

“RETHINKING YOUTH BULGE THEORY AND THREAT
DISCOURSE IN MELANESIA: LISTENING IN, AND
CONNECTING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN PAPUA NEW
GUINEA”

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
PACIFIC ISLANDS STUDIES

By

Patrick Kaiku

May 2011

Thesis Committee:

Terence Wesley-Smith, Chair

Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka

Gerard Finin

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of contents	ii
Table of Figures	iv
Acknowledgments	v
List of Abbreviations	viii
Abstract	1
Poem: <i>Can You See Me?</i>	2
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	3
CHAPTER 2: Youth bulge theory – engaging with a global discourse	13
2.1. The youth bulge discourse and its assumptions	17
2.2. Criticisms of the youth bulge discourse	21
2.3. The youth bulge discourse in the Pacific Islands and Melanesia	27
2.4. Concluding remarks	33
CHAPTER 3: <i>Oli tok-tok stori bilong ol</i> – They tell their stories	35
3.1. Personalizing the “youth” from the youth bulge	35
3.1.1. Ganjiki (Male, 30) – <i>Patriots PNG Inc.</i> founder	38
3.1.2. Forgy (Female, 27) – Villager in a patriarchal culture	45
3.1.3. Jonesteed (Male, 26) – Unemployed urbanite	50
3.1.4. Daba (Male, 24) – Villager and married	60
3.1.5. Jess (Female, 24) – UPNG graduate and pessimist	65
CHAPTER 4: An interactive force or destructive element?	
Re-thinking the youth “problem” in Melanesia	75
4.1. Problematizing the youth bulge discourse	76
4.1.1. “ <i>At least I am doing something</i> ” – Youth as Agents of Positive Change	79

4.1.2. Shifting allegiance? Localized mobilization vs. national causes	86
4.1.3. “Breeding a nation” – Social interaction and integration	88
4.1.4. The masculinization of PNG society	92
4.1.5. Rural-urban divide: locating the troubles-spots	95
4.1.6. <i>Holim Graun</i> - Holding to the soil (land)	98
4.2. Re-thinking the youth bulge discourse	100
CHAPTER 5: Conclusion	105
APPENDIX A:	
Table 1: Population distribution according to rural/urban settings (2000 estimates)	111
APPENDIX B:	
Interview Questionnaire (English)	112
APPENDIX C:	
Interview Questionnaire (New Guinea <i>Tok Pisin</i>)	116
REFERENCES	121

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of Oceania	5
Figure 2: Pacific population pyramid	6
Figure 3: Papua New Guinea population pyramid	7
Figure 4: Select countries with youth bulges	16
Figure 5: The relationship between youth bulges and armed conflict	21
Figure 6: Map of Papua New Guinea	37

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: *POSONG KALARO*

Kalaro Tapait si kam atapunuk i alomonaus. Nate posong ro si kam alilis i to.

Often, the completion a scholarly project comes with its added pleasantries. In my case I pause to take stock of relationships fomented during the course of my journey as a MA candidate in the Pacific Islands Studies program. Many generous and inspirational individuals were part of this experience. Undertaking the MA program and the completion of this thesis could not have been possible without the unwavering attention and support of the following.

First, I acknowledge my benefactors at the East-West Center. Through the Asian Development Bank – Government of Japan Scholarship (ADB-GoJ), I undertook the MA in Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa beginning in the 2009 spring semester. My time at the East-West Center and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa was the most enriching ever. I acknowledge the kindness and generosity of the East-West Center Education Program staff namely; Stella Kolinski, Mendl Djunaidy, Mary Hammond and the late Jeane Yamamoto.

The staff at the Pacific Islands Development Programme (PIDP) provided additional financial support during a brief extended stay in the first weeks of January 2011. I am indebted to the kindness of Gerard Finin. Your interest in my work and meeting the expenses of my extended stay has been a source of motivation ever since. My extended stay enabled me to complete sections of this thesis and allowed me time to reflect on the direction of this project.

The Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa stepped in with registering me for the Thesis Writing 700 credits for the 2011 spring semester. I am so grateful for these trust and confidence in my work. *Kalaro luai.*

I also acknowledge my Thesis Committee: Drs. Terence Wesley-Smith, Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka (Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa) and Gerard Finin (Pacific Islands Development Programme). I relied on your directions and learned input in the process of generating ideas that went into this thesis. Your attention to detail in my work and your patience towards my work is greatly appreciated.

My gratitude goes the way of Prof. Vilsoni Hereniko – a creative mind who initially suggested the route of my research approach. Putting a human story to the concept of the youth bulge came out of one my interactive sessions with Prof. Hereniko. I treasure the moments. For his commentaries on my initial concept papers and proposals my sincere thanks to David Chappell.

To all my many colleagues at the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, I have the deepest respect for your spirit of camaraderie. In the true form of connectivity Oceania brings us together.

I mention with sincere gratitude my two benefactors who provided financial assistance towards the conducting of field in PNG during the summer of 2010. The airfare travel and other associated costs were met through a University of Hawai'i's Graduate Students Organization (GSO) grant. I was also an appreciative recipient of the *Na Kei Tou I Loloma Research Award*. My heartfelt appreciation to Ms. Sheree Lipton the sponsor of the *Loloma Award* for assisting me with the timely award. I am so greatfull for making it possible for my trip to PNG during the summer of 2010.

I also acknowledge *papa* Simon Shong. For your time in humbly accompanying me through the Highlands of PNG as I did interviews – much love. Dr. Steven Winduo and Nimo Kama provided me the contacts in Kainantu. In Kainantu, Labu Pungkanu and the elders in the Kainantu valley attended to my inquisitiveness. Likewise, Teddy Winn's assistance in identifying

interviewees at the University of Papua New Guinea is greatly appreciated. Thank you for playing a part in the experience in this thesis project. *Kaloro luai.*

This research would not have been possible without the ever-reliable presence of my best friend Marion Cadora. I am always indebted to you as a colleague and friend. Most importantly, I acknowledge the 10 respondents involved in this exercise. You opened your lives for perspectives worth hearing. In the process of writing this thesis I grew more assured that the great and colorful lives of Papua New Guineans will continue to thrive amidst ever-changing situations. Your stories are part of a greater process presently occurring in our beautiful country and region. You inspired me to reflect on the possibilities that Papua New Guineans and Melanesians can achieve in our time. I remember the two most precious peoples in my life – my parents, Tukul Walla Kaiku and Ombone Kaiku. You made me who I am. Finally I pay tribute to you *bubu* Tavokolai and *kakai* Marty. In my absence you passed on to the next world. Where generations have gone before, I shall see you again.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACFOA - Australian Council for Overseas Aid

AusAID – Australian Agency for International Development

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

CIC – Coffee Industry Corporation

CLTC – Christian Leaders Training College

CPI – Corruption Perceptions Index

CPL – City Pharmacy Limited

ENB – East New Britain

EPG – Eminent Persons Group

IPA – Investment Promotion Authority

LNG - Liquefied Natural Gas

LTI – Legal Training Institute

MENA – Middle East North Africa

NGO – Non-Government Organization

PNG – Papua New Guinea

PICs – Pacific Islands Countries

RAMSI – Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands

SDA – Seventh Day Adventist

SPC – Secretariat of the Pacific Community

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UPNG – University of Papua New Guinea

US – United States

ABSTRACT

In this study I critique the youth bulge theory through the ethnographic sketches of five young Papua New Guineans. Youth bulge theory is a demographic-based global discourse that has become prevalent in the sphere of security studies. In recent discussions on issues of development in the Pacific Islands, commentators argue that Melanesia is contending with growing and increasingly violence-prone generations of male youth.

In this thesis, I propose that this that youth bulge theory as applied to Melanesian societies disregards the social and cultural dynamics of the context it purports to describe. I argue Papua New Guineans everyday lived experiences clearly problematize and bring to light oversimplifications of youth bulge discourse. The findings of this research posit that the cross-cutting and extended networks among younger generations of Papua New Guineans are a positive source of strength and stability largely ignored by youth bulge theorists. The culturally valued creation of extended social relationships is a critical dimension of the demographic milieu that youth bulge theory should take into account.

I argue large-scale urban youth disengagement in PNG and Melanesia is a consequence of corrosive cross-cutting global influences that contemporary PNG society is reproducing. Rather than subscribing to the gloomy predictions of a Melanesia that is increasingly susceptible to youth-initiated crises and revolutions, I find that young Papua New Guineans are beholden to a range of positive socio-cultural linkages with which they identify. Context specificity and the inclusion of socio-cultural variables provide alternative ways of re-thinking the youth bulge theory in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia more generally. Youth bulge theory could become more empowering for policymakers if it were more attentive to the peoples and cultures it describes.

Poem: *Can You See Me?*

Human development index for Pacific island countries, 1998

Country	Adult literacy (per cent)	Combined gross enrolment (per cent)	Life expectancy at birth	GDP per capita (US \$)	HDI	Global HDI rank ^{2/}
Palau	91.4	83.4	69.0	8,027	0.861	46
Cook Islands	93.2	84.8	72.0	4,947	0.822	62
Niue	97.0	83.6	74.0	3,714	0.744	70
Fiji	92.9	81.3	66.5	2,684	0.667	101
Nauru	95.0	79.5	58.2	3,450	0.663	103
Tonga	99.0	83.3	68.0	1,868	0.647	107
Samoa	95.7	85.7	66.6	1,060	0.590	117
Tuvalu	95.0	74.0	67.0	1,157	0.583	118
Federated States of Micronesia	71.3	71.4	65.7	2,070	0.569	120
Marshall Islands	74.4	71.7	65.0	1,182	0.563	121
Kiribati	92.2	67.8	61.6	702	0.515	129
Vanuatu	33.5	57.4	65.8	1,231	0.425	140
Solomon Islands	30.3	34.8	64.7	926	0.371	147
Papua New Guinea	28.2	28.6	54.0	1,196	0.314	164
Tokelau	91.0	88.3	69.0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: *Pacific Human Development Report 1999* (UNDP, Suva, 1999)

^{2/} Ranking is applied according to the 1998 *Human Development Report*.

Can you see me?

If you can

Find my face

In this maze

I am numbered

Lettered

Divided

Quantified

Can you see me?

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

High population growth rates in Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are perceived as a developmental anomaly. Some of the most pessimistic projections about the demographic changes in the Pacific Islands were highlighted in the critically reviewed *Pacific 2010* project (see Callick, 1993). The latter publication projected a litany of problems for the growing populations of Pacific Island countries. With limited resources and weak institutions, the social and economic costs of continuous population increase lead to doomsday scenarios for Pacific Island communities. In this study, I address emergent literature on the security implications of the increasing numbers of young people in Pacific Island countries.¹ This discussion is from a Melanesian perspective, and with specific attention to Papua New Guinea.²

In the context of Melanesian countries, considerable discussion is focused on the increasing number of young people in the general population. The youthfulness of the populations in Melanesian countries is evident from the demographic data. As Figure 2 indicates, half of the total Melanesian population is below 21.4 year old. Melanesia has the lowest median age in the Pacific Islands. Collectively, the male and female population of Pacific Island countries is 21 years.

Demographers refer to the disproportionately large number of young people in the demographic composition of any given country as the youth bulge. The youth bulge is evident when there is a “sudden change in the age structure of the population characterized

¹See Figure 1 for an illustration of the region under consideration.

²I will use the term Melanesia in this discussion to mean the sub-region of the Pacific Islands comprising “West PNG [now West Papua], Papua New Guinea [it is a nation that includes the “outer islands”, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and Fiji” (Narokobi, 1983:4). Except for West Papua and New Caledonia (Kanaky), the rest are politically independent. I will use Melanesia here specifically as a geographical and broad cultural reference points in this discussion, however problematic and “colonial” the label may be perceived (Kirch, 2005).

by an increase in the number of young people” (Daumerie, 2008:2).³ In their problematizing of the youthful populations of young people in the Melanesian countries, analysts and commentators advance the notion that these countries will, because of the demographic bulge, inevitably confront issues of instability and crisis. Combined with weak governance and a lack of socio-economic advancement, the mere presence of so many young people will only exacerbate internal insecurity in Melanesian countries (Ware 2005; AusAID 2006; Booth et al. 2006; Dobell 2006).

In this study I will argue that there is evidence suggesting young people’s lived experiences in Papua New Guinea do not fully conform to the general assumptions of the youth bulge theory. I examine the inter-linkages in social relationships that serve to mitigate youth-initiated conflicts and crisis. I conclude that the ability of youth to react to societal challenges in a positive way is facilitated by an increasingly interconnected Papua New Guinean society.

³ Other commentators define the demographic features of the youth bulge as the distribution of youth measured either as a proportion of the entire population (Huntington, 1996; Collier, 2001; Goldstone, 2001), or as a proportion of the adult population (Urdal, 2004, 2006). Melanesian countries are undergoing similar features in their population sizes.



Figure 1: Map of Oceania
 Source: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Pacific Islands Studies

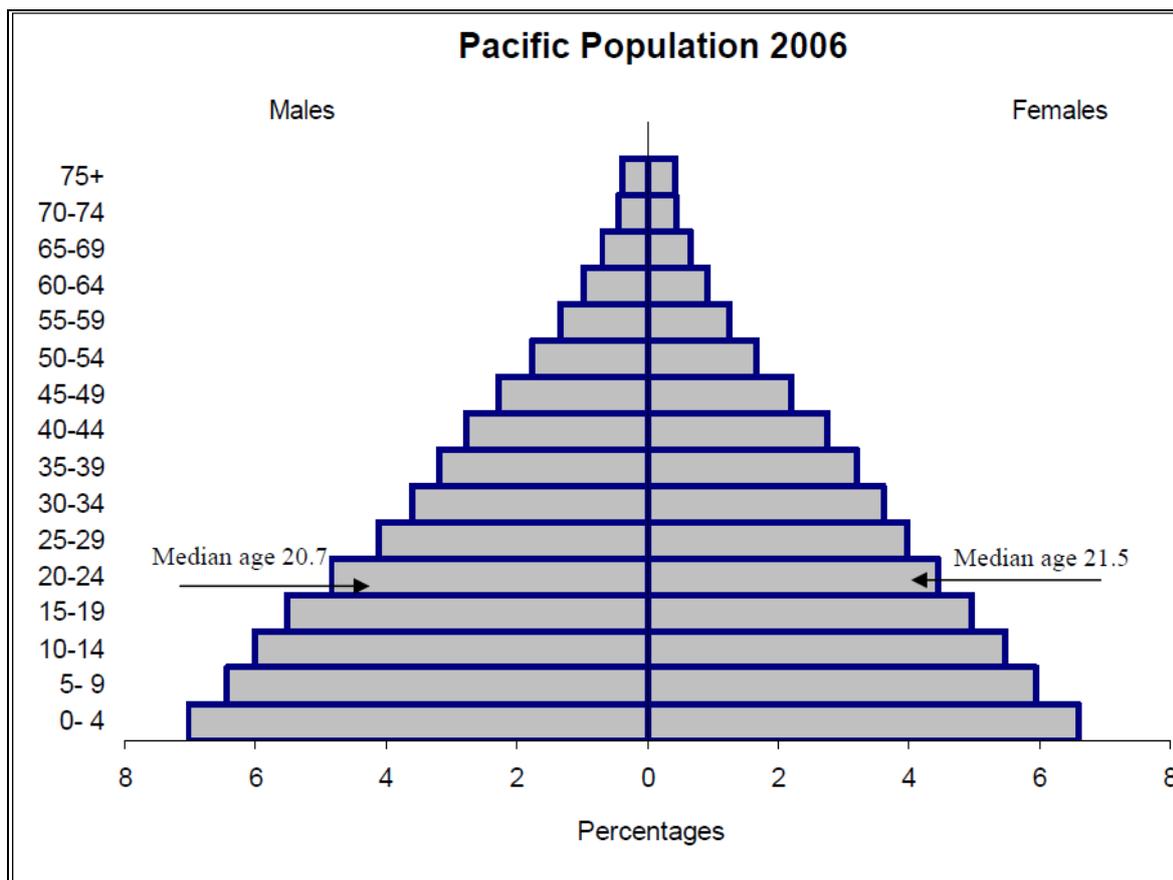


Figure 2: Pacific population pyramid

Source: *Statistics and Demography Programme*, SPC, New Caledonia (2006)

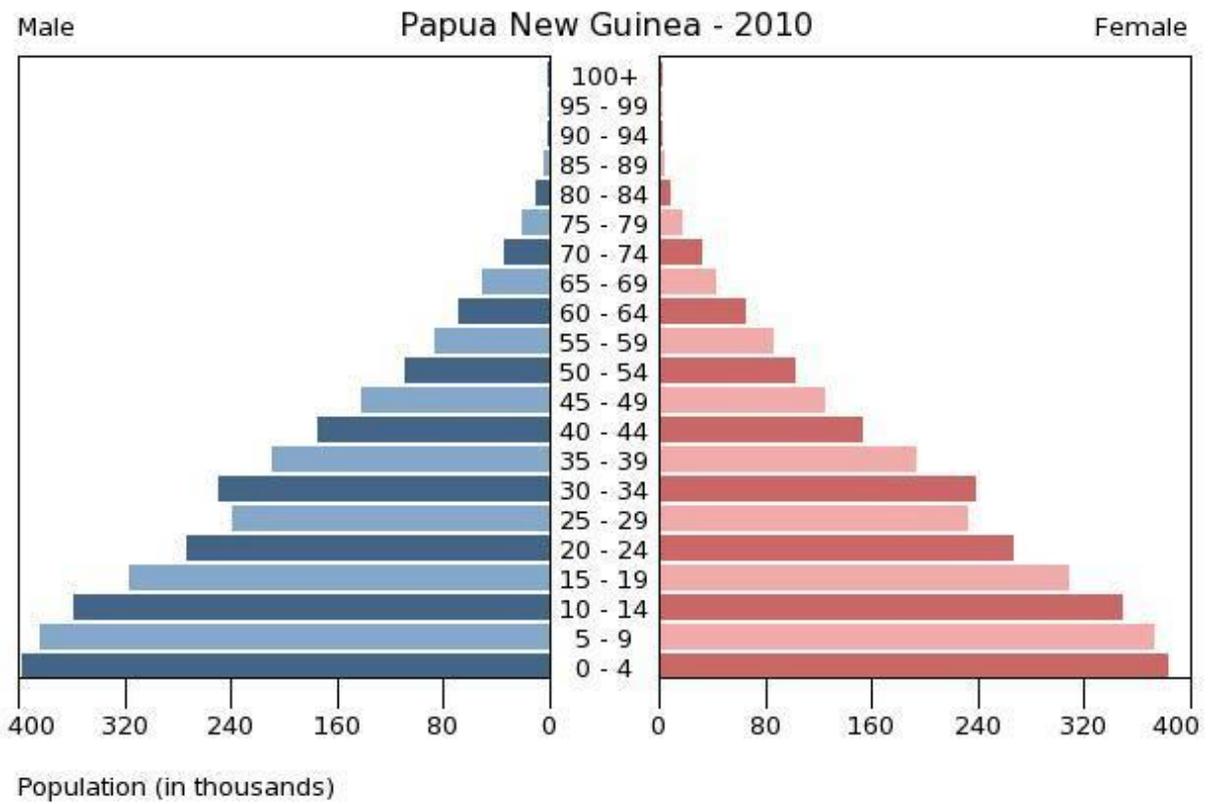


Figure 3: Papua New Guinea population pyramid
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2010)

The problematic nature of the youth bulge theory is evinced in recent policy discussions about Melanesia that focus primarily on the security implications associated with its increasing youthful population.⁴ These discussions assume the lack of socio-economic opportunities in these countries will only create a generation of discontented young people who will ultimately seek to influence the outcome of development in their countries through a range of unlawful or even revolutionary means. Limited opportunity for Melanesian young people to migrate out of their countries⁵ in search of employment is seen as exacerbating this discontent (Ware, 2004). Confined within nation-states that persistently fail to provide for their well-being and aspirations, young people are seen as being extremely susceptible to being mobilized into disruptive or destabilizing movements. Though relatively recent in the Pacific Islands or Melanesia, the strategic implications of the youth bulge theory feeds into an existing imagery of Melanesia as the most problematic part of the Pacific Islands Region.

Emerging from the field of strategic demography, a key assumption of the youth bulge theory is the “power in numbers” fears, where large numbers of young people concentrated in specific locales are perceived as potentially serious threats to regional and global security (Hendrixson, 2003c:2; Kaplan, 1994:46). Daumerie (2008: 5) observes that the speed of the population growth rate (acceleration) is responsible for “creating both large youth bulges and increasing the risk for violent conflict directly.” What this analysis implies is that the youth bulge contributes to the overall disorder and lack of development.

Embracing methods of predictive analysis, youth bulge theorists rely on various developmental indicators such as resource scarcity, political disempowerment or high unemployment among young people as triggering mechanisms for involvement in conflict, violence, or crisis

⁴Cross-national studies have been conducted claiming to demonstrate the causal relationships between large youth-bulge proportion and high risks of political violence and civil strife (see for instance Leahy, et al., 2007; Urdal, 2006; Mesquida and Wiener, 1996).

⁵Fiji however is the exception where immigration is one of its major revenue-earner as evident in the remittance sector.

situations. When the expectations of young people are not met frustrations build, leading to mobilization or recruitment into armed movements. Youth in this circumstance become all but synonymous with trouble. In the aftermath of the recent conflicts in the Solomon Islands,⁶ youth bulge theory has found a growing number of sympathetic proponents committed to interpreting conflict and crisis situations in Melanesia using this conceptual scheme as a framework in their discussions (Ware, 2005; Dobell, 2006).

Youth bulge theory does have its critics (Hendrixson, 2004). Social scientists have, for example, called into question the stereotypical representations in the youth bulge discourse and the systematic generalizations inherent in the theory. They point to the fact youth bulge discourse feeds into an existing narrative and reinforces assumptions about the conflict-prone setting that Melanesia has come to represent in the strategic discourse about the region.

Still, the inevitability of conflict and crisis remains embedded in recent discussions about Melanesia. One prominent scholar argues that “internal conflict and violence” are prevalent “in the Melanesian sub-region of Oceania”....while... “microstates of Polynesia and Micronesia have, when compared with Melanesia, been relatively conflict free” (Henderson, 2005: 12). Likewise, Ben Reilly (2002) in his ‘Africanization of the Pacific’ thesis concludes that Melanesian governance and living standard indicators are clearly preconditions for the crises and break-down of the state institutions.

The imagery of a deeply problematic Melanesia was featured front and center in the Australian foreign policy-making fraternity after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. Discussions expanded to include the “arc of instability”,⁷ geographically inclusive of

⁶The conflict in the Solomon Islands, euphemistically referred to as the “ethnic tensions” began in the late 1990s when disgruntled Guadalcanal militants started agitating for the expulsion of Malaitan settlers on their lands in and around the urban capital of Honiara. In 1998, actual confrontations resulted in the formation of a Guadalcanal-based Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA, later changed to Isatabu Freedom Movement - IFM). The Malaitan Eagle Force (MEF) with membership from the Malaitans was formed in response to intimidation on Malaitan settlers on Guadalcanal.

⁷The “arc of instability”, used in the context of Australian security and strategic discussions depicts the region north of Australia, stretching from Timor Leste, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. These states are seen as internally unstable and prone to civil strife and political uncertainty. However Graham Dobell (2007) argues that even though the “arc” “is a useful term in Canberra, summing up a range of

almost all the Melanesian countries.⁸ Around the same time the “arc of instability” discourse gained prominence, commentators began applying the failed state (or potential failed state) label on several Melanesian countries. For instance, Hughes (2004) in writing about PNG⁹ and Wainwright (2003) in analyzing the Solomon Islands¹⁰ have identified these countries as either progressing towards state failure or having already reached the brink of state collapse. Youth bulge theory is firmly embedded within this discourse.

Papua New Guinea has long been perceived as a hot-bed of lawlessness, governance breakdown and tribal warfare. The literature on these societal ills identify the presence of young people—always young men—as a major source of instability and therefore a significant threat in what is frequently characterized as a “weak state” (Dinnen, 1994). Papua New Guinea is clearly at the center of security discourse about Melanesia. Papua New Guinea is also experiencing a significant youth bulge phenomena with a large proportion of its population between the ages of 18-30 years (see Figure 3).

While the definition of youth varies in policy-making circles across the Pacific Islands, in the context of this study I use the term “youth” to mean the chronological age category of the given population. I adopt the definition of “youth” used by youth bulge theorists who categorise this cohort as consisting of people between 15 and 29 years of age (e.g., Daumerie, 2008; Urdal, 2004).

As noted above, my aim is to investigate the appropriateness of the youth bulge theory in the Melanesian context, seeking a broader and deeper understanding. I consider three key questions:

diplomatic, economic and geopolitical forces. The arc of instability is descriptive rather than explanatory; it doesn't seem to have much utility when you are standing in one of the individual states it encompasses” (p.3).

⁸In the context of the Pacific, ‘arc of instability’ was first used in 2000 in the aftermath of the Fiji coup. Kevin Rudd, the new prime minister of Australia in 2007 in announcing a “new approach” by Australia towards the southwest Pacific includes Timor, PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Tonga, and Nauru in his ‘arc of instability’ (Rudd, 2007). Ironically, the old terminologies remain even though the approach is new. A criticism of this worst case scenario thinking is that it exaggerates the scale of the approach that is developed outside the Pacific Island countries.

⁹Defense planners in Australia around 2005 had reached a consensus that PNG face the “real risk” of being a failed state in the next 15 years if security in the country further deteriorated (see ABC Correspondents Report, *Real risk of failed PNG state: Defense Planners*, at <http://www.abc.net.au/correspondents/content/2005/s1483081.htm>). See also Hughes (2004)

¹⁰Roughan, John (2002) “Pacific First: A Failed State.” *Solomon Star* (February 13), p. 5.

- (i) Does the youth bulge theory enhance or distort our understanding of the lived realities of young people in Melanesia and specifically Papua New Guinea?
- (ii) Through the narratives of young people, how does the context of Melanesia and specifically Papua New Guinea inform a re-thinking of the youth bulge theory?
- (iii) To what extent is youth bulge theory useful in predicting the behavior of youth in Melanesia?

My methodology in addressing these questions relies on a review of the literature and, most importantly, in-depth case studies of five young Papua New Guineans based on extended personal interviews. Through careful examination of the ethnographic information obtained in the telling of their stories, I call into question the central assumptions of youth bulge theory. That is, while youth bulge theory is prone to pessimistically predict that demographically stressed societies are likely to go down a path of self-destruction, the evidence brought to light by a detailed analysis of actual lived experiences reveals a considerably more complex and optimistic picture.

