

**An exploration of teachers' knowledge about aspects of  
Australian Indigenous history and their attitude to  
reconciliation**

**Submitted by**

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## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP AND SOURCES

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## ABSTRACT

In contemporary Australian society the term Reconciliation refers to the process by which the Indigenous and wider Australian communities strive to improve relations with each other. It seeks to do this by recognizing past wrongdoings, addressing the disadvantage faced by Indigenous people today, whilst working together as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for a better future (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993a,b,g). Education is seen to play an important role in the advancement of this process. This is evident in the policy documents of Australian education departments (Brisbane Catholic Education, 2006; Department of Education, science and Training, 1999; Education Queensland, 2000) and the observed level of support for Reconciliation in the educational community (Burridge, 2006).

It is apparent that Reconciliation is a key issue for teachers in modern Australia. This is particularly the case for teachers in Catholic schools. Catholic school teachers are required to model gospel values, one of which is the notion of reconciliation, embodied in the sacramental rite bearing the same name. Although the theological and secular meanings of this term have some similarities there are significant tensions between “Christian” reconciliation and reconciliation in the broader Australian context. The importance of Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to Catholic school teachers is articulated in the National Catholic Education Commission’s Statement: Educating for Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation (1998). This document makes a strong commitment to support and encourage educators in the Catholic community to journey with Indigenous Australians and work towards reconciliation through education.

Teachers in Catholic primary schools are the interface between Reconciliation, the Catholic ethos, and students. The attitude of these teachers towards this process will have a significant bearing on how it is addressed in the school setting. The National Catholic Education Commission (1998) regards a positive and productive approach to Reconciliation is dependent on an appreciation of Indigenous Australian history. It is this link between knowledge of Indigenous Australian history and attitude towards Reconciliation that is the principle focus of this study.

This investigation tested the hypothesis that teachers’ knowledge of Indigenous history impacts positively on their attitude towards Reconciliation. In testing this hypothesis data on these constructs were collected via an attitude inventory and a history test, presented in questionnaire format. These research instruments were developed specifically for this investigation and administered to 100 staff from 11 Brisbane Catholic Education Primary schools. These 11 schools were those that agreed to participate from a sample of 50 schools randomly selected from within the Brisbane Diocese. The participants’ scores on each of the instruments were correlated in order to test the research hypothesis and their responses to the attitude survey were subjected to factor analytic techniques to search for underlying patterns in the data.

Schools differed significantly in their attitude scores and history test results, however, across the sample it was found that there was a small to moderate positive correlation between a teacher’s knowledge of Indigenous history and their attitude towards Reconciliation. Participation in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies, or cultural awareness was also shown to correlate with a positive attitude towards Reconciliation. With regards to the factor analysis, it was observed that the response patterns of participants to the Attitude survey could be grouped into five broad themes and that the highest level of agreement was observed on items relating to “Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture”.

The latter finding indicates that the teachers sampled considered Indigenous history an important aspect of the Reconciliation process. The correlation between history test results and attitude inventory scores supports the research hypothesis that that teachers’ knowledge of Indigenous history impacts positively on their attitude towards Reconciliation. This, coupled with the observation that participation in formal training also impacts favorably on this construct, suggests steps by which teacher attitudes could be improved. These steps could include making in-service training and pre-service units focusing on Indigenous history a compulsory component of teacher education programs.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## THE RESEARCH DEFINED

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

The reconciliation process has the support of Australian education departments (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1998; Department of Education and Science and Training, 1999; Education Queensland, 2000). Despite this, Indigenous Australians are the most educationally disadvantaged student group in Australia (Adams, 1998; DEET, 1994; Herbert, Anderson, Price, & Stehbens, 1999). Addressing this educational disadvantage is essential for the advancement of the reconciliation process. As a consequence many educational institutions are searching for ways to establish learning environments that improve the educational outcomes for Indigenous pupils. A key feature of such an environment is a teacher with a positive attitude towards reconciliation. It is this construct (attitude) that provides the focal point for this investigation.

The purposes of this chapter are to (a) describe the background context to these issues, (b) explain the significance of the research and (c) briefly outline the research methodology. This chapter contains the following sections:

1.2 Rationale for the research

1.3 Research questions

1.4 Overview of the methodology

1.5 Significance of the study

1.6 Outline of thesis

### 1.2. RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

In keeping with the Catholic ethos, teachers in Catholic primary schools are expected to model gospel values, one of which is the notion of reconciliation. This is a significant issue in modern Australian society. From the 1990's the idea of expressing regret at the past wrongs inflicted on Indigenous Australians, as well as the notion that areas of disadvantage should be addressed, has been at the forefront of political, academic and social dialogue. This has also been the case for religious institutions such as the Catholic Church. The National Catholic Education Commission's

Statement: Educating for Truth Justice and Reconciliation (1998) makes a commitment to support and encourage educators in the Catholic community to journey with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and work towards reconciliation through education.

In August 1991, the Federal Parliament unanimously passed an Act setting up the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. The council was developed to bring about a better understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider community, and to continue to resolve the levels of disadvantage experienced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia.

The level of disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians is well documented. This is particularly true from an educational perspective. When compared to their non-Indigenous peers, Indigenous students have lower levels of literacy and numeracy, coupled with higher rates of absenteeism and attrition (Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000). Initiatives introduced by Commonwealth and State/Territory governments have sought to improve these educational outcomes (DEET,1994; Groome & Hamilton, 1995; Munns, 1998). Whilst these programs have had some success, Indigenous Australians continue to be the most educationally disadvantaged student group in Australia (Alford and James, 2007; Adams, 1998; Commonwealth of Australia, 2002; DEET, 1994; Herbert, Anderson, Price, & Stehbins, 1999; Hunter and Schwab, 2003; Mellors & Corrigan, 2004).

To further the reconciliation process, addressing educational disadvantage is a necessity. A large amount of research has been conducted to determine ways in which this can be achieved (Australian Government, 2000). A major recommendation emerging from this body of research is the implementation of training strategies to improve teacher knowledge and attitudes towards Indigenous issues (Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000; Alford and James, 2007).

Teachers in Catholic primary schools are the interface between reconciliation, the Catholic ethos and students. Therefore teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation will have a significant influence on the efficacy of this process. The National Catholic Education Commission (1998) states that a positive and productive approach to reconciliation is reliant on an appreciation of Indigenous Australian history with specific focus on the implications and consequences of the shared history of the last

200 years. This appreciation is in turn dependant on a sound knowledge of this history. This knowledge is often lacking due to the traditionally ethnocentric manner in which history has been taught and portrayed.

The purpose of this research was to investigate how teachers' understanding of and knowledge about Indigenous history impacts on teachers' attitudes to reconciliation. In particular it investigates the link between the attitudes of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. For the purposes of this investigation the term *Indigenous history* refers to Indigenous Australian history with specific focus on the implications and consequences of the shared history of the last 200 years. The term reconciliation has been used to define the process in which the Indigenous and wider Australian communities strive to improve relations with each other (Horton, 1994). This investigation uses this term within the context of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation's vision for reconciliation: "A united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all" (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993a, p.1).

