

**PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING  
MINISTRY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF  
THE UNITED CHURCH IN SOLOMON  
ISLANDS: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT ON  
ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS WHO ABUSE  
ALCOHOL**

A Thesis Presented to the  
Faculty of the Pacific Theological College  
Suva

In Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Theology

by

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September 2019

## **ABSTRACT**

The United Church of Solomon Islands (UCSI) has not been effective in her role as the provider of adequate Pastoral Care and Counselling (PCC) among students who abuse alcohol in the five church-managed schools.

From my experience as a school chaplain and also evidence given by interviewees, PCC among students in the five church managed schools has not been effective. It has even been characterised as dormant.

This research has revealed that school chaplains who work with these students are unable to satisfactorily carry out their work being unskilled in this aspect of PCC, while students claim pastoral needs have not been met that is through effective care and counselling.

Interviewee research analysis indicates that students abuse alcohol for a variety of reasons. Consequently, this abuse affects their moral life, continuity in education, and even extends to adverse outcomes for family and community. These students do not honour and respect the school rules nor the norms and values of their families and community.

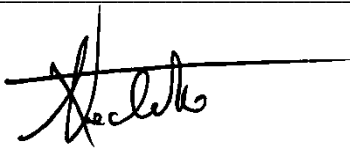
Therefore, this thesis analyses the nature of the problems and makes recommendations that will contribute to change for the better for the students with alcohol abuse for the five UCSI secondary schools and for family and community life.

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis, which is 33,192 words in length (excluding the bibliography, front and back matter), has been written by me, that it is the result of work carried out by me, and that it has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, in any previous written work for an academic award at this or any other academic institution.

I also declare that this thesis has not used any material, heard or read, without academically appropriate acknowledgment of the source.

Name: Leslie Vedoko

Signed: 

Date: 3rd September 2019

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate and present this work to the students of United Church Solomon Islands secondary schools, principals, teachers, chaplains and parents, all of whom have assisted in making Pastoral Care and Counselling among students who abuse alcohol a high priority and effective in its application. It is my humble prayer that God, through His Spirit, will guide and give you peace and joy as you learn and teach in schools.

Last but not least, I dedicate this thesis to the hard work done by my wife, Barbara M. Vedoko, our four grown-up children and our four grandchildren.

May the Lord, our Banara (God), who reigns over our islands and schools bless you in abundance with inner peace, joy, wisdom and knowledge.

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## Acknowledgments

First, I wish to acknowledge God who is the source of all wisdom, knowledge and strength. Without Him and the gifts He gives, I would not be able to accomplish this work.

Second, the following people have assisted me in my thesis writing and deserve my acknowledgement: The Solomon Island Government for making a scholarship available to me and the teaching faculty of the Pacific Theological College for helping me develop in my theological learning. To the lecturers from the Church Ministry Department: Rev Dr Gwayaweng Kiki and Rev Dr Donald Samuel; many thanks for your advice and encouragement; I am truly grateful for your supervision that enabled me to complete the thesis. Thanks to Mr Michael Kafonika, and Mr Bruce Stark for proof reading and editing my thesis prior to its submission and especially Mr Bruce Stark for assisting me with graduation expenses. My thanks to the Library and IT staff respectively for their assistance: Mrs Nailini Premadish, Mrs Anna Mamatuki, Mrs Suliana Moce, Mr Saimoni Katonivere and Mr Lorima Malo. My gratitude also to my colleagues in study for their co-operation, understanding, care and love toward my family and I and toward each other during my two years (2018- 19) of training at the Pacific Theological College. To the PTC community, many thanks for your moral and prayer support. To Dr and Mrs Jerry and Noreen Kena; many thanks for your financial support in meeting some important needs while writing the thesis. I am also grateful for assistance from the respective UCSI secondary school principals, chaplains, senior secondary teachers, the Director of Nursing Clinical, UCSI Education Secretary and the many students who willingly shared information with me.

Lastly to my wife Barbara M. Vedoko who was with me here at PTC, Fiji, during the time of writing and my four grown-up children and four grandchildren who remained



in the Solomon Islands while I was writing the thesis. I sincerely thank them for their patience and prayerful support.

Without the assistance of all the above- mentioned people and God, I would not have been able to complete the work. And so, may the name of the Lord be praised forever.

