attitudes towards the older people are not there. For instance, when they get drunk, they break the bottles in the village. They do not care about anybody. Once they drink they think they are the boss of the community. Even when they are stopped by the people, they swear them or they shut them up. They have no respect to the community and to the people. For those who do criminal activities, the village people have no regard for them.

Young male participants were asked what alternatives could be used to help stop young people from behaving badly in the community. They responded that young people do not get any assistance from anybody in the community, even those who are affected by smoking marijuana are not supported. Although their counterparts advise them of the side effects, they oppose the advice. Peter and Paulo commented that it was difficult to advise young people same age as them:

**Peter:** we should be assisted by the community. Some say this is our body. So that puts us off.

**Paulo:** Some of us are part of the group. You know if we tell them to do some positive things, you know they tell us to leave them alone. It is our life, whatever happens to me it is my life just leave me alone. This is what they say when we want to help them. Some of the druggies are mental (affected mentally by drugs), so if you say a word, you get into a fight.

### Common problems faced by young people

All the respondents agreed that young people are not disciplined and are not taught by their parents to show respect by their parents:

**Virginia:** From my school days, it is like, from the age when I was born to when I was in the Primary school, I was with my parents. So the discipline from my parents was mostly strict. ...It made me gain respect and I respect my elders in the community. When you respect somebody, they will respect you in return. Meaning you gain respect. I was brought in a very strong discipline parenting.

Virginia and George commented that young people are not taught how to show respect and therefore do not know their own culture:
Virginia: More youth are into modern influences like alcohol and all this things but I believe if they are taught more of culture, it will give them respect and they will also respect the village in a way. Because that is where you learn and know where your identity is coming from. When you do not know your identity that means you do not know where you are from.

George: Respect ends from us and it will not go far.

Virginia commented further that young people lack discipline:

Looking at the community there are lots of children who lack discipline, they are not taught. They are probably disciplined but they play a lot. It is those that are not disciplined when they grow they get into all sorts of peer pressure ...drinking, smoking they even experience things they should not be at the age of 13, 14, 15, now young youths very young youths act as adults. They think they are smarter that the bigger ones. When you look at them they just look stupid.

When the respondents were asked what the bad things were that happened in the community, an array of responses emerged that captured the understanding of what the young people do in the community. Many respondents felt that the behaviour of the young people is beyond the cultural norm. All the respondents agreed that young people do not show any respect:

Virginia: Very obvious one is the drug use, alcohol, youths mixing home brew, relationship problems, teenage pregnancy, and education.

Jonathan emphasised that young people are depressed as a result of all sorts of problems and issues such as incest and prostitution in rural areas:

I think the children have been depressed. We are working on the Child Protection policy. The child protection policy is one area we would like to help young people leaders and parents, we planning to organise in the Territory. Children are abused, we should teach them the right things to say when dealing with young people. In the last five years, I see drug and alcohol related problems as most common problems in the communities, we read in the papers, see them on the television, boy girl relationship, teenage pregnancy. I have heard some stories about incest and prostitution in some
areas of Rigo. Some are doing that now maybe because of family problems or maybe for survival purposes.

**Tasks of females in the community**

Young people, especially girls, are required to participate in the activities that their mothers are involved in. They are confined to work in the kitchen and have certain tasks they have to do when working in the garden. The female participants described their experiences. Virginia, for example, highlighted some things that young girls do that are not acceptable:

**Virginia:** I was told that a female should stay with the mother in the kitchen to learn how to cook and should not be associating a lot, kept busy with house chores, going to the garden. Most of the young girls they so much help around in the house not in the community. They are kept with the parents with the mother they go to the garden help the mother...females are mostly used in the kitchen area and gardening. Should be given limited time to hang around to associate with friends.

**Florence:** Yeh! There is a lot of work to be done in the house. I get angry...our parents get angry, they tell us that we were born to be girls so it is our obligation to work. You do the job in the house but our parents want us to do everything in the house. They just stay in the house do nothing. Our parents talk too much when we do not work in the house.

**Yvonne:** We complain when there is a lot of work in the house. Our parents want us to work a lot in the house. It is a cultural obligation for girls to work. If we do not work they get angry with us.

Virginia did not think that it was fair for the female children to be limited from associating with friends or confined to the kitchen, yet she now realises that the teachings she had made her become a better person. She stated those young females who do not behave accordingly tend to get married early:

At that time, I did not think that it was fair but again looking back...it did help me a lot because, I grew up matured enough. Now a days there is a lot of teenage marriages. I mean today’s youth mostly do not listen. Most of them do not listen to their parents.
With regard to young girls’ behaviour, Virginia noted that they defy the instructions of their parents in terms of associating with friends for longer periods of time than allowed. Therefore they are falling victims of teenage pregnancy and gossiping:

Most issues that females come across in the communities ...they talk about others. That is the really bad thing about the females do in the community. They sit around and talk about somebody else or gossip. They keep spoiling somebody else which does return in a way. Meaning it is not a good thing to start when you are raising a family. It comes around to you when you are talking about someone else.

Virginia described how rural young people behave in the community because of the lack of discipline. She gives an explicit description of what she observes and commented that the influence of modernity has a greater impact on rural young people and do not know how to adapt to the changing influences:

They just like running around hanging loose, if parents are not strict and do not keep them in the house they experience more which they should not be experiencing...know how to drink, how to smoke, even taking up drugs.

When you look at the community at the village level most youth get out of hand. Most youth especially those from the village do not know how to adapt to modern level. So for village youth it is a fast effect on them, it twists them very quickly, they do not know how to control it or limit themselves on doing those things. They see it as an opportunity without knowing what may affect them.

**The invasion of technology in the minds of people**

The introduction of mobile phones and other technological devices to rural villages has both advantages and disadvantages. Mobile phones were introduced in rural villages on the pretext of development and linking such rural villages to the services in PNG. While the good side is that it enables people to communicate with people and families living far away from the village; the down side is that young people are using it as a means of assisting criminal and inappropriate activities.
The respondents agreed that while mobile phones were good, some young people use mobile phones in unacceptable ways. Donald and Ben highlighted the consequences that come from using mobile phones. They said that, for a start, mobile phones consumed a lot of money.

**Advantages**

**Donald:** when technology came in life became easy but it also consumes a lot of money. On the side of emergency call it is ok! But for those who use it unnecessarily is a waste. If you have money you put credit in the phone it is ok. But if you do not have any credit then you do not make any call. I use the phone during the day. I use the free text to make contacts, I text my friend.

**Ben:** It is a good technology to communicate. I ring my family. I set the alarm to wake me up for devotion.

**Geoff:** Having a mobile phone is a good thing. When a family dies you can call your relatives. The other thing is that you tend to waste a lot of money trying to buy top-up/credits. I use the mobile to set my time.

**Virginia:** There are lots of cheap phones, every youth has a phone and communication is a lot easier too. Makes it easier for gathering and you do not have to walk around to pick your friends out just texting and calling that makes a very big group and association and bad peers.

**Disadvantages**

While there are advantages of using the phone, Donald and Stewart described that mobile phones were also used for criminal activities:

**Donald:** Mobile phones are used for different purposes. For instance, some people use the phone to get in touch with their friend, to know their location. So if they see a vehicle come by, they keep track and make plans to rob the vehicle. This is what is happening. Life has become so easy with phone.

**Stewart:** Some big boys in the community use the phone for get-away vehicles. They do this to steal big money or big things. There are insiders who ring people in the group. They advise them on how the money is being transported. So the person receiving the call informs the others to react.
Ben and Virginia describe how users of mobile phones can ruin marital relationships and fall for prostitutes:

**Ben:** But one thing I see that is not good is that it spoils the relationship of married couple. It spoils the family. A man, who gets the mobile phone, gets the number of female and he calls unnecessarily. He does not think of their family. Female are the same.

**Virginia:** Technology is growing fast, lots of expensive phones are around in the village they have access to internets, they are picking up lots of pornographic things, young people are into pornographic, drugs, alcohol, home brew and it does have affect the youth. Expensive phones meaning phones with internet access.

Most of those influences come from mostly youth with parents who earn a lot. They can afford all this things. And now there is also an issue developing in the village, prostitution is an impact on the youth or young females. It just comes to the village.

Now you will be wondering where this person got this expensive phone, or how come he has a lot of money. You will see young people holding expensive phones; it is not that they are doing prostitution.

With regards to the questionnaire, young people struggle for various reasons while leaving in the village. I pointed out to Virginia that she highlighted some problems like the influence of technology and prostitution and wondered if she saw that as a struggle for young people? She argued that while there were advantages brought to the young people, for example it was free money for the female, but it was a problem in the community triggered by technology:

For young people it is an advantage. For females’ case, it is free money. Before you have to work hard in the garden, harvest and sell and that was the way of living it was also difficult but prostitution makes it very easy to earn money. So it is not a struggle but a problem in the community. And technology just makes it easier for all these things to happen. Because now internet is free and there is a lot of garbage being advertised that’s easier to get on internet even if you are in the rural area. You have access to internet even now in the village. The influence comes from internet and television.
Florence commented that modern technology also affects the concentration of young people and disrupts their commitment to their studies. She argues that young people should not rely on their parents but they should concentrate on their studies for the benefit of their future:

> These days, students are not concentrating on their work. Let’s say they are controlled by the modern technology. Instead of doing their studies they are so obsessed with the technology and so they do not concentrate in their school work.

**Suggestions**

**Fred:** Young people should be assisted. For instance we should be told to do some good things in the community, to run the community.

**Virginia:** teach culture and skills of gardening and survival to the young people.

**Youth Culture Summary**

Young people dislike the teaching of the ways of the old people and their tradition because they believe that traditional ways of teaching are ways of the past. Since they are now experiencing the new ways (modern life) they reject the old ways because the modern life is easier. Although the parents of the young people encourage their children to participate in working in the garden, the children hesitate to because the task of working in the garden is laborious. Therefore young people like easy money by engaging in activities that may earn them an income.

The introduction of modern technology such as mobile phones, radios, and television also undercuts the thoughts and teachings of the traditional culture that is important to maintain order. Young people want to be like other people in the world: they want to possess the material goods others have in order to be part of the group.
Suggestions from all sections

This section highlights suggestions from the participants for all the sections.

- Young people should be given the responsibilities to take care and work on the land.
- They should be assisted to start their projects: in this way they can be able to learn to manage their own projects. To start this off, they have to be given seedlings and tools. Projects such as piggeries and poultry-farming will need financial assistance however; NGO’s and the government should assist them.
- The government should create more jobs for rural young people to engage in. The government should take the initiative to create more jobs and create institutions that can teach skills that can prepare young people to live in the village.
- Counselling is a major need for the young people. Although rural villages suggest a high level of network support, young people do not confide in the older people to share their problems.
- Parenting lessons; there are underage marriages and young couple need parenting lessons and counselling.
- The community should have its own hospital built so that they will be able to seek medical advice instantly when in need and therefore minimise travel time and cost.
- Although the village has a water pump built at the lower lands of the village, still most people in the community do not have tanks; people do not have easy access to water therefore a water pump is required to be installed in the main village.
• Counsellors and elders of the community should organise young people to work in the village to clean the tracks, cemetery and the roads.