In this study I go beyond the conventional political economy discussion. I rely heavily on a biographical approach with the objective of trying to better understand the dynamics of youth from their personal accounts. This approach is at once appropriate and relevant because it is “takes informants chronologically through their lives, from childhood, through adolescence...examining issues, events and people as secondary concerns to that of the informants’ life stories” (Douglas, et. al. 1988:49). The *liklik stori* (short story) component of this study will include five young Papua New Guineans. My intention is to show the social realities of youth in Papua New Guinea, the challenges they face personally and the contributions they are making to the functioning of their society. Whereas youth bulge discourse too often relies exclusively on demographic statistics, the ethnographic approach sheds additional light, illuminating how youth are both active and thoughtful actors

embracing approaches to life that are well adapted to the local environment in which they reside. From this research emerges a fuller understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics and life strategies of Melanesian youth.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter 2 provides a brief survey of the literature on youth bulge theory and its emergence in the Pacific Islands, specifically in Melanesia. Chapter 3 of the study will be the *liklik stori*. Here I provide biographical narratives of the five young Papua New Guineans, juxtaposing their life situations in relation to assumptions of the youth bulge discourse. I privilege *Tok Pisin* narrative in the process of relating the stories to capture precisely how young people articulate thoughts about their daily lives.

Chapter 4 presents some of the common themes generated from the stories. I use this chapter to analyze the *liklik storis* and, equally importantly, address the overall research question of this study. Finally, Chapter 5 offers concluding observations and suggests areas for further research and inquiry. Issues such as sub-regional mobility in Melanesia and the effects of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project in Papua New Guinea offer the prospect of further illuminating the aspirations of youth in Melanesia.

CHAPTER 2: YOUTH BULGE THEORY – ENGAGING WITH A GLOBAL DISCOURSE

I was shuffling through my notes when I heard Izsy knocking on the rusty chains of my mum's house. He is already here, 15 minutes earlier than our scheduled interview time. Joining him on the pathway, I thanked him for his time, and led him to the backyard. Under the mango tree a fine mat was already laid out. Taking our places I mentioned in passing that Izsy was my 6th interviewee in the series of interviews I was conducting. I proposed that we chew some betel nuts before continuing the interview. That should free up ease our thought processes for the duration of the interview. While chomping on the mouthful of betel nut, I warmed him to the task ahead by randomly asking: “*Yu klia wanem dispela samting oli kolim youth bulge?*”¹¹ To that question, Iszy, my University of Papua New Guinea-educated interviewee replied: “*Nogat, em nambawan taim turu mi harim dispela nem ya. Em wanem samting?*”¹² I knew that I needed a 15-minute explanation before I could formally interview Iszy. And with the betel nut taking effect, I began a brief and simplified explanation of this unheard-of concept!

¹¹In *Tok Pisin* translated to mean: “*So, do you know what this term youth bulge is all about?*”

¹²In *Tok Pisin* translated to mean: “*Never, this is the first time I have heard of that word. What is it?*”

Analysis of two articles on the theme of the youth bulge phenomenon in the Pacific Islands is illustrative of the dire outlook frequently suggested in alarmist commentaries. The first article by journalist Angela Gregory appeared in the *New Zealand Herald* of July 1st 2006 under the title “Revolution warning for Pacific as ‘youth bulge’ keeps growing.” Gregory cautions that the youth population in the Pacific Islands “is reaching levels where historically there have been revolutions”. Ominous signs are “when 20 per cent of a country’s population was aged between 15 and 24 years” (Gregory, 2006).¹³ The second article by Neil Plimmer, former Chair of the New Zealand-based Pacific Cooperation Foundation is found in *Pacific Connections*. Plimmer asserts that “the seriousness of the ‘youth bulge’ in many PICs [Pacific Islands Countries] is a factor behind unemployment and social unrest (Plimmer, 2007:10). He adds that the youth bulge “is and will be more marked in the Melanesian states than elsewhere in the Pacific” (ibid.).

These commentaries by Gregory and Plimmer convey overly dramatic impressions of the Pacific Islands. Imagery of youth beset by helplessness permeates the texts in a manner that few islander youth would readily recognize. My initial reading of these articles allowed me to identify the problematic that is the theme of this study. First, there is no agency at all in the notion of the “youth.” Rather, the youth bulge is a faceless, uncontrollable mass, predestined to produce instability.¹⁴ Plimmer specifically singles out Melanesia as the likely site for most of the problems related to the youth bulge. In the *New Zealand Herald* article, Gregory unhesitatingly makes deductive inferences about the historical and global experiences of the youth bulge. Suggesting that the “revolutionary” tendencies of youth in the Pacific Islands are informed by experiences in other parts of the world, her article raises

¹³An illustration that best characterizes the demographic phenomenon of the youth bulge is represented in Figure 3.

¹⁴Commenting on the representation of youth, Hartmann and Hendrixson (2005) state that “the youth bulge is portrayed as an unpredictable, out-of-control force.....an immediate threat that must be stopped” (p.226).

interesting questions about this global discourse. For instance, *who* is defining the youth bulge phenomenon and *what* purpose does it serve?

Strategic and security interests of powerful players in the international system frequently see the Pacific Islands through lenses which project youth as a problem. For instance, the U.S. National Security Council classifies the Marshall Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Samoa as showing signs of youth bulge in its populations (see Figure 4). The strategic implications of this demographic phenomenon are all too apparent.

The Youth Bulge, 2005¹⁵

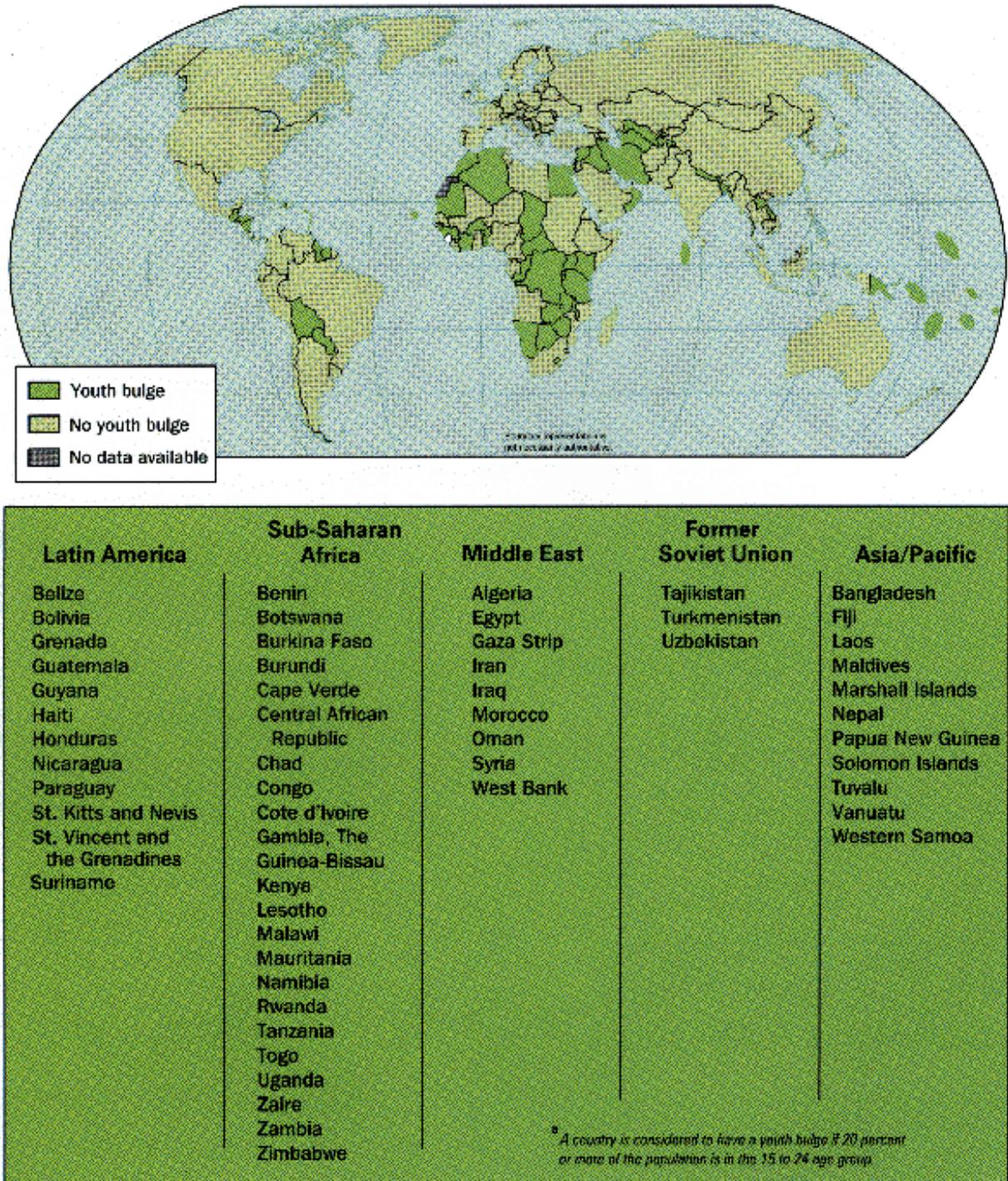


Figure 4: Select countries with youth bulges.¹⁵

¹⁵ Source: National Intelligence Council (2010) available online at: http://www.dni.gov/nic/special_globaltrends2010.html

2.1. The Youth Bulge Discourse and its Assumptions

Youth bulge theorists argue that “societies with rapidly growing young populations often end up with rampant unemployment and large pools of disaffected youths who are more susceptible to recruitment into rebel or terrorist groups.”¹⁶ Further, it is “countries with weak political institutions [that] are most vulnerable to youth bulge-related violence and social unrest” (ibid.). Anne Hendrixson (2003a) extends this definition of the youth bulge concept, identifying “young men as a historically volatile population” (p.29). Moreover, the discourse:

explores the idea that the presence of more than twenty percent of young people in the population signals the possibility of political rebellion and unrest. The concept specifically equates large percentages of young men with an increased possibility of violence, particularly in the global South where analysts argue that governments may not have the capacity to support them (Hendrixson, 2003a:29).

Since Robert Kaplan published “The Coming Anarchy” (1994), security-related studies have increasingly generated discussions on the role of population pressure and environmental factors (resource scarcity) on global insecurity.¹⁷ Kaplan’s article set the scene for the growth of post-Cold War interest in the non-military or non-traditional security threats. A series of qualitative studies have followed, consistently raising the profile of the youth bulge as a key variable in determining the onset of conflict situations.

¹⁶Beehner, Lionel (2007) *The Effects of the ‘Youth Bulge’ on Civil Conflicts*, Council on Foreign Relations, http://www.cfr.org/publication/13093/effects_of_youth_bulge_on_civil_conflicts.html#p2 (accessed November 18, 2010).

¹⁷The growing influence of the youth bulge discourse can also be understood in the post-Cold War international system. Prior to the end of the Cold War, “most international relations research paid little attention to scarcity or the sociobiological roots of competition and conflict, focusing instead on issues such as the ideological differences underpinning the Cold War” (Hudson and den Boer, 2004:1).

An outcome of one of these research projects was called the “State Failure Task Force Report” (see Esty et al.1998). Here the authors highlight that “the risks of ethnic war were greatly increased by the presence of a ‘youth bulge’; that is, a large percentage of 15 to 29-year-olds relative to the population age 30-54” (Esty et.al.1999:51).¹⁸

The depiction of the youth bulge as a “problem” from the “South” or Third World is not surprising given the origins of the youth bulge discourse.¹⁹ In fact, the term “youth bulge” and its subsequent use as a conceptual lens through which strategic and security objectives are framed occurred in the pioneering work of scholars in the intelligence community, particularly the United States’ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (see CIA, 2002; Helgerson, 2002; Hughes, 1997 and; Tenant, 2002).²⁰ Since the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States and the subsequent global “war on terror”, commentators have highlighted the effects of the youth bulge phenomenon on America’s national security. Fareed Zakaria (2001) in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States argues that the outbreak of Islamic fundamentalism is at least partially attributable to Islamic countries having youth bulges with little economic and social change to absorb the youth population. Young men are easily recruited or indoctrinated into fundamentalist ideologies in this context of uncertainty. Reinforcing the threat of youth radicalization in the Muslim world, Samuel Huntington opines:

I don’t think Islam is any more violent than any other religions.... But the key factor is the demographic factor. Generally speaking, the people who go out and kill other people are males between the ages of 16 and 30. During the 1960s, 70s and 80s there were high birth rates in the Muslim world, and

¹⁸More recent quantitative studies that have fed into the literature of the youth bulge discourse includes Fearon and Laitin (2003) and Collier and Hoeffler (2004).

¹⁹The idea that youth bulge has a causal effect on political violence has a long history dating back to work by Herbert Moller (1968) and Nazli Choucri (1974). The youth bulge concept was coined in 1985 by Gary Fuller who was at the Central Intelligence Agency’s Office of Global Issues as a visiting scholar (Hendrixson, 2004:2).

this has given rise to a huge youth bulge. But the bulge will fade. Muslim birth rates are going down; in fact, they have dropped dramatically in some countries.²¹

Strategic analyses by agencies of the United States government suggest that the youth bulge discourse will continue to inform the American national security agenda (Fuller, 2003; Helgerson, 2002; Hendrixson, 2004).²²

This emphasis on demographic factors and their influence on strategic agendas gave rise to the emergence of the discipline of strategic demography.²³ Theorists in strategic demography use “population characteristics such as age, ethnicity, geographic location and numbers to help locate terrorist or criminal threats” (Hendrixson, 2004:1). Here, strategic demography frames “national security threats in demographic terms” (Hartmann and Hendrixson, 2004: 1).²⁴

Strategic demography also claims to be informed by empirical scientific inquiry. It advocates quantitative analysis to identify and predict conflict and cases of political violence. Predictive analysis is a method that applies demographic data against variables such as economic growth to show probabilities of conflict situations. Predictive analysis is used globally to carry out such ‘cross-national studies’ to situate the probabilities of conflict, violence and crisis (see for example Urdal, 2004).

²¹‘So, are civilizations at war?’ Interview with Samuel P. Huntington by Michael Steinberger, *The Observer*, Sunday October 21, 2001.

²²As illustrated by the 2002 United States Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) statement to the United States Senate’s Select Committee on Intelligence which states: “Several troublesome global trends – especially the growing demographic youth bulge in developing nations whose economic systems and political ideologies are under enormous stress – will fuel the rise of more disaffected groups willing to use violence to address their perceived differences” (CIA, 2002:5).

²³Boer and Hudson (2005) use “security demographics” defining it as a “new subfield of Security Studies in recent years, as scholars have begun to envision the security implications of long-term demographic change. This subfield provides important new insight into the problem of population, social stability and conflict” (p.27).

²⁴See also Furedi, Frank (1997) *Population and Development: A Critical Introduction*, New York: St. Martin’s Press.

The unsettling predictions emerging from youth bulge discourse may be understood through careful examination of its basic premises, based on a range of disciplines. One such theory, for instance, is the superpredator theory that was popularized in the mid-1990s and equated “a rise in the proportion of young men in a given population with a rise in the numbers of criminal young men” (Hendrixson, 2004: 3).²⁵ Ted Gurr’s (1970) “relative deprivation theory” also found resonance in some of more recent research on the youth bulge.²⁶ According to Gurr, where expectations of younger generations is to accomplish more than their parents, a lack of opportunities for the realization of this potential can only result in frustrations and riots.

Another influence on youth bulge theory was through the work of Richard Easterlin (1980). He argues that psychological or social factors compel large cohorts of young people to engage in violent acts. The basis of Easterlin’s argument is that group motivation operates to influence personal perceptions of destiny. More recently, the work of Beatrice Daumerie (2008) suggests that the speed of population growth rate (acceleration) is responsible in “creating both large youth bulges and increasing the risk for violent conflict directly” (Daumerie, 2008:5). Daumerie argues that the higher the rate of population growth, the higher the probability that economic growth will not catch up. Resource scarcity and the competition for resources are implied as the underlying rationale for youth becoming violent.²⁷

Other contributors to the youth bulge theory argue that economic factors have causal effects on youth-inspired violence. Employment is one variable that features prominently in Henrik Urdal’s 2004 study. As illustrated in Figure 5, Urdal proposes that “youth grievances”

²⁵The superpredator theory portrays “young men of color and “teenage welfare queens” (describing young women of color) problems, and supported the practical measures to “control them, including incarceration, contraceptive and sterilization abuse, and prison-like schools” (Hendrixson, 2005: 15, see also Gluckman, 2001). The youth bulge discourse takes from the superpredator theory the elements of framing young people along racial, gender and age lines.

²⁶For instance, Henrik Urdal (2004)

²⁷Henrik Urdal (2004, 2006) tries to address in his use of statistical association of young cohorts as a proportion of the adult population. He uses theoretical explanation to predict the onset of conflicts – a direct manifestation of competition for scarce resource between the adult population and the younger cohorts.

may eventuate in circumstances where limited job opportunities available to a growing youth cohort result in uprisings and armed conflict. In his observation Urdal states:

Generations that are considerably larger than their parents' generations are likely to run into several societal 'bottlenecks', straining social institutions. And most theoretical works concerned with youth bulges point to limited absorption capacity of the labour market as the most important factor for causing grievances among youth (p. 3).

Likewise, Valerie Hudson (2004) concludes that the lack of employment by young men and almost no family ties leave them unattached and available for mobilization into armed movements (see also Daumerie, 2008:3).

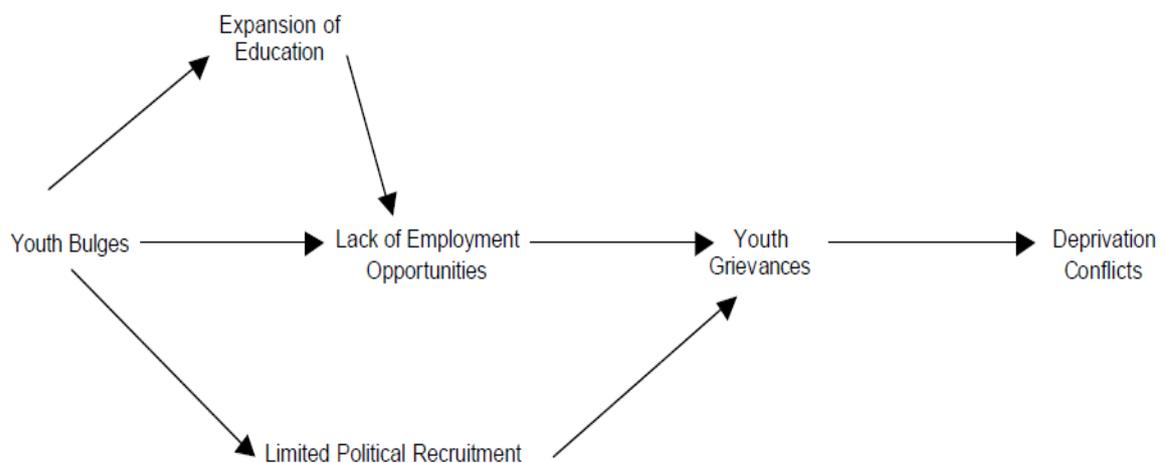


Figure 5: The relationship between youth bulges and armed conflict.

2.2. Criticisms of the youth bulge discourse

A recurring theme in critical discussions of youth bulge discourse is its propensity toward generalization and stereotyping. Its attempt to deductively fashion a global theory of youth

and apply such explanations to the developing world should give pause. Moreover, as suggested above, youth bulge discourse is not an innocuous or neutral intellectual lens. Inherent in its policy objectives are global power relations. For instance, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, there has been renewed interest in issues of population growth and the youth bulge phenomenon, particularly as it may relate to explanations of “terrorism and increased global insecurity” (Ian Bannon in Urdal, 2004).

At times, the youth bulge concept is also linked to the “power in numbers” fears – overwhelming numbers of disenfranchised young people perceived as threats to regional and global security (Hendrixson, 2003c:2; Kaplan, 1994:46).²⁸ Speaking of the method employed by proponents of the youth bulge discourse, Hartmann and Hendrixson (2004) observe that strategic demography

not only employs demographic statistics in its calculus of threats, but alarmist images, tropes and narratives to identify, describe and build fear of the enemy. In fact, there is a discursive synergy between the statistical legitimacy demography confers on the construction of threats and the more emotive imagery that infuses those statistics with meaning.²⁹

In Hendrixson’s (2003c:8) words, the youth bulge is “personified as a discontented, angry young man, almost always a person of color” typically a Third World phenomenon that is an “unpredictable, out-of-control force.” In fact strategic demography is said to derive “meaning from, the alarmist images and narratives that are today so often used to describe enemy ‘others’, particularly in the Islamic South” (Hendrixson, 2005:1). For the practical agenda of

²⁸Anne Hendrixson (2004) notes that “9/11 proved a watershed for popular and policy acceptance of the ‘youth bulge’ figure of speech” (p.2) and the subsequent “war on terror”. Driven predominantly by Western-based scholars and researchers, and under the auspices of the intelligence community in the West, the images we have come to know about youth in non-Western countries are predominantly Orientalist in intellectual tradition.

²⁹Anne Hendrixson (2004) notes that “Strategic demography’s statistics both lend legitimacy to, and derive meaning from, the alarmist images and narratives that are today so often used to describe enemy “others””.

policy intervention, however, the generalized notions of youth engender significant questions. For instance, Graham E. Fuller (2003) admits that the youth bulge concept is ambiguous because as the youth bulge grows progressively older, their societal needs and planning directed toward meeting these needs are treated “differently at each stage of its aging process” (p.9). This implies youth bulge is by no means a homogenous category because age differences and life experiences may account for the varied levels of expectations and needs in that category of the general population. Under these conditions, if age is the sole criterion used in the representation of youth, policy interventions may be ill-formed.

Criticisms of the youth bulge theory also point to the fact that, based on historical experience, the mere existence of a large youth cohort in the general population does not necessarily mean that conflict or political violence is inevitable. Triggering factors that propel youth bulge as a security threat or dilemma (manifested through riots, violence or conflicts) are much more complex and the subject of sustained research (Zakaria, 2001). Studies conducted to understand the causative linkages between youth bulge and conflict suggest that political violence depends on myriad other variables, such as intermediary regimes and economic recession (Urdal, 2002).

Fuller’s (2003:3) study of the Middle East and its demographic “problems” associated with high population growth rates leads to policy recommendations advising the United States to address areas where radicalized agents can influence this “most volatile element of society” – the youth. He argues for assistance in improving liberal Middle East educational systems so as to avoid a vacuum that may leave young people vulnerable to the indoctrinating teachings of Islamist hardliners. Some analysts also promote the exporting of American ideals and values through sustained public diplomacy.

Mesquida and Weiner (2001) suggest that violence is to some degree biologically predetermined and coalitional violence is a survival strategy by young males. Similar studies

suggest that “adolescent males with high levels of testosterone in their blood are easily influenced by peers” (Rowe et al. 2004: 550). This does not suggest however, that high testosterone levels will necessarily entail collective commitment to deviant behavior. Rowe et al. (2004) show that if adolescent males “associate instead with peers engaged in positive behavior, they are likely to become leaders.” Hence, “ignoring, isolating or denigrating young people is unlikely to yield positive results” (ibid.).

Samuel Huntington’s much discussed *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996) perpetuates the racialized assumptions of the youth bulge theory. He argues that the high concentration of young people in Muslim lands is connected to “Muslim propensity toward violent conflict.” Huntington depicts Islam as one pole of a “clash of the civilizations” with the West and warns that “the expansion of the youth cohort in Muslim countries provides recruits for fundamentalism, terrorism, insurgency and migration” (p.258).

Hendrixson (2004:12) argues that Huntington’s conceptions of the “youth bulge” phenomena in Middle Eastern countries overgeneralises Islam and tends not to distinguish clearly between fundamentalists, terrorists and Arabs in general.” He further suggests that images evoked in the use of the youth bulge theory have racial, generational, and religious connotations. Articulation of foreign policies associated with loaded terminologies and value judgments associated with *The Clash of Civilizations* suggest a number of parallels in critiquing the scholarship of the youth bulge.

Yet another issue associated with youth bulge theory is gender bias. This prejudice is also noted by Anne Hendrixson (2003c:3) who highlights how “the youth bulge concept builds from gender stereotypes.” Stated succinctly, she observes “that men, particularly young men, are prone to violence” and the “fears that when young men face challenges like gaining employment, political power and wealth, they will form alliances and find outlets for their essentially violent natures.” Marc Sommers (2006:8) stresses the invisibility of females in the

youth bulge discourse as reflective of societal realities. It is the “female youth, whose plight is frequently overlooked within their societies and beyond, who often live much less public lives than their male counterparts, and who do not inspire the degree of fear that male youth do”.

The lack of attention to female youth by bulge theorists is a major shortcoming, given that this section of the population is frequently subject to violence and conflict (Nordstrom, 1999; Sommers, 2003). And although the scholarship has little to say about female youths, it is noticeable how all too often relegate policy discussions of female youth are limited to population control and family planning. Female youth are usually singled out in family planning measures related to limiting population growth and hence, the number of potential male “superpredators” or security threats (Hendrixson, 2004).

One other notable research carried out by Barakat and Urdal (2008) shows that “young male population bulges are more likely to increase the risk of conflict in societies where male secondary education is low”.³⁰ This suggests that domestic armed conflict is driven by availability of large under-schooled cohorts of potential recruits. Barakat and Urdal’s (2008) findings have been disputed by Marc Sommers (2006) in his research in Rwanda. Nevertheless, Barakat and Urdal (2008) proposed that for the reduction of conflict potential in developing countries, emphasis should be through increasing educational opportunities for young people.

Critical examination of the youth bulge theory has tended to be lacking. As Hendrixson (2005) points out, the “writing and analysis on “youth bulge” theory simply assumes that it is “common sense” without critically exploring its foundations or testing whether it is credible in various cultural or historical contexts” (p.3). For instance, Paul D. Dyer (2008) provides an interesting perspective, indicating that the youth bulge in the Middle

³⁰From Abstract, Available online at: <http://ideas.repec.org/p/wbk/wbrwps/5114.html>, accessed August 5, 2010

East is not a new phenomenon. Dyer (2008) promotes proceeding on case-by-case analysis of the contextual and historical implications of the demographic change in that part of the world.

Important research in Rwanda and its post-1994 genocide generation of young people has also yielded no definite conclusions to suggest that a large concentration of young men is inherently dangerous. Marc Sommers in his series of studies points to the fallacy and weakness of the youth bulge theory in addressing the diversity of societies in its descriptive generalizations and assumptions. Sommers (2003, 2006) notes that country-specific studies such as the one he conducted in Rwanda “illustrates the inherent weakness of the youth bulge theory and those who argument that high concentration of African male youth is inherently dangerous” (2006, p.3). Even though there is “high demographic concentration in rural areas, there is no evidence that they were in any way unusually violent or threatening prior to the government’s determination (and those of their allies) to exploit and direct male youth frustrations toward violence and genocide” (2006, p.15).

The notions of “unemployed young men, such a staple of literature about the 1994 genocide, scarcely exist in the pre-war and pre-genocide literature – as well as most literature produced since 1994. There was nothing intrinsically and predictively violent about male youth in Rwanda” (ibid.). Sommers conclude that the fear of young men should be directed at the proponents of this theory than their male youth subjects.