### **1.2.1 Context of the researcher**

I have taught for eleven years in catholic primary schools. My initial year of teaching was in a Catholic primary school in an Aboriginal Community in the Northern Territory. This gave me an awareness and some understanding (albeit limited) of issues surrounding Indigenous education as well as broader cultural issues. This interest has remained with me during my subsequent experience. The last 10 years I have spent teaching at a Catholic school in a small community in south-east Queensland. The community has a fairly large Indigenous population although this population is under-represented at the Catholic school, with the majority of Indigenous students attending the local state schools.

During my more recent teaching experience I became aware of a number of issues pertaining to Indigenous in education. One of these was the apparent disconnection between the topics addressed by professional development activities focusing on Indigenous issues and reconciliation. Despite syllabus documents (notably the SOSE syllabus, 2000) and the Council for Reconciliation identifying a wide range of key issues, these in-services tended to only address cultural activities such as basket

weaving and boomerang throwing. The superficial nature of these in-services meant that participants did not engage with more difficult topics such as shared history; addressing disadvantage; improving relationships; custody levels; destiny, a formal document; native title; and the stolen generation. I felt that as a consequence my own knowledge of Indigenous issues (and that of many of my peers) was less than what it could be.

Pursuant to this was my observation of a certain amount of negativity towards Indigenous issues from some areas within the teaching profession. I began to consider the extent to which this negativity was symptomatic of my previously mentioned observation of lack of relevant knowledge. From these considerations a number of research questions emerged that provided the impetus for this investigation.

### **1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study investigated the link between the attitudes of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. The specific research questions addressed are:

**Research Question 1:** What are the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers to the reconciliation process?

This research question makes the assumption that attitude towards reconciliation can be measured and quantified. Other investigations have successfully done this with respect to attitude towards different issues (Brady & Bowd, 2005; McLeod, 1994; Pehkonen, 1994; Phillippou & Christou, 1998; Thompson, 1992). In order for attitude to be measured effectively a tool was developed and modified via pilot testing. In answering this question the researcher obtained data that could be analysed and correlated with other data pertaining to participants' knowledge of Indigenous history and the degree to which teachers have participated in formal education courses in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies and the Cultural Awareness course run by Brisbane Catholic Education.

**Research Question 2:** How knowledgeable is this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers with respect to key aspects of Indigenous history?

This research question investigates the knowledge of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers in relation to Indigenous Australian history with a specific focus on

the implications and consequences of the shared history of the last 200 years. These data were obtained via a multiple choice history test, and are significant because they quantify knowledge of Indigenous history and allow for subsequent statistical analysis.

**Research Question 3:** What influence does participation in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component have on the knowledge and attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers?

This research question attempts to identify any link that exists between participation in formal education courses with the knowledge and attitude data gathered in response to the preceding research questions. The sample population was asked to indicate whether they had participated in any courses relating to Indigenous history or Indigenous studies. In addition they were asked to state whether they had participated in the course run by Brisbane Catholic Education at the time 'Cultural Awareness'. This program that was being conducted involved the use of the then newly developed teaching resource Aboriginal Culture and History kit. It was the belief of the researcher that all of these course types could have had an influence on the participants' knowledge of Indigenous history and therefore their attitude towards Reconciliation. The fact that not all of the course categories specifically related to Indigenous history (the focus of this research question) is a weakness and this limitation is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.8.

**Research Question 4:** What is the relationship between this sample of teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history?

The final research question formed the primary focus of the entire investigation.

## **1.4. OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY**

This research investigation has been approached from the positivist epistemological viewpoint. The positivist paradigm "views social science research as an organised method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations so that causal laws can be established"(Dorman & Zajda, 2001). This study attempted to identify a link between teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. In establishing this link quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used.



Data about teachers' attitudes towards the reconciliation process was collected by means of an attitude survey. The survey was designed with reference to the 10 key issues for reconciliation as outlined by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, in which Indigenous history is a recurrent theme (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2000; Education Queensland, 2000, p. 5). These issues are of particular relevance to Catholic School teachers because the vision of the National Catholic Education Commission states "all involved in Catholic Education will act upon the words of the Australian Bishops, Pope John Paul II and *the vision of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.*" (1998, p. 1.)

A multiple-choice test was administered after the attitude survey to determine the subjects' knowledge of Australian History. The focus of this test was the shared history since 1788.

Limited demographic information (age, teaching experience, teaching area) was collected to see if links existed between these data and responses/performance on the research tools. For example, age may be seen to influence attitudes towards reconciliation. The researcher was restricted from collecting gender and location data by the Australian Catholic University Ethics Committee. It was thought that this data could compromise the anonymity of each participant. This lack of information is discussed as a limitation in Chapter 5.

The results from both data collection instruments were then correlated. It was suggested that a positive correlation would support the researcher's hypothesis that a positive attitude towards reconciliation coincides with knowledge of Indigenous Australian history.

## **1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This research is important for the advancement of the Reconciliation process in Australia. This investigation is significant because it addresses a gap in existing research with respect to the influence of knowledge on teacher attitudes towards reconciliation. In addition the research study has developed an instrument with which these attitudes can be measured.

There have been a number of studies assessing Indigenous students' attitudes towards teachers and schooling (e.g. Godfrey, Partington, Harslett, & Richer, 2001). In

addition there have been investigations into how to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students (e.g. Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000).

This study is the first to look at teachers' attitudes towards Reconciliation as defined by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1993b) as a way of improving Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations. Furthermore it is the first study to attempt to link these attitudes with knowledge of Indigenous history.

A positive link between teachers' attitude towards the reconciliation process and their knowledge of historical Indigenous issues could inform education policy makers and lead to the development of teacher education programs specifically focusing on these issues. Implementation of these programs could advance the reconciliation process.

## **1.6. OUTLINE OF THESIS**

This chapter has clarified the research problem by describing the contextual background to the issues of reconciliation, teacher attitude, and knowledge of Indigenous history. In addition to this it has explained the significance of the research and given an overview of the investigation process. The chapters that follow elaborate on this perspective.

Chapter 2 focuses on reconciliation in the Australian context. It reviews literature that explores the historical perspectives of politicians, historians, educators and the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation with regard to Indigenous history. The second part of this chapter reviews the nature of knowledge and its relationship to attitude formation. The chapter concludes by stating a hypothesis: that an individual's knowledge of Indigenous history will have a measurable effect on their attitude towards Indigenous issues such as reconciliation. Questions are formulated to help test this hypothesis.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology and design used in this study. In particular it includes a statement of purpose of the research, the theoretical framework, details of the research sample, and the development of the research instrument. Validity and reliability procedures and an overview of the data analysis are also included. This chapter concludes by discussing the ethical issues that were taken into consideration for this study.