• Create awareness in the village. This should be done in conjunction with the church activities and sports. Educate the parents to help their children.

• Pastors should organise camps or activities that will enhance their skills. The village elders, the counsellors and the Pastors should work together and create programs such sport coaching and other necessary skills that will benefit the young people in the village community.

• The leaders should be transparent in handling the money matters for the village.

• The community does not have a playing field. Hence, a site should be prepared and organized so that young people can be assisted to improve their skills in playing sports.

• Improve the learning facilities in the community, the curriculum. Incorporate teaching skills to prepare children when they return to the villages. Teach skills in agriculture.

• Build vocational schools so that young people who do not continue formal education can get to the vocational schools to learn skills in cooking, sewing, mechanic and building.

• Young people should be taught their culture and the cultural norms. Also teach skills in how to make gardens.

• Improve study facilities for the children in their home.

• Free education for all. There should be no failures.

• Relevant agencies should create appropriate policies to guide parents to selecting the institutions for their children.
• Set up associations and scholarships for students to continue with their education.
• The village leaders should organise work for the young people to work around the village and they should be paid.
• Young people should think about self-employment rather than being dependent on others. They have the land to be capable of having their own businesses.
• Development partners have a project application papers that require the village people to contribute 10% of the funds; this is a hindrance for the people in the community and therefore they should redesign their application formalities.
• Empower the whole society if we want youth to be productive. Empower the society when it comes to financial services to build the capacity of the society. Once the family is empowered in terms of their knowledge in financial services, they can assist or support their children to make money. But if we just try to empower the youth only, then we are not supporting the power base.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, there was a consensus among the participants that young people in rural villages face considerable hardships despite the concept of the rural idyll where a perceived support network exists. Although there was little assistance that existed in the village, young people are — to their credit — not content about the delivery of services. However, many overlapping problems were highlighted by the respondents that contribute to their everyday lives. The identification of the problems in rural communities reveals that rural young people face similar problems with their counterparts in the urban areas. What is most disturbing is that although a village is community who share a common culture and are bonded by blood, and which has
extended family networks, the collective support required by young people is not obtained.

Government services such as education are not fully equipped, making learning difficult and not conducive for the young people. More critically, the teaching curriculum is not complimentary to rural living and young people who break away from education are less skilled in working in the gardens. Other services, such as health services or shopping centres, are far from rural villages; hence young people are drawn to the urban areas.

Parents and caregivers are not given proper directions to guide their children into selecting appropriate institutions to further or enhance their learning.

This chapter also revealed that there is a disconnection between the government and the local villages whereby the relevant programs and information are not reaching the young people living in rural villages.
Chapter Five – Analysis

Introduction

This chapter analyses the discourses of rural young people in PNG. The chapter is divided into three sections connected to the theoretical understandings of the discourses of these young people. These sections are:

1. Power relations and discourse
2. Thematic discussions utilising the themes generated in the literature and the results chapter
3. Ecological systems pertinent to the study.

Drawing from the issues that were raised in the literature review and explored in the results chapter, this chapter attempts to address the themes of youth, rural, poverty, unemployment, education and youth culture as presented in the literature review.

These questions draw us to the discussion of power relationships within and around the environment of the young people which are concomitant to the theories discussed in the literature review; which leads me to explore a collective way of addressing the issues affecting young people and address the bottom-up approach to community development as an appropriate model for rural village communities in PNG. These questions also identify that the “truths” of the respondents are formed by power relationships at micro, meso and macro levels.

Therefore this chapter will analyse the power relationships relative to the research questions using the tools outlined in the literature review; namely, Selby’s (1995)
collective ecological model; Shannon and Young’s (2004) community development framework; and Opie’s (2000) power relationships discussion. These tools in combination provide an inclusive view of the factors affecting the young people outlined in this research, with the overall aim of reducing exclusion and disempowerment among young people within the community.

**Power relationships and Discourse**

In order to understand the power relationships surrounding the environment of the participants in this study, it is useful to first recognise the definition of discourse which is highlighted in the literature chapter (Jorgensen & Philips 2002; Opie, 1997). Discourse analysis is viewed in various ways, as described in the literature chapter, however, for the purposes of this analysis, Foucauldian theory, in association with Opie’s discussion of power and knowledge, will be utilised in this chapter. Foucault (1980) conceives that the exercise of power itself not only creates and causes the emergence of new objects of knowledge, but also accumulates new bodies of information. The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power (Foucault 1980:54). Knowledge and power are therefore incorporated and not isolated from each other. The knowledge is the discourses which then become the ‘regime of truth’ (p131). Truth is neither outside nor deficient in power, rather it is centred on the form of scientific discourse. Truth is attached to power where right and wrong are identified and detached from each other, and where the elements of right are attracted by power.

Discourse lies in the foregrounding, not so much of the young people’s articulation of tacit knowledge, but of their consciousness of how they are operating from a particular
discursive location (in this case the rural village and its cultures rather than urban areas). The marginalisation of the rural from urban area here is primarily because that young people in urban areas have far higher access to facilities — but with costs attached to every service provided. As such, discourses are constructed in multiple ways to view the same idea, as Opie (1997) argues, and discourses of prominent power dominate the field and are constantly challenged.

In a discursive field such as considering the young rural people in this study, there are discourses that run both through the environment and through their relationships with others; meanwhile, some discourses have greater autonomy over others (Moffat, 1999; Opie, 1997). The power that dominates a discursive field always faces a challenge when a new actor enters the field. In light of this, it is appropriate to observe the discourses of rural young people as they try to identify the truth in their environment. This may not merely be the overall truth, but may include conflicting discourses. It is in this view that the fragmented discursive body may be reassembled through the attention to those relationships between its dispersed fragments and the implications of those relationships worked with through the process of knowledge collaboration and the coordination of various views.

Power exists everywhere and differs in every setting; it justifies differences and controls others (Opie, 1997). There are three players in power relationships in this study: rural young people; older people in the village; and the government (via the structures and the legislations that directly involve young people such as Youth Commission or the Education Department). Their relationships can be illustrated in figure 5.1.
The government adheres to these relationships to meet the demands and needs of the young people and also to interact with older people to identify the needs and plan to meet the resolutions. The governmental legislation should, ideally, interact with the young and the people. As indicated in the diagram, there are also strong relationships between the young and the older people.

In relation to figure 5.1, there are no solutions directly found in this construction; rather, the power relationships are shifted surrounding the environment of the young people. In relation to this scenario, this section is devoted to identifying power relationships between the two contingents described.

Institutions and people delineate what knowledge is orthodox as the truth is the dominant source of power in which Foucault describes four disciplines; spatial, control of activities, expert knowledge; and decision making for maintaining power through the control of knowledge (Foucault, 1980).

The truths of the study participants are formed by power relations at the micro, meso and macro levels. As described in the literature chapter (Moffat, 1999; Opie, 1997), power exists is everywhere; nobody owns power but it is omnipresent in discourses. Subsequently, participants in this study who live in rural villages are contained by a
comparatively powerful discourse that defines that person as more or less powerful. Their relationships within the village community are inseparably saturated with relations of power:

But in thinking of the mechanism of power, I am thinking rather of its capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives (Foucault, 1980:40)

The identification of the truth that appraises their decision-making and contributes to their actions also contributes to effective partnership within the community. Partnership rhetoric thus emphasizes the possibilities of a more integrated (if not holistic) approach and is frequently contingent on, or affected by, the work of another (Opie, 2000:15). Nevertheless, this section highlights the power relationships and the discourses in rural villages as expressed by the participants in the study.

**Village Youth**

It is significant in the experiences of young people that the domination of power exists in their relationships within their environment. Given the cohort it is inevitable because the culture in which they are bounded has dominion over aspects of their lives.

These means that the dominant culture undermines the capabilities of the young people and prevents them from taking part in decision making at a village level; neither are they allowed to work on their land — especially the males — unless they are married and/or are obligated to do so. In the case of females, the society is a patrilineal society, therefore women do not inherit the possessions of the family. Instead, they are taught the skills of womanhood within the society:
It seems to me that the power is ‘always there’, that one is never ‘outside’ it, that there are no ‘margins’ for those who break with the system to gambol in. But this does not entail the necessity of accepting an inescapable form of domination or an absolute privilege on the side of the law. To say that one can never be ‘outside’ power does not mean that one is trapped and condemned to defeat no matter what (Foucault, M, 1980:141).

The cultural beliefs negotiate the relationships and the expectations of the young people to contribute positively in this regard.

While young people seek to avoid traditional power such as is embodied in cultural elements and cultural standards of living, they recognise that it structures who they are within the cohort and how they engage with the discursive outcomes. As I have demonstrated, representations of young people are created and recreated in complex ways involving older people’s practices and their cultural outlook. Therefore young people become the subjects of marginalisation or exclusion (Fook, 2002; Bunch et al, 2007; Burchardt, 2009) from certain rituals or activities because the cultural beliefs dictate their mode of conduct within the society and to those in power such as the older people (Leyshon, 2003).

Young people seek to adopt the modern knowledge brought by globalisation and subsequently they disregard the cultural knowledge of the village. They elicit and engage with global information, which overrides the older peoples’ knowledge, and are reluctant to conform to the perceptions and prescriptions of the older people. As discussed in the results chapter, most of the participants identified that there were certain beliefs they appreciated and there were certain customary procedures that defined the activities of young people from the older cohort or between male and female tasks.
The Youth Commission in its policy document – National Youth Policy Document 2007 – 2017 — acknowledges that youth are active members of the community and are responsible for their personal development and hence have equal rights to opportunities. In its effort to recognise the vulnerability of young people so that they in return make an impact on the societal changes in their lives, the National Youth Policy documents a contractual relationship between stakeholders such as the Secretariat for the Pacific Community Youth Bureau, Non-Government Organisations, Provincial Administrations and Churches. These relationships are fostered to assist young people. The government policy makers and NGO groups, at least on paper, support the idea of a coherent relationship between young people and their community. While young people may assume that National Youth Commission was established to support young people, young people in the village communities do not have much knowledge about the functions of these entities. Although this partnership is evident in the policies, the participants in this study seem to echo that such relationships are far from reality, despite these documents and organisations emphasising that communication and consultation were pivotal in delivering the message to the young people.

