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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
THE GOALS OF UNIVERSITIES IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

BY



JOHN MARK SOLON

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND  
RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 1990



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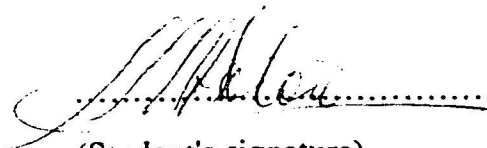
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE GOALS OF UNIVERSITIES IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA submitted by JOHN MARK SOLON in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother Rosalind Yasko (Droleu), my father Paul Droke-en, my partner Elizabeth, and my children, Alice, Alexander, Michaela and Patricia.

## ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to identify and compare goal perceptions of writers, administrators and academics in two universities in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Three methods -- a survey based on the Institutional Goal Inventory (IGI), document study, and focussed interview -- were used to gather data. Questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods while document and interview data were subjected to content and item analysis.

The findings indicated that respondents perceived most IGI and specific local goals to be appropriate for universities in PNG. Academic development, intellectual orientation, community, accountability/efficiency, advanced training, vocational preparation, intellectual/ aesthetic environment and democratic governance were among the highest rated goals.

Similarly training of national staff for Papua New Guinea universities; cooperation with Commission for Higher Education in planning higher education in Papua New Guinea; promotion of language, mathematics and library skills of university students and establishment of a single salary and improved working condition for university staff; were among the highest rated local specific goals.

Significant differences were evident between the respondents' actual and preferred ratings. Respondents' "preferred" ratings for 20 IGI goals and 10 local specific goals were higher than the "actual."

Differences were also evident in the goal ratings of administrators and academics, and in the ratings of respondents at the University of Papua New Guinea and the Papua New Guinea University of Technology. Administrators generally had higher goal ratings than did academics. Respondents at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology



rated the following actual goal: vocational preparation; advanced training; and meeting local needs; of higher importance than did respondents at the University of Papua New Guinea. Respondents at the University of Papua New Guinea rated freedom, and democratic governance and social criticism/activism of higher importance than did respondents at the University of Technology.

Respondents at the University of Papua New Guinea rated the following preferred goals: academic development; intellectual orientation, humanism/altruism; cultural aesthetic awareness; research, public service, social criticism/activism; freedom and intellectual aesthetic environment of higher importance than did respondents at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology.

On the same note, the University of Papua New Guinea respondents' actual ratings of provision of in-service education and training for teachers/instructors; establishment of a single salary/working condition for university staff; and promotion of Papua New Guinea's cultural practices were higher than the Papua New Guinea University of Technology respondents. The latter rated adaptation of teaching methods to Papua New Guinean learning styles; encouragement of Papua New Guinean women to obtain university education; and development of joint-university programs; of higher importance at their university.

Diverse socio-cultural practices, inadequate finance, public misunderstanding of the universities' goals, and inadequate educational curricula were identified as problems inhibiting goal achievement. Revision of socio-cultural practices, improved financial assistance to universities, revision of educational structures and programs, and improved communications between the parties were among the recommendations to advance the goals of Papua New Guinea universities.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Papua New Guinea (PNG) has two universities. The University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and the Papua New Guinea University of Technology (PNGUT) were established in the 1960s to educate and prepare the people for self-government and independence. More specifically the universities were charged with training an indigenous elite that would assume administrative and technical functions of government previously performed by Australian personnel. The universities responded with ambitious programs of teaching, research and technical training which helped PNG to successfully achieve independence in 1975.

The achievement of independence, deteriorating economic conditions and the universities' quest for autonomy and intellectual freedom created uncertainties and conflicts among indigenous leaders and the public about the functions of universities in the country. Evidence of this conflict can be observed in the views of the country's two prominent political leaders. In discussing the role of UPNG, Prime Minister, Mr. Michael Somare (1976) cited high-level manpower training, research into national problems and issues, and acting as social-conscience of the nation by being a critic of its government, as primary functions of a university. The "father" of PNG's constitution, Reverend John Momis (1975), however, questioned the university's role of producing high-level manpower and argued that its proper role "is to equip people with the necessary intellectual perception to identify the real needs and aspirations of the people" and added that "the people of Papua New Guinea expect the university to give them a vision of the future" (p. 189).

