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What's on the Menu?

How the cuisine of large-scale, upmarket tourist resorts
shapes agricultural development in Fiji

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Abstract

Tourism is an economic backbone for many developing countries, especially small island development states (SIDS). Nevertheless, scholars have argued that tourism is a globalising and, potentially, colonising force that may not be a sustainable path for the economic and cultural development of such countries. Even though international tourist numbers are growing, economic leakages are high in developing countries. This is partly due to a significant share of food being imported for tourists, despite local food production. Research on the impediments of agriculture-tourism linkages in developing countries has so far taken mostly an economistic approach, finding a variety of supply, demand, marketing and policy related factors. To allow for a more holistic approach, this study takes a cultural perspective and investigates how the cuisine of large-scale, upmarket tourist resorts shapes agricultural development in SIDS, such as Fiji. Sahlins' (1992) theory of cultural change is combined with the corporate community development framework (Banks, Scheyvens, McLennan, & Bebbington, 2016) to explore the agency of Fijians in negotiating the impact of Western-dominated tourism.

This study employed ethnographic methods in a case study approach during a four-month field trip to Fiji. Participation and observation in a resort kitchen, field visits to other resorts, farms and food intermediaries, 38 interviews as well as document analysis enabled a rich representation of local viewpoints on food, culture and tourism. Large-scale resorts present Fijian cuisine either in the form of tokenistic 'island night shows', or in fusion concepts that cater to a few affluent guests. Fijian chefs rarely perceive their own cuisine as valuable, due to decades of Western-dominated tourism. The use of local produce is accordingly low and purposeful development of tourism-agriculture linkages is rare. Farmers, on the other hand, recognise resorts as a valuable market. Nevertheless, many Indo-Fijian farmers turn towards food exporters as a more reliable and predictable business partner. Indigenous food producers engage only to a degree that they deem valuable for their own socio-cultural needs and goals. Findings suggest that small-scale resorts, catering to niche markets, might be more conducive to local integration and sustainable tourism development. Policy-wise, developing the agricultural agenda of SIDS to match the requirements of Western diets might have environmentally and socially detrimental implications.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	viii
List of Pictures	viii
List of Abbreviations	x
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Fish'n'chips in Paradise	1
1.2 Globalisation, tourism and cultural change	3
1.3 Tourism in Fiji.....	8
1.4 Research aims and objectives.....	13
1.5 Key arguments	14
1.6 Chapter outline.....	14
2 TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT	17
2.1 Introduction	17
2.2 The economic perspective	17
2.3 Tourism's effects on destinations: Linkages, leakages and beyond	19
2.4 Tourism, development and sustainability	21
2.4.1 Tourism and development	21
2.4.2 Sustainable tourism	23
2.4.3 The nexus of sustainability and development: The good life.....	25
2.5 Tourism development in SIDS	27
2.6 Postcolonialism and neocolonisation through tourism	29
2.7 Corporate community development	32
2.7.1 From CSR to CCD	33
2.7.2 CCD and tourism	35
2.8 Chapter summary.....	38
3 TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	40
3.1 Introduction	40
3.2 Linking agriculture and tourism	40
3.3 Impeding factors	43
3.4 Critique of the literature	46
3.5 Examples of successful linkages	49
3.6 Agriculture-tourism linkages in Fiji.....	51

3.7	Chapter summary	55
4	CUISINE AND CULTURAL CHANGE	57
4.1	Introduction	57
4.2	The concept of cuisine	58
4.3	Fiji's cuisine	64
4.3.1	Society	64
4.3.2	Natural environment	68
4.3.3	Agriculture	70
4.3.4	Food	75
4.4	Cuisine as a 'recipe' for development?	78
4.5	Marshall Sahlins' theory of cultural change	80
4.6	Cuisine as a conduit of cultural change within the CCD framework	85
4.7	Chapter summary	87
5	METHODOLOGY	89
5.1	Introduction	89
5.2	Research paradigm	89
5.3	Culturally and ethically appropriate research in the Pacific	90
5.4	Case study approach	93
5.4.1	Choosing the case study	94
5.4.2	The Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort	95
5.5	Methods of data collection	97
5.5.1	Participant observation	99
5.5.2	Interviews	101
5.5.3	Document analysis	101
5.6	Research design and implementation	102
5.6.1	Scoping trip	103
5.6.2	Main period of fieldwork	104
5.7	Data analysis	106
5.7.1	Observations and reflections	106
5.7.2	Content analysis	106
5.7.3	Validity of qualitative data	107
5.8	Researcher positionality	108
5.9	Summary	110
6	A COOK'S POINT OF VIEW: THE OUTRIGGER RESORT	111
6.1	Introduction	111
6.2	A standard day in the kitchen	112
6.3	About cooks, chefs and places of birth	114

6.3.1	Becoming part of the team.....	114
6.3.2	Local and non-local chefs	115
6.3.3	Cultural differences.....	118
6.3.4	Good chefs are hard to find	120
6.3.5	Places of birth: Where chefs are made	125
6.4	What’s on the menu? In search of the local.....	126
6.5	A note on authenticity	135
6.6	Guests and what they want.....	137
6.7	What produce from where at which value.....	141
6.8	Decision-making on sourcing and the link to menus	145
6.9	Working with local farmers – “It’s the mind-set!”	148
6.10	Summary	150
7	PERSPECTIVES FROM THE WIDER RESORT INDUSTRY AND TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS.....	152
7.1	Introduction	152
7.2	The typology of resorts	154
7.3	Personal backgrounds and cooking styles.....	155
7.4	The menus	156
7.4.1	The hotel food paradigm – “You can’t touch those burgers!”	156
7.4.2	Local produce – “Why buy spinach?”	158
7.4.3	Guest expectations of ‘local cuisine’ – “It has to be there!”	161
7.5	Kitchen staff	163
7.6	Impediments to the creativity of executive chefs.....	164
7.7	Sourcing.....	164
7.7.1	Local versus imported.....	164
7.7.2	Direct sourcing from producers – “You’ve paid me enough on Wednesday!”	170
7.7.3	Chefs’ support for local producers – “It’s our duty!”	171
7.8	Development aid-supported local food projects – “Huge issues!”	172
7.9	Summary	174
8	AGRICULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS’ PERSPECTIVES	177
8.1	Introduction	177
8.2	The Outrigger’s fruit and vegetable suppliers	178
8.3	The Taiwan Technical Mission	182
8.3.1	Background.....	182
8.3.2	The Taiwan Technical Mission’s agenda.....	183
8.3.3	Farming issues as seen by the TTM	187
8.3.4	Papayas and guavas: Agricultural development projects.....	189
8.4	The Cane Coast Farmer Association	191

8.4.1	How farmers see TTM’s support	191
8.4.2	Curious minds, lacking education and the mind-set	192
8.4.3	Tourism – “Not just an industry”	194
8.5	The Ministry of Agriculture	195
8.5.1	Supporting farmers – “We are running this show”	196
8.5.2	Supporting the tourism-agriculture linkage – “We are encouraging”	198
8.6	Summary	200
9	DISCUSSION	202
9.1	Introduction	202
9.2	Applying the concept of cuisine	203
9.3	Sahlins and the humiliation of cuisine	205
9.3.1	Humiliation	205
9.3.2	Creativity and develop-man	208
9.4	Colonial remnants, the farmers’ mind-set and rational choices	214
9.4.1	Impeding factors – history repeating?	214
9.4.2	The mind-set of farmers	216
9.4.3	Resisting and integrating the tourism economy	219
9.5	Immanent flows, agricultural agendas and cuisine	220
9.5.1	The immanent flow of cuisine	220
9.5.2	The place of culture in CCD	222
9.5.3	Environmental implications of Western cuisine	225
9.6	Summary	227
10	CONCLUSION	229
10.1	Outcomes	229
10.2	Implications	233
10.3	Contributions	234
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	238
	APPENDICES	270
A.	Interview guidelines for semi-structured interviews	270
B.	The Outrigger’s guest comment card for restaurants	271
C.	Codes and categories	272

List of Tables

Table 1: Fiji's accommodation sector by rooms and area in 2016.....	12
Table 2: Factors impeding tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries	45
Table 3: The Outrigger Resort interviewees	111
Table 4: The Outrigger's kitchen staff by rank	117
Table 5: Weekly evening buffet themes at the Outrigger.....	129
Table 6: Outrigger's ten most valuable imported food items	145
Table 7: Coral Coast hotels and restaurant interviewees	153
Table 8: Tourism industry stakeholder interviewees.....	153
Table 9: Agricultural sector interviewees	178

List of Figures

Figure 1: Visitor arrivals in Fiji, 1983-2017.....	9
Figure 2: Monthly visitor arrivals in Fiji, 2016-2018	10
Figure 3: Fiji visitor arrivals by country in 2017 and change since 2013	11
Figure 4: The corporate community development framework	35
Figure 5: The tourism corporate community development framework	37
Figure 6: The concept of cuisine	64
Figure 7: Sahlins' cultural change theory in the CCD framework	86
Figure 8: Circular research strategy.....	98
Figure 9: Research design	103
Figure 10: Outrigger's food expenditure by category and source for one month in 2017	142
Figure 11: Sahlins' cultural change theory in the CCD framework	224
Figure 12: The concept of cuisine applied to a tourism context.....	230

List of Pictures

Picture 1: Map of Fiji's main islands and case study location.....	69
Picture 2: Aerial view of the Sigatoka river and the Coral Coast	70
Picture 3: The Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort	96
Picture 4: Bure-style accommodation at the Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort	96
Picture 5: Pawpaw and avocado salad at the Outrigger's <i>Lovo Night</i>	122
Picture 6: Commercial cookery students at the Technical College	124
Picture 7: Local fruit station at the Outrigger's breakfast buffet	127
Picture 8: <i>Meke</i> dance show at the <i>Magiti</i> dinner buffet.....	128
Picture 9: Ocean's Catch dinner buffet	130

Picture 10: Standard lunch order at Baravi Bar & Restaurant.....	131
Picture 11: IVI's fine-dining dishes.....	134
Picture 12: Pork from the spit at the <i>Magiti</i> dinner buffet	136
Picture 13: River prawns steamed in bamboo.....	137
Picture 14: Chef Miles's "Season market fish".....	160
Picture 15: Guava trees at the TTM research farm	184
Picture 16: Sandy soil of the Cane Coast at Dharman's farm	185
Picture 17: Clay-rich alluvial soil of the Sigatoka river valley	186
Picture 18: Small-holder farm, upper Sigatoka river valley	187
Picture 19: Papaya fruit tree plantation	190
Picture 20: Cane Coast Farmer Association's collection centre on Pushka's farm.....	192
Picture 21: Tomato field trial at a Ministry of Agriculture Research Station	196

List of Abbreviations

CCD	Corporate Community Development
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FHTA	Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association
GM	General Manager
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICDF	International Cooperation and Development Fund, Taiwan
MITT	Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Fiji
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji
PNG	Papua New Guinea
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPTO	South Pacific Tourism Organisation
TTM	Taiwan Technical Mission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1 Introduction

1.1 Fish'n'chips in Paradise

March 2012, Gansbaai, South Africa: I am cutting up pumpkins for a vegetable side dish in the kitchen of a luxurious lodge. The butternuts were grown next door in an organic farming and training project established by the lodge for unemployed women from local townships. Eight students had the chance to learn organic agricultural practices and apply those skills in their own backyards, hopefully increasing their family's food security. The project was supposed to be financed largely by the lodge's kitchen and its need for fresh local produce. The day before, the students had harvested a seasonal invasion of pumpkins while cheerfully lamenting they would not know what to do with them at home and they liked chicken, rice and mayonnaise much more anyway. Upon delivery, the white South African kitchen chef¹ looked at them piling up in his store room, mumbling: "What must I do with all this stuff?"

What sounded like a palatable tourism-led development project with a social entrepreneurial edge, based on the easily marketable idea of 'local food', turned out to be a case study of the multi-level and complex issues of tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries. Those that were supposed to benefit were not interested, because they opposed agricultural labour due to its role in the country's Apartheid history. The kitchen found a challenge in coping with seasonal supply and varying degrees of quality, quantity and consistency. Western tourists paid top dollars and expected *their* idea of 'good food', which mostly involved prime meat cuts. Despite the lodge's owner advocating for the project, no one felt in charge of driving it. Finally, no local culinary heritage was at hand to marry local food supply and tourism expectations into dishes that work for discerning travellers and chefs alike (see Laeis, 2012, 2016; Laeis & Lemke, 2016).

Notions of 'local' and 'ethnic' foods are all over the Western gastronomic agendas (National Restaurant Association, 2015, 2018) and, arguably, play a key role in tourism (Bessière, 1998; C. M. Hall & Sharples, 2003). Meanwhile, the employment of about 70 percent of the world's rural poor depends on agriculture (World Bank, 2016a). Vis-à-vis

¹ In this thesis I differentiate between chefs and cooks. The prior are more senior and in a leading position, whereas the latter are more junior and do not have managerial responsibilities.

significant economic leakages of tourism income in many developing countries (Anderson, 2013; Lacher & Nepal, 2010; D. Meyer, 2007; Pratt, Suntikul, & Dorji, 2018), the concept of linking local food production and tourism for the benefit of tourist experiences and rural communities seems obvious, yet remains a challenge in many developing countries (Rogerson, 2012b; Torres & Momsen, 2004).

May 2017, Coral Coast, Fiji: “New order’s up: two fish’n’chips, one club sandwich, one fun-in-bun²” shouts the sous chef in charge of the Outrigger resort’s pool bar kitchen. I get busy loading the two deep fryers in front of me with frozen potato chips, imported from Europe. Every dish of this new order comes with chips – as do most other dishes ordered for lunch by the predominantly Australian guests. I, on the other hand, came to Fiji to understand the relationship between large-scale upmarket resorts and local food producers and to potentially find answers to why both parties rarely connect well. I also came hoping to learn about the local Pacific island cuisine. It is important to note here that ‘cuisine’ is often used in everyday language to refer to the food, ingredients and recipes of a particular culture or geographic region. This thesis, however, will discuss cuisine in greater depth in Chapter 4 and develop it into a conceptual tool to examine tourism-agriculture linkages.

Fijian cuisine has recently received a fair amount of media attention in New Zealand and abroad. Mouth-watering TV food shows (Zoomslide, 2014), award-winning cookbooks (Oliver, Berno, & Ram, 2010, 2013) and the never-before-seen restaurant concept of Kai Pasifika in Auckland (Stewart, 2016) translate traditional Pacific island cuisine into dishes that seem enticing to the contemporary food enthusiast. Yet, here I was, in front of two deep fryers that almost could not handle the amount of deep fried items ordered during lunch service. I certainly did not expect to wind up in a McDonald’s-like restaurant on the premises of a five-star resort – not on an island that markets itself as the friendly, tropical and paradisiac heart of the South Pacific.

What happened to coconuts, root crops and fresh vegetables? Why were they not on the menu? Why was I serving food that could perhaps be served in any other given resort, or fast food restaurant, around the world without raising eyebrows? In pursuit of these questions it is important to bear in mind that tourism is one of the largest industries in the

² A mini hamburger on the kids menu.

world and part and parcel of a globalised and globalising economy. As such, tourism plays a significant role on the sustainable development agendas and in discussions around economic and cultural impacts on developing countries.

1.2 Globalisation, tourism and cultural change

The term globalisation entered the public debate in the early 1980s and has since developed into a symbol of our current age (Clark & Knowles, 2003). Some authors argue that it is due to globalisation that dichotomies of developed / developing countries³ came into being (e.g., Frank, 1969; Schech & Haggis, 2000). Other scholars, however, point towards the many positive economic outcomes of a globalised world (e.g., Norberg, 2003). The United Nations (UN, 2013b) conclude that in the meantime economic inequalities remain high and income disparities within many countries have increased. This is but a snapshot of the reality that globalisation is neither inclusive nor even (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015). From a broader perspective, globalisation certainly does not only pertain to the economy, but rather stretches to the most peripheral areas of societies, cultures and environments (McGrew, 1992). In this respect tourism presents an interesting phenomenon to study the intricacies and interconnections of economic and cultural flows across the globe. Arguably, such flows can lead to unprecedented homogenisation as well as conscious differentiation on many levels of society as people and capital move from one context and place to another, leaving behind metaphorical footprints wherever they go.

On the one hand, scholars argued that with growing globalisation cultures differentiate, fragment and possibly even conflict. For example, Huntington (1993) feared a cultural “clash of civilizations” (p. 22). The so-called ‘West’, made up of North American and European political, economic and societal institutions, would clash with ‘the Rest’, encompassing an alphabet soup of previous colonies, communist countries and Islamic and East Asian realms (Huntington, 1993). This terminology indicates Huntington’s argument of a power relationship in Foucauldian terms in favour of the West (S. Hall, 2006). From a tourism development perspective, however, culture can be turned into a regionalised

³ The author acknowledges the controversy about these terms, their meaning and trajectory. However, within this study the term ‘developing country’ will be used as a synonym and refers to the UN’s country classification based on economic performance indices. In terms of geographical regions, developing countries are based in Africa, Caribbean, Central America, South America, Asia (excluding Japan) and Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) (UN, 2013a).

asset that at best promotes local empowerment and authenticity (Bessière, 1998; Scheyvens, 2006; Williams & Gonzalez, 2017) and at worst facilitates policies of museum-like, sentimental conservation (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015) or even appropriation and commodification of cultures (Devine, 2017).

On the other hand, cultures can homogenise by forces of globalisation and merge into one global way of life (Inglis & Gimlin, 2009a). The West, most notably northern America, exports not only goods and services, but also cultural identity. On the receiving end (the Rest), some scholars claim, are countries which can but change their traditional practices to meet the requirements brought about by globalisation and liberalised markets (Rodrik, 1997, p. 1). This scenario arguably leads to what is framed as an emerging, homogenous global mass society (Beyer, 1994; Bird & Stevens, 2003; Worsley, 1999). Ritzer (2015) exemplifies this idea in his concept of ‘McDonaldisation’, whereby efficiency, calculability, predictability and control come to be maxims of almost any human activity. He illustrates how this process of rationalisation has swept through “seemingly impervious institutions ... and regions ... of the world” (p. 1). From a development perspective, this paradigm purports a victory march of Western values and a capitalistic consumption-driven society – and perhaps, as this research might imply, a form of ‘McTourism’. Nonetheless, Storper (2001) identifies diversification as a process that supersedes homogenisation and cultural differentiation. The emergence of an all-encompassing, homogenised global ‘McCulture’ is questionable and within capitalism culturally adaptive spaces can emerge after all. To this end, Inglis and Gimlin (2009a) argue that cultural differentiation can be a visceral reaction to homogenisation. In a sense, both might be inextricably linked, as Wilk (2006) has argued. The prolific growth of fast food chains and the subsequent and likewise successful rise of the international Slow Food movement, advocating for regional food identity and authenticity, is but one example.

As a third form of framing the interplay of globalisation and culture, and in a response to the dichotomous questions of homogenisation or clash, the concepts of ‘cultural hybridisation’ (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015) or ‘creolisation’ (R. Cohen, 2007; Hannerz, 1987) have been proposed. These concepts argue that cultures are a product of combination of various influences over time. This is best thought of as “rhizomes of culture” (Nederveen Pieterse, 2015, p. 57) that cross over from one cultural territory to another to mix and mingle. Likewise, R. Cohen (2007) posits that “participants select particular elements from incoming or inherited cultures, endow these with meanings different from those they

possessed in the original culture, and then creatively merge these to create new varieties that supersede the prior forms” (p. 369). In this sense, both scholars argue that the global becomes local and the local becomes global.

The relationship between culture and food provides a useful lens through which the reciprocal impact of culture and globalisation can be assessed (Mak, Lumbers, & Eves, 2012; Phillips, 2006; Wilk, 2006). In many parts of the world the current food system, especially the commercial food production and distribution (i.e. agribusiness), is ruled by a consortium of multinational corporations (MNCs) that allegedly thrive on the unequal power relations between developing and developed countries (E. M. Young, 2004). Mostly armed conflicts and climate change are mentioned as underlying reasons for the existence of an estimated 821 million hungry people in 2017 (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO, 2018). Other studies have argued, however, that the global food system, despite an increase in calories output in recent decades, does not operate for the benefit of the poor and hungry (B. D. McIntyre, Herren, Wakhungu, & Watson, 2009; Pretty, 2001). One of the key reasons for this situation lies within the structure of the agribusiness sector, as Constance, Hendrickson, and Howard (2014) examine. Since the 1990s the food industry has seen an increasing market power concentration and consolidation of MNCs. In many instances, procurement and distribution policies are determined by a few global players to the disadvantage of consumers and producers (Constance et al., 2014). The ramifications of this situation are manifold and highly contextual. However, its impact on global food culture is evident and would certainly be put under the McDonaldisation-category of globalisation.

Whether we think of uniform McDonald’s food or ethnic food of indigenous peoples, Montanari (2006) argues that food essentially *manifests* culture in all its stages: from production to preparation and consumption to value and meaning. Moreover, Fischler (1988) notes that food bridges culture and human nature. In his view, people’s food habits are not predetermined, but rather acquired and are central to the individual’s sense of identity. Because humans are omnivores it is culture that defines what may or may not be appropriate food (Fischler, 1988). With respect to globalisation’s play in shaping – or it being shaped by – food, Inglis and Gimlin (2009a) argue that it is not a singular process. Alluding to the three concepts of cultural differentiation, homogenisation and hybridisation mentioned above, they conclude that one should think of food globalisations (plural), which to them encompass:

The multiple modes of interaction (e.g. connection, penetration and mutual, although not necessarily equally weighted, influencing and restructuring) of the economic, political, social and cultural dimensions of globalization (i.e. forces, processes, institutions, structures, actors, networks, etc.) as these affect food-related matters, and as the latter in turn come to affect the former, in a series of ongoing dialectical relations characterized by the constant generation of forms of complexity. (Inglis & Gimlin, 2009a, p. 9)

This alludes to the fact that “food is everywhere richly cultural” (Egan, Burton, & Nero, 2006, p. 31); it is localised and highly dependent on the given natural and social circumstances. Food is not only commodity or mere sustenance, it is a means to represent cultural, political and social relationships (Oosterveer, 2006). In light of the homogenising forces of the present globalised food system scholars argue that developing countries are facing significant risks. Egan et al. (2006) assert that their local production has declined and consumption of internationally imported foodstuffs has increased. Moreover, they summarise that

[t]he broader social, economic, and political issues associated with these changes are numerous and include, among other things, important cultural disruptions. Local foods frequently express local cultural values in the ways that they bind people and land together in ecologically sustainable relationships. The diminished importance of these local foods in so many settings throughout the world speaks not only to reduced biodiversity in the earth’s food supply, but also to new challenges to cultural diversity. (Egan et al., 2006, p. 31)

A place where such ‘disruptions’ appear through the interconnectedness of globalisation, private businesses, culture and food is tourism, particularly so in developing countries. “Perhaps even more than the ubiquitous McDonald’s, international tourism symbolizes globalization not only in its massive movement of people to virtually every corner of the world but also in its linkage of economic, political and sociocultural elements” (Wood, 1997, p. 2).

Tourism in many ways epitomises the globalised links between business, food, culture and development of countries, for several reasons. Firstly, it is one of the largest industries of the world and thus by default “both a cause and a consequence of globalization” (Azarya, 2004, p. 949). The United Nation World Tourism Organisation estimates that numbers of international tourist arrivals have reached the all-time record of 1,326 million in 2017, generating about US\$ 1,340 billion in tourism receipts (UNWTO, 2018c, p. 2). With this international movement of travellers and capital comes an exchange of Western cultural values, life styles and business concepts (Fukuyama, 1992), which on a local level impacts destination societies’ “value systems, individual behaviour, family structure

and relationships, collective lifestyles, safety levels, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organizations” (Fox, 1977, p. 27). Secondly, tourism is one of the few global industries that are mentioned in the UN’s current sustainable development goals (SDGs) The global community has come to see tourism as a phenomenon that is associated with a range of factors essential to achieve sustainable development. For example, SDGs 8, 12 and 14 highlight tourism’s capacity to support sustainable economic growth, foster sustainable consumption and production patterns and conserve marine resources (UNWTO, 2016). Moreover, the fact that many attractive tourism destinations are located in developing countries (Mowforth & Munt, 2016) alludes to the potential role of tourism corporations in bringing about meaningful change in their host communities through alleviating poverty, hunger and gender inequalities, among others. Yet, Pleumarom and Ling (cited in Reflection group on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2016) heavily critique tourism for not being able to deliver sustainable development.

Despite pronouncements of tourism being a positive force for economic development and poverty eradication, tourism is inept at meeting the challenge of implementing the SDGs. Like no other industry, tourism promotes – and glamorizes – a hyper-mobile and hyper-consumeristic lifestyle, rendering sustainability elusive. In fact, tourism development is fraught with negatives including inequality, social and cultural erosion, environmental degradation and climate pollution. (p. 96)

Lastly, food is a key link that on the one hand reflects culture (Bessièrè, 1998), be it the host communities’ or the tourists’ culture and, on the other hand, constitutes one of the most important economic activities within tourism (S. L. J. Smith & Honggen, 2008). The latter has implications beyond the tourism industry, as agriculture is the principle livelihood of many in developing countries (Torres & Momsen, 2004). Moreover, food is a significant factor in developing destination preferences and experiences among tourists (Bessièrè, 1998; E. Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hjalager & Richards, 2002).

This study therefore argues that the menu of a restaurant in any given destination is a snapshot of the ongoing negotiation between globalising forces, such as market structures and cultural exchange, the host communities, food service establishments and tourists. For instance, in a developing country a restaurant menu filled with Westernised dishes (e.g., hamburgers, club sandwiches and chips), consisting of mostly imported food has overall very different implications than a menu made up of local food and depicting a cultural reflection of the host society. This train of thought is pertinent to every developing country seeking a place on the global tourism map. It is even more so important for

small island development states (SIDS) that heavily rely on tourism as their economic mainstay (Bojanic & Lo, 2016), such as Fiji.

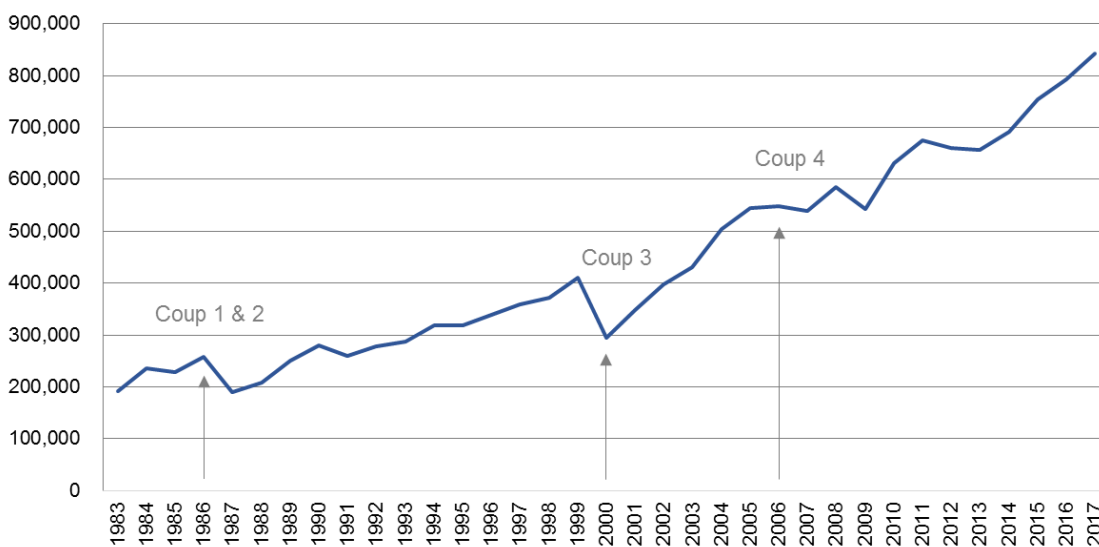
1.3 Tourism in Fiji

Fiji presents a valuable destination to study the effects of large-scale tourist resorts on local food producers through their cuisine for several reasons. On the one hand, Fiji records by far the highest number of international tourist arrivals of all SIDS within the South Pacific (South Pacific Tourism Organisation, 2018). The Government highlights tourism as a cornerstone of its economy, generating a significant share of its gross domestic product (GDP) (Ministry of Industry Trade and Tourism, 2017). On the other hand, researchers point out that in Fiji and other SIDS across the South Pacific the developmental impact of tourism remains rather shallow (Berno, 2011; Cheer et al., 2018). Interestingly, Fiji's first Prime Minister believed that tourism was not going to be a sustainable path to Fiji's future (Kanemasu, 2015). Meanwhile, increasing rural-urban migration and increasing inequalities has put pressure onto the rural areas in Fiji and other PICs (Connell, 2011). This calls for an agenda that shares the benefits of tourism more widely throughout the islands' society. European Union-funded aid programmes have identified the connection of agriculture and tourism in SIDS as a strategy for such sustainable development (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation, 2018a). Likewise, scholars emphasise that while tourist resorts may contribute to Fiji's economic development through lease money and employment, there is certainly room for improvement in terms of procuring local food (e.g., Berno, 2011; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012). But, in times where a beach-side restaurant receives a TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Award for 'best Fijian restaurant' for its Italian-style pizza and pasta (Nataro, 2017, February 11), questions arise about the feasibility of local procurement and the cultural impact of tourism.

Tourism in Fiji first gained economic prominence in the 1960s (Donnelly, Quanchi, & Kerr, 1994, p. 204), but the sugar industry remained an economic mainstay before in the 1990s Fiji pursued a tourism- and manufacturing-led growth strategy (P. K. Narayan & Prasad, 2005). Tourism in Fiji and other Pacific SIDS primarily takes shape as mass tourism associated with "sun, sand and sea" (Berno, 2011, p. 91). In terms of its regional significance, Fiji is by far the strongest tourism economy of all Oceanian SIDS (UNWTO, 2017, p. 9). In 2016 the travel and tourism industry directly contributed FJ\$1.3 billion (14.5 %) to Fiji's GDP. Forecasts predict an 8.6 percent increase for 2017 and a further

positive outlook until 2027. Including further economic effects in other parts of the economy, the industry had a total contribution of FJ\$3,599.2 million (40.4 %) to Fiji's GDP in 2016, according to the World Tourism and Travel Council⁴ (WTTC, 2017, p. 1). In the same year, accommodation providers generated FJ\$893 million turnover, of which 58 percent (FJ\$518.5 mil.) was accommodation-related and 23 percent (FJ\$205.5 mil.) was food-related (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018e). In sum, accommodation providers, such as hotels and resorts, generate just under 70 percent of Fiji's travel and tourism-related GDP. Fiji welcomed 842,884 international visitors in 2017, an increase of 6.4 percent since 2016 (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018e). This puts Fiji just below the average Oceanian growth rate of seven percent (UNWTO, 2018a). Between 1983 and 2017, Fiji's arrivals have grown annually by 4.5 percent on average⁵. Coups have negatively impacted tourist arrivals in the short term, especially in 1986 and 2000, as Figure 1 depicts, but numbers recovered quickly. In contrast, the 29 tropical cyclones that hit Fiji between 1982 and 2016 have not dealt much damage to Fiji's tourism industry (Jayaraman, Choong, Ng, & Bhatt, 2016). Since 2013, tourist arrivals have continuously marked record levels, as Figure 1 shows.

Figure 1: Visitor arrivals in Fiji, 1983-2017



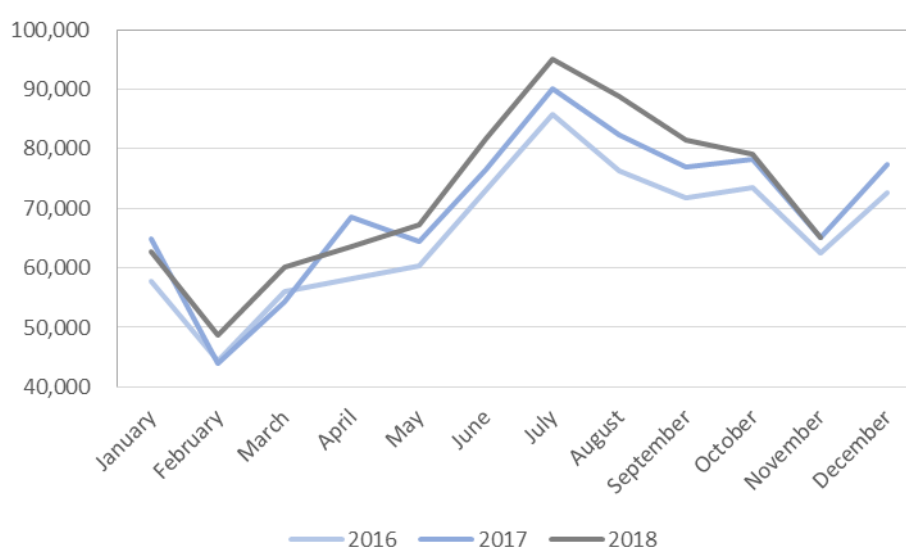
⁴ The WTTC has been criticised for exaggerating tourism's economic value; actual figures may be lower (S. L. Smith & Wilton, 1997).

⁵ Compound average growth rate, calculated based on data by Milne (1990) and the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (2018e).

Source: G. Laeis based on data from the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (2018e), Milne (1990) and Baron, Pizam, and Crofts (1997)

The year 2018 appears to be no exception, according to recent monthly arrival numbers, depicted in Figure 2. Furthermore, the figure shows that visitor arrivals follow a seasonal pattern. Strong months are June through to October as well as December, with an annual peak in July. Shoulder months are January, March, April, May and November. February can be seen as off-season.

Figure 2: Monthly visitor arrivals in Fiji, 2016-2018

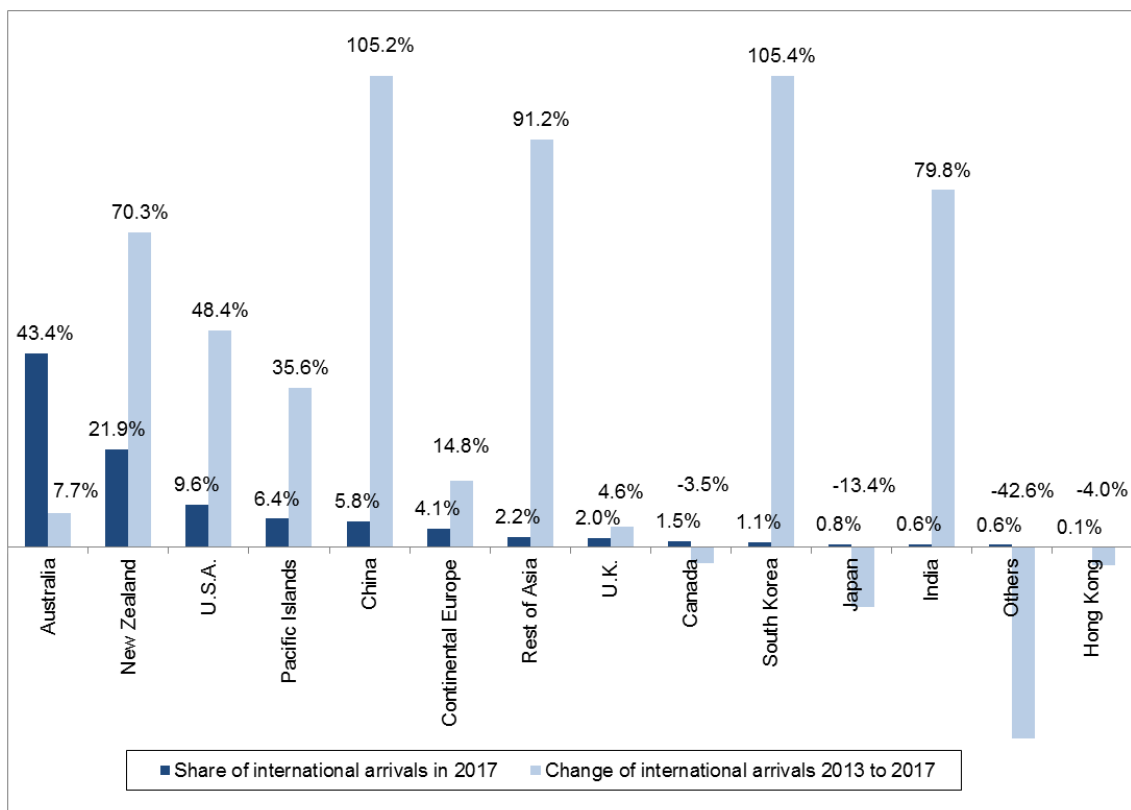


Source: G. Laeis based on data from the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (2018e)

Most visitors to Fiji come for holidays (2017: 74.8 %) and stay for about 4.9 nights (2016) (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018e). As presented in Figure 3, the majority of tourists came from Anglo-Saxon⁶ countries (78.4 %), mainly Australia (43.4 %), New Zealand (21.9 %), and the U.S. (9.6 %). Since 2013 Fiji has seen arrivals increase by 24.3 percent from this group of English-speaking countries, with New Zealand being the strongest growth market (+70.3 %). In contrast, Asian countries hold by far a smaller market share (9.9 % in 2017), but show significantly higher growth rates of 81.2 percent since 2013. The strongest growth markets have been South Korea (+105.4 %), China (+105.2 %), India (+79.8 %) and other Asian countries (+91.2 %).

⁶ In this thesis the term refers to developed countries where English is the primary language.

Figure 3: Fiji visitor arrivals by country in 2017 and change since 2013



Source: G. Laeis based on data from the Fiji Bureau of Statistics (2018e)

Overall, Fiji’s accommodation providers (hotels, resorts, hostels, etc.) offered about 3.5 million room nights⁷ in 2016, of which 51.7 percent were occupied. Most room nights were offered and booked in the areas of Nadi, the Coral Coast, Suva and the Mamanuca islands (see Table 1) (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018b). Suva is Fiji’s capital and hosts business and leisure travellers. Nadi, in contrast, is home to Fiji’s international airport and a tourism enclave named Denarau Island. This research project is based on the Coral Coast, close to Sigatoka town, and therefore within Fiji’s second largest tourism area, by available rooms.

⁷ ‘Room nights’ are a product of number of rooms and their availability. Example: a 100-room hotel open continuously throughout one year equals 36,500 room nights.

Table 1: Fiji's accommodation sector by rooms and area in 2016

Area	Available room nights	Sold room nights	Occupancy
Nadi	1,222,185	665,013	54.4 %
Coral Coast	685,110	361,755	52.8 %
Suva	553,308	347,555	62.8 %
Mamanuca	479,477	254,929	53.2 %
Northern Division	239,010	64,022	26.8 %
Others	112,516	26,949	24.0 %
Total	3,516,686	1,817,559	51.7 %

Source: G. Laeis based on data from Fiji Bureau of Statistics (2018b)

Statistics on numbers and categories of available accommodation in Fiji are not accessible. However, Mr. Dixon Seeto, President of the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association (FHTA), believed that Fiji needed further hotels and resorts. In his view, the increasing international arrivals and the development of international airline connections from and to Fiji needed to go hand in hand with a development of the local accommodation sector. He also emphasised the importance of the Asian tourist market and argued that a direct flight connection to China's mainland was of utmost importance for future tourism growth in Fiji (personal communication, 19. June, 2017).

This section has presented Fiji's tourism context. In sum, Fiji has departed its colonial history of being an agricultural producer and became a tourism-dominated economy. Political and environmental threats have so far not hampered this development to a great extent. As a destination Fiji depends on leisure visitors from Anglo-Saxon countries around the Pacific, most notably from Australia. However, Asian markets have grown significantly in the past years.

Further aspects of the country context are dispersed throughout this thesis. The status quo of tourism-agriculture linkages in Fiji as well as policies and projects initiated to address these are presented in Section 3.6. Finally, Section 4.3 provides Fiji's socio-political, environmental, agricultural and food-related context in an attempt to discuss what enacts Fijian cuisine.

1.4 Research aims and objectives

The “guiding theoretical problem” (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 32) of this research is the often invoked development strategy, yet mostly failing, linkage between hospitality operators and agricultural producers in developing countries. This research takes a cultural perspective on this problem and aims to investigate how the cuisine of large-scale upmarket tourist resorts shapes agricultural development in SIDS, such as Fiji.

1. **Research question:** In how far is ‘cuisine’, as a conduit of cultural change, a valuable analytical concept for understanding linkages between tourism, agriculture and development?

Objective 1.1: Discuss cuisine as an aspect of cultural change and in its relation to tourism-agriculture-development linkages.

Objective 1.2: Test its applicability and value in the context of SIDS.

2. **Research question:** How do kitchen staff of large-scale resorts, food intermediaries and farmers perceive the impact of a Western-dominated tourism industry in SIDS, such as Fiji?

Objective 2: Explore the experiences of Fijian⁸ kitchen staff, food intermediaries and farmers in their effort to negotiate the impact of Western tourism.

3. **Research question:** How can large-scale upmarket tourist resorts in Fiji, and more generally in SIDS, engage in meaningful local community development through linkages to food producers?

Objective 3: Examine current and potential strategies, based on food, local culture, procurement and production, that tourist resorts in SIDS could use to engage in meaningful development of local communities.

⁸ In this thesis, the term ‘Fijian’ refers to any citizen of Fiji. Indigenous Fijians are called *iTaukei*, and Fijians with Indian heritage are referred to as Indo-Fijians. This nomenclature is in line with current Fijian legislation (Naidu, 2013). However, it has also been contested in public media as superficially imposed by a military decree of the 2006 post-coup Government. Some claim that the term ‘Fijian’ refers to members of the *iTaukei* community, whereas ethnic Indo-Fijians rather identify as ‘Indians’ (Narsey, 2011).

1.5 Key arguments

To elaborate on the three research questions above, this study will look at tourism-agriculture linkages through the concept of cuisine. This focusses our viewpoint on the individuals that are involved along the food chain and their experiences with tourism in Fiji. The corporate community development framework (Banks et al., 2016) will be employed to contextualise the study in development theory and highlight how the agency of chefs, food intermediaries and farmers play out in very different ways. To this end, Sahlins' (1992) theory of cultural change will help to better understand how Western-dominated tourism influences the cultures of host communities.

Applying the concept of cuisine provides an entry point for this study. I argue that what type of foods are valued by guests, cooked by chefs and grown by farmers is a product of socio-cultural factors. Colonialisation, ethnic struggles and Westernisation, not least of all through tourism, have left their mark on Fijians and their understanding and valuation of local and foreign foods and crops. In this respect, the concept of cuisine and Sahlins' theory of cultural change help to understand questions around power and change in the cultural interface of tourism.

From a corporate development perspective this study argues that in Fiji linkages between large-scale resorts and farmers are left to emerge by default. If at all, some linkages are guided by the conviction, commitment and personal relationships of individuals. Purposefully created corporate-level programmes that seek to develop rural communities through food chains are almost non-existent. Farmers who want to benefit from the mass-tourism sector need to grow food according to the Western diet. This may not be, however, an environmental and socially sustainable pathway for SIDS. In this respect the question arises, whether linking tourism and local food production is valuable for sustainable development of SIDS at all. This speaks critically to the role of the private sector in being an engaged actor in sustainable development through tourism.

1.6 Chapter outline

This first chapter has set the scene by introducing how ideas of development, globalisation and cultural change intersect in food and tourism. Snapshots of the author's personal

experiences in resort kitchens in developing countries foreshadow the ethnographic methodology applied in this study. One of these countries, Fiji, is introduced in terms of its tourism context in greater detail before the three research aims are presented.

Chapters 2 and 3 present the literature review of this thesis. Chapter 2 starts off by introducing tourism as a tool for economic development, followed by a critical evaluation of tourism's potential to realise backward linkages to host economies. Concepts of more sustainable ways of organising tourism are then introduced, highlighting the notion of 'the good life' as a baseline concept for sustainable development. Subsequently, the chapter turns towards a discussion of the particularities of tourism development in SIDS. Then, alluding to the history of these island states, postcolonial theory is discussed as the development theory backdrop to this study. The chapter closes with a discussion of how the private sector has come to be an important agent of development. To this end, corporate community development is introduced as a framework that captures the interplay of businesses and local communities, arguing that the latter have agency in how they respond to the influences of the private sector.

Chapter 3 focusses entirely on the issues of backward linkages from the tourism industry to the agricultural sector in developing countries. An in-depth literature review of studies published since the 1980s reveals a number of critical insights in terms of research approaches, conceptualisations in development theory and methods applied. The chapter proceeds to an enumeration of successful examples of tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries before elaborating on the formation of such linkages in Fiji.

Building upon the findings of the previous chapter, Chapter 4 takes a conceptual approach, outlining how the significance of culture can be better integrated into research on tourism-agriculture linkages. To this end the concept of cuisine is proposed as a new and more holistic approach. A literature review discusses the role of food in society and the various factors that influence what gets eaten by whom and under what conditions. The concept is subsequently used to elaborate on Fiji and the factors that influence its cuisines, providing much of the societal, natural, agricultural and historical country context this study is based in. The chapter proceeds to outline why the concept of cuisine is used in this research as a viewpoint on corporate community development to better understand the issues involved in linking the tourism industry with agriculture in SIDS. Finally, Chapter 4 elaborates why Marshall Sahlins' theory of cultural change is a useful way of conceptualising how local communities negotiate the influence of the private sector.

Chapter 5 covers the methodology of this study. Firstly, the paradigm of social constructionism and the intricacies of conducting ethical and culturally appropriate research in South Pacific societies are expanded upon. Then the chapter explores the value of taking a case study approach using ethnographic methods. This section then introduces the Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort as the main case study. The chapter goes on to outline how participant observation, field visits, interviewing and document analysis were applied and how these methods have facilitated answering the three research questions mentioned above. Details of how these methods were applied in the course of two field visits to Fiji in 2016 and 2017 are given, before the procedures of data analysis and the researcher's positionality are described.

Chapters 6 to 8 report on the findings of this study. Chapter 6 starts off with the researcher's observations and experiences as a participating cook within the kitchen team of the Outrigger resort. Chapter 7 reflects on and triangulates these findings using interviews and observations from other resorts, hotels and restaurants as well as the wider tourism stakeholder community in Fiji. Chapter 8 changes perspectives and turns towards the viewpoints of the agricultural stakeholders, such as farmers, agricultural development projects, food suppliers and Government staff.

Chapter 9 discusses the findings of the previous three chapters by drawing upon the literature and theory framework of this study. First, the usefulness of the concept of cuisine to explore the aims of this study is explained. Subsequently, Sahlins' theory of cultural change is employed to explore the effects of Western-dominated mass tourism on chefs, food intermediaries and farmers. This highlights the various degrees of agency people have within their different positions along tourism-agriculture linkages. Finally, the interactions between large-scale upmarket resorts and local communities is conceptualised through the lens of corporate community development, highlighting how Sahlins' theory can be applied in this respect.

Finally, Chapter 10 concludes this study. A summary of its outcomes in relation to the three research questions is provided before the chapter expands on the findings' implications and various contributions this research has made.

2 Tourism and Development

2.1 Introduction

Tourism as one of the largest industries in the world is part and parcel of a prolific globalised economic system that impacts many developing countries. The idea of tourism as a tool for economic development has been broadly discussed since the 1970s. It is often seen as an opportunity for developing countries with few other resources to expand their economic base, increase foreign currency reserves and provide employment for their people. This chapter scrutinises the notion of tourism as a development tool with particular reference to SIDS. The first two sections elaborate on the extent of the economic power that tourism has in developing countries and how this materialises – or not – through linkages to other sectors of an economy. The chapter continues by elaborating on how more sustainable forms of tourism are defined and how this is situated within ideas of sustainable development. The chapter criticises that ‘sustainable development’ is often defined from a Western perspective, which leads on to a discussion of the particular circumstances of SIDS. To this end an elaboration on postcolonialism and the critique of tourism as a form of neocolonialism frames the underlying development theory of this research. Finally, the role of the private sector as an agent of development is highlighted through the introduction of a framework that examines the interactions between corporate capital and local communities. The chapter concludes that despite the validity of the neocolonial critique of tourism, host communities have agency in the process of negotiating the economic and cultural impact of a globalised tourism industry.

2.2 The economic perspective

Tourism is seen as “the single largest peaceful movement of people across cultural boundaries” (Lett, 1989, p. 277) and one of the largest industries in the world. Since 2012 international tourist arrivals have grown annually by 4.4 percent, recording close to 1.2 billion arrivals in 2015 (UNWTO, 2016, p. 15). In the same year the industry was directly responsible for about three percent of global GDP as well as 3.6 percent of employment. Including indirect economic impacts, such as economic effects through tourism supply chains and capital investment into tourism, figures were about threefold (WTTC, 2016, p. 1).

Economies arguably benefit from promoting tourism. A meta-study on tourism's contribution to economic growth (i.e. the so-called tourism-led growth hypothesis) found that on average, economies are likely to benefit from promoting inbound tourism (Brida, Cortes-Jimenez, & Pulina, 2016). However, some scholars assert that the effects are stronger in industrialised than in developing countries (Cárdenas-García, Sánchez-Rivero, & Pulido-Fernández, 2015). Again others attest that with respect to developing countries there is no significant relationship at all, even though a positive indication may be apparent (Ekanayake & Long, 2011). Asiedu and Gbedema (2011) argue that tourism holds potential for “those developing countries that possess natural beauty and the relevant infrastructure but lack other significant exploitable natural resources” (p. 30) – a condition found in a number of developing countries, especially SIDS. This potential is mainly generated by tourists from developed countries, especially Europe and North America (Shaw & Williams, 1994), or otherwise known as ‘the West’, who still present the largest number of global travellers. In 2010 developed economies realised significantly more tourism revenue from international tourism (63 %) than developing economies (37 %) (UNWTO cited in Sharpley, 2015, p. 19). Notwithstanding, tourism in developing countries gained momentum as their market share in international tourist arrivals increased from 37.6 percent in 2000 to 45.3 percent in 2014 (UNWTO, 2015b, p. 4). Between 2003 and 2012, emerging economies, including developing countries, saw significantly higher growth rates of international tourist arrivals than advanced economies (5.6 % and 1.8 % per annum respectively); emerging economies also generate about five times as much income through tourism (about US\$386 billion in 2012) than development assistance funds directed to them (UNWTO, 2013, p. 16).

Given these circumstances there is strong agreement across academia, governments and international institutions that tourism can increase foreign exchange earnings, create jobs for various qualification levels, offer business opportunities and attract foreign investments (Sharpley, 2015; Simons-Kaufmann, Kaufmann, Sloan, & Legrand, 2012; Torres & Momsen, 2004). Medina-Muñoz, Medina-Muñoz, and Gutiérrez-Pérez (2016), however, oppose this notion. Through a critical review of 172 studies on the effects of tourism on poverty alleviation, the authors found contradictory evidence about tourism's value for the poor. Medina-Muñoz et al. concluded that tourism development has not been inclusive. A recent study by Oviedo-García, González-Rodríguez, and Vega-Vázquez (2018) support this finding in the case of the Dominican Republic, where “sun-and-sea

all-inclusive tourism” (p. 1) has neither alleviated poverty nor reduced inequality. Therefore, how the economic value of tourism plays out for host communities in developing countries warrants further elaboration.

2.3 Tourism’s effects on destinations: Linkages, leakages and beyond

Tourism’s *direct* economic impact on a host economy mainly materialises as earnings of employees and entrepreneurs. The industry is regarded as comparably labour intensive, offering a wide range of opportunities for workers from all skill levels (Ashley, De Brine, Lehr, & Wilde, 2007). A number of scholars argue, however, that one of the main reasons why tourism is seen as a valuable macroeconomic option in developing countries is its ability to create various backward linkages into other industries through *indirect* and *induced* economic contributions along the greater tourism value chain (Sharpley, 2015; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008; Torres & Momsen, 2005). The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2018) defines indirect contributions as the share of tourism and travel receipts that are passed on to the industry’s supply chain (e.g., food suppliers), government spending on travel and tourism services and, lastly, capital investments into the travel and tourism industry (e.g., building a new hotel). Induced contributions materialise from the “spending by those who are directly or indirectly employed by travel and tourism” (WTTC, 2018, p. 11). Globally, indirect and induced contributions accounted for 69 percent of the total travel and tourism economic impact of US\$ 8,272.3 billion in 2017 (WTTC, 2018, p. 1). However, not all of the direct and indirect economic effects remain within the host country.

Economic leakage is one of the main criticisms directed at those who claim tourism is a successful tool for development. Leakages occur when income from tourism is passed on to non-local businesses or individuals for the provision of labour or services (Sandbrook, 2010). Lacher and Nepal (2010, p. 82) outline four underlying reasons why leakages occur in a tourism industry context: non-availability of funds to set up local supply structures, lack of local ownership, lack of local employment and, lastly, the failure to establish linkages between primary tourism enterprises and supporting local businesses. Additionally, Dwyer and Thomas (2012) argue that the economic expansion of the tourism sector in developing countries leads to increase domestic prices and therefore also result in an

increase of importation. With respect to developing countries it is estimated that economic leakages amount to about 50 percent on average (Worldwatch Institute, 2003), whereas more advanced and diversified countries experience only 10 to 20 percent (Diaz Benevides, 2001, cited in D. Meyer, 2007, p. 561).

In the case of SIDS, leakage factors are reported to reach up to 70 percent (Milne, 1990). Evidence, however, varies. In Mauritius just 30 percent of gross tourism revenue supposedly leaves the economy (Deloitte & Touche, 2002, cited in Sharpley & Naidoo, 2010, p. 152), whereas reports on Zanzibar speak of about 80 percent (Anderson, 2013, p. 72) and in Fiji of about 40 to 60 percent (Berno, 2011, pp. 91-92; Berno, 2005, and SPTO, 2005, cited in Robertson, 2006, p. 24). As Veit (2007), referring to Shiavo-Camp (1982), pointed out, this rate appears to be stable over time. One factor in economic leakages through food is the importation of food for tourists. For example, in Niue a vast majority of restaurants and cafés serve Western style menus. Imported produce is responsible for about 90 percent of their food bill (Singh, Milne, & Hull, 2012, p. 470), whereas in Fiji the Ministry of Tourism suggests that 80 percent of food sold to tourists is imported (cited in Berno, 2011, p. 92). Both observations allude to high economic leakages in tourism overall. These findings suggest that even though tourism poses a significant economic opportunity for developing countries, leakages may considerably impede its *de facto* value.

Tourism may yet represent a legitimate development tool in economic terms that can reach beyond its primary impact, but how to harness the industry's power to achieve development goals and move towards more sustainable tourism remains contested. Spenceley and Meyer (2012) therefore argued that the analyses of tourism as a tool for sustainable development need to move away from a mere economic impact focus and look at tourism "as a powerful social force that needs to be better understood in order to connect it more effectively to development agendas" (p. 301; see also Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006). Above and beyond its direct economic impact, tourism may influence livelihoods positively in other ways. Croes and Vanegas (2008) summarised that

tourism expansion and development both need to receive support from and give support to the local communities, because tourism activities affect an entire community. This means that [a] new growth and development strategy should focus on increased economic participation, social equity, and thus poverty reduction. (p. 96)

A number of authors have highlighted social and cultural benefits that tourism businesses can bring to local communities (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010, pp. 61-64; Scheyvens, 2011, p. 129; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012), for example:

- encourage corporate visitor groups to provide hands-on help with community projects;
- support of local cultural events (e.g., sporting and religious events);
- environmental protection or restoration projects;
- assistance during and after natural disasters;
- non-paternalistic local business mentoring, possibly in the form of joint ventures;
- provide access to IT, transport and healthcare infrastructure;
- support awareness of value of indigenous culture;
- community empowerment and institution building through consultation processes.

In sum, numerous ways exist in how tourism can support host communities beyond their economic wellbeing. Such findings were, however, criticised for being based on “micro-level and anecdotal case studies” (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010, p. 62). Moreover, numerous scholars claimed that tourism fosters unequal relations with high degrees of dependencies, as well as inequitable social, economic, environmental and spatial development (e.g., Britton, 1982; de Kadt, 1979; Medina-Muñoz et al., 2016; Milne, 1997; Mowforth & Munt, 2016; Scheyvens, 2011; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015; Spenceley & Meyer, 2012). To this end the question arises what would constitute a more sustainable form of tourism.

2.4 Tourism, development and sustainability

2.4.1 Tourism and development

Since the 1950s proponents of modernisation theory have argued that Western economic growth and modernisation principles, including tourism, can help overcome the so-called ‘backwardness’ of developing countries (Peet & Hartwick, 2015; Radcliffe, 2006a). However, in the 1970s and 1980s tourism was framed by critics within the context of

neocolonial theory, among others, arguing that former colonies were once more made dependent on the economic powers of developed countries. As Britton (1982) pointed out, tourism was criticised for not delivering much benefit to developing countries; their labour, natural resources, and culture was exploited and in many cases commodified (tourism as a form of neocolonialism will be discussed in greater detail in Section 2.6). Even though this criticism still has merit (Mowforth & Munt, 2016), the rise of a new sustainable development agenda (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) and the ensuing international conferences on sustainable development instigated a new approach towards tourism (Ruhanen, Weiler, Moyle, & McLennan, 2015). Tourism was framed within the larger debate about sustainable development and multiple research directions on ‘sustainable tourism’ have since emerged (Ruhanen et al., 2015, pp. 524-526).

At this stage it is important to note that the terms ‘sustainability’, ‘development’ and ‘tourism’ are frequently used in a variety of combinations and contexts and have produced a jigsaw puzzle of meanings. Overall, however, two main research trajectories can be delineated. On the one hand, scholars look at sustainability aspects of tourism and their development as such. This literature is mostly based in *developed countries* and evolves around issues of sustainable business development and performance, tourism planning, waste management, energy efficiency and consumer behaviour (e.g., Alonso-Almeida, Bagur-Femenias, Llach, & Perramon, 2015; Cheng, 2016; Coles, Dinan, & Warren, 2016; López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016; Maxim, 2016; Nickerson, Jorgenson, & Boley, 2016; Qian & Schneider, 2016; Souto, 2015). On the other side, researchers look at sustainable tourism issues mainly in a *developing country* context where issues of sustainable development (i.e. the development of the ‘underdeveloped’) prevail. Themes such as poverty reduction, environmental conservation, community development and empowerment, social inclusion and livelihood resilience as well as cultural heritage, are among the key foci (e.g., Ashley et al., 2007; Ashley & Haysom, 2009; Azarya, 2004; F. Brown & Hall, 2008; Hughes & Scheyvens, 2015; Mowforth & Munt, 2016; Saner, Yiu, & Filadoro, 2015; Scheyvens, 2011; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008; Torres & Momsen, 2004). This research will draw particularly on the latter body of knowledge, yet it is acknowledged that any research within the greater scheme of sustainable development needs to cross-cut a broader range of perspectives. To build a sound basis for further elaborations on the topic, the following subsection provides a broadly

accepted definition of sustainable tourism and connects this with concepts of sustainable development in a more general sense.

2.4.2 Sustainable tourism

In simple words, *sustainable tourism* is defined as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNWTO & UNEP, 2005, p. 12). This builds on the Brundtland Report’s definition of sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) by reflecting the notion of intra- and intergenerational equity as well as on the concept of economic, social and environmental responsibilities (Elkington, 1999). This definition is accompanied by 12 goals for a sustainable tourism agenda that help delineate and understand its greater implications:

1. **Economic viability:** To ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to continue to prosper and deliver benefits in the long term.
2. **Local prosperity:** To maximize the contribution of tourism to the prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally.
3. **Employment quality:** To strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
4. **Social equity:** To seek a widespread distribution of economic and social benefits from tourism throughout the recipient community, including improving opportunities, income and services available to the poor.
5. **Visitor fulfilment:** To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
6. **Local control:** To engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making about the management and future development of tourism in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders.
7. **Community wellbeing:** To maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.
8. **Cultural richness:** To respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctiveness of host communities.
9. **Physical integrity:** To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes, both urban and rural, and avoid the physical and visual degradation of the environment.
10. **Biological diversity:** To support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife, and minimize damage to them.

11. **Resource efficiency:** To minimize the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.
12. **Environmental purity:** To minimize the pollution of air, water and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors. (UNWTO & UNEP, 2005, pp. 18-19, emphasis added)

This set of goals reaches beyond mere economic sustainability and outlines the relationships between host communities, fragile environments and the tourism industry that need to be respected to create sustainable tourism. As a major part of the tourism industry, accommodation, gastronomy and catering businesses – the hospitality sector – need to carefully consider their role in sustainable development as well. Sloan, Legrand, and Chen (2013, p. 27) outline that hotels, for instance, can support sustainable development through environmental, social and economic programmes that align with the 12 goals presented above.

A decade after these goals had been suggested, the UN agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), accompanied by 169 targets, which structure the international development agenda until 2030 (UN, 2016). In this context, tourism's importance for achieving sustainable development is highlighted in three SDGs as well as by declaring 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism (UNWTO, 2018b). SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth targets to “devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products” by 2030 (Target 8.9). SDG 12 on responsible production and consumption aims to “develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products” (Target 12b). Lastly, SDG 14 on oceans and marine resources proposes to “increase the economic benefits to SIDS and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism” (Target 14.7) (see various SDGs and target descriptions in UNWTO, 2015a).

These targets suggest that tourism is primarily seen as a tool that creates jobs and economic benefits. Apart from these direct references, the UNWTO stresses that tourism is directly or indirectly related to all SDGs. For example, with respect to food and agriculture (SDG 2) tourism supposedly helps to “achieve food security” by “promoting the production, use and sale of local produce in tourist destinations and its full integration in the tourism value chain” (UNWTO, 2015a, p. 3). Monshausen, Tremel, Plüss, Koschwitz,

and Lukow (2016) emphasise that meeting a number of targets is “indispensable in order to make tourism sustainable” (p. 7), for instance Target 2.3:

By 2030, double the productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment. (UN, 2016)

Agriculture and food production, in turn, are closely linked to climate change and the health of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, covered by SDGs 13, 14 and 15.