# List of Illustrations

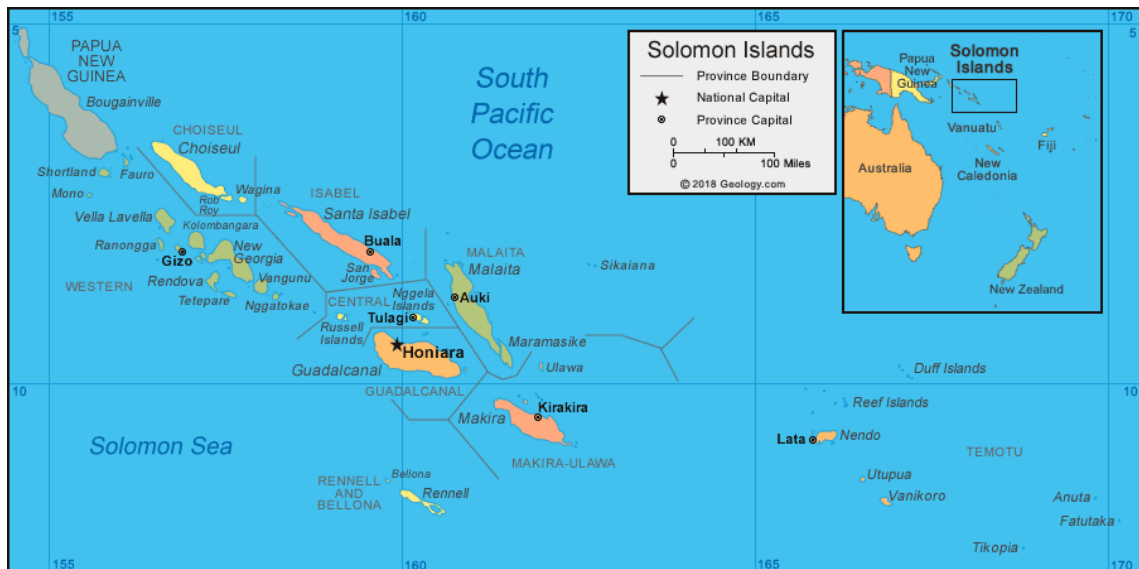
## Map 1. Pacific Islands Map



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=pacific+islands+map&oq=pacific&aqs>

Accessed 24/06/2019

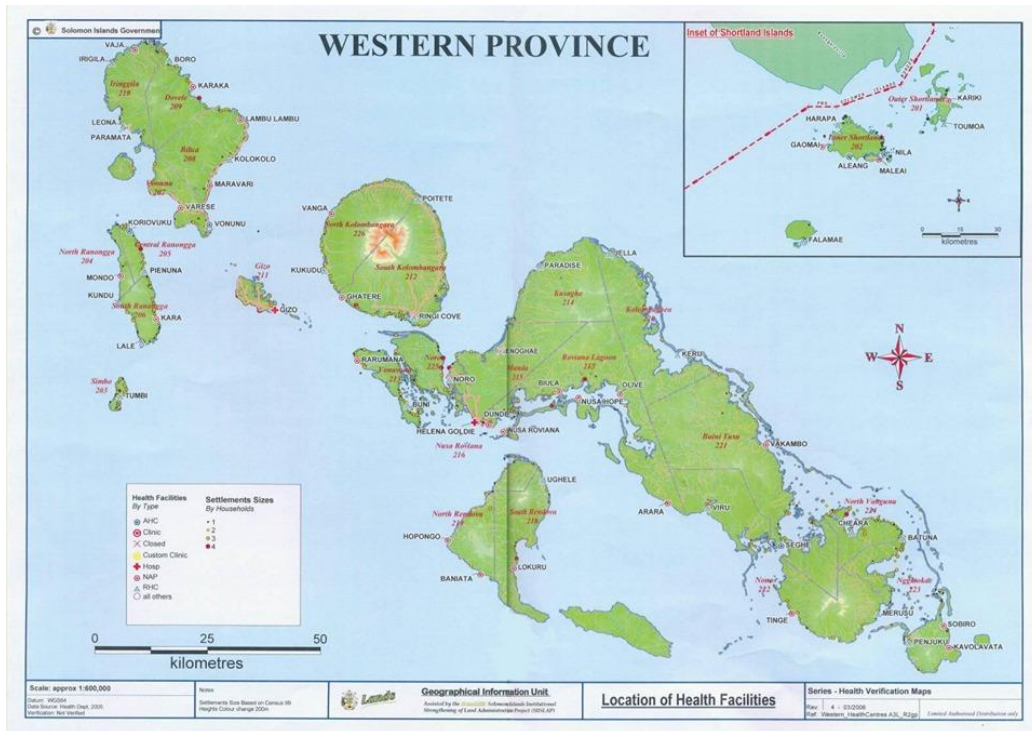
## Map 2. Solomon Islands Map



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=solomon+islands+map&tbm>

Accessed 24/06/2019

**Map 3. Western Province Map**



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?tb>

Accessed 24/06/2019

**Map 4. Choiseul Province Map**



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=choiseul+island&tb>

Accessed 24/06/2019

## Vella Lavella Island Map



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=vella+vella+island+map&tbm>