Another popular opinion was that universities should continue to educate an elite group for national leadership and other professional functions of government, but opponents (Addison, 1981) argued that this would weaken the fabric of PNG's egalitarian

society .

The dilemma is compounded by the country's continuing changes in political, social and economic conditions. Politically, the introduction of a decentralized system of government after independence has created additional demands for highly educated leaders and bureaucrats. Socially, through formal education, PNG traditions are being compromised by the introduction of western values and lifestyles. For example, traditional kinship ties are being replaced by competitive and individualistic attitudes. Economically, diminishing amounts of Australian financial aid, the world financial crisis and low export prices are forcing the government to cut expenditures on basic services such as health and education.

These changes have forced the government and the public to question the functions of the universities. Consequently, universities are challenged to re-examine their goals and establish priorities to match dwindling resources. Should universities emphasize the same goals they had twenty years ago? Do changes in the nation's conditions warrant new goals and programs? Meek (1982) suggested that the universities, like the nation itself, are entering an age of uncertainty:

UPNG is an institution sponsored by a colonial power and built by expatriates. The "mission" to be achieved by the foundation of the university in PNG was well defined by those involved. However, with the accomplishment of the original mission, and with the dramatic change in the institution's exogenous environment, the nature of the task of adapting the university to a social context which its members help to create is less clear. The character of the institution and the social values of its members have a different significance today than they had some ten years ago.(p. 49)

The literature questions universities' effectiveness and suggests a re-definition of their goals. Surveys of the literature on university education in PNG reveal that little

research has been conducted to guide university administrators, educational planners and policy makers.

### **Purposes of the Study**

The significance of goal-related information for national and institutional policies and decision-making for universities prompted the researcher to plan a study that would examine existing literature for direct and indirect references to university goals as well as perceptions of administrators and academics concerning their universities.

To address these purposes, the following research questions were articulated:

1. What are the goals of PNG universities as described in the literature?
2. What are the perceived goals (actual and preferred) of the PNG university system?
3. What are the perceived goals of each university?
4. What are the differences (if any) between goal perceptions of academics and administrators?
5. What are the differences (if any) between goal perceptions of UPNG and PNGUT respondents?
6. What problems inhibit goal achievement?
7. What strategies might advance these goals?

### **Significance of the Study**

The importance of clear goals to the universities, other higher education institutions, and policy makers cannot be over-emphasized. As observed by Cornish (1977), the subject of goals is "one of the most pervasive issues in organization theory" and "has become a critical problem in the daily reality of organizational operations particularly in

institutions of higher education" (p. 1). Uhl (1971) described the implications of goals for higher education institutions in the United States in the 1970s as follows:

During the past five years, colleges and universities have experienced a crisis of authority and confidence both on and off campus. Radicals view colleges and universities as tools for forging a new society, while conservatives see them as instruments for sustaining and strengthening the status quo. Politicians and taxpayers generally view higher education as being unable to manage its own affairs. The intensity with which the colleges and universities are being pulled by these different groups not only stresses the importance of what the groups want but also indicates the importance of finding a means to promote convergence of opinion among them with respect to institutions. (p. x)

While this condition was evident in the United States more than a decade ago, it reflects the crisis in PNG in the 1980s. The political, social and economic conditions in PNG have been changing dramatically during the last 25 years; universities, however, are evolving at a slower pace. University administrators and policy makers are constantly challenged to establish appropriate programs and priorities and keep abreast with the changes. Indeed, as observed by the Joint Working Party on University Priorities Staffing and National Resources in PNG (Rogers et al., 1984), "the question of academic programme priorities has now become an important and potentially divisive issue at many institutions facing the reality of having to consolidate a broad array of offerings or eliminate selected programmes" (p. 15). This challenge will be impossible if institutions are unclear of their purposes and goals.