2.4.3 The nexus of sustainability and development: The good life

From a broader perspective, definitions of what constitute ‘development’ go much beyond such economic and environmental foci and resonate rather with the scope of UN-WTO and UNEP’s 2005 definition of sustainable tourism. Chambers (1995), for instance, defined development as “good change” (p. 174). In his view, “[t]he objective of development is well-being for all” (Chambers, 1997, p. 9). Well-being is subjective, highly contextual (Copestake, 2008) and differs from concepts of wealth or poverty, which relate mainly to economic status. Even though every individual may have a distinct perception of what well-being encompasses, Chambers (1997) believed that a majority would “agree to include living standards, access to basic services, security and freedom from fear, health, good relations with others, friendship, love, peace of mind, choice, creativity, fulfilment and fun” (p. 10). Copestake (2008) emphasised that understanding well-being from a local perspective helps to reveal the intentions behind a ‘development’ initiative and the perceptions of those affected by it. In order for well-being to occur through change, change needs to be good. To Chambers’ mind such change hinges on the security of livelihoods, the range of capabilities people possess to pursue their livelihoods, a consideration of the poor in all contexts and, finally, economic, social, institutional and environmental sustainability.

Drawing on Chambers’ (1997) ideas, Thomas (2000) defines development more broadly as the process of achieving “a vision ... of the state of being a desirable society” (p. 29). Desirable and good to whom, however, is not always clearly defined, as Sharpley (2015) pointed out. One might assume that such universally applicable concepts as environmental purity or social equity embedded in the sustainable tourism agenda above would be desirable to any given society. Nevertheless, the question of what constitutes a ‘desirable

society’, or simply put ‘the good life’ is essentially an ethical issue. Sharpley (2015) summarises that a good life is defined by three fundamental values, drawing on work by human development theorist Goulet (1968):

- *the sustenance of life*: all people have basic requirements, such as food, shelter and health, without which ‘a state of underdevelopment exists’.
- *esteem*: all individuals seek self-esteem, a sense of identity, self-respect or dignity. The nature of esteem varies from one society to the next and may be manifested in increased wealth and material well-being or, conversely, in the strengthening of spiritual or cultural values.
- *freedom*: in the context of development, freedom represents increased choice for the individual members of society and freedom from servitude to ignorance, nature, other societies, beliefs and institutions. (Sharpley, 2015, p. 21, emphasis in original)

For the purpose of this research, this definition of development as the transformation of societies towards what constitutes a good life is taken as a baseline definition of ‘development’. Concepts of what constitutes wellbeing, happiness or a ‘good life’ differ between cultures. However, underlying assumptions of, for instance, happiness are often taken for granted by those that engage with it (Kingfisher, 2013).

Following Copestake’s (2008) call for a local understanding of well-being, Subsection 4.3.1 will briefly explore the Fijian understanding of well-being and ‘good life’. For now, this subsection concludes a discussion on the interconnectedness of tourism, development and sustainability, arguing that tourism can support sustainable progress in developing countries, if factors beyond economic success are considered. Too often when discussing development through tourism, the ‘good life’ was defined from a developed country perspective where tourism was “seen as both a vehicle and a symbol at least of westernisation, but also, more importantly, of progress and modernisation” (Roche, 1992, p. 566). This notion goes hand in hand with the fact that the majority of international tourism flows stem from Western industrialised countries. Consequently, there is ongoing debate about whether or not tourism is an appropriate agent for development, given the argument that it may impose Western concepts of the good life (Gascón, 2015; Mowforth & Munt, 2016; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008). This critique is particularly relevant to SIDS, such as Fiji, which are in most cases highly dependent on a tourism economy as well as subject to a colonial history and its cultural implications, as the following sections outline.

2.5 Tourism development in SIDS

Tourism in SIDS is often an important economic sector (Roe & Urquhart Khanya, 2001). SDG 14, outlined earlier, highlights this fact well. Yet, Ruhanen et al. (2015, p. 525) argued that the reliance of SIDS on tourism and its ramifications play only a minor role in the overall research arena of sustainability and tourism. This research therefore pays particular attention to the environment and history of SIDS as they relate to tourism.

The UN (2015) classifies 57 countries as SIDS, of which eight⁹ are also part of the world's 48 least developed countries. Tourism assumes a particular role in terms of development in all SIDS, as they face a number of developmental challenges due to their particular natural, economic, social and historical circumstances. Pratt (2015, p. 149) summarised those challenges in four categories:

- small size (both geographically as well as population-wise, results in small resource bases and domestic markets and thus a high propensity to import goods);
- remoteness and insularity (increases transportation costs);
- environmental vulnerability (due to lower education levels, weaker governance structures, low per capita income as well as climate change);
- socio-economic factors (such as reliance on foreign aid and remittances as well as heavy out-migration, unemployment and excessive bureaucracy).

Due to these characteristics as well as their desirable attributes for tourists, tourism has become the dominant economic sector for many SIDS (Bojanic & Lo, 2016; Sharpley, 2015; UNWTO, 2014). Between 2000 and 2013 international tourist arrivals to SIDS grew from 28 million to 41 million (+46 %) and tourism exports increased from US\$26 billion to US\$53 billion (+104 %) (UNWTO, 2014, p. 2). These numbers depict a quantitative as well as a qualitative tourism growth. Economic figures further indicate that, firstly, many SIDS show a high degree of dependence on tourism in terms of contribution to total country GDP. The world's top ten countries in terms of tourism contribution to GDP are all SIDS (Schubert, Brida, & Risso, 2011, based on WTTC figures). Secondly, they generate some of the highest international tourism receipts per capita (Ashe, 2005, cited in Scheyvens & Momsen, 2008, p. 23). As already alluded to by Pratt (2015, p. 149)

⁹ Comoros, Haiti, Kiribati, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu (UN, 2015).

above, the small size of SIDS creates a small domestic market, narrow productive bases and, therefore, low economic diversification and limited exports. These characteristics make for a vulnerable market and a dependence on international trade and foreign direct investments (Shareef, Hoti, & McAleer, 2008). Not surprisingly, the tourism-led growth hypothesis has been confirmed in the case of SIDS (Seetanah, 2011; Teelucksingh & Watson, 2013).

The images of ‘sea, sand and sun’, natural beauty and remoteness provide SIDS with a competitive advantage over many other tourist destinations (Jackman, Lorde, Lowe, & Alleyne, 2011). Tourism has therefore become a common development strategy for many SIDS that turn away from their colonial past of being exporters of natural resources or agricultural products (Prasad, 2003) and towards increasing tourism development (Schubert et al., 2011). In small and dispersed island states, tourist resorts can become “an economic zone in the middle of nowhere” (Pittar, 2011, cited in Scheyvens & Hughes, 2015, p. 140), offering employment and basic infrastructure to communities which rely on subsistence agriculture, fisheries and / or remittances. In this respect Bojanic and Lo (2016) point out, however, that an

overreliance on tourism can have a negative impact on economic development. However, if countries focus their efforts on sustainable tourism practices and government policies, they can actually benefit from higher levels of tourism reliance. This is particularly true for SIDS. (p. 213)

As far as the UNWTO (2014) is concerned, sustainable tourism development is essential for SIDS, as it “is the only path to ensure that the sector continues to advance socio-economic welfare while protecting their fragile ecosystems” (p. 2). Environmentally and socially sustainable approaches to tourism development should be, without doubt, a priority for SIDS. However, given their various developmental challenges stated above vis-à-vis their significant economic reliance on tourism, we should question according to whose agenda is tourism planned and executed in SIDS. To this end Scheyvens and Momsen (2008) emphasised that governments need to move beyond developing tourism “in line with neoliberal growth-oriented policies” (p. 22); rather, they should encourage participation of local communities in decision-making processes, endorse their rights and provide investments in and education on tourism.

Tourism critics like Britton (1982) and Brohman (1996) argue that SIDS, in particular, find it difficult to overcome poverty and inequality because of their colonial heritage,

foreign dominance of tourism MNCs and lack of educated populace. The following section therefore draws attention to the theory of postcolonialism in relation to tourism and establishes the development theory this research is based in.

2.6 Postcolonialism and neocolonisation through tourism

The history of modern European imperialism and colonialism since the 1500s established European countries as both political and cultural powers over a vast range of countries on the African, American and Asian continents as well as the Pacific, Caribbean and Indian Oceans. After reaching political independence from Western hegemony in the decades after the Second World War, former colonies, particularly SIDS, remained economically dependent on their former colonisers as well as heavily impacted by the introduced Western culture (S. Hall, 1992; Jaakson, 2004). Said (1978) argued famously that the colonisation of the Orient has led to not only a questionable representation of the Orient on Western terms, but also to a way of structuring and gaining continuous power over the Orient. His work inspired the critique that postcolonial representations “continue to frame how the world is seen through Western eyes and legitimize contemporary economic and geopolitical interventions” (McEwan, 2014, p. 45). Out of these realisations a critical postcolonial discourse emerged that “sought to undo Europe’s appropriation of ‘the other’ (the non-European)” (Peet & Hartwick, 2015, p. 234). This discourse scrutinises the cultural impact of colonisation from its first manifestation until today (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1989, p. 2).

From a development perspective, postcolonial theory criticises “key Western concepts of progress and development” (Peet & Hartwick, 2015, p. 238), such as democracy, technological advancement or division of labour, that are frequently accepted by default as the preferred way of development (Kapoor, 2004; Peet & Hartwick, 2015). McEwan (2009, p. 117) adds that a postcolonial vantage point on development contexts helps to understand cultural production and reproduction as well as the relationship between power and capitalism in developing countries. The critical reflection on development practices and discourses, however, has also been criticised for not necessarily offering solutions to the problems at hand, but merely providing a starting point for critique. Nederveen Pieterse (2000) argued that postcolonial theory, among other post-theories, was “directionless in the end” (p. 187). However, the careful consideration of non-Western ontologies is be-

coming increasingly important in development thinking as countries such as Brazil, Russia, India and China gain importance in global politics (Sidaway, 2012) and may challenge Western notions of development.

Postcolonial scholars continue to criticise the hegemonic power of former colonisers, including the United States, over their ex-colonies. Given the imbalance of tourism flows from mainly the wealthier developed to developing countries, as outlined in Section 2.2, criticism of tourism as a recurring form of colonialism, so-called neocolonialism, emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Yet, C. M. Hall and Tucker (2004a, p. 6) argue that the value of postcolonial theory to the study of tourism has not yet been sufficiently realised.

Nash (1989) tied colonialism to the notion of imperialism and argued that through the encouragement of international investments in developing countries, tourism is in fact a form of financial imperialism. Galtung (1971) elaborated further that such imperialism may exist in multiple forms, such as economic, cultural, military, communication and/or political imperialism, alluding to the fact that tourism is not merely an economic force. Matthews (1978, p. 79) argued that tourism could be thought of as a new ‘plantation economy’ in which wealthier Western countries seek to dominate the tourism markets of developing countries for the benefits of their Western tourists. He exemplified his argument with American and multinational companies’ economic control of the Caribbean islands’ tourism economy. This circumstance led Crick (1989) to refer to tourism as ‘leisure imperialism’. Britton (1982) located the same issue in island states of the South Pacific. To his mind they became peripheral production places of services in a trading relationship dominated by wealthy metropolitan consumers of the West, just as they had been under colonial rule. Nash (1989) outlined this argument in broader terms, echoing Galtung (1971) by proposing that

at the most general level, theories of imperialism refer to the expansion of a society’s interests abroad. These interests – whether economic, political, military, religious, or some other – are imposed on or adopted by an alien society, and evolving intersocietal transactions, marked by the ebb and flow of power, are established. (p. 38)

The postcolonial character of tourism is therefore not one of direct military and political interventions, but of an indirect domination through “the expansion of capitalism and economic and cultural globalisation so that the core powers exercise influence over the postcolonial periphery” (C. M. Hall & Tucker, 2004a, p. 2). On this ground some scholars

argued that there is a need to carefully consider the “ambiguous gift of capitalist modernity” (C. M. Hall & Tucker, 2004a, p. 6) and its cultural imperialisms as part and parcel of globalisation (Britton, 1991; various chapters of C. M. Hall & Tucker, 2004b; Mowforth & Munt, 2016). Jaakson (2004) elaborated further on the downside of capitalist expansion in the form of globalisation through tourism:

Capitalism in its quest for competitiveness seeks out and exploits differences in the cost of labour, favourable trade and permissive social and environmental regulations. The result is a global ‘race to the bottom’ between developing countries competing to be the recipients of outsourcing from developed countries of manufacturing and service provision. Corporate globalisation creates externalities, such as environmental degradation, pollution and resource depletion, which poor countries, already stretched fiscally, are unable to cope with. (pp. 171-172)

To this end C. M. Hall (1994) provided an example of how tourism has led to a new form of imperialism. He argued that the planning of ecotourism ventures has often neglected social dimensions. Imposing “Western notions of conservation” (p. 152) through tourism, in some cases, induced dependency on foreign capital, depletion of local resources and unequal wealth distribution. Mowforth and Munt (2016, pp. 98-100) argue that even new and supposedly more sustainable forms of alternative tourism (e.g., eco- or community-tourism) speak of the power that Western tourists have over determining what forms of tourism should take place in developing countries. Multiple contributions to a special issue on violence in tourism in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* found “recurring themes of enclosure and extraction, erasure and commodification, ‘destructive creation’, and (neo)colonialism” (Devine & Ojeda, 2017, p. 605). Fisher (2004) looked at the different motivations of tourists and locals behind maintaining colonial buildings in Fiji. He concluded that “the entwinement of worldviews” (p. 137) through the encounter with international tourism went only one way:

The local people have to accommodate the worldview of outsiders. While this does not require local people to give up their own worldviews, they have to see the preservation of the town in terms of income generation in order to support it. Outsiders have just assumed that they are ‘correct’ in preserving the town. ... There appears to be no attempt to accommodate the worldviews of local people or even to consider the possibility that different worldviews exist. In this sense tourism can be seen to be an agent of neocolonialism. (Fisher, 2004, p. 137)

Fisher’s findings emphasise postcolonial criticism of the Western assumption of holding the ‘correct’ worldview (Kapoor, 2004; Peet & Hartwick, 2015).

Through its economic power, tourism may dictate what parts of culture are appreciated and how they are represented – in sum, what worldview governs tourism. This speaks

critically to the goals of sustainable tourism introduced in Section 2.4, based on concepts by the UNWTO and UNEP (2005). For example, certain kinds of ‘visitor fulfilments’ and ‘viable economic tourism ventures’ might contradict the goals of ‘local control’, ‘community wellbeing’ and ‘cultural richness’. Moreover, this kind of ‘domination through tourism’ may be at odds with Goulet’s (1968) concepts of the good life, such as esteem and freedom of choice. In contrast, a study by Sinclair-Maragh and Gursoy (2015) on Jamaican host communities found that the cultural and political impacts of tourism were welcomed, whereas the respondents had a negative perception of tourism’s economic impact. The respondents were fairly young and most were unemployed, which would have had an effect on their perceptions. In Tanzania rural communities thought they greatly benefitted from tourism. Some, however, lamented that this was not true for poor and unskilled members of their villages (Anderson, 2015). Overall, however, these studies show that despite all postcolonial critique levied against tourism in developing countries, their citizens might yet welcome aspects of it.

This section elaborated on the theory of postcolonialism and its relation to tourism. Because many SIDS heavily rely on international tourism as their economic mainstay and have a colonial past, this research builds on postcolonialism as its theoretical backdrop. From a development perspective, however, some scholars argue that local people have agency in negotiating this capitalistic and, arguably, neocolonialistic Western impact and are not powerless victims. The following section therefore unpacks the interplay of development efforts of the private sector and its negotiation by local people on the grounds of a concept known as ‘corporate community development’.

2.7 Corporate community development

The rising attention towards the challenges of globalisation as well as economic and social disparities has sparked a growing interest in how these challenges can be addressed by the private sector. For centuries a country’s ‘development’ was essentially in the hands of its government (Desai & Potter, 2014). In the 20th century, with the emergence of a globally interdependent and interconnected marketplace came increasing trade and economic wealth for some, but also detrimental ramifications for others. Prominent examples include labour exploitation, environmental degradation and abuse of economic power (Crane & Matten, 2010). Globalisation brought about an unprecedented speed and level

of deregulation and global assimilation of markets and business practices and thus weakened public control, which in turn led to a rising call for more accountability of companies (Crane & Matten, 2010; Matten & Moon, 2008). Some scholars argue that to some degree the private sector has outgrown national political institutions in its ability to influence development (M. Klein & Harford, 2004). Even though governments commonly regulate the legal framework of business, laws and policies are rarely comprehensive enough to cover all aspects of business. In the case of developing countries, adequate laws, policies and / or the enforcing institutions may be weak or not even present at all. Additionally, development aid in the form of donations, grants and budget supports from developed countries towards developing countries were increasingly challenged as a feasible tool to encourage sustainable development (Davis, 2012; Doucouliagos & Paldam, 2009). It is, therefore, internationally recognised that the private sector is increasingly becoming an important factor in sustainable development in developing countries (Blowfield, 2012; Muthuri, Moon, & Idemudia, 2012; UN Global Compact, 2014; van Tulder & Fortanier, 2009). In this respect, businesses get tied up in the debate about “the widening gap between skilled and unskilled workers, the chasm between the formal and informal economies, and the growing disparities in health, education and opportunities for social and political participation” (UN, 2005, p. 3).

2.7.1 From CSR to CCD

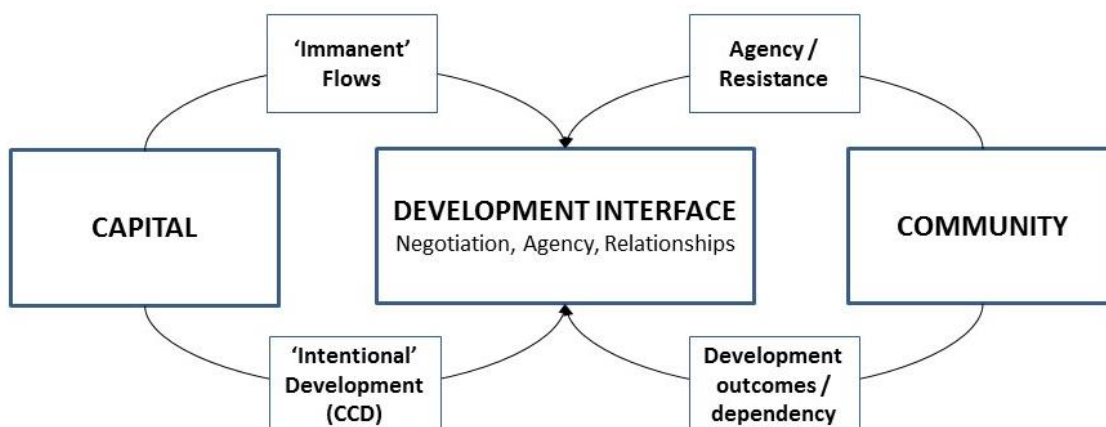
In response to the emerging prominence of the private sector in addressing social and environmental concerns, the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) was put forward. Governments, civil society and the private sector, to a certain extent, believe that it presents a “bridge connecting the arenas of business and development” (Blowfield & Frynas, 2005, p. 499). The concept holds that companies should go above and beyond their legal requirements by integrating “social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (European Commission, 2011, p. 2). CSR as a development tool, however, has frequently been criticised for a narrow focus on the ‘business case of CSR’ (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). This overriding emphasis emerged from managerial concerns related to costs, revenues and competition and was addressed by assuring a social license to operate, avoiding regulatory interventions, creating harmonious relationships with local communities and burnishing the company’s public image (Ashley & Haysom, 2006; Blowfield, 2005). But,

as Dobers and Halme (2009) trenchantly pointed out, most CSR efforts have been conceptualised with a Western developed country perspective. Views from local communities in developing nations have been hardly considered. Therefore, such efforts rarely returned locally meaningful development outcomes (Jenkins, 2005) and only addressed some of the worst forms of social and environmental degradation (Utting, 2005). Dobers and Halme (2009) therefore concluded that “[t]his calls for examining which types of problems get addressed and which do not, whose interests are focused on and whose are overlooked” (p. 246). To this end it is suggested we need to shift the lens more towards a community development perspective and focus on the concerns of those that are on the receiving end of the private sector’s development efforts (Muthuri et al., 2012; Owen & Kemp, 2012).

To examine the interplay between private capital and communities in a holistic fashion, Banks et al. (2016) proposed a conceptual framework for what they termed corporate community development (CCD). The framework draws on Long’s (2001) notion of the *development interface* and the concept of *immanent* and *intentional development* by Cowen and Shenton (1996). It is based on three fundamental premises: the establishment of a larger corporation in a developing country has by default immanent effects on nearby communities; there exists a two-way relationship between corporations and communities; lastly, communities have a degree of power and agency to influence their own development space (Banks et al., 2016). The framework (Figure 4) holds that corporations not only influence surrounding communities by intentional developmental efforts (e.g., through CSR projects), but also have an immanent effect on the wider social and economic situations of those communities by nature of their existence. Every business, and especially tourism enterprises, need employees and resources, such as food or construction materials. These immanent parts of any business may well be sourced locally and constitute what the CCD framework refers to as ‘immanent’ flows to communities. It is important to note, that from the community’s perspective immanent and intentional flows will likely be experienced as one and the same. Moreover, developmental initiatives directed at local communities, intentionally or unintentionally, may need to be met with reciprocity (‘a favour for a favour’) which can create dependency, or be met with resistance by the community. Either way, communities may possess the means to negotiate how they receive a company’s CCD actions and therefore also influence its outcomes.

These negotiations between capital and community take place in the development interface, a place in which “the tensions between broader structures and agendas, and local agency are played out in practice” (Banks et al., 2016, p. 255). Banks et al. integrate concepts of CSR, community agency and development theory into a coherent framework that lends itself to an analysis of corporate-community interaction. It is, however, important to carefully delineate the CCD concept from CSR, as they are not synonymous. CCD refers to interventionist development-related activities of a business that act as “an agent of *intentional* development” (Banks, Kuir-Ayius, Kombako, & Sagir, 2013, p. 4, emphasis added). Furthermore, CCD activities do not necessarily need to be voluntary. They can, for instance, be the result of government policies which the private sector needs to obey. Therefore, the distinction between immanent and intentional development sometimes blurs. Finally, as the title implies, CCD only pertain to those activities that are geared towards community development (Banks et al., 2016).

Figure 4: The corporate community development framework



Source: Banks et al. (2016, p. 246)

2.7.2 CCD and tourism

For many years, tourism companies have geared their CSR activities mostly towards environmental issues (Dodds & Joppe, 2005) and “[m]uch less attention has been paid to managing their economic multipliers and impacts along local and global value chains” (Spenceley & Meyer, 2012, p. 311). This is probably due to the notion that tourism businesses are supposed to have an economic impact on host communities by default. Arguably the mere existence of an enterprise immanently brings economic development to communities (Cowen & Shenton, 1996). However, Scheyvens and Hughes (2015) argue

that social and economic support, above and beyond immanent economic development, can be equally important, particularly in the case of small island states. In a related point, Ashley et al. (2007) ask “how can tourism companies adapt their business practices in ways that make long-term commercial sense and deliver greater benefits to the local economies” (p. 7)?

Tourism operators in Pacific islands mainly engage in tokenistic or philanthropic initiatives that are “of a rather piecemeal nature” (Scheyvens & Hughes, 2015, p. 140). Smaller stand-alone and one-off projects or charitable donations are the norm. With regards to Fiji, however, there is also evidence of notable exceptions. Some tourism enterprises have managed to make a business case based partly on their poverty alleviation initiatives, partnering up with local communities or businesses in a genuine, lasting and mutually beneficial relationship. For example, one resort helped an indigenous community to set up a rainforest trekking business and another resort supported a taxi service. The resorts’ roles were first and foremost that of business mentors. Ownership of the enterprises, and thus power and control, are ultimately held by the communities (Scheyvens & Hughes, 2015, p. 141).

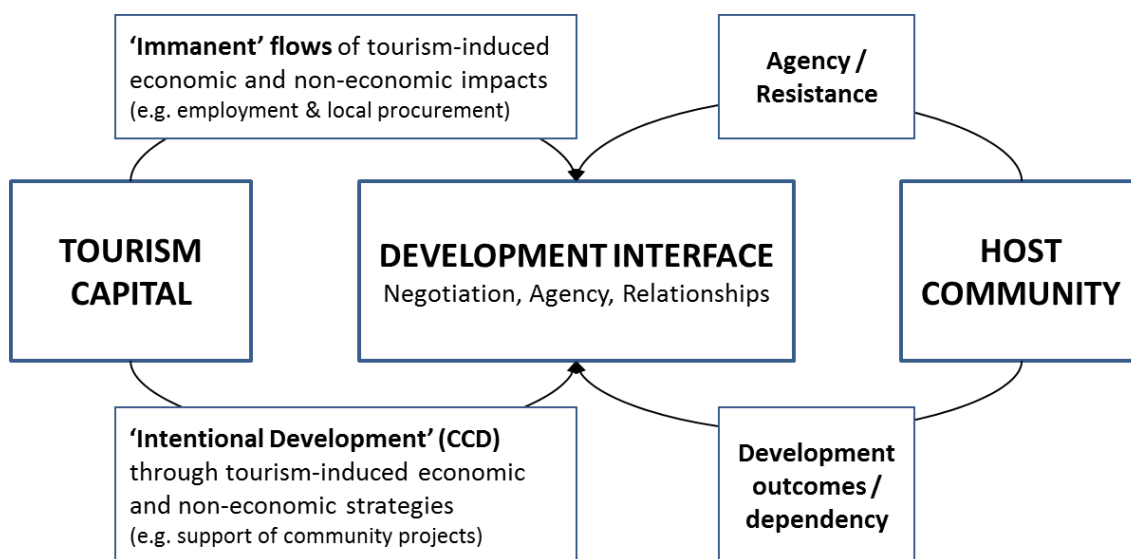
Such initiatives are geared at developing the local community and based on mutually beneficial relationships. This would be referred to by Cowen and Shenton (1996) as ‘intentional development’. In fact, there are good reasons for tourism operators in SIDS to develop long-lasting and mutually respectful relationships with local communities. Roe, Goodwin, and Ashley (2002) conclude that tourists would rather give their business to companies that show a genuine commitment towards their social responsibilities. Torres and Momsen (2004) argue more pragmatically in terms of a business case, illustrating that by helping poorer communities, companies can support a growing market for their own products and services.

Moreover, a CCD approach can support the relationships between land owners and tourism enterprises. Hotels in SIDS often lease land from local communities. These relationships may, however, suffer from occasional conflict or even violent outbreaks. In Fiji, Leah Burns (2003) observed how communities resented that, firstly, lease money did not benefit all community members equally and, secondly, they felt excluded from their land and thus not in charge of their own affairs. In other cases, landowners’ claims to higher land leases or better employment conditions for their community members have led to disputes, workers’ strikes, resort occupation and access blockage (Kanemasu, 2015, p.

75). An intentional management of respectful and supportive relationship through CCD can certainly help to navigate any form of such conflicts.

Figure 5 depicts how tourism-induced economic and non-economic benefits flow towards communities. It is important to note that the figure neither prescribes which way tourism capital should enter the development interface, nor are the two ways mutually exclusive. Tourism capital enters the development interface through immanent flows as soon as a business is established. The intentional pathway, however, suggests that the economic and non-economic benefits for communities are planned-for and executed in a beneficial way, possibly even to maximise poverty alleviation. Presumably, tourism capital would usually reach the development interface through a variable mixture of immanent and intentional flows. In her recent study on the community impact of large-scale resorts in Fiji, Hughes (2016, p. 256) found that immanent flows through employment and local procurement had a greater impact on local people than intentional community development efforts, such as supporting schools.

Figure 5: The tourism corporate community development framework



Sources: G. Laeis based on Banks et al. (2016, p. 246)

This research will draw on the CCD concept to frame its analyses of tourism industry and host community interactions through the food chain for the following reasons. Firstly, CCD does not take a single-sided viewpoint of community development from an industry perspective, which is why other concepts, such as CSR, have been criticised. Secondly, the CCD concept realises that from a host community perspective any capital flow, whether immanent or intentional, is an outcome of the private sector’s presence. Thirdly,

CCD draws attention to the fact that host communities may not be powerless victims, but rather have agency in negotiating the impact of tourism capital – a characteristic that will be further expanded on in Chapter 4. Fourthly, through the use of a development interface, CCD accommodates an analysis of what Fisher (2004) refers to as “the entwinement of worldviews” (p. 137): how are the different ‘worldviews’ of the international tourism industry and host communities negotiated by either side? This is important to allow for a postcolonial viewpoint within this research. Lastly, CCD is a comparatively new concept that has only been applied by Hughes (2016) in the context of tourism. This research seeks to further apply and expand the concept.

2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter set out to determine the context of tourism as a tool for development with a particular emphasis on SIDS. Without doubt, the globalised tourism industry provides a number of economic opportunities to developing countries, especially through backward economic linkages to agriculture, for example. However, often these linkages do not fully develop and therefore economic leakages are comparatively high, especially in SIDS. In addition to economic opportunities, tourism may also bring other benefits to host communities, such as the support of local culture or environmental protection. Definitions of the structure and nature of sustainable tourism state that tourism may in fact support the entire triple-bottom line of economic, socio-cultural and environmental wellbeing and constitute a pathway towards a ‘good life’. Scholars that take a postcolonial perspective on the notion that tourism is a valuable development tool oppose this notion, nevertheless. They argue that because the tourism industry is structured according to the interests of Western countries within in a globalised and capitalist market, host countries in the developing world are indirectly ‘colonised’ by Western economic interests. SIDS make for an interesting case study in this respect, as they continue to come to terms with challenges such as being former plantation economies, high poverty levels, global food crises, environmental vulnerability and strong economic dependency on tourism (Timms & Neill, 2011).

Through its economic power, tourism dictates what worldview should govern, what parts of culture are appreciated and ultimately, as this thesis will suggest later on, what may or may not appear on restaurant menus. Therefore, this study recognises the postcolonial discourse on tourism and development as a valuable background which necessitates a

focus on power relationships between the international tourism economy and local communities in postcolonial island states. Such power relationship can be framed by the corporate community development concept, which facilitates an analysis of how the private sector directly and indirectly impacts local communities and how communities, in turn, negotiate this impact.

Consequently, this chapter has elaborated upon the foundations of this research: the implications of sustainable development through tourism in SIDS, the theoretical viewpoint of postcolonialism on tourism, and, lastly, an analytical framework that allows for a comprehensive analysis of development through the private sector and the communities' reaction to the former. The following chapter now focuses further on the backward linkages from the tourism industry to the agricultural sector within a developing country context.

3 Tourism and Agriculture in Developing Countries

3.1 Introduction

Scholars have pointed out that tourism is unlikely to be a panacea for overcoming economic challenges in many developing countries (Khan, 1997). Over the years, much of this disagreement has centred on the issue of economic leakages, as presented above. Some argued that tourist spending rarely translates into significant net gains for host communities (Britton, 1982; D. Meyer, 2007; Mowforth & Munt, 2016). Yet, scholars, development planners, governments and international institutions suggest that an antidote to such leakages is the strengthening backward economic linkages from tourism enterprises to local food producers. It is argued that this can help channel income derived from tourism more directly into local communities (e.g., Hunt & Rogerson, 2013; Lejarraja & Walkenhorst, 2007; Pillay & Rogerson, 2013; Saarinen & Rogerson, 2014; Scheyvens, 2011; Torres & Momsen, 2004, 2005). This chapter therefore scrutinises in greater detail the formation of such linkages in a developing country context. A particular emphasis is put on factors that inhibit tourism-agriculture linkages and examples which have overcome these. Finally, the chapter provides the Fijian country context for these linkages.

3.2 Linking agriculture and tourism

The linkages between tourism and agriculture rarely appeared as research topics in the academic disciplines of tourism, geography and development before the 1980s (Bélisle, 1983). In terms of geographic location, research on the issue within developing countries has so far mostly focussed on South Africa (Butler & Rogerson, 2016; Hunt & Rogerson, 2013; Pillay & Rogerson, 2013; Rogerson, 2012b; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2014), Mexico (Torres, 2000, 2002, 2003; Torres & Momsen, 2004, 2005), the Caribbean Islands (Bélisle, 1983; D. Meyer, 2006; Rhiney, 2008, 2011; Richardson-Ngwenya & Momsen, 2011; Timms, 2006; Timms & Neill, 2011) and Fiji (Berno, 2006, 2011; Pratt, 2013; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012; Veit, 2007). Lesser researched countries include Bhutan (Pratt et al., 2018), Cambodia (Mao, Grunfeld, DeLacy, & Chandler, 2014), Costa Rica (Trejos & Chiang, 2009; Vanegas Sr, Gartner, & Senauer, 2015), Indonesia (Telfer & Wall, 1996, 2000), Niue (Singh et al., 2012), Samoa (Berno, 2015), Thailand (Lacher & Nepal, 2010) and some sub-Saharan countries, such as Ghana (Asiedu & Gbedema,

2011), Kenya (Mshenga, 2010), and Tanzania (Anderson, 2013; Nguni, 2015). Despite the growing number of studies, scholars have argued these linkages are not yet sufficiently explored (Pillay & Rogerson, 2013).

Regardless of the manifestations such linkages can take, Torres and Momsen (2004) argue that they may work for the benefit of local food producers in many different circumstances. The following paragraphs elaborate on perspectives of local communities, food producers and tourists that support the idea of close linkages between local food producers and tourism enterprises in developing countries.

From a community and producer perspective it has been contended that increasing the demand for local food produce stimulates the market for farmers and other food producers (Pretty, 2001). The argument builds on the fact that the employment of 70 percent of the world's rural poor still depend on agriculture (World Bank, 2016a). Torres and Momsen (2004) therefore proposed that supporting the agricultural sector builds on existing skills, resources, and livelihood strategies. This, they argued, was particularly relevant for rural areas, as they were frequently home to tourism projects due to their natural and scenic attractiveness. Moreover, if food markets see a growing demand from tourism, possibly above and beyond commonly grown local products, producers may be presented with the opportunity to establish new value chain linkages outside the tourism industry. For instance, producers could supply wholesalers and processors and therefore diversify their livelihood strategy, as Ashley et al. (2007) demonstrate. In this regard it is important to note that a substantial body of research points towards the benefit of supporting small-scale agricultural production in developing countries to promote more equitable, empowered, food-secure and resilient local communities (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, 2011; B. D. McIntyre et al., 2009). This appears to be particularly meaningful for small-scale and indigenous farmers in the Pacific (Manner & Thaman, 2013). The menus of hotels and restaurants can in turn showcase local products, if marketed accordingly, and thus act as promoting agents for local producers (Herzog & Murray, 2013).

From the tourist's viewpoint, food of a particular destination resembles more than mere sustenance. It may stand for the culture of a particular area (A. Jones & Jenkins, 2002; Montanari, 2006; Sims, 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013) and in this sense can be part and parcel of the identity of an entire destination (Sims, 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013). Therefore, food is a significant part of the tourism experience and presents an opportunity to

consume a supposedly authentic and tangible aspect of the host's culture (C. M. Hall & Sharples, 2003; B. Okumus, Okumus, & McKercher, 2007). Figures on tourist spending patterns show that the consumption of food makes up a significant part of tourism expenditure. Visitors to major U.S. cities spent between 26 to 28 percent of their travel budget on food and beverage; dining in restaurants was one of the most frequent tourism activities (C. M. Hall & Sharples, 2003, pp. 3-5). In Fiji, the Sustainable Tourism Development Consortium (2007) estimated this amount to be about 20 percent.

These figures match a growing consumer interest in so-called 'local food' (Mount, 2012). Even though a broadly accepted definition of this vague term is yet to be found (Pearson et al., 2011), Kelly and Schulschenk (2011) propose that local food is a concept that prioritises "the flow of resources (financial, human, social, environmental and others) within a network of community-based enterprises that produce and distribute food at the local scale for local consumption" (pp. 563-564). Studies on mostly Western consumers' choices and preferences for local food concluded that the interest in local food in general has steadily increased since the turn of the millennium (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015), most prominently so amongst affluent and well-educated customers (E. Brown, Dury, & Holdsworth, 2009). Prevailing reasons for choosing local products were a counter-trend to an increasingly globalised and fossil-fuel-reliant food system, a critical stance on imported foods, and more hedonistic reasons that frame local food as fresher, healthier and safer than imported goods. However, a study on food choices in Belgium found that behavioural patterns of consumers were not consistent with their mostly positive attitudes towards sustainable food (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006).

From an environmental perspective the rationale of local food reduces what Gössling et al. (2011) termed "foodprint" (p. 535) – greenhouse gas emissions associated with the transportation of food – and thus helps fight climate change. Additionally, some scholars point out that even though localisation of the food system might come with trade-offs, it would still be a way to generate net economic and environmental benefits (Pretty, Ball, Lang, & Morison, 2005). Among these benefits can be the generation of a local market for underutilised, but locally adapted species. The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (2018b) highlights how in many developing countries such crops are underutilised, yet highly valuable for small-scale farmers. They are well-adapted to the natural environment, seed material is accessible and oftentimes they are nutrient-rich.

The ideas around localised food systems in tourism discussed above galvanise in what Sims (2009) had previously implied and Berno (2011) finally termed a “sustainable cuisine¹⁰” (p. 87): a style of preparing food that through its choice of ingredients and style of preparation supports local food production rather than imports, thus promoting the local economy and traditional culture, while at the same time meeting a growing demand from tourists for authentic food experiences. It is within this nexus of tourism, agriculture and food preparation that Berno (2006) identified “a holistic approach to sustainable tourism” (p. 212). However, on a broader scope there were also concerns about the potential dependency of agricultural producers on tourism businesses as their main source of income. Tourism is notorious for its susceptibility to external factors over which destinations have little to no control (Harrison, 2003; Mowforth & Munt, 2016). Visitor numbers can be dramatically impacted by political instability or environmental hazards, as seen in the aftermath of the financial crisis 2008/9, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami or the 2005 terrorist attacks in Bali. On the latter Tarplee (2008) notes that the most vulnerable people were not those employed directly in tourism, but those on the fringe of the industry, such as suppliers and farmers. This goes to show that if agricultural production relies to a large extent on tourism, it may create dependency on a rather volatile industry (Tarplee, 2008). Even though the theory of linking tourism demand and agricultural supply for the benefit of tourists, local producers and the environment has merit, benefits from the suggested synergies have rarely emerged (Timms & Neill, 2011; Torres & Momsen, 2011). Therefore, particular consideration should be given to reasons that impede the emergence and/or institutionalisation of localised agriculture-tourism linkages.

3.3 Impeding factors

In an industry such as tourism with a broad range of actors across the globe there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution for establishing backward economic linkages – what suits small-scale safari lodges in one place may be less appropriate for an international five star hotel in another (Ashley et al., 2007). The same applies to the various agro-ecological circumstances and food production systems (Rhiney, 2011). No wonder that researchers have found a plethora of factors that may inhibit such linkages. Research on tourism-

¹⁰ The notion of cuisine is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

agriculture linkages commenced with a study by Bélisle in the Caribbean in 1983, regarded by Rogerson (2012a) as seminal in this field and still relevant in its findings. Bélisle examined ten constraints in the areas of consumer preferences, agricultural capacities, hotel procurement and trade infrastructure. In the following decades, Torres and Momsen (2004) published a much-cited study on hotel food procurement methods and implications for small-scale farmers in Mexico, before Rogerson (2012a), Pillay and Rogerson (2013) and Anderson (2013) explained the issue within a South African context. They all have compiled extensive accounts of factors that constrain tourism-agriculture linkages, reviewing relevant literature from 1971 until 2011. The authors have so far grouped these factors according to the four categories of ‘supply / production’, ‘demand’, ‘marketing / intermediary’ and ‘role of national government’. Table 2 below summarises their findings.

All factors across the four groups could be thought of in two broad themes: reasons and effects. In many cases the *effects* are either lacking quantity, quality and / or consistency of supply, or the production of food that is not required by the tourism industry. It is important to note here that the relative terms of ‘quantity’, ‘quality’ and ‘consistency’ are always defined from a tourism industry perspective, which in most cases reflects Western hospitality standards of A-grade quality, large quantities and consistency irrespective of seasonality. The *reasons* for these circumstances are manifold, but could be summarised by under-capitalisation and under-industrialisation of the agricultural sector and a lack of a policy programme to address these factors. The factors present a context in which an efficient and standardised Western tourism industry meets the agricultural space of a foreign developing nation.

Table 2: Factors impeding tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries

1. Supply & production	1.1. Lack of sufficient, consistent and guaranteed quantity of locally produced food (Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.2. High prices of locally produced foods (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.3. Local farming systems' small economies of scale and poor growing conditions (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.4. Nature of existing local farming systems, e.g. plantation instead of food crops, and thus rather export-oriented production (Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.5. Little access of food producers to capital, investment, credit and technology (Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.6. Agriculture competes with tourism sector for labour (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.7. Poor infrastructure, e.g. roads, electricity and irrigation (Rogerson, 2012a) 1.8. Distance between farms and tourism businesses (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 1.9. Low adoption of formal quality assurance systems in the agricultural community (Rogerson, 2012a) 1.10. Conflicting terms of payment between buyers and sellers (Anderson, 2013)
2. Demand	2.1. Seasonality of demand and the inability of suppliers to adapt (Anderson, 2013) 2.2. Tourists' preferences for imported and/or 'home-country' foods (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 2.3. Changing tourism behaviour results in demand for fair trade- and / or organic certified products that cannot be readily supplied by local producers (Rogerson, 2012a) 2.4. Foreign-owned, large and high-end hotels' preference for processed and imported foods (Torres & Momsen, 2004), particularly due to origin and training of kitchen chefs and purchasing officers (Rogerson, 2012a) 2.5. Strong connection of foreign-owned hotels to international food suppliers (Rogerson, 2012a) 2.6. Hotels' aversion against sourcing from several individual farmers due to logistical challenges (Rogerson, 2012a) 2.7. Kitchen chefs' concerns about health and safety of local food, irrespective of hard evidence (Torres & Momsen, 2004)
3. Marketing & intermediaries	3.1. Failure to promote local foods (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 3.2. Inadequate transportation, storage, processing and marketing infrastructure (Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) 3.3. Absence of local intermediaries (Rogerson, 2012a) 3.4. Mistrust and lack of communication / information exchange between farmers, suppliers and tourism industry (Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) 3.5. Exploitation of farmers by local intermediaries (Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) 3.6. Entrenched monopoly of particular marketing networks that prevent market access of local farmers (Torres & Momsen, 2004) 3.7. Corrupt local marketing networks that limit local producer access (e.g. payment of kickbacks to purchase decision takers) (Torres & Momsen, 2004)

	3.8. Bureaucratic obstacles and informal nature of local farming operations (Torres & Momsen, 2004)
4. Role of national government	<p>4.1. Tourism-agriculture linkages (a) not a focus of governmental institutions and programmes in general and (b) are just assumed to develop (Pillay & Rogerson, 2013; Torres & Momsen, 2004)</p> <p>4.2. Preference for export production (Rogerson, 2012a)</p> <p>4.3. Linkages not part of a tourism planning processes (Rogerson, 2012a)</p> <p>4.4. Mediation between tourism and agricultural sector not supported (Pillay & Rogerson, 2013), e.g. by providing training on acceptable food quality standards across both sectors (Anderson, 2013)</p>

Sources: Compiled from Torres and Momsen (2004), Rogerson (2012a), Anderson (2013) and Pillay and Rogerson (2013)

Besides the points that have not been noted by the scholars summarised in Table 2, there are further interesting impediment to highlight. Scheyvens and Russell (2012) and Mshenga (2010) concluded that the size of an accommodation business was an important factor in local sourcing, as case studies in Fiji and Kenya showed. Small-scale tourism businesses were more likely to procure local goods as they commonly required smaller quantities which can more readily be supplied by local food producers. Furthermore, their style of cooking is seen as less elaborate and more attuned to local customs, which in turn results in a higher demand for locally grown food. A study on hotels in Crete suggested similar relations between size and local economic impact (Andriotis, 2002). Similarly, Pratt et al. (2018, p. 631) found that five-star hotels in Bhutan had significantly higher shares of imported food (80.3 %) than the average (69.9 %). In contrast, Telfer and Wall (2000) found in case studies in Indonesia that if the surrounding area of large-scale hotels provided a productive and diverse agricultural space, it was indeed possible to source large volumes of quality products locally.

3.4 Critique of the literature

There are three interesting observations on the approach of the studies covered in the previous section and summarised by Table 2 (including much of the literature these studies draw upon): firstly, they take a rather economic perspective on agriculture-tourism linkages. Secondly, the studies are rarely contextualised in development theory; if at all, they draw on the pro-poor tourism approach. Lastly, there is a high prevalence of interview-based qualitative methodologies. This section will now elaborate on each of these observations.

With respect to the economic scope, terminology such as demand, supply, marketing and the business environment (i.e., in this case mostly the political and legislative environment) are commonly used in economic and business studies; for the purpose of analysing failures of economic linkages this appears sensible. In contrast, notions of broader socio-cultural circumstances, such as historical influences (e.g., colonisation), traditions, identity and social relations, are rarely considered. An interesting exception, however, can be found in Torres and Momsen (2004, p. 311), where they consider differences in class and ethnicity as a potential reason why farmers find it difficult to connect to purchasing officers. Nevertheless, the limited attention to such issues is surprising, as several scholars in the past have pointed out the integral connection and contextual dependency between agriculture, culture/cuisine, tourism, local communities and sustainable development (Bessière, 1998; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Gössling & Hall, 2013; Østrup Backe, 2013; Sims, 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013). Along this line of thought, a more recent discussion by Berno (2015) on the idea of using a culturally attuned cookbook to “empower communities, contribute to sustainable food systems and reinforce cultural identity” (p. 346) in Samoa, provided a new angle. She contextualised agriculture-tourism linkages within historical trajectories of the host community’s taste for food and appreciation of cuisine as well as notions of self-perception and cultural identity. In her assessment of strength, opportunities, weaknesses and threats of “farm-to-fork” (2011, p. 95) relationships in Fiji, Berno (2015) drew attention to not only market issues, such as those presented above, but also the poor perception of the Fijian cuisine by international visitors and the lacking confidence of chefs to prepare Fijian food for tourists. It appears, therefore, that the cultural aspects of food can have important implications for tourism-agriculture linkages, particularly within the South Pacific context (Berno, 2015; Gewertz & Errington, 2010).

Some of the studies covered above not only elaborate on tourism-agriculture linkages, but also draw on the concept of pro-poor tourism (e.g., Asiedu & Gbedema, 2011; Butler & Rogerson, 2016; Hunt & Rogerson, 2013; D. Meyer, 2007; Torres & Momsen, 2004). Pro-poor tourism is not a form, but rather an approach to tourism management that puts the wellbeing of the poor first, yet considers environmental and economic concerns as well (Ashley & Roe, 2002; Neto, 2003). In its application the pro-poor tourism approach can be understood as a set of strategies that can be drawn on in a variety of contexts (Ashley, Roe, & Goodwin, 2001). Even though pro-poor tourism is considered part of the

wider debate about corporate citizenship and the role of the private sector in meeting development goals (Scheyvens & Hughes, 2015), it is strictly speaking not development theory. It simply assumes that promoting tourism for economic development is valuable to host communities (Harrison, 2008). This suggests that much of the scholarly work on agriculture-tourism linkages in a developing country context is under-theorised.

Methodologically, the majority of the research follows a qualitative approach and relies mainly on interviews as their central tool for inquiry. Some studies focus on a few in-depth case studies (Lacher & Nepal, 2010; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012; Singh et al., 2012; Telfer & Wall, 2000), in which the authors also report on field visits to and observations within their case studies. Other studies have conducted interviews with a number of kitchen chefs and/or managers in the range of about 50 to 150 participants (Anderson, 2013; Pillay & Rogerson, 2013; Rogerson, 2012b). A third set of studies employ a variety of methods, such as interviews, case studies, questionnaires and review of quantitative secondary economic data (Mao et al., 2014; Pratt et al., 2018; Torres & Momsen, 2004). Interestingly, other field-based qualitative research tools, such as participatory action research or participant observation (Creswell, 2009) are only used in a side-line supportive manner, if at all. Even though qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires are long-established and widely used techniques, they also have shortcomings. For instance, interviews are likely to take place outside of natural field settings, the presence of researchers may bias the responses and, lastly, some respondents are more articulate than others (Creswell, 2009). Moreover, some respondents might possess more reflexive awareness than others and are therefore capable of explaining their daily practices better. For these reasons interviews may therefore not be ideally suited to understand the socio-cultural and physical aspects of food chains in the day-to-day experiences of all actors. Quantitative questionnaires and the review of economic data sets may reveal objective and quantifiable results for specific questions. Yet, they also lack the ability to understand in-depth the lived experiences of a variety of actors.

Overall, this literature review revealed that various factors, such as demand and supply, marketing processes, agro-ecological circumstances and governmental policies were key in shaping linkages between food producers and tourism businesses. In fact, they appeared to be more inhibitive than supportive in many cases. Besides these findings, however, little has been said about broader societal, cultural and historical factors that come into play, let alone personal circumstances of the various stakeholders. This is probably

a consequence of research approaches that have failed to go much beyond interviews and surveys and fully appreciate the lived experiences of the research participants. The discussion on linkages has, furthermore, not been conceptualised with development theory, even though much of the literature is situated in developing country contexts. Out of this critique, the question arises how to overcome the impeding factors and forge successful ‘farm-to-fork’ relationships that benefit most, if not all stakeholders involved. The following paragraphs provide insights into various successful cases and present suggestions on ways forward.

3.5 Examples of successful linkages

A number of case studies from developing countries demonstrate how accommodation providers have managed to establish successful relationships with local food producers. This may be in the form of an on-site farm directly cooperating with the kitchen, also termed “hyper-local sourcing” (National Restaurant Association, 2015), or by linking up with existing independent producers. The former case is rare, as hotels or restaurants need to establish a garden or farm first. The latter, however, can be a viable option for most tourism establishments. In this regard, scholars have proposed several key issues that need to be addressed in order for the desired linkages to emerge and be sustained.

For instance, the Hui Mea’ai project in Hawai’i is a partnership between a 356-room international chain resort and a grass-roots food bank initiative that serves two purposes: firstly, it teaches local small-scale producers how to grow and market food produce and secondly, it acts as a wholesaler, being the distribution hub for all local supply and demand. The hotel committed time and other resources from its staff to help build a workable relationship and to introduce local farmers to the quality expectations of internationally operating resorts (CCCBC, 2002). A similar approach was taken by a chain of Sandals resorts in Jamaica. They cooperated with 80 farmers and went as far as to employ a full-time extension officer, who was responsible for educating farmers on quality prerequisites (Agriculture Commodities Programme, 2011). A quite different approach was taken by the Kleins Camp in Tanzania, which is positioned in a remote area of the country and on its own established a small-scale gardening operation to supply its kitchen with fresh produce in addition to weekly shipments of staple foods from the market in the next town. Even though the garden was part of the Kleins Camp, the kitchen had to pay for any product that it sourced from the garden. The man in charge of gardening was at first

on the hotel's payroll. As the garden grew in both space and quality, two additional gardeners were employed and it supplied the Kleins Camp as well as other lodges and two local villages in the surrounding Serengeti (Gordon, 1999). The Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, South Africa, had a similar system in place. Grootbos focused not only on providing local produce to its kitchen, but also sought to support local township communities. The luxury safari lodge established an organic farming operation which fed directly into the lodge's kitchen. After initial struggles to be financially viable the farm was capable of generating a financial surplus that was used for other non-profit ventures. For instance, Grootbos ran school gardens at the local school and introduced raised bed systems in the neighbouring townships to increase the interest in home gardening and thus ameliorate food insecurity (Laeis, 2016; Laeis & Lemke, 2016). Something important to note about all these case studies is, firstly, the corporate commitment towards establishing local linkages, and, secondly, the personal involvement and commitment of key decision takers, such as business owners, head chefs and local farmers. Linkages were not simply 'expected to emerge', but purposefully planned and executed by able and committed individuals. They resemble what Banks et al. (2016) refer to as 'intentional development', as opposed to 'immanent flows' (see Section 2.7).

Besides these examples of successful 'farm-to-table' initiatives, findings on how best to overcome challenges in building agriculture-tourism linkages suggest three strategies: strengthening the agricultural sector, training and awareness building in the tourism industry as well as reciprocal communication between all stakeholders involved. Firstly, scholars plea for strengthening the agricultural sector in developing countries. Suggested strategies include more investment in and capacity building for producers to increase the quality and consistency of their production (Anderson, 2013; Torres & Momsen, 2004). Additionally, comprehensive policy agendas of governments and associations are needed which address demand, supply and marketing intermediaries in order to support agricultural supply chains (Mao et al., 2014; Pillay & Rogerson, 2013; Torres & Momsen, 2004). This is particularly pertinent if such linkages are supposed to reduce rural poverty (Scheyvens & Russell, 2012). Secondly, scholars point towards the hospitality industry and its stakeholders' need for training and awareness building on local food and cuisine. For instance, chefs may need to be trained on how to cook traditional recipes in a suitable fashion for appealing modern hotel menus using local food (Berno, 2011). In this regard, Larsen (2010) proposes "playful nostalgia" (p. 90) as a way to creatively link culinary

heritage of particular localities with contemporary forms of food preparation and presentation. Purchasing officers may need assistance with devising adequate ordering and payment systems for small-scale producers (Telfer & Wall, 2000). Finally, it is noted that ongoing, reciprocal and trustful communication between all those involved in the everyday business of growing, supplying, sourcing and preparing of food is essential for the emergence of synergetic relationships (Laeis & Lemke, 2016; Rogerson, 2012a; Telfer & Wall, 2000).

3.6 Agriculture-tourism linkages in Fiji

Tourism in Fiji has been criticised for high economic leakage rates, despite its contribution to GDP and employment. A major share of this leakage has been attributed to the importation of food. A study by Varley in 1978 (cited in Sinclair, 1998, p. 24) reported that the import share of tourism expenditure on food was at 56 percent. In 2004 Fiji's Ministry of Tourism suggested that 80 percent of food sold to tourists was imported (cited in Berno, 2011, p. 92). However, Veit (2007, 2009) suggested that Fiji's agriculture held significant potential to substitute food imports for tourists, especially with respect to fruits and vegetables. But, for reasons explained in Section 3.3, this potential has not been exploited (e.g., lacking quality, quantity and consistency of supply; tourists' and chefs' preferences; insufficient marketing and distribution networks; little access to capital). Some studies proposed that especially large, high-end hotels have a tendency to source imported food, whereas small and lower-end accommodations prefer cheaper local products, or are locally owned and therefore have stronger ties to local farmers (Pratt, 2013; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012; Veit, 2007).

Interestingly, a report by Fiji's Hotel Association in 1999 claimed that the use of local products was limited to three main areas: "fruits/vegetables for breakfast and/or inclusion in 'western menus' (e.g. salads and vegetables to accompany meals), traditional Fijian *lovo* (earth oven) nights and staff meals" (cited in Berno, 2011, p. 92, emphasis in original). This suggests that local produce is mainly being used for particular kinds of dishes.

Berno (2011, p. 95) presented a comprehensive analysis of the facilitators and barriers to the implementation of so-called 'farm-to-fork' linkages in Fiji. She summarised that the

various cultural influences from indigenous, Indian, Asian and European populations provide an interesting context for the development of a Fijian food experience. Furthermore, there were well-trained chefs in Fiji, a broad range of locally grown produce and the main tourist areas were close to fertile agricultural areas (e.g., Coral Coast close to Sigatoka valley). These factors would all facilitate strong agriculture-tourism linkages. Most barriers Berno found are similar to constraints summarised in Table 2 above, such as the lack of interest in local food and preferences for Western food, concerns over seasonal demand for produce, poor communication and organisation among growers, resorts and governmental bodies, poor infrastructure and access to technology and capital for farmers and, lastly, the inconsistent availability and quality of produce. Issues that have not been noted previously and which seem to be Fiji-specific are the poor perception of Fijian foods among tourists, the absence of a recognisable Fijian cuisine and the incompatibility of some local recipes with the tourist palate. Furthermore, Berno found there was a lack of resources to train chefs about local produce, past initiatives had not been sustainable, local fish stocks may be overfished due to high demand and, lastly, land lease issues¹¹ affected tourism and agricultural development in Fiji.

So far a number of strategies and projects from a range of stakeholders have sought to strengthen agriculture-tourism linkages in Fiji and address some of the above-mentioned barriers. Since the early 2000s reports and strategy papers by the Fijian Government and the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) recognise the need to strengthen such linkages (Berno, 2011). The current Government's 'Fijian Tourism 2021' master plan dedicates one of its 29 proposed strategies to the support of such linkages (Ministry of Industry Trade and Tourism, 2017). The strategy proposes to

- a. develop a reward system for those tourism service providers making an effort to promote local food;
- b. provide grants and capacity building programs for farmers to promote innovative farming systems, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture;
- c. foster synergies between the Government, farmers and tourism businesses through technical workshops and forums for all stakeholder;

¹¹ On the issue of land leases see also the subsections on Fiji's Society (4.3.1) and Agriculture (4.3.3).

- d. introduce 'Fijian Grown' and 'Fijian Organic' as quality brands for Fijian produce to tourism businesses as a marketing tool to push local consumption.

How far these strategies materialise remains to be seen. But, with limited strategies to deal with retention of revenue from tourism, inclusive tourism development appears to take a backseat to those strategies aiming to increase tourist numbers and expenditure.

On behalf of the FAO, Veit (2009) conducted a feasibility study for establishing collection centres in Fiji as a tool to better link small-scale farmers and large-scale buyers. These centres were supposed to enable farmers to sell collectively directly in larger volumes, rather than individually in small amounts to middlemen at low profit. He concluded, however, that buyers and sellers were likely to resort to farm-gate deals, which would render collection centres inefficient. Therefore, the Government should focus on "[i]mproving infrastructure, the dissemination of information, access to finance and agro-inputs, and technical training" (Veit, 2009, p. 7). Similarly, the 'Fiji 2020' agriculture sector policy agenda proposed, among others, to establish 'food parks' in Lautoka, Labasa, Sigatoka and Taveuni (Ministry of Agriculture, 2014). These were supposed to act as anchor points for food processing and marketing, possibly similar to collection centres. So far, none have been established, aside from the already existing municipal food markets in those locations. J. Young and Vinning (2006) conducted a quantitative study on the farm-to-tourism value chain of four Fijian horticultural products, namely papaya, mango, tomato and carrot. They found that because hotels regularly needed large volumes, they mostly sourced from wholesalers and importers and only occasionally from municipal markets (p. 144). This, Young and Vinning concluded, made it virtually impossible for small-scale farmers to supply to the large-scale tourism market, unless they formed associations or cooperatives. Furthermore, the hotels' requests for delivery to the hotel premises, adherence to particular delivery schedules and the delivery of a wide range of products in one delivery exceeded the organisational capacity of most producers in Fiji at the time of study.

An initiative of an employee of the Outrigger Resort tried to establish a more direct relationship with a locally owned and managed horticultural farm. The Oloolo Farm project that was initiated by a member of the local *mataqali* Naboka – Juanahali in 2005, who was also a resort manager at the Outrigger Resort (Juanahali Holdings Ltd, 2005). The resort had signed a memorandum of understanding that they were to be a fixed trading partner. Joes Farm Produce Ltd and the development NGO Taiwan Technical Mission

had agreed to provide training and guidance on farming aspects. After a successful start, however, the project was discontinued due to managerial misconduct and financial irregularities, according to Dr. Tracy Berno (personal communication, February 28th, 2019).

Cookbooks on Fijian and South Pacific cuisine have also been promoted as a strategy to increase the uptake of local produce in hotels through marketing local cuisine to guests and chefs. In the 1980s the SPTO commissioned the writing of a cookbook entitled *Cooking the South Pacific Way* (Parkinson, 1989), which drew largely on local vegetable varieties and recipes. The book aimed to assist Fijian chefs in “knowing when and what to look for in local markets” and assist with “produce choice and tips on quality to correct storage, preparation and cooking methods”, hoping that the book becomes “a basis for further imaginative development by the chefs of Fiji and the South Pacific” (Parkinson, 1989, p. viii). Despite interest, the project did not result in longer-term changes of food sourcing habits of the local tourism industry. Apparently, chefs were dissatisfied with the quality and reliability of local produce and the overall programme lacked coordination amongst farmers, chefs, purchasing managers and Government departments (Berno, 2006, p. 217). Aside from Parkinson’s publication, a range of other cookbooks have also dealt with Fijian and South Pacific food (e.g., Brennan, 2000; Langbein, 2000; Parkinson, Stacy, & Mattinson, 1995; Rody, 1982; Skinner, 1983).

Recently, however, three cookbooks have been published that were part of a greater developmental effort. They translated traditional Pacific recipes into contemporary formats and, secondly, the authors engaged in educational activities for professional chefs. Chef Robert Oliver with Tracy Berno and Shiri Ram (2010, 2013) published two cookbooks on South Pacific island cuisines, including Fiji, with the explicit intention of introducing contemporary South Pacific cuisine to a broader audience and help the tourism sector connect more to local farmers (Berno, 2015). This initiative led on to a culinary TV series presented by chef Robert Oliver (Zoomslide, 2014), a development project in cooperation with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) of the European Union (Oliver & Berno, 2016), a number of South Pacific culinary training workshops (Chefs for Development, 2016), a sustainable fisheries project under the lead of World Wildlife Fund in Fiji (WWF New Zealand, 2016) and the opening of a South Pacific restaurant in Auckland (Stewart, 2016) – the first of its kind. Recently, Robert Oliver has initiated a TV-based cooking competition to promote contemporary Pacific cuisine in the

region (Launch, 2018). Furthermore, chef Colin Chung in collaboration with Fiji's Ministry of Agriculture published another cookbook on South Pacific island cuisine (Chung, 2017). He trained chefs in Fiji's Yasawa islands (DEPTFO News, 2016, December 11) and during the 2016 Chefs for Development project, on the use of local produce.