In order to empower young people and avoid social exclusion, the National Youth policy is defined by a legal frameworks fostered within relationships with the community; public or private sector; non-government organisations; faith-based organisations; and international agencies. These consequently call for a cohesive relationship to assist young people; to achieve the individual goals; and to participate meaningfully in the development of PNG society.

The contractual relationship is informed by the rhetoric of the National Government Medium Term Development Strategy 2005 – 2010 (MTDS), which in turn reflects the
United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG). Young people and the assisting organisations are required to foster and deliver under the MTDS. This means that the relationship surrounding the young people is bound, impacted, informed and mandated by the guidelines in recognition with, for instance, the National Legislation, Lukautim Pikinini Act, Education Act – National Education Plan 2005 - 2014, National Sports Act, National Health Plan 2010 and others.

Most participants identified that young people are not always included in decision making or given the opportunity to solve disagreements. An older person or the parent’s supervision and decision are paramount over the ideas of the young people as this power-relationship is embedded in the cultural systems or knowledge. Therefore when the young people participants undertake independent knowledge and decision making, parents feel their children are at risk and are fearful for them in so far as an individual’s conduct is defined by the cultural systems that identify them as a community, and thus their behaviours have to conform to these cultural systems.

Figure 5.2 illustrates that there are two gaps in the relationship—between the young people and Youth Commission and between the Youth Commission and the rural village.

Figure 5.2: Partnership and Discourse of Youth Commission on Young people
community— but there is also a strengthened relationship between the young people and the village. Although legislation attempts to strengthen these relationships, however, there remains a gap in the partnership.

In the partnership between young people, village community and the Youth Commission; two players exist, young people and the village community. While Youth Commission may be powerful in this relationship through its legislations, there is no direct interaction between the commission and the young people or with the community. The community has a direct relationship with the young people in this partnership. This indicates that a power imbalance thrives in the current situation, preventing the young people from making significant contributions to the opportunities that exist. As such, establishing and enhancing a new partnership between the government, community and young people will be realised when the issues of the young people are addressed at the local level and the partnership strengthened. This new partnership will also create a balanced power relation among the three players, consequently increasing the dominion by enhancing the social relations.

**Rural village**

The majority of the people of PNG live in rural villages. As suggested by the literature (Halfacree, 1993; Rye, 2006), rurality is a construct which shifts dominance. There is an overall dominance on the part of the urban society because the rural villages lack proper facilities, and sometimes there is no modern technology in existence. In order for rural villages to shift this dominance, the community needs to access power resources to compete with the power resources in urban communities. Similarly, rural people should be given the mandate to have dominion over decision making and resource distribution within their own community.
The discursive field of the rural village lies within the collective model, itself within the local village and the government. This is a multifaceted discourse that takes a dominant relationship over rural villages as there are many players involved in the delivery of services, and also takers of resources. This multiplicity also influences the directions of the local people either explicitly or implicitly, thus impacting the local people.

Figure 5.3 illustrates another complex relationship in the environment of the young people which exists between the older people, community, government and the NGO. In the relationship between the young people, older people and the community, there seems to be a strong relationship between young people and the older people but there is a gap between the young people and the community.

Nevertheless, there is an informal relationship between the NGO and the government and the community. The government and NGO may have a relationship with the community, but only at a distance, through legislation; these two bodies do not have a direct impact in the community. Similarly, the relationship between the older people, younger people and the government is also indicated by way of the dotted lines — that is, that there is no direct relationship. The scenario is different in the relationship between younger people, older people and the NGOs in this study.

There is a complex relationship of dominion that transmits to rural villages:
1. Rural village have natural resources that are supported by their tacit knowledge in the customary heritage. They own the natural resources.

2. However what they lack is the modern technology and easy access to services.

It was significant, and often explicitly highlighted by the respondents, that services for the community are lacking, especially for young people. These are services that may advance the local people but are not available to access.

These services include modern and appropriate technology and are the prime focus for the young people’s needs and in their interaction with older people in the local villages. The relationship between the young people and the older people in the local village are dominated by the knowledge focused on the issues of the young people and their well-being within the locality. Young people want to have access to new technology, income-earning jobs, and no laborious work in the sun as is traditionally the case in the villages. It is obvious that the popular knowledge of the community, especially that of the older people, does not appear to be common sense knowledge to the young people. Older people’s perception of this knowledge is contradictory, in itself incapable of unanimity, and thus creates conflicts in understanding, resulting in imposing criticism on the young people.

The relationship of the young people and the facilitation of their needs are constrained: there is little compromise, especially when these needs are perceived as a source of conflict. This exposes the young people to greater opposite/negative consequences. Young people with recurring conflict or unsolved problems are often particularly excluded either from mainstream activities or from decision making.
When there was an intensified interaction between young people or when issues were not acknowledged, especially by parents, another young person or the older parents sometimes stepped in to resolve the tension, thus isolating the main players of the conflict. This highlights that the older people or the parents have a dominant influence in the marginalisation of the young people from being included in decision making. The dominant influence of the parents highlights that they are the experts and thus hold dominance in knowledge and conflict resolution.

While this displays a degree of support and acknowledgement experienced and achieved by the parents in maintaining the working relationships, underlying conflict still exists since the main players who contributed towards the conflict are not facilitated to resolve the conflict. Therefore the partnership in this regard is unbalanced.

In most cases, parents of the conflicting parties respond to the problem in the community by creating a gap between them and the young people. It is the cultural responsibility of the parents to resolve the conflict, however, and not involve the young people or hold them accountable. The community sees that parents are the experts who dominate the control of communication and decision-making, rather than the young people who are often constructed as the cause of the problem.

Culturally, the older people or the parents in the village have dominant power in decision making processes or conflict resolution. In regard to the study participants: full consultation is not sought with the young people in the decision-making process, thereby creating exclusion. The roles of the young study participants are challenged and altered, but there is little compromise in order to find common solutions that may assist them in their discursive location.
The discourse of young people in rural village fosters a greater responsibility on the community as well as the government. While the village is knowledgeable about its resources through cultural heritage; while the government may seek these resources for development, the community and its individuals have dominant power and control over the natural resources within their locality. In contrast, as the villages lack modern technology and services to meet their purposes; they do not have power over the distribution of funds to build such services. However, they do have the control over the types of services that need to be built in their village.

This illustrates that the government provides these services by way of fund allocations. Local people may not get direct funding: rather allocations go through the provinces, which then go to the local level districts and may not ever reach them.

Figure 5.4 illustrates that the government has dominant power over the process of fund allocation and the delivery of services to reach the village people. As illustrated in figure 5.4, similar discussions are also levelled at the NGO funding. In most cases the services do not reach the local people as they are intended to.
Although the NGO may have the power over the relationship in terms of funding allocation, the local people have the power over what services are suitable for their people. However, the NGO has an influence to assist and improve the livelihood of the people, hence it is necessary for the locals to have their say and be given the power to differentiate what is good and bad for their people.

The government may have a distinct partnership with the NGOs but these organisations are not directly funded by the government. Likewise, the NGOs may have to adhere to certain principles to operate within the guidelines set by the Government, but direct funds do not explicitly come from the government. NGO funds come from their main head offices located outside of PNG, such as is the case with the Salvation Army and the City Mission.

The Salvation Army and the City Mission may have strong partnerships with the youth and local villages, but in order for their services to be realised within the partnership, funds have to be allocated for these services from outside sources rather than the government.

There are multiple influences such as this that impact the environment of the young people and organisations alike. Everything outside the young peoples’ environment that influences their effectiveness, such as organisations like the Salvation Army and City Mission who wish to influence the lives of the young people or village, are linked to broader fields; therefore, collaboration and cooperation in their partnership must be fostered in order to reach the young people in rural villages.

While funding may be necessary, what is of prime concern is participatory action in the process of decision making. The village should have a direct input in the discussions of
what they need in their community. This enhances their freedom to work on their land as they own the resources.

This research identified that NGOs such as the Salvation Army were unable to reach the local people in this study primarily because of denomination issues and therefore, it extended its services to localities only involving the Salvation Army religion. Accepting the Salvation Army to deliver its services in that locality, however, may not come from the village as a result of religious misunderstandings. However, the Salvation Army is not limited to extending its services to other nearby villages with similar religious view.

Importantly, the Salvation Army and the likes of City Mission have organisational partnerships and linkages with local government authorities. Their informal links are important to alleviate the problems of the young people and therefore should be harnessed so that effective communication and service delivery can be exhibited within the partnership.

The influences of supra-organisational environment also exist in the partnership. The partnership and fund allocation between the young people and rural village and the government and NGO is complex in itself, i.e. it constitutes a supra-organisational environment (Jones and May, 1994:114). The supra-organisational environment is important to the functions of organisations in assisting the young people or the village. This means that the government or the NGO provides legitimacy, resources and support to the local people that operate under its authority (see figure 5.4).

The village maintains a direct link with the District Office, which in turn has a link with the Provincial Administration office. Here, there are established officers such as the Community Development Officer who is linked to the central Government and other
government bodies, as well as legislative and judicial bodies. Any particular government department may have extensive formal and informal relations with departments from other levels of government, and also with non-government organisations that provide it with complimentary or necessary services (Jones & May, 1994:114). Apart from these linkages, important partnerships also exist with international organisations such as AusAid, NZAid and European Union.

These partnerships are not exclusive of the relationship between the United Church congregations within the village. As indicated in my introductory sections, the United Church has an important role in making an impact in the lives of the young people and/or bringing services to local villages, but this does not seem to be realised as its operations are confined to biblical teachings. Although the United Church has youth fellowships to teach the biblical principles, this study found that the local church fails to support individuals in their everyday issues. Tangible assistance from the United Church to the young people is thus lacking despite its presence in the village.

It is vital, therefore, to identify significant partnerships and linkages that impinge on or can be influenced by the village. This means embracing the entire relations specific to the village and to the young people so that tangible assistance can be deployed, making significant differences in the lives of rural people.

Poverty

Historically, there was no such thing as poverty in the village; oral histories describe abundance and sharing among the people. The locals took care of their resources and prepared for the coming months. They took control of their resources and sustained
themselves. As part of their cultural system, the barter system was an effective scheme; goods were exchanged for other goods and materials they lacked (Local-Global, 2009).

The government now has power over the market economy and controls the goods and services that are distributed to the people. This means that although the resources are available for the people to utilise, bureaucratic regulations imposed on the goods and services limit the purchasing power of the people. It is inevitable that young people who are non-income earners and are still dependent on their parents find themselves powerless to make independent decisions on the types of goods and services they may wish to obtain. Unfortunately, poverty in the village among young people is obvious despite the fact that they own the land and is able to produce and sell vegetables. What is clearly revealed in this study is that the method of gardening is laborious, and the young people are reluctant to adopt it. Even the earnings from selling the products are little compared to the price of the products one may want to purchase from the shops.