While emphasis has been placed on the importance of goals in institutional planning and decision making elsewhere (Cornish, 1977; Etzioni, 1964; Gross, 1969; Gross and Grambsch, 1974; Uhl, 1971), no study of this nature has been conducted on universities in PNG. This research is consequently of great significance to universities, the Ministry of Education and the government for future planning and developments. It will generate basic



information for decision making at several levels and will contribute to the nation's database on university goals and effectiveness. Finally, the study will provide cross-cultural researchers with information about the use of the Institutional Quality Inventory (IQI) instrument in a specific cultural setting, other than the one for which the instrument was designed.

### **Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

One major limitation of the study is its use of a numerically small sample of respondents, as opposed to the traditionally large survey samples obtained for other university and higher education institution studies (Gross and Grambsch, 1974). Furthermore, the study is dependent on individual interpretations by administrators and faculty members in the universities. Time constraints made it impractical to include other members of the universities' population (students and support staff) in the survey.

While this study has potential for research into the higher education sector in the country, it is limited to the survey perceptions, documentary evidence and oral opinions of academic staff, administrators and writers. Consequently conclusions of the study are limited to the universities of PNG.

### **Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis comprises nine chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction to the study. The purposes, subproblems, significance and organization of the study are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2 describes the political, social, economic and educational context of the study, including an account of the principles underlying university development in PNG.

Related literature is described in chapter 3. Discussion includes the nature of goals, their definitions, identification and organizational significance. The chapter presents further discussions on university functions of teaching, research, public service and democratic community and highlights conflicting demands and influences these functions have had on traditional and modern university structures. Finally, the development of the IGI and results of goal related research are discussed.

The analytical framework, instrumentation, data gathering and analytical procedures for this study are explained in chapter 4.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8, contain basic data for this study. This includes summaries of statistical interpretations of questionnaires, content analysis of documents and interviews. Chapter 5 presents the survey results of the Institutional Goals Inventory (IGI). Results of ten local specific goals (goals statements which address PNG university issues) are discussed in chapter 6. Data deduced from study of goal-related documents on PNG universities are discussed in chapter 7. Chapter 8 discusses data obtained by interviews.

Finally, chapter 9 presents the summary, conclusions and implications of the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA CONTEXT

Descriptions of PNG's early contact with western powers and its political, economic and educational developments are presented in this chapter. While the focus of the study is on university goals, political, social, economic and educational needs influenced the development of the nation's universities. Indeed, PNG's two universities were planned and established in response to particular needs of the country.

#### Political Developments

The existence of "the black people of Papua" (Nelson, 1982, p. 10) was reported by European traders in the Dutch East Indies in the fourteenth century, but Europeans knew little about the land and its people until the late 1800s. European explorers sighted and charted PNG's many islands from 1528 to 1793. By the late 1800s sufficient knowledge had been gained to interest two western powers, Germany and Great Britain, in what these islands had to offer.

PNG was administered as two Territories -- Papua and New Guinea-- in the late nineteenth century by Britain and Germany respectively. Papua was claimed by Britain as a protectorate in 1884 and became a crown colony in 1888. During 1888-1898, Britain shared administrative responsibilities with Queensland, following Queensland's attempt to annex Papua from Britain. In 1902 an Imperial Order in Council placed Papua under Australian control. The Order became effective when the Papua Act was proclaimed in 1905 (Cleverly, Wescombe, 1979).

New Guinea was claimed by Germany in 1884 and remained a German colony until

1914. During World War I, Australian troops occupied and controlled German New Guinea. Military administration of the colony continued until 1920 when Australia accepted a mandate from the League of Nations to administer the colony as a Trust Territory.

From 1942 to 1945 the Territories were administered as a single entity by the Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit (A.N.G.A.U.) under the Australian Department of the Army and the Department for External Territories. In 1949 the Australian Government passed the Papua New Guinea Provisional Act and established a permanent civil administrative unit. Although the Territory was administered as a single entity, Papua retained its status as a colony and New Guinea remained a mandated territory of the United Nations. In 1971 the Australian Government passed the National Identity Act which provided for joint self-government. The territories became politically united as Papua New Guinea, and on September 16, 1975 Papua New Guinea assumed political independence from Australia.