Overall it appears that Fiji provides a feasible context for close agriculture-tourism linkages. There is a flourishing tourism industry, a variety of cultural influences and numerous fertile agricultural areas. Nevertheless, the island state suffers from a range of inhibiting factors that impede the establishment of such linkages. Some of these factors are common in developing countries, others seem to be particular to the Fijian context. Fiji's Government as well as other NGOs and the private sector have recognised this issue and a number of initiatives have promoted contemporary Fijian cuisine to the industry and consumers alike. In how far the recent trainings of chefs and public media coverage on contemporary Fijian cuisine as well as Government policies take effect on a larger scale in Fiji cannot be assessed yet. Statistics on current consumption rates of local versus imported food in Fiji's tourism industry are not available. The most recent figures of the Ministry of Tourism suggest that 80 percent of food sold to tourists is imported (cited in Berno, 2011, p. 92).

3.7 Chapter summary

The establishment of linkages between food producers and tourism businesses can help to channel income from tourism to rural communities as well as meet a potential desire for authentic tourism experiences. It has been argued that "culinary networks can be used as a tool for sustainable tourism development in rural areas, as such initiatives involve small-scale producers, highlight locally sourced products, and enhance local traditions and cultural value" (Østrup Backe, 2013, p. 60). Case studies suggest that such linkages successfully emerge, if committed individuals drive them, backed by a corporate commitment. However, a number of factors were found that inhibit these linkages. The literature on this issue is substantial, but gaps nevertheless exist. Studies have looked at developing countries around the globe and a number have focused on the South Pacific. Most studies used an economic lens to focus on the issue at hand. Even though the economic approach is certainly relevant to the study of inter-sectoral linkages, more nuanced views considering other influencing factors are missing. A few notable exceptions exist, nonetheless. For example, Berno (2015) uses a cookbook to advocate for a contemporary

Pacific cuisine. Furthermore, the studies focused mostly on qualitative methods, such as interviewing. Some also integrated quantitative assessments into mixed-methods approaches, but other field-based, ethnographic methods were not used.

Fiji presents an interesting case study, because it has a growing tourism industry as well as a fertile agricultural sector. The country has seen a range of initiatives – policies, NGO projects and private sector initiatives – that sought to promote Fijian food to the tourism industry and to consumers. Interestingly, however, as Berno (2011) noted, Fijian food is valued neither by chefs nor tourists. Whether the recent publication of contemporary cookbooks and the subsequent training and marketing projects by internationally renowned chefs have been able to address this issue remains to be seen.

Leading on from ideas of Sims (2009) and Berno (2011) on sustainable cuisine, the following chapter addresses the issue of a so-far rather economic viewpoint and suggests the concept of cuisine to interrogate the formation of tourism-agriculture linkages. Because food is such an integral part of a culture and tourism might be an influential factor in cultural change and local development, the chapter continues by elaborating on cultural change in South Pacific island states, critically examining theories put forward by Marshall Sahlins. He conceptualised the process how Pacific island peoples change their culture in the face of external influences such as colonisation or globalisation.

4 Cuisine and Cultural Change

4.1 Introduction

Development has long been conceptualised from a Western economic viewpoint. As Chapter Three lays out, this approach to development also dominates most of the research on tourism-agriculture linkages. In contrast, a number of authors have argued that it is critical to move away from an economic viewpoint and recognise culture as a central theme in development (Prah, 2001; Radcliffe, 2006b; Schech & Haggis, 2000). Radcliffe (2006a) summarised that “culture has recently acquired a new visibility and salience in development thinking and practice” (p. 1). The understanding of ‘development’ depends eventually on cultural values and perceptions of what constitutes a good life (Chambers, 1997; Radcliffe, 2006a; Sharpley, 2015). Prah (2001), therefore, argued that any form of development needs to strengthen and build upon the existing culture in developing countries and not seek to merely replace it by other – mostly Western – ideas and principles of ‘the good life’. In other words, there appears to be a palpable interplay between development and cultural change.

In order to address the analytical gaps identified in Section 3.4, this chapter now proposes cuisine as a concept that embeds the economic into the cultural. Furthermore, this chapter provides a backdrop to the first research question, which seeks to understand in how far ‘cuisine’, as a conduit of cultural change, is a valuable analytical concept for understanding tourism-agriculture-development linkages. Arguing that the economic viewpoint does not suffice, the question is in how far a more culturally attuned concept, such as cuisine, can help to analyse tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries. Food, its production and consumption, have always been interlinked with culture and identity. Therefore, the concept of cuisine aims to facilitate a more holistic analysis of tourism-agriculture linkages. After establishing the concept of cuisine for the purpose of this research, it is applied to Fiji. This provides much of the country context and highlights how cuisine can facilitate analyses. In the following, the chapter argues that whether or not local food ends up on tourist menus depends not least of all on restaurant chefs and their attitudes towards their own culinary heritage vis-à-vis their guests’ preferences. This is important to emphasise in the case of Fiji and other SIDS, as they oftentimes have a colonial past and a Western-dominated tourism industry. Returning to the argument of local agency in

development and in opposition to concepts of neo-/colonialism, Marshall Sahlins' theory of cultural change is discussed. Broadly speaking he argues that local people in SIDS indeed have agency to negotiate the impact of change inflicted upon them. Concluding the literature review, the final section brings together cuisine, CCD and Sahlins' theory of cultural change to establish the conceptual and theoretical foundation of this thesis.

4.2 The concept of cuisine

Food production and consumption have always been closely linked to notions of culture, identity and heritage. Food is not only a necessity of life, but also a mediator of “[c]ultural habitudes, social-economic conditions, and political landscapes” (A. M. Young, Eckstein, & Conley, 2015, p. 198). There are a variety of conceptualisations of food in relation to society and culture. Terms such as ‘gastronomy’, ‘foodways’ and ‘cuisine’ are widespread in writings on food, but used in a number of contexts and frequently conflated (e.g., Bessièrè, 1998; Brillat-Savarin, [1825] 1941; Salmi, Tranberg, Pääkkönen, & Nurmi, 2014; A. M. Young et al., 2015). Gastronomy is often translated as the science of good eating and is predominantly concerned with the culture of consumption and taste (Brillat-Savarin, [1825] 1941; Kivela & Crotts, 2006). It is, therefore, an aspect of cuisine, as further described below. Foodways goes much beyond gastronomy and looks at “how we grow or acquire [food], how we prepare it, how we display or use it, and how and when we consume it” (Zeller, Dallam, Neilson, & Rubel, 2014, p. xviii). Other scholars define research on foodways as the “folkloric study of foods in all cultures across time and place” (Thursby, 2008, p. vii). However, cuisine is arguably the broader term and used prolifically in food-related studies (e.g., Civitello, 2011; Fine, 1996; J. A. Klein & Murcott, 2014; F. Okumus, Kock, Scantlebury, & Okumus, 2013; Pujol, 2009; Scarpato & Daniele, 2002; Stierand & Dörfler, 2012; Timothy & Ron, 2013), with elaborate considerations in the field of anthropology (Crowther, 2013; Goody, 1982; Pollock, 1992; Wilk, 1999).

The notion of cuisine is especially useful for the purpose of this study, because of its broad conceptualisation as well as its frequent use in tourism- and hospitality-related studies (Bessièrè, 1998; Choe & Kim, 2018; Erdem, Doğdubay, & Sarioğlan, 2012; Lee, Chao, & Lin, 2018; B. Okumus et al., 2007; F. Okumus et al., 2013; Prada-Trigo, 2017; Scarpato & Daniele, 2002; Timothy & Ron, 2013). Laudan (2013) published a history

book of cuisine and defined it, almost casually, as “styles of cooking” (p. 14). Nevertheless, the title of Civitello’s (2011) book *Cuisine and culture: A history of food and people* alludes to cuisine’s entanglement with the broader notions of culture, food, people and their development over time, as the following paragraphs demonstrate.

MacLennan and Zhang (2004) draw on Messer (1989) and define cuisine as

the culturally elaborated and transmitted body of food related practices of any given culture. It includes the selected basic foods, characteristic flavourings, processing (e.g., chopping and cooking), rules dealing with acceptable foods and combinations and textures; festival foods; the social context of eating; together with the symbolic combinations of foods in meals, menus, and seasonal or lifetime cycles of ritual foods and eating. The concept includes gastronomy, the art and science of good eating; and diet which includes the types and quantities of food and drink and their contribution to macro and micronutrient intakes. (p. 131)

MacLennan and Zhang (2004) elaborate further on what shapes a given culture’s cuisine: agricultural practices, religion and belief, medicinal knowledge, migration and trade. They hold that today “cuisine continues to evolve with urbanisation, agribusiness and globalisation” (p. 131). In doing so cuisine reflects “a variety of socio-ecological conditions that are inherent in definitions of place and ethnic identity” (Timothy & Ron, 2013, p. 278). At its heart, cuisine is concerned with the preparation and consumption of food, but as elaborated above, this connects to the multitude of factors that influence how this preparation and consumption takes shape.

First and foremost, cuisine is a product of its ecological environment. Soil, climate and water bodies, for example, establish the basis for a region’s cuisine. They define flora and fauna and therefore the naturally occurring raw products (Heine, 2004; Lougheed, 2010). Since humanity invented agriculture, the ability to subdue nature and make food availability in a partly controllable system changed the way humans ate (Civitello, 2011; Diamond, 1999). Seasons and their natural implications for agriculture shaped many traditions of what foods where to be harvested, prepared, eaten, preserved and consumed at what point in time (Civitello, 2011).

Laudan (2013) discusses how religions and customs influence societies’ eating habits. The histories of Buddhism, Islam and Christianity are at the same time accounts of particular cuisines, she argues. Most religions, for instance, developed sumptuary laws that helped define who was part of a particular belief and who was not.

Additionally, trade and migration, including colonialisation, have continuously changed the way societies eat and cook. For example, the silk route trade between Europe and Asia

left its traces in many recipes along the way. Mediterranean cuisine developed after Columbus brought back tomatoes, maize and potatoes, among other crops, from the newly discovered American continent in the 15th century (Civitello, 2011). British cuisine has changed substantially due to the country's colonisation of India. Lastly, trade exerts major influence on food systems and the way societies deal with food (Inglis & Gimlin, 2009b). Trade makes foreign foods available to places where they have previously been unknown. It therefore can change taste preferences and practices around food. With time and human development came an understanding of technology and medicine, which had an increasing effect on what was eaten and how. Humans came to understand the medicinal properties of foods as well as various techniques of how to grow various crops, make them edible and preserve them for later use. Technology in many cases served to negotiate the various challenging natural environments humans settled in. For instance, the invention of the plough or knowledge around grafting greatly changed agricultural practices and extended the human diet (Diamond, 1999).

Fischler (1988) outlines the broader social implications of cuisine. He asserts that for two reasons reducing cuisine to mere cooking practices does not do its societal importance justice. Firstly, cooking comprises not only physical and chemical transformation, but also imaginative processes. “[W]hich ingredients? at which stage of ripeness? what quantities? which methods of preparation? which methods of cooking? for how long? with what flavourings? It is as an expression of conscious choice that cuisine may be considered an art” (Santich, 2000, para. 8). In this process food transforms “from the state of Nature to the state of Culture” (Fischler, 1988, p. 284). Secondly, cuisine provides what Fischler (1988) assesses as “classifications and rules ordering the world and giving it meaning” (p. 285). This notion echoes in Brillat-Savarin's ([1825] 1941) famous quote: “Tell me what you eat and I shall tell you what you are” (p. 3). He refers to a cuisine's role in answering questions about identity. What is good and acceptable to eat and what is not? What some may incorporate in their diet differentiates them from others, as Goody (1982) discussed broadly in his work on the role of food in the British society. Throughout history food frequently served as a marker of social status and cultural affiliation (Civitello, 2011; Goody, 1982; Pollock, 1992). Therefore, cuisine is food culture and bestows identity upon those that share the same cuisine (Fischler, 1988; Montanari, 2006).

In a sense, cuisine acts as a symbol through which its influencing factors (climate, agriculture, trade, migration, etc.), and therefore a society's history and culture, manifests in every-day life.

Beyond its dietary importance, cuisine communicates meaning and is rich in symbols (Wilk, 1999). Ferraro and Andreatta (2009) argue that how food is eaten, with whom and when defines ethnic and cultural identity. Some believe, that because food is a prominent marker of cultural expression (Tellstrom, Gustafsson, & Mossberg, 2005), it can traverse regional and national boundaries and might even “tie together people who otherwise might not be part of a unified group” (Ferraro & Andreatta, 2009, p. 29). This notion builds on the idea that cuisine is often tightly linked to environment and place (Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Feagan, 2007) and thus presents a point of cultural reference. For example, cuisine can assume a key role in the struggle of diasporic people to maintain cultural identities (Sukovic, Sharf, Sharkey, & John, 2011). From a gastronomic point of view, Morris (2010) argues that the appreciative consumption of foreign cuisines may speak of the attitude one culture has towards another. She illustrates her case by the discomfort Pākehā¹² seem to have towards indigenous Māori restaurants in New Zealand. As U. Narayan (1995) proposes, cuisine is an essential building block of national identity. Cusack (2000) expands on this idea with respect to African cuisine and argues that “[a] ‘national cuisine’ is often built by appropriating and assembling a variety of regional or ethnic recipes and often reflects long and complex culinary histories as well as domestic ideologies” (p. 207) (see also Appadurai, 1988). He critiques the notion of ‘national cuisine’ in relation to Africa’s colonial history and points out how “ideologies [of] imperialism, capitalism and nationalism” (p. 207) are reflected in contemporary African cuisines. Their recipes present colonialisation and the subsequent dependency on Western countries, side by side with indigenous knowledge (Cusack, 2000). To this end many writers on food draw on notions of ‘traditional’ or ‘authentic’ cuisines (Rand, Heath, & Alberts, 2003; Sidali, Kastenholz, & Bianchi, 2015; Sims, 2009; Symons, 1999) – two labels that warrant further investigation.

¹² Te Reo for a white, non-Maori New Zealander.

Myhrvold, Young, and Bilet (2011) argue that so-called food traditionalists constantly seek out the alleged authentic and original ideas of a cuisine and try to emphasise “traditional styles and values”, but this perception of cuisine may just be “convenient fiction” (p. 14). Styles and methods of food preparation have always been part of a change process, as the culinary history books by Laudan (2013) and Civitello (2011) illustrate. Agricultural techniques, trade and discovery, among others, constantly change cuisines. Recipes regarded as ‘traditional’ often resemble “accumulated leftovers from changes wrought in the past” (Myhrvold et al., 2011, p. 14). Smith-Morris (2016) agrees and points out how difficult it is to in fact identify and quantify traditional food.

For example, much of what is taken as ‘traditional Italian’, is an assemblage of historic events. Either Marco Polo’s journey to China or traders from the Middle East brought durum wheat *pasta* to Italy (Civitello, 2011). The water buffaloes reared for *Mozzarella di bufala* originate from Southeast Asia. Tomatoes, without which Italian cookery would be almost unthinkable today, were a result of Columbus’ venture to South America. The list continues with maize, eggplants, almonds and coffee beans, to name but a few examples (Civitello, 2011). They may be regarded as ‘traditional’, but were in fact additions to Italian cuisine in the course of history. Tradition in regards to cuisine can be misleading. Whose tradition and from what period of time is a matter of scope and discourse and certainly difficult to define.

‘Authentic’ is yet another contested adjective that supposedly describes a particularly ‘genuine’ or ‘real’ cuisine. Symons (1999) holds that for food to be authentic, “meals have to be true to place” and therefore “be honest in not just what ends up on the plate, but also how it gets there” (p. 337). There is debate, however, around what constitutes ‘place’. Boorstin (1964), for instance, was criticised for his static and objective understanding of place and culture (Sims, 2009). Other scholars assert that cultures change and do not resonate with notions of purity upon which authenticity might be staged (Germann Molz, 2004). Authenticity is not defined by a strict adherence to recipes, the use of particular ingredients or preparation methods, but by an open communication of its trajectory. Appadurai (1986) proposes that

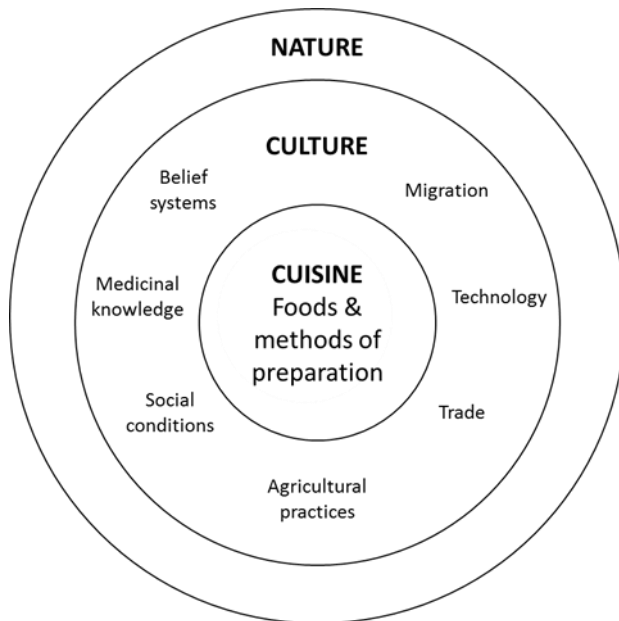
authenticity measures the degree to which something is more or less what it *ought* to be. It is thus a norm of some sort. But is it an immanent norm, emerging somehow from cuisine itself? Or is it an external norm, reflecting some imposed gastronomic standard? (p. 25; emphasis in original)

He therefore believes that ‘authenticity’ should not be used with regards to cuisine at all, as it implies an objective reality. On the contrary, E. Cohen (1988) and Edensor (1998) argue that authenticity emerges out of a discourse and is continuously constructed and negotiated within societies. In this sense, ‘Western’ food, such as mutton flaps and breakfast biscuits may be as authentically South Pacific as locally grown coconuts and taro, as long as they all remain ‘good to think’ (Lévi-Strauss, 1978) within the discourse on what is taken as consumable or not.

Given this background one could argue that cuisine represents a snapshot of its influencing factors in a point in time. Cuisine is in flux, informed by history and shaped by its current social discourse. It neither represents a historic relic that remains static over time nor a ‘traditional’ or ‘authentic’ product by default. Drawing on the different definitions and arguments presented so far I propose the following definition of cuisine as a methodological baseline for this research:

The concept of cuisine encompasses the foods and preparation methods of a particular culture at a point in time. Therein, cuisine is a discursive product of society and its natural environment, agricultural practices, trade, migration, technology, belief systems, medicinal knowledge and social conditions, and their respective histories. In turn cuisine represents culture and provides identity for the people that share it. (Author)

Figure 6 shows how foods and their preparation techniques are at the centre of the concept, but a range of factors influence how any given culture continuously produces and reproduces its cuisine. These factors not only influence cuisine, but may also impact each other. For instance, agricultural practices change with technology, or medicinal knowledge might be different according to one’s social condition. The natural environment then encompasses culture and cuisine, because it provides the environmental conditions and boundaries for their respective development. Figure 6 is not a rigid framework, but a diagram that emphasises the interconnectedness of environment, culture and food-related practices.

Figure 6: The concept of cuisine

Source: G. Laeis

4.3 Fiji's cuisine

This section serves a dual purpose. It firstly shows how the above-outlined concept of cuisine can be applied to understand the various facets of a particular country's cuisine. In doing so, it works towards Objective 1.2 in applying the concept to a SIDS. Secondly, this section also situates the study in its greater country context by elaborating on Fiji's natural environment, history, society, agriculture and food.

4.3.1 Society

Fiji has a population of about 885,000 which mainly resides on the archipelago's largest island Viti Levu. The province this study is based in, Nadroga-Navosa, is home to 6.7 percent of the population (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018d). Due to the British colonialisatation in 1874 and the subsequent introduction of indentured labourers from India, Fiji's society has mainly two ethnic backgrounds. Indigenous Fijians, the *iTaukei*¹³ account for about 57 percent. The descendants of Indian labourers as well as other immigrants from

¹³ *ITaukei* are the indigenous Fijians who are also understood as the owners of the land (Ravuvu, 1991, cited in Schieder, 2014, p. 191).

India, together referred to as Indo-Fijians, make up about 37 percent¹⁴. The remaining six percent are mostly other Pacific islanders, part-Europeans, Rotumans and Chinese (Donnelly et al., 1994; Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018c). In terms of religion, Christianity takes up an important cultural and social role amongst the iTaukei and so does Hinduism amongst the Indo-Fijians. Traditionally, the denomination of the Methodist Church has enjoyed by far the largest followership in Fiji (about 35 percent of Fiji's total population, according to a 2007 census). However, since the 1990s other Christian denominations, such as Pentecostal Churches, have seen increasing numbers due to their more critical stance on some Fijian traditions. The second-largest religious group in Fiji are of Hindu belief, accounting for 28 percent of the population in 2007 (Ryle, 2010).

For many *iTaukei* Christianity is held in equally high esteem as their long-held indigenous believes in the *vanua*; so far so, that Methodist church services regularly highlight their congregation's belonging to God and the *vanua* (Ryle, 2010). The *vanua* encompasses a tribe, its culture and connection to land, sea and spirituality. It structures the indigenous Fijian society in that each *vanua* includes several *yavusa* (clans), each consisting of a number of *mataqali* (sub-clan) and each *mataqali* comprises several *tokatoka* (extended families). The *mataqali* and the *yavusa* are commonly the land-owning units within this social structure, but a *vanua* defines the geographic area its people live in. A *vanua* is headed by a *tui*, the chief of the *vanua* (Ravuvu, 2005). In sum, *vanua* stands for "life that acquires its meaning when lived in community with others – not only with other human beings but also with ancestors, with seasons and festivals, plants and animals, land and sea and everything on it" (Tuwere, 2002, p. 69). Meo-Sewabu (2015) elaborates that well-being in Fiji comes with achieving "a state of completion and wholeness" (p. 109). She emphasises that this holistic notion of a good life builds upon maintaining good relationships and honouring communal and religious obligations within one's *vanua*.

In the past, Fiji has suffered from social unrest and political tension. Ethnic division between *iTaukei* and Indo-Fijians as well as inter-*iTaukei* rivalries have been contributing factors to four coup d'états in 1987 (twice), 2000 and 2006 (Naidu, 2013). The first three coups aimed at safeguarding indigenous Fijian interests against an increasing Indo-Fijian political presence. An environment of ethnic resentment, especially as a corollary of the

¹⁴ Data from the 2007 census; according to Fiji's Bureau of Statistics, the 2017 census did not correctly record ethnicities.

1987 and 2000 coups, led to riots and violence against Indo-Fijians and an increased rate of emigration (Beaglehole, 2013, pp. 132-138). The situation was aggravated by many indigenous landowners not renewing land leases with Indo-Fijian farmers (McCarthy, 2007; see also Subsection 4.3.3 for further details). In September 2014 Fiji held its first democratic elections after the 2006 coup and Bainimarama's party Fiji First received the majority of votes. Ratuva (2015) suggested that due to Bainimarama's reformist political agenda this outcome was welcomed by both *iTaukei* and Indo-Fijians. However, the Fijian Government still stands accused of restricted freedom of speech, encroachments on worker's rights as well as arbitrary arrests and torture by Fiji's police and armed forces (Amnesty International, 2016, pp. 156-157; Naidu, 2013).

Furthermore, poverty remains a serious issue for many Fijians. Even though the World Bank classes Fiji as an upper-middle income country and as the most sophisticated economy among the South Pacific island states, poverty figures increased significantly between 1977 and 2002/2003 (Mahadevan, 2009). Since then, however, incidences of basic needs poverty¹⁵ dropped from 39.8 to 34.0 percent in 2013/2014. Rural poverty was higher (38.3 %) than urban (29.9 %), according to the World Bank (2017, p. 19). 2008 statistics showed that Indo-Fijians had slightly higher rates of poverty than *iTaukei* (Narsey et al., 2010, p. 13). The decline of the sugar industry, political instability and non-renewal of land leases were deemed to be decisive factors in the earlier increase in poverty, especially in rural areas (UNDP, 2014). The coups of 1987 and 2000 resulted in significant economic downturn, the coup of 2006, however, did not. After a decade of stagnation, Fiji's economy has seen accelerated growth since 2010. Despite the devastating tropical cyclones in 2012 and 2016, the economy is spurred by rising confidence in political stability, strong visitor arrivals and private and public investments. Furthermore, the World Bank (2017) attributes the decrease in poverty also to more low-skilled jobs being available in the tourism and transport industry as well as an increase in remittances.

With respect to food, colonialisation, trade and globalisation had a range of significant impacts on Pacific societies. Today, South Pacific SIDS are part of a globalised market place, which has significant implications for their economies (Firth, 2000; Lockwood,

¹⁵ The Fijian basic needs poverty line (BNPL) is based on the expenditure of middle quintile rural and urban households on basic food and non-food needs. In 2008/2009 the BNPL per adult per week was FJ\$41.15 in rural and FJ\$46.54 in urban areas (Narsey, Raikoti, & Waqavonovono, 2010, p. 10).

2004). In this regard, globalisation is frequently seen as a major factor in changing Pacific cuisine and diets (Gerbasi et al., 2014; Snowdon et al., 2013). Haden (2009)¹⁶ summarised that “the overall diet of islanders has been transformed, and that islands have changed radically from being primary producers of foodstuff to being net importers of foods produced elsewhere” (pp. ix-x). Haden (2009) argued that the South Pacific presented a “stark contrast between traditional foodways and Western consumption patterns” (p. xiii) where “fast, junk, and snack foods are consumed by islanders, just as readily, if not more so, than are their traditional staple foods like taro, yam, and breadfruit, which have tended to become sidelined as special occasion foods” (p. xi). Fiji’s propensity to import food supports this argument (see Subsection 4.3.3).

Modernisation and growing urbanisation, along with changing perceptions of social norms in many parts of island society, are the predominant influences in this respect (Gerbasi et al., 2014; M. Rapaport, 2013). The traditional village lifestyle of fishing and subsistence agriculture is eroding and giving way to the promises of cash employment and an urban lifestyle (Haden, 2009). The country’s urbanisation rate stood at 55.9 percent in 2017, an increase of 16.3 percent over 2007 (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018a). Stagnating job opportunities in rural areas and livelihood options in growing urban areas are key drivers in this regard (Russel, 2009). As a result, eating habits have changed dramatically. Hi-caloric foods such as rice, wheat, sugar and tinned meat and fish products became more desirable than locally produced foods. Paired with a less active urban lifestyle and an increased intake of salt and alcohol this situation has created a number of non-communicable health issues and turned the South Pacific into a region with one of the highest obesity rates worldwide (Gerbasi et al., 2014; Russel, 2009; Snowdon et al., 2013; UNDP & SPC, 1982; Utter et al., 2008; World Health Organization, July 2010). In contrast, Dr. Lako, a food and nutrition scientist from the University of the South Pacific, holds that the traditional Pacific diet based on locally produced foods is a “super diet” (cited in Oliver et al., 2010, p. 28). It offers fibre-rich starches, low-fat proteins as well as leafy greens and fruits. At the same time, she claims, the region serves as a “dumping

¹⁶ Roger Haden’s book *Food culture in the Pacific* is a comprehensive resource and a key reference for this section. Oliver et al. (2010) regard it as “the ultimate source of information on food culture of the region” (p. 478).

ground for many foodstuffs that are regarded as by-products in New Zealand and Australia” (p. 29), which are now an integral part of the diet (see also Gewertz & Errington, 2007).

Nevertheless, some of the oldest Pacific cultural practices alive today are concerned with food (Haden, 2009). Pollock (1986, 1992) argued that the cultural and symbolic meanings attached to food are highly valued, possibly equal to nutritional properties. “Food represents a way of talking to people; it stands for respect, identity... It comes from the land that ties the present generations to the past and carries the whole group through to the future” (Pollock, 1992, p. 235). Food therefore represents an essential part of indigenous life in the form of communal feasts and representations during festivities (Lindstrom, 2013). Giant yams and pigs are societal currency in a number of Pacific cultures on such occasions. In the Solomon Islands and PNG, for example, a “bride-price” is paid in pig meat (Haden, 2009, p. 134). This also becomes apparent in everyday language, where only starchy root and tree crops, the staple food of indigenous Fijians and many other South Pacific peoples are regarded as ‘real food’ (see Subsection 4.3.4).

In sum, Fiji’s society is characterised by two major continuums. Firstly, the country’s two main ethnic backgrounds – indigenous and Indo-Fijians – and their evolving relationship between peaceful coexistence and conflict. Secondly, Fiji society balances between century old indigenous culture and modernity. The latter is exemplified by urbanisation and Fiji’s partaking in globalisation through international tourism and trade.

4.3.2 Natural environment

Fiji’s natural environment is shaped by the islands’ location 16° to 19° south of the equator and by their mostly volcanic origin. The more than 330 islands, of which about 100 are inhabited, account for less than ten percent of the total area, including its vast water-body (Donnelly et al., 1994). The marine environments of South Pacific islands provide a diverse source of food for the entire region; some lagoons are reported to provide about 250 edible species (Connell, 2007, p. 128). Fiji’s tropical maritime climate has two seasons (wet November-April; dry May-October), high and constant average temperatures (>25°C), abundant sunshine and a variety of micro climates, which allow for the cultivation of a large variety of tropical and semi-tropical crops (Donnelly et al., 1994, pp. 136-139; Sturman & McGowan, 2013). Noteworthy are dry-zones on the north-western and western sides of the two main islands, which can be water deficient during the dry months.

A natural threat is posed by tropical cyclones that form occasionally between November and March and cause damage through strong winds and heavy rainfall (Donnelly et al., 1994). Soil conditions vary greatly, depending on the islands' topography. To a large extent the volcanic islands Viti Levu and Vanua Levu possess poor lateritic¹⁷ soils. Agriculturally more productive alluvial soils, rich in river sediments and minerals, can be found in flood plains and along river banks (Donnelly et al., 1994, pp. 140-142), such as in Viti Levu's Sigatoka valley, near to where this study is situated (see Map 1).

Picture 1: Map of Fiji's main islands and case study location



Source: Google Maps, 2018

The Sigatoka valley is locally known as the country's 'salad bowl' due to its fertile soil and numerous vegetable and fruit farms (see farmland alongside Sigatoka river on Picture 2). According to estimates this area produces about 80 percent of Fiji's vegetables (Fink,

¹⁷ Highly weathered and nutrient-poor red soil common in tropical regions. Over long periods of time easily soluble nutrients have been leached out through heavy rainfall and strong sun.

Neave, Hickes, Wang, & Nand, 2013, p. 1). Of the two main islands, about a third is too rugged and mountainous to be used agriculturally and about 55 percent of the land area is covered by forest. Only 4,250 square kilometres (23 %) of Fiji's total land is used agriculturally, of which 39 percent is arable land, 20 percent is used for permanent crops and 41 percent accounts for permanent pastures (figures from 2014 and 2015; UN Statistics Division, 2016).

Picture 2: Areal view of the Sigatoka river and the Coral Coast



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

4.3.3 Agriculture

Prior to Western contact, the peoples of the South Pacific were hunter-gatherers and over time engaged in subsistence agriculture based on a number of crops and wild plants from the islands themselves as well as introduced species (Manner & Thaman, 2013). Many of the cultivated Pacific island foods¹⁸ referred to as ‘traditional’ or ‘indigenous’, such as breadfruit, yams, taro and coconut, were introduced from Southeast Asia and possibly

¹⁸ For a detailed description of Fiji's food evolution, edible species and their common and scientific names see Chapters 6, 7 and 8 as well as Thaman (1990).

South America in the early migratory periods 30,000 to 8,000 years ago (Diamond, 1999; Haden, 2009; Thaman, 1990). Today, agriculture provides the “economic and cultural foundation” (Manner & Thaman, 2013, p. 341) of many islanders. The indigenous terms for the months of the year still reflect this foundation. The terms refer to what crops or fish are in season, or should not be gathered. For example, *vulainuqualevu* (January) translates into ‘the moon where fish are plentiful’ (personal communication with Dr. Litea Meo-Sewabu, March 2017). Traditional subsistence and semi-traditional mixed forms of agriculture are widely practiced. Some of these cultivation methods score highly on a sustainability scale, especially the “agroforests, humanized woodlands, and polycultural gardens of traditional Pacific agricultural systems” (Manner & Thaman, 2013, p. 350). Food forests and extensive shifting agriculture were and still are widely practices (Thaman, 1990). They are well-suited for the often poor soils, safeguard fertility, foster high biodiversity and inhibit erosion, which in turn provides key ecological services, such as waterway and reef protection.

With the beginning of colonisation in the mid-1800s the South Pacific islands were heavily influenced by European domination, a “plantation boom” and the introduction of a cash economy (Chappell, 2013, p. 140). The colonisation of Fiji led to a transformation of the country from “self-sufficient tribal” to a foreign-owned sugar cane-based “export economy” (Knapman, 1985, p. 66), which depended to a large extent on indentured Indian labourers. Since Fiji’s independence in 1970, sugar cane, produced by mostly Indo-Fijian small-holder farmers and exported to Europe, was a major driver of Fiji’s economy (Donnelly et al., 1994). The industry reached peak production in 1995 with 454,000 tonnes of sugar (P. K. Narayan & Prasad, 2005). By 2016, however, the industry had decreased by 70 percent (Radio New Zealand, 2017, November 28). Non-renewal of land leases to Indo-Fijian farmers, uncertainty about preferential trade arrangements with Europe¹⁹ (P. K. Narayan & Prasad, 2005), fragmented and small-scale farms (Donnelly et al., 1994, p. 152), and the destruction of transport infrastructure by tropical cyclones led

¹⁹ The Sugar Protocol was a preferential trade agreement between the European Community and Fiji, among other developing countries. The agreement came into effect under the 1975 Lomé Convention. For decades it guaranteed sugar quotas at price levels above the world market rate. In 2009 the agreement officially ended, but negotiations about further trade arrangements continued (Firth, 2007; Government of Fiji, 2011).

to a sharp decrease in sugar production and export. According to the last agricultural census in 2009, sugar cane farms planted on average 2.9 hectares of cane (Ministry of Agriculture, 2016b, p. 22). Some authors argue that the sugar industry will collapse, if Fiji cannot secure continuing preferential access to global markets or increase its production efficiency to compete with world market prices (Firth, 2007; Morgan, 2018).

Despite the challenges associated with sugar production and trade, agriculture is an important part of Fiji's economy as it employs about two thirds of the Fijian workforce (Ministry of Agriculture, 2014, pp. 10-11). However, since 1991 the number of farms has dropped by 32 percent to about 65,000 mostly small-scale farms in 2009, according to the last agricultural census. The average farm size was 3.9 hectares in 2009, a decrease of more than a third (2.3 hectares) since 1991. Just under half of all farms (44 %) were subsistence farms of less than one hectare. Another 39 percent of farms were between one and five hectares (Department of Agriculture, 2009, p. 33; Ministry of Agriculture, 2016b, p. 20). Meanwhile, the contribution of the agricultural sector to Fiji's GDP declined from about 16 percent in the 1995 to 7.6 percent in 2014 (Ministry of Agriculture, 2016a, p. 5; 2016b, p. 19). The ratio of food sourced domestically compared to total food available was at 32 percent in 2015, but forecasted to increase to 42 percent by 2021 (Ministry of Economy, 2017, p. 10).

Overall, while small-scale agriculture production still puts food on the tables of many families in Fiji and sale of surplus produce is a source of income to a lot of people, the agricultural sector is in decline and there are only few large-scale and commercially operated farms. The corollary of limited productivity and a slim variety of agricultural produce, heavy reliance on food imports and forgone opportunity to earn foreign exchange is lamented frequently (Duncan & Sing, 2009; Martyn, 2011; Ministry of Agriculture, 2014, 2016a; Ullah & Anad, 2007). Sisifa, Taylor, McGregor, Fink, and Dawson (2016) argue that in many South Pacific SIDS the limited access of farmers to finance, investment and extension services has become a crisis for the region and has limited its overall development. The Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda reported that Fiji "is still importing many of its basic food requirements. These food products include rice, meat, milk, the needs of the tourism sector, and around 90 percent of the food lines in the supermarkets" (Ministry of Agriculture, 2014, p. 8).

Duncan and Sing (2009) hold that Fiji's agriculture is split between a commercial and a "village sector" (p. 169). The commercial sector includes a few large-scale corporate

farms, mostly involved in poultry production, as well as other smaller commercial farms for dairy, beef, ginger and fresh vegetables. Major products are fruits (papaya, pineapple and mango), various vegetables and traditional crops, such as *yaqona*, ginger, taro and cassava (Duncan & Sing, 2009, p. 168; Ministry of Agriculture, 2014, p. 19; Ministry of Primary Industries, 2012, p. 20). Their production does not necessarily take place in a commercial fashion, however. For example, fruits are often just casually harvested “from scattered and poorly maintained plantings” (Ministry of Primary Industries, 2012, p. 21). In contrast, the ‘village sector’ encompasses households that lead “semi-subsistence livelihoods, producing a surplus for sale to meet education and health expenses as well as purchases of food and other expenses such as social and cultural obligations and entertainment” (Duncan & Sing, 2009, p. 169). Village agriculture is very comparable to the pre-contact forms of Pacific island agriculture described above. Ms. Masuka, an officer of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in charge of the province of Nadroga-Navosa, which includes the Sigatoka valley, estimated the area was home to about 6,000 farmers. About 70 percent of these farmers were on a subsistence level, 18 percent on semi-subsistence and just about two percent operated commercially. The majority of the last category, she said, were Indo-Fijians growing papaya, eggplant, chilli, okra and curry leaves mainly for export (personal communication, July 3, 2017). The MOA reports that “[t]he country’s pace of transformation from subsistence to commercial scale agriculture is still slow” (Ministry of Agriculture, 2016b, p. 18). Given the context of declining farm numbers vis-à-vis the asserted economic importance of Fiji’s agricultural sector, scholars identified a range of external and internal factors that inhibit the progress of agriculture.

In 2008 Duncan and Sing (2009) conducted a thorough review of Fiji’s Ministry of Agriculture and its policies. In their assessment, the authors found that externally, quarantine restrictions of countries that trade with Fiji (e.g., New Zealand, Australia, North America) allow only certain agricultural produce to be exported from Fiji. Internally, land tenure and access to formal land titles, on-farm theft, a socio-cultural obligation to share impede agricultural development. Even though these findings may be arguable, they allude to Fiji’s socio-political conditions.

Duncan and Sing firstly note that “the absence of secure individualised tenure to land and the resulting difficulty of accessing credit without such secure collateral” (p. 168) are key challenges. The *iTaukei* own about 88 percent of land in Fiji communally (iTaukei Land Trust Board, 2018), mostly as shared property of a *mataqali*. In this context, farm land is

allocated to community members according to custom and not through formalised land titles. However, without such titles, indigenous farmers cannot apply for Government grants. Indo-Fijian farmers, on the other hand, mostly lease land from the *iTaukei*. Due to political instability, however, their leases have often not been renewed in the past (McCarthy, 2007). This had two consequences. Firstly, Indo-Fijian farmers shied away from long-term capital investment into farming ventures (World Bank, 2017). This resonates well with Higgins, Balint, Liversage, and Winters (2018), who found “strong evidence for positive effects of land tenure security on productive and environmentally-beneficial agricultural investments as well as on female empowerment” (p. 34). Secondly, Indo-Fijian farmers lacked the interest to pass on their farms to the next generation. Crocombe (2013) elaborated further.

In Fiji, where 14,000 long-established Indian settlers lease farms from indigenous Fijians, conflict is high over rent and political issues. Some lessees have been harassed into abandoning the farms. Many have not been renewed at the end of their thirty-year terms, and many such farms have gone out of production, reducing productivity and national income. (p. 199)

Furthermore, the “theft of crop and animal products has become a pervasive problem for commercial farming” (Duncan & Sing, 2009, p. 169), which might be a result of high poverty rates in rural areas. Some farmers therefore shift towards cultivating less valuable and more difficult to steal root crops. This issue pertains predominantly to the *iTaukei* community. The authors believe that the culturally embedded obligation to share possessions with one’s kin – known as *kerekere* – can hold village farmers back from establishing viable businesses. However, Lindstrom (2013) alludes to the fact that Pacific island societies are commonly defined by their social relations and kinship. Who people engage in economic activities with and exchange goods with is defined by their relationships. “Islanders create, maintain, and repair their social relations through the acts of exchange”, which frequently includes the exchange of foodstuffs (p. 176). From a Western-economic perspective, *kerekere* may be seen as an impediment to development; however, for indigenous societies it is custom, an expression of their culture, and a way of sharing goods and wealth.

Lastly, there is arguably a tendency to not honour contracts with suppliers on a regular basis. Because of the ownership of land and widespread subsistence farming, some communities only engage in income-generating activities if the necessity arises, for instance to pay for child education or fulfil social obligations. The authors emphasise that the latter

two reasons are culturally determined and should not be judged, but rather seen as prerequisites that need to be considered in any attempt to support indigenous agriculture. In terms of the MOA's policies, Duncan and Sing note that Fijian farmers have become used to receiving Government grants, rather than being subjected to liberal market forces. This has led many farmers to acquire a "hand-out mind-set" (Duncan & Sing, 2009, p. 177; Veit, 2007).

In sum, Fiji's agricultural sector is characterised by a diminishing importance of sugar production, mostly small farm sizes, a majority of traditional 'village agriculture' units, and only few large commercial farming enterprises. Indo-Fijian farmers struggle for secure long-term access to land, whereas *iTaukei* farmers face issues establishing businesses, while adhering to cultural norms. Overall, the agricultural sector does not produce sufficient food to satisfy domestic demand. A failure to establish a feasible and supportive agriculture and land tenure policy framework has aggravated the situation.

4.3.4 Food

The raw ingredients and recipes that are assembled to make food stand at the centre point of any cuisine. This subsection elaborates on ingredients and recipes of Fiji's food as a product of its social, agricultural, environmental and historical context outlined above. Fijian food is based on the islands' natural environment, the various waves of immigrants that came to Fiji and the globalising forces of the current market economy.

Fijian food can be divided into pre- and post-contact food. The prior is regarded as the 'traditional' indigenous food, even though it is also a product of a long and complex history of migration and trade of early Asian-Pacific peoples (Diamond, 1999; Haden, 2009; Thaman, 1990). Since first contact with the West and the ensuing colonisation, Fiji's cuisine became a crucible of indigenous, Indian, Asian and European ingredients, recipes and traditions. Fiji is a unique case among the South Pacific SIDS in so far as more than a third of its population is of Indian descent. Nevertheless, most islands share a common or at least similar natural environment and history. Even though the region is culturally diverse (Nile & Clerk, 1996), Haden (2009, p. 131) argues that from a food-perspective all indigenous South Pacific island cultures retain a high degree of continuity. This is, of course, contestable, as the environments of particular members of the South Pacific SIDS vary greatly. PNG with its mountain slopes at 2,600 metres poses a different environmental prerequisite than most of the lower-lying island nations (Manner & Thaman, 2013, p.

341). Nonetheless, the low-lying South Pacific islands appear similar when it comes to food, according to Haden (2009). Pollock (1992), too, emphasised the similarity of food culture on central and eastern Pacific islands. Overall, the indigenous societies of many South Pacific SIDS share a common cuisine, a culturally shared ‘pattern’ (Pollock, 1992), of which various ‘dialects’, both in terminology as well as in preparation techniques, have developed.

For example, raw fish marinated in lemon juice and coconut milk is a dish found across the Pacific. In Fiji and New Guinea it is called *kokoda*, in Tahiti *poisson cru*, in Kiribati *orao ra* and in Tonga *lei ika*. Meat or fish mixed with coconut milk, wrapped in taro and banana leaves and baked is regarded as *palusami* by Fijians and as *lu pulu* by Tongans. The use of an earth oven for baking or steaming food is another constant across the region, despite its varying names, such as “*imu* (Hawai’i), *mumu* (PNG), *’umu* (Samoa), *lovo* (Fiji), [and] *motu* (Solomon Islands)” (Haden, 2009, p. 90).

Indigenous Fijian meals are always based on *kai* – starchy root crops and tree fruits, such as taro, cassava, sweet potatoes, yams, plantain and breadfruit. *ITaukei* refer to them as well as to coconut as *kakana dina* – ‘real food’, highlighting their nutritional and cultural value and meaning (Haden, 2009; Pollock, 1986). For example, the diet of villagers of the Lau islands in Fiji is estimated to consist of up to 80 percent of starches (S. Jones, 2009, p. 107). Starchy crops are commonly boiled and served as a whole or cut in large chunks, served in bowls for everyone to take from. On feasts or representative dinners the amount and variety of *kakana dina* represent the male host’s ability to garden and provide food, referred to as *liga kaukauwa* – ‘strong hands’ (Ravuvu, 1983 cited in Pollock, 1986). *Kakana dina* is accompanied by *kina* (Haden, 2009) or *i coi* (Pollock, 1986) – non-starchy dishes that complete a meal. These may be vegetables (e.g., *rourou*, *bele*, *moca* and *ota*), meat, fish or seafood. Coconut is another Fijian staple and the main source of plant-derived fat. Freshly squeezed coconut milk, *lolo*, is a standard accompaniment. Oliver et al. (2010, pp. 33-36) note a variety of uses of coconut in South Pacific cooking. Fruits were uncommon in the early stages of settlement in Fiji and hence they are not referred to as proper food, but rather as snacks. Over time immigration and trade have brought a wide selection of tropical fruits (as well as vegetables, herbs and spices) to Fiji, such as papaya, banana, mango, melon, pineapple and passionfruit. The successful establishment of all of the mentioned foods is not only a product of early settlements, but also of Fiji’s tropical climate and agro-forestry systems. The starchy crops, especially, as well as coconut palms

are well adapted to the island environments and can be grown on fertile volcanic soils as well as in atolls with little soil at all. Particular crops, such as yams, were grown for times of hardship and to endure natural disasters (Haden, 2009). The reefs and seas around the islands as well as rivers and lakes provided a large variety of fish, crustaceans and other seafood. On land, pigs and chickens constitute the most appreciated form of animal protein and are frequently part of communal feasts prepared in a *lovo* (Haden, 2009).

The ‘traditional’ indigenous diet, however, has changed drastically from the past. Early on, Parkinson (1982) warned that “[t]he carefully balanced nutritional status of populations, particularly on the atolls, has been endangered by the uncontrolled introduction of foreign foods” (p. 125). Rice, wheat and tinned fish products have increasingly substituted *kakana dina*, fresh fish and seafood. Salt and sugar intake has increased, growing urbanisation has led to a change in lifestyle and traditional foods, even though culturally still a strong point of reference, are often relegated to the sphere of special occasion foods. As alluded to above, globalisation and the introduction of a Western diet has since been blamed for a number of nutrition-related ills (Gerbasi et al., 2014; Snowdon et al., 2013; Thaman, 1988; World Health Organization, July 2010).

Besides *iTaukei* recipes, cookbooks such as Oliver et al. (2010), Chung (2017) and Skinner (1983) provide recipes on Indo-Fijian and *kailoma*²⁰ food. Since the arrival of the first sugar labourers, Indian cuisine has had a significant influence on Fiji. It developed as its own cuisine as much as it has influenced indigenous cooking. Spices, most notably chillies, curries, and flatbreads are common place in Indo-Fijian as well as *iTaukei* cooking. Oliver et al. (2010) note that before the arrival of Indians in Fiji

the use of spices had been very limited and most cookery very simple: fish cooked in coconut milk and roasted in banana leaves in a *lovo*, shellfish boiled or thrown into a cooking fire, roasted root vegetables. But now things began to heat up. Curries, fresh ginger and complex, fragrant masalas all melded well with the mellower fare of fish, coconut and the root crops already present. Rice arrived, and the mixing of Pacific ingredients and East Indian spices began. This happened dramatically in Fiji, where the Indo-Fijians virtually created the local restaurant industry. (p. 318)

The *kailoma* influence is present in mixed forms of European and local ingredients and preparation methods, such as scones made with coconut or pastries made with plantain. Haden (2009) noted that bread, tea and butter “must now be considered a regional staple”

²⁰ *Kailoma* is a term used for Fijians that are of European and *iTaukei* descent.

(p. 73). Skinner (1983) also highlighted the influence Chinese immigrants have had on Fiji's food culture. Many recipes include ingredients such as noodles or soy, oyster, and sweet chilli sauce. *Chow mein* and *chop suey* are common dishes in restaurants and local communities. Finally, Fiji's inclusion into the global market economy has made the importation of significant amounts of food possible. Increasing urbanisation and modernisation has supported the consumption of more Western-style convenience food, supported by local media advertisement and the globalising forces of international tourism.

In sum, applying the concept of cuisine to Fiji shows the relations between the historic developments and current state of the country's environment, agriculture, society and food. Even though each influencing factor is just briefly visited, this overview aims for a basic understanding of the underlying structures. On the one hand, the region provides a 'super diet' of vegetables, fruits, seafood, fish and limited meat options. On the other hand, colonialisation and the ensuing trade and urbanisation have introduced foods from various other countries, including high-caloric fare in the form of snacks and fast-foods. Fijian cuisine is therefore made up of the variety of influences present on the island, predominantly indigenous *iTaukei*, Indian, Chinese and European food. Their sum presents the local cuisine. However, there may be another 'cuisine' found in cookbooks on 'paradise islands' as well as in the minds of tourists. Within the tourism and hospitality industry what aspects of South Pacific cuisine – if any – appear on menus depends, in most cases, on hotel and restaurant managers and even more so on chefs. Such choices have, in turn, implications for local food producers.

4.4 Cuisine as a 'recipe' for development?

Contributing to local development by linking the tourism industry to local agriculture can help channel income from tourism more directly to rural communities as well as enhance the tourism experience, as outlined in Section 3.2. From an economic viewpoint, cuisine can be anything between a mere necessity when travelling and a tourism product in its own right (C. M. Hall & Sharples, 2003; Richards, 2002; Timothy & Ron, 2013). In any case, it presents a vehicle that transforms a destination's image into a consumable product (Bessière, 1998). If fuelled with locally produced raw material, cuisine channels such expenditures towards local food producers, such as farmers, fishermen and artisanal manufacturers, and therefore constitutes an regional economic development tool (C. M. Hall, Mitchell, & Sharples, 2003; Torres & Momsen, 2004).

Implicit in this argument is, however, the understanding that those in charge of restaurant menus and procurement methods need to opt for a locally attuned menu – an issue that has not received much scholarly attention so far. As discussed in this chapter, cuisine is part and parcel of culture and identity. Manifold factors influence what is eaten how and by whom, as described in the previous section. Despite the economic rationale, laid out in Section 3.3, decisions on what appears on a restaurant menu and how food is procured may therefore be influenced by cultural factors as well. This becomes apparent in anecdotal evidence of endeavours to establish locally themed restaurants in the Caribbean. “One obstacle kept coming up again and again: the Caribbean cooks and chefs did not view their own food culture as being ‘world class’ and worthy of appearing on hotel menus“ (Oliver et al., 2010, p. 12). The authors observed the same in Fiji where “local cooks themselves did not see their own food as viable – it was good enough for home, but not restaurant worthy” (p. 14). Oliver et al. (2010) believe that local tourism-agriculture linkages in Fiji have not developed because the “local food culture [has] not been successfully adapted to suit the menu needs of the hotels, largely because native dishes [have] not evolved past their original format” (pp. 14-15).

These observations speak of a different issue than commonly framed by ‘demand-supply’ analyses. Apparently, aspects of island cuisines are seen by some as too inferior to meet tourists’ expectations. This is reminiscent of the critique of tourism as a form of neocolonialism outlined in Section 2.6. Developing countries may have little control over their foreign-owned tourism sectors and are once more ‘colonised’ by indirect rule through the capitalistic market forces of tourism, followed by a diffusion of Western culture. Following this thought, one could argue that the country’s own culture is made inferior by tourism. This may seem ironic, considering tourism is seen as an economic source for development for SIDS. Interestingly, Pollock (1992) observed that “[d]uring the colonial period, pride in local foods was overwhelmed by messages about cash crops and the greater efficacy of Western foods” (p. 235). Crosby (1986) pointed out the ‘europeanisation’ of many countries through the introduction of plants and animals that are most desired by Europeans. This resonates with postcolonial theory in a way that it speaks of the change colonised countries have experienced towards Western (food) culture. In view of peoples from postcolonial countries, Philips termed this process ‘cultural cringe’: a “denigration of their own culture in favour of others” (cited in Symons, 1999, p. 334).

Colonialisation and the ensuing Westernisation have certainly left marks on Pacific cultures, not least of all with respect to food. In the face of a stark contrast between traditional and Western cuisine in the Pacific the question arises, how do those in charge of the menus and growing food negotiate their spaces of culinary heritage, colonial legacy and ongoing Westernisation in the context of a globalised tourism industry? And what implications does this have for local food procurement and ergo for channelling tourism receipts into local communities?

To this end, cuisine poses a concept that constitutes “an avenue toward understanding complex issues of cultural change and transnational cultural flow” (Wilk, 1999, p. 244). I will use cuisine in this research as a viewpoint on corporate community development, to better understand the issues involved in linking tourism with agriculture in SIDS. This is not to say that economically guided analyses are worthless. Rather, their focus can be enriched by looking at cuisine and its cultural implications, I argue. The following section returns to the argument of agency, as raised at the end of Section 2.6 in relation to cultural change. The CCD concept holds that local communities have agency in their reception of, or resistance against development impacts of tourism capital. If we look at findings from Pollock (1992) and Oliver et al. (2010), the question arises what made people exercise their agency to change their cuisine or even think of it as inferior? What provoked this ‘cultural cringe’? I employ a theory on cultural change proposed by Marshall Sahlins in the context of the South Pacific to elaborate on these questions.

4.5 Marshall Sahlins’ theory of cultural change

Sahlins has made the theory of cultural change a paramount subject of his studies. His work is valuable in the context of this study because he specifically looked at the behaviour of Pacific islanders in the face of change through colonialism, capitalism and globalisation. He has theorised local responses to the forms and effects of globalisation laid out in Chapter 1. In most of his work, Sahlins argued for a cultural ‘continuity through change’, which holds that indigenous cultures are produced and reproduced, yet remain intact even in the face of dramatic changes through colonialisation and Western capitalism (Kumoll, 2007; Robbins & Wardlow, 2005). Sahlins’ 1992 publication *The economics of develop-man in the Pacific*, however, broke away from the idea of continual cultural integrity. For the first time Sahlins explained how he saw indigenous cultures come to

abandon their own cultural reproduction and decide to change their ontology fundamentally towards Western values. This section lays out in greater detail the reasoning behind Sahlins' theories of cultural change, drawing largely on his 1992 publication as well as Robbins and Wardlow (2005), who have put together the – so far only – edited volume of papers that took the notion of fundamental change through cultural 'humiliation' as their starting point, as well as Kumoll (2007), who has produced a comprehensive analyses of Sahlins' entire work.

Sahlins (2000, pp. 9-10) presented three basic premises that underline his theory of cultural change. Firstly, there is continuity in change. Even though change in the culture of indigenous people occurs, it does not render that culture obsolete or irrelevant. Secondly, the culture of indigenous people remains intact through its continuous production and reproduction, even through periods of dramatic change. Lastly, indigenous people are active agents in this process of production and reproduction, even if the powers that trigger change, such as colonialisation or capitalistic globalisation, are dominating actors.

Sahlins argues against proponents of the world system theory, such as Wolf (1997) and Huntington (1993) (see also Section 2.6). Wolf (1997) doubted that what anthropologists take as 'indigenous culture' is still intact and proposed that these cultures were rather products of the dominant world capitalist system, which has destroyed indigenous traditions and remodelled them according to Western specifications. From his point of view, 'development' was defined by the core and taken up by the periphery. This is reminiscent of Huntington's (1993) argument around the 'clash of civilisations'. In contrast, rather than being seen as dominated and exploited by the core, "the periphery must be seen as an active agent whose contact with the core can vary from eager demand for trade to indifference to active resistance" (Stein, 1999, p. 21). Sahlins (2000) argues that Wolf's and Huntington's viewpoints are perhaps too simplistic.

The capitalist forces are realized in other forms and finalities, in exotic cultural logics far removed from the native European commodity fetishism ... Hence, the World System is not a physics of proportionate relationships between economic 'impacts' and cultural 'reactions'. The specific effects of the global-material forces depend on the various ways they are mediated in local cultural schemes. (p. 418)

As a counter model to Wolf and Huntington, Sahlins (1992) proposed the concept of ‘develop-man’²¹, explicitly in contrast to the Western concept of ‘development’ (Kumoll, 2007, p. 247). Develop-man stands for “the enrichment of” the indigenous peoples’ “own ideas of what mankind [*sic*] is all about” (Sahlins, 1992, p. 14) through furnishing their lives and cultural understandings with Western objects and ideas. In Sahlins’ view, indigenous peoples are not victims, but actively negotiate foreign impacts, making conscious decisions about what to integrate and make their own, or what to reject. In doing so, their own culture – or their own value system – is enriched and neither eroded nor Westernised.

Brought into the orbit of the capitalist World System, this global crusade of economic rationality, they [New Guineans] have proven themselves quick studies in commercial cunning – which they use to stage the most extravagant traditional ceremonies anyone could ever remember. ... [I]t is *development* from the perspective of the people concerned: their own culture on a bigger and better scale than they ever had it. (Sahlins, 1992, p. 13, emphasis in original)

This argument endorses concepts of ‘cultural hybridisation’ Nederveen Pieterse (2015) or ‘creolisation’ (R. Cohen, 2007) mentioned earlier. Cultures interrelate, exchange and change with each other, rather than one dominating the development of the other.

In a South Pacific context Chappell (2013) observed further examples of what Sahlins would have called develop-man. In Tahiti “ambitious chiefs added foreign trade contacts to traditional power dynamics in their quest for supremacy” (p. 139). Regarding the arrival of missionaries he argued that “Oceanians ‘indigenised’ Christianity, sometimes blending it with their own beliefs” (p. 140). Wherever indigenous cultures and capitalism meet for the first time, develop-man is the initial local commercial response, because indigenous people do not try “to become just like us [Westerners], but more like themselves” (Sahlins, 1992, p. 13). This is not to say, however, that Sahlins’ theory does not accommodate more fatal impacts on indigenous cultures that indeed result in an erosion of long-established traditions and values. Given his underlying assumptions of indigenous agency, continuity in change and cultural integrity (Sahlins, 2000), the question arises what must happen in order for indigenous people to abandon the integral reproductive cycle of their own culture and aspire to modernise?

²¹ The term originates from a conversation Sahlins overheard in Fiji, where South Pacific students blended their local Neo-Melanesian vernacular and English into what was supposed to be ‘development’ (Sahlins, 1992, p. 13). Sahlins uses this term as a gender inclusive concept.

At the end of Sahlins' 1992 paper he analyses the transition from *develop-man* to *development*, "marked ... by the shift from a selective to an eclectic relation to Western commodities" (p. 23). The use of Western goods and ideas no longer supports indigenous values, but serves to consciously appropriate Western values and concepts of a good life (Kumoll, 2007). In order for the indigenous ontology to become porous and the integral cycle of cultural reproduction to break, indigenous people "had to pass through a certain cultural desert to reach the promised land of 'modernization': they had to experience a certain *humiliation*" (Sahlins, 1992, p. 23, emphasis added). Sahlins explains that

to 'modernize', the people must first learn to hate what they already have, what they have always considered their well-being. Beyond that, they have to despise what they are, to hold their own existence in contempt – and want, then, to be someone else. (Sahlins, 1992, p. 24)

Note that Sahlins uses 'develop', 'modernise' and 'Westernise' interchangeably. Regardless of the term, he always refers to a Western concept of development. To differentiate more clearly between 'develop-man' and 'development', below I will replace the latter with 'modernise'. This acknowledges that Western forms of 'development' may not be in line with notions of sustainable development and wellbeing (see Subsection 2.4.3) as well as South Pacific world views (see Subsection 4.3.1). The implied link to the critique of modernisation theory (Briggs, 2014) is therefore intended.

Humiliation can for instance be induced by colonisation and the ensuing confrontation with novel ideas, commodities and values that may appear more desirable. Arguably, tourism might also cause 'humiliation' for people in developing countries. According to Jaakson (2004) tourism in poor countries "is a powerful symbol of wealth and privilege" (p. 170) that perhaps may be desired by others. However, Sahlins argues that humiliation is not a product of Western exercise of power, but rather an effect of aspirational indigenous people who voluntarily decide to abandon their cultural values in the face of other aspirational ideas. This does not stand in contrast to the concept of *develop-man*, but rather expands it to explain the process of modernisation.

[H]umiliation, in Sahlins['] scheme, is an answer to the question of how, given the bias toward indigenous cultural reproduction and expansion, people ever come to embrace the West and make achieving development *stricto sensu* their goal. It is the need his theory has to pose this question that makes the humiliation argument an important development within it. (Robbins, 2005, p. 10)

Interestingly, at the end of Sahlins' 1992 publication he points out that humiliation can be a double-edged concept. Even though humiliation can bring indigenous people to modernise, it might also risk "provoking a self-consciousness of the indigenous culture, as possessed of values better than and distinct from Westernization" (p. 24). Through the confrontation with 'the other', indigenous people may become more aware of their own culture that they so far may have taken for granted. Hence, modernisation might create an impetus for indigenisation as well as modernisation.