Likewise, research in Asia has shed light on the comparative experience of Asian countries in relation to the youth bulge phenomena in their demographic indicators. Fuller and Hoch (1998) showed how large numbers of young people are coming into the labor market and frustrated over the status quo. This has not translated into full-blown crisis or instability. The inherent variations of regions in the world, with their own evolving political systems, economic potential or cultural background seriously challenge any universal appeal of the youth bulge theory.

It is interesting to note that Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi and Mary Mederios Kent (2007) using comparative lessons from the Middle East and North Africa find the youth bulge as presenting a demographic dividend. This demographic dividend is defined “as a temporary surge in the proportion of working-age adults in the population that can boost economic growth” (p.3).³¹Roudi-Fahimi and Mederios Kent (2007) nevertheless qualified their observations by noting that along with this demographic dividend, there are obstacles such as “high unemployment, a mismatch of jobs and skill levels, extensive government entitlements, and political instability are among the factors that have made it difficult for the young MENA [Middle East North Africa] population to spur economic growth” (pp.3-4).

In Asia, Graeme Hugo (2005) provides another scenario where the demographic dividend from the youth bulge is understood. He sees “the passage of this bulge through the age structure can produce a “demographic dividend” of economic growth when the bulge passes into the working age groups, and as a result, the workforce grows faster than the overall population” (p.67).

When addressing the subsequent use of the youth bulge theory in the Pacific Islands and especially Melanesia, its global evolution tends to mirror the power relations and the imageries that are generated through its use. I now briefly discuss the emergence of the youth bulge theory in the Pacific Islands.

2.3. The youth bulge discourse in the Pacific Islands and Melanesia

In recent decades discussions on strategic concerns in Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have, as noted previously, increasingly focused on the demographic phenomenon of youth bulge. Some of the most dramatic projections about Pacific Island societies come from proponents

³¹From a comparative reading of the Asian experience with its youthful population and the “demographic dividend”, see David E. Bloom, David Canning, and Jaypee Sevilla (2003) *The Demographic Dividend: A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND).

of the youth bulge theory. The emergence of youth bulge coupled with sluggish developmental trends in post-Independence Pacific Islands serves to reinforce claims of the tenuous nature of security in these countries.³²

One of the key indicators which youth bulge theory employs is youth unemployment. Job markets in the formal sectors of the economy are perceived as inadequate in absorbing the increasing numbers of youth passing out of the education system. Without any prospects of employment, the otherwise productive input of young people into the life of society is underutilized or expended in anti-social activities such as *raskolism*, drug abuse, and so forth. Fears of large numbers of urbanized, unemployed and restless youth being easily mobilized or induced into destabilizing factions have been central assumptions (see Sommers, 2003).

Undeniably, rapid social change is happening in Pacific Island societies. Young Pacific Islanders are more than ever integrating into contexts far more complex than the ones their parents or elders experienced. Confronting the changes such as the dislocative processes of Westernization, urbanization and a consumerist culture demand varying levels of responses (see for instance Schoeffel, 1994). Recent incidences of conflict and unrest in Melanesia reinforce the perceived threat posed by broader social changes and an increasing number of youth. In an analysis of the 1998 ethnic crisis in the Solomon Islands, Judith Bennett (2002) observes:

There were few employment opportunities for young Solomon Islanders, especially those with little education, and opportunities further declined in the late 1990s.....This was a youthful population with higher aspirations than its parents. In the towns it fed on images from the shabby video parlors that portrayed violence as a means to satisfy those aspirations.

³²Commentators such as Helen Ware (2004) and Graeme Dobbie (2006) argue that the socio-economic indicators of countries in the Pacific Islands region are inadequate in meeting the expectations of this increasing section of the community.

Commenting on some of the underlying factors leading up to the crisis in the Solomon Islands, another observer said that “[T]he bulk of Solomons youth has been schooled for non-existent urban jobs, effectively alienating them from their village resource base and branding them as failures in a system foreign to their lives” (Roughan 2000, cited in Chevalier, 2001:39). Moreover, it is young people who “bear the burden of unemployment, a mismanaged economy, and an education system that provides them with few skills for self-employment” (Chevalier, 2001:39).

However, the developmental challenges and on-going security concerns in Melanesian and Pacific Islands countries are not the only basis on which the youth bulge discourse seems to be finding an audience. The youth bulge theory persists because of the lack of any sustained exploration of its foundation and its validity across the diverse cultural or historical contexts it describes. For all its recent application to analyses and descriptions of Pacific Islands, and especially Melanesia, the youth bulge theory has yet to be rigorously examined for its credibility and practical relevance to Pacific Islands or Melanesian communities. Anne Hendrixson (2004) noted that “[M]ost writing and analysis on “youth bulge” theory simply assumes that it is “common sense” without critically exploring its foundations or testing whether it is credible in various cultural or historical contexts” (p.4).

Though the Melanesian sub-region is where the youth bulge has found avid following in scholarship, this does not limit the general themes of the youth bulge concept to its usage on a regional scale. In August this year (2009), police chiefs from around the Pacific met in Papua New Guinea for a conference entitled "Youth offending in the Pacific and its impact on Regional Security." Some of the prevailing pre-September 11 circumstances in the Pacific islands countries such as issues of youth unemployment in the formal sector of the economy (see Callick 1993; Gannicott 1993), are recurring themes in the general concerns over instability and broader security interests of metropolitan countries in the region.

Commentators Melanesia espouse labor mobility as the outlet in addressing the youth unemployment in the Melanesian region. Labor mobility is promoted as capable of relieving countries with the underemployment problem (Allegro, 2006:15; Dobell, 2007; Lynn, 2006; Maclellan and Mares, 2006 cited in Lynn; Ware, 2005, 2004). This policy route emphasizing migration and labor mobility is of course consistent with global trends towards addressing the youth bulge concerns (UNDP, 2006:18; Urdal, 2004). The seasonal ‘fruit-picking’ contracts advocated in certain quarters of the policy communities of the two metropolitan countries, Australian and New Zealand is also seen in that light (Australian Government, 2006a, 2006b; Australian Senate, 2003).

Helen Ware (2007, 2005, 2004) has commented widely on the issue of the youth bulge. For instance she states that “violent unrest in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs).....is increasingly common because of lack of employment for large cohorts of young people” (Ware, 2004a:1). In the article “Melanesian Seasonal Migration as a Potential Contribution to Security” (2007), she promotes emigration as a “partial solution” that would allow Pacific islanders and particularly Melanesians to enter into the metropolitan countries [New Zealand and Australia] on a short-term basis for lower-skilled seasonal work” (Ware, 2007: 242).

Ware envisages that “the twin advantages of providing money for development and of reducing the pressures of youth unemployment at home” would be practical outcomes of the labor mobility arrangement (ibid.). Comparative interpretation of events in the region allowed her to make a case that because of overseas employment opportunities, Polynesians have managed to evade the instability instigated by its equally restless young population in Melanesia.

Commenting on the Australian-led intervention in the Solomon Islands, Ware (2007) believes that “[I]n the longer term, the solution to this insecurity lies not in the military intervention of Regional Assistance Missions, or the external imposition of good governance

programmes, but in economic development that specifically gives young people a stake in their country rather than a motivation for unrest or permanent emigration” (2007, p.221).

Two other notable contributors to our understanding of the youth bulge in Melanesia, and especially the Solomon Islands are Kate Romer and Andre Renzaho (2007). In a 2007 article entitled “Re-emerging Conflict in the Solomon Islands? The Underlying Causes and Triggers of the riots of April 2006” Romer and Renzaho reinforce the idea that even though the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) achieved the immediate objective of enforcing law and order, the re-emergence of “tensions” or “violence” in August 2006 were reflective of unresolved underlying issues. According to Romer and Renhazo, the riot, looting and burning of Chinatown in Honiara in August 2006 is a clear indication that issues of youth unemployment have not been adequately addressed (see also Hassal and Associates, 2003).

Romer and Renzaho also underscore that although young people were a notable feature in that riot, they were clearly sanctioned or urged on by political elites (p.6). Rioting was also experienced in Papua New Guinea in 2009, much of it fuelled by anti-Asian sentiments. This nation-wide riots and looting in the urban centers of Papua New Guinea in 2009 also evoked images of an uncontrolled mass of young, disaffected people. In the aftermath of that episode, one politician stated that “the ingredients of the riots were a build-up of frustrations, large numbers of unemployed, lack of job and business opportunities and difficulty in accessing credit funds” (Kolo, 2009).

Pacific island leaders, through the Eminent Person’s Group’s (EPG) have somewhat belatedly recognized “the needs and aspirations of the burgeoning population of young people in the region, and recognize the impact of bigger and more youthful populations on the resources required for education and vocational training, healthcare, and job opportunities” (Chan, et al. 2004:13). If informed and driven only by security agendas that are missing the

contextual setting of Melanesia, addressing young people's "needs and aspirations," will be hard pressed to produce desired outcomes.

Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands feature are prominently featured as examples of the consequences of the youth bulge. (Brown, 2006). In Papua New Guinea, "disaffected youth are seen as a major cause of the deteriorating law and order situation in many villages and towns" (O'Collins, 2000).³³ Sinclair Dinnen (1996) and Bill Standish (1994) have consistently cited socio-economic factors such as "urbanization [and the ensuing decline of traditional controls at village level], population growth, lack of economic growth and an expanding body of marginalized youth as providing important preconditions for crime and delinquency in Papua New Guinea" (Dinnen, 1996:92). Rapid population growth (2.3 per cent per annum) and a very young population, with some 51 percent aged 19 years or below in 1980 is seen as presenting major challenges (Standish, 1994:56). Standish also mentions the lack of employment for young people who are drawn out of villages to towns for educational and job opportunities. Equally important to our understanding of youth behavior is the rapid decline of traditional social control mechanisms or authority, and the powerlessness of elders to enforce discipline, perhaps one of the "deepest cleavages" in controlling the behavior of young urban Papua New Guineans (see also O'Collins, 2000). In this context of socio-economic inequalities and rapid social changes, physical violence and law and order problems are forms of rebellion and protest (p.56).

Though Sinclair Dinnen does not specifically address the role of young people in *Law and Order in a Weak State* (2001), he raises valuable insights into the context from which internal security in Papua New Guinea may be scrutinized. Growing levels of resentment on the part of an increasingly young population base, where quality of governance is rated as abysmal (AusAID, 2006), has significant implications for state legitimacy. Youth are

³³ O'Collins, Maev (2000) "Law and Order in Papua New Guinea", available online at: rspas.anu.edu.au/papers/melanesia/working.../maev2.htm, accessed August 5, 2010

frequently the most politically active and potentially volatile population (O'Collins, 1986, especially Chapter 10). Against the on-going challenges of political corruption in Papua New Guinea John Nonggorr warned that "there might be a rise in public disorder including violence, when there is widespread recognition amongst Papua New Guineans, especially the youth, that corruption permeates through the Government bureaucracy" (cited in Joku, 2007:1).

Entering these robust discussions on youth bulge in the Pacific Islands, I try in the next chapter to make sense of young people's lives. In particular, I examine the applicability of the youth bulge theory through documentation of their lived experiences. I employ this biographical approach as an alternative to the statistical formulations usually associated with the youth bulge literature. The biographical approach is attentive to the complexities of human persons in Papua New Guinea who, like everybody else, have revealing stories to tell.

2.4. Concluding remarks

In the foregoing discussions, I explored the scholarly evolution of the youth bulge discourse found in the literature. At the outset, I addressed why youth bulge theory is now making inroads into security discussions in the Pacific Islands and especially Melanesia. I then showed how Melanesians and other Pacific Islanders are often (mis)represented in this discourse.

Youth bulge theory is clearly reflected in global strategic concerns of Western intelligence and defense entities. The strategic and security issues associated with youth bulge explanations play a significant role in justifying the various forms of policy intervention in societies purportedly undergoing this demographic-related turmoil. As is evident in the application of youth bulge theory, Melanesian societies are not insulated from

global agendas and strategic considerations of metropolitan powers. The lack of any critical examination of the youth bulge theory in light of the contextual specificities of the different cultures and settings is a disservice to our understanding the complexities of human societies. Moreover, it leaves youth bulge theory open to criticism for being overly simplistic, overly monocausal. In the next chapter I employ the method of ethnographic case study to situate the lives of young Papua New Guineans in their ever-changing society.

CHAPTER 3: *OLI TOK-TOK STORI BILONG OL - THEY TELL THEIR STORIES*

3.1. Personalizing the “youth” from the youth bulge

In this chapter of this study I use a series of personal stories of 5 young Papua New Guineans as a backdrop to the overall discussion on the youth bulge theory. As a way of personalizing the youth bulge discourse and opening up the discussion on the youth bulge, young peoples, the subject of much of the discussions lived experiences that are far more insightful – and worth hearing. What emerges from the biographical profile of these 5 young Papua New Guineans is their personal experience in a rapidly changing Papua New Guinean society.

From different backgrounds – social, economic, ethnic, linguistic and educational levels, there diverging settings and sentiments are so informative of broader processes of nation-building and social changes in Papua New Guinea. As diverse as these 5 Papua New Guineans are in the life of their communities, any suggestion that they are part of the security-related problems may be inconclusive and premature. The stories of such young people suggest that there is an on-going negotiation and attempt for productive engagement in the community.

Trying not to gloss over the developmental anomalies that Papua New Guinea faces, this study considers young people as actively participating in the reproducing and sustaining of relationships that may mitigate the probabilities of conflicts and crisis situations. And rather than being seen as a problem, the youth are equally susceptible to the local, regional and global forces that influence their lives. Out of the most trying of circumstances, the

optimism in the stories of the respondents in this chapter is reason to be open to increasing possibilities to informed and creative interventions in their lives.

I therefore use this biographical approach to privilege the stories of youth in their communities with the hope of understanding young people as dynamic and complex participants in the process of national development.

These biographical profiles are complemented with data generated through a series of interviews carried out in Papua New Guinea during the summer of 2010. Interviews were conducted during a three months period (June to August) in Port Moresby, the capital city of Papua New Guinea and in the Kainantu Valley of the Eastern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea in the year 2010.

In organizing my interviewees, emphasis on the immediate issue areas such as employment, education and political consciousness – variables that youth bulge theorists argue influence youth-instigated insecurity in the region. In this study, I interviewed five male and five female respondents – a total of ten interviewees. A factor considered in the sampling exercise was the social and economic background of the interviewees. Towards that end, the ten interviewees were randomly determined according to the following criteria: 2 respondents from a village setting; 3 respondents working in a non-governmental organization (NGO); 2 unemployed youth; 3 youth in tertiary level institutions and 1 female youth employed in the informal sector of the economy. The emphasis on educational background, employment status and rural-urban settings goes to the crux of the youth bulge assumptions about factors influencing youth to resort to violence and confrontations.



Figure 6: Map of Papua New Guinea

3.1.1. Ganjiki (Male, 30) – *Patriots PNG Inc.* founder

This is a brief biographical account of Ganjiki, a 30 year old male presently residing in Port Moresby (the capital city of PNG). Ganjiki is the founder of *Patriots PNG Inc.* a grassroots or non-government organization in Papua New Guinea. I first learnt about Ganjiki through Facebook, the social networking internet site. Ganjiki's Facebook group page is of the same name – *Patriots PNG Inc.*³⁴ In the words of Ganjiki, the movement advocates for:

a change of mentality. It is about the consciousness of the people of Papua New Guinea. And we are trying to address the mindset first before we can address anything else...we are trying to address the fact that Papua New Guineans have or think negative mindsets. So what we trying to do is to get us to changing our mindsets, start seeing things differently, acting differently. It's about pasin na senisim attitude bilong ol man na meri [it is about behavior and changing the attitude of man and women]. So that is where we are at the moment. So when I get into calling out some political issue, it is just as a personal capacity as a citizen.

Interestingly, the Facebook site of *Patriots PNG Inc.* serves as one of the avenues used by Ganjiki in linking up young and old Papua New Guineans residing both inside and outside the country. It is a medium that has been used by Ganjiki to advertise planned events and activities for the *Patriots PNG Inc.* Papua New Guineans residing outside of PNG are also kept abreast with some of the on-going discussions happening in the country.

On October 2nd 2009, *Patriots PNG Inc.* commenced formal steps to be registered as an incorporated organization. By January 15th, 2010, *Patriots PNG Inc.* was formally certified with a

³⁴The *Patriots PNG Inc.* Facebook group page has to date well over 1,700 members. *Patriots PNG Inc.*

Certificate of Incorporation from the Registrar of Companies at Investment Promotion Authority (IPA). This means that it is a full legal person and can operate fully and lawfully.

Ganjiki attributes his visions in establishing *Patriots PNG Inc.* to a series of factors. He relates how his upbringing and early exposure to fellow Papua New Guineans generated his zeal in starting a movement addressing a total “mindset change” in the country. The culmination of his upbringing and visions led him to establish the *Patriots PNG Inc.* To understand Ganjiki’s visions for the *Patriots PNG Inc.* his upbringing and the various influences in his life are discussed.

Ganjiki was born at the Port Moresby General Hospital. He is the eldest sibling in a family of three. Ganjiki is one example of an increasing generation of young Papua New Guineans, from mixed parentage (his parents are from different cultural groupings in Papua New Guinea). Ganjiki’s mother is from the East Sepik province³⁵ and his father, a senior pastor in a Christian denomination in Port Moresby is from the Central province.³⁶ Ganjiki sees himself as occupying a liminal space³⁷ from where to speak as the quintessential younger generation Papua New Guinean. He states:

I was really blessed to have my parents being from both ends of the country. And usually when I go around giving talks and I want to introduce myself I say my mum is from Papua and my mum is from New Guinea, and so I am from Papua New Guinea. I am from everywhere in between. And that is the nice thing about the parents being from these two areas.

³⁵East Sepik province is located to the northern coast of mainland Papua New Guinea (provide map of places). During the colonial demarcation of the Island of New Guinea by the Germans and British, the area where East Sepik province currently located was part of the New Guinea, and central Province was known as Papua. So Ganjiki is here invoking the using the colonial construct geographical demarcations in his reference to place.

³⁶Located on the southern coast of mainland Papua New Guinea.

³⁷According to Wayne F. Goulet entry posted April, 2009, on the Liminal Space – Sharing the Journey of Personal and Spiritual Renewal Blog (post April 2009) *liminal space* “applies to those uncertain times in our lives when we stand in the ‘threshold’ between the ‘old’ which may no longer work and the ‘new’ which is not yet clear. This experience can apply to relationships, jobs, or those ‘bigger’ issues like belief systems or the purpose and meaning of our lives. These are also tremendous opportunities for growth, clarity, and perspective”. The position young Papua New Guineans find themselves could be seen in this light – a constant negotiation between the “old” and “new”.

Not only was Ganjiki a child of parents from contrasting cultural settings in Papua New Guinea. Ganjiki spent his entire childhood and formative years in places other than his parents'. His family temporarily resided in Wewak town, where Ganjiki's father hails from. Most of the years however the capital of East Sepik province and early childhood experience was that he grew up in different places in Papua New Guinea. He relates:

I was born here in Port Moresby. And we [Ganjiki's family] went to Tabubil. My dad is a pastor. He was ministering there so we went there [Tabubil]. About 5 years I grew up in Tabubil. When I turned about 5 or 6 we moved to Hagen. And then we went to Wewak for a while. Came back to Hagen to a place called Fatima [CLTC- Christian Leaders Training College]. I was in Hagen for about three years [dad was working there] and then I started my grade one there (or maybe it was two years). In Wewak it was just about one year, I did grade two and three and then we came down to the Christian Leaders Training College in Banz [Western Highland]. We were there for a year – my dad did his bachelor of theology there are we were there. And then we went up to Hagen. My dad took up a job with the church and we had to move there again. In Hagen for two and a half years. I did grade 5 there [Hagen], six and just a bit of seven.

When Ganjiki was 11 years old his family moved from Mt. Hagen to Lae, the provincial capital of Morobe province and Papua New Guinea's second largest city. In Lae Ganjiki completed his high schooling (grades 7-10) and secondary education (grades 11-12). After sitting for the higher school certificate examination in grade, he was selected to take up law studies at the University of Papua New Guinea in 2003. He summarized his early formative years in the different areas of Papua New Guinea as follows:

I was educated in Hagen, Wewak, Hagen, mostly in the Highlands and then I finished in Lae, Morobe. And Morobe is a very diverse place as well. The whole spectrum of our ethnicity is there. So you are exposed to everyone, so you get to meet everyone. So when I came to uni [University of Papua New Guinea] in Moresby, this is when I guess you could call it the climax of national awareness mentality. Because I started seeing the nation now in a much more intelligent, educated way.

Ganjiki's admission to pursue a law degree at the University of Papua New Guinea coincided with his family moving to Port Moresby where they have resided ever since. According to Ganjiki, the experience of growing up in different locations of Papua New Guinea and exposure to various cultures and peoples is attributed as one of the factors that contributed to his impression of national consciousness. He states:

The other good thing is that it taught me to think "nation". I didn't grow up in a certain area where I could just claim that this is home. This little part of PNG is home and that is all that matters. I grew up everywhere.

Ganjiki notes how his childhood exposure to the multicultural nature of Papua New Guinea assisted in his critical examination of the overt stereotypes of other fellow Papua New Guineans. Growing up in these various locations of the country, Ganjiki "got to know the different people of Papua New Guinea...especially in the Highlands where a lot of us coastal people have a stereotype, negative mentality about them".

There is also another interesting aspect of Ganjiki's personal experience. He observes how an extensive network of cross-cultural linkages through his extended family has connected him to a range of peoples outside his parent's immediate ethnic and cultural boundaries:

There other thing that probably affected my mentality was the fact that much of my uncle and aunties also got married to other parts of the country – not just Sepik. That exposed me to the Tolais, and the Manus, because I have uncles and aunties married to people in those areas of the country. I also became aware of how diverse we are, how nice we could be as a people. All these things added up to just think nationally.

After graduating in 2007 as a lawyer, Ganjiki did one year training at the Legal Training Institute (LTI) in Port Moresby. He was formally admitted to the bar at the end of 2008 and is presently a practicing lawyer in a law firm based in Port Moresby. Ganjiki remains fully attuned to national issues. Through his *Patriots PNG Inc.* Facebook group page he consistently provides commentaries and discussion themes on national issues in Papua New Guinea.³⁸

Ganjiki's upbringing is reflected in his present lifestyle and the value systems that he promotes through the *Patriots PNG Inc.* group. For instance, Ganjiki is a devoted Christian and is immersing himself in various responsibilities in the local Tokarara suburb congregation, one as a Sunday school teacher. And as a son of a pastor, this speaks volumes about how the father (or parents) reared Ganjiki. The role of parenting and socializing responsibilities of elders appears as a common theme in all the interviews and conversations I had with the respondents in this study. For a society that is known for the importance of the extended family network in the imparting of societal norms to the younger generations, this is most obvious. Ganjiki's was quick to dismiss any wholehearted acceptance of the youth bulge discourse assumptions that youth were responsible for the ills witnessed in the Papua New Guinea society:

And it is unfair to say that young people are causing much of the problems, even though they are, it's unfair because the elders were the most influential

³⁸For instance, one of *Patriots PNG Inc.*'s popular discussion topics on the Facebook page was related to the proposal to review of our 'sex laws' possibly decriminalising prostitution and homosexuality.

peoples in our lives when we were growing up and growing up we should have been imparted (or a lot of young people) should have been imparted with values and some direction and Papua New Guinea along the way we have taken on the Western culture and the Western system of thought and Western values- and much of it is materialistic and our original values

However Ganjiki is known more through his *Patriots PNG Inc.* advocacy role. In the context of the *Patriots PNG Inc.* there is no specific preference for any gender, age category/ethnic or religious groups. It is inclusive to all Papua New Guineans.

Ganjiki frames the objectives of *Patriots PNG Inc.* in relating his experience of youth issue in Papua New Guinea. For instance, when asked what pressing issues or concerns young Papua New Guineans are facing, Ganjiki broadly identifies three. The first is that young people struggle for or “long for is expression”. He continues:

They just want to express themselves. And they try to find expression in all sorts of things....the way they dress, the way they walk and talk and what they listen to, the music they listen to and sing. What kind of books they read if they read any books at all. They are just looking for expression and they find that expression in all those different ways.

Secondly, youth in Papua New Guinea long “for a sense of security”. And for a sense of security, Ganjiki defines youth insecurity as follows:

Mostly we all find that in our parents until we come to a certain age where we really want to be self-reliant but we don't know how to get to that place if we want to be self-reliant. In that way, we are kind of afraid to step into a world where we are trying to understand and know.

And thirdly, youth in Papua New Guinea struggle with “direction” and guidance. The distinguishing feature for Ganjiki is that where as:

in the old days, when young people were growing up, it was easy for the elders to pass on the values to the young people and they would grab that and that's the way they live their life. But now we have everything under the sun bombarding us left, right and center. And you can just imagine the confusion in our minds.

Ganjiki is nevertheless optimistic about the future of Papua New Guinea and especially its youthful population. As a youth who is taking the initiative in creating awareness about change in the attitudes and mindsets of Papua New Guineans, he provides reasons why Papua New Guinea will avert large-scale security problems with its youth population:

Personally I am very optimistic about the future of Papua New Guinea. I am optimistic one because I have started a movement that I think is going to cause a big change in this country, getting people to awaken. The movement itself finds its significance in trying to get young people to change that sort of mindset they currently have into a more positive one because they are the ones who will be running the nation in a few years time..... I am worried but I am optimistic because I am trying to do something about it. And I guess if I wasn't doing something about it, I will be more worried.

Reflecting on Ganjiki's statement it provides an insight into how individuals and communities such as Papua New Guinea and Melanesia use their own initiatives as frameworks to dismiss the claims of discourses such as the youth bulge theory. I found this approach empowering. The assertion: “At least I am doing something about it” is a challenge to discourses such as that centered on the youth

bulge who may be adept at stating the problem, yet found wanting in generating the appropriate measures to address the identified weaknesses in these communities they write about.

At a personal level, the *Patriots PNG Inc.* is Ganjiki's way of "doing something about" the identified "youth problem" that is religiously pointed out by youth bulge theorists. It makes Ganjiki's experience and life worth documenting.

3.1.2. Forgy (Female, 27) – Villager in a patriarchal culture

Forgy is a 27 year old female from a village in the Kainantu valley of the Eastern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea. She is the second-last born in a family of six.³⁹ Forgy was still a baby when her mother died. The father married a new wife. As a child Forgy was raised by a relative – her mother's sister. She grew up in the same village of her parents. Earlier on, one of the most disheartening experiences of her life was her inability to complete her studies. She blames her step-mother when she was refused entry to school because of the non-payment of school tuition fees. She ended her primary-level education in grade 5 once her father became wholly committed to his new wife. At the time of writing, Forgy is married and has a child. Life in the village revolves around sustaining the household through gardening. Forgy also engages in the selling of local vegetables that she grows in her gardens.