Accessed 24/06/2019

## **List of Abbreviations**

CHS	:	Community High School
DONC	:	Director of Nursing Clinical
ES	:	Education Secretary
MBCSA	:	Milne Bay Counselling Service Association
NSS	:	National Secondary School
PCC	:	Pastoral Care and Counselling
SSPR	:	Secondary School Principal
SST	:	Senior Secondary teacher
STU	:	Student
UCSI	:	United Church of Solomon Islands
WHO	:	World Health Organization

## Preliminary Statement

The issue that this thesis critically addresses is the impact of current pastoral care and counselling (PCC)<sup>1</sup> of the United Church in the Solomon Islands (UCSI)<sup>2</sup> on students who abuse alcohol in her five secondary schools: Goldie College National Secondary School (NSS),<sup>3</sup> Vonunu National Secondary School (NSS), Kokegolo Community High School (CHS),<sup>4</sup> Sasamuga Community High School (CHS), and Patukae Community High School.

Related issues which are addressed highlight the poor quality of the current PCC practices in the five secondary schools including the role of chaplains, the availability of resources, PCC facilities, relationships between counsellor and counsee, and communication between relevant stakeholders. All these issues greatly affect the quality of PCC ministry that is currently offered to students with problems related to alcohol abuse.

PCC ministry is just one of the ministries within the UCSI. Its main function is to give adequate care to all members especially when faced with any sort of problems, needs or crisis. The PCC ministry is based on biblical principles that this thesis will also examine. For instance, the priests and prophets of the Old Testament cared for, led and had an intermediary role between God and Israel (Ancient Hebrews). Similarly, Jesus in the gospel story in Palestine cared for those who came to him with different needs and problems. And he always pointed to God's grace and love by his words and actions. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup> The abbreviation PCC will be used for 'Pastoral Care and Counselling' throughout the thesis.

<sup>2</sup> The abbreviation UCSI will be used for 'United Church of Solomon Islands' throughout the thesis.

<sup>3</sup> The abbreviation NSS will be used for 'National Secondary School' throughout the thesis.

<sup>4</sup> The abbreviation CHS will be used for 'Community High School' throughout the thesis.

the role of the PCC ministry is to demonstrate care and concern by reaching out and counselling them.

Alcohol abuse has a great impact on any student's physical, psychological, social, and spiritual life (SSPR2 2018), even 'affecting family and community' (SSPR1 2018). So, effective PCC concerns the total well-being of any student who abuses alcohol. This is an issue to be grappled with by concerned principals, chaplains, teachers and students in the five secondary schools.

However, students who abuse alcohol are not currently given full attention by the UCSI through PCC ministry in the five secondary schools. And these students continue to live with stressful physical, mental, social, and spiritual issues.

This scenario is a warning to UCSI PCC ministry in the five secondary schools to better respond to students with alcohol abuse. Francis Bridger and David Atkinson, counsellors and developers of a theological framework of counselling in this context state that: "one area that most needs attention in the field is Christian caring and counselling" (1994, 123). Howard Clinebell similarly emphasises that:

Pastoral care is a response to the need that everyone has for warmth, nurture, support, and caring and is heightened during times of personal stress and social chaos. Through pastoral counselling, care is expressed, seeking to bring healing to those who have suffered from crisis-induced dysfunction and brokenness (1984, 46).

So, care and counselling in response to students with alcohol abuse problems in the five secondary schools is of paramount importance.

Given this background of inadequate PCC offered to students who abuse alcohol, this study reveals weakness in PCC and highlights points for improvement. It also discusses ten recommendations which would substantially improve the current PCC ministry in the five UCSI secondary schools into providing quality care-giving and counselling to students confronted with alcohol abuse issues.