High costs of goods and services and lack of services are creating a large vacuum in which the wealthier become wealthier and rural young people poorer. Wealth is no longer what one possesses, but what one makes a profit out of. The accelerating flow of wealth; its ever-growing power of circulation; the abandonment of hoarding during abundance; the practice of credit; the decrease in the importance of landed wealth — all these factors tend to make theft seem no more scandalous to people than confidence tricks or tax evasion (Foucault. M, 1980:44). It is significant that young people in the study have become vulnerable to the current situation facing them in the rural village where goods and services are exchanged in monetary terms; a system which inflicts many burdens on their lives, eventually forcing them into acting outside of the cultural norms.
One of the pillars of the eight point plan that guides the nation to independence is “Promoting Self Reliance”. It reflects the values of Melanesian society and the PNG way of life. In recognition of the issues of poverty, MTDS dispersed blueprints with the aim of investing in the young people through education and health in order to alleviate poverty. Nevertheless, the recognition of poverty by the government in its blueprints dispels unrealistic efforts, as has been shown in the study.

The democratic nation of PNG now has dominant power over the lives of the people. This means that services such as health and education come with a price, therefore the customary system may not be applicable in this scenario. But one thing is certain; the people of the villages own their land. People have to work on their land and produce sellable vegetables and earn money in exchange for these services. The state should only function to make sure that the market is free and protected rather than imposing large tax deductions or tax regulations on the goods and services such that even the simple village man is struggling to meet the cost.

Consequently, a collective approach is necessary for the rural village to identify solutions impacting their wellbeing. This indicates that the local people should be given the power to control their resources and participate in and control their decision making. Currently, and as illustrated in the diagram above (figure 5.4), the approach to decision making is top down: this should, however, be reversed so that local people in the community are given the power to make decisions and control their own resources; effectively, to develop a bottom-up approach. The mechanism of social development in order to alleviate poverty highlights that decision making should be at the lowest possible level (Shannon & Young, 2004:33), primarily for all the people in the community to participate.
Figure 5.5 provides an illustration of a bottom-up approach for local people to take control and participate in decision making in relation to how the resources or goods and services could be distributed within their community. Here there is still a relationship between the people, but instead of the government taking control in decision making the young people and the local community could take control of decision making and the use of resources. In so doing, they move towards a position to alleviate poverty, including overcoming exclusion from services. In order to improve the livelihood of the people in the locality it is necessary and appropriate within this context for the people within the community to have a voice in decision making. This means that the government has to listen to the people and act on the issues, rather than acting without taking heed of the concerns and issues of the community.

Although the Youth Commission aims to coordinate the activities of young people across the nation under the reformed Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government, which enables it to define its roles and responsibilities to ensure that it operates at different levels of the government to implement youth programs, the programs do not
reach remote villages. It is therefore necessary for the Youth Commission policy to promote youth and to integrate their views in the development process and reduce the impacts of social change. In this way, the partnership between the Youth Commission and rural villages will be strengthened. In terms of people owning land and resources and by gathering the views from this study, it seems to show that gardening is a laborious activity for young people, and therefore structured youth programs should be devised in such a way that the young people living in rural villages can develop their skills to work on their land so that they are self-reliant in all aspects. In doing so, structured events and the agendas impacting rural youth due to poverty would bring the village together to engage in collaborative partnership. The process of skills-training, comprehensive and the collective concerns of the parties involved would establish a working partnership in order to alleviate the concerns affecting them.

**Unemployment**

The study participants agreed that there were no employment opportunities in the village and it is difficult to find income-earning employment; while some of them may have the necessary qualifications, there was lack of job opportunities around the country as a whole. Nevertheless, while most of the young people are disadvantaged, they return to the villages in the hope that they will obtain a job while at the same time undertake work there as subsistence farmers. Most of the participants agreed that the government or the NGO bodies should assist young people to create new jobs and find employment. However, the Youth Commission Policy document reiterates that the way to transform unemployment is by young people becoming self-reliant subsistence farmers.

Young people are understandably reluctant to become subsistence farmers; rather, they prefer to engage in income-generating employments. They consider subsistence farming
as difficult, as opposed to having an income-earning job, which is seen as prestigious. Conflicting discourses such as this signify that the multiple knowledge relating to unemployment of rural young people and the views of the older people require a comprehensive understanding and collaboration with the government to enable better and workable solutions that will meet the needs of the people in the villages.

Each individual in the discursive location will have to manage the inevitable tensions and contradictions associated with the provision of jobs in the rural village and the realities of their status, including the possibilities of young people and the older people defining what is relevant and tangible for the village. In reality, the government would have to respond to the village community by including both young and older people’s different degrees of ability (because of their cultural positioning and their views) to articulate their knowledge. I take the micro practices of the young people and the older people (because they own the land and are wholly responsible on how to utilise their resources as a critical site of discursive production), and then we can see that part of their effectiveness in their community does relate to how they are able to produce sufficiently and work on the resources discursively produced through them. Thus they will be attentive to differences in power as a consequence of a rural status and the positions in which the young people are located and the implications of their stance and being able to respond positively to difference and address the effects of differences, and work with the village, young people and the older people in terms of their contradictions. Young people may seriously consider having income-generating employment if the government created other avenues to attract the young people to other employment opportunities.

As I have also shown, technology is creating a concept of income inequality. This is evidenced in the study where people living in the village do not have an income.
Although individuals, citizens and society function through state directions such as education, rural people struggle to access these services fully. Utilising labour resources in the development processes may correct such inequality.

Supra-organisations linked to the villages and to the young people could establish negotiations with the village to assist young people to work in rural areas and be paid for the work they do.

As it stands, the villages are attached to the district government and there are no alternatives or established employment strategies for young people in rural areas. There does not seem to be a scheme to engage the young people in any form of employment. Although the National Policy indicates that there has been a decline in employment since 1990 (National Youth Policy 2007 – 2017) and that the policy is in line with the national governments eight point plan – “integral human development”, there are no indications of strategies that could solve such a decline in employment. The introduction of decentralisation in the system of government could bring the administration closer to the people, with the result that funds can be budgeted and controlled. This is not effective, however, because of inadequate funds to resource functioning. What it does indicate is that that rural youth are involved in subsistence agriculture and are encouraged to be self-reliant through this avenue, as outlined in the Eight Point Improvement Plan and Medium Term Development Strategy.

The policy statement of the Youth Commission is to empower young people in rural villages so that the young people can draw from their resources and engage in income generating activities. It acknowledges that the Youth Commission and the Provincial government have in place various strategies and objectives for rural villages to achieve –
the District Services (Local Level Government) is tasked to reach out to the villages and ensure these objectives are attained.

Despite the mineral boom in the Central Province of PNG, and industries such as the Tolukuma mine and the LNG project or the Cassava Bio Fuel and Rice Project, young people are not attaining employment. Such entities require expert knowledge, which the young people do not have. If these projects were localised, giving power to the local people to manage its affairs, unemployment in rural villages would be minimised.

To undertake this role it is envisaged that the District Services would establish a working relationship with the local villages so that strategies in the policy statements are achieved and that the needs of the community are met. In spite of this, the study participants showed that this objective is not realised as a consequence of a gap in the relationship.

**Education**

Education downfalls discussed in the literature have impacted the goals of every young person in rural villages (White & Wyn, 2004). Both young and the older people see that attaining a better education draws better income earning jobs with a related outcome of better lives. This changes the perception of the parents, who want their children to gain better education — reflecting the fact that education has become significant for most people in different societies whether in developing or developed countries (Wallace et al, 1998; Smith, 1999). The changing needs of the economy also have an impact on the challenges of the education system, resulting in the selection process to screen young people into occupational hierarchies.

The spreading of micro-powers; a distributed network of apparatus without a single organising system, centre or focus; transverse coordination of unrelated institutions and
technologies in government-controlled schools and the establishment of corrections or the systems of surveillance (by way of rules and regulations of the schools); and the implementation of student files and assessments, systems of marking and classifying and the integrated accountancy of individual records (Foucault, M, 1990:72) filters the students through the system of education. This system has become the permanent experience of young people across the nation, which places control over their progress and determines the hierarchical jobs they enter. The national examinations and tests introduced to the schools are the unique instruments of power which determines the status of their progress in education (Hope, 2009). Evidently the powers of modern society are exercised through gaining better education, a well-paid job and the scholarly system of education sovereignty between young people and older people their livelihood in rural village.

Figure 5.6: Partnership between the school, young people and the village
Figure 5.6 illustrates that the Minister of Education has power in the Education Sector, which controls the decisions of the schools by way of legislation. The decisions also affect the general functioning of the school, the young people and the older people.

Most rural schools are subject to lack of facilities and equipment, and have complex situations in existence between the parents, students, the education system, and the schools themselves. The education system in rural villages comprises of different governing bodies that directly affects the young people. The Board of Governors (BoG) are approved by the PEB (Provincial Education Board) every two years. Their role is to formulate and implement the policies at the school level. The National Department of Education (NDoE) formulate national policies and co-ordinate the implementation of the policies in the province and Local Level Government (LLG). Apart from other responsibilities under the Education Act (1995), they are also responsible for the development of the curriculum, the National Examinations, and the distribution of the textbooks and curriculum materials. The discourse that the National Education Department and the legislations promulgate directly affects the young people in rural villages. Thus the discourse of the Education Department becomes dominant because it is the most powerful voice. The Education Department is comprised of representatives at the provincial, district and local levels, and they draw upon different legislation from other institutions in the discursive field — for example the universities and secondary schools — to support their view of the truth. School teachers, who have a direct impact on the lives of the young people, are appointed by the Teaching Service Commission to carry out its duties as directed by the legislation of the Education Department and therefore school teachers disseminate the curriculum to the young people at the local schools.
The Education department promotes a neo-liberal ideology which has an effect on the educational institutions (such as the primary schools, secondary schools and the National High Schools) in its distribution of funds. It is important to note that despite the neo-liberal stance to the concept of equality in education and free education policy, the local schools struggle to deliver an appropriate curriculum to rural young people, which does not equip them if they leave school at an early stage. In line with the distribution of funds, local schools do not directly get funds from the Education Department but rather, the allocations of the funds are further distributed at the district level and, in most cases, do not reach the local schools. Local schools therefore have poor facilities that are not conducive for the students’ learning.

The knowledge of older people and the differing knowledge of younger people are conflicting matters of discourse and relationship between government services, especially in the education system. The introduction of free education by the government was intended to increase the interest of parents; however, the project fee that was attached to this package did not seem to be attractive and reassuring either to rural young people or their parents. Taking into consideration that the parents are solely dependent on subsistence farming, such a package was clearly not popular with the parents.