Forgy has very insightful perspectives about issues in her community. The most immediate aspect is the dominant patriarchal culture she lives in. Much of this is embedded in the culture of her Highlands society. Relating to the on-going tribal war in her area, she gives an indication of how masculinized society is:

Planti ol mangi oli go in long dispela trouble ya emi kamap ya. So long sait blong mipela ol meri yah, ol rausim mipela igo long way. Ol man i tokim mipela, yupela

³⁹In Forgy's family, there are two girls and four boys.

ino ken kam klostu long ol mangi, nogut yupela igat sik mun or kain olsem yu silip wantem man or kain olsem nau yu kam long ples klia long eye blong ol man or yu sikan im ol mangi or man pikinini i go insait long dispela kain hevi or fight nau, bullet or spear em bai nonap abrusim em. Em bai go insait stret long skin. Olsem na ol save rausim mipela olgeta meri, na kain samting isave kamap em mipela olgeta meri isave go stap long wanpela sait...kain olsem long haus man where ol man bai nonap go em mipela bai go hait antap long dispela kain ol hap na stap. So ol man pikinini tasol isave go insait long dispela samting.⁴⁰

The above is an account of the protocol regulating the prosecution of tribal wars. The expectation is for a strict separation between males and females during. Though obvious non-combatants, women are perceived as equally dangerous when they are seen as capable of polluting the fighting strength of males. The fear of blood from menstruating women and sexual encounter between males and females attests to the highly masculinized nature of Forgy's society.

A sense of solidarity among the male in the tribe is observed by Forgy. Forgy relates how this affects individuals in the collectivity all of which reinforce the masculinized culture:

...nau taim gun ikam insait long community na ol mangi olim gun ya, oli save laik ol mas go yet na fight....Toktok em olsem: "Mipela no meri na bai mipela i poret na ranaway. So mipela tu imas fight na go olsem".⁴¹

⁴⁰ Many of the young men are taking part in the conflict which recently happened. As for us the womenfolk, they [men] chased us and told us to keep out distance [from the men]. They advised us [the women] not to come near the young men, fearing that we have may have menstrual blood or have sex with the men. Shaking hands with the men who are in the tribal conflict is strictly forbidden. If women come into contact with the men, the spear or bullets [from the enemy] will kill them. It will go straight to their body. That is why they chase us out, and we the women are kept separate [from the men]. So where the men don't go, we hide in such places. So young men are part of the tribal war.

⁴¹ "...these days guns have been introduced into the community and young men are carrying guns and willing to go and fight....This is what they [men] say: "We are not women and will be frightened easily and run away. We will fight you [enemies] too."

This impression has wider implication beyond the conflict situation. In areas of decision-making and peace-building, the role of women would warrant an extensive appreciation. Initial accounts by Forgy suggest how tribal war affects everyone regardless:

*...dispela tasol em mekim na mi gat belhevi long dispela pasin ya. Ol lain startim dispela trouble yah em mipela olgeta save kisim bel hevi. Samting mipela stap gut na ol mekim na mipela olgeta innocent go insait. Sampela innocent life pundaun pinis na kain olsem.*⁴²

In the uncertainty of the on-going tribal conflict, children who would otherwise be in school stay home in fear of being abducted by the enemy tribesmen. Moreover young men are unwillingly drawn into such feuds that have little benefit for them:

*Olgeta yangpela mangi wok long involve long dispela hevi. Sampela mangi lusim skul na stap insait long hevi. Ol lukim mipela go skul nau, ol lukim mipela em ol bai nonap givim chance long mipela. Nau dispela kain fight ya, em oli no fight long battle field, ol wok long lukim ol long rot em ol kidnap tasol na karim go kilim tasol. Olsem na ol tingim life blong oli lusim skul na stap tasol long peles. Oli no go bek long skul.*⁴³

It is also ironic that for all the chaotic scenarios that are associated with tribal warfare, Forgy attests to the presence of rules governing the conducting of tribal wars in this part of the Highlands. These codes of conflict are passed down through the generations. Forgy relates the first-hand conduct of

⁴²These things [tribal war] are the source of my frustrations. Others trigger off this problems and we all end up suffering its effects. We live normal lives but as a result of somebody else' doing, all the innocent people are affected. Some innocent people have died as a result.

⁴³All the young men are involved in this conflict. Some of the young men have left school to go into this conflict. When they [enemy tribesmen] see us go to school, they will not give us any chances. Presently this kind of fight [tribal fight] is not conducted on the battlefield. When they see somebody on the road they will just kidnap that person. So they [school aged children] have stopped schooling and are now living in the village. They have not gone to school.

tribal wars in relation to the women and children. Women and children are not targets in raids or hostilities by fighting men. She states:

*Sait blong mipela ol meri, em tambu. Ol nonap paitim mipela o kilim mipela. Em law, tambu, pasin tumbuna. Bipo ol tumbuna pasin ikam ya em olsem.*⁴⁴

The period of uncertainty in the Aiyura valley had an effect on Forgy's desire for some basic form of personal security:

*Yes, mi pilim dispela kain hevi ya, mi les long stap insait long dispela kain ples or olsem. Mi go out long sampela hap em orait. Stap insait ya em kainkain toktok na kain hevi na disturb na mipela ino stap orait. So em mi go out nau em bai mi lus tingting long olgeta samting na mi go stap gut. But oli kisim peace na olsem kain nau, em olgeta samting em bai go orait nau.*⁴⁵

Forgy is limited in her ability to travel outside of her village. She recounts an experience where she briefly went down to Lae to be with a relative for a week only to be summoned back to Aiyura by her husband. Forgy has no immediate *wantoks* in other parts of the country where she can live with hence her mobility has been only briefly confined to the Highlands provinces.

Another aspect of Forgy's experience is the work in a cultural center in her community. She is upbeat about the positive role that this cultural center has on the lives of young men and women in her area. As a core member of the initiative her understanding of the cultural center is one of reproduction of cultural knowledge. Under the guidance of a local leader in the community, the cultural center is the focal point of Forgy's life in the village:

⁴⁴As women, it is forbidden. They [fighting men] cannot fight with us or kill us. It is customary law from our ancestors. The way our ancestors practiced [tribal fights], that is how it is today.

⁴⁵Yes, I feel the kind of burden [of living through this tribal conflict] to the point where I am tired of living here anymore. If I can only travel to other places, this will be good [for me]. When I am here, with all the talks [of tribal conflict] and tension or disturbance, it is not good to live here. But there is an initiative to bring peace and like today, I think things are working out well [for peace].

*Bifo mipela wok long lus tingting long pasin kastom, em wok long go lushus nau, nau taim yah whiteman kam yah na mipela is kisim pasin blong ol whiteman na em ino gutpela, yumi mas kisim bek pasin blong tumbuna kam bek insait ken. So ol mangi gat tingting long sigirapim bunara na kain wokim ol kain liklik samting blong tumbuna yah, mekim go nau na disturb kam nau na olgeta mangi ol just lose hope go daun na oli no wokim ol dispela samting. Oli stap nating olsem tasol. Olgeta gat interest but dispela kam yah em katim interest blong ol go daun.*⁴⁶

According to Forgy, the creation of the cultural center in her village has been a timely investment.

Among the issues she notices is the infrequent use of the indigenous language:

*Mipela save toktok long bai mipela before, tokples em save go paul na pidgin emi wok long kam strong so em laikim olsem bai mipela mas tokples planti na kisim lainim ol before samting tumbuna samting yah. Yupela mas kisim, nau taim em white man taim so mipela wok long lus tingting long ol pasin blong tumbuna na holim bek pasin blong white man. So dispela as na man yah kisim hausman kam putim na mispela hamamas long kisim bek wokim na bihainim pasin blong tumbuna, na holim na bihainim.*⁴⁷

⁴⁶Before we start forgetting our traditional customs, it is slowly fading now when the white man's ways we are adopting and these are not good we must bring back the ways of our ancestors back in. So the youth have the knowledge of making arrows and various things that our ancestors did until the disturbance [tribal war] happened and the youth lost hope and have not continued for a while. Everybody is interested but when the fighting started the interest in the cultural activities came to a halt.

⁴⁷We talk about how our language is now forgotten and the use of Pidgin is increasingly used. So he [village leader, cultural center founder] encourages us to speak our language more often and learn the ways of our ancestors. We must take the opportunity, because in these times, the ways of the white man and we are forgetting the traditions of our ancestors and embracing the cultures of the white man. That is the reason why he [village leader, cultural center founder] brought the cultural center to our village so we can reclaim the cultures of our ancestors and hold on to it and live it.

The cultural center is the institution that has generated publicity for the village. And it serves as an awareness forum for the young people in the village. Such a model of cultural initiative has generated the enthusiasm of young females like Forgy who see the cultural and economic⁴⁸ benefits of this institution in their community.

In concluding, it is amidst the rapid social change and the experience of an uncertain life under a tribal war situation that I find Forgy insights adding to the diversity of personal experiences of young Papua New Guineans. For the present time, Forgy is content with being as loyal as possible to participating in the activities of the cultural center. And like most other young rural-based Papua New Guinean females, her responsibility to the family and tribe give her a purpose in life.

3.1.3. Jonesteed (Male, 26) – Unemployed urbanite

Jonesteed is a 26 year old male.⁴⁹ He presently resides in the Gerehu suburb of Port Moresby.

Jonesteed is a long time resident of Gerehu, having lived there for the last 26 years of his life.⁵⁰

Jonesteed's parents are from different parts of the country. His father is originally from East Sepik province. He passed away in 2002. Jonesteed's mother is from the Morobe province of Papua New Guinea. Jonesteed's parents were never educated beyond primary school level (grades 1 to 6).⁵¹ The jobs that they were previously employed in were not high-paying jobs.⁵² Without any consistent form of income and a lack of financial security, this had a bearing on Jonesteed's motivation in staying in school. All this culminated in his subsequent expulsion in grade 8 in 1998.

⁴⁸ Conversations with the elders involved in this cultural center suggest that they are looking at involving young men and women to learn and make art and crafts to be sold to potential tourists and visitors to the area.

⁴⁹ Jonesteed's specific date of birth is August 21, 1982.

⁵⁰ Gerehu is synonymous with the "*rascal*" problem that Port Moresby is known for. Jonesteed readily admits to being a product of the "streets" or in Tok Pisin, "*street mangi*".

⁵¹ Prior to the education reforms of the mid-1990s, primary or community school level was from grades 1 to 6. Technically by age range for this level of education is from 7 to 12 years old.

⁵² Jonesteed's parents moved to Port Moresby in the late 1970s and have lived there ever since, raising a family and making a life for themselves in the suburb of Morata.

As Jonesteed's parents grew older, they actively relied more on the informal economic sector in meeting their daily needs. A typical scenario is the selling of garden produce and other goods in the city markets as a means of earning an income. Occasionally, Jonesteed's relatives would provide financial assistance and other basic necessities. Presently Jonesteed's eldest sister is employed and supplements whatever income that the family collectively generates through the informal economic sector. To understand the plight of Jonesteed and his subsequent involvement in *raskolism*, the environment he grew up in and his impressions, the perceived inequalities in his community and country become apparent. However, all is not lost. Jonesteed relates his experience with the basic training he received from a non-government organization (NGO) in his neighborhood. This is one of several optimistic sides to his story.

Jonesteed was born in Port Moresby's General Hospital and he is the 4th child in a family of five. Against the prevailing assumptions about the youth as a problematic section of the Melanesian or Papua New Guinean society I found this biographical profile of Jonesteed an interesting one on three levels. All three aspects of Jonesteed's experience are interconnected and show the typical characteristic of an urbanized male youth.

Firstly, Jonesteed claims to be part of the *raskol* phenomenon. He has committed criminal acts and openly speaks about how he grew into *raskolism* when he was still in high school. Secondly, his education prematurely ended at Gerehu High School in Port Moresby. Without any formal educational qualification, Jonesteed has remained unemployed for the most part of his time in Port Moresby. And thirdly, Jonesteed is one of a growing number of young second generation Papua New Guineans who are raised in an urban environment with limited connection to the village settings of their parents. He admits his inability to speak the languages of his father and mother:

*Tasol long language tasol em mi speak im Tok Pisin na English. Na ol mother tongue mi nonap speak im long sait blong mama na papa. Na mi lukim olsem laif blong taun olgeta em stap insait long mi pinis.*⁵³

Jonesteed's experience of living in an urban environment, detached from his parent's villages and land and knowledge of his parent's language is an interesting phenomenon. Much of the responsibility in failing to connect Jonesteed and his siblings to their parent's land and culture is attributed to the parents. Jonesteed continues:

*Tasol mama tu emi kamap meri blong taun nau na tingting blong em long ples em bai stap, tasol long kisim mipela ol mangi, ol femili igo long ples, mipela bikpela pinis na hard. Mipela go em bai mipela tok em different lifestyle yah. If mipela i bin mangi yet nae m kisim mipela igo, em bai orait. Mipela bai grow wantem ples, culture na situation na tingting blong ples. Dispela em mipela bikpela pinis so what bai mipela wokim nau em mi no ting bai mipela i go bek gen long ples.*⁵⁴

I am indeed fascinated by Jonesteed's perceived disconnection from his parent's land and village. Would this variable shed light on the "youth problem" that is experienced in Papua New Guinea, and by extension, Melanesia? Can the lack of being grounded in "culture" or land a viable prerequisite in understanding youth issues in Papua New Guinea? Not necessarily as it become apparent in Jonesteed's observation. He recounts an interesting trend, something that seems to indicate that "traditional" or *kastom* practices and relationships continue to be perpetuated in the urban context.

⁵³But in terms of speaking, I only converse in *Tok Pisin* and English. In terms of my mother tongue, I cannot speak language from either my mother or father's side. So I see that I the lifestyle of town [urban area], is already part of me.

⁵⁴But mother has now become a town woman [literally 'person from town'], and she will still have sentimental attachments to her place [village]. However for her to bring us [her children] to her village will be complicated. If we are to go back [to mother's village], we will find it a different lifestyle. If we were still children and were introduced to village life earlier on, it would have been easy. We would grow within the village, culture and situation and mindset of village life. But we are all big now and so what is there for us is that we don't think we will ever go back to the village.

His first-hand knowledge of *kastom*, especially in the prevention and resolution of conflict indicates how *kastom* is almost an everyday phenomenon:

*Yes, taim blong hevi. Wanpela example bai mi tok. Yu gat koros wantem wanpela man, yu mas go bek na steretim na tok sori long en. Em long sait blong ples, long kastom. Dispela em oli nau bringim ikam long city nau yumi stap na dispela kain activities i wok long kamap. Oli no kisim igo long lo sait, oli wok long act upon long planti blong kastom sait. Sapos mi koros wantem wanpela man long taun, inap long em bai kisim igo long han blong police na putim long han blong police, tasol em bai kisim igo long sait blong kastom em bai tru. Yu kilim pik na bai yu steretim mi. That is why mi lukim kastom tu i wok long kamap long taun sait. Pasin blong taun, cities na gavman isave balance. Na em save ron wantem.*⁵⁵

As implied in the above quotations, Jonesteed acknowledges certain common cultural themes, some of which have relevance to his living in an urban environment. In his mingling with other young people in his neighborhood, some form of group identity is established. A sub-culture developing out of young men from different parts of the country is also evident in this group. This connection with other young people from various parts of the country has potential benefits. Collectively Jonesteed's cohort harbor frustration, resentment and also helplessness. Provided the right intervention and guidance, this coalitional identity would be as productive as any in the community.

Jonesteed's involvement in criminal acts began when he dropped out of high school and began his life on the "streets" of Port Moresby:

⁵⁵Yes, in times of crisis. I will give an example. If you have a disagreement with another person, you are expected to reconcile with him. That is the village way, the customary way. These customary traditions have now been brought into the city [Port Moresby] and where we are the observance of customary activities continues. They don't take matters (conflict) to the side – they use the customary way to address grievances. Suppose I have a grudge against another man here in town, rather than taking me to a police and letting the police resolve the problem, he goes through the customary way. In the customary way you are expected "to kill a pig" to show remorse. That is what I am seeing in town – customary practices are happening (in the resolution and prevention of conflict). Customary practices act as a balance or alternative to the formal law and justice system in the urban areas. They co-exist (in addressing conflict situations).

Mi bin go long skul long hia long Port Moresby long Gerehu High School mi bin wokim grade one long Philip Aravure to six [grades 1-6]. Grade 7 to grade 8 long 1998. Long influence dispela kain tasol nau mi bagarapim skul blong mi na mi no bin skul gut na nau mi stap olsem em mi stap.⁵⁶

Jonesteed's attributes the premature end to his high school education to his mixing in with the "wrong crowd". He observes how his community is still experiencing the same situation he grew up in, showing how there has been little change to addressing the issue of youth boredom and lack of alternative forms of expression:

Sampela mipela ol family where mipela i grow insait long ol settlement na streets na ol block areas, where mipela i stap insait long ol kainkain activities olsem mipela i stap olsem ol vacant, where anything to do with life, yu kam long mipela bai mipela tok yes tasol, bai mipela ino nap tok no. Yu kam sait long sait blong pokies na yu tokim mi long go play pokies em mi ken tok yes yumi go. Bikos mipela nogat taim blong mipela long wokim wanem samting. Mipela just stap nating. Yu kam tokim mipela long mekim wanem samting mipela bai tok go tasol, go tasol. Nogat no blong mipela or mipela ino save tok weit na tingim pastem. So em tasol save influence im mipela tasol em taim. Taim blong mipela mipela save stap forever, for nothing.⁵⁷

⁵⁶I went to school here in Port Moresby at the Gerehu High School. Prior to that, I did my primary schooling – grades 1 to 6 at Philip Aravure (1991 to 1996). By 1998 I was in Grade 8. But with the kind of influence in my community, I turned out to be what I am today.

⁵⁷For some of our families raised in settlements or on the streets or in block area, whatever kind of activities we do, we are like vagrants. Anything you want us to do and seek our assistance, we will just do without hesitation. If you want us [to accompany you] to play pokies with you, I will just agree to go with you. Since we don't have anything to do, we just do nothing. If you come and tell us to do anything, we will just agree [and follow you]. There will be no second thoughts or we will not stop to think it through. So our time is wasted for nothing and this spare time has an influence [on our activities in our neighborhood].

From this observation, Jonesteed provides a first-hand account of one of the critical feature in the unemployed, out-of-school urban youth lifestyle. Jonesteed reinforces the idea that youth in this neighborhood are usually bored and aside from school they are constantly susceptible and ready to being drawn into whatever activity is available to occupy their time – either good or bad.⁵⁸ It is obvious from these sentiments that Jonesteed invokes a sense of frustration. And over the years Jonesteed, growing ever conscious of the inequalities around him blames the elected public officials and the inability of government.⁵⁹

Reassuringly Jonesteed hints that the life of crime is a temporary preoccupation for him. He explains that for a typical criminal, where sincere intervention or attention is given to the *raskol*, some grow out of the life of crime and lawlessness. For other youth however, their ever-dependence on crime and frustration leaves them trapped indefinitely in *raskolism*. Death (at the hands of police) or old age may halt their participation in criminal activities. Jonesteed shows the dilemma for *raskols*:

Long sait blong wok moni, dispela ol lain taim ol stap insait long dispela system pinis [criminal life or ‘street’ life], ol bai laik sindaun tasol na expect samting bai kam free. Ol bai nonap tingting long wok o painim wok o kain olsem. Ol bai targetim yu dispela man o meri yu gat money long en ol bai just base long understanding blong en olsem bai ol mas mekim sampela samting em bai fulfil im laif blong yu..... Then ol bai kisim na use im long ol dispela kain tingting oli gat long en – dring bia, baim niupela shirt, trausis na kain olsem. Givim sampela

⁵⁸This is the same issue identified by Jess, the female respondent I profile in the following section of this chapter. She says: *I see that most youths are [what they are] because they have nothing to do.... And because they don't have anything to do that's gonna keep them busy, they immerse themselves in these activities*".

⁵⁹*Taim oli insait long parliament, oli save lus tingting long kam bek long ol people. Especially mipela ol youth isave givim moa power long ol. So oli nap long tingting na kam bek gen long mipela ol youths then through long mipela, bai mipela traिम long break through long ol gutpela samting. [When they get into parliament, they forget to get back to us the people. Especially for the youth, we give them more votes (during elections). But they forget about us and don't come back to us with initiatives that we can try to use to make any break through and be productive].*

money long ol femili blong ol where oli poor long en na stap o kain olsem.

*Dispela em ol bikpela samting mi lukim nau.*⁶⁰

Another theme in Jonesteed's experiences is that although he claims to have lived in the Gerehu suburb of Port Moresby all his life, in the early 2000s he has also traveled outside of that place. And through these travels to places like Kainantu and Goroka in the Highlands region and the Momase region⁶¹ in Wewak and Lae, he expresses how the same desperate lives of young people are lived. He compares how the criminal activities in Port Moresby are also taking place at a most alarming rate in the places he has visited:

*Ol dispela hap ples mi raun na mi lukim, olsem situation em olgeta i wankain tasol....OK, long dispela sait mi raun long olgeta province, mi still face im. Even any crime, minor pick pocket o break and enter or snatching [bag] o wanem kain, even salim marijuana tu long street. Still yu kam aninit long activity where government ino laikim. Still yu mas go through lo dispela procedure long survive, painim samting. Kisim long break and enter, robbery or kilim man na yu stil em bikpela tumas nau. Mi raun long Highlands mi lukim olsem wankain olsem even long ol taun areas. Lo Lae mi lukim olsem worse. Lae em worse wankain olsem Moresby.*⁶²

⁶⁰From the perspective of employment, youth when they are in this system [*raskolism*], they will just sit down and expect things to come free their way. They will not think of working or finding employment and so forth. They will target the man and women who has money, and [if you are a *raskol*] according to you understanding, you are expected to do anything to fulfill [or sustain] your livelihood....The proceeds of such criminal activities are then used on things like alcohol, buying new clothes. You are also expected to give money to your families if they are poor and so forth. These are the crucial issues I am seeing presently.

⁶¹Momase is the acronym taken from the first two letters of Morobe, Madang, Sepik. Collectively, it denotes the northern coastal provinces on mainland Papua New Guinea. Loosely used for administrative purposes, the Momase region is made up of four provinces – Morobe, Madang, and the two Sepik provinces, East Sepik and West Sepik provinces.

⁶²Those places I have been to, it is the same situation (as Port Moresby). So, in the places I visited, I still encountered the same problems (with criminal gangs). Even any crime from minor pickpockets, break and enter, bag-snatching, selling of marijuana on the streets – all these are happening in the places I went to. This is what the government/state considers unlawful. But nevertheless, you must do these criminal acts to survive – you are looking. When you get something through break and enter, robbery or murder, this is the extreme now. I traveled to the Highlands and witnessed the same criminal activities that are happening in town areas. In Lae, it is worse. Lae is much the same as Port Moresby.

However, all is not lost for Jonesteed. He recounts one empowering experience when he and a group of youth from his street were engaged with two non-government organizations (NGOs) in a training program. The NGOs were Christian Fellowship Mission and the City Pharmacy Limited. They helped organize a self-help training program in Jonesteed's neighborhood called the Mindset School. The initiative is aimed at skills training and informal sector participation for young people. Jonesteed describes at length some of the activities that his cohort was introduced to:

Dispela ol mindset skul i bin kam kisim mipela em long save blo mi yet, em ol mission, ol save tok Christian Fellowship Mission oli kam attach wantem dispela skul mipela ibin lainim mipela long dispela. Mindset em yu senisim tingting, habit, pasin blong yu then taim yu go insait long ol normal technical school or dispela ol business skul or wanem school we yu bai go long en, dispela tingting em stap pinis. So yu go insait, ino gat ol narapela ol influence or tingting bai stap moa wantem yu, olsem long past. Em olsem yu rausim olgeta pinis. So yu go insait em yu luk forward long skul long wokim skul long bai yu achieve im wanem goal yu tingting long go long en. Mi lukim dispela skul olsem emi moa better than ol dispela skul we mipela ol mangi i stap nating na ol sampela brothers i save salim buai. Em gutpela skul we mipela i kisim na lainim. So mi tingim olsem next 30 years taim kantri blong yumi em bai ron gut taim dispela skul emi stap insait.⁶³

⁶³This school that got us attached to its programs according to my knowledge is a [Christian] mission, they call it Christian Fellowship Mission. Mindset is about you changing your thinking, habit, lifestyle and going to school or whatever schools you go to, this thinking is with you. So when you are in, you would have disowned previous influences or thinking, it would something of the past. So when you go in you will look forward to schooling and achieving whatever goals you have in mind. I see that this kind of school [training] is much better than other schools [training] for us youth who have nothing and for those of our brothers who are selling betel nut [for our income]. It is a good school [training] where we have embraced and learn from. So in the next 30 years I see the country [PNG] will develop well if this kinds of schools [training] are included [for unemployed youth].

Jonesteed seems enthusiastic about his goal of becoming a businessman in the near future. The manner he speaks of the future and based on his own interest in gaining skills in technical and agricultural work, he can do almost anything with his life. The lack of any major intervening agent to set up him with skills or capital is the only constraint to some of his most immediate goals.

So in addressing the present issue of youth unemployment or idle masses of youth, Jonesteed seeks nothing more than an emphasis on the provision of technical and vocation training for young men like him eager to take the opportunity to better their lives. He uses the model of the Mindset School to propose a potential empowering role this could have on young men in his neighborhood and Papua New Guinea:

So dispela emi olsem, every months insait long wanpela week, dispela training mas kam insait long ol wokples o ol skul ples, o NGOs, or wanem kain o insait long community o street o insait long lotu o churches, dispela skul imas go insait so em ken break through long tingting blong wanwan man na ol bai skelim laif em olsem wanem. Olsem mi yet mi skelim dispela kain skul em wanpela kain skul we emi break im down tingting blong mi, ino mi tasol, ol planti mangi long mipela raun wantem, mipela i stap.⁶⁴

One of the initiatives that were trialed through the Mindset School was planting of marketable vegetables and crops. At an agricultural college in a parish called St. Anne's in Gerehu, Jonesteed and his group were given seedlings and other tools to plant food crops. The opportunity for basic business enterprise was taught first-hand in this project:

... Na harvestim na wokim marketing blong dispela crops na kain olsem. Garden training mipela bin go long en em ol tok Mindset where ol CPL (City Pharmacy

⁶⁴It is like for a week in a month, these kinds of training ought to come into workplaces or schools, or NGOs or whatever groups in the community or street or churches. These schools [Mindset Schools] should be used to re-orient the thinking of people and to enable them to assess life in their own ways. I can see that these kinds of schools [Mindset Schools] have had an effective outcome in that they have changed people's attitudes, not only me, but many of the youth I hang out with.