Chapter 3 presents the results in four sections: Section 4.2 shows data relating to participants' responses to the attitude survey. Section 4.3 presents basic descriptive data about the participants' responses to the history test. Section 4.4 depicts data in relation to respondents' participation in formal education in the area of Indigenous studies or Indigenous history (including Cultural Awareness course facilitated by Brisbane Catholic Education). Section 4.5 examines the correlation between individual scores on the attitude survey history test results.

Chapter 5 uses the research questions as a framework to analyse and discuss the data presented in the previous chapter. This final chapter discusses the link between teacher knowledge of Indigenous history and attitude towards reconciliation. The significance and implications of the trends observed are outlined. In addition to this, areas for future research are identified. Finally the limitations of the investigation are acknowledged.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE RESEARCH LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

This investigation tested the hypothesis that a teacher's knowledge of Indigenous history is related to their attitude towards Indigenous issues such as reconciliation. In doing so a number of research questions were asked, namely:

- What are the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers to the reconciliation process?
- How knowledgeable is this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers with respect to key aspects of Indigenous history?
- What influence does participation in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component have on the knowledge and attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers?
- What is the relationship between this sample of teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history?

The literature discussed in this section informed the development of these questions. The structure of the review is outlined below.

This chapter consists of three distinct sections. The first section examines reconciliation in the Australian context. Specific foci of this section include the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, education policy, historical perspectives, and the perceptions of politicians and academia. This initial section concludes by establishing the centrality of Indigenous history to the reconciliation process.

The second section of this chapter focuses on knowledge and attitudes and their influence on teaching and learning. Sources of knowledge, representations of Australian history and the significance of teacher attitudes are discussed.

In order to investigate the impact of knowledge of Indigenous history on teacher attitudes towards reconciliation it is important to establish what is meant by the term knowledge. As a consequence, the third section of this review focuses on defining this construct. In doing so this section describes the various types of knowledge that exist and discusses ways in which this knowledge impacts on the teaching profession. In

addition to these sources of knowledge are examined, with particular reference to representations and misrepresentations of Indigenous history.

The final section of this chapter relates the literature reviewed to the hypothesis that an individual's knowledge of Indigenous history is related to their attitude towards Indigenous issues such as reconciliation. Chapter Two concludes by revisiting the research questions delineated from the literature that assist in testing this hypothesis.

## **2.2. RECONCILIATION IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA**

This section begins by defining the word reconciliation in generic and religious terms, and then discusses the present use of this term as the descriptor of a process via which race relations are to be improved. The social and departmental imperatives that compel teachers to facilitate this process are outlined. Attitudes towards reconciliation are discussed and the role that historical perspectives, representations, and understandings play in shaping these attitudes is examined.

### **2.2.1. Reconciliation**

Reconciliation is the noun of reconcile which is defined by The Macquarie Concise Dictionary (Delbridge, 1995) as "to bring into agreement or harmony; make compatible or consistent; to win over to friendliness; to compose or settle". In addition to this meaning is the Roman Catholic meaning of the sacrament of reconciliation. Within this sacramental rite penitents are involved in a declaration of sins in order to obtain absolution, usually on condition of an act of penance. In other words, within the process of this sacrament there must be an acknowledgment of guilt or past wrongdoing (The Macquarie Concise Dictionary, 1998).

More recently, the term reconciliation has been used to define the process in which the Indigenous and wider Australian communities strive to improve relations with each other (Horton, 1994). Reconciliation has become a generic term for this process in Australian society since the mid 1990's. It can be seen that the preceding definitions and connotations of the term reconciliation have both secular and religious aspects that simultaneously resonate and conflict with one another.

This Australian reconciliation process has aspects of a "secularised" theological politics (Phillips, 2005) in which the discussions around a reconciled Australia are couched in theological terms. Social commentator, Young states "Reconciliation has

to be based on acknowledgement of fault on one side, and forgiveness on the other. Logically the acknowledgement of the fault has to come before the forgiveness” (1999, p.1). Such language is typical of Christian theology; indeed the acknowledgement of fault or guilt is central to the Roman Catholic sacrament of Reconciliation.

The reconciliation process has been strongly supported by a number of Australian Churches. Fourteen of these religious institutions collaborated to produce a pamphlet entitled “Towards Reconciliation in Australia”, the text of which was used by Prime Minister Hawke in his 1988 parliamentary motion of reconciliation. The support of the Christian Churches for the reconciliation movement was apparent in the intense lobbying of both sides of government by Fr Frank Brennan, Aboriginal affairs advisor to the Australian Catholic bishops (Brennan, 1989, p.242-250). Continued support was also evident in the number of Christian members serving on the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation who cited close links between their faith and the aims of the Council (Phillips, 2005). This support of reconciliation by Christian churches, Church leaders, and theologians has not been confined to Australia. The significant role of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and others in the reconciliation movement in South Africa is well documented (Battle 2000; Tutu, 1999).

Reconciliation is a theological term that has become prominent in secular political discourse in divided societies worldwide (Phillips, 2005). There are, however, a number of problems in applying a strictly theological interpretation of this term to the broader political context.

A major difficulty with applying a religious definition of the term reconciliation to the Australian context is that the religious dimension of reconciliation presupposes a unity that overrides existing circumstances. It is a return to this presupposed state that the ‘re’ in *reconciliation* refers to. In a theological sense, an admission of wrongdoing and an act of penance are required to restore the relationship to its original harmonious state. This is problematic because no such harmony has existed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians prior to colonisation (Schaap, 2006).

An additional problem with a theological definition of reconciliation is the tension between forgiveness and justice or retribution. Christian reconciliation is a process in which injustice is affirmed and transcended. It does not rely on making perfect

reparation for injustice, rather on seeking forgiveness and performing symbolic acts of penance. At the centre of this problem is the issue of whether or not forgiveness is a 'cheap' alternative to justice (Phillips, 2005). The religious notion of reconciliation appears to subordinate justice to forgiveness, whereas one of the slogans of the early reconciliation movement was "There can be no reconciliation without justice" (Tickner, 1991).

Notwithstanding the existence of several significant similarities, the previously identified inadequacies preclude the use of a strictly theological understanding of the term Reconciliation. A description that better reflects the contemporary Australian context is warranted.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1993a,b,g) describes reconciliation as a process that strives to improve relations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider community. It aims to do this through recognising past wrongdoings, addressing the disadvantages faced by Indigenous people today, and working together as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for a better future.

Reconciliation Australia, an independent, not for profit organization established in 2000 by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation describes its vision as "an Australia that recognises the special place and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians, values their participation and provides equal life chances for all" (2007). Reconciliation is described as a process that involves the "symbolic recognition of the honoured place of the first Australians, as well as practical measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Indigenous people in health, employment, education and general opportunity".

The need for the Indigenous and wider Australian community to undergo a reconciliation process originated with Britain's colonisation of Australia in 1788. This initial colony at Sydney Cove was established without consent and in the absence of negotiations with the original inhabitants of the land. Dispossessed of their lands, Aboriginal people were forced into reserves, and killed in battles for their land or attacks on individuals or communities (Scott, 2001). Torres Strait Islanders lost their independence when the Queensland government annexed the islands. Since colonisation, Indigenous Australians suffered various forms of discrimination and abuse at the hands of governments and institutions (Scott, 2001, p. 840). The

reconciliation movement seeks to acknowledge this and address the consequences of these past wrongs.