## **Methodology**

The ‘Triangulation’ methodology is used in this thesis. This methodology combines both qualitative and quantitative methods used to gather information (Catherine Dowson 2009, 20), from the five UCSI school principals, teachers, Education Authority (EA)<sup>5</sup>, Director of Nursing Clinical (DNC)<sup>6</sup>, and students. My research and interviews focused on the PCC ministry in secondary schools of the United Church in Solomon Islands providing a critical assessment of PCC and its impact on students who abuse alcohol. The five schools: are: Goldie Collage NSS, Vonunu NSS, Kokegolo CHS, Sasamuga CHS, and Patukae CHS.

This research methodology includes face-to-face interviews and questionnaires sent out to respondents. The process by which I conducted my research was through prior consultation with the UCSI Assembly office in Kokegolo, Munda and as well as with school principals, teachers, Education Authority and Director Nursing Clinical. All the data collected, together with the issues discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, have been interpreted in chapter 3. This was amalgamated and synthesized in my deliberations and recommendations in Chapter 4.

## **Purpose and Significance of the Thesis**

This thesis intends to critically assess the current PCC ministry of the UCSI in the Solomon Islands among students who abuse alcohol, with special reference to Goldie College NSS, Vonunu NSS, Kokegolo CHS, Sasamuga CHS, and Patukae CHS.

Among the questions asked were three questions concerning the problem of alcohol abuse by students:

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<sup>5</sup> The abbreviation EA will be used for ‘Education Authority’ throughout the thesis.

<sup>6</sup> The abbreviation DNC will be used for ‘Director Nursing Clinical’ throughout the thesis.



- 1) What causes students to abuse alcohol?
- 2) How is the PCC ministry of the UCSI carried out among these students?
- 3) What else could be done by UCSI to improve PCC among students who abuse alcohol in secondary schools?

These questions were aimed to critically examine all aspects of PCC of the UCSI as a response to the problem of student alcohol abuse in her five secondary schools. And, to find ways to empower, strengthen and improve the PCC ministry to students who abuse alcohol since it is ineffective in practice in the five secondary schools.

Importantly, the motivation for the presentation of this thesis comes from a spirit of deep concern for the welfare of students, their families, communities and nation especially in view of inadequate PCC ministry to students who abuse alcohol. .

Therefore the ten recommendations put forward should empower principals, chaplains, teachers and parents to provide an effective PCC ministry to students who abuse alcohol in the five secondary schools.

## **Summary of Chapters**

Chapter one discusses current issues concerning PCC among students who abuse alcohol in five UCSI Secondary Schools. It highlights the brief background of the school, especially the context of the schools and a bit of information of the provinces that the five Secondary Schools are situated. Further, it discusses the current issues that concern PCC to students who actually involved in abusing alcohol drink. Respectively; the role of chaplain, availability of resources, PCC facility, trust between student and counsellor and communication between the relevant stake holders.

Chapter two deliberates on the biblical, theological and cultural perspectives of PCC in response to the abuse of drinking alcohol. It looks at PCC responses to alcohol abuse in the Old and New Testaments. It examines theological aspects of PCC responses

to alcohol abuse. And further, it discusses cultural perspectives of PCC responses to alcohol abuse; specifically, the Vella lavellan cultural context in the Solomon Islands and some cultures of other Pacific Islands.

Chapter three deliberates on field work data. It critically analyses the impacts of PCC ministry in five UCSI Secondary Schools on students who abuse alcohol drink. The data analysis compiled through personal interviews and written responses to questionnaires was used to critically assess PCC responses to students with alcohol abuse. The results of the data analysis and interpretation cannot solve the whole issue of PCC ministry and its response to alcohol problem. It only points to those areas for improvement and strengthening including suggestions for formulation of policies that are suggested as further recommendations in the next chapter.

Chapter Four discusses a comfortable PCC environment for students with alcohol abuse. The discussion in this chapter puts together the issues that discussed in chapters 1, 2, and 3. It suggests alternatives and recommendations for PCC ministry for UCSI and Secondary Schools to consider and implement especially with students who abuse alcohol drink. This chapter set its direction to create good human relationships, promote training, improve counselling facilities and resources, and promotes cultural values of care and counselling, bridged information from UCSI main office to pastoral office in five Secondary Schools, create a policy and promote Christian teaching.

The conclusion part is a summary of the impacts of PCC ministry in five UCSI Secondary Schools on students who abuse alcohol drink that been covered in the four chapters.