Limited) *i bin wokim funding blong dispela training blong mipela. So mipela olsem 15 pela boys i bin attendim dispela training so then i bin start long openim tingting na minds blong mipela lo hau laif i olsem wanem. So referim ikam bek long mipela ol mangi long street olsem mipela ol dispela lain igo kisim training mipela ino bin go raun na wokim dispela kain wok. Mipela igo bek gen long graun baksait long yard lo haus, mipela olim graun, planim ol crops, kisim na go bek salim long CPL gen na oli baim ken dispela crops blo mipela, so nau em hau mipela i stap olsem.*⁶⁵

I conclude this brief biography of Jonesteed by noting how he strives to provide for his family. One of the most reassuring comments he gives and based on his experience is that though the stereotypical notion of the youth problem he notes how siblings in a family-oriented context act as a check on each other's behavior:

Sampela pikinini oli kamap long gutpela family, sampela nogut family but oli no kamap long gutpela background but insait long dispela family oli born olsem 3pela or 4pela mangi insait long ol em wanpela bai gutpela mangi. The rest em ol bai nonap gutpela mangi. Tasol tru long dispela wanpela gutpela mangi istap. Lo respect long dispela ol barata blong em, oli ken senisim tingting.....Mi yet mi bin experience im. Mi bin raun mi lukim ol planti family olsem mama papa oli kamapim pikinini insait long ol pikinini insait long family olgeta mangi sa nogut,

⁶⁵In harvesting and marketing of this crops and so forth. The agricultural training we attended was through the Mindset School made possible through funding from the CPL (City Pharmacy Limited). So the 15 of us attended this training. This experience enlightened our thoughts and minds on how life in general. Hence, in reference to us youth in the streets, for us who had the opportunity to get this training, we were fortunate to be involved. We used the piece of land in the backyard of our house, put our hands into the ground, planted the crops, and harvested and sold the vegetables back to CPL.

*tasol insait long ol wanpela tupelo isave gutpela. Ol bai influence im ol barata
ino stap gut yah, na toktok long ol.*⁶⁶

According to Jonesteed, within families, there are members of families who by example influence the behavior of their siblings. The dynamics of the family unit in this sense is crucial in understanding the existence of youth in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia.

3.1.4. Daba (Male, 24) – Villager and married

Daba is a 24 year old male from a village in the Kainantu valley of the Eastern Highlands province of Papua New Guinea. His parents are both from the same village. Where he was born, Daba lives to this day. When he was around ten years old, Daba travelled to the Central province and resided temporarily there with his eldest sister. His sister is married to a man in the Bereina area of the Central province. This was perhaps the only time he was outside of his village.

Daba has been married since 2002 and currently has 2 children (both girls). Daba's level of educational pursuits abruptly ended in grade 3. He left school early as a result of an altercation with his teacher. He has never received any formal training after that.

For the purpose of the discussion, I consider some central themes in Daba's story relevant to understanding the youth bulge discourse. Firstly, Daba is a youth in a rural setting of Papua New Guinea sub-clan. His local concerns are informed and motivated by the most immediate social relations of his family and *hauslain*.

⁶⁶There are children who come from good families, while others from problematic families. For those children who come out of broken down families, there will be 3 or 4 children who are bad while one is good. The rest may be bad. But through the actions of the good sibling, if he commands the respect of his other siblings, he [or she] can change their behavior...I have personally experienced this. I have traveled around and seen many families where parents have children who are problematic but within such families, there are either one or two children who are good. And they can influence their brothers to be good, by talking to them.

Secondly, Daba is someone who claims ownership and access to his customary land. He uses land as a means of meeting his daily sustenance. I find this interesting in the context of the on-going discussions on the youth bulge for the reason that land (according to Daba's experience) is the ever-present means of self-reliance and on-going sustenance. The formal economy and issues of employment are only seasonal aspects of the Daba's experience.⁶⁷ In the case of Papua New Guinea, census data suggests (see Table 1, Annex A) that young Papua New Guineans (ages 12-25) are predominantly rural-based and are presumably dependent on the land in supporting their needs. This presents an interesting argument against youth bulge theorists' claims that revolutionary actions are a direct result of perceived socio-economic deprivation. If access to land in Melanesian society is not given the appropriate intellectual attention in cushioning these revolutionary tendencies against the State, the omission in the youth bulge discourse are self-evident in Daba's story.

Thirdly, the role of the Christian Churches in the lives of Papua New Guineans is told in the combined efforts at peace-building and mobilizing of youth towards economic participation. As the Christian Churches have an enduring relationship in their communities, they play a significant role in some of the responsibilities that the State system is limited in fulfilling. The dynamics of this relationship is evident in Daba's experience. Against these general themes the story of Daba is told.

Though the community Daba comes from is a typical rural setting, the most obvious effects of the cash economy and increased desire for material goods are evident. Situated next to the bustling network of the Highlands Highway, Anamunapa is home to young people like Daba who use the road to access the outside world. And with the effects of the cash economy, Daba gives very telling observations about the societal ills that are part of the process of his community's increased integration into the cash economy:

*Olsem before taim em money ino save kam tumas. Nau dispela taim money kam,
money taim so bagarapim het blong blong olgeta man, na olgeta manmeri laikim*

⁶⁷Daba is interested nevertheless in being employed. He approached various organizations in the Aiyura valley seeking employment but without any favorable response. Without any source of getting money, he resorts to stealing green coffee beans from coffee-growing entities in the Aiyura valley.

*money, money, money tasol. Dispela oli stap long wanem oli painim money na kam, em ol kain ol liklik hevi nambaut ol go lo painim money long em na kain ol hevi save kamap.*⁶⁸

Unemployed and without any form of income, Daba meets his need for money through stealing of green coffee beans:

*Mi no wok, mi save askim wok money, oli no save kisim mi.....Mipela save go stilim kofi blong CIC. Ikam bek, kam play kas, em wan dei stil mani so, mipela kam play bomb or kas nambaut em wan raun em pinis. Wan dei mani, so mipela go bek gen stilim, kam salim, mipela kisim next tomorrow gen nogat nau em mipela save stilim coffee.*⁶⁹

Daba knows too well that if caught in the act of stealing coffee beans, the punishment would be severe. However he seems to have evaded capture by the coffee owners whom he steals from. Almost ironic is the fact that the money that is generated through the theft is carelessly wasted gambling.

Daba is also attentive to wider issues affecting youth in general. It becomes apparent that the Christian mission plays an influential role in the expectations of Daba.⁷⁰ One of the active non-government agents in this part of the country is the Christian mission of the Seventh Day Adventist

⁶⁸Before there was not an influx of money. Now at this time, money has come into our community and it has corrupted the minds of everybody, and everyone wants money, money and only money. So what people want, they look for money, and when there are minor problems [to resolve] and that is when problems arise.

⁶⁹I am not employed, and when I ask to be employed, they don't employ me. So we usually go and steal the coffee from CIC [Coffee Industry Corporation]. We come and play cards, that is just one-day [temporary] money, so we play bomb or cards. In an instant the money is gone. It is one-day money so we go back and steal again, come sell [the green coffee beans], get the money and when it finishes tomorrow, we go back to steal more coffee.

⁷⁰When speaking of the future, Daba for instance uses the revelational last day scenario as his point of reference. When asked about the prospects of PNG as a nation, he says: "*Em last day ya na kam bek blong Bikpela em klostu na Devil em wok long wok ya na bai yumi painim bagarap yet*" (These are the last days and the Lord's return is upon us so the Devil is working as hard as well so we can expect to encounter hardships).

(SDA) Church. The Seventh Day Adventist Church for instance has started mobilizing villagers towards some of the peace initiatives in the valley.⁷¹

The Church has stepped into a vacuum where the transformative cultural institution such as the men's house has been forgotten. Daba attests to his limited association with the traditional men's house in this part of the Aiyura valley:

Bipo taim em hausman isave stap. Ol five or four years old mangi oli save tromoi go insait long hausman. Papa blong mi yet ino go insait long hausman. Start blong taim blong ol ikam nau ya em ol no go insait long hausman. Tumbuna blong mi tasol bin go insait long hausman. Olsem ino ol meri bai go insait. Em bai tambu. Haus meri bai stap long sait. Ol stap long hausman na ol ready nau OK, ol bai givim stori long ol man long hausman....⁷²

By Daba's admission, initiation into the men's house has not been practiced. He is a second-generation male who has not passed through the men's house. The Church on the other hand performs the role of moral teachings in the absence of the men's house.

On the eve of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project in 2014, Daba also relates how the Church is engaging youth in the Anamunapa area as contracted growers of vegetables and food crops to supply LNG project sites. Daba says:

*Lotu wok long lukim ol situation blong ol yangpela manmeri long dispela ples.
....Ol lida man em ol wok long wokim igo tasol yu save het blong ol, lida emi gat*

⁷¹Coinciding with my visit to the area, I witnessed pastors from the local Seventh Day Adventist Church in the valley brokering peace between the various *haus-lains* (sub-clans) involved in an on-going feud. The public rallies were a show of neutrality on the part of the Church involved in peace-building in this part of the Aiyura valley. Since the situation was still tense, the SDA elders went from village to village conducting awareness and getting the consensual assurance of the various *haus-lains* on coming to a conclusive end of the conflict.

⁷²Previously the men's house was active. Males between the ages of 5 and 4 years old would be put into the men's house. My own father did not go into a men's house. From my father generation until today, they did not pass through into the men's house. Only my grandfather was initiated into the men's house. Women were not allowed inside the men's house. It was forbidden. Women's house was on the other side [of the men's house]. When they are in the men's house, they are preparing themselves. In the men's house they are told [given] the myths [about the genealogy, customs, and so forth]

brother na family long dispela hap so em bai tingim family blong em tasol na em nonap wokim kain olsem..... So nau pastor na church leader ikam na halivim long kulim daun ol samting, olgeta youth mangi. Putim ol long ples nau na ol yet bai go painim wok blong ol. So wanpela wok em kam pinis. Em ol wok long kolim dispela wok em LNG project. LNG project i givim mipela wanpela contract long planim ples kaikai nambaut na bai mipela i salim. Ol givim contract pinis, em sign off pinis. Lotu lain i wokim contract. Taim ol redi nau ol start salim kaikai nau em ol bai toksave long mipela olgeta youths mangi em bai mipela planim ol market samting em bai yumi market insait long hia.⁷³

One can see the obvious issues that the Church addresses. Daba hints on the conflicting positions the agents of the State are confronted with. Where local-level government leaders work in serving the narrow interests of their immediate tribesmen, the void in the general welfare of the youth population in his village is addressed by the Church. In the areas of moral discipline and now with the LNG project's existence, a youth mobilization program to get youth in the Kainantu valley to grow food crops as a means to generating an income.

Looking long-term, Daba aspires to be a businessman in his village. Regarding his future he states:

Mi laik kamap olsem wanpela man emi gat money, emi gat cargo, so mi ken tingim bikpela na mi ken stap. Mi laik kamap olsem wanpela garden man na lukautim coffee. Kamap olsem coffee grower. Mi gat giraun i stap. Graun mi gat

⁷³The Church work is looking into the situation of young men and women in this village. The [political] leaders have been doing their bit, but as you know, leaders have allegiances to their immediate family members and cannot do anything much [for all young people]. So presently the pastors and Church leaders have stepped in to help calm the situation [on-going tribal war] which the youth are involved in. It has put them in their place now and is seeking to engage them in employment. So there are work opportunities happening. What they call the LNG project is one of those. The LNG project has given us a contract, its already signed off. The Church people made the contract [with the LNG project]. When they are ready to start to start selling food crops, they will alert us youth [in this village] so we can go ahead with planting food and market from here.

*em wanpela tumbuna tasol emi kisim na mipela nau i burukim na holim stap, na mipela i stap. Em bikpela graun. Em bai mi planim coffee long en. Mi kisim money long en em bai mi startim ol liklik.*⁷⁴

In concluding this brief profile of Daba, it is worth noting how marriage life compels him to attend to the responsibilities of fatherhood. His chances of going out in search of jobs or leisure travel are limited in this regard. For the time being the buzz created by the LNG project is something he looks forward to and attentively hearing about.

3.1.5. Jess (Female, 24) – UPNG graduate and pessimist

Jess is a 22 year old female. At the time of writing she is completing the final year towards a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG),⁷⁵ majoring in political science.

There are distinctive aspects about Jess's life that are worth telling. Within the general discussion on the youth bulge in Melanesia and Papua New Guinea, I found Jess' experience relevant on the following themes: firstly, the expectations of the family unit on young university-educated Papua New Guineans and youth employment; secondly, the so-called masculinization of Papua New Guinean society, thirdly, a growing awareness of broader issues of governance and political leadership, and the negotiation of cultural diversity in an ever-interconnecting Papua New Guinean society.

To understand Jess, she is firstly of mixed parentage. Her mum is from East New Britain (ENB) province and her father is from what is now the Autonomous Region of Bougainville

⁷⁴I want to become a person who has money, material goods so I can think of God as I live. I want to be an agriculturalist and tend to coffee crops and be a coffee grower. I have land. The land I have was through one ancestor. He had the land and divided it up [amongst the family members] and we are custodians of this. It is a big piece of land. That is where I will plant my coffee in. When I get the money [from the coffee] I will start small.

⁷⁵At the University of Papua New Guinea, a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree usually takes four years to attain.

(formerly North Solomons province). For a period after her parent's divorce, Jess grew up fatherless. Her mother cared for her. Through her mother's employment postings, Jess was raised in the urban centers of Lae in Morobe province, Rabaul in East New Britain province and Kimbe in West New Britain province. In 1999, Jess moved with her mother to the mother's village in the East New Britain province where they reside to the present time.

For a child who grew up in mostly urban settings, the transition into village life since 1999 presented a personal crisis in terms of "fitting in" to the village. Of mixed parentage, and resembling a much darker complexion than that of a typical Tolai (her mother's people),⁷⁶ this aspect of her identity played a part in the detached lifestyle she lived in the village (since 1999) until leaving to pursue university studies in 2007. She says this regarding her experience:

.... I don't have many friends in the village. I don't engage myself in the cultural activities in the social activities. Like for example if there is a feast or they break shell money and stuff, bride price or death ceremonies. I don't know maybe I don't see myself as a villager. I see myself as an outside or something. Most of the time, when there is such things like that comes up, I am just in the house....I don't know what, I think it's because we were raised outside of the village. And then too, when I attended school the nearest primary school I was this quite girl. I kept to myself most of the time. There were discriminations towards me. I kept to myself. And when I was in grades 7 and 8 now I had friends for the first time... And most these friends were girls who came in from outside, from towns. Like it was so easy for us to relate to each other.

If village life was a struggle, trying to get along with her relatives, the experiences at the UPNG was equally unsettling. In 2007, Jess began her studies at the UPNG. She noticed earlier on that the

⁷⁶It was apparent that Jess took from her father certain physical traits, including dark complexion. Her mother's people – the Tolais are usually known for their fair skin and distinctly lighter hair color. And Jess father's people (Bougainvilleans) have a dark complexion compared to other Papua New Guineans.

university was far from the ideal medium through which the diversity of Papua New Guinea is represented and celebrated. She notes how students at the university were highly parochial – confining themselves mostly within their own cultural groupings and regional affiliations. Ironically amidst the unsettling impression she had, Jess befriended a Highlander (from Chimbu province) at the university. She relates this experience in the following:

*Each cultural grouping here at the university where the Highlanders stick to themselves and Bougainvilleans stick to themselves things like that. They don't get to mix around. Mostly we people from the coast we don't like to get to know Highlanders.*⁷⁷

When thinking about the youth bulge discourse and the probability for conflict and crisis in the Papua New Guinean and Melanesian context, I found this observation by Jess informative. It throws into question some of the assumptions about large-scale coalition between like-minded youth. Jess' observations are a tip of the iceberg as it were, for serious discussions on the dynamics of youth affiliation in PNG's highest learning institution – not along social, economic or political agendas, but rather through cultural or ethnic and regional affiliations. And as observed earlier in Ganjiki's story, the security and familiarity with which cultural collectivities provide would be seen as inherent check on any large-scale problem of violence or crisis.⁷⁸

⁷⁷Jess relates an experience with a person from the Highlanders region and conclude: "That has created this dislike in me that I don't like Highlanders. I think that Highlanders are more aggressive, and they have this attitude problem. And if they want something, they really want something, they won't give anyone else a chance or anything. Even in desperate measures, trying their best to get something, they can really push or go out to get what they want".

⁷⁸Ganjiki said in relation to PNG's socio-cultural diversity: "Unity in the sense that we don't have a big group of Papua New Guineans who can really lead. ...So you don't have one group rising up and expecting whole bunch of people to follow that group. You will have one group of people from one province rising up but you will have one group from the other province or region will say: *Yupela husait na mipela bihainim yupela?* Displa kain [Who are you that we will follow you? Something like that]. There is a check and balance...So yes that is how, for PNG I would say there is threat or potential even though we have seen some of it but the extent that in the long term it will not really be sustained." Naturally suspicious of each other, the sustaining of any large-scale or

The dynamics of regional identity are just some of Jess' mental impressions of the life at the highest learning institution of the country. The stereotypical imaginations of cultural groups in the university could well be reflective of the natural misunderstandings in the broader Papua New Guinean society. And for young Papua New Guineans like Jess, the sustained interactions that are afforded in such institutions are a learning experience.

One other immediate aspect of Jess experience that comes with being a university student is the uncertainty of any immediate employment opportunities after graduation. Jess is highly pessimistic and frustrated. She sees the inconsiderateness of elderly Papua New Guineans public servants staffing the various machineries of the public bureaucracy as problematic. Jess aspires for a career in the central government public bureaucracy, however noting with dejection how that very public bureaucracy is rife with nepotism and institutionally antithetical to change.

Perhaps the motivation and inclination towards this career path in the public service can best be explained through an understanding of her current area of studies at the University and the broader misplaced hopes that her university program seems to engender in its prospective students. The perception that since her specialty is in the discipline of political science and public policy-related she is naturally made to easily make a career in the governance or public administration-related fields of Papua New Guinea.⁷⁹ This has been a longstanding perception by political science and public administration students and sometimes unattainable given the notable issues of nepotism in the appointments to the public service of Papua New Guinea. Jess justifies why she thinks the old bureaucrats are an impediment to fresh ideas and change:

violent enforcement of one groups' will on the other will only seem futile or, improbable. I always think of this as a positive outcome for socio-culturally diverse societies such as Papua New Guinea – and Melanesia.

⁷⁹As a graduate of the University of Papua New Guinea's political science and public policy and management I also nurtured the same aspirations of naturally destined to be a public servant in the central government bureaucracy in Port Moresby. The course syllabus advertising the career prospects of political science and public administration majors confirms these observations, invariably reinforcing university students' goals of potential recruitment into the public bureaucracy.

The youths can have a very big impact on the development of our country if we are included in the formal bureaucracy. The top jobs are occupied by the old elites.

Jess is also the first member of her family to receive a university level education. Added to her personal accomplishment in going as far as university, the pressing expectation from her family in getting a job immediately after graduation is obvious. She talks about her situation:

From my dad's side of the family, he has all these elder brothers and sisters older than him. None of them has made it through to UPNG [University of Papua New Guinea]. My dad was ex-UPNG too. And I think I am the only one who has made it as far as university. So they have this, they are just in the village and they have this, like everyone is looking up to me. They have their own family and they told me that when I finish from school and when I am at work and I am going to look after all of them I am being pressured by all that. I am thinking that what can I do? I have this feeling that, this responsibility towards them to help them. There has to be certain limits to it.

I relate this dilemma in Jess' life to highlight her societal obligations. Employment is seen here as a way of supporting one's family. Moreover it is about gaining respect and adoration from family members. Finding the public service workforce unable to absorb her, the likely outcome would be personal guilt and frustration.

And obviously the subjects of Jess' frustration are the "old-timers" occupying the public bureaucracy. Seen as impediments for young graduates like herself, the "old-timers" staffing the public service of Papua New Guinea are said to be resistant to change in the composition of the public bureaucracy:

The other thing too is these days our country is overlooking us, government is overlooking us [youth]. Most of those top jobs up there mostly are given to all those old people.... people who are suppose to be retired.

The aging manpower in the public bureaucracy of Papua New Guinea are blamed as the root causes of the lack of change and vision in the bureaucratic culture of Papua New Guinea. And as Jess suggests, young graduates coming out of universities have nothing to offer because the “older” generations cannot give up their positions that easily.

Given the bottleneck in the bureaucracy of Papua New Guinea, Jess suggests that the government of Papua New Guinea should do more to promote the informal sector, technical or vocational-oriented training as alternative outlets for youth employment in Papua New Guinea:

...I think one main area where the government should look closer into is creating more job opportunities for our country. If we want to excel economically then we have to create more job opportunities too, not only in the formal sector but we have to look at the informal sector as well cause the bulk of the population is in the rural areas and we don't have to look at bigger things like for example our mentality now is with the LNG [Liquefied Natural Gas] project that is where we are putting all our hopes in and trying to see that is where all the money is coming from into improving our country. But I think that if the government creates smaller things like from the informal sector to the formal we the youths can get into.

Unemployment is seen by Jess as a natural absorber of the energies and potential of the youth population. Young people become problematic members of their communities if their time is not put

to productive use. The consensus by Jess is for a holistic approach to the issues of law and order problem in Papua New Guinea from an employment perspective:

As I said if you keep yourself busy doing something then at the end of the day you have something, you have gained something and you will say that you have not done nothing and at least you have made good use of yourself. Last time my aunty came back from Brisbane and she was telling me that in Australia you will hardly see youths doing nothing. Like even if they are not in classes (she was referring to students). If they are not in classes, they are working.

Jess touches on the increased levels of insecurity in Papua New Guinea. By insecurity, I am referring more to the perceived threats to one personal safety and well-being. In terms of the youth bulge discourse, the emphasis is on national security threats. Both are distinctively divergent spheres of the discussions where the units of analysis for general lawlessness is the individual (Jess) and the national security implies the nation-state (government and its instrumentalities). As a young female, lawlessness has a profound effect on Jess' own personal security. And just like any victim to the occasion opportunistic criminal acts, Jess seems to think that crime does not distinguish between age categorizations:

They [youth] are both victims and instigators of law and order problems...I have had experiences of being attacked by people on my home back from school.

In terms of large scale revolutions and the role of youth in the national security of Papua New Guinea, Jess notes how an educated, male-dominate society Papua New Guinea can be forceful on the government:

They [youth] can mobilise. With education now, we know what development is all about, and governance is all about. We are aware of, like before, people did not

get all those, not well-equipped with the type of knowledge that we are acquiring today about what's going on out there in the hierarchy ... We understand what we suppose to have in society and be treated equally in society and all that, not being intimidated. And this can cause this frustration in us which is short of like what other countries are experiencing..... It happened in Bougainville I know it can happen in Papua New Guinea as a whole. And for a male dominated society, like you know, male is about masculinity and aggression and all that. And with more youths and all that, and especially males who are more educated and all that I think they can come up and start up revolutions and all that.

For a university student who has had first-hand experience of participating in organized protests against the government, this observation is a reminder of a growing consciousness of perceived injustices and inequality in Papua New Guinea, mostly by informed young citizens of the country. So education and awareness of national issues can be a merging factor in Jess' observation.

On the other hand, with specific reference to the law and order problems in Papua New Guinea, Jess attributes this firstly to the break-down in cultural norms:

Nowadays we don't respect our, well, most of the youths in my place they don't seem to respect the old people, well not respect the old people only but respect for the whole community as a whole. And they have these, and when I look at them and I try to wonder why they do that and all that, and there are so many things that come up into my mind and I try to think is it because of the changes, what modernization is bringing and you know with our past traditional and cultures that's causing conflict of interest within the youths – they don't know what to do and that's how they are reacting. Because normally people don't have respect, especially the youths, they don't have respect for society and all that.

I conclude Jess' brief biography by noting the bright sides of her experience. Within the UPNG she served as the treasurer for the East New Britain Students Association. Within her tenure, the Association carried out awareness campaigns in the East New Britain in 2009. She tells how the East New Britain Students Association:

...went out to the villages during our meetings here in school the things that we talk about are autonomy [provincial autonomy goals of East New Britain] and awareness. We try to talk about the things that we learn in school, especially the main idea behind awareness that we wanted to bring out to the people in the villages because the issue of autonomy, the importance of autonomy for East New Britain and all that. We did some talks on national issues like governance, health, HIV and AIDS, and I did in my presentation. There were different target groups that we went out to, to the villages and to schools.

The opportunities for such educational experience are open more than ever to university students like Jess. And she admits that there is no place like Papua New Guinea. with all the uncertainty about her employment opportunities, she seems to think with increased consciousness about issues in the country, the appropriate time for change is imminent when young Papua New Guinean start speaking up:

I think there is hope. We can bring change. We can with the knowledge that we have, we can go back and tell them that this is what's happening and we need to work together in order to make this country a good and safe place too. Make our views and points known to the government that this is what we want and you have to give this to us if you want the country to prosper in the near future.

In the previous stories I tried to understand the actual realities of the youth bulge theory from the very people who make up the population under study – the youth. And through the process of interviewing and writing the briefest of their life stories I came to learn more about the various forces at play in their lives and the influences outside their control. In the next chapter I address some of the common themes and dynamics that are worth understanding in relation to the simplistic conceptions in the youth bulge discourse.

CHAPTER 4: AN INTERACTIVE FORCE OR DESTRUCTIVE ELEMENT? RE-THINKING THE YOUTH “PROBLEM” IN MELANESIA

I use the biographical profile of the 5 Papua New Guineans in the previous chapter and additional interview data as the basis for this discussion. Through a presentation of general themes identified in the biographical exercise (in Chapter 3) I argue that aspects of young people’s lives do not conform to the youth bulge discourse. The central argument in this study is that young Papua New Guineans are creating cross-cutting social relationships that are productive in preventing large-scale armed conflicts. Indeed, there is more to know about human relationships at the personal level of the youth than what some of the generalized assumptions of the youth bulge theory can actually inform us.

Moreover, the accessibility to land, the participation of youth in the informal sector of the economy and the safety net of the extended family system are notable factors in preventing youth-initiated conflicts and violence. Finally, the stories of the young Papua New Guineans invariably indicate that more than ever, there are unprecedented opportunities available for their participation in the development of their communities.

In proposing a Papua New Guinea-centered argument against the orientaling discourse of the youth bulge theory, some of the underlying factors identified in this study have been and will continue to be effective in mitigating youth-led revolution and crisis. In a nutshell, there is optimism when considering PNG-specific variables that the youth bulge theory overlooks.

True, the demography of PNG shows that there is a growing high number of youth in the general population. Young people are contending with challenges of unemployment and weak governance in PNG. However, the stories that young people in PNG are narrating is

also insightful. They relate how they are responding in their own various ways to rapid changes in their societies. And their stories are not always about violence, armed conflict and revolutions.

The 5 Papua New Guinean youth profiled in this thesis give indications that resorting to violence is least an option in their present predicaments. Personal responsibilities and expectations within their respective communities are more immediate preoccupations than youth-initiated revolutions against the government and so forth. I conclude here that with the appropriate intervention in its awareness message, the youth bulge discourse can be educational and empowering in its message.⁸⁰

4.1. Problematizing the youth bulge discourse

In this chapter I address the two core research questions of this thesis:

- (i) Does the youth bulge theory enhance or distort our understanding of the lived realities of young peoples in Melanesia and specifically Papua New Guinea?
- (ii) Through the narratives of young people, how is the context of Melanesia and specifically Papua New Guinea informing a re-thinking of the youth bulge theory?