The reconciliation process formally commenced with the parliamentary approval of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in 1991. Prior to the establishment of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation there were a number of attempts to raise awareness of the plight of Indigenous Australians. These included the Freedom Ride in 1965, in which Charles Perkins led a number of Indigenous and non Indigenous Australians on a bus through western New South Wales. The purpose of their journey was to protest about the discrimination and poor living conditions that local Indigenous people were experiencing. The Freedom Ride was a significant event in the wider community aware of these issues. Another effort to raise the awareness of discrimination faced by Indigenous peoples occurred one year later at Wave Hill, Northern Territory. The Gurindji people led by Vincent Lingari went on strike regarding poor living conditions and low wages (Reconciliation Australia, 2006).

Arising from efforts such as these, and in response to public opinion, was the 1967 referendum on Aboriginal affairs, in which 90.7% of Australians voted 'Yes' for a constitutional change. This change involved the removal of two references in the Australian constitution that discriminated against Aboriginal people. The Australian voting population was asked to vote, 'Yes' or 'No', on the following two issues:

1. To remove the words "other than the Aboriginal race in any State" from paragraph (xxvi) of Section 51. That section read:

*The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to (xxvi). The people of any race, other than the aboriginal race in any State, for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.*

2. To repeal Section 127 of the Constitution. That section read:

*In reckoning the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth, or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives shall not be counted.*

Kilcullen, (2000). The Australian Constitution: A First Reading

After this referendum, laws were passed on racial discrimination and land rights. Despite this legislation, little progress was made on socio-economic disadvantage and



knowledge of Indigenous cultures and history (Scott, 2001). Although the non-Indigenous population was aware that Indigenous people were disadvantaged in a number of ways, there was little public discussion of the causes of this disadvantage (Scott, 2001). For many non-Indigenous Australians contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people was minimal or non-existent and the plight of Indigenous people was not evident.

In 1979 the National Aboriginal Conference (NAC) proposed a treaty to settle outstanding issues between Indigenous Australians and European settlers, arising from the manner in which Australia was colonised. The government of the day found the term “treaty” unpalatable but commissioned a report on the proposal. The NAC was supported in these activities by the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, a group of prominent intellectuals whose members included Dr H. C. Coombs and Judith Wright (Healy, 2005).

It was around this time (the early 1980’s) that Australian society began to address the severe consequences that European settlement has had on ATSI people and their cultures. This was largely due to the efforts of the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, which lobbied for public debate on important Indigenous issues. By 1988, the bi-centenary of European arrival, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (Aboriginal Deaths in Custody *The Royal Commission and its Records, 1987–1991*) was established. It found that deaths in custody were symptomatic of a broader set of socio-cultural issues. These include:

- wholesale loss of their rights to use and enjoy their land and waters;
- heavy pressure on their ability to maintain their cultural heritage and traditional lifestyles;
- a devastating effect on their health and life expectancy; the reality that they are by far the most disadvantaged group in Australian society, not only in terms of health but also across a range of other indicators, including education status, housing and public utilities standards, employment status, and exposure to the criminal justice system;
- as a result of disadvantage and other factors, an impairment of the freedom to participate on equal terms in the economic and political life of the wider society; and

- personal and cultural humiliation, including forced removal from traditional lands and forced separation of children from their mothers.

(Aboriginal Deaths in Custody *The Royal Commission and its Records, 1987–1991*)

For these reasons, the Royal Commission proposed “that all political leaders and their parties recognise that reconciliation between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Australia must be achieved if community division, discord and injustice to Aboriginal people are to be avoided” (Aboriginal Deaths in Custody *The Royal Commission and its Records, 1987–1991*).

In August 1991, the Federal Parliament unanimously passed an Act to set up the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. This occurred within months of the publication of the Royal Commission’s report and, as stated previously, formally commenced the reconciliation process. The Council was established to bring about a better understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider community, and to continue to address the levels of disadvantage experienced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. This Council had a ten-year term and identified a number of issues of concern to Indigenous Australians (Reconciliation Australia, 2006).

At the end of its ten-year tenure in 2001, The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation released its recommendations and established an independent, non-government foundation to provide national leadership on reconciliation - Reconciliation Australia.

Although many of its recommendations have not been implemented (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation, 2005), the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) played a key role in identifying and articulating the goals and aims of the reconciliation movement in Australia. The publications of this organisation were central to the development of the tools used in this investigation. As a result of the significance of the CAR recommendations to this investigation, the next section of this paper is devoted to outlining the visions of the Council in detail.

### **2.2.2. Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation**

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was created as a cross cultural and cross party body and given a wide range of duties to promote reconciliation. The council had 25 members, selected from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and wider Australian communities.

The Council adopted the following vision:

**“A united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.”**

(Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993a, p. 1)

Ten key issues were identified as an essential part of the reconciliation process (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2000, Education Queensland, 2000, p. 5).

These were:

- Understanding Country – A greater understanding of the importance of land and sea in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies.
- Improving Relationships – Better relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Australian community.
- Valuing Cultures – Recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture/s and heritage are a valued part of the Australian Heritage.
- Sharing History – A sense for all Australians of a shared ownership of their history.
- Addressing Disadvantage – A greater awareness of the causes of disadvantage that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from achieving a fair and proper standard of health, housing, employment and education.
- Custody Levels – A greater community response to addressing the underlying causes of the unacceptably high levels of custody for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Destiny – A greater opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to control their destinies.
- Formal Document – Agreement on whether the process of reconciliation would be advanced by a document or documents of reconciliation.
- Native Title – Recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander property rights pre-exist and survive colonisation.
- Stolen Generations – Acknowledgement that government policies resulted in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children being taken away from their

families and communities and that these policies caused immeasurable trauma though separation and the subsequent impact on family and cultural life.

These issues are significant to this investigation as they provided the framework for the development of the reconciliation questionnaire.

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation finished its ten-year tenure in 2001, resulting in the formation of Reconciliation Australia. Federal government funding for this new body was substantially reduced. Operating within these financial constraints, Reconciliation Australia has identified community leadership, employment, banking and financial services, and Indigenous family violence as priorities for meaningful change. The government response to the Council's recommendations was delivered in September of 2002 and was described by Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) as disappointing. In a fact sheet entitled "Towards Reconciliation", ANTaR (2005) indicated that the government rejected most of the Council's recommendations, including those which set out processes for formally advancing the reconciliation movement. The government describes its approach as 'practical reconciliation' with a focus on addressing Indigenous disadvantage. Critics of this approach see it as a shift away from rights-based reconciliation to a narrower agenda (Reys & Cooper, 2005).

Many of the visions of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation have been adopted by various educational bodies and can be found in the policy documents of these organisations. This is significant when discussing reconciliation from a teaching perspective.