The policies and procedures of the Education Department, in line with the eight millennium Development Goals as developed by United Nations, inform the discourse of the Education Department. What surfaces in the polices and the procedures is that compositions of policy and the procedures that have come about exist because of the consultations it has with other players in the field, such as the United Nations or the NGOs. While this is acknowledged, the concepts of preparing the young people with appropriate skills that will equip them to be self-sufficient and the primary goal of the
Government to improve the quality of life (Department of Planning and Monitoring, 1999, National Youth Commission, 2010 – 2017) and to raise the quality of labour force in the rural village, is unrealistic, as shown in the study. These statements can be contested however, as they reflect in language the dominant discourse of the Education Department and the powerful position it plays in all the schools.

The schools that have been contracted to teach the curriculum by the Education Department need to acquire resources to challenge its relevance in the rural village so that education becomes practical and appropriate to local villages. This means that the schools have to embrace the declining number of students transiting to continue schooling; have effective influence of power to undertake the purpose of the schools in the local community; and increase that power to further influence the curriculum they are teaching to young people. There needs to be a modification in the modern, academically-orientated model of education to promote instead the discourse of rural skills in the curriculum — this may also require the engagement of older local people to equip the young people with appropriate skills. Also, vocational schools at the district level should leverage their power sources to attract students who do not perform academically and create employment pathways for them.

Training and education initiatives need to be appropriate and responsive to the needs and conditions of local communities. In a predominantly subsistence community where livelihoods are dependent on the capacity of households to grow sufficient crops to feed themselves, training in agricultural skills and techniques is a natural priority for the people. Moreover, community learning strategies should ideally build upon the strengths and techniques already present in communities.
As it stands, there are pathways that have to be attractively located in rural areas by the Education Department, and especially by the TVET section (Technical Vocational Education and Training) so that the young people can venture into this area.

**Youth culture**

My hypothesis is that the prison was linked from its beginning to a project for the transformation of individuals. People tend to think to suppose that the prison was a kind of refuse dump for criminals, a dump whose disadvantages became apparent during use, giving rise to the conviction that the prisons must be reformed and made into means of transforming individuals. In 1820 it was already understood that the prisons, far from transforming criminals into honest citizens, serve only to manufacture new criminals and to drive more existing criminals even deeper into criminality. Today imprisonment, don’t transform anyone (Foucault. M: 40).

It is significant in the responses of the participants that good customary and cultural habits and practices that traditionally identified the status of the young person in the community are seen as becoming distorted by the introduction of modern practices of living. Young people now long to own the same resources and gadgets (computers, cell phones) as their colleagues in the urban community. By owning such gadgets and having a common form of conduct allows them to be part of the group. However, the quick transition from the traditional way of life to modern life enforces multiple discourses in which the young participants signify that they are still not comfortable: they do not feel well-versed in accepting the change as they have serious implications in their lives. This also means that the traditional way of doing things and behaving are not accepted as youth resort to a modern lifestyle. The young respondents believe that exposure to a modern lifestyle has dominant power over the traditional lifestyle because it gives them better opportunities and links them into the modern world.
Dominant views undermine the cultural perceptions

There are two completely contradicting and conflicting views expressed by the respondents in terms of pursuing better lives. These views include those that older people want the young people to conform to because of the cultural beliefs; the other is the conduct of the young people as a result of globalisation. The conduct of young people in traditional times was defined by the culture and beliefs of the society that involved discipline and respect for the elders. In comparison to the attitudes of the young people currently, modernity is ultimately becoming an anathema for the older people as they reminisce on the carefree and care-free environment they lived in.

The effectiveness of the discipline delivered to the young people by the older people was very effective. In the past, the society created young people who were well-behaved, respectful and hard-working. They contributed to the activities of the community at the directions of the older people. Such rhetoric is still acknowledged by the older generation, who uphold their culture and beliefs.

However, the emergence of Christianity in rural villages initially defied traditional cultural beliefs and rituals as they were seen as bad — a view which slowly undercut and undermined the knowledge of older people. In accepting Christian practices and ideologies, young people were sent to mission schools to enhance these principles. These principles moulded these young people and earned them jobs. By earning an income, they could purchase modern materials, which eventually created a prestige for such things in the community. This motivation still inspires the young people in the community to compete in school and earn a good job so that they can achieve better lives. However, this comes to a standstill when their dreams are not realised. Hence,
when living in the village they want to possess the same materials and technologies as their urban colleagues. To achieve this young people end up being involved in activities such as thieving which are not acceptable to the older people.

Young people are driven by the expectations of the older people and the community and/or are responding to government directives (education & employment) so that their concerns cannot be resolved without stable input from the government itself. The partnership between the young people, older people and the government is dependent on their capabilities to receive the resources delivered by the service delivery systems. Young people require the resources from service delivery organisations (such as schools) and the older people to facilitate discussions as the vehicle through which collaborative partnership will exist.

The study participants, especially the young people, shared their experience that they struggle to meet their everyday needs, especially when they are not employed and are under-educated. The only means for them to achieve their objectives is for the government to create more income-earning jobs and the service delivery institutions to provide better services to rural villages. The young respondents agreed that to overcome the challenges they encounter everyday they need to have better education that will create better pathways for them. Furthermore, if they do not achieve an academic education pathway, TVET institutions could provide services and training for them.

**Partnership unrealised in the village**

Given the unrealised partnership between service delivery and the government (education services), some experiences of the participants highlight that the roles and responsibilities of young people turn to mayhem when their dreams are not realised,
especially when the service delivery they anticipated to correct and improve their lives is inaccessible. This is an indication of the magnitude in the lack of service delivery not conforming to the legislations the government established. The co-operation and collaboration required in the relationship between the service delivery to rural villages and the young people within it raise complex questions as to what direction rural people need to take. The legislation (National Youth Commission, Central Province Education Plan) stipulates clearly that it values collaborative relationships as the means to improving the lives of rural young people, increasing self-reliance, increasing resilience, and ultimately reducing social exclusion, unemployment and poverty. Participants in the study, however, vehemently expressed that they are not aware of the legislation and that these policies were not realised in rural villages.

Improving the relationship between the young people and the government would involve a change in service delivery to the rural village. Changing modes of decision-making in the village community — such as involving the young people in discussions at the community level, acknowledging discrepancies, and responding to the needs and issues — will effectively assist young people to take on the responsibilities that are required of them at the village level. This means that the older people could organise events with specific agendas in relation to the issues that are of concern in the village and incorporating cultural aspects would establish and foster a working relationship between generations.

**Enhancing the relationship in the village**

Young participants expressed that the village is a boring place to be apart from going to the gardens and helping their parents. From the interviews, it is significant that the service delivery in rural villages is non-existent and is rarely attractive for the young
people, while getting involved in the paid workforce is unrealistic because there is never any opportunity available for them: in reality there is no employment in rural villages. In addition, working in the garden is strenuous and it is difficult to earn an income that will supplement their diets or give them access to the modern technology that will improve their lives. It is therefore necessary for partnerships to enhance and to communicate issues that matter and that affect young people in rural villages. In doing so, to shift the dominance, the rural village need to access resources to challenge the power-differential: resources that are available at Local Level Government and the Provincial Government level. This will shift the power resources at the village level and increase the power to act and influence their own lives, taking into consideration that villages have the resources and their own cultural knowledge to make an impact in the changes they need for the young people.

As I have suggested, the rural village has links with the government agencies and the NGOs through the United Church. These are informal but are linked with groups through church activities. If the United Church established itself effectively in the village, and is serious in its desire to strengthen its relationship with the village and the young people, then it is important for them to develop and engage in approaches to involve these young people. This could include social services, NGO-run institutions such as City Mission, or Vocational institutions. These groups could support the legislation in their strategies to assist the young people, or even older people, to move the power within their relationship, align themselves with an alternative structure, and secure community-dependent source of funds, giving autonomy to the community to direct the resources suitable for the community itself (Walker, 1997; Shannon, 2004).
This section was based on issues raised and discussed thematically. The next section will discuss an ecological systems perspective on the issues and the impact on the young people.

**Ecological model pertinent to the research**

**Inferences of young rural people from dysfunctional families**

As discussed in the literature review, Erickson (1959) notes that the development of an adolescent is affected by culminating effects that surrounds the individual. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner (1972) expresses that development and learning evolve with someone from close attachment and reciprocal activities, and that this develops the person into who they turn out to be in the future. While Erickson (1959) highlights eight stages in unfolding personalities; Bronfenbrenner (1972) describes concentric layers of the ecological system that affects the progress of the individual. As Boyd (1992) clarifies in his study, young people from dysfunctional families are constrained from progressing because of the problems that impact the family members.

As discussed in the literature, the three theories Erickson (1959), Bronfenbrenner (1972) and Boyd (1992) are interrelated in these ways; for instance, young people in this study come from broken families or non-income earning families (Boyd, 1992), thereby making it difficult to make ends meet in their life, such as providing sufficient income to purchase nutritious meals or pay for school fees because they are unemployed. They are unemployed because there are insufficient jobs in rural areas, because they are not qualified to be able to attain a job, or because of the effects caused by the factors
described by Bronfenbrenner (1972). These eventually have an impact on the
development of the young people: here, the young people identified in this study
revealed that they struggle to find their identity or maintain mutual relationships with
peers in their community.

For example, one of the respondents noted the treatment of a young person when their
parent died and they were taken care of by the grandparents:

Their parents would look after them well, they would ask freely if their parents were
there by them, but they do not have that treatment...they have fear...they do not have
any freedom of choice. So when they make any mistakes, their uncles fight
them...sometimes they get chased away by their grandparents or their uncles.

As the grandparents are old and not working they are unlikely to provide for the needs
and wants of the young person or even pay the school fees for the child as he or she
would anticipate if the biological parent was alive. Their living conditions are also unsafe
as they are beaten and chased away by their caregivers. These reactions create fear and
insecurity for the young person and, in order for them to feel secure, they search for their
identity to increase their self-esteem.

Another example also shows that after the demise of his parents, the child’s needs were
not catered for despite the fact that he was an intelligent child; his sisters were unable to
meet needs or care for him because they had their own children to worry about:

I live with some of my sisters. They do not look after me well. They have children too
so they concentrate on their children rather than me. We go steal that is how we
survive.

Young people from dysfunctional families in this study are unable to continue with their
education because they do not have sufficient school fees; for this or because of multiple
other factors (Conchas & Vigil, 2010), they fall out of the education system and eventually
get involved in illegal activities. In this transition, young people feel excluded and thereby they identify ways to fulfil the development stages described by Erickson. Such behaviour is imposed on them because of the factors having an impact in their lives. This is indicative of Erickson and Bronfenbrenner’s model, in which the development of the young person is hampered since security is not established, thus inhibiting a mutual growth in independence. I am not implying that other stages of Erickson’s developmental stages are not fulfilled however; they are distorted and negotiated of in other ways.