Sahlins has not developed his concept of humiliation any further. Kumoll (2007, pp. 250-254) as well as the contributing authors to Robbins and Wardlow (2005) provide a critique of Sahlins' concepts of develop-man and humiliation. Firstly, Josephides (2005) points out that for Sahlins "the humiliation process assumes that modernity is wholly a western notion" (p. 116). Based on her research, however, she argues that other non-Western cultures might evoke this as well. Sahlins focussed on the encounter of Pacific cultures with 'the West', but his theory does not necessarily only apply to this one specific context (Kumoll, 2007). Furthermore, Kumoll criticises the dichotomy of develop-man/development for being a too rigid construct to allow for an analyses of the highly heterogeneous and overlapping nature of cultures. He follows the contributors to Robbins and Wardlow (2005), who argue mostly for the merit of humiliation, but question, firstly, that a culture as a whole becomes humiliated and then modernises, and, secondly, that there is a clear distinction between 'the indigenous' and 'the West', as suggested by Sahlins' idea of a 'cultural desert' between indigenous culture and modernity. Rather, develop-man and modernisation seem to occur more dynamically in various strands, at various stages and in different aspects of a culture (Foster, 2005; Josephides, 2005). Lastly, Robbins (2005) proposes that humiliation might not mean a cultural turn away from indigenous values, but rather an expression of indigenous culture itself.

Humiliation ... must first arise in traditional terms, since these are the only terms that exist at that point in the lives of the people whose humiliation is at issue. It is only once humiliation arises in traditional terms that it can work to dislodge the very culture that first made it sensible. (Robbins, 2005, p. 15)

Overall, Sahlins' theory of cultural change explains the process and extent of indigenous agency in the negotiation of cultural change. The concept of develop-man describes how indigenous cultures adopt or reject new commodities, values and ideas within their own cultural fabric – or, through humiliation, change their ontology, or parts thereof, fundamentally and modernise. Critics of Sahlins' theory emphasised that this applies not only

to indigenous cultures, but possibly also to the interplay between other Western and non-Western cultures. Moreover, there may be multiple processes of development, humiliation and modernisation occurring simultaneously throughout a culture. Most importantly, however, Sahlins' theory emphasises the agency of people in negotiating foreign impacts. Interestingly, culture has often been seen as an obstacle to development (Watts, 2003). Arguably there exists a hierarchical relationship between 'modern' and 'traditional' culture, whereby the latter is understood as backwards and supposed to be 'driven out' through development efforts (Schech & Haggis, 2000). Sahlins, however, does not associate culture with hierarchical terms if there is an exchange of cultural aspects, as suggested by development. The terminology and concept of 'humiliation' indeed speaks of a hierarchical relationship, but on behalf of the humiliated. Sahlins speaks from the position of the indigenous people, where modernity needs to be understood in indigenous terms first, in order to be made part of their own culture. It is their decision to feel humiliated and then decide to radically change and modernise, or not. Thus, foreign impacts do not necessarily corrupt or destabilise a culture.

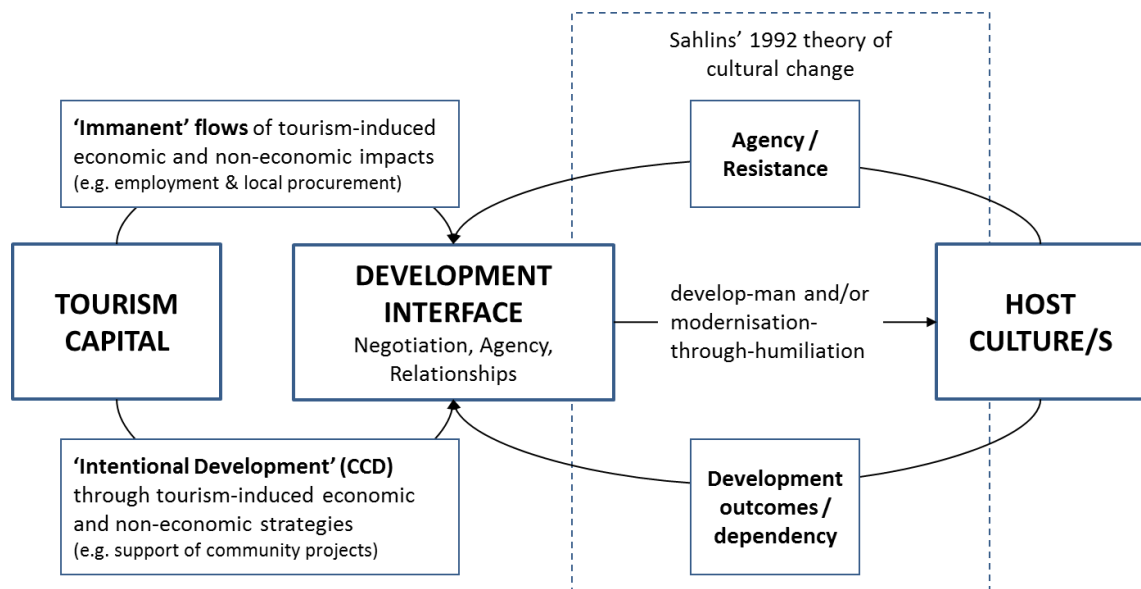
In view of the concept of cuisine, Sahlins' theory can be employed to discuss the process and extent of indigenous agency in the negotiation of changes brought about by tourism along food chains. The following section concludes the literature review of this thesis by linking Sahlins' theory on cultural change with the concept of cuisine and the CCD framework to interweave the theoretical backgrounds of this research.

4.6 Cuisine as a conduit of cultural change within the CCD framework

The CCD framework emphasises that communities in developing countries are not passive victims of the private sector's presence, but possess agency in negotiating its immanent effects and intentional development efforts. To highlight this agency, I apply Sahlins' theory on cultural change to conceptualise the responses of Fijians to the impact of Western-dominated tourism. Sahlins' concept is valuable in this context for three reasons. Firstly, it builds upon the same premises as the CCD framework: people (in developing countries) can negotiate the influence of foreign influences through their own practices and agency. Secondly, Sahlins established his theory within the context of the South

Pacific and the interface of Western-driven change and responses from indigenous societies. I follow Kumoll (2007), however, and apply Sahlins' concept of cultural change not only to the indigenous Fijians, but to all who consider themselves Fijian. Lastly, through the differentiation of develop-man and modernisation, Sahlins' theory describes how cultures appropriate foreign influences or change fundamentally. Figure 7 visualises how Sahlins' theory of cultural change is applied to interrogate the interaction between host cultures and the development interface within the tourism CCD framework (see Figure 5 above). 'Host communities' is here replaced with 'Host culture/s' to emphasise how tourism capital might not only impact communities, but cultures at large. The interrelation between culture and development is further discussed below.

Figure 7: Sahlins' cultural change theory in the CCD framework



Sources: G. Laeis based on Banks et al. (2016, p. 246) and Sahlins (1992)

The importance of culture in the context of development has seen increasing scholarly attention (Hooper, 2000; Prah, 2001; Rabie, 2016; Radcliffe, 2006b; Schech, 2014; Schech & Haggis, 2000). Development certainly goes beyond the efforts of the private sector and local communities. Rather, development encompasses the larger society and institutions and therefore constitutes "a societal enterprise" (Rabie, 2016, p. 12). The actors involved in such enterprises transform society through their inextricably interconnected struggle to develop. Rabie (2016), drawing on concepts of Fukuyama (1995) on trust and change, outlines the significant role of culture in society's development and its palpable interplay with economic actors.

People's attitudes, values, traditions, and relationships – or simply people's cultures – affect the way their economies are organized and how they function. Meanwhile, people's involvement in the activities of their economies makes them subject to the influence of economic and technological changes and production relations, which in turn cause their cultures to change accordingly. In other words, the relationship between culture and economy is a dynamic one, whereby each affects and is affected by the other. This makes the relationships that tie culture to economy and economy to culture the major forces that cause progress and stagnation, development and underdevelopment, and determine the degree of dynamism in all aspects of societal life. (Rabie, 2016, p. 10)

To what degree the above-mentioned relationships impact development possibly varies. Nevertheless, the pathways of economic and cultural development are certainly inextricably connected. The challenges of linking tourism and agriculture in developing countries, as laid out in Chapter 3, therefore require more than an economic appraisal. This chapter has proposed cuisine as a concept that does justice to Rabie's (2016) and Dixon's (1999) argument of the dialectic link between economy and culture and applies it to food, its production and consumption. In doing so, this chapter has laid the foundation to answer the first research question of in how far cuisine is a valuable analytical concept for understanding tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries.

In pursue of Research Objective 1.1, this research understands cuisine as a cultural conduit, which is a further argument for moving from 'host communities' to 'host culture/s' in Figure 7. It is an example of an eminent part of culture that can be used to discuss food-driven CCD impacts. The CCD framework, on the other hand, can conceptualise the developmental influence of tourism capital on host communities. To this end I apply Sahlins' theory of cultural change to better understand how these communities negotiate the Western capitalistic influence through cuisine.

4.7 Chapter summary

This chapter addressed the issue of appraising tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries from an economic viewpoint. Not only does this omit the importance of culture within developmental issues, but it also overlooks the fact that food, its production and consumption is a significant part of culture. This chapter has therefore proposed the concept of cuisine as a novel way to scrutinise the interface of tourism and agriculture. Cuisine is often thought of as just the particular recipes and preparation methods of food of a particular region or culture. But, as such, it is part and parcel of a range of factors that determine what food is produced where, by whom, traded with whom and finally prepared

and consumed by whom. The natural environment, agricultural practices, social and economic conditions and their historic development over time produce 'cuisine'. Thinking about tourism-agricultural relationships through cuisine therefore helps to embed economic aspects into the cultural context. In Fiji, cuisine is a product of its tropical island environment, various waves of immigration and a continuum of lifestyles, ranging from traditional indigenous village lives to modern urban existences. But, social unrest and ethnic struggles have also greatly impacted Fiji. For instance, indigenous farmers mostly remain within the scope of traditional 'village farming', governed by *iTaukei* custom. Indo-Fijian farmers, in contrast, operate most of the small sugar cane farms as well as a few modernised and large-scale farms, but have had to endure ethnic unrest and expiring land leases in the past. This background may have had a significant impact on their entrepreneurial spirit. Moreover, Fiji is a post-colonial country, which, as some scholars have observed, has left marks on the perception of its indigenous people on their traditional food.

Sahlins' theory of cultural change can be applied to better understand under what conditions South Pacific people adapt or entirely change their culture. What must occur so that Western ideas of a good life displace cultural production and reproduction of an indigenous culture? Or, more pertinently, why do Fijians seem to think less of their culinary heritage in the face of Western-dominated tourism? This question epitomises the links this chapter has outlined between the concept of cuisine, tourism-led CCD and Sahlins' theory of cultural change in South Pacific SIDS. This chapter argued that cuisine is a cultural conduit. As such, it can be used to discuss food-driven CCD impacts. The CCD framework, on the other hand, can conceptualise the developmental influence of tourism capital on host communities. To this end I apply Sahlins' theory of cultural change to better understand how these communities negotiate the Western capitalistic influence of tourism through cuisine.

5 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have reviewed literature on the role of tourism in sustainable development and tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries. Then the study proposed to deploy the concept of cuisine, Sahlins' theory of cultural change and the CCD framework to study such linkages from a cultural perspective. Chapter 5 will now expand on the methodological considerations of translating this proposal into practice. The first sections discuss the research paradigm and the implications of conducting research in Pacific communities in an ethical and culturally appropriate fashion. The third section describes the ethnographic methodology used within a case study approach in Fiji. Section four then explains and visualises how these methods will be used to answer the three research questions, before reporting on the implementation of the methodology in practice. A description of how gathered data was analysed and an appraisal of the researcher's positionality conclude the chapter.

5.2 Research paradigm

This study is based on the paradigm of social constructionism, assuming that people create their own social reality through individual and collective actions. The paradigm's goal is to explore "what people at a particular time and place take as real, how they construct their views and actions, when different constructions arise, whose constructions become taken definitive, and how the process ensues" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 189). I followed a qualitative approach in the form of a case study built upon ethnographic inquiry. It aims at the in-depth understanding of a single case as opposed to the coverage of a larger sample. The research further follows an inductive paradigm and explores underlying patterns and structures of behaviour (Charmaz, 2006; Lamnek, 2010). Thus, this study aims to add an in-depth ethnographic understanding to the existing literature on tourism-agriculture linkages.

Despite the ongoing debate about the value of qualitative versus quantitative research (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008), scholars argue that a qualitative approach is particularly useful in circumstances where a comprehensive understanding of a complex is-

sue is needed, where extensive information about processes, experiences, and stakeholders is of interest, and/or where mostly non-numerical information is available (Arendt et al., 2012; Bazeley, 2007). Such circumstances pertain particularly to research on culture and tourism (Hollinshead, 2004; Singh et al., 2012). Grybovych (2012), for instance, applied the same approach. As a participating observer she studied tourism planning practices in three North American communities and realised how vastly different and challenging the various worldviews of her participants were. She acknowledged that her subject “did not ‘exist’ out there, but was rather (re)constructed by its participants, and that each of them interpreted the process according to their historical, cultural and social background, experiences, and social interactions” (p. 506). Grybovych therefore concluded that a qualitative and participatory research approach based around case studies is valuable to understand personal perceptions and motivations as well as interactions amongst complex networks of people. Walsh (2003) and Kwortnik (2003) point out that in a food-service and hospitality context qualitative research methods are particularly useful to explore multifaceted research problems. An advantage in this respect is the immediate collaboration between researchers and researched. Through this process the researched organisation may gain meaningful insights into its own workings (Walsh, 2003), which makes for a mutually beneficial research project. This outcome is an important part of Pacific research values, which emphasises the respect for reciprocity, as Section 5.3 will elaborate in greater detail.

5.3 Culturally and ethically appropriate research in the Pacific

This research draws upon postcolonial development theory and recognises that every culture possesses its own appreciation of knowledge and acceptable ways of acquiring it. Frequently the fact has been lamented that Western scientists and development workers have acted according to their Western worldviews, disregarding the value of local knowledge systems (Briggs, 2014). In an effort to decolonise the generation of knowledge on Pacific peoples, a number of research frameworks have been proposed that put self-determination of knowledge-holders at the centre point of attention. With respect to Fiji, Nabobo-Baba’s (2008) Vanua Research Framework is a prominent example (Farrelly & Nabobo-Baba, 2014, p. 321). This framework highlights how research in indigenous settings in Fiji needs to benefit the local communities, especially those that are researched, and respect their “cultural values, protocols, knowledge processes and philosophies”

(Nabobo-Baba, 2008, p. 144). Researchers need to adhere to cultural protocols to be granted access to communities and knowledge. A great emphasis is put on reciprocity and exchange; knowledge is seen as a gift rather than a right.

Previous field-based studies on indigenous Fijian communities have used the Vanua Research Framework as an essential part of their research methodology (e.g., Hughes, 2016; Meo-Sewabu, 2015). My research, however, is not necessarily located within such communities. It rather cross-sects three cultural spheres: Western-managed hospitality enterprises, Indo-Fijian communities and indigenous Fijian communities. Nevertheless, the methodology of this research needs to do justice to the fact that it is based within a Pacific cultural context. I therefore draw on the Pacific Research Guidelines and Protocols, put forward by Massey University's Pacific Research and Policy Centre (2017). These protocols, which have also been informed by the Vanua Research Framework, encompass five principle guidelines for culturally and ethically appropriate research in the Pacific. The following five paragraphs briefly explain each guideline and how this research has acknowledged them.

The **respect for relationships** is held highly in the Pacific. In Fiji, the concept of *vanua* stands for the belief that “there is a direct relationship between human belief, performance on earth and the blessings a *vanua* receives from God” (Nabobo-Baba, 2006, p. 41). In a number of ways I have sought to establish respectful and trustworthy relationships with my research participants. At Massey University this research has received a low risk notification (ethics notification number: 4000016473) upon a review of the initial research plan through a peer-review process. Both supervisors and an external reviewer, who had conducted ethnographic research in Fiji herself, agreed on this research being ethically of low risk to its participants, as long as all research activities were overtly conducted in line with Fijian culture and participants could at any point in time refuse to be researched (see further critical issues below in the paragraph on respect for knowledge holders). In Fiji the Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts approved this research, based on a project description and the author's commitment to share the research results. An official research visa was granted. An initial scoping trip to Fiji (further described in Subsection 5.6.1) helped to gain the trust of the Outrigger resort's Executive Chef, a key stakeholder and knowledge-holder in this research. On multiple occasions he granted me access to his network, for example to food suppliers and other chefs. I have received cultural guidance on how to form and retain respectful relationships with Fijians from fellow researchers

who have conducted fieldwork in indigenous Fijian communities previously, namely Emma Hughes and Litea Meo-Sewabu. The Fijian host family I was renting a house from also enhanced my knowledge of Fijian culture. Through an official *sevusevu*²² ceremony upon my arrival I was taken up as a guest in the village and later on made part of their *mataqali* in the presence of the chief. My research endeavour was approved and henceforth supported.

Related to the respect for relationships is the particular **respect for knowledge holders** and their self-determination. Issues that may have arisen through this research endeavour include: resort staff not willing to participate, yet being present in the kitchen during ongoing participant observation; interviewees wishing to stay anonymous or not being recorded; members of indigenous communities being approached for interviews in a culturally inappropriate fashion; or participants not being informed about the uses and consequences of taking part in the research. In order to address these issues, all participants were either supplied with a written research project description, or informed verbally about its objectives and uses before the commencement of any research activity. The Outrigger's Executive Chef had informed his staff in a monthly meeting about my research project prior to my arrival. All participants were given the opportunity to not partake in this research, for example by refusing to be interviewed or by expressing the wish to not be mentioned in observations. Those that chose to participate were given the option to be named or treated anonymously. All interview recordings were kept on a password-protected device. When invited to participants' homes, for example farms, I provided gifts, mostly food items. On other occasions, I took participants out for small lunches or tea breaks or offered to pay for fuel costs.

Showing respect to one's research subject is a form of **reciprocity** which is a fundamental part of the Pacific Research Guidelines and Protocols. To honour the idea of reciprocity, all participants could sign up to be provided with research results, which many did. The

²² According to Nabobo-Baba (2006, pp. 26-27) a *sevusevu* is an *iTaukei vanua* custom, by which a visitor upon arrival in a village presents a bundle of *yaqona* (a local root which is used to produce the valued drink of *kava*) and asks for permission to enter the village or pursue any other purpose within the community, such as research. This is commonly done in the presence of the village chief, the head of the household or another person with social status. As I knew that my host family did not approve of the consumption of *kava*, I brought 500 grams of chocolate to the ceremony. This was very welcomed and often talked about later on. The day before my departure, I was invited to a *magiti*, a festive feast, and in the presence of the village chief made part of my host-father's *mataqali*, the *Keteisese*.

Ministry of Education will be supplied with a copy of this thesis. Furthermore, I liberally shared my own knowledge and skill set. Within the resort's environment I worked in the kitchen to the best of my abilities, shared knowledge about preparation methods or answered questions about European cuisine. Similarly, on farms I shared experiences about organic agricultural practices or answered questions about how resorts operate and source food. Most importantly, I felt, was the fact that I showed a genuine interest in the world of my participants. Many took great pride in introducing me to their work and worldviews.

The research guidelines furthermore support the notion of **holism**. Firstly, a researcher should present him- or herself not just in a professional manner, but as a genuine human being. For this research, I have used my cooking skills to engage with research participants in the kitchens. I have also taken advantage of opportunities to engage with participants outside of this research, for example by forming friendships or visiting their market stands, farms, restaurants or homes. Within the village I was living in, I participated in many village functions, attended most Sunday church services and lunches. The village community appreciated my sharp chef's knives in cutting up *lovo* meat during feasts.

Finally, one's research is supposed to **benefit the community** and country in question. Given Fiji's background of a strong tourism economy vis-à-vis high poverty levels and an ailing agricultural sector, this research may have a valuable contribution to make. The Ministries responsible for education, tourism and agriculture will be provided with a comprehensive report on the research findings. Similarly, the case study resort as well as any other interested participant or party will be informed about its outcomes. I strive to depict a balanced picture within the findings, discussion and conclusion chapters and safeguard anonymity wherever necessary.

5.4 Case study approach

Research through case study is an approach rather than a method (Lamnek, 2010; Stake, 2000). It may utilise a variety of research methods over a longer period of time to elaborate on multiple dimensions of one particularly interesting case, or several. A case study therefore offers a holistic approach as opposed to quantitative surveys that are limited to fewer dimensions. With regards to research focus, a case study mostly elaborates on social elements, such as people, groups, institutions or organisations. It also strives to allow

for a deeper insight into the interplay of several factors, highlighting typical procedures or processes and allowing for reality-based research (Lamnek, 2010; Stake, 2000).

In terms of the quantitative-qualitative controversy, Lamnek (2010) notes that a case study has two distinct advantages, if used in a qualitative form. Firstly, it is capable of depicting concrete realities and the perception of real people of such realities and thus has an advantage over highly aggregated data sets that may only show averages and tendencies. Secondly, it prevents rash stereotyping and categorising of data as it is bound to the complexity of each individual case. Therefore, a case study lacks the power of quantifiable data to be used for generalisation, but becomes relevant for the development of new theories. It proves especially useful to understand people, events, organisations and experiences in their social and historic context (Veal, 2006). However, Yin (2003) holds that case studies are not merely exploratory in nature. They can facilitate evaluative studies in their own right. Also, case studies support comprehensive description from the viewpoint of the participants (Stark & Torrance, 2005), which in a development studies context provides a stage for local voices. This is particularly pertinent in sight of the second research question that looks at the perception of chefs, food intermediaries and farmers of the impact of a Western-dominated tourism industry in SIDS, such as Fiji.

Thus the case study approach shares common ground with ethnographic methodology. Both highlight the importance of deep immersion into the researched context and spending long periods of time in the field to observe and participate in sociocultural processes (Fife, 2005; Pink, 2007). A case study drawing on ethnographic methods could be described as an “iterative-inductive research (that evolves in design through the study), drawing on a family of methods, involving direct and sustained contact with human agents, within the context of their daily lives (and cultures)” (O'Reilly, 2005, p. 3). Similar approaches have been applied by Garcia Rodrigues and Villasante (2016) for investigating restaurant-seafood linkages and Wellton, Jonsson, and Walter (2016), who performed a kitchen ethnography to understand the use of local food from a restaurateur's perspective.

5.4.1 Choosing the case study

To answer research question two, mentioned above, and three, how large-scale resorts can engage in meaningful local community development through food linkages, the aim was to choose a large-scale four- to five-star resort, managed under an internationally

recognised brand and located in one of Fiji's prime tourism destinations. Weaver (2001) describes why it is more valuable to assess large-scale tourism enterprises and their contribution towards sustainable development than small- and medium-sized enterprises.

The same corporations that control the mega-resorts are probably in the best position to effect the transition towards sustainability, relative to their smaller counterparts. This is owing to the critical mass that allows them to allocate significant resources specifically for environmental and social purposes. (p. 167)

In addition, Scheyvens and Russell (2012) have compared the impacts of large- and small-scale accommodation providers in Fiji and found that the down-stream economic effects of large-scale resorts had room for improvement, especially regarding the sourcing of local food.

Based on these premises, the Outrigger was chosen for the following reasons. Firstly, with 253 rooms under the U.S. American Outrigger Resort brand it is a good example of a large-scale and internationally owned and managed resort. Secondly, its vicinity to the Sigatoka valley (13 km), a fertile agricultural area known as 'the salad bowl of Fiji', makes for an interesting environment for observations on local food sourcing. For instance, Telfer and Wall (2000) found in case studies in Indonesia that if the surrounding area of large-scale hotels provides a productive and diverse agricultural space, it is indeed possible to source large volumes of quality products locally. Thirdly, it has the only 5-star resort kitchen that has been managed continuously by a Fijian executive chef since 2007. Additionally, the Executive Chef has won numerous awards for his culinary skills and presided over Fiji's Chef Association until 2016. Fourthly, at the 2016 ANZ Fiji Excellence in Tourism Awards the resort won Best Deluxe Accommodation and its fine-dining restaurant IVI won Best Visitor Dining Experience. Reasons three and four allude to the fact that the Outrigger kitchen is an example of a Fijian-managed kitchen that provides highly appreciated food to its guests. Lastly, as mentioned above, a scoping trip established a trustful relationship and understanding of local prerequisites and research goals with the Executive Chef.

5.4.2 The Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort

The Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort is located on the Coral Coast, about five kilometres east of Sigatoka (see Picture 1). The resort was built in 1999 as a 5-star property under the Outrigger brand (Outrigger, n.d.). It is owned and operated by the Outrigger Enterprise Group, a Hawaii-based and privately-held hospitality corporation that currently operates

28 properties under five brands across Asia-Pacific, Caribbean, and Indian Ocean (Outrigger, 2018).

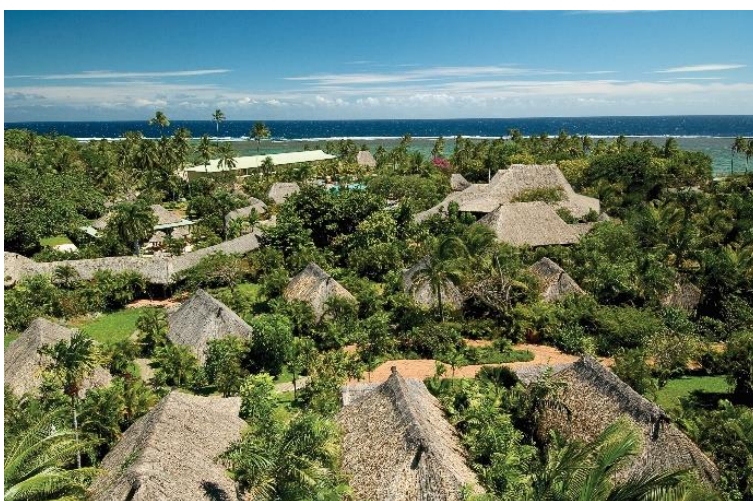
Picture 3: The Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort



Source: Outrigger

The beachside property features 205 rooms and 47 ‘bures’ – small cottages with thatched roofs that resemble the traditional housing in Fijian villages (see Picture 3 and Picture 4). Being primarily a holiday resort, about 2.5 guests stay per room on average. The resort has an annual average occupancy of about 85 percent, resulting in approximately 536 guests staying in the resort each day.

Picture 4: Bure-style accommodation at the Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort



Source: Outrigger

In terms of entertainment visitors have access to the beach and reef in front of the resort as well as an outside family pool area, adults-only pool, gym, tennis court, golf driving range, a spa area, massage bure, and a dive shop. Furthermore, an 'activities team' offers a broad range of daytime activities for children and adults, for example volleyball matches, guided reef walks, basket weaving or cooking local dishes.

The food and beverage (F&B) offer²³ encompasses nine outlets²⁴. Vale Ni Kana (VNK) is the biggest breakfast and dinner restaurant (250 seats), which also hosts a small coffee shop, Takia Café, under its roof. Its kitchen, Outrigger's main kitchen, also serves room service 24 hours and prepares any function catering. The resort's reception area has a second coffee shop, Takia On the Go, geared towards take-away customers. Next to VNK sits the IVI Restaurant, Outrigger's fine-dining restaurant with about 30 seats in its own little bure. Next to the family pool area is the Baravi Bar, serving lunch and dinner with about 60 seats, and to the pool side area. The adults-only pool is serviced by Vahavu, a small bistro-style place offering breakfast, lunch and snacks. On an outlook above the beach is Sundowner Bar & Grill, a lunch and dinner restaurant with about 80 seats and panoramic sunset views. Guests at Outrigger's Bebe Spa can enjoy high-tea, tapas and small snacks at the Kalokalo Bar. Finally, the Vakavanua Lounge, next to VNK, is an evening bar offering live music, drinks and a small snack menu from afternoon till late night.

5.5 Methods of data collection

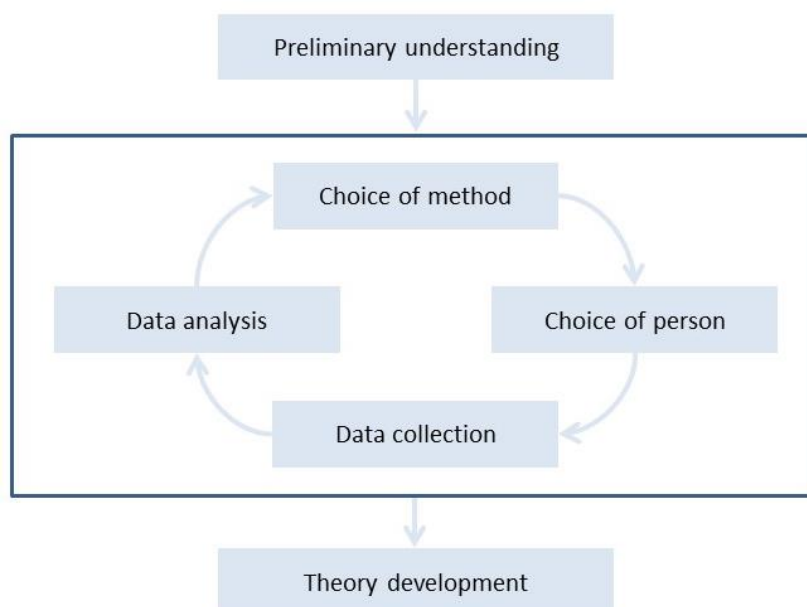
Within the paradigm of qualitative social research and in the context of a case study approach, a circular or iterative strategy for data collection is recommended (Lamnek, 2010, p. 174; Yin, 2009, p. 2). Lamnek (2010) suggests that the choice of method depends on a previously gained understanding from literature research as much as on insights gained

²³ 'F&B offer' or a hotel/resort refers to the totality of restaurants, bars, lounges, catering facilities and in-room dining options a property has to offer. This term can also be used for the offer of a single facility, e.g. a restaurant.

²⁴ 'Outlet' or 'F&B outlet' refers to any openly accessible place within a hotel that serves food and beverages to guests. This may include delis, coffee shops, bars, lounges, restaurants, pool-side bars, etc. 'Services', such as room- or butler-service are commonly not included.

from a cumulative body of continuously collected and analysed primary data. This circular strategy (see Figure 8) is also in line with the application of ethnographic methods, according to O'Reilly (2012).

Figure 8: Circular research strategy



Source: Lamnek (2010, p. 174)

This research cross-cuts several methodological points of departure: research in a developing country, a highly qualitative case study approach and a focus on the lived experiences of the research participants along a food chain. Being able to draw on a variety of methods helps to take advantage of opportunities that emerge in a fluid and to some degree unpredictable fieldwork environment. For a case study approach the literature suggests generally three methods of data collection: open and narrative interviews, participatory research and the analyses of files and documents (Creswell, 2009; Lamnek, 2010; Wolcott, 2008; Yin, 2012). In terms of ethnographic methods used for research in developing countries, Fife (2005) proposes participant observation, semi- and / or unstructured interviewing and self-reporting as effective methods.

Within the course of a four months field visit to Fiji, I opted primarily for participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis as main methods. Given my own experience in professional kitchens (see researcher's background in Section 5.8), participatory action research within the kitchen space provided another interesting method, which can also be part of the larger ethnographic methods toolbox (Wolcott,

2008). In my case, however, this has been used only in a side-line supportive manner. The following three subsections describe each primary method in greater detail.

5.5.1 Participant observation

The second research question seeks to understand the perceptions of kitchen staff, intermediaries and farmers of Western-dominated tourism in Fiji. To this end, the fundamental ethnographic method of participant observation (Fife, 2005; Wolcott, 2008) enables a researcher to “participate in the lives of the people under study with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data” (Fetterman, 1989, p. 45). Gold (1957), however, challenges the notion of keeping one’s ‘professional distance’ by proposing that researchers can be anywhere between a fully immersed “complete participant” and a “complete observer”, who is rather removed from social interactions (pp. 219-222). Either way, observations are typically recorded in a reflexive field journal (Stewart-Withers, Banks, McGregor, & Meo-Sewabu, 2014, p. 71).

I assumed the role of a “participant as observer” (Creswell, 2009, p. 179; Gold, 1957), closely related to the ‘complete participant’, where my role as a researcher was known, meanwhile I blended in through performing routine tasks of those observed. In doing so I subjectively immersed myself in the workplace culture (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000) and became a ‘member of the team’ that could observe genuine behaviour rather than Hawthorne effects (Arendt et al., 2012, p. 823). I recorded all observations in a field journal and annotated each day’s observations with reflexive comments. These comments constituted a first step of analysis (Watt, 2007, p. 83) and were an essential part of my circular research strategy mentioned above.

Previous non-Pacific researchers have found issues in interviewing Pacific islanders, because the researchers were regarded as foreigners (Singh et al., 2012). Establishing trustful relationships with research participants through extended times of participant observation and participation enhanced openness in interviews. Additionally, being familiar with my case study participants proved to grant easier access to other study participants through referral networks, for example to other chefs, food producers and intermediaries. In reality, this worked for the most part. There were two people in senior positions at the Outrigger with whom the interviews were rather short and not as open and friendly as in other cases. However, this did not substantially influenced findings as there were numerous other interviews and casual conversations I could draw on. Outside or the resort I

have had one case at the MOA where the person I was supposed to interview was not present on the agreed day, but an equally qualified member of staff was.

The ‘participating observations’ were further enriched through using aspects of the participatory action research method. Originally intended as a marriage of participatory research (B. L. Hall, 1981) and action research (R. Rapaport, 1970) to gain the best of both methods (L. D. Brown & Tandon, 1983), it seeks to create knowledge through a collective research effort of researcher and the researched in shared action. This is also reflected in the alternatively used term, *collaborative* action research, by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000, p. 567). The method draws on critical self-reflective learning experiences of all parties involved and aims to induce social change (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; A. McIntyre, 2008). The participative approach makes it valuable for an in-depth case study approach. According to A. McIntyre (2008, p. 7), participatory action research should take shape in a recursive collaborative process of questioning and reflecting upon an issue, planning and performing particular actions with one’s participants and, finally, investigating the outcomes together.

Having had hands-on experience in the hospitality industry (see personal background description in Section 5.8 below), multiple opportunities arose during my presence in the Outrigger kitchen to share knowledge and suggest, for instance, different courses of action. Through this I regularly transcended from observing to participating. For example, I suggested different approaches to menu creation, food sourcing and food presentation. This behaviour prompted different participants’ reactions, which were interesting to observe. Some of these reactions are documented in Chapter 6. However, these actions did not take place in a formal, collaboratively planned fashion, but were part of messy, complex and ad-hoc participatory events in the kitchen. Therefore, I do not consider this a thoroughly applied research method, but an enrichment of participatory research that allowed me to illustrate my questions in form of actions.

Conducting participant observation as an ethnographic method by default takes place within field visits. However, staying in the field for prolonged periods of time facilitates not only an observation of participants, but also their environments. Within the course of this research I visited, for instance, numerous resorts and farms, following people into networks the way they would do.

5.5.2 Interviews

Qualitative interviews are particularly suitable when the research encompasses complex issues and interdependencies and a careful reconstruction of different individual perspectives, motives and beliefs is necessary (Blatter, Janning, & Wagemann, 2007). In concert with participatory observation, interviews constitute a key ethnographic method (Fife, 2005) which can build upon established trust relationships, shared experiences and earlier informal conversations. Therefore, genuine and reliable interviews can be expected, which are otherwise difficult to obtain as other researchers in the South Pacific have experienced (e.g., Singh et al., 2012). Lamnek (2010) differentiates between several types of qualitative interviews, of which the in-depth ‘episodic interview’ is most appropriate for this work. This is a narrative interviewing technique, in which the interviewee is asked about particular aspects, periods or themes of his or her daily life. This was conducted in the form of semi-structured interviews, which were guided by about six open-ended questions (see Appendix A) in order to elicit opinions and views of the interviewee (Creswell, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Such questions encourage a broader elaboration upon a particular issue or situation. Yet, probing questions and more detailed questions in between are legitimate and support plausibility, a holistic understanding of the matter and help to direct the interview.

Group interviews, for instance in the form of focus group discussions, also held potential. However they proved not to suit my research context. At the Outrigger resort, the work environment in the kitchen required full attention of all staff members at all times and comprised a seven-day operation schedule. Thus, focus group interviews were unfeasible. Additionally, Kaplowitz (2000) found that interviewees are more likely to share sensitive information in a one-to-one interview than in group setting. However, on two occasions group interviews emerged by chance because all participants happened to be present simultaneously (see Table 7). Many casual conversations in the field, for example with chefs or during farmer group meetings, happened within groups. The exchange of ideas and concerns amongst the participants is what made them valuable.

5.5.3 Document analysis

Good case studies draw on multiple sources to substantiate and triangulate their findings. Next to observations and interviews, Yin (2012, p. 10) lists documents such as archival

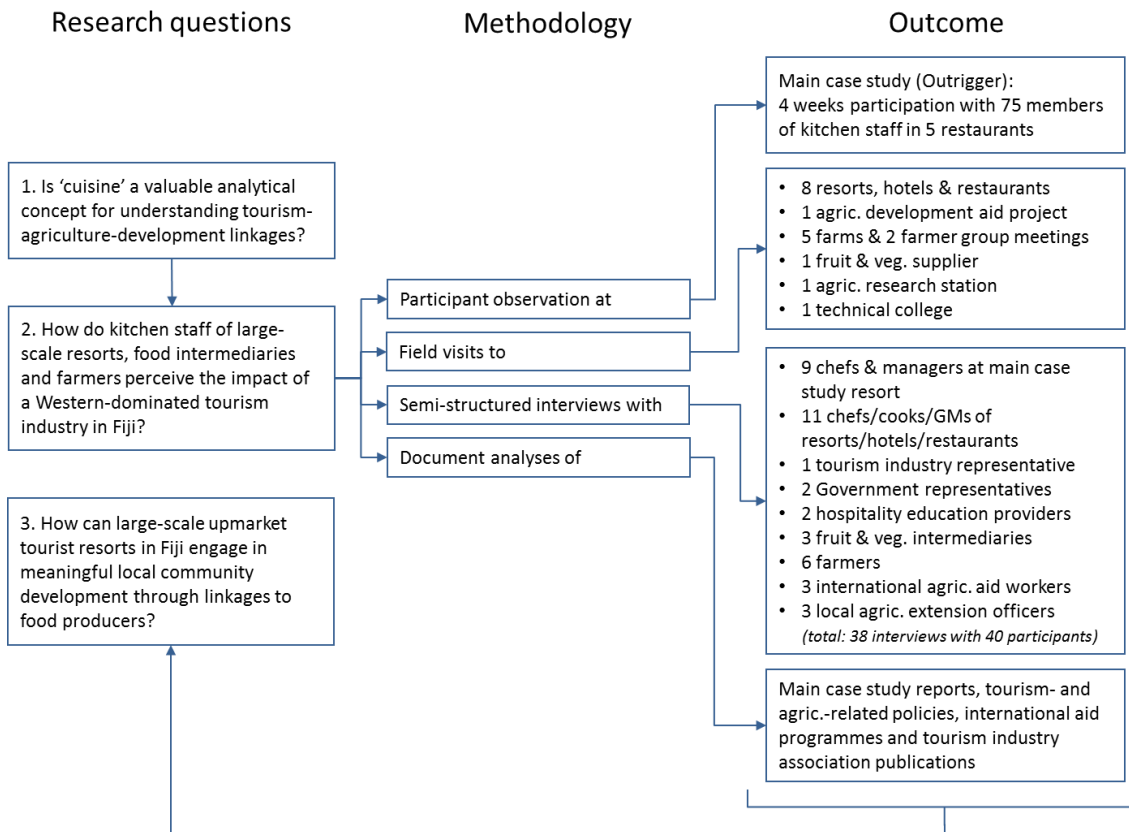
records, newspapers, reports, etc. as valuable evidence. Document analysis is also mentioned as a macro-level ethnographic method (Fife, 2005). In terms of this research two types of documents were analysed. The first set of documents was supplied by the Outrigger resort and comprised restaurant menus, procurement documents and spreadsheets, guest feedback forms, employee manuals, and corporate websites. The procurement spreadsheet was analysed using descriptive statistics. The second set of documents related to the larger circle of stakeholders and encompassed newspaper articles, policy documents, governmental websites and publications by industry associations and NGOs.

5.6 Research design and implementation

The above sections have outlined the underlying paradigm of this research, the particularities of conducting ethical research in the South Pacific and the ethnographic methods applied within a case study approach. In doing so, this chapter addresses methodologically the gap identified in previous research on agriculture-tourism linkages in developing countries, as outlined in Section 3.4. This section, firstly, describes the research design and puts the methodology in relation to the three research questions provided in Chapter 1. Secondly, it reports on the implementation of this methodology through a scoping trip and main period of fieldwork in Fiji.

This research investigates how the cuisine of large-scale upmarket tourist resorts shapes agricultural development in SIDS, such as Fiji. Through the literature review presented above, this study establishes that much of the previous research on tourism-agriculture linkages misses a cultural angle. Therefore, the concept of cuisine is proposed as a conceptual lens that can help to investigate such linkages beyond their economic implications. The first research question asks to what extent the concept of cuisine is a valuable analytical concept for understanding tourism-agricultural linkages. This is largely answered by applying the concept of cuisine in the second research question. Here, I seek to uncover the perceptions of kitchen staff, food intermediaries and farmers of Western-dominated tourism industry in SIDS, such as Fiji, through ethnographic methods. The findings of research question two, discussed on the grounds of the literature review, will then answer the third research question of how large-scale upmarket tourist resorts in Fiji, and more generally in SIDS, can engage in meaningful local community development through linkages to food producers. Figure 9 visualises the relationships of research questions, methods and outcomes. Note that the research questions are abbreviated.

Figure 9: Research design



Source: G. Laeis

5.6.1 Scoping trip

The successful initiation of data collection was supported by a two-week scoping trip to Fiji in August 2016. I was invited to join New Zealand-based chef Robert Oliver and WWF Pacific staff in their efforts to promote the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade-funded Sustainable Seafood Project in Fiji. The project aimed to connect indigenous fisher people in Fiji’s Macuata province with high-class hotels and resorts in Fiji’s main tourism areas. Five Fijian resorts cooperated with WWF Pacific initially, of which we visited one. I was introduced to the Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort (see Section 5.4 above) and its Executive Chef, with whom I could establish an understanding of this research project. He and the resort’s general manager (GM) agreed to allow me to come back at a later date to conduct participatory research on their premises. The scoping trip also enabled me to become familiar with the wider Sigatoka and Coral Coast area, where the resort is located.

5.6.2 Main period of fieldwork

Following this scoping trip, field research took place from the 1st of April until 31st of July 2017. In April I familiarised myself with the area, being mostly Navuevu village, where I rented a house from an *iTaukei* family. I also paid frequent visits to Sigatoka town, Sigatoka river valley, the Outrigger resort and the Coral Coast. Through this process I became aware of the Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM), an international agricultural development programme located in the Sigatoka valley. For all of May I immersed myself into the kitchen of the Outrigger resort. Working alongside the kitchen staff I experienced the participants' routines, thoughts, feelings and daily struggles in producing food for the resort's mostly Western guests. I participated in the backstage realities of tourism, experiencing the lives of those that facilitate it.

As this research takes a cultural angle, it is important that the research methods are chosen accordingly. "Culture is about meaning, and ethnography is a method to explain that meaning", Ladner (2014, p. 12) argued. Similar approaches have been taken by other researchers on local food relationships and restaurant practices (see for example Wellton et al., 2016). Thus I designed my research around the methods of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis, as outlined in Section 5.5 above. Furthermore, I paid attention to where food in the kitchen was coming from. I sought connections to local producers and intermediaries who supplied the ingredients that the Outrigger kitchen used. Given the case study's vicinity to the Sigatoka river valley farms I focussed on fruits and vegetables. This research design was inspired by an approach known as 'follow the thing' (Cook, 2004; Cook & Harrison, 2007). Following the material pathways of food items complemented the case study approach. Not only did the Outrigger resort become a case study in itself, but it was broadened by its connections to fruit and vegetable suppliers and producers.

The last two months were used, firstly, to visit and interview initial contacts I had made through working at the Outrigger kitchen. This included predominantly fruit and vegetable intermediaries as well as the TTM project and the members of its associated Cane Coast Farmer Association. Secondly, I visited and interviewed other chefs, cooks and/or GMs of near-by resorts to compare and contrast previous observations at the Outrigger with other tourist resorts in Fiji in an effort to triangulate and substantiate findings, as Denzin (1989) suggests. Finally, I interviewed stakeholders of the larger tourism-food production sphere, such as an agricultural participatory guarantee system manager, the

Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture and educational institutions (University of South Pacific and the Technical College Nadroga-Navosa) to further contextualise data on tourism-food linkages in Fiji and its relation to corporate development work.

The number of research participants in this research has not been planned before entering the field. The case study resort as well as further tourism and agricultural stakeholders, as described above, were defined, but due a qualitative research paradigm, numbers of participants evolved throughout the fieldwork. Qualitative research can be a fluid and interruptive process. The researcher needs to assess, when data saturation has been achieved (O'Leary, 2010). Participants outside the case study resort and other pre-defined stakeholders have been sampled by a snowball effect and based on existing relationships as well as according to their capacity to portrait a holistic range of voices on the issue. Overall, I worked with 75 members of the Outrigger kitchen staff for four weeks, conducted 38 in-depth semi-structured interviews in total, visited one food intermediary, one technical college, five fruit and vegetable farms, one training and research farm, eight resorts and restaurants outside the Outrigger and attended two farmer association meetings.

Given this research design one might argue that, indeed, it resembles rather an ethnography than a case study. Indeed, this research is in line with basic definition of ethnographic practices (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 28; Wolcott, 2008). Its design evolved throughout the study, I spent a prolonged time in the field in direct contact with humans, I had a particular interest in their daily lives and ways of seeing the world, I drew on a variety of ethnographic methods, and, lastly, try to acknowledge the complexity of my participants' world by providing richly and sensitively described findings in the following chapters. However, I argue that 'case study drawing on ethnographic methods' is yet the more correct description, as I also do not comply with a number of aspects that are necessary for a thorough ethnography. The often required, but rarely defined 'time in the field' in sustained contact with one's participants was limited to four weeks in a kitchen and a number of repeated visits to key participants. I was not able to converse in Fiji-Hindi or Bauen; despite English, the two important Fijian languages. I took the privilege to not work six days in the kitchen, as all other employees, but only four. For these reasons I argue that I did not become fully immersed in the field and therefore do not claim this research to be an ethnography.

5.7 Data analysis

5.7.1 Observations and reflections

As the researcher is the main tool of enquiry in qualitative research, personal values impact the observation and interpretation process. Keeping a reflective field journal throughout the data collection process is standard practice in observation-based ethnographies (Fife, 2005) and suggested as a way of making personal biases and positionalities explicit (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014).

During the entire field trip I kept a field journal to record observations, photos, arising questions, and other meaningful information. The descriptions were amended with reflective notes on the descriptions with an emphasis on personal attitudes and feelings that the observations evoked. The content of this journal was the basis for two feedback calls with my academic supervisors during the time of fieldwork.

5.7.2 Content analysis

The underlying assumption of content analysis is that in whatever people say or write they express their intentions, attitudes, situational interpretation, knowledge, and tacit assumptions about the world they live in. Hence, the careful analysis of people's speech or written documents elicits conclusions on individual and societal non-verbal phenomena (Lamnek, 2010). Of the 38 interviews, 28 were recorded and transcribed verbatim in full where English was the interviewees' first language. Otherwise, transcriptions included meanings rather than words. Ten interviews were not audio recorded in situ, but documented in form of memory protocols. Together with a reflective diary (see following subsection) they were analysed for content on the basis of a procedure suggested for the analysis of narrative data by Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003, pp. 2-5).

1. Upon completion of data collection all materials were sorted according to source.
2. Each document was read and emerging codes noted manually. Throughout the process the codes were tested for applicability within each document and with respect to the research questions.
3. After initial exploration of all documents, all codes were revised, bundled or further refined, finally put into a code book and provided with a brief definition to

prevent coding confusion. Then, every document was coded again. This process was done manually and continued until no new themes or categories emerged.

4. The themes and patterns in form of codes were then sorted into coherent categories that emerged from the revision of codes.
5. Emerging categories were bundled under leading categories or further refined into subcategories, if necessary. They formed the basis for later presentation and discussion of the finding and supported the theory building process.

All codes and categories are presented in Appendix C.

5.7.3 Validity of qualitative data

Validity is concerned with the accuracy of findings from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant of the study and the reader (Creswell, 2009). This research followed five measures to ensure validity suggest Rubin and Rubin (2012) and Lamnek (2010):

- The triangulation of information from various sources helps to establish a coherent justification for themes. It is “a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Stake, 2000, p. 443). Triangulation includes looking at various sources, but is particularly true for information that shows the different perspectives of participants. This was a guiding principle in choosing interviewees. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), individuals have to be purposefully selected according to their expertise, relevance to the research project, diversity of perspectives and versatile perceptions and nuanced understandings of the issues involved.
- Spending a long time in the field can help researchers to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon studied. In this case, a two-week scoping trip paved the way for a four-month field trip, in which participatory research methods were applied. Living amongst indigenous Fijians in Navuevu Village is strictly speaking not part of this research, but it has nevertheless provided a deeper understanding of Fijian culture.
- Furthermore, constant peer debriefing is suggested. The process refers to the continuous review and questioning of the research in progress by a person outside of the study. I conducted two feedback calls with academic supervisors during fieldwork and provided them with summaries of my initial observations and thoughts on the field research.

- Any bias that a researcher brings into the study must be clarified. For this purpose, I kept a reflective diary during field research and provide a note on my role and self-perception within this study (see following section).
- Lastly, the presentation and discussion of findings should be supported by rich and dense description of the findings. For instance, the use of direct quotes from interviews or particularly suitable pictures is encouraged to support valid argumentation.

Creswell (2009) also suggests having the final analysis of results checked by all participants so they can highlight misinterpretations or add clarifications. While, due to financial and time constraints, it was not possible for me to return to Fiji to have my final results scrutinised by participants, I did undertake measures to check on the validity of my findings while in the field. I had sustained contact with most respondents and went for multiple field visits to, for instance, farms or agricultural training projects. This enabled me to receive their feedback on initial observations. At the case study resort I conducted a feedback meeting with the Executive Chef at the end of my participation in the kitchen.

This section has outlined what steps can be taken to ensure that qualitative findings are analysed in a structured and valid fashion. In qualitative studies, however, the researcher is as much a part of the creation of knowledge as the participants are. The observation and interpretation of data does not take place through ‘counting and measuring’ with prescribed mathematical formulas, but “are filtered through our own experience” (O’Reilly, 2012, p. 223). It is to a discussion of my personal biography – my positionality – that we now turn.

5.8 Researcher positionality

The presence and character of a researcher inevitably has an impact on how social qualitative research is conducted, analysed and described. This is particularly pertinent to studies using participatory methods, where the researcher is the key instrument of the research process (Watt, 2007). Researchers as well as participants must be recognised as individuals with emotions, biases and interests (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). These ‘co-creators’ of knowledge do not stand neutrally above the observed issue, but rather live within it and can but impact the study through their own physical presence, in the case of participatory research, or moral judgements, for instance during data analysis. It is therefore important

to approach fieldwork, data analysis and the presentation of findings in a self-reflected fashion to clarify what impact one's own presence in the field and biography might have had on the research.

I am a 36-year old white male, who has been brought up in a comparatively wealthy and stable European economy for most of my life. I have had the opportunity to spend several years abroad, furthering my appreciation of different cultures. I deem myself capable of negotiating exposure to different environments. However, living amongst Fijians, a culture I was previously unfamiliar with, I may have succumbed to stereotyping or generalising my research participants according to my Western worldview. I may have also broken cultural protocols or offended people around me without intention. However, no such case was brought to my attention by anyone in the field.

Professionally and academically I have been concerned with the hospitality industry for about ten years and have worked in various positions, such as cook, barkeeper, waiter, front office clerk, housekeeper, lecturer and management consultant. This experience has shaped my understanding of the tourism and hospitality industry in the following way: things need to be done fast, efficient and with an emphasis on quality to please both customers and shareholders as well as to ensure one's own career progression. One could argue that this stands in contrast to the Pacific notion of valuing communal good over individualistic gain. Furthermore, I gained an understanding of agricultural practices through a post-graduate study in organic agriculture, work experiences on a farm and a research project on a farm-kitchen linkage in South Africa. I understand that engaging in sustainable agriculture takes significant education and experience. It is neither only about 'letting Mother Nature reign', nor about letting hybrid seeds, agro-chemicals and machinery take over the fields.

On the one hand, this personal context has helped a great deal in acquiring access to the case study resort and establishing rapport with key participants, such as chefs and farmers. It has also enabled me to blend into the Outrigger's kitchen environment as well as to have meaningful discussions with farmers. To some degree my background has helped me to become an insider in the field (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 98). I am familiar with kitchen jargon, know cooking processes and have my own tools and uniforms. From this viewpoint, my provisional background leveraged the participatory part of this research significantly.

On the other hand, my biography also meant that I had a particular perspective on whatever I was confronted with. I saw through the eyes of someone who had seen hotel environments and farms before. Kapoor (2004), referring to works of Spivak (1988, 1990), encourages anyone involved in development to take a self-reflexive approach to researching about developing countries. She emphasises the importance of ‘unlearning’ Western ethnocentrism and establishing an intimate relationship with one’s research objects to avoid a homogenised representation of ‘the other’ through Western eyes. It took a while for me to leave the role of being a Western-educated judgemental hospitality employee and become ‘just’ one of them, concerned with the every-day life in the kitchen or on a farm, wondering how came things were done the way they were. To this end, living in a local village and spending four months in the field has certainly helped to ‘unlearn’. Nevertheless, given the colour of my skin, the fact that everyone needed to be aware of my role as a researcher, for ethical reasons, and my often-times privileged position²⁵ made me an outsider at the same time.

5.9 Summary

In order to employ the concept of cuisine to explore the perceptions of kitchen staff, food intermediaries and farmers of Western-dominated tourism in Fiji, this study follows the paradigm of social constructionism and uses ethnographic research methods. During four months of fieldwork the researcher engaged in participant observation, interviewing and document analysis to gain a thorough understand of the relationships between an up-market large-scale tourist resort on Fiji’s Coral Coast, local food intermediaries and farmers in the vicinity. Gathered data in the form of 38 semi-structured interviews, field observations, various project and policy documents and a reflexive field journal was qualitatively analysed through coding and gathering of emerging themes. The researcher’s personal background in the hospitality industry allowed him to integrate into the chosen case study resort and transition from being an outside researcher to an insider amongst his participants.

²⁵ I participated only four days a week in the Outrigger kitchen, whereas employees worked six days a week.

6 A Cook's Point of View: The Outrigger Resort

6.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on four weeks of participatory research in the kitchen of the Outrigger resort on Fiji's Coral Coast in May 2017. The findings are based on observations, casual conversations, semi-structured interviews (see Table 3) and the analysis of documents from the resort. It applies the concept of cuisine discussed in Section 4.2 to explore the experiences of kitchen staff with Western-dominated tourism and linkages to local farmers. As discussed in Section 5.6 above, this chapter therefore also reports on the applicability of the concept of cuisine in a research setting. In this chapter I explore the daily practices, experiences and beliefs of the Outrigger's staff around procuring and cooking the particular kinds of food they serve to their guests. What emerges is a set of complex practices and beliefs that have been shaped by the cultural influence of mass-tourism. This builds the basis for a later discussion of Sahlins' theory of cultural change in Chapter 9.

Table 3: The Outrigger Resort interviewees

#	Interviewees General Administration (Position)
1	Resort General Manager (GM)
2	Executive Assistant
3	Food & Beverage (F&B) Manager
4	Purchasing Manager
Interviewees Kitchen Staff (Position)	
5	Executive Chef
6	Executive Sous Chef
7	Senior Sous Chef
8	Sous Chef
9	Junior Sous Chef

6.2 A standard day in the kitchen

Monday morning, 4:30 am in Navuevu. My first day as a cook in the Outrigger kitchen begins. From the village it is a 16 kilometre drive east on Queen's Highway to the Outrigger. A cab takes about 30 minutes, but locals can rarely afford cabs for commuting to work, so I will not take one either. The Outrigger offers staff busses, but they usually do not go as far west as Navuevu and never as early as to get me to the kitchen in time for breakfast shift. I hitchhike, as many of my colleagues do too. At 5:00 am it is pitch black. I'm standing on the side of Queen's Highway trying to flag down a ride. Tava, a young cook from Navuevu, shows me how it is done. She tells me how scared she is when she has to walk from her home through the bush and stand along the road alone in the darkness. When we work evening shifts we face the same problem at night: there are only a few staff buses in the evening and not all go to Navuevu. If you're not out in time you might miss them anyway. Mostly hitchhiking works well, but sometimes you wait for a long time and might even end up late. If someone gets us to the nearest town, Sigatoka, at least we can catch a 'dollar bus' from there. Today we make it into the kitchen just before 6 am, ready for the breakfast shift.

The kitchen space is essentially set up as any other large-scale hotel kitchen I have seen. There is a service (i.e. waitresses and waiters) drop-off station for dirty dishes next to the stewarding area (the space of dishwashers and potwashers). Opposite is the hot section with various gas hobs, ovens, deep fryers, wok stations and a grill; all opposite the pass where the service picks up food. At the back of the hot section is a cold section with large working tables and washing sinks. This is also used for preparing buffet and function food. Next door are easily accessible cool and freezer rooms. On the opposite side of the stewarding section are yet another two cooking aisles: one with big pots and a large frying pan – the canteen station – and what looks like a small version of what I just had seen – a kitchen within a kitchen. This is IVI's kitchen, the fine-dining restaurant. Back through stewarding and the hot and cold sections of the main kitchen, along a narrow hallway, are two more sections that in my experience not every hotel has: a bakery and a butcher/fishmonger. Further down comes a tiny dry store, a temperature controlled storage room for fruits and vegetables and the gateway to the loading dock and purchasing area. It all makes sense to me. The setup looks familiar and the only thing I notice so far is the lack of air conditioning. Despite extractor hoods above the cooking aisles and an armada of ceiling ventilators, it gets almost unbearably hot during the day.

In agreement with the Executive Chef I am assigned to help out during breakfast and later on in the cold section (i.e. Gardemanger, responsible for preparing cold entrées) for my first week. It is a good place to start because it is located centrally in the kitchen. During the day almost all kitchen staff would pass by at some point, which is useful for getting to know faces. Throughout the upcoming four weeks I will work in the resort's main kitchen for breakfast and buffet dinners at Vale Ni Kana (VNK) restaurant, at Sundowner Bar & Grill for dinners, at Baravi (casual family dining by the pool) and Vahavu (the bistro in the couples-only pool area) for lunches and finally at IVI for dinners. Meanwhile I will be able to observe room service and function catering as well. I omit the resort's smaller F&B outlets (coffee shops and bars), as they are focussed more on beverages than food. However, I visit all of them for a first-hand impression and copies of their menus.

From 6:00 am through to about 12:15 pm Tava, myself, and another five cooks and trainees are very busy with making breakfast for about 400 guests plus about 10 room service requests. The last hour or so we need for taking down the buffet, replenishing, wrapping and storing items for tomorrow morning. According to our roster we are left with just under two hours to prepare anything for the cold section today. Tava's favourite day of the week is Tuesday, because it is "Lovo²⁶ Night" buffet at VNK and there are not too many salads, entrées, and cold sauces she needs to make. On Mondays, however, it is the opposite. For the "South West American Feast" she needs to prepare six salads and whip up about eight different sauces that go with the BBQ Buffalo Wings, Jacked Potatoes, etc. (for a detailed description of Outrigger's food see Section 6.4 below). When there is a function, for instance one of the 234 weddings Outrigger hosted in 2017, she needs to prepare their cold dishes as well.

Tava complains to me that actually she was hired as a Gardemanger, but over time they have asked her to help out with breakfast, too. By now she spends most of her shift making breakfast and her extra hours go into salads. Apparently the kitchen is not fully staffed and cooks need to fill in. "Ai lei²⁷... nothing I can do about it. They should just hire more people" she says. On many days she would rather skip lunch than knock off late. Two hours extra work is common, even though Tava is hard working, well organised and has

²⁶ The local word for an earth oven, similar to the *hāngi* in New Zealand and the *'umu* in Samoa.

²⁷ A Bauan expression for 'Oh, well...' Bauan is the major of several Fijian dialects, and is predominantly used by *iTaukei*.

been on her post for over a year now. Other cooks complain to me that the moment you show that you are well-organised and capable the managing chefs will dump more work on you. At 4pm we knock off after 10 hours of work. That was a standard day in the kitchen. Of course, not everyone does extra hours all the time, but they are common.

6.3 About cooks, chefs and places of birth

6.3.1 Becoming part of the team

In my first days I work alongside Tava. At the moment she is employed as ‘Cook’, the entrance level rank in the kitchen. The structure of the entire kitchen brigade follows the Western, and essentially French, standard of kitchen hierarchy (from the top): Executive Chef (de Cuisine), Sous Chef, Chef de Partie, Demi-Chef de Partie, Commis, Cook. This does not come as a surprise to me, as I have never seen any other structure elsewhere. Tava seems well organised and in control. On a napkin she quickly jots down what I can help her with and which quantities to use for what. “Keep it” she says and hands me the note, “so you remember next week!” She is cheerful while working away and in fact the entire atmosphere amongst the junior cooks and chefs is a mix of affection, mockery and (mostly friendly) insults. “We always spoil²⁸ each other!” Tava says. Who did what to whom, who can drink the most or who fancies whom – this is the usual kitchen jargon of a crew of twenty- to thirty-year-olds who spent six days a week working together. However, on rare occasions mockery turns into verbal harassment, especially from some of the younger male cooks towards the female cooks and stewards. “Someone should tell that guy to shut up” a female steward frowns after having endured blunt sexual advances from a young cook.