### **2.2.3. Education Policy**

#### **2.2.3.1. National Education**

The reconciliation process has the support of Education departments nationwide. This support is evident in the National Goals for Schooling outlined in the Hobart and Adelaide declaration (1999). It is stated that schooling should be socially just so that "all students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians" (Department of Education Science and Training, 1999, p. 2).

More recently the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST, 2007) prepared a Reconciliation Action Plan to coincide with the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic 1967 referendum on Aboriginal affairs. This action plan, prepared in consultation with Reconciliation Australia, commits the department to a series of specific and tangible initiatives. Goals of this action plan include expanding education options for Indigenous pupils; addressing Indigenous outcomes in school, vocational, and higher education funding agreements; and the inclusion of specific targets for Indigenous outcomes in all “mainstream” DEST outcomes. This inclusion of broad-based educational goals and specific targets relating to reconciliation in these important policy documents is indicative of the support national education departments have for this process.

#### **2.2.3.2. State Education**

The local State Education authority, Education Queensland, is similarly committed to the reconciliation process. Overt support for the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation is evident in *Reconciliation: Walking and Working Together, Towards the Future- A Guide for Schools* (2000). This resource states that there is a shared responsibility of educators to “demonstrate commitment towards Reconciliation and encourage initiatives within school communities to progress the vision of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation” (p. 5).

A key policy initiative created to implement this vision was the Partners for Success strategy (2003-2005), which targeted the education and employment needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland. As part of the school planning process within *Partners for Success* all schools are required to complete a Partners for Success component as part of their School Annual Report and Operational Plan. This involves the identification of strategies and allocation of resources to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the curriculum.

Stakeholders in Indigenous education have made considerable effort to ensure that the curriculum resources developed and allocated are culturally appropriate. These stakeholders include State Education Departments, research bodies, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organizations. A challenge faced by these groups is the stereotypical and generic nature of existing resources (Ah Sam and Ackland, 2005). In response to this Education Queensland has developed a set of Core Selection

Criteria for various resources that focus on ensuring that learning resources are culturally appropriate and inclusive (Education Queensland, 2003).

In June 2006, the Education Queensland launched the *Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools* as a practical guide for administrators and teachers to strengthen inclusive practices. It gives students and teachers the opportunity to share and acknowledge the heritage of Indigenous Queenslanders, and in doing so enhance their appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage. A curriculum team, an Indigenous Reference Group, and Indigenous education workers provide support for the implementation of this guide.

### **2.2.3.3. Catholic Education**

The Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane also supports reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It developed a policy statement, Policy Statement for Brisbane Catholic Education Schools – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Education (1998) that outlined how it supported the reconciliation process. One of the key statements in the document involves educators in Catholic Schools “including and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and perspectives as appropriate in the school curriculum across all key learning areas to develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, history, spirituality and traditional and contemporary cultures” (p.2). A more recent iteration of this document released in 2006 reaffirms these commitments.

It can be seen that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and history are recurrent themes in the issues identified by the Council as well as educational institutions. In response to this the way in which “Australian” history has been perceived, recorded and taught has come under scrutiny.

### **2.2.4. Historical Perspectives and Reconciliation**

Many Australians believe that it is appropriate and necessary to record those parts of Australia's history that have been ignored or minimised in what has been described by anthropologist, Stanner (1979) as ‘the Great Australian Silence’. Opponents to this point of view perceive that the history of Australia is being “re-written with undue attention being given to the negative aspects of European settlement, in particular the treatment of Australia's Indigenous peoples” (Francis, 2000, p. 1). This reluctance to

revise Australia's history is one aspect of resistance to the broader process of reconciliation.

There have been many sources of resistance to the reconciliation process. The mining and pastoral industries interpreted the high court decisions of Wik and Mabo as a threat to long term economic interests. Some State politicians see these judgments as a threat to State rights in the management of land (Manne, 1999).

The further source of resistance to the reconciliation process has come from some conservative politicians and intellectuals. This point of view, as reflected in mainstream media has undoubtedly influenced the attitudes of many Australians. The next part of this paper elaborates on the attitudes of these influential groups towards reconciliation.

### **2.2.5. Politicians and Perceptions of Indigenous Issues**

Since Federation, politicians have risen to power and remained in power based on ideologies (therefore subsequent policies) that have encouraged poor relations between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. The following section presents excerpts from a variety of sources (including parliamentary documents) that support this assertion.

The Hon. Edmund Barton, the first Prime Minister of Australia stated:

I do not think that the doctrine of equality of man was ever really intended to include racial equality. (*Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, cited in Pattel-Gray 1998, p. 56).

“Over the past century politicians have made the most shocking and amazing statements imaginable – and seem to have done so with impunity.” (Pattel-Gray, 1998, p. 56). This trend seemed to magnify when public interest in a treaty reached a peak in 1988, the year of Australia's Bicentenary.

Former Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser claimed:

I don't enjoy those Australians who want to go around feeling guilty. When the English came from England they *behaved brutally*. *That's all right; they were Englishmen. Not me, I'm Australian. We should not feel guilty for our sins of 200 years ago* (Mydans, 25 January 1988:2; cf. New York Times 31 January 1988:3, emphasis added, cited in Pattel-Gray 1998, p. 57).

Added to this were the statements made by the Hon. John Howard, (then) Leader of the Opposition in Federal Parliament:

I do not accept the doctrine of hereditary guilt. I acknowledge that, in the past, wrongs were done to Aborigines. *But they weren't done by me.* They weren't done by my parents. They weren't done by my generation (Barnett, emphasis added, cited in Pattel-Gray 1998, p. 57).

In 1993 the Labour Government's attempts to formulate Native Title legislation re-fuelled the debate on Reconciliation. Tim Fischer, Leader of the Federal National Party and Shadow Deputy Prime Minister made the following remarks, in January 1993 – International Year for the World's Indigenous People:

I am not going to apologise for the 200 years of white progress in this country. Indeed I will take on and fight the guilt industry all the way..... I certainly do not belong to that guilt industry which says we whites must apologise for being here for 200 years, for developing the road, rail, airport infrastructure, for providing heaps of taxpayers' money [for land councils]..... I am as Australian as any Aborigine (Chamberlin, 13 January 1993, p. 1, cited in Pattel-Gray 1998, p. 57).

The recent Prime Minister John Howard has complained that the 'black armband' view of history evokes feelings of guilt. He believed this account of Australia's history is misleading because it suggests that Australia has a racist past. However, John Howard, has made a personal apology to Indigenous Australians:

Personally I feel deep sorrow for those of my fellow Australians who suffered injustices under the practices of past generations towards Indigenous people. Equally I am sorry for the hurt and trauma many people may continue to feel as a consequence of those practices" (Howard, 1997, p. 10).