Young people in this study also experience great difficulties in their everyday lives either because they have lost both parents, have only one parent, or because their parents are unemployed or low income earners, with some dependent on their relatives for basic necessities. The transition from childhood to adulthood is a phase where young people need support for security and to increase their self-esteem. It is a period that builds the foundation for the young person to move onto the next stage of life. As a consequence of lack of support from the family and the support mechanisms that should elevate the progress of the child, the child opts to behave out of the norm to attract attention from the environment, for example as expressed by one of the respondents:

I live with some of my sisters. They do not look after me well. They have children too so they concentrate on their children rather than me...my friends go to steal I follow them. We go steal that is how we survive...people in the community do not like me.

In this case, the primary support mechanism that is supposed to be given by the immediate family has failed to consider the welfare of the respondent since the respondent was seen as secondary to their obligation. This also implies that the young person has low self-esteem within the community but does have an identity within the
group he is engaged in — although there is still fear for his life if he continues with stealing to meet his needs.

From this study I have gathered that the young people are in a competing development stage where many things are occurring at the same time and it is thus complex as they attempt to find their own identity, struggle with social interaction and deal with moral issues. They feel unsuccessful, isolated and distanced from the others and when they do not identify ways to create satisfying relationships they feel that everything around them shrinks. As described by Burchardt (2009) in the literature, such occurrences are not their own fault, but rather the fault of the systems put in place by the society in which they live. Young people look for mutually-satisfying relationships essentially through friends when they feel neglected and the most significant relationship is with their peers. Furthermore, as discussed by Leyshon (2003), young people are marginalised not only because they are from dysfunctional families but because they lack appropriate services. Therefore this study has found that the three theories are interrelated and identifies that young people from dysfunctional families struggle and are disempowered when their opportunities are not reached fully and they are also disempowered under the adult surveillance.

**Ecological model**

By way of the discussion in the literature, the concentric layers of the ecological systems include the micro, meso and macro systems. Each of these will be discussed in this section, showing the relevance in terms of how the young people in this study are affected.
Although this section was discussed in the literature review, my intention here is to bring to the fore what the participants are indicating is relevant to the ecological model.

Figure 5.7: Ecological model, Adapted from Shannon and Young, 2004

**Implications for young people at the Micro level**

As Shannon and Young (2004) show in their study, we see many similar impacts on rural young people in this study, where the young people react to situations such as deconstructed, dysfunctional families, or how s/he reacts to unemployment, poverty, education and lack of resources.

In the series of responses here, there was common understanding in the ways that young people from dysfunctional families in rural villages described how they are affected when either or both of their parents is/are not present to see them through in times of their needs. They described the difficulties in accessing resources. Even if they have to live with the relatives, they see that these relatives have responsibilities to their own children rather than to them. This highlights that there is no network or welfare support for such young people and therefore they are subject to abuse and mistreatment — hence illegal activities become the only means whereby the young people find ways to survive. This creates a domino effect on the lives of the young people.

Also as a consequence of the above, the support in assisting the young child to continue education is terminated because there is no money for school fees; therefore the child
drops out of the school system and thereby lacking the qualification to attain a well-paid job:

  My friends got their certificates so they look for jobs. For my case it is difficult. I can write my application letter but it is my certificate. I want to get my certificate because I want to go back to school.

From the respondents’ descriptions, there is a definite indication that caregivers are unable to sufficiently support their children to obtain or pursue education due to limited funds.

The detrimental effects continue for the individual because they have to struggle to work hard on their land to earn an income to support themselves, buy clothes, have a nutritious meal, or even purchase soap to wash their clothes. Supposing working on the land is unfavourable for them, the other options young people fall for are illegal undertakings such as stealing or selling drugs or female prostitution. Although prostitution and drugs are an urban phenomenon as emphasised by Pruit (2009) and PNGNYP (2005), such activities are gaining traction in rural villages. For example as described by the respondents, prostitution is evident in rural villages:

  There is now because there is already prostitution already in the village. It is not that they are doing prostitution but it is that earning money has become easy nowadays.

The participants indicated that lack of income was the basis of their behaviour. Because of modernisation, goods and services have to be paid for in order to access the amenities or imported goods, for example, education, hospitals, food and clothing. In rural areas, families have to work hard on the land to yield good vegetables in exchange for money to purchase imported goods. The only income source for rural people is subsistence gardening or fishing. The produce they grow becomes their source of income when they are sold. Young people therefore barely have money in their pockets. Despite the
arguments from the former Prime Minister, Michael Somare, (2009) that there is no shortage of food in the village, there is indeed poverty in the villages. The factors expressed by participants confirm that they struggle to meet their everyday needs:

People have to work hard to be able to withstand the situations. If it is yam season, people eat yam, if it is banana season, people eat banana. It is a hard life.

Some people eat food without protein. It is difficult living in the village.

These descriptions are indicative of the struggles of young people in this study, and indicate that food consumption and marketing are seasonal (due to good and bad weather) and if they have an income, their meals are supplemented. Hence, because they are poor, they need the support of every individual in the community to minimise the trouble they experience, alongside support from governing bodies via sufficient employment and education opportunities for youth. Young people from dysfunctional families and those who live in rural villages experience similar situations to their colleagues in urban settings.

Initiatives should be aimed at socially including disenfranchised participants, and in particular young people should be organised in a way that stakeholders and partners are included on all levels of governance and execution of initiatives. It is therefore important to concentrate at the micro level (that is the village) so that the young people are given the opportunity to suggest ways to assist themselves.

**Implications for young people at the Meso level**

The delivery of services to rural villages has an immense impact on the young people. All the interview participants indicated that education was an important aspect in the rural village mainly because it enhanced their knowledge and prepared them to secure a paid job. However, this perception becomes unrealised when they discontinue their
education due to factors such as those described by Kari (1990), Kaman (2003) and Avalos (1992), as discussed in the literature. For instance, one of the respondents said:

Most youths do not complete their education in the village. Because they do not enough funds or the child to continue or not interested to continue or they go to High School but our High School facilities are not so good. Most children give up on the way. They are not fed well like how they are fed at home. But others give up on the way because of the living standards in High School.

This highlights that the education system in PNG does not provide sufficient facilities to cater for the needs of children in the school. It is incongruous for the Education policy to describe providing education to all; in reality it fails to recognise the needs of rural schools and the appalling lack of infrastructure. In spite of the views of the older people in the study that education was vital for young people (while at the same time demanding that the younger people continue working and learning the art of working on the land and the traditional ways), older people maintained that every young person should be given the opportunity to continue with education.

Nobody should be a failure. I am thinking of free education. So I think education should not finish at grade 10. In fact, they should continue to Grade 12. Parents in this village do not have enough to sponsor their children for further education.

It is also important to note that, at the time of writing this thesis, the Government of PNG under the current regime of Prime Minister, Peter O’Neil, approved free education for children to fulfil the implementation of the Education plan (2005 -2014). However this comes with complications due to the high number of students in the classrooms, poor infrastructure in the schools, and a lack of teachers. Even though education is free in theory it is encumbered with project fees that are too steep for rural parents to meet.

While the young people in the study and their parents have a perception of following the education pathway (high school to University), and of gaining a white collar job, they
often undermine the other pathway of primary school to vocational schools (skills enhancement programs). Vocational schools have therefore become a secondary option or an option they do not consider. However, the participants have indicated that vocational schools did indeed constitute a much-needed pathway to offer skills to those young people who are unable to continue with the type of education that can earn them a white collar job:

There should be some kind of guide that will be able to guide the parents to lead their children into institutions. They may not be bright but gaining the skills is relevant. These skills have to be looked at through proper policies.

Build vocational schools so that young people who do not continue should get to the vocational schools to learn how the skills in cooking, sewing, mechanic and building.

Similarly, the provision of health services in rural areas is difficult as people have to travel several hours to gain access to the nearest aid post.

The Central Province is equipped with City Mission, Salvation Army and educational institutions coupled with the mineral resources that can all be utilised that can assist rural young people to be self-sustaining. Therefore the Central Province District services need to take stock of the assets available within the province and calculate its capacities to target the rural village.

**Implications for the young people at the Macro level**

Young people go through problems because of several reasons, as highlighted in the literature review; issues discussed in the micro level are also pertinent to the reasons why they attract negative attitudes within their communities.

Participants in this study believed that within the community young people should abide by the traditional norms and culture in so far as parents should discipline their children.
There are different ways of discipline enforced on the children within the village. These include; beating from parents; admonishment by parents or elders; public reproach; and advice highlighting right and wrong relevant to the customary beliefs. There are also relevant beliefs that young people have to abide by to show respect, as one participant explained:

When you learn and know about your culture and customary belief you have the identity in your community. It does not mean I am brought up in the modern way and I bring that level down because there are customary beliefs and customary works and practices.

These days, such teachings are often defied by young people as they conceive that they have laws in place to protect them and that the beliefs and teachings of the old ways are for the old people. For example one of the respondents stated that they were modern children, therefore, they are reluctant to learn the skills of the older people:

We are modernised children. They tell us in the morning ... get up and lets go to the garden ... we young people only say, you go, it is your work, it is you old people’s work. It is very hard for us to learn how to make gardens when we are just waking up to eat and only. We find it hard to get into the garden to work.

This was confirmed by an older person who highlighted the refusal of young people to learn the oratories describing discipline or the songs of the traditional culture. The refusal of young people to learn the traits of the older generation encapsulates the conflicting views by which young people describe their world.

Together with Fook (2002) and Pugh & Gould (2000), as discussed in the literature, I am compelled to agree that the impact of globalisation on rural young people is inevitable. It first of all comes with a change in attitudes, a disregard of the culture, the need to have access to services, and the ownership of wealth and goods. One participant commented
that young people no longer want to accept the traditional songs but prefer to listen to the modern songs or enjoy modern entertainment:

If we have traditional dancing, our young people do not have any interest. If we put out videos or TV, young people will want to watch that, or if there is a dance, they will want to go and dance. It does not appeal to them. Say when I am singing my traditional song, this young person asks why I do this all the time. He has no appreciation of the traditional songs, or if I sing kitoro (traditional song), he will not want me to sing the songs. When he plays his modern songs, he will jump up and down in excitement. They have no appreciation for culture. I have stopped singing our traditional songs. It is the same thing with his father. When I sing they imitate me sarcastically. So my interest in this has also depleted.

Colonisation imposed its culture on the indigenous people and saw the need for the local people to change their traditional attitudes — which it did by bringing in missionaries to correct their perceptions. The customs and traditions of the local people were seen as unscrupulous and thus missionaries imposed biblical teachings to replace the teachings of the older people. Eventually young people, especially men, were recruited to be carriers in the World War II, while young women were also recruited to be nurses. Children were urged to attend mission schools which ultimately allowed them to continue to High Schools if they passed the required educational standards. From this, some young people went on to get paid jobs while others returned to the villages.