A few days into my time at Outrigger I am being made part of the game. “So, Tava, you have to decide, which one do you like better: white chocolate or *dalo*?” Ashwin mocks her. *Dalo* (*Colocasia esculenta*) is a local root crop with a dark brown skin and an affectionate word for the *iTaukei* around here. White chocolate referred to me, as I found out later. I return the favour. “Ashwin, I guess you fancy some white chocolate for yourself, right?” He laughs mischievously. Situations like these feel like an unofficial uptake into

²⁸ Local vernacular for to mock.

the team. The moment the kitchen crew feels comfortable joking with me, they most likely have gained some form of trust. For all *iTaukei* staff members the question of trust, however, is also answered in a different way. “Gabi, where are you staying?” is a standard question I’m asked when meeting any *iTaukei* for the first time. The moment I say the name of my village and host family, they look at me with raised eyebrows. “Oh, *io*²⁹! Navuevu? Rokomatu? Oh *io*!” After this introduction, wherever they see me they stop for a chat. “Gabi, where are you going?”, “Have you had lunch?”, “Come sit with us!”, “Come to my village – have *kava*³⁰ together!” It feels like being part of a large family.

6.3.2 Local and non-local chefs

I realise that in the first few days the colour of my skin seems to have an effect on some of the cooks. The Executive Chef had told everyone in the kitchen that I was coming to conduct research on how cooks in Fiji handle local produce. On my second day, Yashni from the IVI kitchen asks me whether I know a way to incorporate the dark purple of beetroot juice into a caramel sauce; with no introduction whatsoever a random thing to ask. I feel as if I am supposed to know. What makes her think I know? And there is Pawan, a young cook who at first seems very shy. He hardly talks to me; just a timid smile in the morning when I come in. It takes him a while, and a chat on Facebook, to warm up to me. Apparently, the General Manager (GM) gave him hell for serving a steak that was past its due date. Allegedly, he “blasted” the whole kitchen team, as the cooks like to say. Maybe he thinks I’m there to ‘look after things’? “They all thought you must be the new Executive Chef” Tava tells me in my second week. However, after the first week no other such situation occurred and as far as I could observe, everyone knew that I was just there ‘for research and experience’. Apparently, there has never been a white man in this kitchen who was not an Executive Chef. And in fact, if you find a non-Fijian member of staff at the Outrigger, you know he or she is a high ranking senior manager, such as the GM, the Hotel Manager, the Director of Human Resources or the Executive Assistant.

²⁹ Bauan for ‘yes’. ‘Oh, *io*!’ is a frequently used expression of acknowledgement – ‘oh, I see!’

³⁰ A traditional Fijian beverage made from the root of *yaqona*, pepper bush (*Piper methysticum*), and water. The drink is commonly shared amongst a group of people sitting around the *tanoa*, a wooden bowl for making and serving *kava*.

The fact that the kitchen is managed by an Indo-Fijian is a rare case in Fiji, “especially in a big property like Outrigger! Otherwise, small hotels tend to have local chefs, but again, their menus are all about chicken stir fry and grilled fish, that's it” (Sous Chef). And the staff seem fond of this fact. Many speak highly of the Executive Chef and point out that it is great to have a local in this position, because he understands how to deal with local staff and their culture. One of the Junior Sous Chefs explains how important this is.

A local chef understands locals better, where expats don't understand locals better! Small things. Our traditions, our customs – it's more understood by a local chef. Just a small example: If we have a funeral in our family and I ask an expat chef for bereavement leave, obviously he will give me a day or maximum of three days. He doesn't understand what's happening in the other 40 days. That's a traditional thing we have. But a local chef understands. He'll say ‘you can do this, that, come in the morning.’ So these are the small things that really matter for our staff.

Other sous chefs point out that the Executive Chef regularly supports young and upcoming cooks to partake in competitions and trainings. He is generally regarded as very knowledgeable and his authority seems undisputed amongst the 75 kitchen team members. However, the F&B Manager points out that when he had made suggestions about how to prepare and serve indigenous food, senior kitchen chefs had just “rolled their eyes”. He realises that what he is asking for might mean more work for the kitchen, but he says that he and other *iTaukei* employees do not feel good about the fact that, for instance, the *lolo* comes out of a tin, or that the palusami is not made like in the village.

Table 4: The Outrigger's kitchen staff by rank

Rank	Number of staff
<i>Managing staff</i>	9
Executive Chef (Head Chef)	1
Executive Sous Chef	1
Senior Sous Chef	1
Sous Chef	1
Pastry Chef	1
Junior Sous Chef	3
Chief Steward	1
<i>Line staff</i>	66
Line cooks (Cooks, Commis, Demi Chef, Chef de Partie)	44
Trainee cooks	6
Stewards	16

Overall 50 cooks and chefs, 6 trainee cooks and 17 stewards work at the Outrigger. The 44 line cooks (see

Table 4) consist of 32 Indo-Fijians and 12 *iTaukei*. In contrast, out of the 16 stewards, 15 are *iTaukei*. Additionally, the kitchen currently has six trainee cooks on board, all of whom are *iTaukei*. The Sundowner Bar & Grill, for instance, is entirely in Indo-Fijian hands, whereas VNK breakfast service is mainly run by *iTaukei* cooks. Baravi is a mixed spot, but Indo-Fijians present the majority. This might just be a coincidence, as cooks tend to be moved around stations and outlets from time to time. Overall, of the cooks and chefs, 78 percent are Indo-Fijian. The managing staff are all non-*iTaukei*. One Senior Sous Chef is Indian, everyone else is Indo-Fijian.

6.3.3 Cultural differences

Some of the younger *iTaukei* cooks think that Indo-Fijians are favoured in the kitchen. The Executive Assistant and the Executive Chef, however, do not share this view and think this is a coincidence. I notice, however, that coping mechanisms differ between *iTaukei* and Indo-Fijians in a stressful and pressure-driven environment like a kitchen. Furthermore, an environment that works in three languages poses a challenge at times.

I witness a number of open confrontations between a Junior Sous Chef and line staff. Someone did not clean up the cool room last night; things were not done up to standard. The tone is very strict, sometimes harsh, regardless of who is the wrongdoer. And it is not over quickly. The culprit gets rebuked in front of everyone for a while. That is where some of the *iTaukei* cooks lean over to me and say: “That’s why so many leave around here! He [the Junior Sous Chef] has a jealous heart!” Others just stare into a void with a blank expression on their face when rebuked. I get told off on two occasions as well. Once for apparently not having told the housekeeping department to *properly* iron my chef’s jacket and again for standing in the kitchen with my hands on my hips while listening to instructions. “That’s not how we stand in the kitchen!” I bite my tongue – “Yes, Chef” – and wonder. If these are important enough reasons to tell me off – someone who is just here for a few weeks, not even a paid employee, a foreigner – what must my colleagues endure? I bring this issue up with the senior Chefs. The Executive Sous Chef reminds me:

[If] you want to be nice, tomorrow there will be a lot of dead people around the kitchen, or some without hands, or burned, or whatever. ... We don't deal with baby bottles! But, on the other hand, we make sure that if we yell at them in front of everyone, we also acknowledge their hard work. If something is good, you taste something, you say: 'Attention everyone, who made this?' I remember one day, Vishal blanched some vegetables and it was one of the best Chef had ever seen. And Chef said in front of everyone. Vishal, good job! But when shit happens, that's

also something that we need to tell them straight in their face. Sometimes, too many jokes and too much politeness carries them away.

No doubt, it should be in any cook's own interest to be made aware of even the pettiest hazards. And indeed, I do witness a few commendations of employees as well. Nevertheless, it seems my *iTaukei* colleagues find it difficult to adjust to open criticism. They talk to me a lot about these events. Tava tells me about someone in the kitchen who is from a particular village in the highlands. "People from that village can say a word and make you sick!" She believes that is why the Pastry Chef recently caught a flu. Not long ago he had a stern word with that particular cook from the highlands. The term 'jealous heart' is used frequently in these circumstances. In contrast, my Indo-Fijian colleagues show a very different attitude. Vishal, who forgot to clean up the cool room the night before, smiles and shrugs his shoulders when I bring up the subject. "You know, Gabi, we have a saying here: we Indians are born with a stick, so that someone can beat us to work!" He does not mind 'getting blasted' too much. It is part of the job.

Overall it seems that Indo-Fijians run the kitchen, with a few exceptions of course, and *iTaukei* are the hosts. Almost all waiters are *iTaukei*. For the latter fact the Executive Assistant has an explanation: "They have such a natural way of being a host. Even if you growl at them, they are still happy!" And indeed, they provide what seems a genuine and warm-hearted service. For example, on the occasions of a guest's birthday or the departure of a long-staying guest the waiters gather and sing traditional Fijian birthday or farewell songs in Bauan. This is not a special service imposed on the staff by management, as a waiter tells me. "Fijians love singing and we like our guests to take a piece of Fiji back in their hearts!" And the guests certainly appreciate this, as their comments on feedback cards reveal (see Section 6.6).

The Outrigger's official language is English. The kitchen, however, works in English, Bauan and Fiji-Hindi. The latter is a Fijian adaptation of the Hindi language the first Indian immigrants brought to the islands. There are only a few employees that are able to speak all three. Everyone speaks decent English, so much so that we can easily communicate. One of the junior sous chefs and one of the demi chefs, both Indo-Fijian, speak fluent Bauan. Everyone knows a few words in Fiji-Hindi or Bauan. Sovinal always says "Gabi, make some more chicken skewers *kere kere* please!", mixing the English and Bauan words for 'please'. But when groups of cooks speak amongst themselves in their own language, others cannot necessarily follow. While working at the Sundowner Bar & Grill,

the trainee, steward and myself cannot follow any of the conversation amongst the remaining kitchen team, as everyone speaks Fiji-Hindi. Apparently they had a great time cracking jokes about us, but all we could do was “roll our eyes and get on with our jobs” as the steward admitted. It was slightly humiliating. The same issue would occur, if someone not speaking Fiji-Hindi was to listen to the managing chefs’ meetings. Even though everyone around me is used to this triple-language environment, it makes me feel uncomfortable and some of my colleagues seem annoyed at times.

6.3.4 Good chefs are hard to find

I am back at the cold section. Tava is assisted by two trainees; young women studying for their Commercial Cookery degree at Fiji National University or the local Technical College of Nadroga-Navosa. At the Outrigger they serve an industry internship for six months. Tava did the same, as well as most of the other cooks and chefs I ask. Across the board, this seems to be the one way of becoming a cook in Fiji. And throughout the team we have a number of young trainees, entry level cooks or senior chefs who have been with the Outrigger since their early days as trainees, as the Executive Sous Chef knows. “Amongst other Fijian resorts, I don't think you will find any resort with many home-grown chefs. For Outrigger, it is 86 or 90 percent of trainees, who grew up into their positions, including me.” The Director of Human Resources (HR) tells me that it is easy for her to find trainees, because the resort has such a good reputation as an employer. The Executive Chef runs the increasingly popular annual ‘Chef’s Challenge’, where school children compete in cooking and baking (Nasokia, 2017, July 10). As a welcome side effect this effort positions the Outrigger as an attractive future training and employment option. However, well-trained and experienced cooks that fill the ranks between entry-level cooks and experienced senior chefs are hard to find and retain, even though the Outrigger pays above average, she says. ‘Good chefs are hard to find’ is a theme all managing chefs agree to. The Senior Sous Chef summarises the issue:

In Fiji it is very hard [to find chefs], because most of them have migrated or they went to island resorts, where they get good pay. They pay more than Coral Coast hotels. That's why they run away. So at present we are running with about five to six senior [chefs], the others are all from trainee [level]. We hire them from trainee and then we bring them up. ... So it's very hard to manage now. Because if as a sous chef or chef de partie [you] miss something, you miss it. You cannot rely on these people. They are too young. They still need training. And for training, we need some skilled people to train them. There are not many skilled people to train them.

There is another issue. So it's a tough game, but we are still taking on board new trainees.

First-hand experience with the line cooks support this view. Four cooks tell me about how they are currently trying to apply for a New Zealand, Australian or Canadian visa. Apparently some have found employers that are keen to support their applications. The issue of cooks leaving Outrigger for a supposedly better position is not only one of finding a suitable substitute, but to make matters worse, it is common to leave without giving notice. This manifests in a speech by the Executive Chef during a monthly general kitchen team meeting: "Do the right thing! Give me notice! I am the last one to not let you go. I have even helped good chefs to find employment elsewhere." He told me later that it is widely common in Fijian resorts to leave your current employer from one day to another without notice. "They got a better offer somewhere else and just don't turn up anymore." Such behaviour results in abrupt loss of knowledge and skills within the kitchen team, which in turn makes it difficult to operate with elaborate recipes. Every position in the kitchen needs to be easily replaceable.

The training and upbringing of young chefs in an environment with many entry-level cooks and only a few experienced senior chefs, however, is equally difficult, as pointed out by the Senior Sous Chef above. A striking example is made when the Executive Sous Chef walks around the main kitchen and announces that tomorrow she will check on every line cook's knife. It better be sharp or she will make their supervisors use it for the rest of the day. I have never heard anything like this before in a professional kitchen. The knife is the most essential tool a cook owns and a blunt blade has uncomfortable, if not dangerous disadvantages. I look at the knives around me. Fairly simple knives with coloured plastic handles and tattered blades. They have not been sharpened carefully. So much for basic chef training. And where are all the other tools? Flexible filleting knives, short paring knives, meat carving knives, spatulas, zest cutters and so forth? I see none of these things. A simple 20-inch knife and a peeler; that is what everyone has around here. There is an old and worn-off sharpening steel somewhere hidden under the cooking range. Over in the IVI kitchen things are a bit different. The three cooks there have a few more utensils. They take very good care of them and lock them away every night. "Otherwise things disappear!" Yashni says. However, with most of the cooking processes I perform and see happening around me, I realise that no one really needs anything more than a standard knife and a peeler. The cooking is fairly simple and straight forward. We are cooking for

the masses; nothing fancy. Knives for filleting and skinning of fish are not needed. A carving knife might be needed over in the butchery, but not for the standard cook.

Picture 5: Pawpaw and avocado salad at the Outrigger's *Lovo* Night



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Moreover, when it comes to preparing dishes there is a ‘quick and dirty’ attitude. Due to a high workload, you have to be fast, otherwise you cannot knock off in time. “When do you knock off?” is in fact one of the most frequently asked questions amongst the cooks. I realise that many dishes are presented in a rather simple fashion. Garnishing does not seem to be of interest. I go ahead and garnish two salads with pineapple leaves, chilli rings and lemon slices. My colleagues like it. “Looks so pretty!” a trainee says, but no one takes up the idea. On the contrary, on occasions where not all products are available for a particular dish, some cooks seem to have difficulties thinking of substitutes or alternative preparation methods. A case in point is the *pawpaw*³¹ and avocado dish on Tuesday’s *Lovo* Night. Fresh avocados are out of season. The cook has to use frozen avocado mousse, which he just squeezes over the papaya straight out of the bag; a rather simple presentation for a luxury resort (see Picture 5). I show this to the Executive Chef. “Make a cordial [i.e. a dressing] out of it, drizzle it over, a bit of garnish – done! But this...”, he rolls his eyes.

Do cooks not care or do they not know better? Are they not accustomed to the products? Not in this case, because both avocado and *pawpaw* are widely available local produce. Maybe they are not interested in such matters in the resort kitchen? We cook dishes from all sorts of culinary backgrounds – burgers, pasta, roasts, grilled fish, salads, sandwiches,

³¹ The local word for ‘papaya’.

Italian antipasti, California rolls, Asian buffets, seafood, pizzas, steaks, and so forth. However, the only time I sense a certain pride in what is being cooked, an attention to detail that makes the cooks taste a number of times before being satisfied with the result, is when my Indo-Fijian colleagues at Baravi prepare chicken curry. “Gabi, have you tried my chicken curry? Good, right? It’s about the right blend of spices!”, Sapneel tells me over a cup of spiced tea. In a number of kitchens the cooks keep a big pot of spiced tea simmering away on the stove for their own consumption; a thick black tea with cardamom, fresh ginger, milk and a hefty scoop of brown Fiji sugar. It makes me wonder why I do not see any of that pride in local food with my *iTaukei* colleagues over at VNK when they prepare for the two local food nights on Tuesdays and Saturdays: *kokoda*, *ika vakalolo*³², *palusami*³³, and so forth. Just like the Head Concierge, who sometimes comes and eats at VNK, many *iTaukei* colleagues tell me: “This is not what we eat in the village. The *palusami* is very different [at home]! Much more creamy. And the *miti*³⁴... They use canned *lolo*³⁵ here. Canned! Not the same.”

I ask Yashni what she thinks of the food that she cooks every night. She could rightly be considered one of the top-class cooks at Outrigger and possibly in Fiji. She runs the “girls-only team”, as the Executive Chef calls it, in charge of Outrigger’s fine dining restaurant IVI – a highly acclaimed eatery that has collected numerous accolades. Recently, it has been voted the “Best Fijian Dining Experience” by TripAdvisor based on guest comments. “You know, I can’t eat these things. If we eat lobster, we get a runny stomach”, she says. “So you don’t like to eat what you are cooking?” I ask. “We cook with all our heart, you know, but this is not our food”, she replies and smiles apologetically.

The Executive Sous Chef also points towards a rather low skill level of their younger cooks in an effort to explain why sometimes things have to be kept simple: “We carry babies with us and we need to guide them! Because most of them, all of them nearly, are [just] out of school.”

³² Fish (*ika*) cooked in coconut milk (*vakalolo*)

³³ Parcels of *dalo* leaves with a filling of coconut cream, ingredients such as onion, corned beef, prawns, or any fish, and baked in a *lovo*.

³⁴ A cold sauce made of coconut milk, chopped onions, lemon juice and, depending on season, chopped tomatoes. It is preferably served with cooked fish or seafood.

³⁵ The local word for coconut milk.

I decide to get a sense of what it means to be 'out of school' in Fiji. Students can attain three levels of the National Certificate of Cookery. The institution responsible for teaching Level 1 and 2 free of charge in the local province is the Technical College Nadroga-Navosa near Cuvu. Level 3 costs approximately FJ\$5,000 (\approx US\$2,400³⁶) and is taught at the Sigatoka campus of Fiji National University.

Picture 6: Commercial cookery students at the Technical College



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

The Head of Campus of the Technical College, Mr. Narayan welcomes me and shows me around campus. The College teaches a variety of trade courses, amongst others cookery and bakery. We enter the training kitchen, a large white room with a stainless-steel six-burner gas stove, oven, deep fryer, preparation tables and a large refrigerator. I see a few tools like colanders and spatulas here and there. The equipment is basic. The training bakery, however, looks more advanced with a number of important pieces of equipment. Currently the students are down by the fire pit, practicing how to prepare a *lovo* (see Picture 6). I ask them if they enjoy their training. They say they do and they express their plan to become famous chefs. They are about to finish their Level 2 Certificate, which encompasses 12 weeks of taught classes and a seven-week industry placement. Later on I sit down with the Head of Campus and he shares with me his view on the students.

³⁶ All FJ\$ to US\$ conversions according to September 25th, 2018, exchange rates on www.xe.com

“Many of our students have dropped out of school, smoke, some even take drugs. It’s difficult!” Mr. Narayan believes that his college receives students from a comparably low socio-economic background. Nevertheless, many of his students find employment in resorts after they graduate. There is always demand for new cooks it seems.

6.3.5 Places of birth: Where chefs are made

Back at the Outrigger I am interested in the background of the senior chefs, as well. The Sous Chef fills me in. He repeatedly says someone “was born in [resort name], raised in [resort name]”. For instance, big international resorts in Denarau seem to be the ‘birth-place’ for many of the Outrigger’s managing chefs. He puts simply what came up in a number of casual conversations with senior chefs: what is most critical about how they operate, how they manage a team or create menus is where they were ‘born’ and ‘raised’, meaning where they received their initial training. For instance, when I ask the Executive Chef what in his life has the most decisive impact on how he manages his kitchen, he fondly remembers:

I think it was the early days. That played a big part, because that was the time where I came in the kitchen with no interest in cooking, to be honest. But those chefs were the ones, who moulded me, who built the interest in me. And from there, the only thing I've done in my life is cooking. I have done nothing else. From after school till today is something to do with this [chef's] jacket. ... It used to be Four Seasons, but now it is Sheraton and Westin. The head chef was a German guy and he had five to six expat chefs in the kitchen. Breakfast chefs, executive sous chefs, sous chefs, pastry chefs, executive chefs – all from Europe, mostly German [and] Swiss. So, tough, very very tough! But, just because they saw the willingness in me, I was the youngest and the cheekiest of the lot, they knew they could do anything to me. Swearing was like a song to me! ... But, ok, they actually also had that affection. They cared about me like their son, their younger brother; they moulded me, collectively. They showed me the right path, they corrected me like they would correct their son, you know, smack me, if they have to.

For him, this fundamental training amongst Western chefs was important for being able to ‘translate’ local ingredients into dishes that appeal to a Western palate: “[W]hen we have to transform those [local] things, it became easy. If I didn't do Sheraton and the big names and the big guys, the European guys, no way! I wouldn't have been able to transform those things.” Nevertheless, his Indo-Fijian background came through when asked what he would like to change on the Outrigger menus, if he was given free reign: “I want to put a little bit of an Indian feel to it!”

Some of the Junior Sous Chefs and the Executive Sous Chef were 'born' at the Outrigger, 'raised' in other international properties around Fiji, and later returned to Outrigger. The Sous Chef was 'born' in a Sheraton in Delhi, but 'raised' in a number of other Sheraton properties around the World. The Senior Sous Chef was 'born and raised' in the Shangri La resort on the Coral Coast. Exactly like in the example of the Executive Chef's life history, for most chefs the common denominator is their experience of being trained by expatriate chefs from a Western background in multinational upmarket hotel chains. This had, and probably still has, an effect on what is perceived by those chefs to be appropriate food for resorts. The Executive Chef expands on what it meant for him to "work under full European style of culinary delivery" in his early days:

Executive Chef: I never even thought of putting my hands into curry and stuff like that. Not even the *lolo*, you know. Because that shit (pauses) this is home! My style is fine dining. Soup has to be consommé! I made goulash, or jus, or...

Gabriel: European classics?

Executive Chef: Yes! Those things, you know. It's not like 'oh, we can do a coconut-pumpkin soup!' I never used that. It had to be minestrone, or I do a beef goulash! Those things.

One could argue that this attitude possibly has to do with being part of a generation of chefs that were 'born and raised' in kitchens during the 1970s and 1980s, when tourism in Fiji boomed and most, if not all resorts, had expatriate chefs (Kanemasu, 2015). But, then a Junior Sous Chef of just under thirty, who had just been sent to a three-month cookery course at the French culinary school Le Cordon Bleu in Wellington, New Zealand, assured me that "French cuisine is always about being perfect. Obviously! Everybody knows. French is perfect." His experience at Le Cordon Bleu provided him with more confidence in his cooking abilities. Now, he says, "people have trust in me that whatever I'm saying, it's 100 percent right."

Of course not all chefs have such stern views on what 'perfect cuisine' is. Nevertheless, it brings up the question of how chefs are supposed to look at their own culinary heritage in an appreciative way and consider it worthy to be served to their mostly Western clientele.

6.4 What's on the menu? In search of the local

In my first days at the Outrigger I work breakfast and dinner shifts at VNK, Outrigger's largest outlet with a seating capacity of about 250. **Breakfast** is a large intercontinental-

style buffet with different breads and pastries, a warm section with scrambled eggs, baked beans, bacon, hash browns, sausages, among others, and a cold buffet offering mueslis, yogurts, and cold cuts. The adjacent coffee bar offers fresh juices and smoothies. Scattered around the buffet are three live-cooking stations serving local seasonal fruit (Picture 7), different egg dishes (poached, omelette, etc.) and a daily changing “sweet treats” station with waffles, pancakes, doughnuts or *babakau*³⁷. On an average day one can expect about 90 percent of all Outrigger guests to show up.

Picture 7: Local fruit station at the Outrigger's breakfast buffet



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

From my experience the breakfast is as standard a five-star resort breakfast as can be, with the exceptions of a few localised highlights. Certainly very local is the fresh fruit station, that I staff for a few mornings. The sous chef in charge assures me that only local seasonal fruit will be served here – and I do serve lots of it. The guests seem to like it. But, I realise that not everyone knows what a passionfruit or papaya is. I start to proactively explain, or rather ‘sell’. “Try our local papaya! It is very sweet and we like to enjoy it with a slice of lemon to balance the sweetness!” Or “this is a local orange. It is green outside and looks a bit like a lime, but tastes very nice and juicy.” It does the trick. Otherwise the guests usually just ask for watermelon, pineapple and banana. I wonder, though, whether my young colleagues, who usually staff this station, also make an effort to explain to guests what is available. Looking at how shy they behave around guests, I doubt it. With the growing appreciation of coconut products in Western countries I would

³⁷ *Babakau* are small deep-fried bread pockets made from a wheat dough and yeast. Locally they are considered a breakfast treat and served lukewarm with honey and fruits.

have imagined there would be some fresh chunks of coconut to go with the fruit plates. As condiments to the mueslis and yogurts, however, there are two little bowls with further local treats: one with freshly scraped coconut seasoned with a hint of cinnamon and one with a banana-honey mixture – all made from local ingredients. Once a week the sweet treat station makes *babakau*, small deep-fried flat breads made with sugar and cinnamon and served with honey; a breakfast treat most Fijians savour. Finally, of the two house-made jams, one is always a pineapple jam made from local fruits.

During **lunch time VNK** only offers a kids buffet, which is mostly frequented by the resorts' nanny service and its young patrons. It features pasta, steamed vegetables, vegemite sandwiches, and wraps, among others. Adult lunch options are served at the other Outrigger outlets. VNK opens again for **dinner**, which is served in a daily changing buffet-style with two or more live cooking stations. The restaurant has a revolving menu of seven themed dinner buffets per week (see Table 5).

Picture 8: Meke dance show at the Magiti dinner buffet



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

According to the Executive Assistant the Southwest American Feast and the Asian night are least popular, whereas Sunday's seafood buffet is by far the most frequented with guest numbers anywhere between 160 and 200. The local food nights Tuesdays and Saturdays are also popular. They are the only buffets which are accompanied by live entertainment. Tuesdays a group from the neighbouring *iTaukei* village performs a traditional

*meke*³⁸ dance show. The sound of a small *lali*³⁹ fills the restaurant as men and women in leaf skirts and flower ribbons sing Fijian songs. Afterwards, warriors with spears and painted faces dance and scare the kids (Picture 8). I ask them how they like performing here in front of the tourists. They say they enjoyed it, it provides a welcome income, and it helps them to keep their traditional songs and dances alive. On Saturdays there is a *kava* ceremony that takes place in the restaurant. A Tongan group performs their traditional dances and songs and guests find “traditional warriors at the entrance to guard [their] dinner” (Menu card).

Table 5: Weekly evening buffet themes at the Outrigger

Day	Buffet Theme
Monday	Southwest American Feast
Tuesday	Traditional <i>Lovo</i> Night (Fijian local food)
Wednesday	A Taste of Asia
Thursday	Mexican Fiesta
Friday	A Night in Italy
Saturday	<i>Magiti</i> ⁴⁰ in the Village (Fijian local food)
Sunday	Ocean's Catch (seafood buffet)

Tuesday's and Saturday's buffets certainly play on the notion of local cuisine. The entertainment adds to the overall 'island night' theme. The buffets offer a mainly *iTaukei*-inspired menu with dishes such as *kokoda* (fish cubes 'cold-cooked' in lemon juice, then combined with coconut cream and served with finely diced vegetables), *palusami*, river *kai* (or *kaikoso*⁴¹), *lovo* meat (pork meat and whole chickens put into woven palm leaf baskets and baked in a *lovo*), *ika vakalolo* (fish, *ika*, cooked in coconut milk) and root crops (such as yams, *dalo*, and cassava⁴²), among others. A few Indo-Fijian dishes are available as well, for example vegetable potato curry or spicy fried *dalo* and breadfruit

³⁸ *Meke* dances are performed by groups of men and/or women singing and dancing at the same time (Ratzel, 1896).

³⁹ Fijian drum carved out of a single piece of wood and beaten with two wooden batons.

⁴⁰ Bauan expression for food ceremonially offered to other people (Jansen, Parkinson, & Robertson, 1990).

⁴¹ Ark shell (*Anadara cornea*); a local mussel found in intertidal zones of estuaries (Jansen et al., 1990).

⁴² *Manihot esculenta*

chunks with chutney, but they play a minor role. Sunday's seafood buffet doesn't strike me as very local, but the Executive Chef argues that seafood is very Fijian and so it could be thought of as a form of local buffet. Some of the fish and seafood is sourced locally if available, for instance crabs, reef lobsters, *mahi-mahi*⁴³, and tuna. A large proportion, however, is made up of imported prawns and squid as well as green-lipped mussels, oysters and salmon from New Zealand (see Picture 9).

Picture 9: Ocean's Catch dinner buffet



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

The **Sundowner Bar & Grill** serves mainly steaks and pizzas. The resort's website claims that "[y]ou'll find an extensive grill menu showcasing juicy Australian beef, an array of local seafood, and signature wood-fired gourmet pizza" (Outrigger, 2017b). Besides a smaller selection of pizzas, steaks and burgers, the lunch menu is lightened up with dishes such as coconut prawn salad, California and sushi rolls, a Japanese bento box, and chicken supreme parmigiana, among others. On the dinner menu heavier steaks such as T-bone or rib eye cuts and a longer list of pizzas reign. The Sundowner is Outrigger's most popular dinner venue. Besides sunset views over a palm-fringed beach, pizzas and premium Tasmanian beef steaks seem to lure guests in. The responsible Sous Chef and his all-male crew know how to handle themselves in a small and cramped kitchen space where as of 6 pm orders just come flying in.

⁴³ The local name for the common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) (Jansen et al., 1990).

Steaks and pizzas are arguably a universal Western concept and consequently Sundowner shows only a few local touches. Depending on the season guests may find Nadi bay bugs, a local crustacean, served as a special from the grill. A coconut prawn salad might pass as a local dish, and the Executive Sous Chef even argues that the “Spiced Indian” pizza with Bombay chicken, chili, tomato, onion and coriander is actually local. However, the Executive Chef believes that “Sundowner is different; it's a steakhouse! You can't ... put any Fijian, any Indian (pauses) you can't put a masala grill beef tenderloin.” In his view a steakhouse is a rather closed concept that allows only for certain dishes, but not for others.

Picture 10: Standard lunch order at Baravi Bar & Restaurant



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Outrigger’s favourite lunchtime eatery is the **Baravi Restaurant**, located next to the main family pool area. Marketing claims it offers “a culinary journey through India, Thailand, Singapore, and China. Traditional and contemporary preparations for lunch and dinner” (Outrigger, 2017b). This claim certainly pitches the evening menu correctly, where guests find dishes such as red Thai curry, Fiji South-Indian lamb, wok stir fry, Singaporean noodles, or Mongolian sizzle plates. During lunch time, however, the menu features a mix of burgers, deep-fried items (e.g., fish and chips, French fries, chicken nuggets) salads and sides (e.g., Thai beef salad, coconut chicken & green papaya salad, an Asian box), sandwiches (e.g., wraps, baguettes and sandwiches), and curry and wok dishes (e.g., chicken curry, Singaporean noodles, nasi goreng, or wok seared beef). There is also a kids menu offering for instance “fun in a bun” mini-burgers, pasta, or peanut butter sandwiches. Overall, as the Executive Assistant phrased it, “this place tries to be everything to everyone”. Western fast food and a plethora of more or less Asian dishes sit side by side.

In my days at Baravi I take up the position of fryer, looking after everything deep-fried: chips, potato wedges, chicken nuggets, fish and the Asian box dumplings. On my first day we serve about 120 guests and I fry 40 kg of French fries and potato wedges, all of which are imported from The Netherlands. When looking at what goes over the kitchen pass it is unmistakable: what Outrigger's guests want for lunch are burgers, club sandwiches, chicken nuggets, and fish & chips (see for example Picture 10). Salads, falafel or curry are nice to have, but rarely ordered, as everyone in the kitchen agrees. After the shift I tell the Senior Sous Chef that I never thought I'd work in a McDonald's one day. He chuckles. "Yes, yes! Like McDonalds! Expensive cooking, right?" We laugh. Later on the Executive Chef almost gets upset when I ask him how he feels about Baravi during lunch.

Don't talk about lunch! ... Bloody fish and chips all over the show! ... The deep fryer can't handle that many chips! I should make a note of how many chips we use in a day.

Indeed, the two deep fryers hardly kept up. The Executive Chef feels unhappy about the guests' choices for lunch, but argues that he has to offer those fast food items.

And then, that's not a buffet, it's à la carte. It means that guests bloody want it! If it is a buffet, they can say 'oh, that's your selection!' But when they order, it is not my choice, it is their choice.

After a few days at 'McDonalds' I move on to **Vahavu**, the pool side bar for the adults-only pool; a smallish affair. The kitchen is a one-woman show. Generally the food is similar to Baravi, just slightly fancier – no 'fun in the bun' around here. Guests can order, for instance, chips with parmesan cheese and drizzled with truffle oil. The sandwiches and starters are also slightly more sophisticated. Vahavu feels as if it could be anywhere in a metropolitan area in New Zealand or Australia. Sandwiches with avocado, poached eggs, waffles with blueberries and syrup, tapas plates with hummus, and the universal burgers and fish and chips. It is the latter that most of the roughly 30 to 40 orders per day call for.

My last four days I spend in dinner service in the **IVI** kitchen, Outrigger's fine-dining space serving up "creative Pacific Continental cuisine" (Outrigger, 2017b). IVI can host up to about 30 guests at a time. On an average night the kitchen team of three will cook for about 15 guests. This is the highest staff-to-guest ratio (1:5) there is in the Outrigger

restaurants. The menu holds a mixture of contemporary creative dishes as well as interpretations of international and Fijian classics. On the creative side I see a “Fijian tasting trio”: lobster cheesecake, coconut prawns and a heart of palm salad. None of this would be served in Navuevu, but the dish is a vivid example of using local ingredients in a Western-contemporary fashion. The rack of lamb rubbed in a Fijian spice mix with local honey and ginger, served with a local sweet potato puree, fried baby okra and mint glaze, echoes Indo-Fijian and British cuisine. The spices resonate with Indian masala mixtures, and ginger and okra are standard ingredient in Indian dishes. The mint sauce is an archetypal British condiment to lamb roasts. The “Mangrove crab wonton bisque” (see right, Picture 11) integrates classical French concepts of cream-enriched soups based on crustaceans (i.e. a ‘bisque’) and a pastry lid frequently served with French onion soups as well as the Chinese concept of wonton soups, all served in a coconut shell (*‘bilo’*), a quintessential South Pacific vessel. “Fiji’s deep sea snapper and shelled mud crab” draws not only on local products, but also on cooking methods, as the fish is wrapped and poached in a banana leaf parcel. The crab meat is cooked in *miti*, a traditional Fijian sauce made from coconut cream, onions, lemon juice and, depending on season, chopped tomatoes. In Navuevu it is preferably served with cooked fish and root crops, but always ‘raw’ and never used in cooking. The “highland duck summer roll” (see left, Picture 11) ties in Vietnamese cuisine, just as the “ricotta and green papaya cannelloni” builds a bridge between Italian cannelloni and green papaya frequently used in South-East Asian recipes.

Almost every dish is an assemblage of different countries’ cuisines, building on local and international products. Even different serving styles are integrated into the picture. The individual ingredients for the Fijian evergreen *kokoda* are prepared in the kitchen (see centre, Picture 11), but assembled and served by waiters table-side, essentially a 19th-century European ‘gueridon service’ – a waiter cooks and serves food on a small table next to the guests. IVI crosses cultural boundaries, blends products, fuses cooking styles, joins and breaks traditions, and mingles ways of serving to create a culinary playground that is somewhere in between traditional Fijian, contemporary and traditional Western, as well as Pacific rim cuisine.

Picture 11: IVI's fine-dining dishes

Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Apart from the two local buffet nights at VNK, IVI is certainly the restaurant with the highest share of local products and recipes in the menu. *Kumala*, a local sweet potato, mostly substitutes common potatoes; local *moca*⁴⁴ stands in for spinach. *Ota*⁴⁵, breadfruit, eggplant, okra, heart of palm, honey, mud crab, lobster, and *mahi-mahi* are all products of the islands. In contrast, dishes such as the “traditional ceasar’s salad” and the “mustard basil rubbed beef tenderloin” have little to do with local culinary heritage or produce. Nevertheless, IVI elegantly crosses the local-international boundary in favour of a Fijian-inspired menu. This effort is rarely made in the other restaurants and it comes at a high cost given the extraordinary staff-to-guest ratio.

Across all menus I see three themes emerge that summarise how local produce find their way into dishes.

1. **Substitution:** A dish familiar to guests is made partly by using local produce as a substitute. Local *moca* or *dalo* leaves substitute spinach. Stewed white *kumala* and carrots make for an orange *kumala* puree. Or, coconut cream stands in for cow’s cream. Local produce become invisible for guests. While this might work with some products and recipes, there are limitations. For instance, efforts to substitute potato-based foods with the abundantly available root crop cassava or with local sweet potatoes have failed for two reasons. Firstly, the majority of guests do

⁴⁴ A local *Amaranth* species (Jansen et al., 1990). Its green leaves are similar in taste and texture to spinach.

⁴⁵ Different species of local edible ferns, e.g. *Diplazium esculentum*, *Diplazium proliferum* or *Athyrium esculentum* (Jansen et al., 1990).

not accept the different taste and texture; secondly, fries would need to be cut manually, which ties up too much work force.

2. **Local dish the local way:** Some local recipes seem to resonate well with the guests' palate. *Kokoda*, for example, depends only on local produce and is well-liked by many guests. A number of local Indo-Fijian curries, if not too spicy, count in this category, too, even though some of the spices need to be imported. However, other local recipes might not be accepted. "[Guests] will try once" and that would be the end of it, said the Executive Chef when we talked about local seafood dishes. Certainly, the stew of local sea slug intestines that I was served in Navuevu might not be to everyone's liking.
3. **Local dish the Western way:** The third option fuses local recipes with concepts well known to tourists to create a dish that appears familiar, but also offers something unknown. This strategy shows mostly in IVI, as the descriptions of dishes such as "mangrove crab wonton bisque" above highlight. This cooking style requires an understanding of local as well as international cuisines. Chefs need to be trained in both, as the Executive Chef points out. Local chefs, such as Tava, in contrast, wonder why anyone would use the highly prized local root crop *dalo* and turn it into a salad similar to a potato salad, for instance. To her mind this was not a proper dish.

All three strategies certainly take at least a fundamental understanding of the nature of local and international produce and recipes. If a cook has never had boiled potatoes, how can s/he understand that *dalo* might be an acceptable substitute? But, if cooks and chefs understand the issue and are able to apply them in a pressure-driven environment with long working hours, dishes can be created that integrate more local ingredients. At the Outrigger, IVI was a good example of this creative fusion of cuisines, but it catered only to a few customers with openness to different tastes and a willingness to pay above-average menu prices.

6.5 A note on authenticity

Very few of the so-called 'local' dishes that I see at Outrigger resemble anything I am served in the village. For example, the *iTaukei* stewards look after the resort's wood-fired

lovo pit. That is authentic to the degree that it is common practice in *iTaukei* villages. Slaughtering pigs and looking after the *lovo* is men's work.

Picture 12: Pork from the spit at the *Magiti* dinner buffet



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Everything else about the *lovo*, however, differs from what I have seen in a village setting. The meat is wrapped in aluminium foil and not in woven coconut palm leave baskets. Therefore, the meat does not have the same smokiness, because the foil seals it from the hot stones. A pig from the spit, as it is served on Saturdays, is not a village concept at all, even though my *iTaukei* colleagues appreciated it nevertheless. “Gabi, don’t give it all to the guests!” they say mischievously while I carve the pig. It has an apple stuck in its mouth and comes with gravy and apple sauce (Picture 12). To me this is reminiscent of 17th century European banquets. The *palusami* is just an unidentifiable mush and not baked in neat little *dalo* leaf parcels. *Lolo*, a quintessential Fijian ingredient, comes out of the can imported from Thailand. In Navuevu that is unthinkable. “It’s just not the same taste! It’s lazy cooking”, Ofa says. And a curried prawn and pawpaw salad? Or a cold *dalo* salad? Unimaginable. “What do they have to use *dalo* in salads for?” Tava wonders. To the villagers a *dalo* is a prized root crop that is best served boiled and whole on special occasions and accompanies cooked meats or fish. In fact, a salad as such is not very common in the village at all. My host sullenly sums up that “if they use canned *lolo*, they might as well use *dalo* for salads!”

Picture 13: River prawns steamed in bamboo



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

On a more positive note, the vanilla custard pie, fried *dalo* and breadfruit chunks as well as the warm *vudi vakasoso*⁴⁶ seem very authentic. Moreover, the river prawns steamed in bamboo (Picture 13) are probably even more authentic than in my village, in a sense that they are more traditional. My hosts remember that steaming food in bamboo is something their forefathers used to do.

The debate around what is authentic food seems to be of interest to some of the chefs. The Executive Sous Chef, for instance, recalls asking an *iTaukei* steward to help her with a local recipe.

I used to struggle a lot making a perfect *vakalolo*⁴⁷ and I was taught by one of our stewards. So he told me the mistake you did was that you [did not] add warm coconut milk. If you add [it] cold from the fridge, it clots.

However, these are sporadic instances. Some chefs might care more than others. Eventually, as all managing chefs pointed out that the guiding paradigm for any food at the Outrigger is the guests' palate.

6.6 Guests and what they want

According to Outrigger's guest statistics 82 percent are from Australia and 11 percent from New Zealand; the remaining seven percent are mostly Europeans, U.S. Americans,

⁴⁶ A dish made from cooked plantains ('vudi') or other types of bananas.

⁴⁷ A Fijian dessert made from cassava, sugar and coconut milk.

and a few Asians. On average, guests stay about five to six nights. Families make up the bulk of visitors, honeymooners and couples have a smaller share and wedding groups are increasingly popular.

Staffing buffet stations, especially during breakfast, is a good opportunity to chat with guests. How do they feel about the food? While juggling big plates of bacon and eggs along the breakfast buffet they tell me they love our food. Great choice, well prepared, but tends to be a bit pricey. Overall though, nothing to complain about; “na, it’s all good, mate” I hear mostly.

I head over to the F&B Manager’s quarters and screen approximately 300 F&B guest comment cards from April 2017. They are designed for guests to give feedback on their experience in particular restaurants in terms of quality of food and service, timeliness, value for money, etc. Despite the odd service glitch that must have happened occasionally (a forgotten order or not the right dish) guests mainly complain about price. They would like to see better value for money. The situation is aggravated by the fact that smaller independent eateries next door offer tasty dishes at a more competitive price. The Executive Assistant explains the context:

As a tourism company that turns over more than one million dollar we are subjected to three after sales tax. First is VAT [value added tax], which is 9 %. The second is service turnover tax which is 10 %.⁴⁸ And the third is an environmental levy which is 6 %. So a total of 25 % after sales tax. We have a product that we want to sell for FJ\$10, straight away it becomes FJ\$12.50. Next door, we've got a great little restaurant, beach bar and grill. Chef trained and groomed in five-star resorts in Fiji. Because of the size of his business he has a tax exemption. He doesn't even pay the 9 % VAT after sales. So when people go next door they say: 'How can I pay FJ\$20 for a steak next door, but I pay FJ\$25 here?' ... The push back from tourists is incredible!

What might be a welcomed source of tax revenue for the government has created a considerable downward pressure for resorts (see also Section 6.8). However, what stands out in terms of guest feedback are the comments about the genuine, caring and warm-hearted service: “Aliti was so nice! She remembered everyone’s name!” “The good bye song was so touching. We will never forget this! *Vinaka!*” On the other side, however, the service is noted as comparably slow, even though we are in a holiday environment where guests

⁴⁸ Fiji’s customs authority has decreased STT to 6 % in their 2017-2018 budget (Fiji Revenue and Customs Authority, 2017, p. 4).

tend to be more relaxed about timing. What I do not encounter are any comments about guests not liking the food. Basically, everyone seems happy with what's on the menu. The comment cards support what guests expressed earlier in occasional conversations. The Executive Assistant concluded: "I believe the way our menus are set up right now is pretty much where the guests want to see them based on feedback."

This goes to show how clear the views of chefs and resort managers are on what can and what cannot be served to guests. The Executive Chef realised, for instance, that due to the high share of Australian guests he needs to have bacon and eggs on the breakfast buffet. "You can't go without bacon!" With respect to local dishes, the Executive Sous Chef mentioned that for breakfast

you can't have fish in lolo or too spicy food with too much garlic, which we Fijians love, right? If I put our Fiji-Indian curries on, the breakfast will be enjoyed once or twice, but if I put that in a seven day menu, I would get some feedback!

A 'you can't go without...' theme emerged strongly throughout conversations with managing chefs. This theme is essentially a dichotomy of what can and what cannot be served to guests of a five-star resort such as the Outrigger in Fiji. On the one hand it refers to the need to have Western food items on the menu, such as a continental breakfast buffet. Other items mentioned were potato hash browns, burgers, fish and chips, club sandwiches, pizzas, pasta, high-quality steaks and a variety of fish and seafood. Furthermore, the need to offer variety, a wide selection of different kinds of food came up a number of times. On the other hand, it also pertains to the issue of serving local dishes. For instance, Indo-Fijian curries cannot be served as spicy as the locals eat them (Executive Sous Chef); the local river mussel '*kai*' (or '*kaikoso*') is a difficult choice because it is unknown to guests and tends to be chewy (Executive Chef); the local beef cannot be served as steaks as it has an irony-earthy taste and tends to be too tough (Sous Chef).

Chefs and managers noted, however, that guests tend to express the wish to eat local food, but mostly eat what they are used to, as summarised by the Executive Assistant:

I think people travel to Fiji with the thought in their mind 'I want to try everything local', but everyone still eats bacon and eggs for breakfast. This is the simplest way to put it. ... [T]he biggest seller in our pool side bar will always be our beef burger. Biggest seller through our room service is always going to be club sandwich. So you've got to do these international staples well and supplement it with localised regional cuisine.

The Executive Chef observed a similar contradicting behaviour in regards to healthy meal choices.

Parents, they give us comments, like: '[there is] nothing healthy [on the menu], we want to serve our kids something healthy'. Bang. I take the fries away, I take these fried items away, so on there go some sandwiches, healthy salads, two pasta, but maybe not with cream, baked meat, stuff like that. Second day: 'No, my kids are not enjoying [it]. Can we have some fries, please! Can we have some chicken nuggets, please. My kids can't eat these steamed veggies.' As much as they say: we want! It is ok for the first day. Second day: We want some chicken nuggets (sighs).

The negotiation of this contradictory space, of guests and their ambivalent behaviour, under the managerial pressure to keep guest satisfaction high and food cost⁴⁹ low, proved to be a major concern for chefs. With respect to local food I suggest in many conversations how the resort could offer more local dishes or integrate local produce into existing recipes. In most cases they are met with resignation. The 'We've tried, but...' category stands for a strongly emerging theme: the various accounts of chefs having tried to serve local dishes or local products tied into Western dishes, but having to recognise that guests did not appreciate their efforts. This theme became very clear in a conversation with the Executive Chef.

Executive Chef: I used to do some root crops, candied *kumala*, some cassava hash [browns] over the years. ... Every month we created something new. Not that we used that every day for the month, but we created one new dish that goes in and we'd use it on alternating days. ...

Gabriel: Did it work?

Executive Chef: Well, maybe [with] 20 percent [of our guests]. The other 30 percent didn't say anything. The other 50 percent asked for [potato] hash browns on request. So we are cooking [potato] hash browns just for them and taking it and giving it to them on this table and that table and then we realise: what are we doing? As per demand, let's put [potato] hash brown there seven days a week. No one asked for *kumala* hash browns! But they ask for hash brown, the food they are comfortable with. (paused) They all say: *we want to try this and that and this*, but when they pay money, I have experienced, *they want to have the things that they are comfortable eating*.

The Sous Chef remembered similar scenarios, for instance how they used to have four local food buffet nights at VNK in a week, but decided to cut down to two, because it was getting "too boring for our guests". When the Sundowner restaurant opened for the first time it apparently had a pizza menu and a local food menu. Guests, however, only came for pizzas. Management decided to build a grill into the kitchen and sell steaks imported

⁴⁹ 'Food cost' is a restaurant industry-specific term that refers to the percentage of the menu's/dish's sales price that was spent on the food it is made of.

from Australia, rather than local dishes. Today, the Sundowner is the most popular dining place at the Outrigger.

The chefs find themselves in a predicament. They perceive themselves as service providers. Their guests' wishes are their commands, or otherwise they 'will get some feedback'. They are to provide "a home away from home" (Executive Sous Chef) and that includes offering what their guests, mostly Australians and New Zealanders, like to eat. Nevertheless, local food seems to be interesting for tourists as well – so they say at least. Guests have even complained on TripAdvisor and to the GM directly, as he recalls. Visitors thought they had not had enough opportunities to taste Fijian food while staying at the Outrigger. Interestingly, the local dishes that are available do not sell well. The Executive Chef sympathised with his guests:

You take me to Australia. I will have a steak today, maybe next day we'll go to an Italian restaurant and eat pasta, bloody third day I want my curry! (smacks his hands on the table). I need my curry! Or I'll ask Missus, we [should] go home, we need to have some home-food.

In sum, the Outrigger is a well-established resort with a menu that seems to work well with its guests. Otherwise, the resort would not run annual average occupancy rates of 80 to 90 percent. Also, the F&B department ranks well with 88 percent (12 month-average) satisfaction on the guest surveys, compared to 89 percent satisfaction average for the entire resort. The kind of menus in place have, however, significant implications for the sourcing of products – not only in terms of what is sourced, but also from where and how.

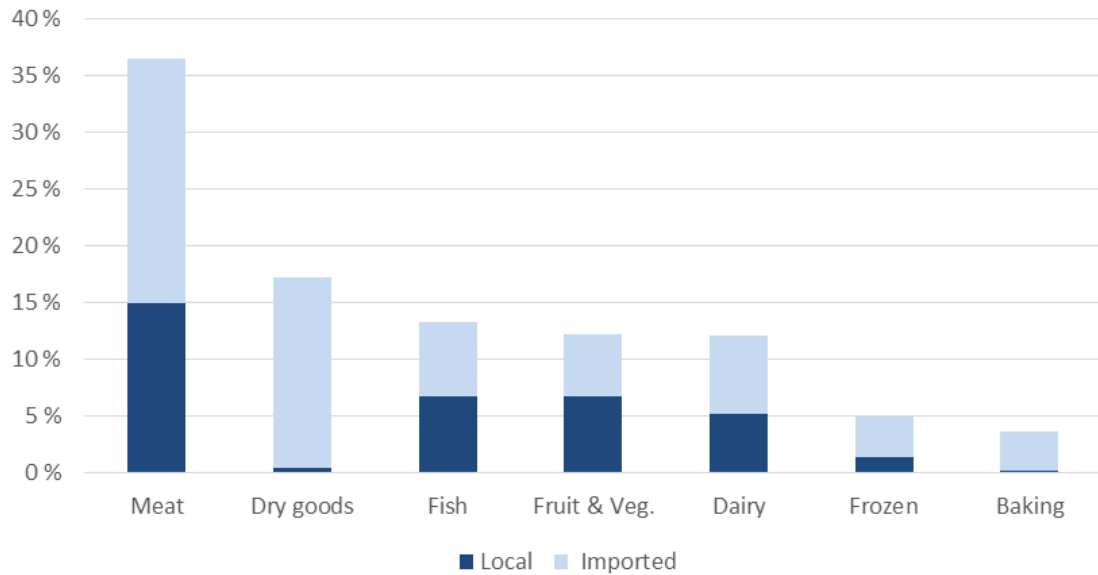
6.7 What produce from where at which value

On a representative month in 2017 the Outrigger procured food worth about FJ\$500,000 (≈US\$236,000). Figure 10 shows which group of products take up what share of this sum (calculated by price x quantity). The pillars are subdivided to show how much of each product category is procured locally or imported. The data is based on a particular month of 2017 that the resort's F&B Cost Controller suggested was representative for current food procurement rates (NB: the data is not a calculated 12-month average).

With just under 37 percent, by far the highest share of the resort's entire food bill goes towards **meat products**. Of this share, more than half (59 %) gets imported. Predominantly this includes prime beef cuts (e.g., tenderloin, rib eye, T-bone and rump steaks), all bacon, pork riblets and any lamb meat. Locally sourced are almost all kinds of poultry

meat from the local Crest Chicken company, all other pork products (e.g., leg, suckling pigs, ham, mince, salami) as well as minced beef meat.

Figure 10: Outrigger's food expenditure by category and source for one month in 2017



Source: G. Laeis based on data provided by the Outrigger Beach Resort Fiji, 2017

The reason for this scenario is found firstly in consumer preferences and secondly in local availability. As pointed out above, chefs reported that local beef was found to have an unpleasant taste by guests. A resort, whose most visited dinner restaurant is a steak house, of course wants to make sure that its main product is appealing. The resort came to the conclusion that there was no suitable supply locally. Hence, all but minced beef is imported from Australia. The latter is commonly used in stews or sauces, mixed with other ingredients and cooked for longer, therefore meat quality and taste are not quite as decisive. Bacon is imported because the local supply allegedly does not suffice. The Outrigger alone uses about 900 kilos of bacon a month, most of it for breakfast, equating to roughly 55 grams of bacon per guest per day on average. Lamb meat would be available locally, but not in the quality, quantity and consistency that the Outrigger requires. All chicken meat as well as all remaining pork is sourced locally, channelling about 15 percent of Outrigger's entire expenditure on food into the local meat economy. How much of this money actually stays there, however, is questionable. As chefs and a former employee of the MOA agree, most of the feed that the local pork and chicken producers use is likely to be imported.

The second most valuable food category is **dry goods**. These essentially include a range of convenience products which can be stored at room temperature for a long time (e.g., sauces, condiments, canned fruits, cereals, pasta, oil and spices). Of the list of 176 items in this category, three are sourced locally: honey, tamarind chutney and coconut oil, amounting to just 2.4 percent of the category.

Fish and seafood account for about 13 percent of the Outrigger's food bill, of which half is imported. The vast majority of the imported products are seafood such as prawns, oysters, green-lipped mussels, octopus, scallops and crab meat. Salmon, green-lipped mussels and oysters are imported from New Zealand. Most of all other fish, however, comes from local sources (*mahi-mahi*, *wahoo*⁵⁰, tuna and sometimes species of reef fish). Some of the seafood, such as mud crab, lobsters and slipper bugs, are caught locally as well.

All locally sourced items depend on season and availability. For instance, according to the GM, local fishermen do not dive for lobsters in cooler months (May to October) as they allegedly shy away from the cooler water. The Outrigger negotiates this inconsistency by buying in bulk during the warmer season and freezing enough to meet demand until local lobster is available again. The same pattern was observable for other kinds of fish. One day, the resort was offered about six whole yellow fin tuna, fresh off a tourist fishing vessel. Some was used instantaneously on the menu; the rest was frozen for later use. Other items, such as slipper bugs, have a particular season. In sum, the share of what is bought locally versus what is imported certainly changes over the year. Nevertheless, two factors drive surprisingly high importation ration in this category. Firstly, the local fishing economy does not seem to be able to satisfy the resort with a consistent variety, quantity and quality of local fish and seafood. Secondly, guests like to see familiar items such as oysters, green lip mussels and salmon on the menu, which are not available in Fiji.

The category of **fruits and vegetables** accounts for just over 12 percent of the resort's food cost. About 55 percent is produced and sourced locally, which is the highest share of local procurement in any category. Traditional heritage foods (banana, *bele*, breadfruit, cassava, coconut, *dalo*, *ota*, heart of palm, jack fruit, *rourou*⁵¹, sweet potato and *vudi*)

⁵⁰ Local name of a species of Spanish mackerel (*Acanthocybium solandri*).

⁵¹ The leaves of a *dalo* plant, used similarly to spinach.

make up about 23 percent of the locally sourced fruits and vegetables, or 1.5 percent of the total food cost. More than half of this expense goes towards cassava for staff meals. As mentioned above, the available data set is a snapshot of a particular month in 2017. As all chefs and the Purchasing Officer point out, what is locally available is in many cases dependent on the season. Fruits such as papaya or pineapple are available year-round. Tomatoes, avocado, mango, lettuces or cabbages, however, have their seasons. The data set does not reflect this. Generally speaking, the share of locally sourced fruits and vegetables is higher in the dryer and cooler season (May to October). Yet, the provided data shows a good average, according to the F&B Cost Controller. Items which are commonly imported are potatoes, onions, carrots, mushrooms, leek, green asparagus, parsley, rosemary, thyme, kiwifruit, nashi pears, oranges, apples, pears, strawberries and grapes. During the dryer season for example tomatoes, lettuces, fresh herbs, cabbages, capsicums and beans are available locally; during the off-season most of these would be imported.

Whether or not particular fruits or vegetables are sourced locally depends again on availability, quality, consistency and price. However, there are a number of items which are certainly only imported due to guest preferences. A case in point is the import of *orange* oranges, even during the time where local *green* oranges are available. The latter are equally tasty and juicy, but have a green skin and yellow flesh. "Our guests don't like this" the Pastry Chef tells me. For some of his desserts he felt the need to use *orange* oranges. Moreover, in a country which produces an abundance of mostly tropical fruits throughout the year, it strikes me that the Outrigger imports fruits such as apples, pears or kiwifruit, although in small amounts. A substantial amount of these apples was used for a bircher muesli for breakfast.

Dairy makes up almost the same share of food cost (12 %) as fruits and vegetables do, but shows a slightly lower ratio of local products (43 %). In principle, eggs, ice cream and most butter comes from local sources. All other products, mostly UHT milk, cheeses and yogurts, are sourced from overseas. The category of **frozen** goods is a mixed bag of cleaned and pre-cut fruits and vegetables as well as so-called 'convenience products', which are ready-to-use pastry, spring rolls, potato fries or seasoned meats. The category accounts for five percent of the resort's food bill and only a minor share of about 28 percent comes from local sources. A striking detail of this category is that 50 percent are made up of French fries, wedges and hash browns, imported as convenience products

from The Netherlands. It is difficult to tell whether the remaining products locally sourced were actually locally produced, or just procured via a local intermediary. In any case, the amounts are negligible. Finally, baking covers all goods used for baking and patisserie (e.g., flour, baking mixtures, baking soda etc.) and not covered in other categories such as dairy. Baking sums up to just about 3.6 percent of the total food bill. The only items sourced locally are brown sugar and a high-quality chocolate used only for special deserts in the IVI restaurant.

Overall, Outrigger imports about 65 percent of its entire food bill. Apart from the view on each category provided above, Table 6 explores the significance of individual food items. The table shows the ten most valuable individual imported items across all categories. Altogether the top ten items account for a third of the entire food bill. Eight items are animal products; two are vegetables. Quality beef cuts, bacon and lamb meat lead the list and sum up to just under 18 percent of total food cost.

Table 6: Outrigger’s ten most valuable imported food items

Rank	Imported item	Percentage of total food cost
1	Quality beef cuts	8.2 %
2	Lamb meat	5.3 %
3	Bacon	4.3 %
4	Prawns	2.9 %
5	Pork riblet	2.3 %
6	Tomatoes	1.7 %
7	Salmon	1.6 %
8	Potato fries (frozen)	1.6 %
9	Milk (UHT)	1.4 %
10	Whipping cream	1.2 %

Source: G. Laeis based on data provided by Outrigger Beach Resort Fiji, 2017

6.8 Decision-making on sourcing and the link to menus

The guests’ palate defines what chefs can put onto menus, as described above. From the resort’s perspective the decisions around sourcing are decided by the Executive Chef in consultation with the F&B Cost Controller and the Purchasing Department. The Executive Chef’s managerial performance is measured on his ability to meet an annual food

cost average of about 30 percent, meaning that the total monthly expenditure on food for the kitchen should not exceed 30 percent of the total revenue generated from selling food in restaurants, bars and through room service. Every menu and sourcing decision impacts this target. The heavy tax burden mentioned above by the Executive Assistant and the downwards pressure from guests certainly creates another push to constantly seek the most competitive offer while maintaining adequate quality. After all, the Executive Chef is also held responsible for guest comments on food quality. The Purchasing Manager, in contrast, presented himself to me as merely an executive agent of what is requested. "The kitchen will give us a request, a market list what they require in kilos, and our office buys it. ... Do as you are told!" he summed up. The F&B Cost Controller tracks the resort's food cost and advises the Executive Chef and Purchasing Manager on tender procedures and cost-saving opportunities.

There is a list of set suppliers that quote their prices for produce listed on the Outrigger's tender on a weekly basis. For example, three intermediaries / farmers tender for and deliver fruits and vegetables constantly during my time in the resort (they will be described in greater detail in Section 8.2). Whoever offers the best value-for-money receives the business on a per-item-basis. For example, one supplier might be chosen for his excellent pineapple and papaya, the other supplier might just be chosen for herbs and root crops and a third supplier might receive all other business. The tender system was put in place to inhibit the formation of monopolies, "to keep things fair, to keep things above water" (Executive Chef) and to drive competitive pressure on price and quality. Mostly the best offer wins, but the Executive Chef points out that he and the receiving officers will always have an eye on quality as well. If deliveries are below standard, the produce gets sent back and a different supplier receives the order. Aside from the set suppliers, anyone can potentially sell to the resort as long as they are able to deliver and can do so in a closed vehicle. Depending on the value, suppliers can even be paid in cash. Most deliveries, however, are paid via the Finance Department within 30 days. Even a fishing boat charter next door that takes tourists out on daytrips for deep sea fishing occasionally sells their surplus catch to the Outrigger. Also employees have sold to the resort before, as the Executive Chef recalls.