## **Chapter 1**

### **An Introductory Personal Journey**

#### **1.1. A Challenging Journey as a Chaplain**

My name is Leslie Vedoko. I am Minister of the United Church of the Solomon Islands (UCSI). I have been serving in the church for the last 25 years. I attended Rarongo Theological College in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea from 1991 to 1993 where I graduated with my diploma in theology. I then served in UCSI for 15 years as circuit minister in six different posts. I was offered a scholarship to undertake the Bachelor of Divinity studies at the Pacific Theological College from 2009 to 2011. After graduating in 2011 I received my new church appointment in 2012 at Goldie College National Secondary School where I served as school chaplain until 2016.

My work during these five years of serving as school chaplain was really challenging. The only formal theological training I had acquired was from the two theological institutions I had attended. This knowledge gained only enabled me to do the work of church minister in the school.

I had not acquired any formal training as school chaplain. I also had no idea on the role or responsibilities of a school chaplain. In addition, there was no job description of a chaplain kept or filed in the office of the chaplain in the School. And this lack of know-how became like a huge wall I had to get through in order to get the work of the school chaplain done.

In order to gain some information on the work of a school chaplain I had to do some research on the internet. I also had to read some helpful books that talked about the school chaplain's work in general which at least helped me to understand and then develop a programme for my work.

Another problem I faced was that I had no teaching skills acquired from any secular institutions. For example, church ministers normally go to Solomon Islands National University (SINU) to pursue teaching skill in education. It was only through internal trainings held in school for teachers and chaplain that helped me to acquire little skill to teach religious knowledge. This together with the previous theological trainings I had received enabled me to teach religious knowledge including New Testament studies in the classroom.

The Solomon Islands Ministry of Education required that a school chaplain must also teach in class. Thus, I spent long hours in lesson preparation before teaching in class. And this also contributed to my spending less time doing pastoral work with students in various dormitories in the school.

## **1.2. Personal confrontation to High Levels of Alcohol Abuse Within Secondary School**

Previously, as circuit minister I had served in the local parishes and interacted with congregational members. Being posted to work as school chaplain to Goldie College National Secondary was completely a new experience and a challenge. Added to this was the realisation of the high levels of alcohol abuse by students within the school.

Before I became chaplain, I had believed that students who attended UCSI managed Secondary Schools came from Christian homes and had learnt Christian virtues taught at home that would have helped them to avoid alcohol drinking. Unfortunately, I came to realise this was not true, as I eventually experienced that a good number of the students were vulnerable due to many reasons that included peer pressure, pressure from parents and financial constraints in the home and pressure from school.

These students became involved in drinking and often became the source of nuisance in the school community. Moreover, for reasons known to them, these drunk students who abuse alcohol often fought with other drunk or even sober students and would also cause damage to school properties with no good reason.

Often I became fearful when confronting drunk and disorderly students in the school setting these intoxicated students who often abused alcohol were not 'normal' and anything could happen in the secondary school setting. However, my love and concern for motivating these students together with my belief in Jesus Christ gave me a very strong mind and faith to reach out to them

Furthermore, my many years of experience as church minister in local parishes and now appointed by UCSI to care for all students in the secondary school setting gave me much courage to confront these abusers of alcohol by talking with them nicely and would often pray with them. Sometimes, this approach worked and other times it didn't work. I would then leave these intoxicated students alone and then come back to them in a few days to further dialogue and pray with them.

### **1.3. Shock and Frustration Over the Issue of Alcohol Abuse by Students**

As chaplain in a secondary school, the issue of abuse of alcohol by students was both a shock and frustration. It was a shock for me because of the number of students who were abusing alcoholic drinks. It was a frustration because their strong desire to take continually takes alcoholic drinks.

It is my view that students because of their alcohol abuse behaviour were unable to concentrate on their learning. They were more interested in associating with other students with a taste to alcoholic drinks where they could mobilise and influence each

other to get alcohol drinks to school and drink together. Sometimes, these students involved in alcohol abuse would go to some hiding places, such as beach and in the bush. They isolated themselves, away from rest of the students and teachers, so that they could drink and enjoy their time in those lonely places.

Often, then these students are drunk they would come into the school compound and cause nuisances, that included disturbing and challenging other students to fights in their dormitories. The disturbances and nuisances these intoxicated students caused also affected the whole school community; this has been an issue that the whole community was aware of.

What always shocked me on the behaviour of these students who abuse alcohol is that they never think wisely, as to how they make decisions for themselves. They preferred to decide for an intoxicated 'high' with alcohol drink rather than their purpose for learning, acquiring knowledge and securing their future through good education while in secondary school.

In some situations, parents of these students who abuse alcohol are not to be blamed, as they would have taught Christian values at home. Usually these students upon transferring into secondary school probably became side tracked by other often-senior students who already addicted to the abuse of alcohol.