Despite voicing his private concerns John Howard believed that, "the great majority of Australians would find the notion of a *treaty*, or something amounting to the same thing under another name, between Aborigines and other Australians as *quite repugnant*" (Howard 1993, p. 47; emphasis added, cited in Pattel-Gray 1998, p. 58). In contrast Mr Howard urged Australians, 'to be proud of what this country has achieved,' even if those achievements were not actually their own personal achievements. This has drawn criticism from some commentators who indicate that he



seems unwilling to accept the wrong doings those past achievers also committed, or our own sharing in their consequences (Davidson, 2000, p. 7).

In a poll conducted by the Age Newspaper in 2004 by Irving Saulwick and Associates it was observed that 55% of Australians believed that the process of reconciliation should continue if Australia is to “put the past behind it”. Despite these sentiments, it was also determined that 61% of those surveyed felt that the government did not have to apologise to Aboriginal people because today’s Australians were “not responsible for what happened in the past” (The Age, 2004, September, 21).

It has been suggested that John Howard’s concern for this apparent majority of Australian voters resulted in a lack of concrete reforms during his time as Prime Minister of Australia, and that this has led to him being cast as an opponent of the reconciliation process. Some writers propose the notion that the concerns of the government are legal as well as political. “Reconciliation requires responsibility, yet governments appear to fear this because it might make them liable for compensation.”(Dodson, 1997, p.11). In 2005 during an address at the National Reconciliation Planning Workshop, Mr. Howard explains his concerns with some “earlier” approaches to reconciliation (that included issues of apology and responsibility): “it left too many people, particularly in white Australia, off the hook. It let them imagine that they could simply meet their responsibilities by symbolic expressions and gesture, rather than accepting the need for an ongoing persistent rendition of practical, on-the-ground measures to challenge the real areas of Indigenous deprivation” (Howard, 2006, p. 35). In this speech Mr. Howard outlined the government’s focus on ‘practical reconciliation’, with an emphasis on addressing disadvantage.

Although there is ongoing debate and disagreement on the nature of the reconciliation process there is agreement that the acknowledgement (or otherwise) of the past (history) is central to this process. Knowledge and understanding of history is based on and shaped by the perceptions of Indigenous history discussed by academics and historians, these are discussed subsequently.

### **2.2.6. Academia and Perceptions of Indigenous History**

Until the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Australian academics paid little attention to Indigenous history. This is evident in the dearth of information on Indigenous peoples

in historical texts (discussed in detail in 2.3.2 The Representation of Australian History). In recent years a number of authors have recognised the ethnocentric perspective from which these histories were written. Manning Clark (1991) suggested the reason for this view is that many of Australia's educated believed "there was only one culture in Australia – European culture; only one way of life – the transplanted European way of life" (p. 16). Manning Clark was of the belief that this perspective has been a major contributor to the injustices inflicted on Indigenous Australians, and sought to redress this in his latter works.

One of Australia's most prominent historians is Professor Geoffrey Blainey (Davidson, 2000), a student of Manning Clark. Professor Blainey has written and spoken widely on a large number of historical topics in texts, journals, newspapers, and at educational institutions. As a consequence, these writings have informed everyday Australians, academics, and policymakers. A conservative intellectual, Blainey referred to the revisionist view of history as the "black armband" view, a view focusing too intensely on past wrongs. While at the same time he acknowledged the three cheers view of Australian history as "too favourable, too self congratulatory" (Blainey, 1999, p. 5). However, he is of the opinion that of the two, the Black Armband view is the more "unreal and decidedly jaundiced." Blainey believed that most Australians are justifiably proud of their country and that "we deprive them of their inheritance if we claim they have inherited little to be proud of" (Blainey, 1999, p. 14).

Manne (1999) suggested that while some conservatives like Blainey, are genuinely concerned with Aboriginal health, education and employment, they cannot see the link between acknowledging through education Australia's Indigenous past and the ability to put aside negative stereotypes of Aborigines. As Blainey so accurately writes: "They were not drifters, they reigned over the continent of Australia and displayed a surprising mastery of its resources" (Blainey 1976 p. vi). Historian Henry Reynolds (2000) suggested that to establish a clearer understanding of the issues behind the reconciliation process a more realistic view of life on the Australian frontier needs to be presented. Unfortunately this point of view has not always been presented.

A possible reason for this is the fact that none of the authorities discussed in the preceding text are Indigenous. Gary Foley, activist and former director of the

Aboriginal Health Service (1981), Aboriginal Arts Board (1983-86), the Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern (1988), and consultant to the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody (1988), articulates this situation well when he writes:

“Some people would argue that a great deal has been done by historians from all these theoretical perspectives and approaches in the reassessment of Australian history and indigenous peoples. But despite the excellent work of Henry Reynolds and cultural historian Barry Morris, there remains an almost total absence of indigenous historians in the academies of Australia.” (Foley, 1999; Essay 7).

Reasons for the long-term exclusion of Indigenous historians and their perspectives include the cultural biases described in previous paragraphs as well as perceived methodological problems associated with the inclusion of Indigenous contributions as data sources. The reluctance of traditional empiricist historians to accept oral history as a reliable source of information has meant that much of Australia’s history has been written from a white perspective because of the need for written documentation that can be verified and substantiated. This western research paradigm has favoured the cultural contribution of white Australians, with their written tradition, over their Indigenous forebears and contemporaries.

Indigenous writer Kevin Carmody (1988) challenged this perspective and asserted that oral evidence can be substantiated using other methods including linguistics, archaeology, anthropology, and ethnology. Despite challenges such as this the portrayal of post-colonial Australian history has been decidedly one-sided.

McLaughlin and Whatman (2007) described these biases in referring to the coloniser /colonised interface, beyond which some western academic institutions are unable to see. In this context this interface refers to the articulation between Indigenous and Western systems of knowledge. The inability of mainstream academia to see beyond (or before) their own conceptions of knowledge has prevented much Indigenous knowledge from being embedded into university teaching and learning. This has influenced the content of history texts.

In 1993 Robert Tickner, (cited in Malezer & Sim, 2002) from the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration stated:

...most non-Indigenous Australians alive today, including people in the State of Queensland, receive an abysmal education about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture. And not only did our education not tell us things that were important to understand, a great many things including the depth and antiquity and the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culture, but in many ways our own text book and our education taught us to be prejudicial.

Until recently the basis for teaching history from which educators have drawn their information has been an ethnocentric view of Australia's history. Textbooks portrayed Aborigines as a kind of native oddity to be studied along with all the other creatures of the continent, while ignoring the complexities of spiritual and family life. These inclusions of Aboriginal history in textbooks lay the foundation for the stereotype of Aboriginal people as prehistoric and subhuman. It is believed that keeping Aboriginal issues trivial in school texts has "contributed to the marginalisation of Aboriginal people in Australian History for generations" (Cavanagh, 1999, p. 155). Schwede (2000) attributed the rejection of an apology to ATSI people to the fact that "History teachers did not teach enough about the history of Indigenous Australians". Some academics are seeking to redress this.