Whether or not to source locally is on the one hand a matter of supply in terms of availability, quality, quantity, price and reliability. A number of fruits and vegetables are only available seasonally. "When we have a local supply we use it, otherwise we import", the

Executive Chef summarises. Other foods may not be produced in Fiji at all (e.g., many of the baking and dry-store goods). Foods such as pineapple, papayas and honey are locally available year-round, in high quality and at a reasonable price. How the varying availability and quality of local produce is navigated through food procurement very much depends on the Executive Chef. He believes that it is because of him that the Outrigger sources a higher share of local products than many other resorts in Fiji. “It is because of my decisions. It is because of the produce I use.” One of the Junior Sous Chefs supports this. “An expat chef would try to use local stuff, but he won't have a full idea of how to use it. A local chef would have full knowledge of how to use things.” This argument may hold true for products unknown to Western chefs, such as *dalo*, *yams*, *moca* or *kai*. However, these made up only an insignificant amount of the menu, even at the Outrigger. The vast majority of the menu was Western or Asian dishes cooked with ingredients most expatriate chefs would be familiar with. Nevertheless, other chefs may decide to import more products rather than to procure locally.

Furthermore, a theme emerged about ‘need to have’ and ‘nice to have’ produce. In many conversations chefs complained about local supply being unreliable, changing in quantity and quality, being seasonal and under threat of being devastated by the next tropical cyclone. A number of items, however, came in only occasionally, such as guava, passion-fruit, or fresh yellow fin tuna. Chefs saw the irregular supply of these particular items as uncritical, though. Either they would simply replace an item that was frozen and in stock anyway (e.g., other kind of tuna), or they were not explicitly mentioned on any menu.

We don't commit [to provide] guava in our menu. You don't write ‘Guava Cheesecake’ or ‘Guava Soufflé’. Don't commit! Just use guava as a seasonal fruit. ... You could say ‘Island Fruit Platter’. When you have guava, you put guava; when you have passion fruit, you put passion fruit and so forth. (Executive Chef)

To some degree it is the way a menu is phrased that governs the dichotomy of ‘need to’ or ‘nice to have’. Items printed on fixed menus need to be available. Other foods may or may not be available. The main menus are changed only once a year which allows for little short-term flexibility.

Judging from my own industry experience, offering ‘daily specials’ on a blackboard or announced by waiters offers another way to negotiate irregular supply. Suddenly a big catch of *wahoo* fish is available at a competitive price – the next day the kitchen offers various daily specials featuring *wahoo*. During my time at the Outrigger only a local crustacean was featured as a seasonal ‘special from the grill’ at Sundowner. The Executive

Chef claimed that offering specials was common practice, but admittedly setting it up was a difficult undertaking. A special menu card would need to be printed, because putting it up on blackboards or having waiters announce specials apparently has not worked in the past. For designing and printing these cards the kitchen must liaise with the F&B Department, which allegedly proved time-consuming. Overall this venture seemed to be too much of a hassle for the Executive Chef to make for a flexible and efficient strategy to meet erratic supply. The Executive Assistant, however, admitted that there was probably room for improvement, but no one was really driving the idea. He also felt that the kitchen staff might not be up for the challenge of menu changes on short-notice.

They don't deal with change very well. You want to shift something from here to there, it's a big undertaking! It's not a dynamic workforce. ... You walk into the kitchen and say 'guys, we've got this tuna now and I want you to cook it!' That's like (pauses) the wheels will come off! You've seen Baravi – when it's pumping, it's pumping. You throw in a random special and it will be like a fridge just fell off the sky and hit the guys in the head.

The process of procuring food is impacted not only by the common issues of quantity, quality and reliability of supply, but equally so by human factors within the resort: the chefs' decisions on what goes onto menus in relation to guests' preferences, how menus are structured, phrased and communicated as well as the staff's skill level and ability to handle change. The latter is certainly a product of the cooks' level of experience and training, as alluded to in Section 6.3.4 above.

6.9 Working with local farmers – “It's the mind-set!”

Despite issues of consistency, quality and quantity of supply, the Executive Chef as well as the GM had tried to establish direct relationships with local farmers in the surrounding area in the past. “We want more of this. ... I'd love to have them here” the Executive Chef said. But, out of my conversations with him and the GM the theme of ‘we have tried, but it did not work’ emerged.

The Executive Chef had tried to explain to farmers what produce in which quality he needed and that they could sell directly to the resort. That way they could evade intermediaries and sell at a higher price. He realised, however, that even though he is a local himself with a family background in farming – “I come from a farming background. My grandparents, my uncles, they are farmers, so I [have] that understanding” – he could not manage to convince farmers.

I was so much trying to entice the farmers, talking to them – I know most of them – encourage them, ‘come, come, come!’ I talk to them in our own language, but no [it did not work]. [I’m] not [talking about] the new Chinese fellows, leave them aside. I’m talking about our original Fiji people. We go to Valley Road⁵², these guys are typical farmers. You see them any time of the day; their shirts are a little torn and dirty. For them, to come to a hotel to talk to a purchasing manager - *a manager!* - you need to be properly dressed. These farmers, they don’t have time to dress up and present them[selves]. They know their stuff, they are proud of what they do, but they are not sales people. (Executive Chef)

One of the three regular fruit and vegetable suppliers, however, was a local farmer and only occasionally acted as an intermediary as well (see Section 8.2 for further details). The Executive Chef believed that he was a special case. He was business savvy, had no issues with approaching a resort and had access to more resources than many other farmers, such as a computer and a closed delivery vehicle.

In the Executive Chef’s opinion the lack of education was probably the biggest issue in the local farming community. Not being able to use a computer, for instance, was one issue; but not being interested in opportunities to grow and sell new kinds of vegetables, was a more cultural issue, he believed. “It’s the mind-set!” he often claimed. This became a theme explaining why efforts fail to cooperate with local farmers due to cultural reasons. However, he was hopeful about the future, as he believed that now “farmers are getting [more] educated, facilities are coming in, so maybe down the road you will get more of them”, meaning educated farmers, who can supply directly to hotels.

The GM supported this view, but also had recollections of failed efforts to set up local supply. Under his predecessor’s management the Outrigger had tried to set up its own beef production on a share of the resort’s 350 acres of freehold land. The local *mataqali* participated in the farming to create a local food supply as well as jobs for their community. “They gave it a go, but unfortunately, once again, with Fiji custom, when the paramount chief⁵³ passed away, it was requested that they slaughter half the herd to give for the feast that was associated with that particular celebration”, the GM explained.

The Executive Chef’s and the GM’s example illustrate issues around directly cooperating with local farmers on the supply side. However, similar to the section above, they appear

⁵² The main road leading into the Sigatoka valley, a farming area also known as the ‘salad bowl of Fiji’.

⁵³ A *vanua* is headed by a paramount chief, the so-called *tui*.

to identify human and cultural factors, rather than mere economic failures. They determine why relationships are built, why farmers grow this rather than that, or what cultural prerequisites govern the local understanding of business conduct.

6.10 Summary

This Chapter has reported on a four-week period of participatory field research at the Outrigger resort, employing ethnographic methods. As part of the kitchen staff I experienced first-hand how cooks and chefs perceive and negotiate their every-day workspace, guest expectations, menus, food sourcing and managerial pressure.

The kitchen is staffed predominantly by Indo-Fijians. *ITaukei* are found in lower-level positions and in the stewarding department. Young cooks are mostly not as well-trained as senior chefs would like to see them. They have to endure pressure and might find the circumstances of their work challenging, for instance getting to and from work, language barriers and sometimes questionable collegial demeanour. They are trained in Western-centred cuisine, where their local food, may it be indigenous or Indo-Fijian, plays only a minor role. Senior chefs have received a significant part of their training in kitchens of internationally branded hotels and resorts under European executive chefs. At the Outrigger they are under managerial pressure to meet a 30 percent food cost target and please their guests, while having to train junior cooks and deal with a short supply of experienced chefs. Further, they have to negotiate a broad menu, a sometimes irregular local food supply, high tax rates and guest demands for familiar dishes at good value for money.

Menus are created only by the Executive Chef in consultation with his sous chefs. The most important factor in creating a menu is always guest preferences. Local dishes are often Westernised and, with only a very few exceptions, presented as special occasion food on two locally themed buffet nights. None of them were authentic in a sense that they reflected what I had experienced in an *iTaukei* village setting. Otherwise, a broad mixture of Western and Asian dishes governs the menus. The chefs feel that continental breakfast, fish and chips, burgers, sandwiches, pizzas, high-quality steaks and seafood are indispensable items that they need to offer. Overall, the Outrigger has a static menu structure that does not easily allow for short-term changes. On the one hand this is due to guest expectations for continuously available dishes. On the other hand it is a suitable system

for a workforce suffering from a sometimes rapid staff turnover, insufficient training and apprehension to sudden changes of their routine.

In terms of local food, chefs realised that guests show contradictory behaviour. They ask for local dishes, but “when they pay money, they want to have the things that they are comfortable eating” (Executive Chef). This prerequisite reflects in the resort’s purchasing figures. Meat accounts for the highest share of food cost. Locally produced items make up just 35 percent of all ingredients used. Fruits and vegetables provide the highest share of locally sourced produce, however, only make up about seven percent of the entire food cost.

In essence, produce is imported due to three reasons: (1) it is not available locally; (2) if available, the quantity and quality is inconsistent; or (3) local produce does not match the customers’ taste preferences. These issues give way to the fact that items on the resort’s menus are mostly imported. Yet, some items, such as seasonal fruits or particular fish, may or may not be sourced locally, depending on availability. The cooperation with local intermediaries (of which one was a farmer) through a tender system seemed to be reliable for the resort. Direct engagement with food producers, however, was reportedly troublesome due to cultural differences.

7 Perspectives from the Wider Resort Industry and Tourism Stakeholders

7.1 Introduction

This second findings chapter contrasts the Outrigger case study presented above with perspectives from the local resort industry and wider tourism stakeholders in Fiji. This contextualises the Outrigger case study and triangulates its findings. Firstly, executive chefs, cooks and general managers (GM) from nine other Fijian resorts, hotels and restaurants were visited and interviewed (see Table 7). The interviewees were contacted via phone or email prior to the interview and received an information sheet introducing the research project, including a participant consent form. Some interviewees agreed to have their name and hotel brand published, others did not. Most interviewees, however, were very open and might have mentioned sensitive information. Therefore, their names are replaced by non-gender-specific synonyms. All interviews were semi-structured, based on six to eight guiding topics (Appendix A) and accompanied by a tour of the given property. In order to compare data with that provided in the Outrigger case study, the majority of interviews were conducted with executive chefs of resorts similar to the Outrigger (interviews 10-13). The perspectives of upmarket city-based business hotels are presented in interviews 14 and 15. Interviews 16 and 17 add the views of a small boutique⁵⁴ resort and an independent restaurant.

To contextualise the previous observations within the larger tourism environment, Fiji's Director of Tourism from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT), the President of the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association (FHTA) and a Senior Lecturer of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the University of the South Pacific were interviewed (Table 8). An interview with the Head of Campus of the local technical college has already been mentioned in Subsection 6.3.4 above.

Overall this chapter shows how similar upmarket and large-scale resorts in Fiji are in terms of their menus, procurement patterns and viewpoints of executive chefs on local

⁵⁴ In hospitality terms, 'boutique' often refers to a small-scale and upmarket operation that caters to a niche market.

sourcing and guest preferences. In contrast, this chapter will also present evidence that small boutique resorts can be rather different in their impact on local food producers and that the conviction of executive chefs seem to make a significant difference in how food is procured. In so far, this chapter provides evidence of how mass-tourism resorts in Fiji fare in terms of the CCD framework. Their influence on local communities is largely exerted through immanent flows or facilitated linkages by third parties. Resort corporations do not have structured food-led community development approaches on their agendas. Furthermore, this chapter shows for the chefs’ perspectives, how Fijian farmers and other food producers and suppliers deal with the resort market, which adds to a later discussion on agency of local actors in the agriculture-tourism interface.

Table 7: Coral Coast hotels and restaurant interviewees

#	Interviewees (‘Synonym’, Position)	Workplace	Marketed as
10	‘Jeff’, Executive Chef	5* beach resort	International chain
11	‘Lukas’, Executive Chef	5* beach resort	International chain
12	‘Paul’, Executive Chef	5* beach resort complex (2 resorts)	International chain
13	‘Jack’, Executive Chef	4* beach resort	International chain
14	‘Mark’, Executive Chef ‘Eddy’, Cook ‘Philip’, GM	5* city hotel	Individual brand
15	‘Peter’, Executive Chef	4* city hotel	International chain
16	‘Martin’, Executive Chef ‘Chris’, GM & owner	2 boutique resorts	Individual brand
17	‘Miles’, Executive Chef	Individual restaurant	Individual brand

Table 8: Tourism industry stakeholder interviewees

#	Institution	Interviewee (Name, Title)
18	Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association (FHTA)	Mr. Dixon Seeto, President

19	Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT), Department of Tourism	Ms. Nanise Masau, Director Tourism
20	University of the South Pacific, School of Tourism and Hospitality Management	Dr. Dawn Gibson, Senior Lecturer
21	Technical College of Fiji, Nadroga-Navosa	Mr. Sunil Narayan, Head of Campus

7.2 The typology of resorts

During the field trip I approached seven four- to five-star large-scale and internationally branded beach-side resorts between Nadi and Suva, one of which, the Outrigger, was my case study. Of the six remaining, five agreed to be interviewed (see Table 7, interviews 10-13). The properties varied in terms of architecture and atmosphere. However, the facilities and services they provided were very comparable. All five-star resorts offer more than 200 rooms, but mostly about 250. A large all-day-dining restaurant offers breakfast and buffet or live-station dinners. A pool-side bar / restaurant offers casual lunch and dinner options, mostly geared towards fast-food. A small fine-dining restaurant has a fusion of ‘local’ and ‘international’ cuisine on the menu; a coffee shop, deli or ‘bakery’ offers a range of sweet and savoury pastries and deli food. Larger resorts commonly offer one more lunch / dinner option, such as a restaurant with an ‘original’ pizza oven, a grill / seafood restaurant, or a restaurant dedicated to a particular cuisine, for instance Italian or Japanese. An evening cocktail bar as well as a spa bar are obligatory as well.

The menus mainly serve what emerged in the Outrigger case study as ‘hotel food’ – everything known to and beloved by ‘the Western palate’. The ‘continental breakfast buffet’ is the most standardised offer of them all (see description of the Outrigger’s breakfast in Section 6.4). During the rest of the day the entire fast-food range of burgers, sandwiches, wraps, fish and chips and so forth is available. More substantial menu items include steaks, pasta, pizza, roasts, salads, a seafood buffet and a hint of south-east-Asian cuisine (mostly Thai or Vietnamese). Lastly, a selected choice of ‘local cuisine’ is available mostly in three forms: firstly, as weekly ‘island night shows’ serving supposedly ‘traditional’ or ‘authentic’ *lovo* food; secondly, as highlighted local produce and recipe-concepts in the fine-dining restaurant; lastly, as *kokoda* on almost any kind of menu. The four-star resort (see Interview 13) was essentially just a smaller version of this set up. It did not have the variety of F&B outlets. It lacked a fine-dining restaurant, but its menus nevertheless portrayed a similar culinary width: continental breakfast buffet, fast food lunch, Western classics, pizzas, steaks, and seafood, a few Asian dishes and – once a

week – an ‘island night’. The field visits to all upmarket beach-side resorts mentioned in Table 7 revealed that their appearances might differ, but their F&B offers are very similar.

7.3 Personal backgrounds and cooking styles

The majority of the interviewed executive chefs were expatriates. Two, however, were Fijian: chef Jeff was in charge of a large five-star beach resort and chef Martin managed the small kitchen team of the boutique resort. Yet, except for chef Martin, all chefs had been trained either overseas in large hotels, mostly under European kitchen management, or in internationally managed resorts in Fiji. Their basis was always central European cuisine, as best described by chef Miles:

I've worked with a whole different myriad of chefs – a Moroccan chef, a Japanese chef, a French, an Italian – so [my menu] is a melting pot of all those. ... I'm old school as well as new school. Traditional French foundation and then [I] just mix in the cultures as I go on.

Chef Martin, in contrast, had only worked at one Fijian resort, under a Fijian head chef, and had never been employed outside of Fiji.

The ‘born in... raised in...’ theme from the Outrigger appeared across the interviews. The foundation of every chef’s skill set, except for chef Martin, was based on European, and mostly French, cuisine, received from training under European chefs. To this end, I wondered whether the strong Western influence on chefs was inhibiting a creative and appreciative engagement with traditional Fijian cuisine, just as the Outrigger’s Executive Chef had pointed out. Dr. Gibson from the University of the South Pacific supported this view:

[T]hey were always taught that the outside is better. It's only changing now, slowly, that we have an emergence of the *Pacific cuisine*. But, they actually get the younger ones to try and do this, but even their culture is changing now and they are becoming more Westernised and they are not eating anymore what their parents were eating. The Fijian have lots of different ways to prepare food, so do the Indians; incredible dishes. But, they look at it and think 'why would anyone want to eat this?'

Additionally, she pointed out, local food was not a major topic on the curricula of Fijian training courses for chefs. “The Pacific food section is just like a week, maybe.”

Nevertheless, all chefs knew essential Fijian recipes, for example *palusami*, *kokoda* and *vakalolo*. Moreover, many showed an interest in local cuisine. Dr. Gibson did not feel that this translated into practice, however. In her experience, expatriate chefs had little interest in local food. Chef Jack, nonetheless, claimed it took him about six months to get to know local produce and learn how to use it. Now, he thought, he knew his way around

Indo-Fijian and *iTaukei* dishes. Chef Miles realised that “to learn local dishes is hard ... and to learn the recipe you've got to get into the village and cook with the Mum in her kitchen.” He had made a deal with the local “church ladies” to teach them Western recipes and, in return, be taught indigenous Fijian cooking.

7.4 The menus

7.4.1 The hotel food paradigm – “You can’t touch those burgers!”

The chefs I talked to had a wide variety of personal backgrounds and culinary experiences throughout their careers. At the same time, however, a theme that previously emerged strongly with chefs at the Outrigger came up again: ‘You can’t go without...’. The imperative of “something that the majority loves, like burgers and fish and chips” was unmistakable: “they have to stay on the menu!” (chef Jeff). Chef Mark served very creative contemporary dishes in his fine-dining restaurant, yet he realised that “you can’t touch those burgers!” Regarding breakfast, every chef was fond of the locally grown tropical fruits, but also admitted that they needed to import apples, pears and (orange) oranges as well. Guests demanded them. Salmon and green lipped mussels, mostly imported from New Zealand, were found on all menus, too. Chef Peter assured me that “yes, you need [salmon] in this hotel, because ... overseas people [are] staying with us and you need to provide some kind of food they know. You cannot give them just *wahoo* and so forth.” Within all internationally managed resorts, city hotels and the restaurant the menu was built upon a variation of the ‘hotel food’ theme – burgers, sandwiches, pastas, pizzas, fish and chips and steaks. When discussing why these items were on the menu, chefs always used terms such as “you need to have...”. No matter where chefs came from or what they had experienced in their careers, they all concurred that these items are a non-negotiable part of a hotel menu.

This attitude also partly manifested in brand standards⁵⁵. The resort and hotel chefs mostly operated under North American hotel brands. In the cases of chefs Peter and Jack, restaurant menu standards asked for a burger, a club sandwich, a particular breakfast buffet and

⁵⁵ A set of standards that define how a particular hotel brand operates. This can include, for example, standards for the design of rooms, the uniforms of employees, the way guests are addressed, which items have to be on a menu, how they are presented and how / from whom food is procured. Such standards

a maximum number of vegetarian dishes and sandwiches to be available on the menus. However, these standards were not pointed out as a limitation by chefs, as they felt they still had sufficient creative freedom.

Apart from those ‘need to have’ items, chefs strived to satisfy “every taste” (chef Jack). At the Outrigger the Executive Assistant noted with respect to Baravi that “this place tries to be everything to everyone” (Section 6.4). When looking at the full range of food offered at the Outrigger, however, it seemed that this was just as true for the entire resort’s food concept. The theme of ‘we’ve got everything’ certainly was strong among all executive chefs.

[We’ve got] everything! So there is a Chinese menu, an Asian menu ...; there is a menu with burgers and tapas and then there is [a grill restaurant] that does anything from pizza down to steaks. We’ve got fine dining; the club does canapes, breakfast, high tea and cocktails. (Chef Lukas)

The chefs wanted “to please a lot of cultures” (chef Mark). In this sense, not only key items such as burgers, fish and chips and steaks are non-negotiable; a broad culinary variety of menus is important as well. However, only those key items generated the majority of revenue. “That’s it! That’s what moves!” (chef Lukas). This matched precisely my, as well as the Executive Assistant’s, observations at the Outrigger (compare Section 6.4).

On average, menus were changed once or twice a year and whatever was on the menu needed to be available at all times, just as in the Outrigger. Otherwise, chefs knew they would get in trouble. “I can’t say ‘sorry, tonight I don’t have this and that’” (chef Peter). This particular combination of certain dishes that everyone agreed were necessary for a menu and the ambition to satisfy every taste was what led chef Lukas to the conclusion that essentially “everybody is doing the same thing here.” Whether it was the beach-side resorts, the city hotels or the independent restaurant – everyone served the same Western staples, alongside a brief selection of localised food as well as other international dishes. Recipes and quality varied and sometimes there were additional creative fusion or country-specific cuisines available. But, essentially, as also Dr. Gibson and Mr. Seeto, President of the FHTA, agreed, everyone served predominantly ‘hotel food’.

aim to establish an internationally recognisable hotel product that is predictable and therefore reliable choice for guests.

The only exceptions to this paradigm were the cases of chef Martin and GM Chris. Both grew up in Fiji and Chris owned and operated two boutique resorts. Their menus were almost entirely based on local Fijian cuisine. Chef Martin went to the markets in Nadi and Lautoka, had a range of local suppliers and served a menu of three entrées, three main courses and three desserts that changed every three days. Guests would find dishes such as a “Seafood Banana Cocktail” or a “Grilled Fillet of Fish with Coconut and Spicy Coriander Sauce”. When asked why he did not have standard ‘hotel food’ on his menus, GM Chris immediately emphasised that he “would *never* sell that!” He believed that his resorts attracted a different kind of clientele than the large multinationals.

[For] the people that stay with us, food is a very, very important part of their travel. They won't remember the cotton of their sheets, what brand of towels they used, whether it was a travertine bathroom or not. My clients will remember the food. They come because of the food.

He experienced that guests would hardly ever ask for anything like a burger. If they did, he would say “you'll have to wait 24 hours. I have to mince the meat and I have to make the bun!” He strongly rejected the notion that a resort needed to fulfil their guests’ every wish. GM Chris wondered, however, how one could “ever assess a client's entitlement?” – especially of those guests paying several hundred dollars per night. To this end he believed that particular kinds of resorts attracted particular guests, who in turn appreciated certain kinds of food, mostly what they felt was ‘comfort food’. “For a lot of people, eating fish and chips is the best food possible. And that’s why Outrigger serves the amount of fish and chips it does.” This was, however, not the kind of clientele he was marketing his resort to. As an entrepreneur, he realised how important it was for resorts to be very clear about what is and what is not available. Guests would complain heavily otherwise – “if you just set yourself up as a target, they are going to shoot you down!” The small-scale boutique resort certainly stood out from all other resorts covered in this research.

7.4.2 Local produce – “Why buy spinach?”

Despite the ubiquitous presence of Western dishes, all chefs integrate local produce into their menus. They followed the same three strategies as I had observed at the Outrigger (see Section 6.4). Predominantly, chefs either substituted an otherwise imported item with a local product, or they created a dish that was similar in concept to a Western dish, but

used local products instead. The third option, offering local dishes made from local produce, was mostly either a case of tokenistic ‘island night’ buffets or *kokoda* as a salad option.

“Why buy spinach?” chef Jack pondered, for example. “I don't buy spinach anymore. I buy *moca*.” It took him a while to come to this conclusion after having moved to Fiji. He pointed out that he had been very used to the Australian market, where he had worked previously – “that’s all I knew!” Chef Lukas liked to garnish his dishes with roasted coconut shavings or burnt raw sugar cane. Chefs Martin and Miles had individually developed recipes for Italian gnocchi, which used in parts *dalo* or *uto*⁵⁶ as a substitute for potatoes. Chef Mark summarised what most chefs claimed they were doing: “you work with local ingredients, but you build modern Australian, New Zealand or even European cuisine into it.” From what I observed, however, this was predominantly done in fine-dining restaurants, which were similar to Outrigger’s IVI restaurant, or for special occasion foods (particular buffets, events, catering contracts, etc.). Exceptions were chef Martin, as described above, and chef Miles. His menu featured a number of dishes that creatively joined Fijian produce and recipes with other international cuisines. A case in point was his “Season market fish” (Picture 14), which was a local fish fillet baked with a crust of freshly grated coconut and spices, a bed of *ota*, accompanied by a *vudi vakasoso* and served with a caper berry burre noisette⁵⁷ sauce. “So there is a bit of French and mainly Fijian”, he explained. Other examples on his menu included a “Tropical Coconut Salad” and the “Fijian Ocean Trio”. He admitted, though, that these kinds of dishes were not his best-selling items, just as all chefs agreed that the local ‘island night’ buffets were never the most popular buffet nights.

⁵⁶ Breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis*) (Jansen et al., 1990).

⁵⁷ Engl.: brown butter; butter heated until its milk solids turn brown and acquire a nutty taste and golden colour.

Picture 14: Chef Miles's "Season market fish"



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Just as the Outrigger's Executive Chef had pointed out, chef Jack emphasised as well that to be able to merge different cuisines and present dishes appealingly, one would

still need a classically trained person to understand ingredients ... from a chef's perspective of structuring. You can't do a mushroom sauce without sautéing the onion first. You can't put the cream in at the beginning. There is always a way to put things.

'Classically trained' in this respect refers to European standard cooking skills. Chef Mark added that not only cooks would need to be well-qualified, but "it also depends on the waiters how educated they are on the menu so that they can explain [the menu]." Given the fact that most service staff are local, it did not seem that knowledge about local produce would be a significant issue.

Interestingly, none of the interviewees, except for chef Martin, ran a mainly Fijian-food-based restaurant. When confronted with that fact, chefs had various explanations why this was the case: the lack of reliable supply, guests would not want it or they did not have enough staff. Chef Jack expanded on the latter argument:

I can't afford to have a farm-to-fork menu. I could do it, but right now that means I would have to be doing that only. From going to the market, picking up the food, creating menus, costing the menu, giving it to the F&B Manager to put it into the system, training the staff and so forth. I'd need to employ someone who does only that. ... It is feasible, but it is a position that needs to be created.

He assumed that such a restaurant would be an addition to his existing restaurants. All others would need to be run as well, which was already a six-day job for him. Chef Martin and his GM Chris, on the other side, managed a three-day set menu and its local sourcing without any issues. "For [Martin] it's a walk in the park. [He] knows all those ingredients"

(GM Chris). It was certainly feasible, but seemed to depend on the type of resort, its number of restaurants and, not least of all, its clientele. After all, chef Martin served around ten guests per night in one restaurant of a small boutique resort.

At an industry-wide level the FHTA encouraged their members to use more local produce as well. They regularly ran Fiji-wide culinary competitions in which chefs had to come up with creative dishes based on local produce. However, Mr. Seeto summarised that the available creativity rarely translates into actual menus: “I've seen what these guys have produced in the Chef's Competition and it looks good, but I don't see these things being offered in those restaurants.”

7.4.3 Guest expectations of ‘local cuisine’ – “It has to be there!”

Just as in the Outrigger, all chefs from the larger hotels and resorts concurred that guests displayed a contradictory behaviour towards Fijian cuisine. Guests expressed the wish to eat local food, but essentially, everyone ate what they were familiar with. Local food was enjoyed once or twice a week, if at all. Mr. Seeto agreed: “people don't come here for the food experience.” ‘Local cuisine’, in the sense of *iTaukei* and Indo-Fijian dishes, was compartmentalised to weekly island buffets and their associated entertainment programmes. Chefs pointed out that whether or not these ‘island night shows’ were popular, depended on how well the entertainment team of the resort advertised it to their guests. Resorts offered a cultural experience package to their guests, as chef Jack described.

It's not going to be Alain Ducasse⁵⁸, right? But, you are going to enjoy your meal, because in the afternoon you went to the pool with the kids and there was someone [from the resort] who told you about [the *lovo*] and its history, ancestral rights and traditions. ... [You] have guys in activities going ‘yeah, a hundred years ago it was you inside [the *lovo*]!’, so there is a theatrical bit to it and that's very important. And you know what, you can eat shit on a plate, as long as it's well presented and well marketed.

In the experience of chefs, Fijian local food needed to be actively marketed to tourists. On its own, it did not seem to be appealing enough. Another critical observation was that three chefs regarded Fijian cuisine as not attractive. Authentic *iTaukei* cuisine was not considered tasteful, elaborate or visually appealing. It was, according to chef Miles, “a

⁵⁸ The first French chef being awarded three stars by the Guide Michelin for each of his three restaurants simultaneously. He is regarded for the beauty and simplicity of his cooking.

pile of mush” and the question for him was “how do I make this look good?” Also, guests complained to chef Lukas that the local food tasted bland. “But that's how it's cooked”, he argued, and his local cooks refused to change the recipes, because they were adamant about how their food was supposed to be served.

Everyone seemed to be “doing Fiji food because it [was] convenient and it [was] going to attract the tourists” (chef Jack). It served the tourists’ expectation and was not difficult to prepare. “Real Fiji food”, however, was “outside, out there in the village”, chefs Miles and Jack agreed. Nevertheless, “the *lovo* has to be there, because it is a gimmick” (chef Jack) so that tourists can “try once, maybe twice. The rest is burgers, pizzas, fish and chips!” chef Paul explained. “It’s not that people really want to go and eat Fijian a lot, they don’t.” The theme of local cuisine being compartmentalised into a tokenistic ‘island night show’ emerged across all interviews, except for the boutique resort. Resorts are essentially service providers meeting the particular expectations of tourists. Consequently, they serve what guests demand. Mr. Seeto summarised this industry credo: “In our hotels, the clients are king. Anything they want”, because “the day you force your customers, is the day you're going to die!”

In contrast, Ms. Masau, Director of Tourism at the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT), believed that the Fijian tourism landscape had not “tapped into the potential of food tourism, yet.” The value of this particular kind of tourism to Fiji has always been acknowledged by the government, she pointed out, but it has never been tackled as a distinct tourism segment. On the other side, Dr. Gibson believed that food tourism, or “culinary tourism” as she termed it, was on the rise in Fiji and elsewhere in the South Pacific. Tourists were willing to pay good money for an authentic food experience, such as foraging, fishing, preparing, cooking and eating with the locals. She said what is holding the development back was that many locals did not believe that tourists would be interested in what they thought of as daily routine. “It's hard to believe when it's yours. This group of people comes and pays all that money to do things that you've done all your life.” It is questionable, however, if foraging, fishing and eating with the locals would be a feasible concept for large-scale tourism in upmarket resorts.

Once again, the only exceptions were chef Martin and GM Chris. “Stop trying to make local food sexy. Local food *is* sexy! ... Just cook it, for Christ sake!” (GM Chris). They never did a *lovo*. GM Chris, in contrast to all interviewees from other resorts, was fond

of the fact that he could offer a different taste experience and he was happy to confront his guests with this attitude.

I like the fact that it's different, that it tastes different to the beef that I can get at the top-of-the-town in London. I like the taste of local beef and I tell people that. This is local beef and it's different! You are not paying £42 for it; you are paying FJ\$38 Fijian and therein lays the difference.

7.5 Kitchen staff

The issues concerning kitchen staff that came out of my observations at the Outrigger were supported by most other interviewees. Chef Martin and GM Chris were the only exceptions. On the whole, kitchen teams are mostly Indo-Fijian and 'good chefs were hard to find'. Both themes were brought up time and again. Chef Lukas proposed an explanation for why so few *iTaukei* move up into higher positions. "They are not aggressive enough. Some of them are, sure, but they [would rather] keep quiet." He thought this was a culturally engrained attitude. Chef Jack claimed that frequently Fijians become chefs because they saw it as a way to easily emigrate. "They want to get out! Everyone wants to get out." Chef Miles agreed. In essence, executive chefs focused on taking on young trainees. They felt that the good ones would most likely leave or emigrate later on. The cooks that were left were described by chefs Lukas, Paul and Peter as mostly unmotivated and not highly skilled individuals. "They are not very motivated and I think some of them just do it because it's a job, it's not a passion. And chefs are in demand in this country, because here are so many resorts opening" (chef Lukas). There was a sense of frustration amongst many chefs. Chef Peter, however, did not think much of it. To him this was just a fact of the industry, whether in Fiji or elsewhere. "I think it's everywhere the same thing. ... You just take it. This is part of the game."

The abuse of *kava* was an issue that surfaced, which had not been raised during the case study at the Outrigger. Not many chefs wanted to comment on this, but one chef believed that "it's one of the things that's holding [the development of kitchens in Fiji] back. When they drink [*kava*], they [i.e. chefs or cooks] don't bother about anything. That makes people very slow." I only observed two cases at the Outrigger, where employees turned up for work appearing to be hungover. They admitted to having had *kava* the night before and felt sleepy and unmotivated. Despite these cases, the enjoyment of *kava* was generally a very common topic of discussion and amusement amongst my colleagues. Overall, the

(non-)availability of skilled labour and their conduct was a very present issue, yet, an issue many chefs did not comment on easily.

7.6 Impediments to the creativity of executive chefs

When I asked chef Paul whether he thought that the issues of finding, training, retaining and managing his staff – amongst all other duties of an executive chef – was in any way inhibiting his creative encounter with local cuisine, he had an interesting viewpoint:

It is *very hard* to work here. You get mentally so stressed and so pressurised to run the operation, because you don't have a strong team on the floor. [Meanwhile,] you are working and have to concentrate to get the [right] result for the company, because otherwise they will kick you out. So that makes it harder here to go and spend more time to do all these things. That's another reason that I see why we don't see this kind of development here. When chefs come they get so busy with organising their own resources and operations, so they don't have the energy to [creatively engage with new ideas and cuisines].

Chef Paul was responsible for two large-scale resorts and was certainly under considerable management pressure. However, this argument summarises the predicament which some of the hotel and resort executive chefs find themselves in. It also speaks of the pressure those chefs face in terms of meeting operational efficiency and financial targets of multinational companies.

7.7 Sourcing

The issues of inconsistent quality and quantity of supply discussed in the literature review were brought up by chefs time and again. “The main issue with all the products in Fiji is consistency. For everything it is” (chef Jack). However, chefs contextualised these known issues in the Fijian environment and some issues prevailed more than others. The most common themes are described below.

7.7.1 Local versus imported

In the Outrigger case study, the local procurement options, guest expectations and the chefs' abilities to negotiate this space were epitomised in a numeric way by the resort's purchasing data described in Section 6.7. Section 7.4 alluded to the similarity in the F&B offers and clientele of all other large-scale resorts I talked to. Even though no other resort provided a detailed purchasing spreadsheet, chef Paul's description of how he sourced

suggested that the ratio of imported to local food by category seems to be similar to the Outrigger. Chef Paul was responsible for two large internationally branded resorts. For his meat, only five percent of beef, 30 to 40 percent of pork and 80 percent of poultry were sourced locally (Outrigger: 4 %, 21 % and 99 %, respectively). Fish and seafood, he believed, were 40 to 50 percent local (Outrigger: 51 %). About 40 percent of fruits and vegetables came from local sources (Outrigger: 55 %), but all dairy products, except for yogurt, were imported⁵⁹. For his bakery he sourced only a few products locally (Outrigger: 4 %). On dry goods he could not comment. Other chefs of large resorts and hotels did not answer quite as comprehensively, but commented on some details of their sourcing. For example, quality beef cuts, salmon, prawns, mussels, apples, oranges, pears and most bakery products were commonly imported. The only exception, again, was chef Martin. “I get whatever I want [locally].”

The urge to source particular fruits, vegetables and herbs at a high quality vis-à-vis the lacking local supply options drove two resorts to establish their own farms. Chef Jeff had recently initiated a small, but growing, horticultural farm on his resort grounds. Chef Paul’s resort operated a larger farm close by. Mainly herbs, salads and baby vegetables were sourced from the farm. Both chefs seemed excited about the idea as such, liked to showcase the farms to their guests and realised that it also made sense economically.

Local supply seemed to be geographically fragmented. Chef Lukas, based not far from Sigatoka, mentioned he sourced all his prawns, in fact 90 percent of his seafood, locally. Chef Paul from a large resort near Nadi was adamant about the fact that “there are no local prawns! Oysters? Nothing!” Apparently chef Lukas also knew a farmer who supplied him with cherry tomatoes, “in beautiful little punnets. Fresh, fresh, fresh!” Outrigger’s Executive Chef, who thought the local farmers were ‘his people’, was not able to source cherry tomatoes locally. Chef Lukas seemed to be very well connected and claimed that he could source almost anything locally.

I think it is how you make friends with everybody and how your reputation is with them. You can pretty much get anything at a decent price. Also, you can get a decent quality, but then they look after you only. So that's how I made friends, especially down Sigatoka way. Beautiful farms over there. So I look after them quite a bit. ...

⁵⁹ Incomparable to the Outrigger figures. The amount of yogurt and if eggs are included in this category is unknown.

Strawberries are no problem. One guy is growing them for me, no issues. (Chef Lukas)

‘Looking after’ local producers meant for chefs Lukas and Mark that they constantly bought their produce, even when the quality, quantity or price was not what they expected. On the other side, chefs had varying experiences with the same suppliers. For some, a particular supplier was very reliable; for others, the same company was not consistent at all. For most chefs, their ability to source locally depended on their relationship, a theme that was further supported by how chefs supported particular farmers above and beyond buying their produce (see Section 7.7.3). A lot of food is available, mostly in smaller quantities, but one needs to have a good relationship with the given farmers. For some other chefs, like Jack and Miles, it seemed to rather be a question of the varying quantities they required. Mr. Seeto concluded that the hotel industry needs large-scale commercial farmers. This would bring “economies of scale and surety of supply”. It would also help with standardised delivery processes to the resorts. He emphasised that it was not the role of resorts to “run a logistics company” in order to source locally.

Chefs also complained that products of A-grade quality were often exported and hardly available locally. This pertained to fruits and vegetables as well as fish and seafood. Chef Jeff had received B-grade eggplants, as he told me, and had realised only later there were A-grade products at all, but they were exported, “because it pays a better price.” The same issue was mentioned numerous times with respect to fish. “The people overseas are willing to pay big dollars for quality of fish. Here? No!” (chef Peter). Mr. Seeto realised that with respect to vegetables, Fiji presented a contradictory situation: “We import a lot of those vegetables and things like this, but we also export a lot of vegetables as well. There seems to be a mismatch somewhere.”

Even though many chefs had successful direct relationships to particular local farmers, they believed that many other farmers were not as developed as they potentially could be from their perspective. The Outrigger’s Executive Chef referred to this issue as “the mind-set” of local farmers, implying a perceived unwillingness to try new crops, market them to resorts and develop their agricultural practices further. Two other chefs simply believed that some farmers were lazy. Chef Peter thought it was due to the kind of agriculture the farmers were used to. “*Dalo*, cassava – you just stick it in the ground and it grows!” Many local farmers, whether *iTaukei* or Indo-Fijian, would mostly grow only their own culturally embedded food. Anything else “they don’t trust”, Dr. Gibson believed. Ms. Masau

agreed and added that this was the case “because they are so used to being subsistence [farmers] and not really being on the commercial side.” If one wanted to change this, one had to change the mind-set and attitude of the farmers first, chef Peter thought. He realised that Fiji’s history had a role to play in this context as well. “No one has taught them actually how to grow something else. They need to learn.” Chef Paul added to this point that many Indo-Fijian farmers were only used to growing sugar cane. “They think nothing else is possible.”

With respect to the *iTaukei*, GM Chris added that they commonly only plant a very specific set of crops: *dalo*, yam, cassava, *vudi*, banana and *bele*⁶⁰. “Everything else that is sold by *iTaukei* is what you gather. They are not the best gardeners” he believed. He suggested it was not in their culture to engage in much horticulture. Their land provided things like breadfruit, *moca*, water cress and *ota*, for example. In many cases even coconuts, essential to Fijian cuisine, were gathered rather than systematically planted. However, GM Chris also realised that this was changing now. *iTaukei* were becoming more interested in gardening, but it was “a new thing”. The theme of ‘it’s the mind-set’ was hereby put into a cultural backdrop of Fiji’s history and culture.

As already alluded to in the Menu section above, the taste preferences of guests decide for some products, what needs to be imported. The local beef had “a funny taste. Peoples palates aren’t used to it” (chef Lukas). Guests also complained about Fijian milk, “about the taste and they don’t like it in coffee”, chef Paul mentioned. Regarding beef not everyone agreed. Chef Miles seemed happy with what he used, but he did not use only local beef, but also from Australia and New Zealand.

Whether you can source a lot of your ingredients locally was a question of the type of restaurant for chef Jack. In his experience, fine-dining required more imports. This was, however, not the case at the Outrigger, where IVI was one of the most locally integrated dining options. Chef Lukas’ fine-dining restaurant was set up similarly to IVI, judging by the menu. Chef Jack and Dr. Gibson also believed that local menus are easier to manage in small restaurants and resorts, because the quantities they required were easier to source locally consistently. Chef Martin’s small restaurant was a positive example of this argument. He could respond to changes in supply quickly, did not need large quantities and

⁶⁰ *Hibiscus manihot*, used similarly to spinach (Jansen et al., 1990).

so local supply would always be sufficient. Overall, “there is no reason why your creativity stops where local food starts” chef Jack contemplated, but this did not seem to hold true for large restaurants with fixed menus and guest expectations of internationally branded resorts. A theme emerged that ‘small resorts are more locally integrated’, because, firstly, their scale of operation matched the scale of the local producers and, secondly, they were easier to market to a particular clientele.

Brand standards were a limiting factor in terms of prescribed menu items, but also with respect to procurement procedures. Chef Jack realised that his brand standards for food procurement might not fit the Fijian market. “We can't order without the [computer-based] system. So [if] the farmer doesn't have fax or email, it makes it very hard for us.” All ordering processes needed to be documented. Placing orders just via phone or paying cash was not well-received by his superiors. It opened up opportunities for fraud and made the ordering process less controllable.

We need to log into a purchasing system – we use the American system over here, which is a bit of a nightmare – [then] we have to create a product, get the quotes, put it in, it goes to Singapore, comes back after 72 hours and *then* we can start ordering.

It seemed as if the imposition of these standards held some chefs back from sourcing from farmers, who did not have any means of online communication or, in some cases, not even a bank account. Some chefs, however, knowingly disregarded these standards. Chef Peter, for example, bent the regulations set forth by his company. Every week he spent about FJ\$3,000 (≈US\$1,400) in cash with small-scale suppliers in the local market. He also sourced Fijian coffee beans rather than his company’s prescribed international brand. “One day [my company] will tell me to stop, I know that,” he said with a chuckle. Chef Lukas sometimes bought vegetables “off the back of a van”, alluding to the fact that he was willing to buy under almost any circumstances, as long as quality and price were right. Most chefs had at least some room to manoeuvre around company standards, but nevertheless, standards certainly impeded the ease of doing business with local small-scale suppliers.

Business misconduct came up in four interviews. Chef Jack knew purchasing managers that he thought were “corrupted to the bone.” Suppliers would bribe purchasing managers so that they could sell goods which were wrongly declared, for instance halal meat which was in fact not halal. Chef Miles had to force his purchasing manager to buy from other suppliers than those he ‘preferred’. Dr. Gibson stated that “within the intermediaries there

was a lot of bribery”, which drove small suppliers and farmers out of business, because they were not be able to tender to hotels. The FHTA found this to be a serious issue and Mr. Seeto urged the government to better control suppliers.

Concerns about food safety of local produce were mentioned a number of times, especially with regards to perishable seafood and fish. Chefs Peter and Jack were cautious of local seafood and fish suppliers. “I don't know where it's coming from. And you have to be very careful, especially as an international chain. I don't want to end up with food poisoning for 120 guests” (chef Peter). Furthermore, chef Jack believed that some of the local vegetable farmers still used DDT⁶¹ as a pesticide. I was told by a local farmer that river prawns are sometimes fished in the highland rivers using “Attack”, a pesticide that was put in the rivers to make prawns drowsy and easier to catch. Chef Jack admitted that, of course, he could not test any product thoroughly for contamination, but he could visit his suppliers and demand to see their storage facilities, temperature log books or even pesticide spraying schedules. With small suppliers or market vendors, that would not be possible, he believed. “Going to the market [is] taking a leap of faith”, he thought, and “at the end of the day I don't need to make sure I source locally. I need to make sure my guests don't die. That's the bottom line.”

Regardless of ongoing problems with consistent quality and quantity, many chefs pointed out to me that overall they felt that the quality of produce had picked up in recent years. “When I first came, eighty percent of the items we were buying were imported”, chef Peter recalled from his earlier days in Fiji. He felt that by now, there was reasonable supply. When chef Paul started his current position about five years ago, he was shocked. Farmers, he thought, “still didn't understand the expectations of five-star resorts”. At the time of the interview, however, he believed the quality had improved, especially concerning fruits and vegetables. However, most chefs agreed that for some products it was still very difficult to source good quality locally. Beef was a major concern. The farmers “would not be able to grow a grain-fed beef over here, with that lovely marble. But, the market wants that, so we buy that from Australia and New Zealand” chef Mark told me.

⁶¹ A bio-accumulative pesticide banned under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

7.7.2 Direct sourcing from producers – “You’ve paid me enough on Wednesday!”

All chefs sourced some of their fresh produce from farmers or fisher people directly. Some of these relationships seemed to be working well, as for instance in the cases of the Outrigger or chef Lukas, described above. Nevertheless, the business conduct of many local farmers, producers and fisher people appeared to be an issue.

Chef Jeff recalled how his local community supplied him regularly with about 20 kilos of lobster. But as soon as the *mataqali* had a community event, for example a fundraising, things changed.

Then all the village men got together and decided to go diving and then they come up with 400 or 500 kg worth of lobster. (laughs) And they want to sell it *now!* That's the thing with consistency: they will only get [the product to sell], when they need the money.

A Fijian himself, he understood their situation and helped out. He bought the entire catch and sold the surplus on to other intermediaries. Dr. Gibson further explained that “their planning [has] to do with their kind of social needs, which doesn't necessarily mix with business, tourism, peak seasons and all that.” Other chefs simply noted that many indigenous Fijians would only sell for as long as they needed to. Chefs Jack, Lukas and Mark found producers that supplied them directly with particular products for a while. But, after the chefs had put these items on their menus, the supply suddenly stopped.

So I called the guy and asked ‘what's going on? I ordered 40 kg for Wednesday and 40 kg for Saturday’. And he said ‘oh, no, I didn't go fishing!’ And I went ‘why didn't you go fishing?’ He said ‘oh, you paid me enough on Wednesday!’ (Chef Jack)

Chef Jack believed that such behaviour was an effect of many *iTaukei* owning land and therefore not being under constant pressure to earn money. Other chefs were confronted with the fact that their supplier had sold out, there was bad weather or they just supplied less than ordered. Farmers, but also other suppliers, frequently “over-commit[ted] and under-deliver[ed]” in chef Jack’s experience. “You can't do business with people like that, as much as they are lovely and you want to be as patient as you can.” Chef Lukas, therefore, sensed a “no-care attitude in suppliers” and even thought they were “lazy”. From his point of view, the solution was to “play with everybody. So the more suppliers you’ve got, the better.” He sent out tenders to nine suppliers and farmers; all other chefs of large resorts had three suppliers that tendered on a weekly basis, just as the Outrigger did.

Nonetheless, chef Mark wondered whether ‘playing with suppliers’ was a good thing to do.

You will be upsetting a lot of farmers, I tell you right now. ... I wouldn't have a dozen of them. I will have three or four, then I know that I can feed them properly, even if I have to buy five kilos from one and another two kilos from someone else, so that they are all happy and you are giving something to them. But that's the technique, no doubt about it.

Chef Paul believed he knew the reason for this ‘no-care attitude’. “In Fiji, you might have realised, people don't think in the long-term.” Why sell more tomorrow, if I have enough money today? Chef Peter tried to convince a meat supplier to age his beef for six months. Aged meat is a premium product and would fetch a higher price. “No, it doesn't work like that here”, chef Peter stated. The supplier stuck to selling his meat quickly.

The experiences of all chefs from larger properties were alike: direct sourcing was troublesome. The theme of ‘we tried, but it did not work’ was present throughout the interviews with only a few positive examples. Mr. Seeto agreed this was a problem throughout the industry: “The ideal thing for us is to support the [small-scale] farmers,” but in order to do that, hoteliers would need to have “transport divisions” and take on the role of intermediaries. This was not the job of hotels and resorts, he insisted. “We just want to get the stuff at the most competitive price, at the best quality and in a consistent supply.”

Therefore, chefs resorted to ‘playing’ with a number of local suppliers to make sure they would always have sufficient produce available. Chefs were anxious to be let down. Intermediaries cushioned the inconsistent supply, but even they were not necessarily thought of as reliable. Most issues, however, occurred in direct relationships with producers. Yet, as chef Jack summarised, “the less the food travels, the better for us” and so many chefs tried to support direct relationships to farmers nevertheless.

7.7.3 Chefs' support for local producers – “It's our duty!”

Chefs engaged to varying degrees in local direct sourcing. Some chefs also expressed their wish “to support the locals to get their product right” (chef Lukas). Chef Paul used his resort's farm to show other farmers in the region what his quality requirements were. Chef Jeff, whose resort was located on *mataqali* land, bought some fruits and vegetables directly from the surrounding village farmers. “It's beautiful stuff!” He liaised with the Village Head to organise supply. Chef Peter had collaborated with a local university to help three farmers, a Chinese, an Indo-Fijian and an *iTaukei*, to grow what he needed. His

main message to the farmers had been: “just grow what we need and not what you want”, which had taken him more than a year to put into practice. Now he had agreements with those farmers and he honoured them. “I stick to it, because I don't want to be unfair with them. For tomatoes I always go to the same farmers.” His actions were driven by a feeling of moral duty to support the community. He elaborated:

I think as a big company it's our duty to support the community. ... I'm involved in a lot of things. [With the] University of the South Pacific [and] Fiji National University [I] try to develop what they are doing for the students. They want to learn a bit about hospitality and I'm really involved. I have to do that. It is my duty. Try to help Fiji to develop. You know, they are great people. I think they have everything to grow vegetables and everything is there. You just have to guide them a little bit. One day, it will not happen soon, but one day I will be able to say ‘I'm a part of it’ and that's why I'm still here eight years later. (Chef Peter)

Even though some chefs struggled with consistent quality and quantity, they would “still carry those [local] guys” (chef Mark). The two main push-factors for chefs to invest in those relationships were a moral sense of duty and the freshness of the produce. “It’s just a different taste when it comes straight from the farm” (chef Paul).

It is certainly convenient to present a resort’s local procurement endeavours as moral duty. Dr. Gibson suggested hotels could move forward by trying to find a compromise between their business needs and the community’s needs.

If we take the time to check a community calendar and put over an industry calendar of peak times and then try to plan [accordingly]. And then explain it to a community in a way they understand. ‘This is why we need this and this is what you need’ and in the middle bits come to some form of compromise.

7.8 Development aid-supported local food projects – “Huge issues!”

When being asked about direct linkages to producers, some interviewees pointed out that they had been involved in foreign aid development projects. They strived to establish direct linkages between chefs and producers, or train chefs on using more local produce. Chef Mark and GM Philip were involved in a sustainable local fish sourcing project and a tomato farming project. The latter was supported by the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia. GM Philip’s experience with the latter was straight forward: “Huge issues! They didn’t get any regular commercial supplies out of Sigatoka and they’ve become very quiet.” His executive chef added that “they started to do ok and they delivered [to] us for a few weeks and then suddenly he went ‘can't supply.’” The same thing had

happened with the sustainable fish sourcing project. The then-current project manager had left the NGO and no one knew whether the project was going to continue or not. A positive outcome of this project was the opportunity to send chefs or cooks to a French culinary training course in New Zealand. However, both projects were not seen as feasible supply options. Their fate was met with resignation, even though chef Mark admitted how much he had hoped to see the projects thrive.

GM Chris was involved in the same sustainable fish sourcing project as well as a 2016 Australian Aid project that tried to teach chefs in Fiji how to use locally available produce. “We were part of this [Australian Aid] project, but then it just fizzled out. They ran out of money or what? I don't know.” The sustainable fish project “just took off and then just - bam - crashed. I've seen [the NGO] through two, three projects, and it's the same experience.” However, GM Chris knew some of the villagers that were involved. They apparently appreciated being trained on post-harvest handling and hygiene. “They were all saying it's a really good idea and they noticed that the fish quality was better.” In essence, however, none of the projects mentioned here were described as successful, or had turned into any form of regular supply.

From MITT's perspective, tying local agriculture and the tourism industry closer together was an important goal, as well. Ms. Masau pointed out that this had also been on the agenda of previous governments, but it had never materialised into any projects or policies. In 2016 the FHTA, MITT, Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and University of the South Pacific had collaboratively piloted a training project for chefs in the Yasawa island group. It focussed on how to use local produce and set up resort gardens. Collin Chung, a New Zealand-based chef and cook book author, well-versed in South Pacific cuisine (Chung, 2017), had volunteered to be the trainer. The MOA supplied seedlings and tested soil quality for setting up resort gardens. Unfortunately, there was no follow up after the project, Ms. Masau admitted. The project's impact had not been assessed. “I think that's a gap for us”, she realised. Mr. Seeto and Ms. Masau concluded that the project's main outcome might not have been a higher uptake of local produce, but a realistic view on the alarmingly low hygiene standards in many resort kitchens. “There [are] a lot of visitor complaints coming up on food poisoning and those kinds of issues that grab our attention,” Ms. Masau reported. She thought that now, after the project, there was less risk because “the guy washes his hands, he uses gloves to touch meat [and] he uses a different cutting board for different things.”

Following basic food hygiene and handling procedures emerged as a more pressing issue than using local produce. According to Ms. Masau, the Ministry of Health had considered shutting down some of the kitchens due to the outcome of this project. Ms. Masau gratefully acknowledged that FHTA and Ministry of Health had recently cooperated to publish a booklet on minimum food quality standards, aimed especially at small- and medium-sized operators. Ms. Masau concluded that Fiji has “not tapped into the potential of food tourism, yet.” But, if Fiji was to develop this idea further, “it has to come with standards as well.”

The Outrigger, chef Leon and chef Peter procured a range of fruits and vegetables through the Cane Coast Farmer Association, a development aid-led project further discussed in the following chapter. It had been set up by the Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (Taiwan ICDF) and the MOA. When asked, the chefs had no negative experiences to report. Interestingly, however, the connection to Cane Coast Farmer Association was not thought of as something special or particularly worthy of support; it was just thought of as a viable supplier.

7.9 Summary

This chapter sought to compare the Outrigger case study to other hospitality businesses in its vicinity as well as stakeholders of the wider tourism industry in Fiji. Interviews with eight executive chefs, two cooks, two GMs and four representatives of Fiji’s Government, the tourism industry association and hospitality education providers revealed a number of interesting similarities as well as points of difference.

All upmarket, large-scale multinational resorts were run either by expatriate chefs or, in two cases, by locals with training in internationally managed resorts. The resorts offered similar menus, consisting of ‘hotel food’ (e.g., continental breakfasts, fish and chips, burgers, sandwiches, steaks, pizzas and pasta) for the main part. Except for a few exemptions, local *iTaukei* and Indo-Fijian cuisines were presented in the form of tokenistic ‘island night shows’ – evening buffets accompanied by cultural entertainment, with food that was neither by guests nor by chefs considered particularly appealing. Fine-dining restaurants blended local and international cuisines, but served only a limited amount of guests. City-based hotels lacked the concept of ‘island night shows’, but otherwise adhered to the same ‘hotel food’ paradigm. Chefs, GMs and two industry and government

representatives agreed that guests do not come to Fiji for the food, even though many expressed the wish to sample it.

Executive chefs struggle with often irregular local supply, the business conduct of local suppliers as well as a short supply of skilled and motivated workforce, meanwhile being expected to reach their company's financial targets. This context seemed to impede on their ability to creatively engage with local cuisine. Therefore, sourcing patterns and strategies of large-scale resorts seemed to be similar, as well. The majority of food was imported, especially meat, dairy, dry goods and baking products. Local products were readily sourced if they were alike to Western staples (e.g., tomatoes, salad, chicken meat) and available in a consistent quality and quantity. In this respect, chefs expressed their support for local producers. They entertained good direct business relationships to different local farmers, or even helped particular farmers. Depending on their knowledge of the local farming sector and their relationships to food producers and suppliers, a different set of foods were locally available to them. Personal relationships certainly emerged as an important factor for the establishment of tourism-agriculture linkages. In contrast, development aid-driven projects that aimed to foster such connections were not reported as successful. Local products in the sense of cultural heritage food (e.g., *moca*, *dalo*, *ota* and *bele*) were rarely put on menus and therefore sourced only in small volumes.

In the light of these findings, the Outrigger case study appears to be very comparable to other large-scale multinational resorts and hotels in Fiji. The only notable exception was the small boutique resort. Due to its size and the GM's determination to market it as a niche product, the kitchen offered a seasonal and only locally inspired menu, prepared by an *iTaukei* chef, who had never been trained in large-scale resorts. Food-wise, mass tourism seems to demand resorts that offer Western cuisine for the most part. Local cuisine is compartmentalised to tokenistic and entertainment-driven 'island night shows' or to the sphere of fusion cuisine in fine-dining restaurants, where it is served to a few affluent guests. The small-scale and boutique-type resort, in contrast, did not aspire to please every type of guest and thus could afford to stand out with its menus. Additionally, a more manageable demand appeared to be a suitable fit for Fiji's small-scale, fragmented and relationship-based food economy.

Finally, this chapter also supported the theme of 'born in..., raised in...' Where chefs come from and what they have experienced in the past is a decisive factor in how they operate. As Dr. Gibson pointed out, Fijian chefs were brought up in an environment where

Western food was heralded as more desirable than their own culinary heritage. This impedes the creative engagement with local produce and forms of food tourism.

8 Agricultural Stakeholders' Perspectives

8.1 Introduction

This chapter moves on from the tourism industry's view to consider the opinions and experiences of those concerned with producing and trading food. Chapter 8 summarises findings from 16 interviews and numerous field visits to farmers and intermediaries as well as a development aid project and governmental bodies (Table 9). The viewpoints from Fiji's food production environment expressed in the following contrast the findings from the previous two chapters. It provides the missing perspective to answer the second research question on the experience of chefs, intermediaries and farmers with Western-led tourism. The previous two chapters elaborated on the viewpoints of kitchen staff and wider tourism stakeholders. Now, we will turn to the perceptions of food intermediaries and farmers.

What emerges is that the notion of the farmer's mind-set is by no means backward or irrational. On the contrary, based on their socio-economic background, many farmers make the rational decision to not engage with the tourism sector. Only those farmers that are well-established, however, take advantage of resorts' economic potential. As the later discussion will reveal they resist, in Sahlins' terms, the Western-dominated tourism industry and only engage with resorts to the degree that it supports their own needs and goals. The reasons for this decision also help to answer the third research question on how large-scale upmarket tourist resorts in Fiji can engage in meaningful local community development through linkages to food producers.

Table 9: Agricultural sector interviewees

#	Occupation/business/institution	Interviewee name or 'synonym' (title)
<i>Outrigger's fruit and vegetable suppliers</i>		
22	Fruit and vegetable supplier	'Dennis' (Manager/owner)
23	Fruit and vegetable supplier	'Robert' (Manager/owner)
24	Fruit and vegetable supplier and farmer	'Julius' (Manager/owner)
<i>Farmers</i>		
25	Farmer (Cane Coast Farmer Association)	Pushkar (President of association)
26	Farmer (Cane Coast Farmer Association)	Vikram
27	Farmer (Cane Coast Farmer Association)	Dharman
28	Farmer (Cane Coast Farmer Association)	Mont
29	Farmer (Cane Coast Farmer Association)	Faizahl
30	Farmer (former association member)	'Jacob'
<i>Agricultural development aid project</i>		
31	Taiwan Technical Mission, Taiwan ICDF	Mr. Yang (Mission Leader)
32	Taiwan Technical Mission, Taiwan ICDF	Mr. Lee (Project Manager)
33	Participant Guarantee System; ACIAR PARDI Project, University of the Sunshine Coast	A/Prof. Rob Erskine-Smith
<i>Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and other officials</i>		
34	MOA, Headquarter, Suva	Mr. Ratuyawa (Senior Economic Planning Officer)
35	MOA, Sigatoka Research Station	Ms. Rasuka (Agricultural Officer in charge of provincial agricultural extension services)
36	MOA, Sigatoka Research Station	Ms. Sofie (Leading Research Officer)
37	MOA, Sigatoka Research Station	Mr. Manoa (Research Officer for fruits)
38	Sigatoka City Council	Mr. Ravouvou (Sigatoka Market Manager)

8.2 The Outrigger's fruit and vegetable suppliers

Whilst working in the Outrigger's kitchen, I met a number of the resort's main food suppliers. They all tender and deliver to the resort at least once a week and are considered

the main suppliers of local fruits and vegetables. All three agreed to being interviewed, but preferred to stay anonymous. Supplier Robert delivers to a number of resorts and supermarket chains between Nadi and Suva. Supplier Dennis sells to resorts along the Coral Coast and to airport/airline caterers in Nadi. Both are among the biggest and most important local intermediaries in the Sigatoka river valley, as the Sigatoka Market Manager, Mr. Ravouvou, confirms. The third supplier, Julius, is a farmer on about 20 hectares in the Sigatoka valley, who supplies directly to four large resorts on the Coral Coast, but at times acts as an intermediary as well, if he cannot provide the entire order from his own farm.