In considering the first question, the objective is to ascertain the appropriateness of the youth bulge theory within the specific context of Papua New Guinea and broadly, Melanesia. The youth bulge narrative generally portrays youth as a homogenous entity devoid of any form of human agency.

⁸⁰The interview sessions with my respondents in this study were thoroughly educational in nature. Made aware of the discussions on the youth bulge, the interviewees appeared optimistic about their own potential in their various communities. If the youth bulge discourse was as engaging and educational in its message, an informed youth population would be aware of where they fit in the scheme of national development broadly. This is one of the apparent challenges I seem to learn from my study.

However, where the youth bulge discourse generally depicts young people as impulsively violent and conflict-prone, it disregards youth-led initiatives that are worth supporting. In the absence of any “recognition and positive interaction, discussions about the current youth generation” (Sommers, 2003:6) will continue to “strip it [youth] of self-respect, underestimate its potential, and leave it devalued” (Hendrixson, 2003b:5). Not only is the youth bulge discourse perpetuating “gross exaggeration and a distortion of reality” (Boyden, 2006:3), it also disregards the capacity of youth to mobilize in pursuit of non-violent objectives! Indeed, as Ganjiki and Jonesteed show in the community movements for “mindset change”; not all “revolutions” involve the violent overthrow of the status quo.⁸¹ The “revolution” for mindset change for Papua New Guineans demonstrates just that.

But perhaps the one critical reason why I think the youth bulge discourse is grossly misleading is because it detaches itself from its intended audience – the youth.⁸² And in Melanesian communities, this is apparent.⁸³ Indeed, discussion on the security implications of the burgeoning youthful population in Melanesia has exclusively been the purview of scholars and academics. In the process of narrating the life experiences and impressions of the 5 young Papua New Guineans (Chapter 3), I discover that the notion of the youth bulge remains an unheard-of concept for my respondents in this study. Almost all the respondents in this study have not heard of this concept and the immediate effects of the youth bulge phenomenon in their lives.

⁸¹Angela Gregory’s stark warning of Pacific Island revolutions, triggered by disenchanted young Pacific Islanders is one of the most recent commentaries. See Gregory, Angela (2006), “Revolution warning for Pacific as ‘youth bulge’ keeps growing”, available online at http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10389228, accessed: October 11, 2010

⁸²In the scholarship of re/representation, Katerina Martina Teaiwa (2004) advocated the need to pay “attention to the audience and the forms in which the audience best engage with, or are influenced by” (p.11). This challenge becomes apparent when the youth bulge discourse is examined in its exclusion of youth.

⁸³A trait in most cultures in PNG is emphatic listening. However, respectfully paying attention to orators, elders and learned persons speak “to us” has its apparent dilemmas. As evidenced in the one-dimensional narrative of the youth bulge discourse, there are perspectives that need knowing. One would like to think that open discussions on the youth bulge theory – as it is applied in the context of Melanesia is engaged by the Papua New Guinean or Melanesian youth.

Reinforcing the lack of any practical affinity with the youth bulge discourse, there has never been any *Tok Pisin* equivalent or definite translation of the youth bulge concept. The inexistence of the youth bulge in the Melanesian lexicon is symptomatic of the discourse's detachment from the contexts and peoples it purports to represent or describe. The biographical approach is therefore a momentary departure from the esoteric scholarship of the youth bulge. The intention is to illustrate specific aspects of Melanesian and Papua New Guinean society through the eyes of young Papua New Guineans.

So when respondents in this study are narrating their personal experiences amidst the broader changes affecting them, one will notice the optimism they draw from the various initiatives they are undertaking in their respective communities. Take for instance Jonesteed's example. As a professed criminal, he appears optimistic about achieving his goals of becoming a businessman. And presently he takes up vocational training and is involved in suburban agricultural ventures as a way of providing for his family.

Using the example of Jonesteed, I find that the youth bulge discourse is a disservice to the very subjects it purport to represent. Instead of "educating" and "empowering" the subjects it depicts, it glosses over this section of the demography with its uninspiring projections of the outcomes of Melanesia's ever-increasing youthful population. One is left with the conclusion that the youth bulge phenomenon is a transient phenomenon – not wholly a permanent state of affairs. All societies undergo a sudden increase in their youth population sizes. What is least understood is the personal struggles of young people and the aspirations they make in the face of challenges in their societies.

Through the second question, I suggest a re-consideration of the youth bulge discourse in Melanesia (or Papua New Guinea). This in no way calls for the wholesale discrediting of the youth bulge discourse. Rather, I suggest that Melanesian or Papua New Guinean themes are worth including in the overall discussion on the youth bulge theory. If

the youth bulge discourse is a global discourse, surely context specificity would be part of its engagement with the people it purports to represent.

Nevertheless, negative developmental indicators in the Melanesian states will persist (see for instance AusAID, 2003). Developmental challenges will continue to reinforce the appeal of the youth bulge theory in the sub-region.⁸⁴ But for all its deficiency in fulfilling the developmental expectations of a modern nation-state, Melanesian or Papua New Guinean societies make up for in the human-based indicators – social relationships, cross-cutting family connections and interrelations established through marriage and increased mobility.

These factors, specific to the context of PNG and Melanesian communities problematize the youth bulge discourse, making the youth bulge discourse a misleading framework in understanding broader issues of conflict or security situations in the sub-region on Melanesia. In contemporary Papua New Guinean and Melanesian societies therefore, societal institutions and systems, constructive and productive in preventing or mitigating youth-initiated crisis provide an alternative perspective.

4.1.1. “At least I am doing something” – Youth as Agents of Positive Change

Proponents of the youth bulge theory argue that the youth are easily manipulated into conducting armed conflicts or involve themselves in acts of violence – mostly acting as foot soldiers to influential persons (Boyden, 2006).⁸⁵ It is young disillusioned males, who are easily mobilized, indoctrinated and armed by resourceful agents.⁸⁶

⁸⁴For instance, the edited work *Security and Development in the Pacific Islands: Social Resilience in Emerging States* (Brown, 2007) provides valuable analysis of some of the long-standing developmental challenges facing countries in the Pacific Islands.

⁸⁵To give a Melanesian example, Romer and Renzaho (2006) noted that the Honiara riots of 2006 saw young people who were urged on by political elites (p.6).

⁸⁶For instance, Marc Sommers’ (2006) analysis of the causal relationship between Africa’s urban youth and conflict related how the 1994 Rwandan ethnic cleansing featured the “unemployed male youth easy pickings for those organizing the genocide” (p. 8). Sommers (2006) also highlight the victimization of youth in the conduct of the genocide, a balanced analysis of war and conflict on young people.

The susceptibility of young people to manipulation by their elders and peers has long been the basis for empirical studies. Such studies have indicated that “adolescent males with high levels of testosterone in their blood are easily influenced by peers” (Rowe et al. 2004: 550). However, these assumptions downplay the fact that if adolescent males “associate instead with peers engaged in positive behavior, they are likely to become leaders” (Rowe, et al, 2004:550). Youth are natural followers, but the positive mentoring needed in their formative years and awareness of their civic responsibilities receives scant attention in the youth bulge discourse. The tendency of the youth bulge discourse in “ignoring, isolating or denigrating young people is unlikely to yield positive results” (ibid.).

In Melanesia, discussions on the underlying factors of the Solomon Islands crisis of 1998-2003 suggest the manifestation of inter-generational power relations. For instance, Jon Fraenkel (2004) notes how “underemployed youths from Guadalcanal and Malaita...were initiated by ex-national politicians who found in them convenient new weapons to deploy in their challenges to the government of the day” (p.186). Romer and Renzaho (2006) in the aftermath of the Honiara riots of 2006 observed that the riots were conducted by mostly youth urged on by political elites (p.6).

A recurring theme associated with the availability of disillusioned young men (for recruitment into armed groups) is the unfulfilling outcome of the education system in that Melanesian country (the Solomon Islands). Where the education system fosters false expectations and churns out “displaced” young men in society without any formal employment opportunities available,⁸⁷ the manifested outcomes was violence and show of aggression (ACFOA, 2000; Chevalier, 2001).

⁸⁷Commenting on some of the underlying factors leading up to the crisis in the Solomon Islands, another observer said that “[T]he bulk of Solomons youth has been schooled for non-existent urban jobs, effectively alienating them from their village resource base and branding them as failures in a system foreign to their lives” (Roughan 2000, cited in Chevalier, 2001:39). Moreover, it is young people who “bear the burden of unemployment, a mismanaged economy, and an education system that provides them with few skills for self-employment” (Chevalier, 2001:39).

This inter-generational factor in conflict situations is also reinforced in the views of one of my informants. With specific reference to tribal conflicts in his Highlands society of Papua New Guinea, STF (initials of interviewee) states that:

*Most of the youth they comply with their elder's thinking. They don't do it themselves....They are just following orders. Being brainwashed, and influenced. In PNG we have this culture that we want to take advise from the elders where even the elders they tell the youths to do something wrong or negative. Under influence of elders we do things, but to us, doing things straight. Like tribal war*⁸⁸
(STF, per.com, July 5th, 2010).

This assumption that youth are controllable by elders is not universally true if one looks at the examples of Ganjiki, Daba and Jonesteed. Even Forgy's experiences in her highly patriarchal society shows that youth are directly involved in communally-driven initiatives – under the mentoring role of a visionary community leader.

In Daba's case, where the state is absent at the village level, the Churches play an important part in the mentoring and guidance of youth. Where the State fails in its responsibility of providing the basic services at the community level, Churches take up the responsibility (see Joseph and Beu, 2008). The role of non-government organizations (NGOs), especially Churches play an important role in addressing issues that are peculiar to youth in the Melanesian context. This is an interesting theme that is amiss in any discussions on the youth bulge theory, especially in Melanesia.

⁸⁸On a positive note, Polly Wiessner's (2010) profile of Engan tribal warfare (Enga province of Papua New Guinea) show that where elders are influential in the lives of young men, the disowning of violence and tribal warfare by young men is possible. She observes that: "In some clans elder men spend time with young men....aligning the goals of the two generations as was done in men's houses and during bachelors' cults. The efforts of tribal leaders fall on fertile soil. The population of Enga is weary of futile modern war and the destruction it brings. Many in the upcoming generation have spent miserable years as refugees and want the benefits of the modern world, not war" (Wiessner, 2010:15-16). If anything, the perceived periods of violence and conflict are not permanent state of affairs. The futility of warfare and violence becomes obvious as the costs of engaging in persistent warfare is realised.

Perhaps the most insightful story so far is found in Ganjiki's experience. Ganjiki is an example of the positive responsibility that young people are undertaking in their communities. Taking Ganjiki's experience, one will notice how some momentous self-realization is destined to change perceptions of one's place in the community. Ganjiki relates a series of events that led to his creation of an advocacy group – *Patriots PNG*:

So when I came to Uni [University of Papua New Guinea] in Moresby, this is when I...I guess you could call it the climax of national awareness mentality. Because I started seeing the nation now in a much more intelligent, educated way. I mean I am experienced in meeting people in my growing up but now you coming and you being exposed to how the country is run, especially the laws that run this country. And then the economics of it, and all that kind of thing. And it kind of put me in a position to become aware of the potential we had as a nation. And I saw that Papua New Guinea could so way up there. But the margin between where could be and where we actually at is really wide. And so I was thinking. So all this things affected my mentality about the nation and then eventually starting this organization.

The motivation for the kind of advocacy work of Ganjiki is involved in was initially inspired through a series of interrelated factors. Rather than generalizing the life story of Ganjiki in the context of Papua New Guinea, he nevertheless provides an example of societal issues addressed through peaceful and democratic means. Indeed, Ganjiki notes how the need for expression is integrally part of youth in contemporary PNG society. He states that:

One issue that young people are struggling for or long for is expression. They just want to express themselves. And they try to find expression in all sorts of things, different things.....from the way they dress, the way they walk and talk and what

they listen to..... They are just looking for expression and they find that expression in all those different ways.

We are reminded through Ganjiki's experience that youth are agents of positive change. This is less discussed in the youth bulge discourse in Melanesia and especially Papua New Guinea. Ganjiki's vision and initiatives resonates well with the programmes of PNG National Youth Service. Recognizing young people's capacity to develop greater civic responsibilities, the PNG National Youth Service (2000) asserts:

“Young men and women can be seen as agents of change to any development, whether it be cultural, religious, political or economical issues. ‘Youth’ have the energy, can learn the latest know-how in technology and have the highest population percentage in any nation....Children in school and those out of school should be aware of their surrounding neighbors and programs of social interaction should be developed and introduced to encourage and promote learning, understanding and respect for one and other, 'Love Thy Neighbor As Thy Self’”.

At this juncture, I recapitulate some of the interesting themes from Ganjiki's initiative in creating a movement aimed at creating awareness among Papua New Guineans.⁸⁹ Firstly, Ganjiki is using the medium of the internet. The use of the internet medium in such initiatives is engaging for younger generations of Papua New Guineans. The social networking and interactions that go on are reflective of a generation of Papua New Guinean youth who have

⁸⁹It is worth noting that similar stories of youth-led initiatives go un-reported in the mainstream discussions on youth in PNG. For instance, the Melanesian Inc. – a forum for Papua New Guinean and Melanesian youth has had a healthy following. Its main goal is the promotion of Melanesian values and cultural awareness. And it is predominantly youth-led with the use of a weblog in its dissemination of awareness materials.

at their disposal the tools of the social media.⁹⁰ This is the milieu we find the youth of PNG contending with. There can never be an appropriate time in the history of PNG where the networking of like-minded younger generations of Papua New Guineans be initiated. At their disposal are creative mediums of creating awareness about issues affecting their society.

The second common thread in Ganjiki's and Jonesteed's stories is their reference to "mindset" or "attitude change". The concepts of mindset or attitude change have been a recent discussion point – primarily in the national print media of PNG. It has been used in the context of on-going campaigns for civic-minded citizenry to exercise personal responsibility in their nation.

Indeed, the language of mindset change is one emerging discourse in the contemporary Papua New Guinea society. I suspect it emerged out of the continuous dialogue and experience of living in a multicultural setting. Where the assumption is that diverse tribes and clans are all part of the national community, the diverging value systems and behaviors ought to be reconsidered in light of the bad perception that usually foreigners have of Papua New Guineans. Jonesteed gives some broad features of the training he received through the "Mindset School":

This school that got us attached to its programs according to my knowledge is a [Christian] mission, they call it Christian Fellowship Mission. Mindset is about you changing your thinking, habit, lifestyle and going to school or whatever schools you go to, this thinking is with you. So when you are in, you would have disowned previous influences or thinking, it would something of the past. So when you go in you will look forward to schooling and achieving whatever goals you have in mind. I see that this kind of school [training] is much better than other schools [training] for us youth who have nothing and for those of our brothers

⁹⁰Clay Shirky (2011) notes that "As communications landscape gets denser, more complex, and more participatory, the networked population is gaining greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and an enhanced ability to undertake collective action" (p.29).

who are selling betel nut [for our income]. It is a good school [training] where we have embraced and learn from. So in the next 30 years I see the country [PNG] will develop well if this kinds of schools [training] are included [for unemployed youth].

In the above quotation, Jonesteed is reflecting on the benefits of the grassroots initiatives provided by the Churches in training youth like himself. And for Jonesteed, the “mindset change” concept is recommended as the way forward for the young men and women in PNG.

And thirdly, the community-based movements have a long-term agenda. Expressing his optimism about the work of *Patriots PNG*, Ganjiki states:

“Personally I am very optimistic about the future of Papua New Guinea. I am optimistic, one, because I have started a movement that I think is going to cause a big change in this country, getting people to awaken.....I am worried but I am optimistic because I am trying to do something about it. And I guess if I wasn’t doing something about it, I will be more worried”.

While the youth are perceived as major threats to the security and stability of their societies, the agency that young people have and the medium at their disposal to mobilize or convey their alternative visions of their country’s future is empowering. So what is the practical value of the youth bulge theory in the lives of young people like Ganjiki?

One sees how ironic the global discourse evades practical measures to address the destabilizing role of the youth while grassroots movements have a positive, mobilizing effect on the youth. Hence, when Ganjiki talks about “doing something” he is inferring that a sense of ownership of his community-based initiative has more tangible effect than subscribing to a discourse such as

the youth bulge theory that has little to offer in terms of practical solutions to the problems encountered by youth.

4.1.2. Shifting allegiance? Localized mobilization vs. national causes

Recruitment of youth into armed groups has been one of the central assumptions of the youth bulge discourse. In societies where perceived socio-economic inequalities persist, the susceptibility of disenfranchised youth being recruited into armed groups is high – or so the argument goes. Valerie Hudson and Andrea den Boer (2004) have observed that lack of employment by young men and loose ties to family leaves them the option of mobilization into armed movements.

Graham E. Fuller (2003) using the example of the Middle East provides this alarmist warning: “[S]ocial services need to be expanded as well to meet the growing population, but most states have been failing to meet the challenge. The slack is then usually taken up by Islamist organizations that are able to provide many of these services and gain increased support from the population.” (p.3). And Beatrice Daumerie (2008) states that the:

lack of attachment makes young males *available* for mobilization. It makes it very easy for political entrepreneurs having an agenda on their own (might it be ethnic, politic or economic) to find resonance for their claims in the population and to recruit candidates for violent political action (p.3).

This assumption is complicated when issues of identity formation and group affiliation in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia are considered. These are more apparent in the current socio-cultural context of Papua New Guinea. And on the other, the identification and allegiance to the tribe, clan, family or locality strongly persists (see Jacobsen, 1995).

As the examples of Daba and Forgy show, in a predominantly rural-based society, people do not necessarily mobilize around class and socio-economic grievances. Papua New Guineans tend more to localized issues of the tribe, clans, villages and so forth.

Adding to the views on the mobilization capacity of the youth in PNG along socio-cultural lines, Jess affirms this argument:

we come from so many cultural backgrounds. And one thing with the political development of our country we can't see from a common point of view. We don't seem to understand people from other cultures. I think that if we all have one common culture that could be much easier for us to come together.....

Here, the views of Jess provide the argument that for a revolt or large-scale ideological mobilization to occur common agendas needs an appeal beyond the immediate social units in PNG societies. I interpret the multicultural setting of PNG as an inhibitor of potentially destructive conflict situations. Young people are therefore confined to their respective ethnic and cultural settings, thus delaying any projected outbursts of violence and armed uprising against the institutions of the state or so forth.⁹¹

Another theme is the role of conflict prevention or reconciliation. Indeed, the “informal” structures of conflict resolution remain unaccounted for in the youth bulge discourse. Forgy and Jonesteed relate their seeing evidence of the institutions of dispute settlement in their rural and urban communities respectively. There are indeed mechanisms

⁹¹This does not necessarily mean that conflict or disagreements have or will not occur. Perhaps the scale of such conflicts beyond certain levels of the various social units (tribes, clans, linguistics groups, and so forth) may be confined and isolated to these groups. A common phrase in *Tok Pisin* is “em samting blong ol”, taken to mean, “its’ their thing/problem”. This is taken to mean that Papua New Guineans don’t necessarily jump on to take sides in another groups’ fight or disagreement.

that conflicts, disagreements and violent interactions are not only resolved, but used as a deterrent against prospective conflicts.⁹²

4.1.3. “Breeding a nation” – Social interaction and integration

Projections on conflict and violent situations in Melanesia make sense to the youth bulge theorist. However, one other theme that exposes the weakness of the youth bulge theory is practical values of *pasin luksave*⁹³ and *wantokism*.⁹⁴ Both concept, are acknowledged in the day-to-day lives of young Papua New Guineans. In the projections of conflict and crisis situations in Melanesia or Papua New Guinea, an understanding of the cross-cultural linkages afforded under the practice of *luksave* and *wantokism* are worthwhile.

The value of *pasin luksave* is an extension of the kinship-based obligations and reciprocity. It is a value system that is increasingly used in the daily interactions of Papua New Guineans. The theme of *pasin luksave* is based on recipsocial relationships. As young Melanesians grow up in an increasingly interactive region, the growing web of relationships will only prove workable in mitigating any of the purported conflict and crisis situations that form the premise of the youth bulge discourse. As Izsy, an informant in my series of interviews stated:

⁹²Among one of the many benefits of conflict resolution PNG-style is that it is publicly acknowledge, potentially deterring potential perpetrators of would-be perpetrators of violence. Of course, the levels of armed conflict vary in size and intensity as attested in the Bougainville crisis (1988-1997). But my argument here is that conflict is not a constant state of affairs as one would interpret from a reading of the youth bulge theory. In PNG and other Melanesian communities, there is indigenous conflict resolution that resolved conflict situations to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

⁹³In the contemporary use of New Guinea *Tok Pisin*, “*pasin luksave*” can be defined as – the practice of recognizing deeds, persons and places. Relationships are built on the practical aspects of relatedness to each other in support rendered, levels of engagement in the community and so forth. The root *Tok Pisin* words are *pasin* – fashion or lifestyle or practice and *luksave* – recognition or understanding.

⁹⁴In the context of Papua New Guinea, Regis Stella (2004:62) notes that: “The concept wantok and the social reality which birthed it are both as recent in the history of Papua New Guinea as the lingua franca *Tok Pisin* in which they are products of the same material, social and ideological forces, yet deeply entrenched in the traditions of PNG cultures....It is a kind of safety net, which operates on a system of relationships, and fellowship where are sense of community and identity are forged”

.....we have these very strong bonds, friendship and we share things. Even though you are from another province and I am from another province, we can have this strong relationship that we develop. This kind of relationship I think it is really good as Papua New Guineans.....for us Papua New Guineans we [acknowledge ourselves]. That is one of the most positive things that we have, like we share as Papua New Guineans.

So in my argument for a social relationship-oriented perspective in the youth bulge discourse, young people are part of the process of nation-building and cross-cultural mutual understanding. This process is constantly shaping the web of relationships that Papua New Guineans build.⁹⁵ And where young people are exposed to this positive aspect of a socially-oriented society, it mitigates against the conflicts that make up the predictions of the youth bulge discourse.

The extension of social relationships is sustainable and critical in the appreciation of conflict prevention because it is undertaken at the grassroots level where interactions regenerate social relationships across tribal, ethnic and linguistic boundaries. And the extension of social relationships through integrative forces such as urbanization, the use of the *Tok Pisin* national lingua franca⁹⁶ and cross-cultural intermarriages are recurring themes in the accounts of respondents in this study. Within this context, younger generations of Papua New Guineans are being initiated into.

Beyond the kin-based or regional affiliations, we find three of the most integrative variables. The first theme is the increased levels of mobility for younger generations of Papua

⁹⁵Conversely, Iltija H. Khan in 1974 proposed that two processes of nation-building are apparent in PNG – the administrative governmental process and the political process leading to the establishment of a dominant political center (p. 364). This analysis uses a statist framework, with the delineation of nation-building process solely within the structure of the state institution.

⁹⁶Christine Jourdan (1995) using the case of the Solomon Islands advances the idea that Pijin is potentially a “unifying tool” within a heterogeneous nation-state.

New Guineans; secondly, the interactive experience of formal education and thirdly; the cross-cultural affinities through intermarriages beyond one's immediate socio-cultural setting. These social dynamics set the stage for an understanding of the cross-cutting allegiances mutually beneficial in the prevention of potential large-scale conflict situations.

The 5 young Papua New Guineans presented in chapter 3 of this study demonstrate some positive aspect of having travelled beyond their linguistic and cultural borders. Likewise education in tertiary institutions is another venue where increased interaction with fellow Papua New Guineans is staged. And there is the idea of long-lasting linkages through intermarriages. Three of the five informants in chapter 3 are known to have parents from different parts of the country.

A significant factor in my consideration of these themes is that increasingly younger generations come to see their futures as inter-locked or dependent on some broad sense of shared destiny. By virtue of their experiences and relationships beyond their immediate localities, increased mobility, formal education and intermarriages present a possible scenario capable of mitigating the ordeals of violence or crisis that is part of the youth bulge trope.

I draw from the observations of by commentators such as Morgan Brigg (2009). In reference to the mitigating influence of social relationships during the Solomon Islands conflict of 1998-2003. Brigg (2009) observes how "several decades of marriage across tribal and island groups in modern Solomon Islands" as generating "a dense countryside web of relationships" (p.156). Solomon Islanders "escaped or mitigated violence through the cross-cutting ties among militants and civilians" (p.152).

Perhaps the most reflective thoughts in this process were articulated by Ganjiki in his personal experience. He states:

I didn't grow up in a certain area where I could just claim that this is home.....I grew up everywhere. The other thing that probably affected my mentality was the

fact that many of my uncle and aunties also got married to other parts of the country – not just Sepik. That exposed me to the Tolais, and the Manus, because I have uncles and aunties married to people in those areas of the country. I also became aware of how diverse we are, how nice we could be as a people. All these things added up to just think nationally.

Ganjiki's example in no ways intends to simplify the socio-cultural complexities of Papua New Guinean society. If there is any indication of this phenomena taking place in the contemporary PNG society, the overwhelming evidence seems to show in the profile of my respondents. My respondents in the study acknowledge that they were children of mixed parentages – a common theme in the demographic make-up of PNG society.

How this translates into broader processes of nation-building is still inconclusive. But the phenomenon of mixed marriages goes to the heart of one of my area of contention. Socially and culturally, relationships across cultural and ethnic boundaries would inherently be sanctioning potentially disruptive behaviors. Young Papua New Guineans are interconnected than ever before.

However, Papua New Guinean youth will respond in their various ways to issues of migration, schooling and intermarriages (cross-cultural). As seen in Jess' experience at the University of Papua New Guinea, ethnic identity are still reinforced in the context of the a modern education system. If anything, the phase and medium of interaction amongst younger generations of Papua New Guineans is much more fluid and open.

4.1.4. The masculinization of PNG society

And for a male dominated society (like you know), male is about masculinity and aggression and all that. And with more youths and all that, and especially males who are more educated and all that I think they can come up and start up revolutions (Jess per com, June, 25, 2010.)

Apparent in the accounts of the informants in this study is the perception that violence and aggressive behavior is perpetrated by “male” youth. Two of the female youth profiled in the previous chapter, Forgy and Jess highlight the powerlessness of female youth in the face of the male aggression. They reinforce the notion that young men are the serial perpetrators of the anti-social behaviors in PNG. The *mangis* (young men) feature prominently in issues of law and order and so forth. What is perceived as the masculinisation of society has been the subject of discussion elsewhere.

For instance, Hudson and den Boer (2004) argue that “[T]he sex ratio of the 15-34 year age group.... is especially interesting to theorists studying societal and inter-societal conflict, given that young men in this age group are responsible for virtually all violent criminal behaviour” (p.6). Tribal wars, acts of *rascalism* and the violence one associates PNG with is very much the expressive nature of mostly young men. The gendered nature of conflict situations and the disparate power relations among young men and women are reflective of the male-dominated cultures of PNG. For instance, Forgy relates the protocol in the height of tribal war situations – which among other things involves a separation between the sexes for fear of female contamination of male strength and fighting prowess.

Forgy notes how women are advised not to go near the young men. Males are forewarned of coming into contact with menstrual blood or engaging in sexual acts with the

women prior to battle – pollutants of the fighting prowess of young men. These taboos guarantee the “safety” of the male tribal warriors.