Those who were engaged in paid jobs continued to nurture their children in a similar way by providing better education, providence and modern possessions. This brought about an improved standard of living. People eventually identified the axiom of better education, better paid job and better living as significant. It increased the desire for every parent for their children to gain better education so that they could have a better life in the future. Parents continue to work hard to invest in their children’s education for their betterment. However, circumstances such as the death of a parent, increased
school fees, lack of infrastructure, lack of employment, and/or no income impose constraints on children in their progress to fulfil the desires of their parents. The effects also inflict greater risks on children and parents alike. Colonisation, modernisation and globalisation have revolutionised the thoughts of all the people at all levels, slowly eradicating the norms of traditional ways and identities.

The young people expressed that the introduction of modern technology in rural villages and the urge to own such technological devices have encouraged them to go out of their ways to obtain such devices. Multifaceted issues such as better education and better income also have multiple impacts on their lives while they are also bearing and deriving constructed views on their conducts in the village.

It is the view of the respondents that the young people in the villages lack education, health and other services; despite the fact that they have their extended family; family members that they can rely on and get support from are rarely available for assistance. The participants agreed that services should be established within the vicinity and that they should be assisted to continue with education and find employment — or even or create employment for rural people.

Given the scenario outlined by way of the ecological system I argue that the perceptions of the young people are affected by the introduction of foreign ways of doing things to which they must conform for the betterment of their lives. At the same time, they are resisting the views of the older people. Hereafter, there are two categories of views: that imposed by young people and that of the older people, both of which impose power relationships at all levels.
**Dualistic viewing of the ecological model**

There are two diverse viewings of the ecological model; the traditional individual concentric model from Bronfenbrenner (1959) and Selby’s (1995) collective model. Briefly, Selby’s (1995) adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model provides a framework to view the perceptions of rural young people and their environment; and the views of the older people within the community and their perceptions of the young people. Young people in this study tend to view the world as theirs in their period, simultaneously circumventing the culture and the traditional systems of maintaining the livelihood and skills of disciplining, and thus aligning with Bronfenbrenner’s (1959) model. In comparison, Selby’s approach of having a collective view and rights is more in line with the traditional viewing of the village.

According to Selby (1995), the young person is the centre of the whanau, hapu and iwi. Figure 5.8, thus displays that their collective voices or rights are supreme, rather than the individual voice. This viewing seems to be appropriate for the traditional village way of life and the formation of discourses among the older people within PNG villages, while the young people’s views is perhaps more pertinent to Bronfenbrenner’s view as illustrated in the figure below.

![Diagram](image-url)

*Figure 5.8: Adaptation of Selby (1995) ecological model to PNG*
This figure shows the two models of the ecological model. Therefore, this analysis is also inclined to identify the synthesis of the two models illustrated above. The illustration of the compounded figures allows us to see, derive and identify discourses relative to the entities shown in the diagram. These discourses will be discussed in power relationships.

Figure 5.9: Ecological model, Adapted from Shannon and Young, 2004

Figure 5.10: Tangata Whenua and Tawiwi models, Adapted from Selby (1995:20)

Figure 5.11, below, indicates that older peoples’ discourses of young people and how they should conduct themselves in the village community are embedded within the cultural conceptions. They expect that young people will behave according to cultural norms, however the young people have a different viewing of the older people’s ideologies as they are affected by the imposition of the functionality in the systems imposed by the society as a result of globalisation, which is also affecting the cultural outlook.

Figure 5.11 displays the multiple discourses of the older people. The collaboration of the discourses of the two contingents is essential in deriving and identifying solutions to their livelihood issues. The view between the two contingents establishes resolution of the
competing views between these two contingents (that is, the amalgamation of thesis and antithesis and a constructing synthesis).

In order for young people to be empowered (Zimmerman, 1995) and included in the community or society or as agents of change in their community, a multilevel approach is needed, working with different stake holders at each level.

**On-going dilemmas**

This research has explored a range of factors that contribute to and have an impact on the lives of rural young people. As a result of growing populations and youth being in the bulging segment of the demographic graph (see figure 2.1), studies of youth — and
especially rural young people — should not be limited to the statistics: rather, tangible strategies should be developed to capture traditional cultural methods alongside modern day developmental methods to curb the social problems that young people go through.

An important element that signifies the status of young people in rural villages is that they own the land; therefore, young people should be empowered with skills that will enable them to work independently or collaboratively in the community. The institutions that have partnership with the young people and rural villages should equip young people with relevant skills that will enable them to generate employment within their own vicinity so that they are also self-sufficient. If given the power at the micro level or decisions made using the collective approach, young people may be empowered to combat their daily struggles.

Despite the fact that legislation is created to link the young rural people to the institutions, it was evident in this research that young people in the villages are not aware of these relationships. Consequently, they often miss out on activities or services that they may require for their community or even for themselves. Hence, it is critical to engage rural young people and educate them about the services that are valuable for them. Also, as there is no relevant support network systems in place in rural villages, churches in the villages must be equipped to address the issues of young people. Often the churches in the villages are obligated to teach the gospel but are rarely equipped to assist the young people with day-to-day problems.

At this stage, the issues of the large number of young people in rural villages are not addressed as a result of unemployment, poverty, under education and the mere fact that they live in a rural village. Young people do not have sufficient network supports that
could help them alleviate their problems despite the fact that they have their extended family system, young people still hesitate to share their problems with their family members.

Rural villages in PNG are ill-equipped with facilities that can help young people. Since the villages are remote from the urban centres that contain these services, often young people are not able to reach these services. Therefore this is one area I suggest needs to be improved in rural villages.

The national statistics of PNG do not provide the relevant information necessary to describe and differentiate the issues in rural villages.

**Further research**

There are multiple issues that are raised in this thesis that require further research. This also means that more funds are needed to be made available for research purposes on rural youth and to address the issues that are facing young people in rural villages in PNG. This study shows that multiple factors contribute to impediments in the progress of rural young people — as is also shown in Western and the Pacific communities. In the growing population of PNG the necessities of the young people are cumbersome and difficult, a situation which can only be made easier if partnerships are established and strengthened at the local level, especially in the villages themselves. Hence further research is mandatory to find the necessary strategies to implement in rural villages encapsulating both traditional methods and existing methods to empower young people with skills that will enable them to be self-sufficient.
Conclusion

This chapter analysed the themes outlined in the results chapter. In addition, it has identified that the dual viewing of the ecological model — that is, the differing perspectives of the younger people and the older people— created a conflict of understanding of their respective environments. In order to understand these viewings, this chapter examined the participants’ discourses in the discursive field surrounding the young people, rural village community, and the government. Identifying these discourses revealed that there were shifts in the power relationships present in the environment of the young rural youth. This therefore also focused on the power relationships that constructed such discourses.

The ecological model put into perspective the ways that that rural young people are influenced by multiple factors from the micro, meso and macro levels. This reveals that the young people, especially those who come from dysfunctional families, have multiple factors impinging on their lives that are side-lined as they have no appropriate pathways to address them. Taking into consideration the multiple discourses and the impacts of the ecological system, an alternative approach seemed a better alternative for rural young people.
Chapter 6 - Conclusion

Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the hardships young people from dysfunctional families who live in rural villages encounter, as was discussed in the scheme. It also explores the power relationships between the young people, the village (older people), and the government (service delivery). The analysis of these discourses investigated the dominance in relationship in the discursive location—the rural village. The study also identified strategies that could alter the dominance that were notable in the relationships.

The research questions sought to elucidate ways that will empower young people in rural villages as we identify the factors that have an impact in their lives so that new strategies can be identified by exploring the multiple discourses within power relationships.

The ecological model enhances our knowledge of the perceptions of multiple discourses that impact the young rural people at micro, meso and macro level. Two viewings of the ecological model identified the synthesis required to create the collective approach (Selby, 1995) that appears to be a fitting model for the construction of discourses among young people in the village communities.

Each section in the chapters discusses particular factors that have an impact in the lives of young people. These factors emerged concurrently with the questions stated earlier. These issues have formed the basis of the thesis discussion and these include rural youth, rural village, poverty, unemployment, education, and youth culture.
In chapter one I touched on the research setting which provides the backdrop of the study, encapsulating the indicators that may be contributing to the issues experienced by young people in rural communities. These indicators provide the pathways necessary for identifying solutions and suggestions to empower the young people who are socially excluded. Although the 1995 reform for governance in the National Government stipulates shifting its powers to local level government, such changes were not effective for rural young people. Meanwhile, support delivery services are also not functional in the communities as a result of the complexities evident in the geographical and cultural contexts.

Chapter two reviews the literature on issues of youth in rural communities in the western, Pacific and PNG. This chapter also discusses theories that underpin these issues. Despite the diverse circumstances in developed and developing countries, there is a large degree of commonality between youth throughout the world. Regardless, the commonality that is expressed by extensive literature documents structural social and cultural factors that either constrains or contributes to young people’s transition in the developmental cycle. It was also identified that some issues typically regarded as urban phenomenon were also pertinent in rural areas. While Durkheim (1995) suggests the concept of the rural idyllic to be accepted by many young people as social solidarity, not all young people accept the notion of rurality in their quest for better lives.

As noted in chapter three, this study required a qualitative research method (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) to explore the values and capture the thoughts, feelings and meanings of the participants (Bell, 2010). Hence my emphasis was particularly based on the involvement and contributions of the key informants by way of data gathering from the interviews which was found to support the research questions. In-depth interviews
delivered the questions to capture the information and issues that affect young people in rural villages.

Chapter four was formed on the basis of the experiences captured in the interview. These issues were discussed thematically according to the scheme established in chapter two to inform an analysis of what may seem to the best practice theory.

Chapter five was concerned with the analyses of discourses of rural young people and their relationship processes to synthesise a collaborative approach to understand and meet the requirements of young people.

While the Government has dominance in terms of most of the issues highlighted by the participants, the government has to establish relationships and/or networks to link the NGOs and the Government departments dealing with youth in order to implement strategies and programs that will empower youth in rural communities. As this seems to be resonating in the issues affecting the young people themselves, the alternative approach (Shannon & Young, 2004) suggests transferring the dominance to the local community as they know what is best for the young people as a result of establishing a collective approach (Selby, 1995).

**Conclusion**

The findings encapsulated in this study contribute to the principles of ameliorating the relationship within the community so that young people are empowered and equipped with necessary skills, incorporating cultural elements, to edify and influence their livelihood.
This study has sought to describe and elucidate the experiences of young people in rural villages, older people of the community, and the government as they interact in response to episodes influencing the construction of problems in the village. These stories have been analysed within institutional discourses with the view to implementing the collective approach and identifying the implications caused by the micro, meso and macro level elements which have an impact on the young people. The processes suggest shifting the dominant power structures and advocate for a bottom-up approach—meaning, to place decision making at the level of the community in anticipation of arriving at solutions for empowerment and inclusion.


