

INTRODUCTION

The second Commonwealth Regional Training Course for Educational Administration and Supervision took place in Suva, Fiji, and was hosted by the Government of Fiji in association with the University of the South Pacific, Suva. It was the second in a series of Commonwealth regional training courses organized by the Education Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat and was attended by twenty-five administrators from eleven Commonwealth Pacific countries. It was financed by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation with support from the Government of Fiji and the University of the South Pacific.

The Fifth Commonwealth Conference of Ministers of Education, held in Canberra in 1971, was the first to discuss specifically the subject of educational administration. The conference expressed support for the training of professional administrative personnel and recommended that the Commonwealth Secretariat should act as a clearing-house for information and developments in the field of educational administration. In Jamaica, in 1974, the Sixth Commonwealth Education Conference adopted the theme, "Managing Education: Innovation, Implementation and Consolidation". By that time, the second of three regional workshops had been held in Georgetown, Guyana, in 1974, and the value of regular in-service meetings for educational administrators had been underlined. The first was in Freetown, Sierra Leone in 1973. Based on the recommendations and experience of both the Freetown and Georgetown workshops, the Jamaica conference agreed that consideration be given to the establishment of regional and inter-regional centres for training educational administrators and supervisors. In 1975, the third workshop in the series took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for the Asia-Pacific region and ended the preparatory steps leading to the regional courses.

The first regional training course was organized for Commonwealth Africa and took place at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, from January to March 1977. Organized for senior educational administrators and trainers, its nature and content were the result of a planning meeting held in Nairobi at the instance of the Commonwealth Secretariat in November 1975, as well as the experience of the three workshops which had preceded it. When the Seventh Commonwealth Ministers of Education Conference met in Accra, Ghana in March 1977, the Nairobi course was drawing to its close. A report of its success led the conference to endorse a continuation of the Secretariat's programme of such regional training courses. It also recommended that governments should consider making provision in their national budgets for training personnel in educational administration.

The present report chronicles the planning, implementation and evaluation of the ten-week Commonwealth Pacific regional course which was the second in the series. It does so in the hope that those seeking guidance in developing their own training courses, will find in it ideas on the structure, content and methods of the course which may be of practical value to their own efforts. Whilst we recognize that the cultural setting and economic context of each country and region will be of major significance in developing appropriate training procedures, it is also clear that common strands may be drawn from the experience so far gained from Nairobi and Suva.

The Commonwealth Secretariat wishes to record its appreciation of the practical support and co-operation of the Government of Fiji in running the course. The successful attachment of participants to a variety of educational and administrative institutions - a central element of the course structure - was a tribute to the unfailing support given by the Ministries of Education and of Youth and Sport. The equally vital support of the University of the South Pacific was expressed in the personal professional contribution of the Vice-Chancellor, Dr James Maraj, no less than his constant encouragement throughout the course. Its success was a fitting tribute not only to this encouragement but also to the energy and expertise of the Course Director, Mr John Weeks, and course consultants, Miss Olive Lyken (Guyana) and Mr Turoa Royal (New Zealand). However, at the heart of the course were the twenty-five administrators of education from eleven Pacific countries, who through this course, were able to confer in a manner new to the majority of them. They contributed signally to the high morale and team spirit which characterized the course from its first day until it closed. Yet, they themselves were the first to recognize the warmth of the hospitality provided by the citizens of Fiji who went out of their way to include in their welcome, all who were in any way involved in the course.

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