Hence, the notion that young males are instigators of violence and aggression in PNG makes interesting reading in the context of the youth bulge theory. In this study Jess and Forgy disassociate themselves from acts that are considered violent and aggressive. I therefore conclude on the basis of observations by Forgy and Jess that the generalization of the “youth” category as prone to violence is disproved and not reflected in the lives of female youth who are very much prone to male-initiated violence and aggression.⁹⁷

Another observation is provided by Jess. She recounts the mobilization tendencies of young educated males. Her observation is however part of her apprehensiveness of males from the Highlands societies. She notes:

I think that Highlanders are more aggressive, and they have this attitude problem. And if they want something, they really want something, they won't give anyone else a chance or anything. Even in desperate measures, trying their best to get something, they can really push or go out to get what they want.

The perception that Jess seems to be communicating is that there is a correlation between ethnicity and outward manifestation of masculinity in PNG. That is, someone's ethnic background determines his tendency of resorting to violence or armed conflict.⁹⁸

The helplessness of female youth in conflict situations is also noted by Forgy. In relation to the tribal war waged in her community, Forgy states that:

⁹⁷Marc Sommers (2006) notes how “female youth, whose plight is frequently overlooked within their societies and beyond, who often live much less public lives than their male counterparts, and who do not inspire the degree of fear that male youth do” (p.8). Youth bulge theorists disregard female youth, even though the female gender continues to be highlighted as victims of violence and conflict (Nordstrom, 1999; Sommers, 2003).

⁹⁸The rationalization is like saying: “if you are from this part of PNG, you will behave in this manner”. Indeed, the different layers of stereotypes that Papua New Guineans themselves hold of each other are obvious in daily interactions. And as Jess eventually got into the life of a university student, she befriended a female friend from the Highlands – who apparently did not fit the stereotypical images that Jess previously harbored of Highlanders.

These things [tribal war] are the source of my frustrations. Others trigger off this problems and we all end up suffering its effects. We live normal lives but as a result of somebody else' doing, all the innocent people are affected. Some innocent people have died as a result.

Forgy's comments bear some resonance with Ruth Liloqula and Alice Aruhe'eta Pollard (2000) observations:

First, a woman in Melanesia and thus in the Solomon Islands is a peacemaker in her own right. She is blessed with natural, God-given qualities such as love, care, peace, patience, humility and sensitivity. These values make women different from men. Women's various contributions and responsibilities in the areas of production, reproduction, community work and leadership, family welfare and nation building do not demand conflict (p.9).

While the Liloqula and Pollard (2000) were referring broadly at the attempts to resolve the Solomon Islands "ethnic tensions", they noted the exclusion of women from this process. How are these relevant to the discussion on the youth bulge discourse in Melanesia and especially PNG?

Perhaps worth noting is that the youth bulge discourse inadvertently overlooks the contributions that females perform in the prevention of conflict or rehabilitation of their communities. Forgy's and Jess' stories are informative. As female youth, their respective disavowal of conflict is a starting point to appreciating the position of young females in conflict situations. Perhaps the coalitional nature of young women in promoting peace at the grassroots is an alternative perspective to that is worth considering in the youth bulge theory.

4.1.5. Rural-urban divide: locating the troubles-spots

I utilize this variable – rural-urban divide, to demonstrate that firstly the ideological and class distinctions necessitating mobilization of youth in PNG is minimal and secondly, the socialization of youth into cultural practices in urban settings is obvious. The latter contradicts one of the central assumptions of the youth bulge theory.

For instance, in his seminal essay of 1994, Robert Kaplan advances the notion that urbanized African youth are “disconnected from their cultures” (Sommers, 2006:1). According to Kaplan the outbreak of deviant and anti-social behaviors is attributed to the lack of social control on the behavior of young men. Equally, with rapid urbanization, the more conflicts and incidences of violence are inevitable as youth are exposed to inequalities of urbanized settings. The assumption is that the increase socio-economic disparities are conducive to resorting to violence and armed confrontation (see Sommers, 2003).⁹⁹

The outbreak of conflict and break-down in social control in the towns and urban areas of PNG has also been the subject of inquiry. Liebert (nd) traces the growing patterns of disillusionment amongst third-generation city born children in Papua New Guinean towns to the early 1970s. He states the all-too familiar scenario where:

The school leaver programme was beginning to come into force around this time [1970s] as well. Many of these youths were second and even third generation city-born children often of parents who had come to administrative centers, found work and never returned to their villages. The type of employment offered during this period began to require a more educated person (p.6)

⁹⁹In his study on urbanized youth in African cities, Marc Sommers (2003) observes that “signs of a rapid concentration of youth in African cities raise the specter of expanding youth unemployment, discord, and unrest” (p.2).

Liebert's (nd) observations are obvious when reading Jonesteed's situation. As a second-generation urbanite, he is one of many young Papua New Guinean youth whose parents came to Port Moresby and have ever since settled permanently.

But while the youth bulge theorists promote the assumption that the rate of urbanization or rural-to-urban migration affects how youth are socialized into violence, I use the examples of Jonesteed and Daba to make interesting reading for comparative purposes.

Jonesteed's accounts also discounts some of the assumptions about a "culturally detached" generation (in the argument of Robert Kaplan) are misleading. Jonesteed notes how *kastom* protocols in resolving conflict play a significant role in his urban community:

These customary traditions have now been brought into the city [Port Moresby] and where we are the observance of customary activities continues. They don't take matters (conflict) to the side – they use the customary way to address grievances. Suppose I have a grudge against another man here in town, rather than taking me to a police and letting the police resolve the problem, he goes through the customary way. In the customary way you are expected "to kill a pig" to show remorse. That is what I am seeing in town – customary practices are happening (in the resolution and prevention of conflict). Customary practices act as a balance or alternative to the formal law and justice system in the urban areas. They co-exist (in addressing conflict situations).

Jonesteed is hinting here that *kastom* and adherence to customary practices are very much part of the migrant communities in urban areas of PNG. Contrary to Robert Kaplan (1994) there is no apparent disconnection between the urbanite population and institutions that are associated with traditional settings such as rural areas. Culture and *kastom* is perpetuated and re-modified in the urban areas. In a positive way, the reference to cultural forms of conflict

prevention and resolution of conflict is enhanced when younger generations of Papua New Guineans are socialized into such institutions.

In terms of mobilization, this study shows that Daba will find little in common with his urban youth cohort. In his closed-knit setting, kin-based interactions form the basis of village life. Little else is shared in terms of a nationally-shared cause to violence. This complicates the “mobilization” assumption that scholars such as Daumerie (2008).¹⁰⁰

On the other hand Jonesteed refers to a growing sense of identity shared with youth from within his cohort. In urban areas such as Port Moresby’s second-generation dwellers like Jonesteed are developing greater networks relationships with his youth cohort. In Jonesteed’s situation the relationships he is fomenting go beyond his immediate street or suburb.

Coalitional identity extends beyond the ethnic, linguistic, tribal or regional markers. However Jonesteed does not see this as a negative aspect of his urban setting. Rather Jonesteed considers his association with his youth cohort as positive and productive in generating common initiatives and increased awareness of common challenges these young men face. He states that:

I live with one [friend] from Goroka and another from Sepik. We talk about the work [Mindset School]. We think about how we can better ourselves. We don't think too much about how the government is functioning. We only concentrate on how to establish a business within the next four years. And we also openly share about our various cultures and our thoughts.

¹⁰⁰For instance, Daumerie (2008) states that the “lack of attachment makes young males *available* for mobilization. It makes it very easy for political entrepreneurs having an agenda on their own (might it be ethnic, politic or economic) to find resonance for their claims in the population and to recruit candidates for violent political action” (p.3).

The manner in which urban areas is the central converging point for Papua New Guinean to interact in pursuit of common goals is highlighted by Jonesteed. Memberships to such cohorts are Jonesteed's group is not strictly ethnic, cultural or linguistic. Rather it is the shared ideas of bettering their lives while in Port Moresby. In Jonesteed's case engaging in a legitimate and positive "business" is the ultimate goal.

4.1.6. *Holim Graun* - Holding to the soil (land)

Holim graun is another theme that I find relevant to an understanding of the problematic application of the youth bulge discourse in Melanesia. *Holim graun* in New Guinea *Tok Pisin* is translated to mean, "holding the ground" or "getting your hands dirty in the land". In the context of my discussion there are three interconnected use of this metaphor.

Firstly, it refers to the accessibility to customary land and the use of the land in subsistence activities. The use of this metaphor in this discussion is informed by the observations of Jonesteed and Daba. Where the youth bulge theory assumes that youth unemployment in the formal economic sector will ultimately lead to grievances against the State, self-sufficient youth in typically agrarian societies such as Papua New Guinea offer a different perspective to such assumptions.

For its practical usage, *holim graun* is synonymous with access to customary land. Daba from Kainantu valley explains this when talking his future ambitions as a coffee-growing businessman:

I want to be an agriculturalist and tend to coffee crops and be a coffee grower. I have land. The land I possess was passed down through our one ancestor. He [originally] had the land and divided it up [amongst the family members] and we are custodians of this. It is a big piece of land. That is where I will plant my coffee in. When I get the money [from the coffee]. I will start small (Daba, per com. July 7th, 2010)

Land in this instant is treated as a social security in sustaining the livelihood or material well-being of rural-based youth in Papua New Guinea. The desire to participate in the cash economy is also accommodated in this relationship to the land where cash cropping is the alternative source of income. This is confirmed in a national social mapping report:

.....in all provinces most people are still engaged in the subsistence economy and young people have access to clan land where they can grow food for direct consumption and a surplus to sell at local markets. Thus, in most communities unemployment does not mean that people do not have means to support themselves and unemployment is a problem mainly in urban centres where there is no land available and in certain areas in the nation where there has been a rapid increase in population, as for example in the Highlands Region, that has led to shortage of land resources (National AIDS Council, 2005: 12).

Secondly, as demonstrated by Ganjiki and Daba, land is also an asset that is embedded with meaning and generates non-tangible effects – namely reinforcing personal connections to genealogy and identity. This is important in considerations of self-esteem of youth in their cultural contexts. Where examples of indigenous peoples being dispossessed of their land has given rise to the problems of youth delinquency, Papua New Guinean youth – especially rural-based youth are dependent on the reinforcing value of the land to their identity.

A sense of “place” for one’s use in reference to identity, something that Ganjiki surmised most eloquently:

And now the Western culture is saying, if you have money and materialism you are somebody, we think that we have to get these things to be somebody. But Papua New Guineans we have to appreciate going back to the roots. And we have land. That is the most important thing. These....foreigners they don't have land

and they look for significance in every other thing, we have land. And even though we go around begging on the streets and everything our roots there is land. We are kind of very significant in that. But because we lose awareness of that value we just get lost, we are lost (Ganjiki, per com, July 18, 2010)

Finally, *holim graun* can be taken to mean the idea of working the land. Jonesteed explains how this is relevant in preoccupying young people. Time is made productive in the exertion of physical labor on one's land or in the production of one's basic necessities through subsistence farming or cash cropping activities. Land is the common denominator in the diversion of young people's energy. The very act of planting and working the land is time used to productive ends. Seeing the products of one's labor on the land is as much empowering in the case of Jonesteed. He observes:

*Tru long dispela yes mi kisim planti dispela save na busy long holim graun na mi no tingting moa long dispela pasin blong street laif.*¹⁰¹

The existence and access to customary land is indeed a variable or theme that receives scant attention within the youth bulge theory. I would argue that accessibility to land in PNG provides a safety net in the containment of youth-related disaffection with the institution of the state. It is even documented that the “[M]ajority of people including youths in the rural areas are involved in subsistence agriculture” (National Youth Commission of Papua New Guinea, 2007:19).

4.2. Re-thinking the youth bulge discourse

The above discussion briefly highlights the problematic use of the youth bulge theory in the context of PNG. The theory readily proposes that any society with a disproportionate number

¹⁰¹Through this, I can attest that I have gained knowledge and keeping myself busy holding the land and I am thinking less of the street life.

of young people and faced with limited socio-economic opportunities and political influence will inevitably experience armed conflicts and violent uprisings. In Melanesia, security concerns about its youthful population feeds into existing discourses that consistently depict Melanesia as a problematic sub-region of the Pacific Islands. Projections of youth-initiated conflicts add to long-standing apprehensions about the ability of Melanesian states in maintain internal stability. For example, discussions on security and strategic agendas in recent decades defines the predominantly Melanesia states as constituting what is known as the “arc of instability” – states with weak states institutions, and underperforming developmental indicators (see Reilly, 2002; May et al. 2003).

However, based on accounts provided in the biographical profile of the 5 young Papua New Guineans and additional interviews employed in this study, I conclude that the Papua New Guinean and Melanesian systems of social relationships and interactions provides be an enabling environment for an interactive generation of youth, not wholly committed to violence and armed conflicts. There is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the high numbers of young people in Papua New Guinea will naturally lead to uncontrolled and sustained youth-initiated acts of crisis. And if youth-initiated conflicts are apparent (as was the case in the Solomon Islands), such acts may not always appeal beyond the social and cultural boundaries of the perpetrators of the destabilizing activities. To understand the dynamics of the sub-region and the case of PNG, I highlighted above some of the factors that are less apparent in the overall discussions of the youth bulge theory.

For instance, the accessibility to customary land by youth is a safety net against the challenges of unemployment in the formal sectors of the economy.¹⁰² And especially in

¹⁰²The most recent global recession (2009) revealed the fallacy of absolute faith on growth-oriented “solutions” to the problems of the Pacific. Ralph Regenvanu revealed how “Vanuatu's 220,000 people had been largely unaffected by the global financial crisis – because they did not belong to the modern economy”. He cited statistics to show that 80 percent of ni-Vanuatu “lived in the traditional village economy, while even the rest – including his Port Vila constituents – rely on tradition and kinship for food, work exchanges and dispute settlement” (McDonald, 2009).

predominantly agrarian societies as PNG, the delaying of civil unrest and armed confrontations becomes apparent when young people can opt to sustain themselves through working the land instead of heavily depending on the formal sector of their economy to meet their daily needs. Economic-driven conflict situations are averted given the access to customary land by youth and where the informal economic sector is a source of material sustenance.¹⁰³ This becomes apparent in the story of Daba, featured in this study.

Also, based on accounts of the 5 young Papua New Guineans and data from field interviews, I conclude that identities and extensive social linkages are constantly being negotiated by youth in Papua New Guinea. The oppositional forces/processes of national identity formation in a post-colonial nation-state and maintenance of tribal/ethnic mobilization defines the manner and appeal of conflict situations in PNG. On one hand Ganjiki promotes the ideals of national identity, while on the other Forgy witnesses a tribal/sub-clan feud that is rooted in the conflicting claims to land ownership rights by sub-clans in her village.

Indeed, the challenge of “thinking” beyond the tribal, ethnic or regional identities is being played out in post-independence Papua New Guinea. This problematizes the youth bulge theory which assumes that a nationally-conscious youthful populace would trigger violence or instability.

If respondents in this study are suggesting that the most immediate preoccupations of youth lie in the welfare of the family, clans and tribes, does this prevent nationally-driven agendas as a mobilizing factor against the perceived incompetence of the state system? Conflict or armed revolt on a national scale needs the ability of young people mobilizing

¹⁰³The informal sector of the Papua New Guinean economy may play a role as well in the preoccupations of youth. Theodore Levantis (1997) explains that “Often, people are forced into informal earning activities through necessity due to difficulties in finding formal sector employment” (pp.73-4). In the absence of “government-provided social security system for the unemployed...Informal income-earning opportunities are thereby taken up as a ‘second-best’ option to formal employment” (p.74). Levantis (1997), in defining the notions of “employment” and “work” shows the vague interpretations of “unemployment” in societies where the informal sector caters for people engaging in productive, income-earning activities.

around national agendas – something that is lacking in most parochially-oriented communities of PNG. And in a society where the state system is limited in its reach, the most apparent source of allegiance is to the clan and tribe.

I therefore find that the potential for young people to form long-term coalitions, and the sustenance of broad-based armed revolutionary movements is found wanting in PNG.¹⁰⁴ One will however find in multi-ethnic societies like PNG the sporadic problems of tribal or ethnic conflicts. Such acts of violence and instability will equally be futile and isolated to specific zones – owing in part to more subtle forms of check and balances in a multi-ethnic society.¹⁰⁵

Thirdly, the rural-urban divide is demonstrated. And where mass mobilization is a prerequisite for sustained and coordinated acts of revolutions or armed conflicts, there is no definite ideological sense of commonality that rural-based youth can align with their urban counterparts. In a predominantly rural-based society as Papua New Guinea, tribal and ethnic attachments are seen as the most immediate identity markers for the rural-based youth. The tribe and clan are more immediate affiliations that work in the village setting and where allegiance to the tribe/clan is rooted in social obligations and reciprocity of service to the tribe/clan. This is compelling evidence enough to suggest that fighting for a national cause may not necessarily appeal beyond the village boundaries where tribal or ethnic loyalty is most intrinsic.

¹⁰⁴The case of the Solomon Islands is worth mentioning. The immediate conflict zone was limited to the northern part of the island of Guadalcanal where the capital of Honiara is located.

¹⁰⁵For instance, while the tribal wars or ethnically-driven conflicts in the Highlands of PNG are notorious for their portrayal of PNG as a lawless society, there are increasingly a growing resentment among coastal Papua New Guineans that such acts of violence have no place in a diverse society. The ethnic violence at the Gordon market in Port Moresby in early 2011 generated a lot of condemnation from non-Highland Papua New Guineans. Some Papuans even called for the repatriation of the suspected perpetrators back to their respective provinces. Other non-Highlands commentators called for the educated elites of the Highlands provinces to take the initiative in educating “their” tribesmen” about living in a “civilized” society. This exemplifies how there are inherent checks and balances on the behavior of Papua New Guineans, potentially delimiting acts of violence and instability.

A recurring theme too is that in the Papua New Guinean society, tribal and clan allegiance are checks and balances. The diverse social units in society play a significant role in a multicultural setting such as Papua New Guinea. In the context of conflict prevention, Ganjiki addresses a positive aspect of PNG's multicultural society. He states that in PNG:

“we don't have a big group of Papua New Guineans who can really lead, you know, like you see in countries like Rwanda, when they were divided into two – Hutus and Tutsis....So you don't have one group rising up and expecting a whole bunch of people to follow that group. You will have one group of people from one province rising up but you will have one group from the other province or region will say: Yupela husait na mipela bihainim yupela? [Who are you that “we” should follow “you”?]”

Fourth, the gendered nature of Papua New Guinean society provides informative insights into understanding the gendered nature of conflict in PNG and Melanesian communities. The youth bulge theory, true to its homogenizing and stereotypical representation of the youth population fails to account for the gender relations in its conception of violence and crisis situations in Melanesia. Victims of conflict – especially women who caught up in some of the most recent outbreaks of violence in Melanesia also demonstrate the mobilizing capacity towards the realization of peace and community rehabilitation.

The youth bulge discourse would ideally be engaging to providing the alternative in re-thinking the role of young women in post-conflict scenarios. Drawing on these interrelated themes, I conclude that a Melanesian/Papua New Guinean-centered discussion on the notion of the youth bulge should embrace the complexity and dynamism of the contexts it depicts.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This study adds PNG-oriented perspectives to the discussions on the youth bulge theory in the Melanesian sub-region of the Pacific Islands. Proponents of the youth bulge theory have noted that Melanesian nation-states will experience increasing levels of armed conflict. Weak socio-economic indicators and the unprecedented increase in the youth population of Melanesian countries are notable variables employed when considering the probabilities of armed conflict and civil unrest in Melanesia (Gregory, 2006; Plimmer, 2007; Ware, 2007). Equally, the recent conflicts in the Solomon Islands “ethnic tensions” in the late 1990s and the increasing lawlessness in PNG reinforce security concerns of youth bulge theorists.

In this study I show why the youth bulge theory is a problematic discourse. Through the stories of young Papua New Guineans, I conclude that the youth bulge theory discounts significant factors that serve as mitigating factors against full-scale civil unrest or armed conflict in PNG society. The argument presented here is that there are alternative themes in explaining the situation of youth in their communities. Factors that are contributing to the avoidance of conflicts include the extended or cross-cutting social relationships in contemporary PNG and the access to land. Unlike previous generations, young people in Melanesia and especially PNG are mobile and beholden to a variety of practical means in expressing themselves or pursuing their personal goals. The faintest of optimism is reflected in the accounts of these young Papua New Guineans, in part suggesting that not all “news is bad news” in this part of the world. Individually, young Papua New Guineans go about their day-to-day chores unguided by a pessimistic and determinist trope scripted of their diverse societies.

The biographical exercise was part of putting the social aspect of young people in the youth bulge discourse. In telling the stories of my respondents, I tried to retain the quotations of my informants in the most intimate manner possible. Almost all my respondents were adamant that young Papua New Guineans *are* capable of generating violence and revolutions. However, the most immediate concerns of my respondents suggest that the thought of participating in any violent or revolutionary acts was not an immediate preoccupation.

In Chapter 2 of this paper, I presented a brief literature review of the scholarly evolution of the youth bulge discourse. The primary objective in the literature review on the youth bulge discourse is to understand the progression of the youth bulge theory and its overall application to the Pacific Islands. Why is the youth bulge discourse now making inroads into security discussions in the Pacific Islands and especially Melanesia?

The central theme in the literature review was that the youth bulge discourse reflects the global strategic thinking of dominant players in the international system. The youth bulge theory is merely a demonstration of global power relations. If the origins of this discourse are any indication one is reminded of its role in informing Western security thinking on developments in non-Western societies. In the scholarly field of strategic demography – the birthplace of the youth bulge theory, this blind association of the “Third World” problem of the youth bulge is a disservice to the complexities and diversity of the human societies concerned. Through the literature survey, I concur with Hendrixson (2004) that there is a lack of critical examination of the youth bulge theory. The context specificities of PNG are attempted in the biographical exercise.

In Chapter 3, I profile 5 young Papua New Guineans. By narrating the personal life stories of Papua New Guineans, my intention is to learn more about the most pressing issues and daily preoccupations these young people are engaged in. The human experience in this approach tells a completely different story about their state of mind. Rather than being

preoccupied with armed conflict and revolutions, these 5 young Papua New Guineans are confronting social and economic changes in their own unique ways. For instance, Ganjiki's initiative in creating a community-based organization is aimed at educating Papua New Guineans about their civic responsibilities. Likewise, Jonesteed, a professed *raskol* aspires to become a businessman. In the process, he (Jonesteed) is taking up training in life skills as means to achieve his goals. Both individuals demonstrate how complex and embrative of change young people are in this part of the world. The simplistic theorizing in the youth bulge theory is counteracted in the most obvious ways when lives of real people are openly narrated.

In Chapter 4 of this study, some of the recurring themes in the biographical exercise is used. I randomly used the positive aspects of life in contemporary PNG society to explain how expanding social relationships will be a decisive factor in mitigating civil unrest and armed conflict.

While researching and writing on the subject of the youth bulge discourse, it becomes apparent that on-going inquiry into the associated themes can be undertaken. By way of suggesting directions for future research themes, I include some of the areas of on-going discussions.

Firstly, a subject worth pursuing in discussions on the role of young people in PNG is the outcome of the present "resource boom" in the country. Most immediate is the effect of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project and its potential to address some of the issues of unemployment amongst youth in PNG.

From the interviews, the informants in this study were cognizant of the significance of the LNG project for the broader PNG economy. How this actually translates into tangible benefits for all Papua New Guineans – and especially the young people of PNG is a much-needed area of inquiry. Will the revolutionary tendencies of the youth be curtailed in this

phase of unprecedented economic growth in Papua New Guinea? Will young people participate meaningfully in the present “resource boom” that PNG is experiencing?

Secondly, the role of the parents and the family unit in the socialization of young Papua New Guineans is reinforced in the views of the respondents in this study. The one starting point in our understanding the roles and responsibilities of the family unit in PNG is of course the National Constitution of PNG. Under the National Goals and Directive Principles 1 (5) – Integral Human Development, the National Constitution affirms that the “family unit to be recognized as the fundamental basis of our society, and for every step to be taken to promote the moral, cultural, economic and social standing of the Melanesian family”.

The discussions on the youth bulge theory emphasises the role of peers and ideologically influential persons in the recruitment or mobilization of youth into armed groups (Fuller, 2003; Daumerie, 2008). In considering the place of the family unit and the extended family system in PNG society, specific research on the socialization process of young people at the level of the family unit will be timely. Amidst the ever-increasing demands of the capitalistic cash economy, urbanization and substance abuse, how is the Papua New Guinean family unit coping with these rapid changes? For practical purposes of policy-making and awareness addressing the concerns of youth in PNG, understanding the various influences on the cohesiveness of the extended family system is an urgent scholarly task.

Another recurring theme in the research was the emphasis on education and employment. The belief that getting an educational qualification will enable one to find a job is a preoccupation of the young Papua New Guineans presented in this research. But as Jonesteed suggests, there is an imbalance in the kind of education for young Papua New Guineans. He observes:

I see that this kind of school [training] is much better than other schools [training] for us youth who have nothing and for those of our brothers who are selling betel nut [for our income]. It is a good school [training] where we have embraced and learn from. So in the next 30 years I see the country [PNG] will develop well if this kinds of schools [training] are included [for unemployed youth].

Jonesteed is partly right when he says that the formal education system and the vocational training institutions can be complemented by attention to “grassroots” induction such as the “mindset school” model. Education in the formal and vocation/technical education systems may create unfulfilled expectations. As seen in the case of Jess, the social expectations for employment are high after completion of university-level education, adding to the stress of young Papua New Guineans.

While employment in the public service is the ultimate goal of university graduates like Jess, there are young people such as Jonesteed who due to financial constraints and learning capabilities who would not make into tertiary level institutions. In the circumstances that “street boys”¹⁰⁶ such as Jonesteed find themselves in, could the civil society-initiated training like the “Mindset School” become a viable institution of learning civic values and life-long skills?

The role of the community-based organizations in facilitating such training for young Papua New Guinean left out of the formal education system could be a valuable area of research. If policy intervention for young out-of-school/out-out-of-work people is replicable, empirical inquiry into the successes and weaknesses of these initiatives can be informative in policy discussions.

¹⁰⁶I use the term “street boys” to generally refer to young men who are without employment and occupy their time outside of formal schooling or employment activities. The use of the “street” denotes a state of “roaming” around freely and unsupervised.

And finally, the role of the government and non-government organizations (NGOs) – (especially the Christian churches) warrants considerations in the broader processes of development in Melanesia and specifically PNG (Joseph and Beu, 2008).¹⁰⁷ The omission of non-state actors such as churches is blatantly obvious in the youth bulge theory's application in the Melanesian sub-region. As Jonesteed and Daba suggest, churches play a significant part in the training and mobilizing of youth to take up productive and positive attitudes to life.