Supplier Robert's main challenges in sourcing locally are the inconsistency of supply from farmers due to changing weather conditions, the farmers' poor sense of timeliness when delivering products to him and, lastly, competitive market conditions, because resorts tender to a number of suppliers. He also noticed that resorts sometimes have a sudden change in demand for specific products. The chefs "probably changed the menu" and then "they are using 300 kg of *vudi* a week, but before it used to be 3 kg a week!" This is a challenge not only for him, but also puts farmers in or out of markets quickly. He admits that the market might be big enough to sell surplus to someone else, but it remains a challenge nevertheless.

My observations support the theme of a 'relationship-based food market' in Fiji. This was also referred to by chefs in the previous chapters. Robert believed that he can supply anything that is grown locally, if he "grinds his knees off" to find a suitable producer somewhere. "I call up my guys" and they make sure that he gets a "quality product" for his resort clients. Robert had convinced a local farmer to grow lemongrass, basil and mint, only for him. "It took me a good couple of months to get it through his head, but now he is laughing", meaning that both of them benefit economically. It is a relationship – he supplies the farmer with farm inputs (i.e. seeds, fertiliser, pesticides, etc.) and buys all of his harvest at an agreed price and the farmer grows what Robert needs. Intermediaries seemed to supply not only forward to resorts, but also backwards to farmers. Both Robert and Dennis mentioned that they sometimes provided farmers in more remote areas with farming inputs. Moreover, both emphasised that they don't "cut the throat of farmers" (Robert) financially, rather they pay them a "fair share".

In contrast, Mr. Seeto, the President of Fiji's Hotel and Tourism Association, believed that intermediaries were "in many cases unfair, because they are the guys that make all

the money.” Farmer and intermediary Julius supports this view: “They can give a very hard life to farmers,” because farmers only receive about a quarter of the intermediary’s retail price or less, he says. In some instances, Julius had not been paid at all. That is why he decided five years ago to try to supply directly to resorts. It works very well for him, he says, but from his experience, not many farmers try this avenue. They do not want to go through the hassle of sorting, cleaning and packing the produce neatly into crates, handling them carefully and transporting them in closed vehicles to the resorts. When farmers supply the local markets “they just load in big trucks, 100 bags [of] eggplant, 100 bags of cabbage (laughs) – just load it and just [ship it]. ... Hotels want the products in a crate and clean, because it's for the tourist”, Julius knows. He appreciates his relationship to resorts. “They give us ideas” about what to plant, when to harvest and how to deliver. “They really support the farmers!” While he shows me around his farm he asks what kind of fruits and vegetables I eat at home. He is curious, because he is considering trying new plants, like broccoli, red capsicum, sweet melon and rock melon – ideas he got from speaking to the resorts. Supplier Robert also has a long list of fruits, vegetables and herbs that he knows he could sell easily to resorts at a good price. Some of them he grows already in his own backyard, but no farmer seems to be willing to plant them on a larger scale, he says. Most farmers in the Sigatoka valley only plant what they are used to and what seeds they are provided by the MOA, Julius believes. They sow all seeds at once, unlike him, who works with a consecutive planting schedule. Therefore, all farmers harvest at once, which creates an oversupply and pushes the price down. Robert expands on this point further.

It’s the mind-set, which, I think, the old generation had [as well] and it is really hard right now to change the system in [the farmers’] heads. Try something else! Like yellow zucchini, yellow capsicum – they grow here – but they don’t [try]. And there is a market for it! Why buy imported ones at FJ\$18 or even FJ\$20 a kilo?

Once again, the mind-set of Fijian farmers as an impediment to tourism-agricultural linkages appears. Just as the chefs in Chapters 6 and 7 pointed out, the intermediaries – one of which was a farmer himself – believed that many Fijian farmers were likely to resist change due to their mind-set. However, none of the interviewees described this notion of a ‘mind-set’ in greater detail.

Another issue brought up by Julius and Robert is that some farmers prefer to grow for export rather than for local markets. Julius sometimes sells his A-grade products to exporters, because they pay the most. However, they only focus on a few items, mostly

eggplant, okra, papaya, curry leaves and a certain species of chilli. This is risky business, Julius believes, because if the products are not of the best quality, for instance due to unfavourable weather conditions, pests or diseases, exports stop entirely. For example, in August 2015 and April to June 2017 New Zealand banned the import of Fijian produce due to bio-security concerns. This resulted in significant financial losses for Fijian exporters and farmers (Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, 2017, June 7; Radio New Zealand, 2015, August 14). Resorts, on the other hand, purchase a much wider variety of produce and agree to wash or even sanitise produce on their premises.

Food safety, however, appears to be problematic not only with respect to farmers and exporters. When visiting supplier Dennis, he takes me to his storage and handling facility. The shelter and house look newly built, but the premises are cluttered. A chicken and a goat freely roam the premises, passing by fresh salad heads and tomatoes, waiting to be shipped to a resort. A bottle of Glyphosate⁶² stands on the ripening shelves filled with produce. Fresh vegetables awaiting delivery are stored on the dusty gravel of the car park. Dennis tells me he was given a food safety training by an airline caterer. I cannot see much of what I would expect to be in place, if food safety was taken seriously here. This would likely require closed buildings, tidy storage racks, a cleaning and sanitising station, mosquito netting on windows, closed and signed storage facilities for harmful substances, cleaning schedules and cool room temperature log books, for example. I wonder whether resorts realise under what circumstances their food might be stored and transported.

The intermediary's role is to negotiate, on the one side, the often irregular quality and quantity from fragmented and mostly small-scale local producers, their varying sense of timeliness and their need for farm inputs. On the other side, they face large resorts demanding punctual and reliable delivery of specified quantities and qualities. In a sense, intermediaries bridge the 'efficiency gap' between Western-managed hotels and the agricultural sphere of a developing nation. At times, intermediaries themselves, however, seem to struggle to achieve a successful transition of perishable goods from one sphere to another. In addition to the presence of intermediaries that connect many farmers to markets, there are development aid projects that strive to help farmers to make them more

⁶² A toxic broad-spectrum chemical herbicide with potential health risks.

self-reliant in terms of farming and market access. One of these projects is the Taiwan Technical Mission, based near Sigatoka.

8.3 The Taiwan Technical Mission

8.3.1 Background

The Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM) came to my attention when the Outrigger's Executive Chef told me how much he liked the crunchy and sweet green guava fruits they deliver to his kitchen. As mentioned above, the TTM was not considered by any chef as a 'development project', yet it is a branch of Taiwan's International Cooperation and Development Fund (Taiwan ICDF) and as such an international development aid programme in Fiji since 1978.

In 2015 the TTM commenced a five-year "Vegetable Production, Marketing Extension and Capacity Building Project" in cooperation with the MOA, a follow-up to an earlier project from 2011 till 2014 (Taiwan ICDF, 2018a). The current project was rolled out across TTM stations in Sigatoka, Nadarivatu and Nasinu. At its demonstration and training farm in the Sigatoka river valley, the TTM aims to

- guide three collection centers in marketing 520 tons of produce (produced at the 55 hectare farm), generating links to export agents and/or supermarkets;

- demonstrate year-round cultivation over 10 hectares, producing 1,000,000 healthy seedlings at Sigatoka Demonstration Farm;

- hold 25 vegetable production workshops, four marketing extension field trips and five agricultural shows. (Taiwan ICDF, 2018b)

In pursuit of these goals, the TTM and the MOA's extension services established the Cane Coast Farmer Association. This association was to accommodate farmers interested and willing to participate in the TTM's projects. Potential members were suggested by Ms. Masuka, head of the MOA's agricultural extension services in Sigatoka, based on their level of experience and location. The Cane Coast Farmer Association started off with 24 farmers in 2013. The term 'Cane Coast' refers to the fact that many farmers along Fiji's Coral Coast used to be, and in parts still are, sugar cane farmers. With this industry in decline, growing fruits and vegetables offer a feasible alternative.

The TTM guides and trains the farmers and supplies farming inputs to the Cane Coast Farmer Association, to build a cooperative-like structure, in which a group of farmers

supply their produce to a jointly managed collection depot. The TTM assists the members to negotiate initial supply to clients, such as hotels, supermarkets and exporters, before the members themselves take over. TTM is not a part of the Cane Coast Farmer Association's legal entity, but assumes the role of a facilitating and consulting agent. Whatever grows on the TTM's demonstration farm is, however, also sold through the association. I visited the TTM's Sigatoka valley demonstration farm five times, had casual conversations and two semi-structured interviews with the project manager and his assistant and participated in two monthly meetings between TTM staff and the farmers. Of the 24 founding members, eight farmers remained active in the association at my time of field research. Out of these eight, I conducted semi-structured interviews with five farmers, including day-visits to their farms. All five farmers were Indo-Fijian. Lastly, a semi-structured interview was conducted with a former *iTaukei* Cane Coast Farmer Association member, who had left the association about a year ago.

8.3.2 The Taiwan Technical Mission's agenda

Besides having helped to establish the Cane Coast Farmer Association in the first place, the TTM

1. initiated direct supply linkages to a number of hotels and supermarkets between Suva and Nadi, including the Outrigger, by visiting chefs and purchasing officers and negotiating initial conditions;
2. funded the establishment of a collection, sorting and storage shed on farmer Pushka's premises, equipped with a washing basin, scale, crates and a fridge for seed refrigeration;
3. funded a delivery truck with a covered loading platform;
4. supplied seed material, e.g. super-sweet corn, tomatoes and different lettuces as well as young guava and papaya seedlings, either free of charge or at a reduced rate;
5. ran monthly association meetings and trainings on issues of planting, fertilising, harvesting and handling;
6. handled most of the administration, such as records of who supplied how much of what or the handling of tenders to the association's clients.

Funds for this project are covered by Taiwan's ICDF. The association retains a five per cent margin from all fruit and vegetable sales, which covers shared costs, for instance delivery costs.

At the time of my fieldtrip, the Cane Coast Farmer Association seemed to work well. A routine of weekly deliveries of fruits and vegetables to its various resort and supermarket clients was in place. None of the interviewed chefs complained about TTM or their farmers in any form. As part of the above-mentioned project, TTM's programme manager, Mr. Yang, wanted to introduce tropical fruit species from Taiwan, such as a green guava (*Psidium guajava*), among others. He saw its potential in the fact that he could graft a high-yielding Taiwanese species onto a wild-growing local guava root stock. Furthermore, the tree fruits year-round, providing continuous income for the farmer, and, lastly, the fruits can fetch a high price, because they are not yet grown in a high quality in Fiji and are not at risk of being substituted by imports from Australia or New Zealand. Guava trees need, however, irrigation in the dry season, compost rather than chemical fertiliser, a particular pruning technique, are attacked by whitefly (*Aleyrodoidea* family) and young fruits need to be wrapped in plastic bags to retain moisture. To Mr. Yang and Mr. Lee, this meant overall a "fairly easy plant". At the TTM's demonstration farm, a field of guava trees had been established (Picture 15) and produced the majority of the association's guava sales. The farm had access to irrigation water from the nearby Sigatoka river and managed its own compost.

Picture 15: Guava trees at the TTM research farm



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Mr. Yang was excited about his efforts to grow tropical fruits in Fiji. He told me with great enthusiasm how he discovered by accident local guava, dragon fruit and jojobe plants, which he then used as locally adapted root stock to propagate Taiwanese varieties. “I’m an expert!” he told me with a proud smile on his face. To his mind, Taiwanese were masters in the art of grafting and propagating fruit plants. Moreover, the TTM helped establish linkages to Taiwanese seed suppliers and agricultural machinery manufacturers. He spent an afternoon explaining to me how the grafting, pruning, growing of fruits, combating pest and irrigation of guava trees worked. I asked whether the TTM was going to teach farmers how to graft their own plants, which would support their skills and independence. He will not, Mr. Yang said, because he was worried that farmers would not do it right and therefore produce sub-standard fruits. This was a threat to the perceived high quality of Taiwanese guava and could adversely impact its market value, which could not be in the interest of anyone, he believed. “It’s the Taiwanese people, they keep this technique alive since decades!”, Mr. Lee explained. It sounded as if he was not going to give away his secrets, thus limiting the knowledge transfer possibilities of this development project. Mr. Ratuyawa, a Senior Economic Planning Officer at the MOA’s headquarters concurred.

Over the years, the TTM hardly transfer[s] that knowledge to locals. They keep all that technical knowhow. But their main purpose is [supposed to be] ... to transfer this knowledge and technology to locals and especially to staff and farmers.

He also agreed, however, that “the farmers and their mentality is rather on okra and those export crops” and this could make knowledge transfer challenging. The farmers’ mind-set, it seemed, was a theme that arose in all interviews.

Picture 16: Sandy soil of the Cane Coast at Dharman's farm



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Despite the TTM's training in growing Taiwanese fruits and vegetables, other, more rudimentary but agriculturally important concepts for small-scale farmers, such as composting, mixed cropping systems, mulching, soil enrichment or organic pest management techniques were taught, if at all, only in theory. "We will show some pictures and use PowerPoint, but if we teach them a lot here, they listen, but when they go back they can't do anything" (Mr. Lee).

Picture 17: Clay-rich alluvial soil of the Sigatoka river valley



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

From my observations, a case in point are the different soil types in the area (see Picture 16 and Picture 17) vis-à-vis the prevailing concern of the MOA (Ms. Sofie) and the TTM (Mr. Lee) that the lack of irrigation systems are a major issue for many farmers. Sandy soils have little water storage capacity and are prone to nutrient leaching; clay-rich soils hold water, but once a dry crust has developed, water hardly permeates into the soil and wash-off occurs. Improving soil organic matter through the use of compost, green manure or deep-rooting legumes, for instance, improves a soil's water-holding capacity (Lampkin, 2002) and reduces the need for frequent irrigation. Dr. Gibson from the University of the South Pacific found, based on previous experience with the TTM, that farmers "wanted more training, but [the] TTM wasn't prepared to invest that kind of money. But that's what farmers needed." Mr. Ratuyawa from the MOA agreed, as pointed out in his quote above. Moreover, Dr. Gibson was aware that the TTM considered bringing in chefs from Taiwan for training purposes, potentially with the "aim also to spread their culture."

Dr. Gibson's comment underlined the emerging theme of an 'agenda-driven development' approach by the TTM and questioned how helpful this was. The TTM's development aid had the Fijian farmers' economic wellbeing in mind and sought to address this

through the introduction of Taiwanese horticulture and linkages to its economy. From a tourism industry perspective, the TTM's introduced fruits and vegetables were welcomed, as pointed out by chefs and suppliers. Whether or not they presented a viable agricultural development pathway for Fijian farmers was a different question, however.

8.3.3 Farming issues as seen by the TTM

Two farmers of the Cane Coast Farmer Association, Pushka and Faizahl, had introduced guava fruit trees on their farms as part of a field trial. Faizahl's farm was next to a river and Pushka had a small borehole. For most other farmers of the association as well as in the Sigatoka river valley and Coral Coast area, irrigation was a major obstacle, Mr. Lee believed. Picture 18 shows an exemplary small-holder vegetable farm in the upper Sigatoka river valley, where farmers are irrigating manually their newly planted crops with a single hose. Many farmers were apprehensive about planting long-term and irrigation-dependent crops. Moreover, he believed the farmers' mind-set was impeding the development work of the TTM. What was described rather vaguely by previous interviewees, Mr. Lee elaborated upon in greater detail. From his point of view, there was a difference between Indo-Fijian and *iTaukei* farmers.

Picture 18: Small-holder farm, upper Sigatoka river valley



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

For Indo-Fijian farmers, short-term economic return was paramount. Many do not own their farmland and were hesitant to invest in any long-term or expensive agricultural ventures, such as orchards or irrigation systems. Additionally, they felt at risk of having their farms flooded or otherwise devastated by severe weather conditions during Fiji's rainy season. "They all say: 'my father, my grandfather and my great-grandfather all planted

cabbage. I don't want to lose my money'", Mr. Lee explained. Additionally, most short-term crops were easier to plant and fertilise with readily-available manufactured fertilisers. This resonates with the experiences of the Outrigger's Executive Chef, who wondered why many Indo-Fijian farmers only produced a certain set of fruits and vegetables. Both believed that for these reasons Indo-Fijian farmers were careful with trying anything new. Finally, winning Indo-Fijian farmers for a collaborative venture, such as the Cane Coast Farmer Association, which required a certain amount of trust, was not easy. Many did not trust their own kind, Mr. Lee believed. This notion was later also supported by Mont, one of the farmer association members. For instance, whether or not members sold their entire harvest through the association, and therefore also generated income for Cane Coast Farmer Association, was a matter of trust. Assistant Professor Rob Erskin-Smith, who supported participatory guarantee systems for agricultural production in Fiji since 2013, however, believed that Indo-Fijians "basically don't need us. They can do things pretty well on their own."

ITaukei farmers, on the contrary, apparently needed more support. With respect to their 'mind-set' issues were different. Mr. Lee believed "they don't worry about tomorrow" too much, primarily, because they own land. This viewpoint was also expressed by chef Jack (Subsection 7.7.1). A/Prof. Erskin-Smith also believed that the issue resided in cultural aspects: "The major issue for the success for any development project or link between small-holder farmers and the market is the cultural aspect, the social aspect and you've got to recognise it's a cultural shift." In his understanding, the *iTaukei* needed to "culture-shift, ... moving from subsistence small-holder, semi-subsistence to a business person." He elaborated:

The *iTaukei* have an extremely strong culture. It is a strength, but like all strengths it is also a weakness. And so the obligation is very strong within the culture to be a groupist and not future oriented culture, the tendency is that it doesn't necessarily fit with the business concept. That's what we've got to change. Well, we don't have to change the people, we have to get them to culture-shift to accept that business is a new way of life and we will change and adapt, as long as they agree to the work ethic, we are in business. (A/Prof. Erskin-Smith)

The 45 farmers A/Prof. Erskin-Smith worked with to grow A-grade tomatoes for the local resorts had to "write a pledge", which meant that "we first get together, the very first thing that I tell everybody, is that 'you guys have to be committed! All I can offer you is blood, toil, sweat and tears. If you don't want that, don't join us'". From a more agri-technical

perspective, he noted that irrigation and growth tunnel infrastructure, and the knowledge how to use both, were the greatest challenges for his farmers. Given these challenging circumstances, the question arose, whether the TTM's efforts to introduce guava trees to Fijian farmers was going to succeed. Mr. Lee did not believe so. "Honestly, I think we will fail," he concluded. The main issues, he believed, were the missing water supply and the farmers' apprehension about investments in new and more long-term oriented forms of agriculture.

8.3.4 Papayas and guavas: Agricultural development projects

According to Mr. Lee, other horticultural extension efforts by the TTM had also failed before, for example particular capsicum species and green asparagus. Supplier Robert recalled that the TTM

did a trial here in the valley. They used to have quite a good harvest all the time. I used to buy [green asparagus] from them – 20 kg only me! ... Now they are out of that and I don't know why they are planting guava.

Despite the TTM's presence in Fiji since 1978, it seemed as if its current aid was rather project-based. The focus was on introducing foreign plants and agricultural practices to local farmers in defined time frames. Once a project cycle had closed, questions of sustainability, such as self-reliant continuation, were left unanswered. Mr. Lee knew of only one successful previous project, which aimed to introduce a new breed of papaya. It started off with a new variety from the University of Hawaii in the early 1990s, which was later reproduced and propagated by the MOA in Fiji. The papaya breed 'Solo Sunrise', locally known as 'Fiji Red', was specifically bred for the Asian market: small, sweet and bright in colour.

Picture 19: Papaya fruit tree plantation

Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Mr. Manoa, a fruit specialist at MOA's Sigatoka Research Station, believed that it was most important to secure a market when introducing a new variety to Fiji, so that farmers see that there is money to be made consistently. A trial with a small-holder farmer, who planted 400 papaya trees (1 acre can hold about 670 trees) resulted in a revenue of FJ\$10,000 (\approx US\$4,700) in little more than a year. Papaya is exported as well as sold locally on markets and to the tourism industry. But, papaya is highly vulnerable to flash floods and water logging, Mr. Manoa said. A half day of water logging is enough to kill the plant – “you need to take care of the plant like a kid!” Planting papaya trees on higher grounds and hillsides or digging drainage channels in between plants can alleviate these issues, however (NB the ground structure in Picture 19). Moreover, papaya is a bi-annual plant; some may be destroyed by adverse weather, but they would all need to be re-planted after two years.

Supplier and farmer Julius thought of papaya as a “super easy plant”. He bought the seedlings from the MOA, used standard NPK⁶³ fertilizer, did not need to irrigate, graft or prune, and, lastly, the plant produced fruit year-round. He could sell his A-grade fruit to exporters and all others to the local tourism industry and markets. In contrast, “for guava you must have special skills”, Mr. Manoa knew. “It will take some time for the farmers

⁶³ Nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) are key minerals for plant growth and standard ingredients of agricultural fertilizer.

to absorb the idea of guava. For now they are quite happy with *pawpaw*.” The MOA also considered introducing a fungus-resistant banana variety from Honduras to Fijian farmers. Mr. Manoa explained that acceptance from farmers was quite a challenge at the moment, “because they are afraid that consumers won’t like it” and so they feared they wouldn’t be able to sell it. Trust in a reliable market seemed to be paramount for many Fijian farmers. Why, in the 1990s, the then-newly introduced papaya variety from Hawaii succeeded in Fiji, no one knew. Compared to guava, however, it seemed to be a much easier plant to manage given the local skill level, weather conditions as well as agricultural and market contexts. Not surprisingly, many farmers of the Cane Coast Farmer Association grew papaya, among other fruits and vegetables, and not guava.

8.4 The Cane Coast Farmer Association

8.4.1 How farmers see TTM’s support

Of the 24 founding members, ten had left the association. Of the remaining 14, only eight were considered ‘active members’, who showed up to the association’s monthly meetings, engaged with the TTM and sold their produce through the Cane Coast Farmer Association. Of these eight active farmers, I interviewed and visited five. Additionally, I interviewed a former member of the association, who identified as *iTaukei*.

All farmers that were active in the association were grateful for the TTM’s support. The farmer and president of the association, Pushka, and his son Rohit believed that “it was the wish of God, that we met Mr. Lee!” The TTM showed him and others how to plant new varieties of fruits and vegetables, how to better manage irrigation and pest control and how to access markets directly, without having to go through intermediaries. They built a collection shed for the association (Picture 20), provided a delivery truck, with which his son Rohit delivered their produce, and helped all farmers to build shade houses and nurseries. Farmer Vikram thought of the TTM as mentors. “If we have any problems, we get free professional advice.” He realised that “of course, farmers know how to plant, but maybe not the best way.” Farmer Dharman believed that the TTM always had better advice than the MOA’s extension services. Both Faizahl and Pushka thought that “there is a need for outside knowledge.” The theme emerged that the TTM was a very helpful and welcome source of knowledge and support for this group of farmers.

Picture 20: Cane Coast Farmer Association's collection centre on Pushka's farm

Source: G. Laeis, 2017

Jacob, an *iTaukei* farmer who had left the farmer association about a year ago, mentioned that from his experience, those farmers that had left did not see the benefits of the Cane Coast Farmer Association. Coming to the monthly meeting was cumbersome and they had better or more urgent things to look after. Jacob had decided to seek employment elsewhere and reduce his farming efforts to a subsistence garden. Moreover, he had sold his two bull ox to cover a debt and his crops had been destroyed by stray cows and goats. Setting up fences was futile, because bushfires would likely burn them down soon, he said. In contrast, Dharman mentioned that farmers had dropped out “because of the grog” – the consumption of *kava* had made them lethargic. These findings suggest a variety of potential factors why farmers decide to join or stay in a development programme such as the TTM’s farmer association. A thorough exploration of the underlying reasons was, however, not part of this research.

8.4.2 Curious minds, lacking education and the mind-set

Of the active farmers, all were Indo-Fijian, but with different backgrounds. Pushka, Dharman and Faizahl had left school after primary education and became farmers, like their fathers had been. Pushka was suggested to be the president of the Cane Coast Farmer Association because he was a good communicator and well-known in the Indo-Fijian and *iTaukei* community. Mont was a retired manager in a technical company who loved farming and had bought land to set up a farm. He joined the Cane Coast Farmer Association because he saw the benefits of being taught how to plant new crops and how to grow during the off-season. Vikram had a university degree in agriculture and used to be a

senior research officer in Fiji's MOA before the coup in 1987. He went on to become a sugar cane farmer and over the years diversified his farming efforts. He joined the association in 2016, because he wanted to exchange knowledge with other farmers.

All farmers had very different levels of agricultural knowledge and education. What unified them was their openness to new ideas, willingness to take risks and engage with new forms of agriculture. This became an important theme throughout the interviews with farmers. "A lot of people don't have ideas. I'm using different ideas", Farmer Mont claimed. "I'm only going with the farmer association because they work with me, they will follow my ideas", Mr. Lee pointed out. In my casual conversations with the farmers, they expressed interest in my ideas on farming. Pushka was interested to learn about soil enrichment through planting legumes as green manure. Vikram invited me to come back and spend more time with the farmers to share knowledge. Dharman asked me what he should plant for hotels and how he could grow fennel.

The prevalent lack of knowledge and education on horticulture was another main theme that emerged. Pushka and Dharman exemplify what all interviewed farmers believed to be a typical Fijian issue: Both were born in the 1950s into second generation Indo-Fijian sugar cane farming families. They received little more than primary education and at a young age started helping out on their family's farm. Sugar cane, as all farmers I talked to agreed, is a "lazy man's crop". The perennial sugar cane that can grow for decades on different kinds of soils is very drought resistant and does not need irrigation. Current varieties can grow up to 50 years, according to Vikram. It only requires weeding and fertilising in the initial growth stages. The only 'hard work' involved is harvesting the cane once a year. When generations of farmers grow up in the agricultural system of this kind, then "farmers don't know what can be done, except for sugar cane", Vikram believed. Successful horticulture and market gardening demands a diverse range of skills, agricultural techniques and planning capacity. How are farmers supposed to know what green asparagus or fennel were and how to best grow them, I wondered. Mr. Ratuyawa expanded on this point. He thought that commercial farming without an umbrella authority, such as the Fiji Sugar Corporation which sets prices and supports farmers, was new to many farmers. Essentially, they struggled with agriculture based on modern market economy.

"The problem is we are all very narrow and short sighted. We are just comfortable with what we have been doing" Vikram concluded. Farmer Mont concurred. "The problem

around here is that many people are continuously doing the same farming method. These old ideas are not changing” he said while pointing out into the Sigatoka river valley. He followed the TTM’s guidance diligently. “It worked, very well!” Moreover, Mont believed people do not plan well ahead. What is the best way to utilise space in shade houses or nurseries? What needs to be planted as a seedling or what can be sown directly into the soil? At what time would what produce fetch the best price? Mont made a point out of growing his vegetables anti-cyclical, whenever he could, so that he would fetch a better price. “Those farmers don’t have a plan. I always focus on making a plan in advance.” In the five weeks before the interview took place, he allegedly had sold produce worth FJ\$10,000 (≈US\$4,700).

The reluctance to change and the lack of education of many members of the Fijian farming community was a uniform observation of the farmers I interviewed. It seemed to tie in with what other interviewees had described earlier as the challenging ‘mind-set’ of Fijian farmers. Mr. Ratuyawa from the MOA further elaborated that such a mind-set is a product of a farming community that is relatively inexperienced with commercial farming. Taking out loans from a bank, growing new kinds of fruits and vegetables in a liberal market environment, in other words: entrepreneurial farming, was “a new thing” for farmers, he believed. “Most of [the farmers], they are just used to what they know. That's the mind-set at the moment, I can say.” On the one hand, this relates to Indo-Fijians having been sugar cane farmers for many decades under the economic organisation of the Fiji Sugar Cane Corporation as well as their issues with land rights, non-renewal of leases and ethnic tensions. Access to land, however, was not an issue to Mr. Ratuyawa. He mentioned the newly-founded Land Bank addressed this issue sufficiently. For *iTaukei* farmers, on the other hand, this related to their tradition of subsistence agriculture and a communal organisation of their society.

8.4.3 Tourism – “Not just an industry”

Farmers pointed out that tourism was a welcome opportunity to break away from the above-described notion of ‘being stuck in one’s way’ – the mind-set so often frowned upon by interviewees. Faizahl and Vikram were keen to welcome tourists on their premises to show them around. Vikram believed visitors might be curious to see how their food was grown; plus, he might be able to create extra income. Both Dharman and Pushka

mentioned that they had learned about new fruits and vegetables through talking to resorts. The tourism-induced demand for new products made the TTM's support valuable to farmers. Yet, Vikram, Pushka and Dharman were upset about the resorts' tender system and the morally unsound practices of some purchasing officers, putting small-holder farmers at a disadvantage. Vikram believed that resorts "need to look at our point of view. What are the problems of the small farmers?" Nevertheless, he noted that tourism was overall a positive economic and social development force for his country.

The hotel industry is not just an industry for me, it is more than that. It really educates us, the common people, in terms of communication, English, apart from the market and the ideas. It helps in the development of the country. Imagine [if] we were as isolated as some parts of India or PNG, where they have never seen a white man.

This quote summarises what most interviewed farmers mentioned: tourism was not just a market, but a form of social influence that was good for Fiji. However valuable a market tourism might be, aspects of it seemed difficult to navigate for farmers. The TTM helped farmers, they mentioned, but the MOA was not quite as helpful.

8.5 The Ministry of Agriculture

Vikram criticised the MOA for their complacency and lack of support for Fiji's agricultural sector. "I'm a farmer," he said, "I have to work seven days a week, so I need their support seven days a week!" In his view, the MOA was neither conducting enough agricultural research and development, nor were their extension services particularly helpful, he thought. The Ministry was rather relying on other actors, such as the TTM and the South Pacific Council to fulfil such tasks. To Vikram's mind, they were simply continuing with what they had been doing for years. "If I was the Minister, I'd close this [Sigatoka] research station tomorrow."

I visited the MOA's Sigatoka Research Station, adjacent to the TTM farm, a number of times. I interviewed the Head of the horticultural research unit, Ms. Sofie, the Agricultural Officer in charge of all extension staff for the province of Nadroga-Navosa, Ms. Masuka, and the fruit expert, Mr. Manoa. At the MOA's headquarters in Suva, I met with Mr. Ratuyawa, a Senior Economic Planning Officer, who directly supports the Minister as well as the Permanent Secretary.

8.5.1 Supporting farmers – “We are running this show”

Ms. Sofie, head of research at the MOA’s Sigatoka Research Farm, was welcoming and showed me around her field trial plots. From a research-perspective, she noted, the station tries to help farmers through supporting year-around production, for instance through research on pest- and disease-resistant crops, field trials as well as greenhouse and irrigation systems. They would equally support export as well as local production.

Picture 21: Tomato field trial at a Ministry of Agriculture Research Station



Source: G. Laeis, 2017

The research facilities I saw looked rather simple, compared to the adjacent TTM. There were small patches of chili, tomato, capsicum and maize trials, among others (e.g., Picture 21). An even smaller patch hosted endemic crops under organic agriculture systems. Supplier Robert pointed out that the research farm was not a good place to show Fijian farmers what can be done. “They've got so much stuff that could be utilised, but half of the MOA's farm is in bushes, weeds [are] growing there. When they are showing farmers that this land is sitting idle, what should they think?” Farmer Vikram, having been an agricultural scientist at the MOA, was discontent with their efforts, too. He believed that for a semi-arid region, such as the Cane Coast, there were a number of viable alternatives to sugar cane or more water-dependent vegetable farming. For instance, Fiji’s reliance on imported livestock feed could be addressed by introducing crops such as sorghum, as he had advocated for in his active time at the MOA. “In my opinion, we have done a lot already”, but the Ministry did not make use of past research. Instead, they “are trying to re-invent the wheel!”

For Ms. Masuka, in charge of all agricultural Training Officers in the wider Sigatoka area, technical advice “from seedling to harvesting” was most important: “irrigation, shade

housing, what to plant, when to plant, how to apply fertiliser; then pest and disease management, how much to spray; then post-harvest handling and harvesting techniques.” As an example of her work she drew on the Cane Coast Farmer Association. “I’m engaged with the TTM, Mr. Yang, we are running this show, the Cane Coast Farmer Association. We have set up a cooperative where we want to show other farmers: this is the way to go.”

All farmers I interviewed agreed that the MOA did provide some help, especially in terms of infrastructural grants and free seed supply, but otherwise their advice and technical support was not deemed as helpful as that of the TTM. These farmers, however, were all active participants in the TTM’s projects and greatly benefited from their help. “The TTM really pushes me”, farmer Mont felt. Two of the suppliers, Julius and Dennis, however, had received grants and believed the MOA’s help was good. How sustainable the success of providing grants for infrastructural investments is, can probably partly be measured by the frequent sight of decaying shade houses as well as the number of stolen or broken water pumps on farms throughout the Sigatoka valley – two circumstances that occurred frequently in my observations and interviews. Yet, Ms. Masuka believed that she needed more grants from the Ministry to assist farmers. Agricultural extension services, however, also support farmers through training. To this end she pointed out how challenging it was to convince farmers of new ideas – “they are not interested!” On the other side, Mr. Lee had experienced that the knowledge of the MOA’s extension staff was sometimes “not better than that of some farmers.”

From the Ministry’s point of view, the TTM was supposed to help farmers. “We have an agreement with them to assist our farmers”, Mr. Ratuyawa emphasised. To this end, within the Sigatoka area, the TTM supported predominantly the Cane Coast Farmer Association’s 8 to 14 farmers. In contrast, the MOA Research Station was theoretically responsible for every farmer in the province. It would probably be challenging to extend the same dedicated help to all these farmers than the TTM does to its few association members. However, as Ms. Masuka and the TTM managers pointed out, the Cane Coast Farmer Association was set up as an example for other farmers to follow and not as a broad scheme which should be established in the entire province straight away. Other farmers should see how successful a well-managed farmers association can be so that they felt enticed to follow the example.

8.5.2 Supporting the tourism-agriculture linkage – “We are encouraging”

All interviewed staff from the MOA agreed that the majority of farmers in the Sigatoka region grew for export, predominantly eggplant, papaya, chilli and okra. According to Ms. Masuka there was no incentive for many farmers to change what they are currently growing and start marketing to resorts directly. Others concurred: “There is no need to think outside the box” (Mr. Ratuyawa). For export-grade produce farmers get more money and commonly enter into a contract with an exporter and receive an annual quota and a fixed price agreement, all of which gave them planning security. Ms. Masuka agreed. She did not support the hotels’ tender system, because it created an unpredictable market for farmers. Nevertheless, she believed the tourism industry posed a valuable market, but “to get there, to really convince those purchasing officers [in resorts] is really a huge task.” She believed “the bargaining power of those middlemen, this ‘under-the-table thing’ ... in the hotels” was a serious problem. “On the other hand” however, “consistency of supply also matters. Both sides matter”, she concluded. “We need the Government to intervene!”

If more tourism income is to remain in farming communities, then more farmers need to grow products that are sought after by hotels. The MOA’s “Fiji 2020” agricultural policy agenda acknowledges this idea (Ministry of Agriculture, 2014). The Senior Economic Planning Officer Mr. Ratuyawa agreed, but concluded that increasing agricultural exports was the more “immediate goal. ... That's because every government needs foreign currency. That's the main focus now.” Dr. Gibson from the University of the South Pacific agreed. Despite this priority, the MOA seemed to have multiple additional targets. During our 71-minute interview on tourism-agricultural linkages, Mr. Ratuyawa used sentences such as “The Ministry is encouraging...” 25 times. With respect to better connecting tourism and agriculture he mentioned that the MOA encouraged, among other things:

1. value-adding and diversification of agriculture, e.g. certified organic production;
2. public-private-partnerships through 15 to 20 year tax breaks for foreign investors, to overcome the development gap from either subsistence- or export-oriented-farmers to a local production for the tourism industry;
3. commercial banks to provide more loans to farmers;
4. farmers to follow the MOA guidelines for marketing to hotels;

5. tourist to try local food through the development of “local cuisines and exotic foods.” For example, the MOA engaged in culinary promotion tours through New Zealand, Australia and USA, employing chefs (e.g., Colin Chung and Robert Oliver) as culinary ambassadors, supporting cook book production (Chung, 2017) and, lastly, a training project for Yasawa islands chefs.

With this list of initiatives, the MOA seemed to have the supply as well as the demand side in mind. From the demand perspective, Mr. Ratuyawa pointed out that “it will take time for tourists to adapt, because they are used to what they like – overseas fruits and vegetables.” Even the MOA realised the going concern of most chefs: ‘you can’t go without’ Western food. The Ministry’s initiative to cultivate ‘Fijian cuisine’ certainly entertained the notion that tourists could be convinced otherwise, if chefs offered enticing local dishes. As pointed out in Section 7.8 above, this initiative had different outcomes than expected. Basic kitchen management and hygiene standards seemed a more pressing concern. I wondered if after the project the Ministry had measured variances in local food procurement by the participating resorts. “I think that’s a good question. And that is one thing that we need to know in order for us to understand so that we can see what’s the impact”, Mr. Ratuyawa thought. Apparently, the Ministry had taken steps to address this issue.

Two years ago we developed a unit called the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture. Their main purpose is to try to measure and evaluate what is the impact of this investment, whether it’s addressing the issue or not? So, it’s a new thing for us. Before – it’s funny – the project cycle in Fiji was planning, funding, implementation. Once the project was finished, that was the end of the project. We did not follow up, we did not monitor what was the impact.

Whether the chefs’ training project in the Yasawa islands was going to be successful or not, depended on whether the project was going to be continuous, “because if you do it only once, people will forget and then that’s the end of it”, Mr. Ratuyawa believed. But, no one knew for sure, because no project impact evaluation had been conducted – for this and many other projects.

Assuming that the MOA looks at sourcing patterns of tourist resorts, they will most likely discover facts similar to those presented in Section 6.7. I tell Mr. Ratuyawa about the high ratios of imported meat and dairy products that the Outrigger and other large-scale resorts are sourcing. Retaining more money locally through producing ‘hotel food’ will consequently mean not only increasing Fiji’s fruit and vegetable production, but also increasing

beef and dairy production significantly, which in turn may have substantial environmental implications, such as deforestation, erosion and eutrophication. I ask him “what will happen to your coral reefs, if you convert your land into pastures for livestock?” He laughs uneasily. “Gone!”

8.6 Summary

This chapter reported on my experiences with stakeholders of Fiji's food producing and trading environment, namely suppliers, farmers, an agricultural development aid programme and Government officials. When looking at Fiji's agricultural sector, it is important to note that over decades it has been driven predominantly by a commercial, yet centrally steered sugar cane industry. Fiji does not have a history of horticulturally diverse commercial farming enterprises, competing in a free market environment. Therefore, many farmers, even though born and raised on farms, have neither much experience nor education regarding fruit and vegetable farming, except for subsistence purposes. This and Fiji's history of ethnic unrest, non-renewal of land leases and land rights issues for Indo-Fijian farmers, might explain their often noted 'mind-set' of being cash-focussed and reluctant to take entrepreneurial risks and invest resources in new kinds of farming. Additionally, even though farmers seem to welcome tourism as a phenomenon, they struggle with the purchasing strategies of large-scale resorts. Export companies, in contrast, offer an opportunity to farmers similar to that of the Fiji Sugar Corporation and backed up by the MOA's agricultural development agenda: contracts over a limited range of products, fixed quotas and prices and therefore security of economic planning. To many farmers this is appealing, but it does not work well with the tourism industry's fluctuating needs for various fruits and vegetables at competitive prices.

Farmers that are not interested in or unable to become export producers, struggle to supply the variety, quality and consistency resorts demand. Intermediaries work hard to negotiate this 'efficiency gap' between mostly small-scale and untrained farmers and large multinational resorts. Some even seem to struggle to adhere to hygiene standards. Farmers that depend on intermediaries as their main market access might suffer the economic consequences of the intermediaries' more powerful bargaining position.

The MOA supports farmers through its research and extension efforts. Farmers welcome the free support in the form of agricultural infrastructure grants and seed material, but

knowledge transfer and training was not reported to be the strength of the MOA's staff. Additionally, the MOA is technically responsible for a large number of farmers. Moreover, the MOA stands accused of not taking full advantage of all available resources in an efficient manner. In contrast, international development aid in the form of the TTM is welcomed, but benefits only a relatively small number of associated farmers. This progressively self-reliant group of farmers, supported by the TTM, proved to possess an interest in new ideas. Many other farmers in Fiji reportedly lack this curiosity. Whether or not the TTM had some form of agenda behind its aid programme and how much of its resources were actually shared, seemed irrelevant to farmers. They acknowledged the exposure to new ideas that the TTM and the tourism industry provided, as a positive force for economic and social change. The TTM's support, however, only reached a few farmers, though it could have accommodated more.

Despite the fact that the MOA established increasing exports as Fiji's main agricultural goal, officials deemed the local tourism market attractive enough to support tourism-agriculture linkages through a set of policies. The Ministry supported and encouraged manufacturers to produce value-added products, public-private partnerships in agriculture, banks to provide more loans to farmers, the dissemination of guidelines how to supply resorts and, finally, culinary promotion and chef training initiatives, hoping that tourists would over time develop a liking for a 'contemporary Fijian cuisine'. The impacts of such policy initiatives were, however, not assessed and therefore remain unknown.

The agricultural sector in Fiji is caught in between its indigenous history of subsistence agriculture, its colonial history of commercial mono-cropping and land access issues, for those not indigenous to Fiji, as well as the Government's focus on export markets and at times inefficient research, development and extension services. On the other hand, pockets of agricultural development exist that are supported by international aid projects, which successfully connect with the tourism industry and provide welcome livelihood options for the participating farmers. However, those that benefit are better-off established farmers and not those living in poverty.

This chapter concluded the findings of this research. The thesis will now turn to a discussion of this and the findings in relation to the literature and methodology.

9 Discussion

9.1 Introduction

Chapter 9 moves on from reporting on findings to a discussion of these findings vis-à-vis the literature and theory framework of this study. The findings in Chapters 6 to 8 have demonstrated that the impact of Western-led tourism in upmarket large-scale resorts is differently perceived by chefs, intermediaries and farmers. The kitchen staff in resorts have to cater to the tourists' food preferences, which are mostly limited to dishes the predominantly Western tourists are familiar with. Local cuisine is showcased in tokenistic 'island night shows' or disguised in Western menus. Creative engagements in the form of fusion cuisine exist only in small, expensive fine-dining restaurants, but heritage island produce plays an insignificant role overall. The menus of these resorts are governed by a Western culinary paradigm that is ingrained through decades of Western-managed resorts. Fijian chefs have come to learn that their own food is inappropriate for tourists. A small boutique resort that focusses on high-end travellers who value local food experiences presents the only exception to this rule. Here, a local chef cooks a menu that is adapted to the Western palate, yet based mostly on local produce. The degree of local sourcing in resorts very much depends on the personal attitude and conviction of key individuals, such as executive chefs. Programmes aiming to strengthen farmer-kitchen relationships initiated and endorsed on an institutional corporate level by Western resorts are non-existent.

Farmers, on the other side, come from a background of centrally-organised mono cropping of sugar cane, which makes them ill-equipped for the diverse food demands of international resorts. Those farmers that have taken up horticultural production perceive resorts as an attractive market, nevertheless, but struggle to come to terms with the liberal market economy the resorts operate in. As a result, *iTaukei* farmers seem to do business with resorts only erratically; Indo-Fijian farmers take advantage of other, more predictable markets, such as food exporters. Agricultural aid programmes offer support in terms of working directly with resorts, but only well-established farmers with secure access to land appear to be willing or able to take advantage of such support. There are also a num-

ber of Governmental efforts geared towards supporting a closer connection between resorts and farmers, but their outcomes are thus far unclear. Moreover, Fiji's Government appears to prefer export agriculture to increase its foreign exchange reserves.

These findings are now analysed and discussed in this chapter, drawing upon postcolonial theory and Sahlins' (1992) cultural change theory in relation to food-led corporate community development (CCD). The following section highlights how applying the concept of cuisine within the scope of this research has helped to draw out cultural dimensions of agriculture-tourism linkages in Fiji. In doing so, the section relates back to the first research question on the usefulness of the concept of cuisine in understanding linkages between tourism, agriculture and development. Section 9.3 extends this discussion by describing how Fijian cuisine has been humiliated in Sahlins' sense in the current mass-tourism market. Here I draw particularly on the perception of executive chefs. The following Section 9.4 moves on to the viewpoints of farmers and other agricultural stakeholders, comparing the findings of this study to previous literature on tourism-agriculture linkages, and discusses research question two on how chefs, farmers and intermediaries perceive Western-led tourism in Fiji. Finally, Section 9.5 elaborates on the findings of this study in relation to the CCD framework, integrating Sahlins' theory of cultural change. The section goes on to discuss the third research question of how large-scale upmarket resorts can engage in meaningful local community development through linkages to food producers, drawing attention to the cultural and ecological implications of a Western-dominated cuisine in tourism.

9.2 Applying the concept of cuisine

This study has conceptualised cuisine to investigate tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries from a more culturally-attuned angle. Accordingly, the first research question asks in how far cuisine is a valuable analytical concept for understanding linkages between tourism, agriculture and development. As described in the methodology chapter (see also Figure 9), the answer to this question is facilitated through the second research question on perceptions of chefs, farmers and intermediaries of Western-dominated tourism. The following section discusses in greater detail key outcomes of conceptualising and applying cuisine within the scope of this study.

At its heart, the concept of cuisine encompasses not only the practices around food preparation and consumption (Laudan, 2013), but also other implications of food. “Cultural habitudes, social-economic conditions, and political landscapes” (A. M. Young et al., 2015, p. 198) are just as much part of cuisine as the natural environment and agricultural practices (Civitello, 2011; Diamond, 1999; Heine, 2004; Lougheed, 2010). Thinking about tourism-agricultural linkages through cuisine therefore urges us to acknowledge how agricultural practices, social conditions, trade, colonisation and so forth influence what gets eaten, where and by whom – and vice-versa. What gets eaten can also affect agriculture, social conditions and trade, in turn. In contrast to foodways, the strength of using the concept of cuisine in this research is that it proposes a starting point for assessing food-driven linkages by looking at kitchen chefs, the negotiators of tourism, culture and food.

The findings of applying the concept of cuisine are presented predominantly in Chapter 6, but can be found throughout the three findings chapters. Attention to Fiji’s colonial history, the nature of its agricultural sectors, the environmental conditions of the islands, the backgrounds of the participants, their personal relationships to cooking and farming of food and their greater cultural background – all these factors are a product of looking at tourism-agricultural linkages through cuisine. Perhaps the most important aspect of cuisine, however, is its attention to the cultural dimension of food and its ability to answer questions about identity and status of those individuals concerned with food (Fischler, 1988; Goody, 1982). The acknowledgement of local experiences and viewpoints is what makes the concept of cuisine valuable to critical thinking on development and tourism (Dobers & Halme, 2009; Muthuri et al., 2012; Owen & Kemp, 2012). This aspect revealed, for instance, that some Fijian chefs have come to see Western food as superior. Moreover, they had to learn what parts of their food culture can be served to tourists and what parts cannot. The following section will elaborate on these findings and emphasise how important it is to acknowledge such cultural dimensions of food in research on tourism-agricultural linkages, applying Sahlins’ (1992) theory of cultural change.

9.3 Sahlins and the humiliation of cuisine

9.3.1 Humiliation

Through colonisation and, later on, the globalised tourism industry, Fijians were and still are exposed to what Fukuyama (1992) called the importation of Western cultural values, life styles and business concepts. In this respect authors such as Britton (1982), Crick (1989), Khan (1997) and Nash (1989) have framed tourism in developing countries as a form of neocolonialism, rendering the local societies as victims rather than active negotiators of this ‘importation’. Interestingly, in Fiji such concerns had already been expressed locally. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Fiji’s first Prime Minister, spoke out against burgeoning mass-tourism development in Fiji in the 1960s and 1970s. He was worried about low levels of local ownership, detrimental socio-cultural impacts and the overall threat to the country's autonomous control over its development (Kanemasu, 2015, p. 66). Today, considering that Fiji’s international arrival statistics are dominated by Western visitors, mostly from Anglo-Saxon countries (78 %, based on Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018e), the question arises how has Fiji fared with respect to the Prime Minister’s concerns. This question goes beyond the scope of this study, but looking at the local linkages between large resorts and local farmers through the concept of cuisine can provide an insightful perspective on socio-cultural impacts of tourism. In order to discuss the perception of chefs, farmers and intermediaries of the Western-dominated tourism sector in Fiji (2. Research questions), I draw on Sahlins’ (1992) cultural change theory and its concepts of ‘develop-man’ and ‘modernisation-through-humiliation’.

In the context of the South Pacific, Sahlins (1992) proposed that indigenous people possess agency in cultural change processes. This stands in contrast to world system theorists (e.g., Wolf, 1997), who argued that they were rather victims of colonisation, capitalism and globalisation. In Sahlins’ view, indigenous people engage in what he termed ‘develop-man’, a process by which Pacific islanders adopt or reject, knowingly and willingly, parts of a foreign culture they are presented with, for instance through globalisation and tourism. If adopted, foreign beliefs and practices become part of their own ontology and the culture becomes ‘creolised’ (R. Cohen, 2007). Through this process of indigenising the foreign, their culture remains intact and there is cultural continuity through change (Sahlins, 1992). If, however, indigenous culture becomes ‘humiliated’, fundamental changes occur and the continuous “cycle of develop-man reproduction and expansion”

(Robbins, 2005, p. 10) is broken. Humiliation, in this context, refers to a state where members of a culture “learn to hate what they already have, what they have always considered their well-being. Beyond that, they have to despise what they are, to hold their own existence in contempt – and want, then, to be someone else” (Sahlins, 1992, p. 24). This, says Sahlins, is a necessary condition for indigenous people to fundamentally want to change and aspire to modernise.

When presented with what indigenous people often come to perceive as the more refined and affluent culture, people may develop an inferiority complex, according to Sahlins. He does not expand on the notion of humiliation, but other scholars have. Fanon (1967) and Margalit (1996) proposed that colonialisation has presented, and neocolonialisation still does so, a humiliating experience for indigenous people. Furthermore, critics of Sahlins’ theory point out that the processes of develop-man and modernisation-through-humiliation are likely to occur simultaneously, at various stages and in multiple strands across cultures (Foster, 2005; Josephides, 2005; Kumoll, 2007). Based on the findings of this research, especially considering the observations at the Outrigger resort, I argue that Fiji’s cuisine has been humiliated through the introduction of Western-led mass tourism.

In the 1970s the beginning of mass tourism in Fiji established Western cuisine as a tourism standard. Fijian chefs were ‘born and raised’ under the paradigm of Western tourism. The case of the Outrigger’s Executive Chef vividly describes how “work under full European style of culinary delivery” during his early career had made him dismiss his own culinary background. For him, “soup had to be consommé” and not an Indo-Fijian lentil soup (‘dal’), with which he would have been much more familiar. This circumstance had a profound effect on the Outrigger’s Executive Chef, as he recalled: “I never even thought of putting my hands into curry, not even the *lolo*.” Locals seeking work in the kitchens of Western resorts had to learn that their own food was considered inferior. Neither *iTaukei* nor Indo-Fijian dishes were regarded as acceptable food for Western tourists. This resonates with Pollock’s (1992) observation that “[d]uring the colonial period [in the South Pacific], pride in local foods was overwhelmed by messages about cash crops and the greater efficacy of Western foods” (p. 235; see also Wilk, 2006, on examples from the Belize). Other works on tourism in SIDS also noted how reluctant local chefs were to put their own cuisine onto restaurant menus (Berno, 2011; Oliver et al., 2010). Considering that tourism in poor countries can be “a powerful symbol of wealth and privilege” (Jaakson, 2004, p. 170), it could cause people to want to change their own culture and

modernise, as Sahlins (1992) suggested. However, this modernisation-through-humiliation process might have just pertained to one aspect of Fijian culture and not the entirety of it (see Foster, 2005; Josephides, 2005). Therefore it is unlikely to have caused a cultural upheaval to the extent that Fijians felt the need to modernise the entirety of their culture. Certainly, however, the argument pertains to food culture within the sphere of Fiji's tourism sector.

Today, the large-scale resorts that were part of this study still operate largely according to this paradigm. Western fare dominates the menus and "everyone still eats bacon and eggs for breakfast" (Outrigger's Executive Assistant). Some Western consumers may have a heightened interest in 'local food' (see Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Mount, 2012), but looking at the omnipresent theme of 'island night shows' in Fijian holiday resorts, I argue that their voices do not have much leverage on what food gets served in these resorts. This also alludes to findings of Vermeir and Verbeke (2006), who found that consumers may be in favour of sustainable food choices, but they do not act accordingly. Perhaps, those consumers who are more interested in local or sustainable food experiences prefer different types of accommodation, as the case of the small-scale boutique resort suggests. In mass tourism, however, Fijian cuisine is mainly marginalised to tokenism, a few hours on the curricula of educational institutions and a side dish – if at all – to Western staples. Dr. Gibson points out that young cooks seem to be more interested in Western foods than in their traditional cuisine. The same observation becomes obvious in the young sous chef's perception that French cuisine, rather than his own, was "perfect". Senior chefs encourage this notion by, for example, judging young cooks on whether or not they can prepare a hollandaise sauce, rather than on the taste of their *vudi vakasosso* or goat curry. A good command of Western cuisine is a prerequisite for cooks in Fiji. If and when this skill is mastered, fine-dining restaurants might pose some creative space for marrying Fijian and Western cuisines, but overall menus are rigid, aligned with Western preferences and creative space is limited.

These observations speak of the fact that chefs have adopted Western cuisine as the more desirable food, at least within the boundaries of their profession. Pollock's 'efficacy' argument with respect to food in tourism still holds today. This goes to show that since the introduction of mass tourism, Fijian cuisine has not been developed further into a contemporary version by the mass-tourism industry, despite recent attempts (see Section 3.6).

From a postcolonial theory viewpoint, one could argue that ‘the ambiguous gift of tourism’, to adapt C. M. Hall and Tucker’s (2004a, p. 6) expression, has made Fiji subject to Western domination. This ambiguity lies within the opportunities of economic development through tourism vis-à-vis the dependence on tourism according to Western preferences and the associated socio-cultural implications for host communities. Therefore, tourism arguably constitutes a form of neocolonialism, where tourists specify menus, not hosts. The guests of large-scale upmarket resorts did not seem particularly interested in local food beyond tokenism. Fijian cuisine has become a tourist commodity and detached from the ongoing development on local terms – from the cycle of cultural continuity-through-change – as Sahlins would argue. In this sense, local cuisine became humiliated and modernised according to Western standards.

9.3.2 Creativity and develop-man

There is, however, a second aspect to the argument presented above. Even though Western-led tourism can be a colonising force in the sense of imposing a particular cuisine onto destinations, local chefs could perhaps take this rather as a challenge and try to creatively use local recipes and products to provide guests with exciting new dishes. Such creativity, some scholars argue, could bring together local food suppliers, traditional cuisine and tourists’ expectations, to the benefit of tourists and farmers (Berno, 2015; Larsen, 2010; Larsen & Österlund-Pötzsch, 2012; Parkinson, 1989). This rationale has prompted a number of awareness-raising and training projects for Fiji and other South Pacific SIDS. For example, the FHTA holds annual chef’s competitions, where creating localised dishes is one discipline. Scholars and celebrity chefs with extensive experience in Fiji have published cook books and TV documentaries on contemporary Fijian and Pacific cuisines that encourage tourists and chefs alike to use more local produce (Chung, 2017; Fiji Television Ltd. & Seeto, 2015; Oliver et al., 2010, 2013; Parkinson, 1989; Parkinson et al., 1995; Zoomslide, 2014). The Fijian Government (DEPTFO News, 2016, December 11), the regional tourism organisation SPTO (Chefs for Development, 2016) and the global NGO WWF (2016) have individually initiated or supported trainings for resort chefs on how to make use of island produce in a contemporary fashion that suits the palates of tourists. They all encourage “playful nostalgia” (Larsen, 2010, p. 90) – the creative engagement with culinary heritage to fit contemporary gastronomic standards of prepa-

ration, taste and presentation. From a development theory perspective, many of these initiatives presented above could be taken as examples of CCD (Banks et al., 2016) – specific development initiatives that are supposed to deliver benefits from the private sector to local people. In these cases here, however, they are mostly initiated and facilitated by actors outside of the private sector, for instance NGOs, bilateral donors and governments. The CCD framework does not integrate this aspect. Yet, they are aimed at the private sector and therefore are geared towards benefiting local agricultural producers. Unfortunately, however, despite best intentions, these initiatives do not seem to have had enduring influence beyond the life of the project, so far. Impacts have not been measured and key informants, such as Fiji’s Director of Tourism and the FHTA’s President, report that they have not observed any changes in the industry. The findings from this study certainly challenge the notion that encouraging creativity amongst chefs is an effective approach.

Cooking at the Outrigger meant long and hard weeks. Depending on your shift, you would get up early mornings, or come home around midnight. Working around ten hours a day for six days a week was common practice. Overall, professional cooking is no leisurely affair that liberally allows for creative time, as Wellton et al. (2016) point out. The strenuous work was lightened up by friendly mockery and camaraderie, but there was also open harassment and rebuke. Where Indo-Fijians somehow seemed to take this treatment as a fact of life – “we Indians are born with a stick” (Vishal), *iTaukei* appeared upset. The senior ranks in the Outrigger’s kitchen staff were principally filled by Indo-Fijians, as was the case in all other large-scale resorts I visited. Menu choices, and many other managerial decisions, were taken by them. This is also exemplified by the F&B Manager’s experience of how his ideas on serving *iTaukei* food were mostly disregarded. Given Fiji’s ethnic background, this power-imbalance may have put additional pressure on employees. There appears to be a troubling issue of ethnic power imbalance at work here, but it is beyond the scope of this study to investigate this further.

However, this environment of different ethnicities in one kitchen in combination with clear-cut perceptions of what tourists like to eat (‘you can’t go without...’), frustrating experiences with putting more localised dishes on to menus (‘we’ve tried, but...’) and, to a degree, the low educational standards of young cooks (‘good chefs are hard to find’) demonstrate the limitations in terms of a creative engagement with local food. Interestingly, no chef or cook interviewed mentioned that there was a need to be more creative

in order to make use of more local produce. Chef Jack aptly summarised that “at the end of the day I don't need to make sure I source locally”, but rather serve what guests request. This situation led to local produce being used principally in three different ways. Firstly, wherever it can be procured at a suitable quality and consistency and align with common ingredients of Western dishes, for instance tomatoes, salads, pumpkin or strawberries. Secondly, local food in terms of more traditionally grown island produce (e.g., *moca*, *bele*, *vudi*, *ota* and *dalo*) are used either if they can substitute an otherwise imported Western produce (e.g., *moca* for spinach), which pertains to only a few items, or within Westernised local and fusion recipes. These kinds of recipes are predominantly employed in ‘island night shows’ once or twice a week. Here, food is local in the sense that it is marketed as ‘authentic’ or ‘traditional’ and presented alongside cultural performances, constituting a cultural showpiece for the tourists’ gaze (Urry, 1992). According to my village experience they do not resemble a realistic concept of *iTaukei* food. Thirdly and to the least extent, local food is used in small fine-dining restaurants. Here, foreign and Fijian cuisines are merged to create dishes that have enough recognisable attributes, yet offer novel combinations of flavours and textures – a creative method frequently applied in high-end restaurants (Larsen, 2010; Messeni Petruzzelli & Savino, 2015). Larsen (2010) refers to this as ‘playful nostalgia’. Interestingly, the fact that contemporary local fusion cuisine is served only in small, expensive restaurants in Fiji to a few affluent guests is consistent with findings of E. Brown et al. (2009) on the type of Western consumers who are likely to buy local food.

However limited, the creative fusion of local and international produce and recipes could constitute a form of ‘develop-man’ in Sahlins’ sense and a break away from the dichotomy of what can and cannot be served to tourists. Over time, such creativity might influence menus and tourist experiences outside of fine-dining restaurants. This kind of develop-man might stand for the integration of foreign cuisine to enrich Fijians’ own cuisine on their own terms. My experiences in Navuevu and research by Pollock (1992) suggest that at a village level this might be the case. There, European, Chinese and Indo-Fijian foods are voluntarily integrated into domestic *iTaukei* cuisine. Chinese soy sauce, corned beef, white bread, breakfast crackers and chicken curry, for instance, have become integral parts of *iTaukei* cuisine (Pollock, 1992). Vice-versa, Indo-Fijians use island produce such as *dalo* or *uto* for their curries. Local cuisines do not stand still the moment colonialism or globalisation occurs in developing countries. There is no such thing as ‘the one

traditional cuisine'. Cuisine continuously develops alongside foreign influences (Myhrvold et al., 2011; Wilk, 2006). But, important to realise in this respect is that the negotiation of how cuisine develops in the domestic sphere occurs on the people's own terms. With respect to the humiliation of Fijian cuisine argument, it is therefore necessary to delineate between food in the tourism industry and food in Fijian homes. In the tourism industry it is prescribed by Western visitors, appreciating 'McTourism' in which familiar, homogenous and predictable (see Ritzer, 2015) 'hotel food' reigns the menu, ingrained through generations of expatriate chefs. For the Fijian employees of this form of tourism, Fisher's (2004) argument holds that "local people have to accommodate the worldview of outsiders" (p. 137), or rather: the cuisine of their visitors.