The term "Great Australian Silence" was coined in 1968 by Stanner, to reflect this incompleteness of Australian history. Stanner went further to say that the omission of Indigenous issues aside from a 'melancholy footnote' was a 'structural matter'. An intentional move to obliterate from Australia's history the ".....several hundred thousand Aborigines who lived and died between 1788 and 1938 .... (who were but)...negative facts of history and, having being negative, were in no way consequential for the modern period" (Stanner, 1979, p. 214).

For Australia to develop as a nation, Indigenous affairs need to be regarded as important (Rowley, 1978). As Rowley (1978) stated: "No adequate assessment of the Aboriginal predicament can be made so long as the historical dimension is lacking: it is the absence of information and background which has made it easy for intelligent persons in each successive generation to accept the stereotype." Blainey (1999) was of the view that, "some Aboriginal peoples would gain more if, proud of their traditions, they sometimes demanded more of each other" (p. 170). Misrepresentation of

Indigenous history is a barrier to racial pride and suggests that it is difficult for a people to feel proud of themselves when through their schooling they were exposed to a syllabus that told them they were inferior (Castan, 1993).

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1993g) believed “that a sharing of history has the potential to be an influential agent of reconciliation” (p. 1). Until recently the history of Australia was essentially the story of British discovery, exploration, settlement and development of an ‘empty’ continent. We learnt about “the triumphs and tribulations of good men of Anglo-Saxon stock against a backdrop of an often harsh environment” (Francis, 2000, p.1). This history neglected the participation and contribution of the Indigenous and women, children and non-British immigrants in the development of Australia. Stanner (1969) referred to this as a view from a window carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of the landscape.

The 10 key issues outlined by The Council for Reconciliation (1993g) all have a theme of history, in particular key issue 4, Sharing Histories: A sense for all Australians of a shared ownership of their history focuses on the historical aspect of the reconciliation process. The Council acknowledged that due to the changes in Australian history writing since the 1960s that a number of assumptions and myths about Indigenous peoples and their culture have begun to crumble. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writing and oral histories are now being regarded as a major influence towards better informed and diverse views of the past. These inclusions and the acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contribution and participation in Australia’s society are an important step in the reconciliation process.

Teaching Australian history should focus attention on the cost of colonisation, while at the same time acknowledging, the achievements of the colonists and their Australian born descendants (Reynolds, 2000). This will offer genuine respect for the identity and history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Pankhania, 1994, p. 52).

### **2.2.7. The Importance of History**

The Queensland Schools Curriculum Council (2000) states that the study of history is important because it allows students to question generalised theories about human behaviour. “Through studying history students learn to approach the present and the future in a creative way, characterised by critical thinking, careful reflection and well-

founded decision-making” (p. 87). This view is shared by a number of prominent historians. “Understanding how today’s society was shaped by history enables students to plan and map a better future together” (Craven & Rigney, 1999, p. 62).

The past exerts an endless fascination. We are interested in the past because we are interested in our roots, or because we are interested in the way the world around us has been shaped, or because we are intrigued by the otherness of different people who lived at different times. These motivations underpin learning about the past whether it is in the classroom, in the archive, or on a Sunday afternoon excursion (Husbands, 1996, p.3).

I happen to be one of those who find answers to these deeper questions about life by knowing more about the past (Manning Clark, 1991, p. 1).

Taylor (1992) described the importance of history: “It is part of culture and a very important part” (p. 2). In addition Taylor suggests that history is about identity, pride and self-esteem, learning from the past, and justice (Taylor, 1992). Davidson (2000) believed that history is important because it can exercise the imagination as well as the memory, embraces the world as well as the nation, and builds hope for the future as well as reverence for the past. It is evident that there is agreement between educators and historians of the importance of history and its impact on the present and the future. All of these descriptions of history are compatible with, indeed essential to, the fulfillment of the visions of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

On the basis of the first section of this review it can be seen that the national agenda of reconciliation seeks to address the past wrong-doings and present disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians. It is also apparent that this agenda has been adopted by Education authorities. Despite this there is widespread opposition to the reconciliation process.

It is the contention of the researcher that this opposition is the result of a lack of awareness of Indigenous issues and Indigenous history. It is further proposed that this lack of awareness has arisen from past misrepresentations and omissions of Indigenous peoples and their history by some politicians, academics and historians.

It can be seen from the preceding section of this review that reconciliation, education and Australian history are inextricably linked. This link provided the impetus for this research investigation. This study investigates the link between the attitudes of

Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. At present there is a paucity of research in this area. This investigation seeks to fill some of these gaps.

The key variables measured and analysed in this investigation are knowledge of Indigenous history and teacher attitudes towards reconciliation. The next section of this chapter discusses the influence of these constructs on teaching and learning.

### **2.3. KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

In his seminal discussion of the impact of knowledge on the teaching profession, Shulman (1987) suggests that an individual teacher's knowledge base could be organised into distinct categories. These include:

- *content knowledge*, the knowledge, understanding, skill and disposition that are to be learned;
- *general pedagogical knowledge*, with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that appear to transcend subject matter;
- *curriculum knowledge*, with particular grasp of the materials and programs that serve as “tools of the trade” for teachers;
- *pedagogical content knowledge*, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding;
- *knowledge of learners and their characteristics*;
- *knowledge of educational contexts*, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance of financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures; and
- *knowledge of educational ends*, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds.

(Shulman, 1987, p. 9)

All of these aspects of knowledge are important in teaching practice, but specific interest to this study is the dimension of content knowledge and its influence on

beliefs about reconciliation. Content knowledge is the “knowledge, understanding, skill and disposition that are to be learned by school children” (Shulman, 1987, p. 9).

Content knowledge is important because it provides the basis from which teachers develop their pedagogical content knowledge (van Driel, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2001). The significance of pedagogical content knowledge is stressed by a number of researchers (e.g., Geddis, 1993; McNergney & Herbert, 1995; Porter & Brophy, 1988; Shulman, 1987). It is this knowledge that helps teachers plan and facilitate learning experiences that encourage students to construct knowledge based on prior experiences (Brophy, 1992; Shulman, 1987). Shulman (1987) defined pedagogical content knowledge as “that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding” (p. 8). It is apparent that content knowledge plays a central role in the development of this professional understanding (Hill, Rowan, & Lowenberg Ball, 2005). Shulman in collaboration with Grossman, Wilson & Shulman (1989) has positioned content knowledge as a dimension of one’s understanding of the subject matter.

Understanding the subject matter is the foundation of effective teaching (Ball & McDiarmid, 1990). In their review of a number of studies concerning the development of pedagogical content knowledge in science teachers, van Driel, Verloop, and Vos (1998) suggested that understanding of subject matter (content knowledge) acts as a prerequisite for the development of pedagogical content knowledge.

Recent research into the discipline of mathematics also supports these findings. A teacher’s knowledge of mathematics has been identified as one of the six core elements essential to enhancing numeracy outcomes (Baturu, Warren & Cooper, 2004). It has been suggested that a knowledgeable teacher will provide a more thorough explanation of key mathematical concepts (Ball, 1991). The same relationship has been observed in pre-service teachers (Stacey, Helme, Steinle, Baturu, Irwin, & Bana, 2001). Furthermore it has been shown that teachers’ mathematical knowledge for teaching correlates significantly with the achievement of primary aged pupils (Hill, Rowan & Loewenberg Ball, 2005).