Cunningham, W. (2008). *Youth at risk in Latin America and the Caribbean: Understanding the causes, realising the potential*. World Bank-free PDF.


*Rural Sociology, 75*(2), 326-347.


*Psychological Science, 15*(9), 591-597.


Rogers, C., Bleakley, R., Ola, W., & Development, Care Integrated Community. (2011). Rural Poverty in remote Papua New Guinea: Case Study of Obura-Wonenara District. ANU: Development Policy Centre, Crawford School of Economic and Government, ANU.


Ware, H. (2004). *Pacific instability and youth bulges: the devil in the demography and the economy.*


Appendices

Appendix A: Consent from Ethics Committee

Dr P Walker
Department of Sociology, Gender and Social Work

24 May 2012

Dear Dr Walker,

I am again writing to you concerning your proposal entitled “Struggles of Youth: Factors that empower and disempower youth in a rural village of Papua New Guinea”, Ethics Committee reference number 12/080.

Thank you for your letter addressing the Committee's concerns. We are grateful for a copy of the amended application.

On the basis of this response, I am pleased to confirm that the proposal now has full ethical approval to proceed.

Approval is for up to three years from the date of this letter. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, re-approval must be requested. If the nature, consent, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise me in writing.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr Gary Witte
Manager, Academic Committees
Tel: 470 8258
Email: gary.witte@olaqo.ac.nz

c.c. Professor H R Campbell Head Department of Sociology, Gender and Social Work
Appendix B: Information Sheet for Participation

12/080
24/05/2012

Struggles of Rural Youth: The factors that empower and disempower youth in the rural villages of PNG

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

LimuMouVagi, the researcher, is currently enrolled as a Masters student at the University of Otago. This project is being undertaken as part of the requirement for Masters in Social and Community Work in Sociology, Gender and Social Work Department at the University of Otago. This research is to identify and understand how the struggles of youth have impacted theirs and their family’s lives and the community in PNG.

This research seeks to informally and formally interview both male and female participants. This will include unemployed youth between the ages of 12 to 25, their parents, NGO workers and Government workers, community leaders, youth leaders and church leaders.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

Approximately 25 people are being invited to take part in the following project. Participants will be recruited from NGO organisations, Government organisations, community leaders, youth leaders and church leaders from the rural village. These will also include youth from the rural village.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in an informal interview. You can also allow some members of your group or organisation to participate in focus group session concerned with the questions below. They will be asked to attend a focus group meeting lasting 1 hour. Agreement to be in the focus group is strictly voluntary. One-on-one interviews will also take 1 hour. The interviews will be done face-to-face.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes issues facing the youth; problems encountered in the rural villages; community development approaches for the youth; disempowerment factors facing the youth. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently,
although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be expected in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

The informal interview will take about an hour. I respect your privacy and will take care that your name and responses will be kept anonymous and confidential.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Interviews will be recorded and transcripts made of the recorded discussion. The group or the individual participants will not be named in the transcripts. The results of this project will be published for the purpose of the researcher writing a Masters Thesis and presenting at an academic conference but any data included will in no way be linked to any specific participant, organisation or community. Upon completion of this project a hard copy of the results will be made available to the appropriate organisation.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only Dr Peter Walker (Supervisor) and Limu Cheryl MouVagi (researcher) will have access to it. The names or any coded information relating to the identity of the group or individual participants will not appear on typed transcripts. At the end of the project, as required by the University’s research policy, any raw data on which the results of this project depend will be retained in a secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Limu Cheryl MouVagi and/or Dr. Peter Walker
Department of Sociology, Gender, Department of Sociology, Gender,
Social Department Social Department
University of Otago University of Otago
University Telephone Number: +6434797651 University Telephone Number: +6434797651
Email Address: mouli189@otago.ac.nz Email Address: peter.walker@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix C: Consent form for Participants

Struggles of Youth: The factors that empower and disempower youth in the rural villages of PNG

Information Sheet

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no advantage to you of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Masters in Social and Community Work in Sociology, Gender and Social Work Department at the University of Otago. This research is to identify and understand how the struggles of youth have impacted theirs and their family’s lives and the community in PNG.

This research seeks to informally and formally interview both male and female participants. This will include unemployed youth between the ages of 12 to 25, their parents, NGO workers and Government workers, community leaders, youth leaders and church leaders.

Should you require to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in an informal interview. You can also allow some members of your group to participate in an informal focus-group session concerned with the above questions.

This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes issues facing the youth; problems encountered in the rural villages; community development approaches for the youth; disempowerment factors facing the youth. The precise natures of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be expected in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does not develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any
particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

The informal interview will take about an hour. I respect your privacy and will take care that your name and responses will be kept anonymous and confidential.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

Data will be collected by writing them in note form, audio taped and video-taped. Data collected will be analysed and used for MSCW thesis only. All data will be stored at a secure place and will be transcribed by me.

Data collected can only be accessed by

- Funding entities NZAID
- Head of Department, Department of Sociology, Gender and Social and Community Work
- My supervisor
- Staff making photocopies

The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project should you wish.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned will be able to gain to it. At the end of the project the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as requires by the University’s research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

**Limu Cheryl Mouvagi** or **Dr. Peter Walker**

Department of Sociology, Gender, Social and Community
University of Otago
Sociology, Gender, Social and Community Department
520/530 Castle St
Dunedin
New Zealand

Ph:

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administration (ph 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix D: Consent form for Participants

STURGGLES OF YOUTH: FACTORS THAT EMPOWER AND DISEMPOWER YOUTH IN RURAL VILLAGES OF PNG

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identification information [video-tapes/audio-tapes, memory cards, questionnaires, notes] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed;
4. I may decline to answer any open ended questions forwarded to me during the interview that I may feel hesitant or uncomfortable. I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity

I agree to take part in this project.

................................................................................................................................................
................................................................................................................................................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03479 8256). Any issues raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix E: Consent form for Parents/Guardians

STURGLES OF YOUTH: FACTORS THAT EMPOWER AND DISEMPOWER YOUTH IN RURAL VILLAGES OF PNG

CONSENT FORM FOR

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My Child’s participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw my child from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identification information [video-tapes/audio-tapes, memory cards, questionnaires, notes] will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years, after which they will be destroyed;
4. My child may decline to answer any open ended questions forwarded during the interview that s/he may feel hesitant or uncomfortable. S/he may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity

I agree for my child to take part in this project.

.................................................................................  .................................................................................

(Signature of parent/guardian)  (Date)

.................................................................................

(Name of child)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03479 8256). Any issues raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix F: Interview Questionnaire

STRUGGLES OF RURAL YOUTH: FACTORS THAT EMPOWER AND DISEMPOWER YOUTH IN THE VILLAGE OF PNG.

Focus group questions

- Introduce self and thank the participants for taking part
- Asking participants to introduce themselves: their names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 1</td>
<td>What is your opinion of conditions or influences that have an impact on young people in your community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 2</td>
<td>What are some factors that make youth happy in your community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 3</td>
<td>What are some common problems young people in your community face?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 4</td>
<td>What activities in the community are helpful for young people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 5</td>
<td>What are your expectations of youth living in your community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 6</td>
<td>In your opinion, what are some aspects in life that make youth behave in the way they do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 7</td>
<td>What is the community doing to support youth in their problems?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 8</td>
<td>Has your community been receiving any assistance for the young people in your community? Who funds this activity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 9</td>
<td>Explain how your community gets assistance for the young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 10</td>
<td>How are these programs monitored?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 11</td>
<td>How do young people react to these programs? Why do they react to the programs?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STRUGGLES OF RURAL YOUTH: FACTORS THAT EMPOWER AND DISEMPOWER YOUTH IN THE VILLAGE OF PNG

General Outline of Research Questions for one-on-one interviews.

Please note that this is only a general outline of the proposed research questions. The questions have deliberately been drafted in a vague form so as to encourage the flow of the interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| QUESTION 1 | What is your opinion/perception about the conditions impacting upon youth who live in the villages?  
- what are some good things?  
- what are some bad things? |
| QUESTION 2 | What are some common problems faced by young people in your community? |
| QUESTION 3 | How has the family structure affected the behaviour of young people? |
| QUESTION 4 | How has the way of living affected the behaviour of the young people? |
| QUESTION 5 | How does culture have an impact in the upbringing of the young people? |
| QUESTION 6 | What are some of the struggles young people face while living in the village?  
- what are some positive things about living in the village? Why?  
- What are some negative things living in the village? Why? |
| QUESTION 7 | Why do you think young people struggle in your community?  
What are some hardships young people face in the village? |
| QUESTION 8 | - Why do you think young people behave negatively?  
Why do you think young people are neglected by the community?  
- In what ways are the young people neglected by the community?  
- Are the young people recognized in their community? In what ways are they recognized? |
| QUESTION 9 | Do young people have a future? How do you think young people can improve their future?  
- How can they improve their lives? |
| QUESTION 10 | Do young people get support from the community/government/NGO?  
Explain how young people get assistance/support from the community. |
| QUESTION 11 | What are some best ways to support young people in the community? |
STRUGGLES OF RURAL YOUTH: FACTORS THAT EMPOWER AND DISEMPOWER YOUTH IN THE VILLAGE OF PNG.

For staff members of Government/NGO

- Introduce self and thank the participants for taking part
- Asking participants to introduce themselves: their names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 1</td>
<td>In your capacity, what activities have you organized for young people in the rural villages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 2</td>
<td>What programs or projects do you have for the youth? How do these programs address the difficulties young people face?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 3</td>
<td>Tell me about this projects and programs for the youth? How do you organize these projects?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 4</td>
<td>How do you get funding for the projects you organize for the youth in the rural villages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 5</td>
<td>How do you distribute the funds for each village community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 6</td>
<td>What activities have you found helpful for the youth in the rural villages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 7</td>
<td>What are some hardships or difficulties you have encountered while working with the youth from the rural villages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 8</td>
<td>How do you monitor these programs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Are factors you consider before doing the distribution such as equity, discrimination, isolation (distance between the city)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Which community had the highest distribution and why was this so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 9</td>
<td>Have you found it difficult working with the young people? What was the most difficult component working with young people in the rural villages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 10</td>
<td>How do you select to work with communities? How do you select young people to work with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 11</td>
<td>What skills do the youth have to have before coming to assist them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 12</td>
<td>How do you co-ordinate the programs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 13</td>
<td>Do you have a network/partnership with other organisations? How does this network work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION 14</td>
<td>Apart from helping youth? What other programs do you have for the rural communities?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G: Map of PNG

Source: NRI (2010), PNG Districts and Provincial Profiles