The Outrigger's Executive Chef as well as chef Jeff, both Fijians, were only able to fuse local products into their menus because they had been educated in Western-led kitchens. Without "the big names and the big guys, the European guys" (Outrigger's Executive Chef) they would have not been able to transform the local into a contemporary international standard. No wonder then, that predominantly chefs from outside of Fiji, rarely local chefs, develop a 'playfully nostalgic contemporary island cuisine' through their cook books, TV programmes and trainings. Postcolonial theory would critique this as a systemic continuation of dependency on the West. Colonisers introduced Western foods to the Pacific islands, resulting in a move away from more traditional fare and an appreciation of a Western diet. This has led to various health issues (Thaman, 1982; World Health Organization, July 2010) as well as a commodification of Fijian cuisine in mass-tourism operations. Anachronistically, now outsiders take it upon themselves to introduce what they believe to be a contemporary and healthy version of South Pacific cuisine back to the islanders in an effort to endorse local culture, healthy diets and linkages to local food producers. Without doubting the positive intentions behind this 're-introduction', it is arguable whether this constitutes a form of neocolonialism or development aid. This conundrum is reminiscent of Nederveen Pieterse's (2000) critique that postcolonial theory is "directionless in the end" (p. 187).

From a postcolonial perspective, this kind of 'playful nostalgia' is essentially a Western-driven concept, which resort chefs harness to entertain a few affluent Western visitors. Nevertheless, it might yet create a positive effect for the income of local farmers and perhaps, over time, help change tourists' perceptions of Fijian cuisine. However, looking ahead the significant growth of Asian visitors to Fiji in the past years (Fiji Bureau of

Statistics, 2018e; Vada-Pareti, 2015) may foreshadow another ‘modernisation-through-humiliation’ of Fijian cuisine in the tourism industry. Humiliation can certainly occur through not only Western cultures (Josephides, 2005; Kumoll, 2007). Among other strategies, the World Bank (2016b) proposed, for instance, that Pacific islands should attract greater numbers of Chinese tourists to strengthen their economic development. Vada-Pareti (2015) found, however, that about half of Chinese visitors to Fiji preferred Chinese food. Will ‘island night shows’ and fine-dining fusion dinners need to accommodate more Asian food? What future implications will this have for Fiji’s agricultural sector? Will Fijian farmers need to grow food according to the Chinese palate?

The answers to these questions are not part of this research, but they certainly highlight how the agenda of the tourism industry might impact host communities through cuisine, today and in future, just as colonialisation has done so in the past. Overall, interviewees contended that, on the one hand, very little of the creative culinary engagement proposed by chef’s competitions, cook books, trainings and so forth materialised on resort menus; on the other hand, tourists were actually not looking for it. Despite paying lip service to their interest in Fijian cuisine, tourists tried local food “once, maybe twice. The rest is burgers, pizzas, fish and chips”, chef Paul aptly summarised. In large-scale and multinational resorts ‘local food’ offers a tokenistic experience for an occasional excursion into a Westernised ‘Otherness’ of Fijian culture. For the remainder of their stay, tourists prefer Western food.

The example of GM Chris and chef Martin, who managed a small boutique resort and successfully offered a local menu, suggests that small resorts might be a different case. Here local food was served to customers due to three reasons. Firstly, the small resort marketed itself as a niche product to affluent, culturally interested, food-minded tourists, as GM Chris emphasised. Secondly, the owner of the resort was also the operator and therefore did not need to meet external financial targets. Lastly, the smaller size of the property enabled chef Martin to easily source from equally small local vendors and farmers, as also pointed out by Dr. Gibson and other scholars (Andriotis, 2002; Mshenga, 2010; Scheyvens & Russell, 2012). It seemed as if the scale of the resort matched the local food market. Overall, chefs of small-scale owner-operator resorts may have a higher degree of flexibility to source and cook locally than chefs of larger internationally managed resorts.

Perhaps small accommodation businesses offer a different prerequisite for connecting tourism and agriculture in SIDS. However, the six Fijian large-scale multinational resorts in this research only do so to a limited extent and only on their terms. The findings discussed above speak critically to literature on the benefits of including local food in tourist menus. Certainly, the large-scale resorts' menus do not promote local products to a great extent (cf. Herzog & Murray, 2013). From the tourists' viewpoint, food of a particular destination arguably resembles more than mere sustenance. It may stand for the culture of and belonging to a particular area (A. Jones & Jenkins, 2002; Montanari, 2006; Sims, 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013) and in this sense may be part and parcel of the identity of an entire destination (Sims, 2009; Timothy & Ron, 2013). However, in the case presented here, local food was only a significant part of the tourism experience if it provided mass-tourists with food they were familiar with. There was little opportunity to consume an authentic aspect of the host's food culture (cf. C. M. Hall & Sharples, 2003; B. Okumus et al., 2007). Resorts mainly offered varying degrees of Westernised versions of Fijian food. This supports Morris' (2010) argument of how the appreciative consumption of foreign cuisines speak of the attitude one culture has towards another. Following Morris, I argue that the presentation of Fijian food as 'island night shows' or expensive fusion cuisine on the menus of large-scale resorts speaks of the "culinary governance" the Western tourism industry has assumed, whereby Fijian food is "reduced to an interesting, but not critical ingredient" (Morris, 2010, p. 23) of the tourism product. This further supports the argument that Fijian cuisine is 'humiliated' in Sahlins' sense.

Sahlins (1992) argued that cultural humiliation is necessary to initiate a modernisation process in South Pacific cultures. To his mind, it would bring about a cultural self-consciousness through reflection. The 'humiliated' have agency in this process and through their reflection may decide to resist and/or integrate parts of the other culture. I will return to this argument further in the third section of this chapter in a discussion on the CCD framework. However, as employed labour in service of Western tourists, the agency and creative space of chefs seemed rather limited, which speaks critically to characteristics of sustainable development through tourism, such as self-esteem, dignity or the strengthening of cultural values of host communities (Goulet, 1968; Sharpley, 2015). To this end, I will now turn to a discussion of the agricultural stakeholders and food intermediaries and their perceptions of tourism.

9.4 Colonial remnants, the farmers' mind-set and rational choices

9.4.1 Impeding factors – history repeating?

Many of the impediments to agriculture-tourism linkages in developing countries discovered by previous research (see Section 3.3, Table 2) are evident in the findings of this research as well. The various parallels are briefly outlined in the following.

As the previous section discussed in depth, the mostly Western tourists had an “established and conservative food preference” (Bélisle, 1983, p. 504) for imported and/or ‘home-country’ produce – an impediment highlighted by a number of scholars (see Torres & Momsen, 2004, p. 300). From the large-scale accommodation industry’s perspective, the inconsistency of quality and quantity of local supply (see e.g., Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004) was pointed out as the predominant challenge time and again. Although chefs see the value of local food sourcing, they also despair when farmers or suppliers “over-commit and under-deliver” (chef Jack). “You can’t do business with people like that, as much as they are lovely and you want to be as patient as you can”, chef Lukas summarised many respondents’ perception. All three intermediaries interviewed agreed to this, as well. One of their major challenges was, however, to negotiate the different perceptions of quality, consistency and timeliness of hotels and food producers. There was also concerns about food safety among chefs, which, in light of hazardous pesticide use (see Sub-/Sections 7.7.1 and 8.2) indeed seemed justified (cf. Table 2, no. 2.7).

Farmers pointed out that some resorts’ procurement procedures were challenging (see Anderson, 2013). Especially the resorts’ tender process was pointed out by several farmers as difficult, because it did not provide them with planning security. The rationale behind tenders was increased competition as well as a suppression of supply monopolies - “to keep things fair, to keep things above water” (Outrigger’s Executive Chef). Nonetheless, chefs, farmers and Government officials provided anecdotal evidence of preferential treatments and downright corruption between purchasing managers and intermediaries. In Berno (2011), suppliers describe resort purchasing officers as “barracudas between suppliers and chef” (p. 97). This goes certainly against the necessity of ongoing, reciprocal and trustful communication between farmers and resorts (Laeis & Lemke, 2016; Rogerson, 2012a; Telfer & Wall, 2000).

On the farmers' side, there was poor agricultural infrastructure and little economy of scale. According to agricultural statistics, just under half of all farms are subsistence farms of less than one hectare and farm sizes overall averaged at about 3.9 hectares (Department of Agriculture, 2009, p. 33; Ministry of Agriculture, 2016b, p. 20). In comparison, New Zealand crop farms⁶⁴ average at about 86 hectares (Beef + Lamb New Zealand, 2017, p. 5). Those farmers that engaged in some form of commercial agriculture focussed on growing varieties for export rather than for the local tourism market and found it challenging to produce a reasonable quality in the off-season (see e.g., Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004). Sisifa et al. (2016) emphasise the limited access of Pacific farmers to finance, investment and extension services. Field visits to farms revealed basic irrigation systems, if present at all, low mechanisation and poorly maintained greenhouses. A lack of irrigation and greenhouses was certainly one reason why farmers did not manage to produce reliably throughout the year. According to key informants at the MOA's Sigatoka Research Station, farmers in the Sigatoka river valley were also mostly growing eggplant, okra, papaya, chili and curry leaves for export. The MOA supported export farming in an effort to support Fiji's foreign exchange earnings, as Mr. Raturawa pointed out (see also Rogerson, 2012a). Ms. Masau from the MITT further added that connecting tourism and agriculture has long been on the policy agenda, but only recently had those policies resulted in actual projects and programmes, such as chef trainings (e.g., Chefs for Development, 2016). This further resonates with scholars arguing that policy makers often simply assume such linkages to develop and therefore do not invest in policies that support or facilitate tourism-agriculture linkages (see Anderson, 2013; Pillay & Rogerson, 2013; Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004).

A previous finding that was not substantiated by this research is the aversion of large-scale resorts to source from multiple smaller farmers (Rogerson, 2012a). Chef Lukas, for instance, bought from various suppliers and farmers, sometimes even "from the back of a van"; chef Peter bought directly from multiple small-scale vendors at the local market. The fact that most resorts tender to about three fruit and vegetable suppliers, however, speaks of the fact that most business is done with a few larger suppliers. Given the vicinity of the case study resort and other Coral Coast resorts to Fiji's 'salad bowl' near Sigatoka,

⁶⁴ This excludes larger livestock farms to make the figure more comparable to Fiji's agricultural sector.

the distance between farms and accommodation businesses was not an issue (cf. Torres & Momsen, 2004), even though this research revealed how spatially fragmented access to suppliers was. The latter had little to do with geographic distance, but with the informal networks that determined who sourced from whom. These observations relate to the CCD framework in a sense that they appear to be in between intentionally planned and merely assumed impacts of resorts on local communities. A more thorough discussion of this observation will follow in the last section of this chapter. Lastly, it is questionable whether Torres and Momsen's (2004) argument that supporting tourism-agriculture linkages builds on locally available farming skills holds true. Generally speaking, there is farming capacity present in Fiji. However, whether that meets the tourism industry's demand is highly questionable. What farmers, coming out of a plantation system, know how to grow and what chefs like to use may be two very different things.

Thus far, this Fijian case study does not appear to be much different in its findings than earlier research. Arguably, future research is likely to produce again similar results for as long as it looks at the consequences of Western-driven tourism in developing countries. Therefore, this research goes beyond these recurring findings and offers novel insights into the perception of chefs and farmers towards large-scale Western-driven tourism which help to explain the underlying reasons for these ailing linkages in Fiji.

9.4.2 The mind-set of farmers

Most chefs, intermediaries, aid workers, Government officials and even the more established Indo-Fijian farmers I interviewed criticised the 'mind-set' of Fijian farmers for impeding further linkages. They were accused of not being willing to grow varieties that resorts wanted, invest in and adopt new farming systems or present themselves to resorts. These allegations portrayed a notion of 'backwardness', as so often found in perspectives on rural dwellers in developing countries (Elliott, 2013). This accusation referred to both Indo-Fijian and *iTaukei* food producers, but in different ways. I argue, however, that their mind-set is not backward, but speaks of rational choices in the light of their histories and cultures.

In the course of Fiji's colonisation, Indian indentured labourers were brought to the islands to work on sugar cane plantations. Today, their descendants are in many cases commercial farmers, born and raised on sugar cane farms. In contrast, *iTaukei* farmers mostly engage in subsistence and semi-subsistence food production in a more traditional

fashion (Manner & Thaman, 2013). Interviews with farmers and Government officials suggest that the history of Indo-Fijian farmers strongly impacts their current perception of farming options. Farmers Pushka, Dharman and Faizahl were brought up in a comparatively simple mono-cropping system of sugar cane, where agricultural diversification was not supported by the authorities (Knapman, 1985), therefore farmer Vikram and Mr. Ratuyawa (MOA) argued many farmers did not know better. Education on agriculture in general appeared to be marginal. Except for Vikram, none of the farmers had visited an agricultural training institution. Additionally, their sugar market was guided by the Fiji Sugar Corporation and was therefore more predictable than the current free market economy. From a societal perspective many Indo-Fijian farmers had been subject to ethnic violence caused by coups. Their land leases had not been renewed. They are often unable to own land and their mainstay, the sugar industry, has declined significantly (P. K. Narayan & Prasad, 2005). I argue this historical context makes many Indo-Fijian farmers vulnerable and explains their risk aversion and security-mindedness. They are not prepared to take on entrepreneurial risks, because they do not possess sufficient resources to fall back onto in case of failure, so selling to the export industry provides a more feasible livelihood strategy for many farmers around the Sigatoka valley (see Subsection 8.5.2). In contrast to the unpredictable, and in some cases even fraudulent tourism market, which requires a wide variety of produce, the export market needs only a limited and by now well established number of varieties. It provides fixed contracts, prices and quotas and therefore security for farmers. Not producing for resorts, but rather for exporters is therefore not in any way 'backward', but rather a rational decision.

The *iTaukei* food producers, on the other side, are embedded in their own cultural context of subsistence farming and adherence to traditional customs. Many chefs pointed out how erratic their supply was. As the interviews with chef Jack, chef Jeff, Dr. Gibson and A/Prof. Erskin-Smith emphasise, their economic engagement is based on customs and social needs. Furthermore, the majority of *iTaukei* own land, have strong family relationships and therefore a form of safety net to fall back on in times of hardship. Given these circumstances, the question might not be how come agriculture-tourism linkages are not well-established in Fiji, but why should they establish at all? There are economic and cultural reasons why Fijian farmers do not engage with the tourism market to a great extent. From an economic standpoint, however, selling to resorts can be lucrative. They pay above local market prices for a range of different produce. In contrast, the number of

exportable crops are limited and past contamination scares (e.g., Radio New Zealand, 2015, August 14) have shown that there can be major interruptions in international demand.

The Cane Coast Farmer Association members had realised their opportunity, however, and contradict the above theory. This group of farmers showed entrepreneurial spirit and valued the guidance of an international aid programme. The TTM helped to establish a farmer association, which bypassed intermediaries and supplied directly to a number of hotels. All farmers working with the association appreciated the TTM's assistance and acknowledged the resort market as valuable. They welcomed not only its economic opportunities, but also its wider influence. Some farmers were introduced by chefs to new varieties, received ideas about what else to grow, or were open to showing tourists around their farms. They mentioned that the TTM had very good advice on how to grow new varieties, on better farm management techniques and how to market directly to resorts. The five active association members I interviewed had very different backgrounds and life histories. What unified them, nevertheless, was that they were well-established Indo-Fijian farmers and interested in developing their farms further. Most owned land and did well economically. They could afford to try new farming methods and crops, for instance guava orchards (cf. Higgins et al., 2018; World Bank, 2017). These farmers were less vulnerable and therefore able to become entrepreneurs and take advantage of foreign aid assistance and the resort market.

Consequently, I argue that the Indo-Fijian farmers' ability to capture benefits from tourism depends predominantly on their available resources. The ability to own farmland or sign long-term lease titles might be key in this respect. Currently, this issue is addressed by the Government's Land Bank institution, according to Mr. Ratuyawa and public media (Chand, 2014, July 7; Delaibatiki, 2018, April 19). The value of this initiative is debatable, however (Acquaye & Crocombe, 1984). A comparable approach by Pacific neighbour state Samoa has not yielded noteworthy results (Ye, 2009). As far as *iTaukei* farmers are concerned, taking more advantage of the resort market depends on their willingness to adapt to the resorts' ways of doing business, as also mentioned by A/Prof. Erskin-Smith. He believed that a "cultural shift" from subsistence farmer to commercial farmer did not mean to "change the people" overall, but certainly how they were doing business. Erskin-Smith noted, however, that such a cultural shift might mean a trade-off between either adhering to traditional customs or to Western economic principles.

9.4.3 Resisting and integrating the tourism economy

Sahlins' cultural change theory helps to explain the normative effect of cuisine in large-scale resorts and its ensuing impact along the food chain, as described above. From an agricultural perspective, the concept of develop-man and humiliation-modernisation also applies to Fijian farmers. Under colonial rule the indentured Indians saw "humiliation and suffering ... on the sugar plantations" (Knapman, 1985, p. 83). Later generations witnessed coups and ethnic unrests (Beaglehole, 2013; Naidu, 2013). The history of Indo-Fijians in Fiji has been anything but peaceful and equal. To come to terms with this context and the decreasing sugar industry, the develop-man strategy of many Indo-Fijian farmers was to opt for export markets as the most reliable way to support their livelihoods. Coming out of a mono-crop sugar cane system, they switched to a few export crops, which was a reasonably safe economic decision. They could make a living out of planting papaya, okra, eggplant and chili. Why would they change their practices and risk losing money only to fit the tourism industry's demands? Whether this has altered their belief system, rituals or other non-economic aspects of their culture, as Sahlins theory would suggest, cannot be validated by this research. In contrast, access to land and possibly other livelihood assets, may well have a role to play in the farmers' ability to engage in entrepreneurship and seize opportunities arising in the tourism industry. This is exemplified by the Cane Coast Farmer Association members. So far, however, many Indo-Fijian farmers do not engage with the tourism industry.

The *iTaukei*, as well, resist the economic agenda pursued by the Western tourism industry. Their decisions are based on cultural and social needs and obligations. They have integrated the Western economic system into their own culture only to the extent that it supports their own understanding of a good life (Sahlins, 1992, p. 13). If a financial need arises, they fish lobster, sell to resorts and use the money to contribute towards their own affairs, towards their notion of a good life within their *vanua* (Nabobo-Baba, 2006). This, however, does not mean they will sell lobster regularly to anyone. *ITaukei* food producers resist the pressure to 'modernise' in this regard. The fact that they engage in economic exchanges with the tourism industry only if *they* need to, speaks of develop-man and, therefore, of the integrity of their own culture and resistance to some parts of the tourism economy.

9.5 Immanent flows, agricultural agendas and cuisine

From a developmental perspective the question remains, how large-scale multinational resorts can address rural poverty levels of about 38 percent in Fiji (Narsey et al., 2010, p. 13; World Bank, 2017, p. 19). Research question three therefore looks at how such resorts can engage in more meaningful local development through their food chains. As the literature review suggests, CCD offers a framework that links the presence of tourism capital and local responses in a development context (Banks et al., 2016). It moves away from the rather business-focussed approach of CSR and acknowledges that companies have immanent as well as intentional development impacts on communities, which in turn have agency in negotiating these impacts.

9.5.1 The immanent flow of cuisine

In terms of the CCD framework and the larger impact of the resorts in question, this research observed only ‘immanent flows’ to the farming community and no ‘intentional development’ (see Figure 11 below for an adapted version of the CCD framework). The large-scale resorts in Fiji that I researched did not engage proactively in intentional development activities related to food on an institutional level. The Outrigger’s official “Community Tourism initiative” (Outrigger, 2017a, para. 3) supported a school in the Sigatoka valley. As the resort’s Executive Assistant pointed out, local food was not on their CSR agenda. Nevertheless, within the WWF sustainable seafood project or TTM’s farmer association, the Outrigger and a number of other resorts participated reactively, after having been approached by these parties. This does not downplay the resorts’ role in the projects, but rather underlines how an NGO and an international aid programme were the driving forces, rather than the corporates themselves. The CCD framework does not accommodate for corporate development that is not industry-led, but third party-led. Yet, tourism capital is harnessed to develop communities and so, I argue, it does present a form of CCD.

Those resorts that did support individual food producers did so because of the conviction, commitment and personal relationships of executive chefs. This is in line with Mao et al.’s (2014) findings that it takes commitment and management time of key individuals to successfully integrate local producers. Laeis and Lemke (2016) also note how personal relationships play a key role in linking hotels and farms. However, the cases observed in

this study stand in contrast to the successful examples of such linkages provided in Section 3.5, because they lack the component of corporate commitment. For instance, Sandals Resorts had a corporate strategy in place and hired a full-time extension officer (Agriculture Commodities Programme, 2011). In Fiji, the Outrigger Executive Chef regularly sourced from Sigatoka farmer and intermediary Julius; chef Jeff sourced fruits and vegetables from the local *mataqali*; chef Peter supported three farmers and went shopping at the local market, even though it was against his company's policy. Without questioning the moral intentions of these individuals, the examples show that CSR activities are often at the same time business decisions (see Carroll & Shabana, 2010). Arguably, they are grounded in managerial concerns related to costs, revenues, competitive advantage or creating harmonious relationships with local communities (Ashley & Haysom, 2006; Blowfield, 2005). For example, sourcing from the local *mataqali* did not come at an economic disadvantage for chef Jeff and ensured a good relationship to the resort's landowning community. Chef Peter supported local farmers and vendors due to his notion that he had a responsibility to help Fijians, but at the same time he recognised the need for reliably available and well-priced local vegetables. In terms of the CCD and its concept of a development interface, it is important to acknowledge that these connections were very much relationship based. Several chefs pointed out in interviews how their capacity to source locally depended on who they knew and how well they looked after these relationships. Here, the agency of local farmers resides in how and with whom they choose to establish such relationships. From a chef's viewpoint, the better the local relationships were, the easier it seemed to be to source locally. However, despite the likelihood that these few cases presented above may have helped the food producers involved, they were the work of individuals and limited in scope. As such, they present what I refer to as 'guided immanent flows', rather than 'intentional development'. They are based on individual conviction and relationships to local producers, not on an institutional approach to local development.

On a much broader scope, the remaining food expenses of resorts can be classified as 'assumed immanent flows'. They materialised in the form of price-driven tender systems and intermediaries negotiating the efficiency gap between the rural space and multinational resorts. Both were often difficult to deal with for small-scale farmers. Their agenda was determined by the tourist's palate and purse. The chefs thought of themselves as service providers, whose success was measured by the satisfaction of their guests. Chefs

only put on menus what guests buy and guests mostly opt for ‘home food’, despite paying lip service to being interested in local food. Therefore, only farmers that produce the kind of food that can be sold to tourists will be “carried” (chef Mark). In CCD terms, only farmers that grow for the Western diet can become subjects of food-driven immanent capital flows from large-scale resorts. This speaks critically to Dobers and Halme’s (2009) question of “whose interests are focused on and whose are overlooked” (p. 246) in the development impacts of the private sector.

From the community’s perspective, many farmers grow for exporters, because farming-wise this is a known concept and economically a safer decision. Those farmers who cannot secure an export contract are likely to become dependent on intermediaries and potentially compromise a significant share of their income. Only established farmers who can draw on livelihood assets, for instance land and education, seem willing and able to change their farming and business practices, grow produce that fits the tourism industry and establish direct relationships with resorts – in other words: become entrepreneurs. Those that do, receive support from international aid programmes, such as in the case of the TTM and its Cane Coast Farmer Association. The TTM helps to overcome knowledge gaps, but also helps to acculturate farmers to Western mass tourism and to its own development aid agenda.

9.5.2 The place of culture in CCD

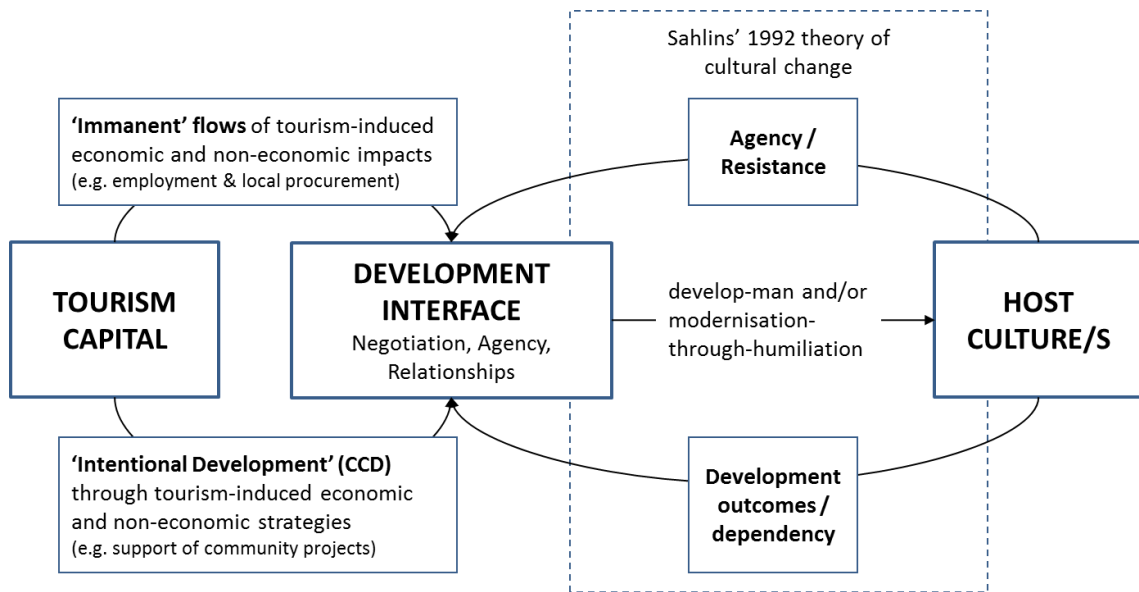
The concept of corporate community development (CCD), as the term implies, pertains to those activities of businesses that are geared towards community development. This study looked at CCD through the concept of cuisine. As the previous section described, these CCD efforts mostly took shape as immanent flows guided by individuals. It is important to note here that Banks et al. (2016) conceptualise CCD as the interplay of (international) capital and (local) community, implying that first and foremost the flows are of economic nature. To this point Rabie (2016) argues that it is impossible to disconnect culture and economy when thinking about human development (see also Section 4.6). They are inextricably linked and influence each other. Therefore, Rabie suggests that this interplay is important in the question of “progress and stagnation, development and underdevelopment” (p. 10) of societies. For this reason I follow Spenceley and Meyer’s (2012) argument that tourism should be thought of as a “powerful social force” (p. 301),

in which the tourist industry's financial power and its associated agenda have significant cultural impacts. Within the scope of this research, they manifested as follows.

International large-scale tourism defined what is regarded as acceptable and desirable food. Even though this effect was in the first instance confined to resort kitchens and restaurants, it was nevertheless facilitated by local employees. Therefore, this may contribute to a different appreciation of food and perhaps a further popularisation of Western foods (Gerbasi et al., 2014; Snowdon et al., 2013; Thaman, 1988; World Health Organization, July 2010). By extension of the first point, tourism's demand for particular foods defined what kind of agriculture local farmers needed to pursue in order to be able to benefit from the tourism economy. This influence is furthered by the agenda of foreign aid programmes, as for instance the TTM. They conduct agricultural development aid based on their Taiwanese agricultural capacity. Introduced species (e.g., guava), seeds and agricultural machinery were tied to their own agricultural background and not based on locally adapted species or traditional practices. Lastly, economic activities in the tourism-agriculture linkage are structured according to a Western liberal business understanding, which may stand in contrast to local concepts of exchange.

These findings are a result of using the concept of cuisine as a lens onto tourism-agriculture linkages in Fiji. Cuisine encompasses more than mere recipes and preparation methods. It highlights the natural environment, agricultural practices, trade, migration and so forth as important factors in the creation of cuisine and, therefore, in the linkage between resorts and farmers. For these reasons I argue that it is valuable to further the CCD perspective on tourism capital's impact from 'community' to 'host cultures', as argued at the end of Chapter 4 and depicted in Figures 7 and 11, respectively⁶⁵.

⁶⁵ Figure 11 is alike to Figure 7. It is again presented here as an aid to the reader and for clarification.

Figure 11: Sahlins' cultural change theory in the CCD framework

Sources: G. Laeis based on Banks et al. (2016, p. 246) and Sahlins (1992)

This adapted version of the Banks et al.'s CCD framework furthers an understanding of the implications of development through tourism on the basis of Sahlins' theory. Critically, it highlights not only the economic, but also the cultural implications of the tourism private sector for host cultures. Thirlwall (2014) argued that the concept of self-esteem, critical to sustainable human development (Goulet, 1968), implies that not only should individuals be able to have self-respect, but also whole nations need to be independent in their affairs. According to Thirlwall, this is impossible in situations where a state "is exploited by others, or cannot conduct economic relations on equal terms" (p. 26). Arguably, from the postcolonial viewpoint outlined in Section 2.6 the international tourism industry can qualify as such. Nevertheless, the application of Sahlins' theory to the findings of this research emphasises how local people possess agency in negotiating the social, cultural and economic impacts of tourism.

On the one hand, tourism can impose cultural and economic paradigms onto destinations. On the other hand, local people have agency in negotiating such influences. As this research has shown, such agency takes the shape of develop-man and modernisation-through-humiliation – simultaneously and in various parts of Fijian society. Figure 11 depicts this as a feedback from the development interface, in which local communities interact with the tourism industry based on their own agency. Whether or not Fijian cultures, *iTaukei* and Indo-Fijian and the different sub-cultures therein, remain intact and in

how far such changes constitutes a better life depends on the perception and negotiation of their own peoples. Well-being is subjective, highly contextual (Copestake, 2008) and differs from concepts of economic wealth or poverty. However, the argument of agency of local people should not downplay the overall force international mass tourism develops.

Despite the publication of cookbooks on ‘contemporary’ Fijian food since the 1980s, culinary training programmes, the involvement of NGOs, ministries and celebrity chefs: Fiji’s mass-tourism cuisine, as far as observed within this study, remains largely Western. Moreover, it has cast Fijian cuisine into an existence of tokenism and cultural hybridisation. This, of course, has implications not only for tourism, but also for agriculture. Forecasts predict that destinations like Fiji will see a further increase in demand. The President of the Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association agreed and believed Fiji needed more resorts to offer suitable accommodation options. This will likely spur market development and tourist numbers, but also pose the question, how inclusive such a development would be? For instance, if the rural areas are supposed to benefit from the predicted growth, then the agricultural sector will need to develop accordingly.

9.5.3 Environmental implications of Western cuisine

The Government’s Land Bank initiative and other policy support for tourism-agriculture linkages (see Section 3.6) as well as international tourist arrival growth rates (Fiji Bureau of Statistics, 2018e) might constitute an impetus for more local food production and respective uptake by resorts in future. Again it is pertinent to consider Dobers and Halme’s (2009) question, according to whose agenda will the future development of Fiji’s agriculture ensue and what consequences could be expected?

The food purchasing figures of the Outrigger (see Figure 10) seem similar to other Fijian large-scale multinational resorts and, in parts, to research on hotels in Bhutan (Pratt et al., 2018; Rinzin, Vermeulen, & Glasbergen, 2007). The highest economic potential to channel more tourism money into Fiji’s agriculture lies in meat, dairy and, to a more limited extent, horticulture. If Fiji’s MOA was to declare this finding a general development paradigm, beef and dairy production, among other livestock, would become a primary goal. Taking the Outrigger statistics as a hypothetical basis, this might mean up to FJ\$1.56 million (\approx US\$735,000) per year per large-scale resort for the local economy. Substituting imported fruits and vegetables locally would equate to up to just FJ\$305,000

(≈US\$144,000) per year. Important to note here is that less than a quarter of this would be spent on locally adapted, traditional food crops, as outlined in Section 6.7 above. In this respect Crosby (1986) pointed out how the introduction of European plants and animals has led in many places around the world to a ‘europeanisation’ of the environment. In contrast, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (2018b) argues that local heritage crops are important to cultivate due to their nutritional value and adaptation to local climatic conditions. Dismissing them would contradict concepts of sustainable development. Firstly, the current SDG agenda calls for “urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats [and] halt the loss of biodiversity” (see Target 15.5, UN, 2016). Relatedly, Target 2.6 highlights the necessity to support resilient agricultural systems to achieve food security. Secondly, the sustainable tourism goals, advocated by the UNWTO and UNEP (2005), posit tourism needs to ensure biological diversity, minimise environmental pollution and use available resources efficiently. Lastly, the ecological degradation as a result of agriculture for tourism will likely contradict ideas of a ‘good life’ in a Fijian *vanua* (Goulet, 1968; Tuwere, 2002).

Indeed, substitutions of food imports should be considered carefully. Certainly there is room for improvement for more local food production, for instance in terms of horticulture. However, if there were to be more cattle farms, for instance, there would also be a need for land for grazing and fodder production. Conventional cattle farming, however, has been associated with land degradation, eutrophication and greenhouse gas emissions (Pimentel, 2006; Steinfeld, Gerber, Wassenaar, Castel, & De Haan, 2006). Converting the hilly inner land on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu (see Subsection 4.3.2) into grazing grounds will likely cause soil erosion (Pimentel, 2006) and ensuing sedimentation on and therefore degradation of Fiji’s coral reefs (Hoffmann, 2002). These, however, are an important ecological asset (see SDG 14) and a livelihood resource for coastal communities. Consequently, to make a meat- and dairy-heavy Western cuisine an agricultural paradigm for Fiji to retain tourism money locally also means to internalise its environmental costs. Taking this step would be ironic for a country that has recently presided over the 23rd Conference of Parties to the UN Climate Change Convention and pleaded for more urgent climate action. Therefore, the question arises, whether localising more of Fiji’s tourism food chain would be desirable at all. More environmentally sustainable options of livestock management do exist, however, for instance in the form of organic agriculture (Lampkin, 2002). The argument of this subsection presents a critical and novel aspect to

long-held calls for connecting tourism and agriculture in developing countries more closely (e.g., from Anderson, 2013; Mao et al., 2014; Dorothea Meyer, Ashley, & Poultney, 2004).

9.6 Summary

To elaborate on the three research questions of this study, this chapter has discussed the research findings based on the literature and theory framework presented in Chapters 1 to 4. Sahlins' theory of cultural change, the concept of cuisine, CCD, strategies for sustainable development and previous research on tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries were the main reference points within this discussion.

Applying the concept of cuisine has provided an entry point for this study. The focus on chefs and cooks has brought to light how decades of Western-led tourism in Fiji has influenced perceptions of their own culinary heritage. It has also shed light on how Fijian cuisine has become mostly a tokenistic commodity, or a subject of cultural hybridisation for a few affluent tourists. The acknowledgement of local experiences and viewpoints all along the food supply chain is what makes the concept of cuisine valuable to critical thinking on development and tourism. In this respect Sahlins' theory of cultural change helps to understand how the development of Western-led mass tourism in large-scale resorts has 'humiliated' Fijian cuisine. Even though pockets of creative engagement with local food exist, they are mostly driven by non-Fijian actors. From a postcolonial viewpoint this is seen as a continuation of Western dominance. Additionally, encouraging 'playful nostalgia' amongst Fijian chefs to support uptake of local produce, and therefore the income of farmers, is yet to prove successful.

Local farmers, on the other side, negotiate this Western-led demand for food according to their own necessities and goals. Indigenous food producers tend to engage with resorts according to their own financial needs, which are often related to their cultural calendars; many Indo-Fijian farmers opt to grow for exporters, which present them with a more reliable and predictable market. In other words, many farmers resist the tourism economy to a certain degree through decisions that are not arbitrary or backwards minded, as so often suspected, but economically reasonable. From a resort's perspective, this renders local supply unreliable in terms of quality, quantity and consistency – an issue noted throughout the literature on agriculture-tourism linkages. Intermediaries then try to bridge

the efficiency gap between resorts and farmers to make local supply fit to the needs of resorts. Those farmers that proactively engage with resorts, aided by agricultural development programmes, are farmers that can draw on a number of essential livelihoods assets, such as secure access to land or education.

Assessing the results from a CCD perspective revealed that direct linkages between resorts and farmers were merely 'guided' immanent flows: fruits and vegetables bought directly from farmers because of the conviction, commitment and personal relationships of executive chefs. Resorts did not initiate developmental linkages to food producers due to corporate-level decisions.

The type of produce procured, however, is governed by the paradigm of Western cuisine. Looking ahead it is likely that appointing this meat- and dairy-rich diet as a developmental goal to connect more Fijian farmers to the tourism industry will come at detrimental environmental costs. Such a development path will not meet indigenous understandings of sustainable development. In so far, this study contributes a novel argument to the notion that backward economic linkages of tourism to local farmers poses a suitable development strategy.

10 Conclusion

10.1 Outcomes

Research on the impediments of tourism-agriculture linkages in developing countries in the 35 years to date has taken a rather economic approach. The intricacies of food consumption and production, however, go far beyond the economic sphere. Food and its associated processes and meanings are part and parcel of culture, as the concept of cuisine shows. Therefore, food in tourism stands for more than economic exchange. It should, rather, be approached as an interface of “cultural habitues, socio-economic conditions, and political landscapes” (A. M. Young et al., 2015, p. 198) between hosts, visitors and the tourism industry. This is an important fact to consider in the question of how tourism-led development efforts of the private sector affect tourism-dependent SIDS. The menu of a restaurant is not only the potential blueprint for how tourism money can or cannot be channelled towards farmers, but also what cultural influences get passed on from tourist to cook to farmer. Therefore, this research endeavoured to investigate how large-scale upmarket tourist resorts affect agricultural development in SIDS, such as Fiji, through their cuisine.

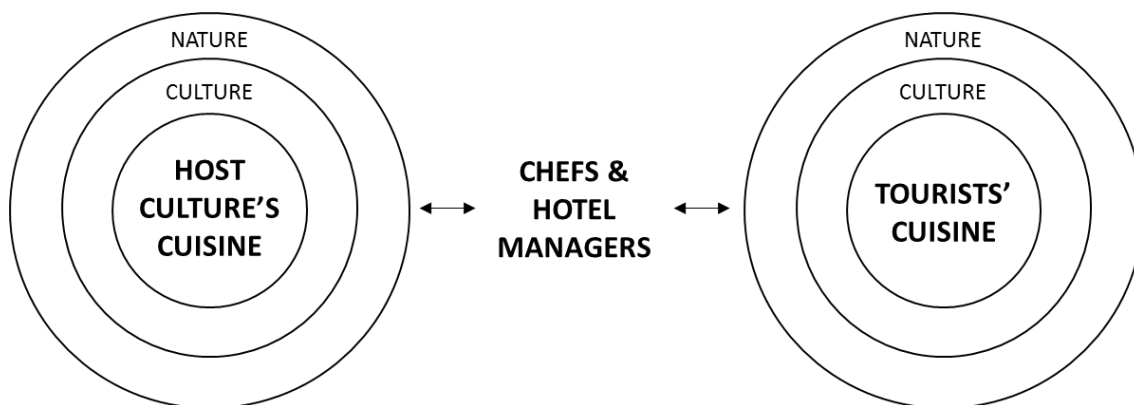
1. Research question: In how far is ‘cuisine’, as a conduit of cultural change, a valuable analytical concept for understanding tourism-agriculture-development linkages?

In pursuit of the first research question, the study found that the concept of cuisine represents a cultural conduit between the local agricultural community, the tourism industry and international tourists in Fiji. Cuisine embeds the economic into the cultural and locates the discussions about economic gains and leakages in the wider socio-cultural background and history. Cuisine acknowledges that tourism is not only part of a globalised economy, but a “powerful social force” (Spenceley & Meyer, 2012, p. 301). Thus, cuisine supports approaches to development theory that argue that development is more than economic progress.

Figure 12 depicts cuisine within a tourism context. Chefs are directly involved in creating dishes and menus and therefore need to negotiate the local as well as their patrons’ cuisines. Hotel managers, in the sense of key decision takers in a hotel, are often more indirectly involved in this process, but can have significant impact through the strategic creation and management of restaurants and procurement channels. I argue that chefs and

hotel managers are in a sense ‘cultural retailers’, located between the poles of tourism production and consumption and thus critical actors in the dialogue around cultural change and stability, meaning and representation (McCracken, 1988).

Figure 12: The concept of cuisine applied to a tourism context



Source: G. Laeis

From a methodological viewpoint, the concept of cuisine provides an entrance point to researching tourism-agriculture linkages. It points towards the role of the accommodation sector and its chefs in negotiating tourism demand vis-à-vis the agricultural environment. As this research has shown, what type of foods are valued by guests, cooked by chefs and grown by farmers is also a product of socio-cultural factors. Colonialisation, ethnic struggles and Westernisation, not least of all through tourism, have left their mark on Fijians and their understanding and valuation of local and foreign foods and crops. In this respect, the concept of cuisine helps to understand questions around power and change in the cultural interface of tourism and, thus, assists in answering the second research question.

2. Research question: How do kitchen staff of large-scale resorts, food intermediaries and farmers perceive the impact of a Western-dominated tourism industry in SIDS, such as Fiji?

On the one hand, this research demonstrates that power resides first and foremost with tourists in large-scale and upmarket resorts, or in terms of Figure 12, power is exerted from the right hand side. In this respect, the research emphasises concerns of Western economic and cultural domination as expressed in the theory of postcolonialism (Britton, 1982; C. M. Hall & Tucker, 2004b; McEwan, 2009). It is the tourist’s palate that ultimately decides how farmers can participate in the tourism economy. Intermediaries need to translate the efficiency gap between small-scale farmers and foreign-owned and -oper-

ated large resorts. Through a local food chain, tourism can be an impetus for the modernisation of agriculture, as exemplified by the TTM project. However, agricultural modernisation efforts may pose a threat to the ecosystems of SIDS, as outlined in Subsection 9.5.3. On the other hand, the influence of Western food can also be met with resistance or ‘develop-man’, as Sahlins would argue. Some farmers actively decided to not partake in the tourism economy, or only to the extent they wanted to. In contrast, it seemed that chefs did not have this choice. Their perception of the tourist cuisine – ‘hotel food’ – was moulded by an ongoing history of Western mass tourism in Fiji. However, they may have the choice of not becoming a part of the tourism industry in the first place. Either way, whoever wishes to participate in Fiji’s large-scale and upmarket tourism economy needs to work according to its rules, which can very well have cultural impacts: chefs in charge of menus have been brought up with the notion that their Fijian culinary heritage is not good enough for tourists. Western food is the standard fare in Fijian large-scale resorts. Local food is only promoted in the form of tokenistic ‘island night shows’. Such experiences led to a clear dichotomy of what can and what cannot be served to tourists. Some have tried to integrate more local produce and recipes into their menus, but failed. The type of tourist that frequents large-scale multinational resorts does not want it. There are creative pockets, where chefs engage in ‘playful nostalgia’, merging international and local cuisines, but they are small in volume and do not seem to benefit local farmers significantly. Moreover, this creative engagement with cuisines is mainly advocated by non-Fijian chefs. Small-scale boutique resorts may pose one of the few exceptions in this respect. The ‘powerful *cultural* force’ of tourism, to build on Spenceley and Meyer’s terminology, has humiliated the Fijian chefs’ sense of cuisine and established Western food as the leading paradigm. This, however, was only examined within the tourism industry. The experiences of chefs outside their industry were not a part of this study.

3. Research question: How can large-scale upmarket tourist resorts in Fiji, and more generally in SIDS, engage in meaningful local community development through linkages to food producers?

The large-scale resorts within this study did not engage in any intentional food-led CCD. In view of research question three, it is important to note that overall the tourists’ cuisine defines the perimeters of food-led CCD for farming communities in SIDS, be it intentional or immanent. If at all, some of the immanent flows were *guided* towards local communities by committed individuals. Some chefs, for instance, bypassed corporate regulations to purchase locally. Despite such occasional incidences the resorts were, generally,

not structured to connect well to local agriculture. Their high demand for particular meats, convenience products and imported fruits and vegetables does not make them suitable partners for the local market. There may be room for improvement, however.

Firstly, resorts could increase their efforts to establish transparent purchasing processes that are designed to match local conditions. This would need to include a thorough prevention of questionable business conduct, fast payment processes and legitimate options for chefs to source from small-scale local suppliers and pay in cash. These are not new findings, as corruption within the supply network (Torres & Momsen, 2004) and conflicting terms of payment between resorts and farmers (Anderson, 2013) have previously been noted. They remain important issues to address, nevertheless. Additionally, resorts could also try to acknowledge where their own seasonal needs and those of local communities match, as Dr. Gibson pointed out. This will be particularly beneficial to *iTaukei* food producers, as their business activities are often aligned with their cultural calendar. Secondly, and again corroborating previous findings, chefs could try harder to localise menus, draw more on local plant-based dishes or seek out traditional recipes that perhaps can be adapted to suit their guests' palate (Berno, 2015). This would need to be a concerted effort with service staff, who need to be able to explain the taste, textures and meanings of such dishes to customers to bridge uncertainties and create awareness. Nevertheless, in this respect and despite numerous efforts to market a burgeoning 'contemporary Pacific cuisine' to chefs and guests, little seems to have changed in large-scale resorts. As long as there is no corporate push towards focusing on local cuisine, such efforts will rest on the conviction of individuals. Corporate efforts, however, most likely will depend on whether or not there is a business case to be made, as frequently pointed out in research on motivations behind CSR (see e.g., Ashley & Haysom, 2006; Blowfield, 2005; Carroll & Shabana, 2010). The absence of intentional CCD efforts in terms of food observed in this study emphasises that there is currently little incentive to do so. Overall, this leads to the conclusion that unless local food producers adjust to the needs of resorts, they will not benefit to any significant degree from tourism income. Unless, of course, such linkages would be made a requirement by policy makers. This conclusion is slightly more radical than previous studies (Asiedu & Gbedema, 2011; Rogerson, 2012a; Torres & Momsen, 2004), which merely highlighted that policies play an important part in tourism-agriculture linkages.

As this research has shown, Fiji's Ministries (MOA and MITT) have supported the emergence of such linkages, but have never gone so far as to require them. Moreover, as pointed out by officials, initiatives have neither turned into more permanent programmes, nor have they been followed up with assessments of their de facto impacts. Perhaps it is time for Fiji's Government to reassess its policies on and delivery of education for tourism and agriculture. For now, Fiji's Government seems to be preoccupied with growing agricultural exports and tourism numbers, rather than pursuing a more inclusive growth strategy that also benefits poorer parts of society. The MOA places great significance on export agriculture to earn foreign exchange. Production for the local market is only a secondary aim. Improved training opportunities for farmers and their access to secure long-term land tenure may help to develop Fiji's agricultural sector into a more productive and self-determined state. Farmers with access to land and other resources, such as the Cane Coast Farmer Association, seem to be in a better position to benefit from the economic opportunities provided by the tourism market and aid programmes. The MITT has a few policies in place to encourage backward economic linkages from the tourism industry, but with limited strategies on retention of revenue from tourism, inclusive tourism development appears to take a backseat to those strategies aiming to increase tourist numbers and expenditure.

10.2 Implications

This thesis has predominantly implications for policy makers and future research. There are also implications for accommodation providers, but they emphasise findings of previous studies to some extent. For example, resorts, hotels and restaurants should increase their efforts to establish transparent purchasing processes that are designed to match local conditions. This would need to include a thorough prevention of corruption and other questionable business conduct, fast payment processes and legitimate options for chefs to source from various small-scale local suppliers and pay in cash. In the best case, sourcing strategies should acknowledge the seasonal needs of local communities. Secondly, resorts are encouraged to localise menus in a concerted effort between chefs, waiters and purchasing officers. This, however, cannot be simply expected to emerge. It needs to be a conscious decision from a corporate level with given support through training, marketing material and perhaps additional staff to liaise with local producers. In a destination such as the Coral Coast, where some executive chefs even believe that “[e]verybody is doing

the same” (chef Lukas), such an effort might distinguish a resort from its competitors, thus presenting a business case for corporations.

Stringent policy support will certainly assist the realisation of these suggestions for the private sector. Otherwise, companies might not see the need to change their current *modus operandi*. There is currently no need for them to source locally, other than if a business case occurs. Encouragement policies, such as training for chefs and farmers, chef-meets-farmer fairs and awareness-raising campaigns may all be worthwhile to pursue. However, policy makers might need to consider more drastic measures, such as penalty taxes on high rates of food importation or sanctions for corruption and bribery.

Moreover, policy makers and advisers need to carefully consider the scale of tourism operations they support. This is especially pertinent to any SIDS considering large-scale multinational accommodation providers as a way forward. Such resorts have a specific way of dealing with food and its procurement. As this thesis outlines, they may not be the most suitable partners for small-scale agricultural sectors in developing countries and they do not support local multiplier effects in food producing communities to a large extent. In contrast, there might be value in further assessing the role of small-scale hospitality enterprises and their contribution to more sustainable forms of tourism. Researchers could try to assess their ability to be more integrated in the local economy as well as their methods and processes around creativity and niche marketing. Another alleyway for research on the tourism industry’s role in sustainable development could be assessing third party-facilitated corporate community development projects. As this thesis outlined, NGOs and international aid programmes can create opportunities for tourism-led corporate community development. What factors can help these initiatives to realise enduring influence beyond the life of projects warrants further investigation.

10.3 Contributions

This thesis has made scholarly contributions on empirical, conceptual, methodological and theoretical levels. **Empirically**, this research furthered the understanding of how large-scale multinational resorts in Fiji use and present local food. Through the active participation in the kitchens of one case study resort and interviews with chefs, cooks and GMs from eight other hospitality providers, this study was able to corroborate a number of facts. These include, how tokenistic Fijian food is handled in large-scale resorts, how

similar procurement patterns are, how relationship-dependent local sourcing is and how the tourists' palate and a need to cover a wide range of tastes governs all menus. Even though just one small-scale boutique resort was included in this study, findings allude to the notion that small resorts can connect better to local food producers. Such findings build on and extend research on the differences between small - and large-scale tourism businesses in Fiji by Scheyvens and Russell (2012), or on the use of culinary training programmes and the use of cook books (cf., Berno, 2015; Oliver et al., 2010, 2013). Lastly, amongst the resorts covered by this study, corporate-led and food-based development projects for local communities were not on the institutional agenda of large-scale MNC resorts. Occasionally community development through the food chain emerged, but only if committed employees took action or third parties facilitated such projects.

Conceptually this research made two contributions. Firstly, conceptualising cuisine as a way of researching agriculture-tourism linkages is a novel contribution. It helps to move away from a mainly economic assessment to a more holistic analysis of tourism-agriculture linkages. Including historic backgrounds, personal views, environmental prerequisites, agricultural practices as well as the economy shows how interrelated these points are and how an economic perspective cannot be separated from society, culture and environment. This conceptualisation helped greatly in realising how the decisions of chefs as well as farmers and intermediaries all have their own rationalities. Secondly, the CCD framework is comparatively new concept that has so far only been field-tested in Emma Hughes' (2016) study. This thesis connects Marshall Sahlins' 1992 theory on cultural change to the concepts of agency in the CCD framework and argues that this constitutes a new approach to thinking about local responses of foreign capital in developing countries. Thinking through Sahlins' notions of develop-man and modernisation-through-humiliation shows how tourism can be an influencing factor, but also an overwhelming force.

From a **methodological** standpoint, tourism-agriculture linkages have not been researched using field-based ethnographic methods previously. Especially the participation in the daily work of chefs is what makes this study unique. The prolonged exposure to the field and the experiences in resorts and on farms enabled me to gather details that are missing in much of the other research on this topic. Anecdotal evidence on the lack of appreciation of local cuisine by chefs in SIDS (Oliver et al., 2010) were corroborated through observations, casual conversations and interviews with chefs and cooks. Working

with cooks as a cook, being used to jargon and ways of handling yourself made me transition quickly from being an outsider to being an insider. This encouraged rapport with participants and honesty in conversations and interviews. The observations of young chefs revealed, for example, their basic skill level, their different coping mechanisms under high workload or their responses to suggestions. Equally, having had farming experience before also helped in relating to participants concerned with agriculture. It certainly shaped my assessment of what I saw when visiting rural areas and farms. Visiting farms and participating in farmer group meetings made interviews possible that took into account the daily struggles and circumstances these farmers lived in – the equipment they relied on, the soil they farmed on, the irrigation options they had and the farming techniques they applied. Thus, many of the findings presented above largely rest on active participation, observation and trustful relationships. Without an immersion into the daily realities and lived experiences of my participants, these findings would have perhaps remained unknown.

Very valuable, but not planned for initially, was living in an *iTaukei* village for the duration of my fieldwork. Living within the culture over four months provided additional experiences of indigenous realities, access to relationships and credibility in front of participants. For instance, the struggle of hitchhiking to work in the dark of the night is not only a snippet from an interview, but my own experience. Having been to the field, having lived with locals, cooked with locals and walked through the farms and storage rooms of locals provides a more balanced view than mere interviews or other, more detached means of data gathering.

Yet, spending just one month in the kitchen environment and only a few hours at a time on farms was not enough to learn about the life worlds of all participants equally. There may yet be untold experiences and viewpoints that I have not managed to record. Moreover, at the Outrigger it was challenging to constantly have a dual focus: perform a job (cooking) simultaneously to being a participating observer. Furthermore, this highly qualitative research approach also constitutes the most important limitation of this study. Ethnographic methods and a case study do not allow for statistically significant conclusions. However, broader generalisations based on underlying factors can be done.

Theoretically the main contribution of this research lies in its application of post-colonial theory. The 1970s and 1980s saw a number of critical publications on the relation between

tourism and postcolonial theory. C. M. Hall and Tucker (2004b) lamented how underdeveloped this body of research was and put forward an important publication in the early 2000s. Since then, little has been made of this critical approach to the study of tourism in developing countries. This research has now helped to contribute to the critical understanding of tourism and postcolonial theory in arguing that, indeed, large-scale tourism is not only an economic, but also a cultural force that impacts local communities. Within the tourism private sector there appears to be a power imbalance in favour of Western tourists. Their “ambiguous gift” (C. M. Hall & Tucker, 2004a, p. 6) supports Fiji’s economy and introduces new ideas that might be taken up into local cultural fabrics, but at the same time requires services according to the tourists’ preferences. This may be seen as a continuation of Fiji’s external governance through a tourism economy, if locals do not have much influence over this process. In the case presented here, the chefs’ influence is limited. The often evoked notion that a creative engagement with local food can help impoverished farmers is predominantly advocated by non-Fijians. Anachronistically, it is once again parties outside of Fiji, even though they may be very familiar with its culture, that take it upon themselves to change the fate of Fijians.

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Appendices

A. Interview guidelines for semi-structured interviews

Hotels/resorts (chefs, cooks and general managers)

- Personal background
- Structure of the property you work for
- Menus and their creation
- Guest perceptions, preferences and influences on menus
- Experiences with local food sourcing
- Experiences with kitchen staff
- Ideas on 'Fijian cuisine'

Food intermediaries

- Personal background
- Business model
- Experience with local farmers
- Degree of involvement with local farmers (e.g. support, communication)
- Experience with resorts/hotels
- 'Wish list' – What would be great to have available locally?


Farmers

- Personal background
- Type of farming practised and main challenges
- Experiences with marketing produce to resorts/hotels
- Experiences with marketing through other channels (e.g. intermediaries)
- Experiences with available support (e.g. from Government, NGOs and int. aid)
- Future plans

Ministries, associations, NGOs and other contextual stakeholders

- Current and planned support for tourism-agriculture linkages
- Past experiences with tourism-agriculture linkages
- Importance of tourism and agriculture for Fiji
- Cooperation with third parties (e.g., other Ministries, NGOs, associations, etc.)
- *For agriculture-related stakeholders*: issues of export production vs. production for local markets
- *For tourism-related stakeholders*: target groups & preferred types of tourism; meaning of Fijian food for tourism product

B. The Outrigger's guest comment card for restaurants



Thank you for choosing to dine with us.

To assist us to continue to improve the quality of our food, beverage and service we would be grateful if you could spend a couple of minutes to complete the below feedback form with your thoughts and comments.

Please indicate which restaurant you are dining in: Breakfast [B] Lunch [L] Dinner [D]

Vale Ni Kana | Baravi | Sundowner | Vahavu | Ivi
B **L** **D** | **L** **D** | **B** **L** **D** | **L** | **D**

	VERY SATISFIED	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	NOT APPLICABLE
Quality of Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of Beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variety of food Selection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variety of beverage Selection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendliness & attentiveness of servers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Server's knowledge of the menu selections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall Ambiance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value for Price	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>


During your meal, did any staff member provide exceptional service which exceeded your expectations? If so, please share with us their name.

Please let us know if there are any other areas you feel which we could improve

Guest Name: _____

Room Number: _____

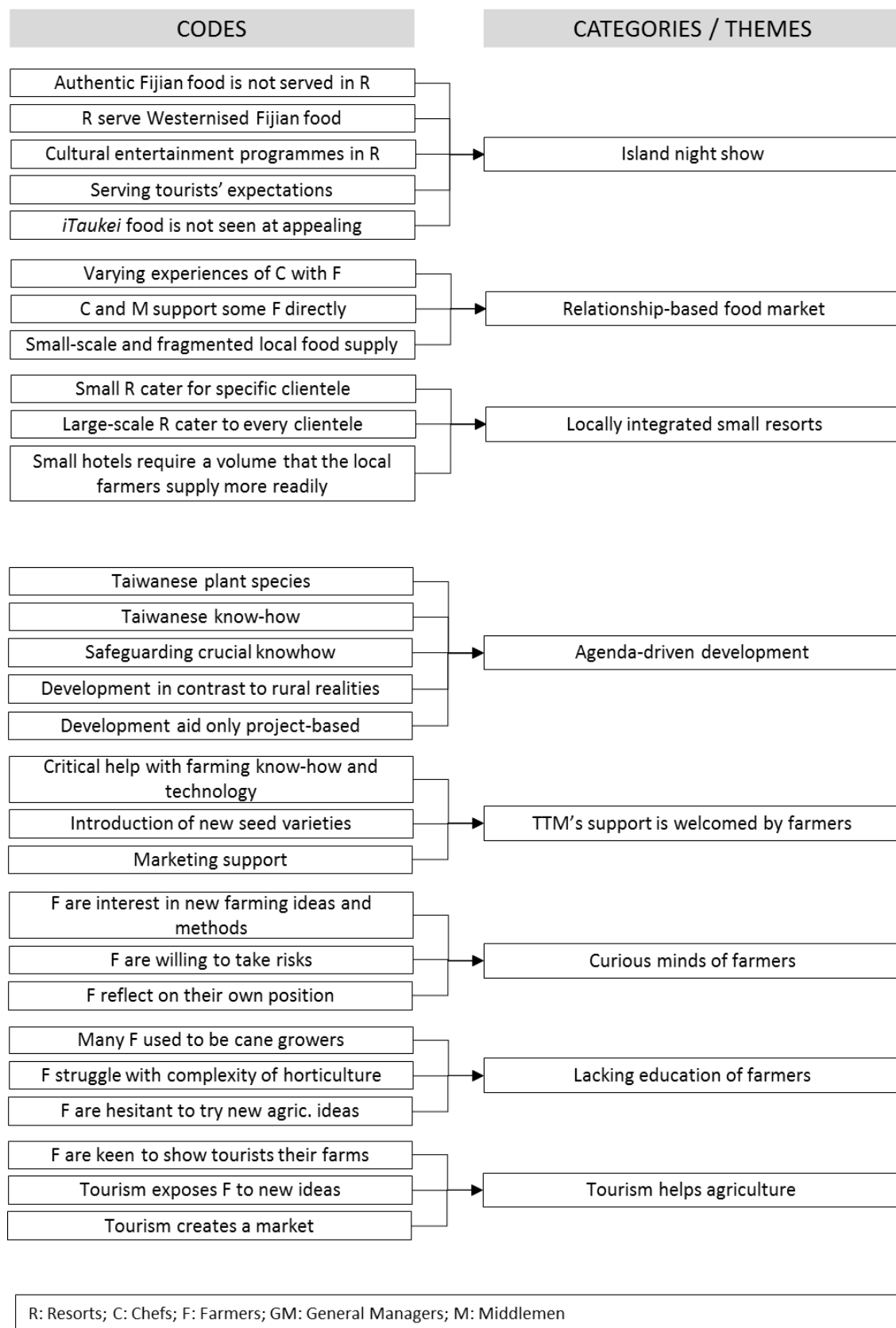
Date: _____

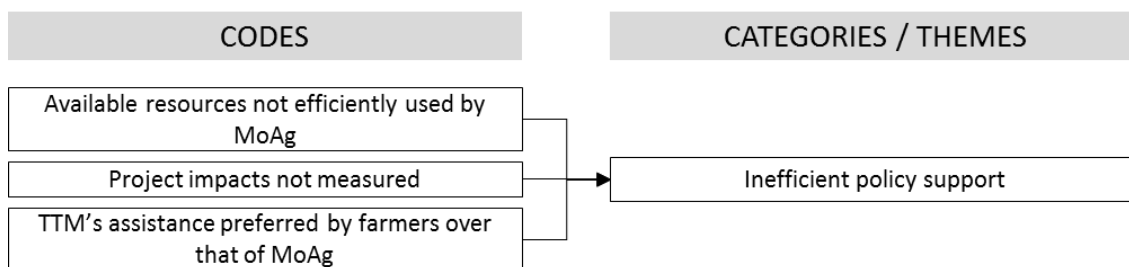


C. Codes and categories



R: Resorts; C: Chefs; F: Farmers; GM: General Managers; M: Middlemen





R: Resorts; C: Chefs; F: Farmers; GM: General Managers; M: Middlemen