In many situations, students who were found to be abusers of alcohol were expelled and sent home. This is because of the SIME School rule that does not permit alcohol consumption in schools by students.

Moreover, as school chaplain, I could only deal with the students who abuse alcohol with what limited knowledge I had about alcohol and its direct effects on those who became addicted. Not only that, I was not a counselor professionally trained to deal with

students who abused alcohol. This gave me a lot of frustrations in dealing alcohol abuse by students.

#### **1.4. Attempt Made to Remedy the Alcohol Situation in School**

While serving as school chaplain I put in place a 'programme' that I followed when dealing with students who abused alcohol. This programme involved: (i) talking with these students; (ii) pastoral visitations to student dormitories; (iii) preaching in school chapel worship; and (iv) in extreme cases, a report to be forwarded to the Behaviour Management Committee (BMC) of the school.

First, when a case of intoxicated student/s became reported to me, I would talk to the student/s about their involvement with drinking alcohol in School. I used this space as a way to 'counsel' them where some are very open to share their problems and some were not. Nevertheless, I would always help them with my theological knowledge on issues of life and stewardship and would pray with them.

However, with regards to counseling, I had no previous knowledge or skill on psychology, professional counseling and guidance. This lack of knowledge was always a frustration for me because I found it very difficult to understand their behaviour.

In my view regarding social issue problems such as students who use and abuse alcohol in schools, I feel that the UCSI should look into the need of training for her church ministers as chaplains to acquire knowledge and skill on psychology, counseling and guidance, so that they are equipped in dealing with such students.

Second, visitation is carried out twice a week in both the male and female student dormitories with the help of pastoral groups made up of small numbers of male and female teachers. The purpose of such visits is to have devotion with the students with the singing of hymns and choruses and encouragement with the word of God and prayer before their bedtime.

I think this approach is much effective and that the students themselves enjoy it. Also, those students who are involved with abusing alcohol are able to freely join in and listen to the words of encouragement through devotion.

*Third*, I usually conducted chapel worship every Monday to Friday and on weekly Sundays. This became another space that I used to preach and teach students.

In my view, this is a good space to interact with all the students as the whole school community is gathered in the chapel and social issues including abuse of alcohol were normally addressed during chapel fellowship. Included among the students in chapel worship were those who were involved in alcohol abuse drinking. And I could say that some changes were observed on the lives of these students.

*Fourth*, as a final resort to remedy the abuse of alcohol by students' situation, a report would be submitted to the Behaviour Management Committee (BMC) of the school in which the committee had to step in to make a decision. And always the decision is expulsion of the student/s concerned.

There is both a good and a bad side to this decision. Expulsion of students concerned helps the school so that rest of the students and school community are at peace from nuisances and disturbances by intoxicated students. However, expulsion does not improve the lives of students who have left the school and those who still in the school and hide their drinking alcohol problem from public view. In my view, pastoral care and counseling to students in school must be consistent so that students are aware of and avoid the temptation of drinking and abusing alcohol.

### **1.5. The Journey Towards Writing the Thesis**

Finally, the point I want to make based on my experience of working with students who abuse alcohol drinking is that while interacting with such students and dealing with their issue of alcohol abuse, I personally sympathise with them even though their



behaviour is unacceptable. The unacceptable behaviour of intoxicated students usually causes lots of problems to their fellow students and members of the school community.

This above narration of this sad situation faced by students while in secondary school triggered my heart and mind to take a journey towards writing the thesis. This is because I believe that this issue of alcohol abuse by students has not been taken seriously by the UCSI, and I believe that this thesis could help the UCSI and her five Secondary Schools in their pastoral care and counseling ministry to students who use and abuse alcohol drink.

I acknowledge that there are other issues of drug abuse as well such as marijuana and kwaso (homemade drug) that students use and abuse in school. However, this thesis concentrates on the issue alcohol abuse by students. It might be good if other thesis writers could study such issues that hinder the wellness and the future of our students in five Secondary Schools undertaken in this study, as well as other Secondary Schools that are managed by the United Church of Solomon Islands.

## **Chapter 2**

# **CURRENT ISSUES CONCERNING PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING AMONG STUDENTS WHO ABUSE DRINKING ALCOHOL**

### **Introduction**

What will be discussed in this chapter is the issue of abuse of drinking alcohol by students of the five schools of the UCSI. PCC work has been carried out in these schools for decades but it seems that little has been done to effectively address the current issue of students' abuse of drinking alcohol. And it is my hope that the discussions in this chapter will help the stakeholders<sup>1</sup> of these schools identify factors concerning PCC in general, and specifically, PCC among students who use and abuse drinking of alcohol.