As the youth bulge discourse extends into the Melanesian context, the role of non-state actors such as churches should be reflected in such discussions. In broader issues of conflict resolution or mediating roles in times of conflict, churches have always been part of the influential actors. Sustained inquiry into the relationships between churches and the mobilization of youth in Melanesian societies should also be empowering. The presence of churches in Melanesian society is a recognition of the complexity and diversity of global regions of the world (such as Melanesia) where that the youth bulge discourse should seriously re-think its conception of the dynamism of human institutions and interactions.

¹⁰⁷Hank Nelson (2006) uses the term “alternative state” in reference to churches. Where the state has limited influence in the most isolated or remote areas of Melanesian societies, the church is bound to be in these areas – providing basic services and mobilizing community initiatives. Two commentators argue that the church is perhaps one of the only introduced institutions that command “loyalty and respect that transcend provincial and tribal boundaries” (Joseph and Beu, 2008:1).

APPENDIX A: Population distribution according to rural/urban settings (2000 estimates)

PNG Youth Population (by rural/urban distribution)

Age group (in years)	Male				Female				Total	%
	Urban	%	Rural	%	Urban	%	Rural	%		
12-14*	23081*	6	168 833	47	21 156	6	147 315	41	360 385	100
15-19	41, 679	7.5	251 598	45.4	37 233	6.7	223 971	40.4	554 581	100
20-25	52, 904	9	239 975	41	44 759	8	242 670	42	580 308	100
Total (12-25)	117 664	7.9	660 406	44.2	103 148	6.9	613 956	41	1 495 174	100

Source: National Statistical Office (2000)

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

Part 1: General Information

1. Name (Pseudonym used):.....

2. Ethnic background.....

3. Gender: Male

Female

5. Age:.....

6. Siblings in the family.....

7. Have you ever traveled outside of your place of birth? Name the places in Papua New Guinea or the world where you have been?

8. Education Qualification (Level):

Never attended school:

Primary (Gr. 1-5):

High School (Gr. 6-9):

Secondary (Gr. 10 – 12):

Tertiary Qualification:

9. Employment status:

Fulltime:

• Formal Sector of Economy:

• Informal Sector of Economy:

Part-time:

Not Employed:

Was never employed:

10. Political Participation:

Have you ever voted in National Elections? Yes.....No.....

Have you been involved in other political activities, other than elections? (please state)

Part II. Knowledge of Contemporary National (PNG) and Regional (Pacific Islands) issues

1. In your opinion, and in any order, what are the pressing issues or concerns young people in Papua New Guinea are facing today?
2. Are you worried or optimistic about the future of Papua New Guinea (as a nation-state)? Explain why.
3. Where do you see Papua New Guinea and Melanesia in the next 20 years?
4. Researchers and foreign observers argue that the increasing number of young people in the population of Melanesian countries (Papua New Guinea included) will generate

conflict, armed revolutions and instability. Do you agree or disagree? Why do you **agree** or **disagree**?

5. What would be your definition of youth or the category of young people?
6. Given that the population size of the young people is increasingly attributed to the security concerns in the region, how should the youth bulge issue be addressed?
7. In your opinion, are young people in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia usually identified as the sources of instability? Why?
8. Do you think there is any hope for the youth of Papua New Guinea?
9. Where does culture and tradition fit in the attempts to address some of the issues concerning youth in Papua New Guinea?
10. Name at least three (3) positive or beneficial aspects that young people in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia provide in society today.

III. Personal Questions

1. Do you identify with some of the issues that young people in Papua New Guinea and Melanesia are facing?

2. What things frustrate you most about your community and country?
3. What things do you take delight about in your community and country?
4. Describe your background. Are your parents from the same area of Papua New Guinea? Melanesia? Your upbringing, was it in a rural or urban environment?
5. As a general question, what do you think determines the behavior of youth in Papua New Guinea?
6. What is your opinion about political leaders? Do you ever take part in political activism or processes such as elections?
7. What do you want to be in the future? What are your future goals and expectations?
8. Is it right or wrong to say that Papua New Guinea's diversity is the source of all the present ills observed by commentators?
9. Do you network with other young Papua New Guineans? What do you talk/discuss about?

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE (NEW GUINEA TOK PISIN)

Part I: Story blong Yu

1. Nem blong yu (Pseudonym used):.....

2. Ples blong mama or papa.....

3. Gender: Man

Meri

4. Number blong Krismas:.....

5. Namba blong ol brata or sista long femili blong yu.....

6. Long laip blong yu, i bin gat taim we yu bin travel autsait long ples mama bin karim yu?
Kolim sampela ples insait long Papua New Guinea or the giraun (world) we yu bin go
pinis long em.

7. Education Qualification (Level):

Ino bin go long skul

Primary (Gr. 1-5):

High School (Gr. 6-9):

Secondary (Gr. 10 – 12):

Tertiary Qualification:

8. Employment status/Wok moni:

Fulltime:

• Formal Sector of Economy:

• Informal Sector of Economy:

Part-time:

Ino wok moni nau

Ino bin wok moni ikam inap nau:

9. Political Participation/Wok politics:

* Yu bin vote pinis insait long National Elections? Yes.....Nogat.....

* Yu save involved long on political activity arasait long elections? (tokaut)

Part II. Knowledge of Contemporary National (PNG) and Regional (Pacific Islands) issues

1. Long tingting blong yu yet, wanem kain ol issues or concerns nau e mol yangpela manmeri in bungim insait long Papua New Guinea?

2. Yu tingting wari or yu wanbel long future blong kantri blong yu Papua New Guinea? Why na yu ting olsem?

3. Insait long tu pela ten krisma bihain long dispela yia 2010, bai wanem kain ol samting bai kantri Papua New Guinea na Melanesia bai bungim?

4. Ol saveman na researchers blong ol narapela kantri oli tok olsem taim namba blong ol yangpela manmeri i grow bikpela insait long ol Melanesian kantri (wantem Papua

New Guinea), dispela ol yangpela manmeri bai kamapim planti bel hevi na crisis insait long kantri na region. Yu wanbel wanbel wantem dispela ol toktok o nogat?

5. Long tingting blong yu yet, wanem ol lain em ol youth?

6. Taim ol lain i tok olsem bikpela population blong ol youth insait long kantri i bai kamapim kainkain hevi na birua, long tingting blong yu yet, wanem kain rot bai halivim long mekim long mekim population blong ol yangpela manmeri i kam daun [decrease]?

7. Long tingting blong yu yet, yu ting olsem wanem - ol yangpela manmeri insait long Papua New Guinea na Melanesian oli as blong olgeta birua na bel hevi? Long wanem na yu answer olsem?

8. Long tingting blong yu yet, yu ting igat hope long ol youth blong Papua New Guinea?

9. Yu ting pasin kastam na culture igat meaning na iken halivim long steretim sindaun na ol issues ol yangpela manmeri i wok long bungim insait long kantri?

10. Nem im three gutpela samting yu ting e mol yangpela manmeri insait long Papua New Guinea na Melanesia i strongim kantri long nau na bihain taim.

III. Personal Questions

1. Ol issues ol yangpela manmeri insait long Papua New Guinea na Melanesia i wok long bungim, yu ting olsem yu tui stap insait long ol dispela issues?
2. Wanem kain ol samting i save kirapim yu long gat bel hevi insait taim yu lukluk long community na country blong yu?
3. Wanem kain ol samting yu save hamamas long en insait long community na country blong yu?
4. Insait long tingting blong yu givim liklik story blong yu. Ol papamama blong yu i blong wanpela hap long Papua New Guinea? Melanesia? Na liklik blong yu, yu bin grow up long ples or town?
5. Yu yet ting olsem wanem, wanem kain ol influence i save autim pasin blong ol yangpela manmeri?
6. Yu ting olsem wanem long ol political lidas blong country? I bin gat taim bipo yu bin involve long wok politivs olsem elections?
7. Yu laik kamap wanem long bihain taim? Wanem ol plans blong yu long bihain taim?

8. Yu ting wanem, i tru or i no tru taim ol saveman i tok olsem Papua New Guinea i bungim kainkain bel hevi bikos long kainkain hauslain na pasin/tingting blong ol lain blong dispela country?

9. Yu save wok bung wantem ol narapela yangpela Papua New Guineans? Yupela i save toktok na gris long wanem samting?

REFERENCES

ABC Correspondents Report, *Real risk of failed PNG state: Defense Planners*, available online at: <http://www.abc.net.au/correspondents/content/2005/s1483081.htm>, accessed August 10, 2010.

ACFOA (2000) *Man-made disaster in the Solomons: Report of the NGO mission to Solomon Islands August–September 2000*, Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Canberra.

Allegro, J. (2006) *Forbidden Fruit: The Social Implications for the Pacific of Seasonal Contract Labour*, Submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee Inquiry into Pacific Region Seasonal Contract Labour, Canberra, May.

AusAID (2003) *Papua New Guinea and the Pacific – A Development Perspective*, Australian Government: Canberra.

- (2006) *Pacific 2020: Challenges and Opportunities for Growth*. Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service.

Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2006a) *Inquiry into a possible Pacific region seasonal contract labour scheme*, Submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee, Canberra, April.

- (2006b) *Inquiry into a possible Pacific regional seasonal contract labour scheme*, Submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee, Canberra, April.

Australian Senate (2003) *A Pacific Engaged: Australia's Relations with Papua New Guinea and the Island States of the South-West Pacific*, Parliament of Australia - Senate, 12 August 2003.

Barakat, B. and Urdal, H. (2008) “Abstract: Education and ‘youth bulge’ effects on violent conflict”, available online at: <http://ideas.repec.org/p/wbk/wbrwps/5114.html>, accessed August 5, 2010.

Beehner, Lionel (2007) *The Effects of the ‘Youth Bulge’ on Civil Conflicts*, Council on Foreign Relations, available online at: http://www.cfr.org/publication/13093/effects_of_youth_bulge_on_civil_conflicts.html#p2, accessed November 18, 2010.

Bennett, Judith (2002) ‘Roots of conflict in Solomon Islands though much is taken, much abides: Legacies of tradition and colonialism’, *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Discussion Paper*, Discussion Paper 2002/5, The Australian National University: Canberra.

Bloom, David E., Canning, David and Sevilla, Jaypee (2003) *The Demographic Dividend: A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND).

- Booth, Heather. et al. (2006) *Population Pressures in Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Island Economics and Timor Leste*. Canberra: Working Papers in Demography, 102, Demography and Sociology Program, The Australian National University.
- Boyden, Jo (2006) 'Children, War and World Disorder in the 21st Century: A Review of the Theories and the Literature on Children's Contributions to Armed Violence', *QEH Working Paper Series*, available online at: www3.qeh.ox.ac.uk/pdf/qehwp/qehwps138.pdf, pp.1-30, accessed August 15, 2010.
- Brigg, Morgan (2009) 'Wantokism and state building in Solomon Islands: A response to Fukuyama', *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, Volume 24, Number 3, pp. 148-161.
- Brown, M. Anne (2006) *Development and security in the Pacific Islands region*, The Security-Development Nexus Program, International Peace Academy: University of Queensland.
- Brown, M. Anne (ed.) (2007) *Security and Development in the Pacific Islands: Social Resilience in Emerging States*, Lynne Rienner Publishers: London.
- Callick, Rowan (1993) "A Domsday Scenario?" in Cole, Rodney (ed.), *Pacific 2010: Challenging the Future*, Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Research School of Pacific Studies, The Australian National University, pp. 1-11.
- Chan J., Cotton B., Kavaliku L., Tito T., Toma M.I., (2004) *Pacific Cooperation - Voices of the Region*, The Eminent Persons Group Review of the Pacific Islands Forum, April 2004.
- Chevalier, Christopher (2001) 'From chimera to chimaera: Changing the realities for youth in Solomon Islands', *Development Bulletin*, 56, The Australian National University: Canberra, pp. 38-41.
- Choucri, N. (1974) *Population Dynamics and International Violence: Propositions, Insights and Evidence*, Lexington, MA: Lexington.
- CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) (2002) *CIA Answers to Questions for the Record: Worldwide Threat Briefing 2002*, available online at: http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2002_hr/020602cia.html, accessed August 10, 2010.
- Collier, Paul, and Anke Hoeffler (2004) "Greed and Grievance in Civil War", *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56: 563-95.
- Collier, Paul (2001) *Economic causes of civil war and their implications for policy: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, United States Institute of Peace Press: Chester A. Crocker.
- Daumerie, B. (2008) *Age-structure, acceleration and the risk of armed domestic conflict*, Institute of Sociology: Stockholm University, available online at: www.wjh.harvard.edu/~hos/papers/Daumerie_HOS.doc, accessed October 10, 2009.
- Dinnen, Sinclair (2001) *Law and Order in a Weak State*, Hindmarsh: Crawford House.

- (1994) “Public Order in Papua New Guinea: Problems and Prospects”, in Thompson, Allan (ed.), *Papua New Guinea: Issues for Australian Security Planners*, Australian Defence Studies Center: Canberra, pp. 99-115.
- (1996) ‘Order in the Year of Law Enforcement: Papua New Guinea’, *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 11 (2):91-99.

Dobell, Graham (2006) “Australia confronts its Pacific taboo: Pacific workers”, *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 21(3), pp. 126-140.

- (2007) “Australia and the Pacific’s Lost Generation”, *Quadrant Magazine*, pp.1-16.

Douglas, Louise et al. (1988) *Oral History – A Handbook*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Dyer, D. Paul (2008) “Demography in the Middle East: Implications and Risks”, *Engagement with Muslim World*, December 11, 2002, available online at: http://www.usembassy.it/file2002_12/alia/A2121606.htm, accessed August 10, 2010.

Easterlin, Richard (1980) *Birth and Fortune: The Impact of Numbers on Personal Welfare*, Basic Books.

Esty, Daniel C., et al. (1998) *State Failure Task Force report: Phase II findings*. McLean, VA: Science Applications International Corporation.

Esty, Daniel C. (1999) ‘State Failure Task Force Report: Phase II Findings’, *Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Issue 5, available online at: <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/events/docs/Phase2.pdf>, accessed November 25, 2010.

Fearon, J. D. and Laitin, D. D. (2003). “Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war.” *American Political Science Review* 97(1), 75-90.

Fraenkel, J. (2004) *The Manipulation of Custom: From Uprising to Intervention in the Solomon Islands*. Pandanus Books: Canberra.

Fuller, G. and Hoch, R.B. (1998) *Youth Bulges in Asia*. Mimeo: University of Hawai’i and Robert Hoch Consulting, April 2.

Fuller, Graham (2003) ‘The youth bulge factor: The new demographics of the Middle East and the implications for U.S. policy’, Brookings, available online at: <http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/islam/fuller2003.pdf>, accessed November 21, 2010.

Furedi, Frank (1997) *Population and Development: A Critical Introduction*, New York: St. Martin’s Press.

Gannicott, K. (1993) ‘Population, Development and Growth’, in Cole, R.V. (eds), *Pacific 2010: Challenging the Future*, National Centre for Development Studies: The Australian National University, Canberra, pp. 12-42.

Gluckman, Ryn (2001) “The Scapegoating of America’s Youth: Past and Present (Mis)Conceptions”, *DifferenTakes*, Issue 13, Fall 2001.

Goldstone, J. (2001) "Population and Security: How Demographic Change Can Lead to Violent Conflict", *Journal of International Affairs*, 56: 3-21.

Gregory, Angela (2006) Revolution warning for Pacific as 'youth bulge' keeps growing, *New Zealand Herald*, available online at:

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10389228, accessed: October 11, 2010.

Gurr, Ted (1970) *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hartmann, Betsy and Hendrixson, Anne (2004) 'Pernicious Peasants and Angry Young Men: The Strategic Demography of Threats', All Academic Research, available online at:

http://www.allacademic.com//meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/7/4/5/8/pages74588/p74588-1.php, accessed November 18th, 2010.

Hassal and Associates (2003) *Youth in Solomon Islands A participatory study of issues, needs and priorities final report*, AusAID: Canberra.

Helgerson, John L. (2002) "The National Security Implications of Global Demographic Change", USAF Center for Strategy and Technology, available online at:

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/cia/helgerson2.htm>, accessed November 21, 2010.

Henderson, John (2005) "Introduction: Pacific Conflict How Much and Why?" in Henderson, John and Watson, Greg (eds.), *Securing a peaceful Pacific*, Canterbury University Press: Christchurch, pp. 3-12.

Hendrixson, Anne (2005) *Angry Young Men, Veiled Young Women: Constructing a New Population Threat*, Corner House Briefing 34 (December 2004), Available online at:

<http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/pdf/briefing/34veiled.pdf>, accessed August 10, 2010.

- (2003a) "The "Youth Bulge": Defining the Next Generation of Young Men as a Threat to the Future", in Gluckman, Ryn and et.al (eds.), *Militarised zones: Gender, Race, Immigration, Environment*, Committee on Women, Population, and the Environment (CWPE): Baltimore, pp.29-32, CWPE, available online at: <http://www.cwpe.org/files/militarized-zones.pdf>, accessed November 12, 2010.
- (2003b) The Youth Bulge ZNet Daily Commentaries (March 14), available online at: <http://www.zmag.org/sustainers/content/2003-03/14hendrixson.cfm>, accessed August 10, 2010.
- (2003c). "The 'Youth Bulge': Defining the Next Generation of Young Men as a Threat to the Future." *DifferenTakes* 19 (Winter).
- (2004) *Angry Young Men, Veiled Young Women – Constructing a New Population Threat*, The Corner House: Dorset, UK (December 2004).

Hudson, Valerie M. and den Boer, Andrea (2004) *Bare Branches: Security Implications of Asia's Surplus Male Population*, The MIT Press: Cambridge.

Hughes, Patrick M. (1997) *Global Threats and Challenges to the United States and its Interests Abroad*, Statement For The Senate Select Committee On Intelligence 5 February and The Senate Armed Services Committee On Intelligence 6 February, Washington, DC: Defense Intelligence Agency, available online at: http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/1997_hr/s970205d.htm, accessed August 10, 2010.

Hughes, Helen (2004) 'Can Papua New Guinea Come Back from the Brink?' Sydney: Centre for Independent Studies.

Hugo, Graeme (2005) "A demographic view of changing youth in Asia", in Gale, Fay and Fahey, Stephanie (eds.), *Youth in transition: The challenges of generational change in Asia*, Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO, Bangkok, pp.59-88.

Huntington, Samuel (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon and Schuster, New York.

Jacobsen, Michael (1995) "Vanishing Nations and the Infiltration of Nationalism: The Case of Papua New Guinea," in Foster, Robert J. (ed.), *Nation Making, Emergent Identities in Post Colonial Melanesia*, The University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, pp. 237.

Joku, H. 2007. 'Corruption time-bomb', *The National*, Friday September 28, 2007, Port Moresby, p. 1.

Joseph, Keith and Beu, Charles Browne (2008) "Church and State in Solomon Islands", *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Discussion Paper*, Discussion Paper 2008/11, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies: Canberra.

Jourdan, Christine (1995) 'Stepping-stones to national consciousness: The Solomon Islands case', in Foster, Robert (ed.), *Nation Making – Emergent Identities in Postcolonial Melanesia*, The University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, pp. 127-149.

Kaplan, Robert D. (1994) 'The Coming Anarchy', *Atlantic Monthly* 273:44–76.

Kirch, Patrick (2000) *On the Road of the Winds*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kolo, P. (2009) "Anti-Asian riots...Dangerous", *Post Courier*, available online at: <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20090710/frhome.htm>, accessed July 10, 2009. Levantis, T. (1997) 'Urban unemployment in Papua New Guinea – its criminal', *Pacific Economic Bulletin*, 12 (2).

Leahy, Elizabeth et al. (2007) *The shape of things to come: Why age structure matters to a safer, more equitable world*. Washington, DC: Population Action International.

Liebert, William (nd) 'Youth and crime in Papua New Guinea: Some emerging trends', *Melanesian Mission Studies*, Melanesian Institute: Goroka, PNG, pp.5-20.

Liloqula, Ruth and Pollard, Alice Aruhe'eta (2000) 'Understanding conflict in Solomon Islands: A practical means to peacemaking', *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Discussion Paper*, Discussion Paper 00/7, Australian National University: Canberra.

Lynn, Charlie (2006) *Submission to the Australian Senate 'Seasonal Contract Labour from the Pacific Region'*, Submission by the Hon. Charlie Lynn MLC, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney.

Maclellan and Mares (2006) cited in Lynn, Charlie (2006) *Submission to the Australian Senate 'Seasonal Contract Labour from the Pacific Region'*, Submission by the Hon. Charlie Lynn MLC, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney.

May, Ron J. et al. (2003) *'Arc of Instability'? Melanesia in the early 2000s*, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Canterbury, and State, Society and Governance in Melanesia: The Australian National University.

McDonald, Hamish (2009) 'A more positive Pacific solution', *Brisbane Time* (August 8, 2009), available online at: <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/opinion/a-more-positive-pacific-solution-20090807-ecwf.html>, accessed January 5, 2010.

Mesquida, Christian and Weiner, Neil (2001) *Young Men and War: Could We Have Predicted the Distribution of Violent Conflicts at the End of the Millennium?* *Woodrow Wilson ESCP Report 7*, p.230, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center.

- (1996) "Human collective aggression: A behavioral ecology perspective", *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 17, pp. 247-262.

Moller, Herbert (1968) "Youth as a Force in the Modern World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 10, pp. 238–260.

National AIDS Council (2005) *Social Mapping of 19 Provinces in Papua New Guinea: Summary Report*, National HIV/AIDS Support Project: Port Moresby.

National Youth Commission of Papua New Guinea (2007) *National Youth Policy of Papua New Guinea 2007-2017*, National Youth Commission of Papua New Guinea: Port Moresby.

Nordstrom, Carolyn (1999) 'Girls and War Zones: Troubling Questions', in Indra, Doreen (ed.), *Engendering Forced Migration: Theory and Practice*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp. 65.

O'Collins, Maev (1986a) 'Youth has many faces: insider and outsider perspectives on youth in Papua New Guinea', in O'Collins, Maev (ed.) *Youth and Society: Perspectives from Papua New Guinea*, Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University: Canberra, pp. 1-12.

- (1986a) 'Urban youth and folk devils: Reflections on International Youth Year, in O'Collins, Maev (ed.) *Youth and Society: Perspectives from Papua New Guinea*, Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University: Canberra, pp.155-167.
- (ed.) (1986b) *Youth and Society: Perspectives from Papua New Guinea*, Political and Social Change Monograph 5, Canberra: Australia National University.
- (2000) "Law and Order in Papua New Guinea", available online at: rspas.anu.edu.au/papers/melanesia/working.../maev2.htm, accessed August 5, 2010.

Plimmer, Neil (2007) 'PCF focuses on Melanesia, communities', *Pacific Communities*, Issue 13, September – November 2007, Pacific Cooperation Foundation, Wellington, p. 10.

PNG National Youth Service (2000) "National Youth Service as a Culturally Integrative Force", Document prepared for the 5th global conference on national youth service June 2000, available online at: <http://www.ianys.utas.edu.au/proceedings/2000/themes/png-t.html>, accessed May 12, 2009.

Reilly, Ben (2000) "The Africanisation of the South Pacific", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 54(3): pp.261-268.

Romer, Kate and Renzaho, Andre MN (2007) 'Re-emerging conflict in the Solomon Islands? The underlying causes and triggers of the riots of April 2006', *Journal of Peace Conflict & Development*, available online at: www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk, accessed, March 10, 2007.

Roudi-Fahimi, Farzaneh and Kent, Mary Mederios (2007) "Challenges and Opportunities: The Population of the Middle East and North Africa", *Population Bulletin*, 62 (2), Population Reference Bureau: Washington D.C.

Roughan, John (2002) "Pacific First: A Failed State." *Solomon Star* (February 13), p. 5.

Rowe, Richard, Barbara Maughan, Carol M. Worthman, E. Jane Costello, Adrian Angold (2004) "Testosterone, Antisocial Behavior, and Social Dominance in Boys: Pubertal Development and Biosocial Interaction," *Biological Psychiatry*, 55: 546-552.

Rudd, Kevin (2007) 'Fresh ideas for future challenges: A new approach to Australia's arc of instability', address to the Lowy Institute, Sydney, available online at: www.alp.org.au/media/0707/speloo050.php, 5 July 2007.

Schoeffel, Penelope (1994) 'Social Change', in Howe, K.R., Kiste, R.C. & Lal, B.V. (eds.), *Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 350-379.

Secretariat of the Pacific Community (2006) *Statistics and Demography Programme*, SPC: Noumea.

Shirky, Clay (2011) 'The Political Power of Social Media – Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change', *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2011, pp. 28-41.

Sommers, Marc (2003) *Urbanization, War, and Africa's Youth at Risk - Towards Understanding and Addressing Future Challenges*, US Agency for International Development: Washington.

- (2006) "Fearing Africa's Young Men: The Case of Rwanda," *Social Development Papers*, The World Bank 32, (January 2006).

Standish, B. (1994) "Papua New Guinea: The search for security in a weak state", in Thompson, Allan (ed.), *Papua New Guinea: Issues for Australian Security Planners*, Australian Defence Studies Center: Canberra, pp.51-97.

Teaiwa, M. Katerina (2004) 'Multi-sited Methodologies: "Homework" between Australia, Fiji and Kiribati', in *Anthropologists in the Field*, forthcoming.

Tenant, George J. (2002) "Remarks by the Director of Central Intelligence George J. Tenant at the Nixon Center Distinguished Service Award Banquet, 11 December 2002," in *CIA Chief Urges Broader Engagement with Muslim World, December 11, 2002*, available online at: http://www.usembassy.it/file2002_12/alia/A2121606.htm, accessed August 14, 2010.

The Observer (2001) 'So, are civilizations at war?' Interview with Samuel P. Huntington by Michael Steinberger, Sunday October 21, 2001.

UNDP (2006) *Youth and violent conflict: Society and development in crisis?* United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery: New York.

Urdal, Henrik (2002) *The devil in the demographics: How youth bulges influence the risk of domestic armed conflict, 1950 – 2000*, Paper presented at International Studies Association 43rd Annual Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana.

- (2004) *The devil in the demographics: the effect of youth bulges on domestic armed conflict, 1950-2000*, Social Development Papers, Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction, Paper No. 14, World Bank, Washington, DC.
- (2006) 'A Clash of Generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence', *International Studies Quarterly*, 50, 607–629.

U.S. Census Bureau (2010) *International Data Base*, available online at: <http://www.d-transition.info/countries-glance-3/papua-new-guinea-445/>, accessed June 8, 2011

Wainwright, Elsin (2003) "Responding to State Failure – The Case of Australia and the Solomon Islands", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 57 (3), pp. 485-498.

Ware, Helen (2004) "Political Instability and Youth Bulges: The Devil in the Demography and the Economy", Paper presented at the 12th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, Canberra, September 15-17, 2004.

- (2005) "Demography, Migration and Conflict in the Pacific", *Journal of Peace Research*, 42(4): 435-454.
- (2007) "Melanesian Seasonal Migration as a Potential Contribution to Security", *Global Change, Peace and Security*, 19:3, 221- 242.

Zakaria, Fareed (2001) 'The Roots of Rage', *Newsweek* 138(16): 14–33.