### **Political Education and Participation**

Political education and participation of Papua New Guineans from 1905 to 1960 was slow and indifferent (Nelson, 1974; Stephen, 1972). The country's rugged terrain and the existence of over 700 small but independent tribes and cultures provided sufficient reasons for the colonial administration to believe that any form of indigenous self-government would be impractical. Some administrators assumed that Australia would continue to administer the Territory into the twentieth century and therefore saw no urgent need for political education of the natives. Others, however, emphasized the need for carefully supervised and spontaneous growth of village and local governments.

The establishment of village and local governments in the late 1950s was ineffective. Colonial officials observed them more as structures to communicate government policies than as local legislative bodies. Most indigenous groups viewed these

institutions as suppressive instruments created by the colonial government to undermine their socio-political practices, and consequently they ceased to support them.

### **Self-Government and Independence**

The quest for political independence by dependencies in Africa and South East Asia in the 1950s, pressure from the United Nations and Australian opposition parties, were reasons for PNG's rapid political development in the 1960s and 1970s. The struggle by Indonesian nationalists to achieve self-government and independence from the Dutch in the East Indies and West New Guinea inspired some indigenous groups to seek self-government. Various United Nations' missions to PNG in the early 1960s urged the Legislative Committee to allow more Papua New Guinean representation in the Legislative Council which advised the Australian Government on Papua New Guinean affairs. The government's opposition in Australia warned that PNG would not be immune to the political changes occurring in Africa and South East Asia and urged that affirmative action be taken to prepare a group of Papua New Guineans to take responsibility for their people. Consequently the Legislative Council was abolished in 1963 and replaced by the House of Assembly in 1964, to which a specified number of indigenous members were elected.

The establishment of the first House of Assembly represented a turning point in PNG's political history (Stephen 1972, p. 56). It was the first time in the country's history that the Legislature had an indigenous majority elected from a common roll. The number of indigenous elected representatives increased, while official and appointed representatives decreased in subsequent elections. For example, the number of open seats (members representing a single political constituency) nearly doubled, from 44 in 1964 election to 82 in the 1972. Similarly, regional seats (elected members representing two or more open electorates) were increased from 15 to 18, while official seats (members appointed by the administrator) were reduced from 10 to four.

Despite this progress, problems plagued the House and its indigenous members. Lack of education, political experience, language barriers, and regional differences divided indigenous members and prevented them from speaking with a united voice. For example, many members were elected to the house for reasons other than education or political experience. Most members were illiterate; some could not speak a language other than their own dialect. Nelson (1974) cites the following personal profile of an elected member to illustrate these problems.

I was old enough to remember the first Australian who came into my area. I am not an educated man. When I was young there was no school in my area. I do not even speak pidgin (a local Lingua Franca) very well. . . . I am just a simple man but I was elected to the House and have learnt a little.  
(p. 135)

Nevertheless, by 1970 a number of Papua New Guinean elected representatives were actively promoting self-government and independence. Their activities led to the foundation of the Papua and New Guinea Unity (PANGU) party. Under the leadership of Mr. Somare (a primary school teacher), the PANGU party members urged that self-determination for their nation become the primary goal of every member in the House. To realize this goal, the PANGU party presented to the House of Assembly eight statements of aims as the basis for planning for self-government and independence.

The eight statements sought to promote:

- (1) an increase in the proportion of the economy under the control of Papua New Guinean individuals and groups and in the proportion of personal and property income that goes to Papua New Guineans;
- (2) more equal distribution of economic benefits, including movement towards equalization of income among people, and towards equalization of services among different areas of the country;
- (3) decentralization of economic activities, planning, and government spending, with emphasis on agricultural development, village industries, better internal trade and more spending channelled to local and area bodies;