#### **2.1. Five Schools of the United Church of the Solomon Islands**

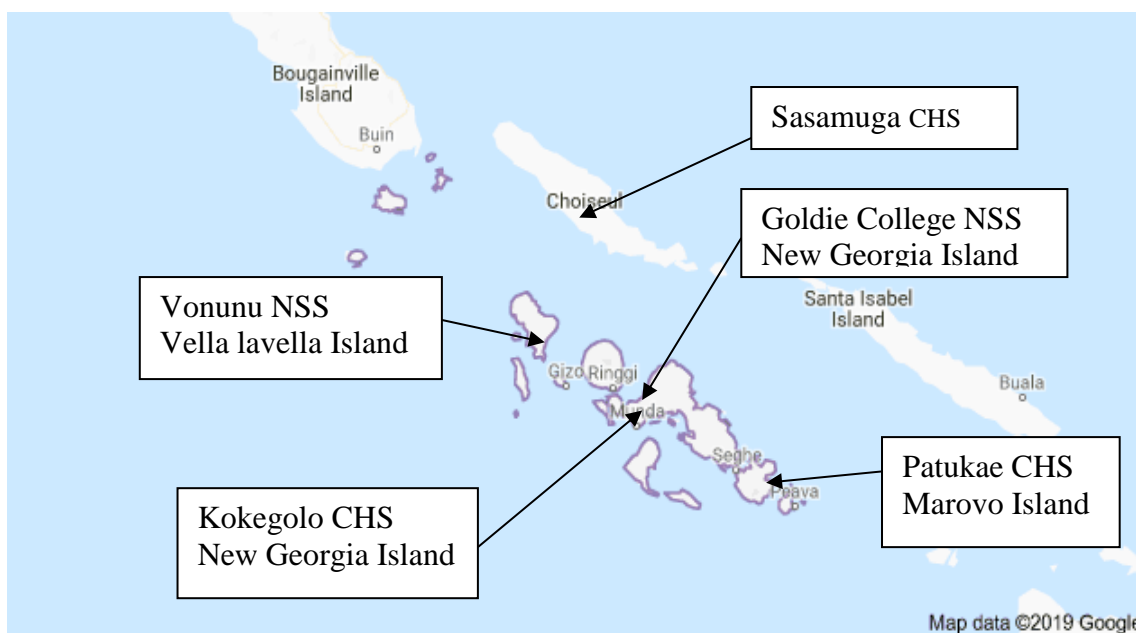
These five schools of the UCSI are Goldie College NSS, Vonunu NSS, Kokegolo CHS, Sasamuga CHS and Patukae CHS.

These schools are situated in four different Islands namely; Choiseul, Vella la vella, New Georgia, and Marovo in the Western Solomon Islands. These islands are displayed in the map below with arrows showing where the schools are located.

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<sup>1</sup> In my opinion, relevant stakeholders to any school institution include the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education (SIME), United Church of Solomon Islands (in this study UCSI as school management), teachers, parents and guardians, and students.

### 2.1.1 Solomon Islands Map: Western and Choiseul Provinces



Students enrolled in these schools are from within the Solomon Islands. The two National Secondary Schools enrol students from all the Solomon Island Provinces<sup>2</sup> and of different backgrounds. Except for the Community High Schools, they also accommodate students from catchment areas within the Western Province. Very rarely do the Community High Schools accommodate students from different Provinces in Solomon Islands because these schools are meant to be Community based schools and are not boarding schools.

Teachers who teach in these schools are from different Provinces and different backgrounds. They are employees of the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education (SIME)<sup>3</sup> and their salary is paid by the SIME. But in terms of ownership, UCSI is the custodian of these schools and provides religious instructions in the curriculum of the schools.

<sup>2</sup> There are nine Provinces in the Solomon Islands namely: Western Province, Choiseul Province, Isabel Province, Central Province, Guadalcanal Province, Malaita Province, Rennel and Bellona Province, Makira-Ulawa Province and Temotu Province.

<sup>3</sup> The abbreviation SIME will be used for 'Solomon Islands Ministry of Education' throughout the thesis.

The capital of the Western Province is at Gizo Island where all its administration functions operate. It is also the political and commercial centre for the Western Province. The Province is governed by the Premier and the Provincial members. People who live on Gizo Island work for the government and private sectors, and are from the different Provinces of Solomon Islands and other countries. Travelling to and from to Gizo Island is by plane, ferryboat, out-boat motor engine and ship.

People from the Solomon Islands do their regular business and local marketing mostly every day. Moreover, while these people speak different dialects, the common language used to communicate easily around the islands is the Solomon Islands Pidgin and our missionary language called *Roviana*<sup>4</sup>. Also people can hear and speak English when expatriates or overseas workers speak to them. But for most people Solomon Pidgin and their own dialect are preferred languages for communication.

## **2.2. Definitions of Pastoral Care and Counselling**

Before any clear discussion on the issue of effective PCC for students who abuse drinking of alcohol can take place, it is good to have a clear understanding on the definitions of ‘Pastoral Care and Counselling’ and also ‘alcohol abuse’.

### **2.2.1. Pastoral Care and Counselling Definition**

With regards to PCC, R. J. Hunter who is a professional counsellor stated that:

Pastoral care usually refers to all pastoral work concerned with the support and nurturance of persons and interpersonal relationships, including everyday expressions of care and concern that may occur in the midst of various pastoring activities, relationships, and caring ministries that are more

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<sup>4</sup> Roviana refers to the area where people speak the language of Roviana. This is the place where the Methodist Mission landed. This is also where many people from our islands around the Western Province went to the Mission Head quarters at Kokegoko in Munda to train as local preachers and pastors and at the same time learnt the language. It is also the language widely spoken by people in the Western Province.

structured and focussed on specifically articulated need or concern ( 1990, 845).

Hunter's view on PCC implies that support, whether in terms of material or moral, must be given to someone who needs it and the type of support depends on the identified situation. In my view, individuals who seek PCC somehow become isolated from many relationships because of fear and guilty. Nurturing of individuals is important because the individual is able to develop and grow and build comfortable relationships with other people. And further, any individual who is without any kind of pastoral support is in a more vulnerable situation than someone who has another to care, support, and nurture them.

This similar scenario could be applied to the school situation where many students become perpetrators of harmful actions toward others resulting from their own abuse of drinking alcohol. Trained counsellors are able to, in these situations, skilfully assist and support these students helping them to become aware of the issues which confront them. This is why conversations between counsellor and counselee are important. Such conversation in turn becomes an opportunity for individual students to discover new strategies to solve their own needs, concerns and problems.

Therefore, PCC work is not only geared to solving problems for counselees but also finding a way for them to make their own conclusions.

### **2.2.2. Alcohol Abuse**

In my Vella lavella Solomon Island dialect, alcohol is defined as *ruge ju* with "*ju*" meaning "drink" and "*ruge*" meaning "not good" respectively. Alcohol is really not a good drink in the sense that some people abuse alcohol in the community. Abusers of alcohol drinking causes unpleasant behaviours, followed by disastrous outcomes such as fighting and being disrespectful to the family and the community at large. Margret Fuad,

a theologian with majors in mission and Christian education, promoting, organising and educating toward prevention and treatment of alcoholism and other alcohol abuse problems, defines alcohol abuse as:

The inappropriate or thoughtless use by non alcoholic persons of alcoholic beverages which can cause a multitude of problems resulting at least in unhappiness and, at the most, havoc in the life of the drinker and in the lives of others ( 1992, 121).

Fuad doesn't describe alcohol as bad. Instead, she states that when any person uses it inappropriately or thoughtlessly then the alcohol drink is abused or misused. Filemoni Tofaeono in his thesis on the Role of the Church in relation to the Problem of Alcohol also states that "the abuse of alcohol happens, when the drinker drinks to excess, whereby he or she loses control and thus brings harm upon self, others, family and community" (1993, 3). And further, Simon Cyrene Ou' ou in his thesis writing on Youth Substance Abuse expressed that:

The effects of substance [alcohol] abuse on families includes: domestic violence, disturbance, aggressiveness, separation and divorce [...] even, community members realise that drugs and alcohol are often the source for family problems which is ongoing concern in local communities (2006, 39).

Ou'ou further stated that, "wives and children are becoming victims of such behaviours and even youths, too, when returning home after having drinks with friends often cause disturbance to family members, yielding aggressive shouts with abusive words" (2006, 39). According to Ou'ou, alcohol abuse has effects on family and community: families often live with conflict; with separated and even divorce occurring; even youths involved in abusing alcohol drinking do not respect their own families. Therefore, in my understanding, when alcohol becomes abused; it not only causes harm to one who abuses it, but through his or her actions may cause different problems to families and communities.