In describing the importance of content knowledge, a number of researchers (e.g., Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989; Shulman, 1987; van Driel, Verloop, & de Vos,



1998) suggested that it is important that a teacher has depth of understanding in specific subject areas as well as a broad liberal education. This provides the teacher with a frame of reference that helps them to facilitate new understanding.

There are number of pedagogical consequences of poor content knowledge of subject matter. These consequences include: teacher avoidance of unfamiliar material, excessive reliance on text books, the inability to critique texts, and adopting an unnecessarily autocratic teaching style to avoid uncomfortable questions (Grossman, et al. 1989). Thus sound content knowledge appears to underpin good teaching practices and thus is a key component for enhancing student learning. Content knowledge is gained from two sources: the accumulated literature and studies in the content area, and the historical and philosophical scholarship on the nature of knowledge in those fields of study (Shulman, 1987). It is the teachers' content knowledge of Indigenous Australian History that is measured by the history test component of this investigation.

The importance of Indigenous Australian historical content knowledge to the teaching profession is acknowledged in the recommendations made by the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body in their position paper on schooling and teacher education (2004). In this document it is suggested that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies be a compulsory component of all pre-service education courses in Queensland. Recommendations such as this are warranted in view of the results of the Teachers in Australian Schools Study (Dempster, Sim, Beere, & Logan, 2000) which highlighted the limited exposure of Australian teachers to Indigenous Studies. Of the 10,019 teachers sampled 86.3% had received no pre-service or in-service training in Indigenous Studies. Queensland teachers received less training than all of their interstate peers with 91.6% of the 1,608 Queensland respondents reporting no Indigenous studies training. This was despite Indigenous Studies being highlighted as an area of national priority.

A qualitative investigation, The National Inquiry into School History, (Taylor, 2000a) was established by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs to examine the status and nature of school history in Australia. Focus groups and interviews revealed a number of issues in relation to Indigenous Australian Studies. These included a reluctance on the part of teachers to teach something about which they had little knowledge, and anxieties around the use of appropriate

terminology. In general, the researcher found that the subjects identified inadequacies in teacher preparation and professional development for “dealing with content and sensitivities of Indigenous history” (Taylor, 2000b, p. vi).

The Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body (2004) suggested various means of addressing these shortcomings, including the development of discrete courses, units, or modules within existing units. These units will enhance the content knowledge of pre-service teachers and ensure that they are adequately prepared to instruct their pupils about Indigenous Issues.

### **2.3.1. Sources of Knowledge**

The literature identified various sources of teacher knowledge (Shulman, 1987; Barnett & Hodson, 2001), such as the materials and settings of the institutionalised educational process, for example, curricula, textbooks, school organisation and finance, and the structure of the teaching profession. These sources of knowledge, and the manner in which they represent or relate to a particular topic, have a significant influence on the knowledge base of educators. Cultural, political, and educational biases strongly influence these sources of knowledge. This has often been the case with depictions of Indigenous Australians in educational texts (Bourke, Bourke, & Edwards, 1994).

As a consequence of these biases, generations of Australian teachers and students obtained their content knowledge from erroneous sources. Historians and educational institutions have sought to redress this situation by rewriting texts and curricula. This is indicative of a more favourable attitude towards cultural diversity, Indigenous issues, and reconciliation. The next section of this paper consists of a chronological overview of the changing ways in which Indigenous history has been depicted in Australian texts, texts that many current teachers have been exposed to in their own educational journey.

### **2.3.2. The Representation of Australian History**

In his chapter of Craven’s *Australian History: A new Understanding* (1999), Cavanagh discussed representations of Australian History in the context of teaching Aboriginal Studies. He referred to the slogan, “White Australia has a Black History”, used on a poster promoting National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Week in

1987. This slogan was used to remind the Australian community that Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders played a part in our social, cultural and economic history. The slogan not only indicated that the social, cultural and economic contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were omitted from the history texts but the slogan was also used as a reminder of the injustices suffered by Indigenous people under the practices of past generations.

It is clear from many accounts of Australia's history that British values, and British styled institutions were thought to be superior than all others and a benefit to all. Such beliefs allowed little consideration for societies that were believed to be 'inferior' and 'primitive' (Pattel-Gray, 1998). An examination by Rowley in 1970 of some Australian history texts from the 20<sup>th</sup> century revealed the scant regard that historians had for the Indigenous aspects of Australia's past.

In his review of the state of Australia's written history Stanner (1969) determined that up to the 1960's academic and popular books on Australian civilization, which left little of Australian life and thought unexamined, adopted total silence on all Indigenous matters (Rowley, 1972). Subsequent decades showed marginal improvement. This is evident in the writings of Cavanagh (1999) who referred to the low priority given to Indigenous Australians by prominent historians: Crawford's "Australia" (1963) includes only two references to Aboriginal people, whilst McQueen's "A New Britannia" (1976) contains four short references. Even Manning Clark's "Short History of Australia" (1981), long-considered Australia's seminal historical text, refers to Australian Aborigines on a mere 17 occasions.

The representations of Aborigines and their culture included in early Australian History texts have been categorised by Bourke as:

- **the colonial presumption** – where Aboriginal people are represented as being the appropriate subject of colonisation and civilization.
- **inadequate treatment** – a failure to take account of Aboriginal peoples' presence in Australian history and to mention Aboriginal dimensions only in passing.
- **stereotypes and derogatory concepts** – notions of superiority expressed in stereotypes such as childlike, simple, savage and primitive.

- **the exotic stress** – draws attention to superficial differences but infers group inferiority through words such as corroboree, cannibal, polygamy and bone pointing.
- **objects for study and discussion** – references such as they, them, these people aligned with physical descriptions emphasising stereotypes such as medium stature, wiry hair, thick lips, prominent lower jaw and broad nose.
- **distortion and euphemism** – where Australian history begins in 1788, Cook discovered Australia, first settled, the Aboriginal problem, and pioneers.

(Bourke, cited in Bourke, Bourke, & Edwards, 1994, p. 7)

In recent years a number of authors have recognised the bias with which these histories were written. Manning Clark (1991) suggested the reason for this view is that many of Australia's educated believed "there was only one culture in Australia – European culture; only one way of life – the transplanted European way of life."(p. 16). This ethnocentric attitude has been a major contributor to the injustices inflicted on Indigenous Australians, whether through violence and brutality, neglect or misguided paternalism (Attwood, Burrage, Burrage, & Stokie, 1994, p. 19).

Since 1970 there have been significant changes to the manner in which Australian history has been written (Cavanagh, 1999). Aboriginal issues began to be considered. One of the first works into this area of Australian history was Rowley's *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society* (1972). One of the main objectives of this book was to elucidate the problems arising from contacts between Aborigines and non-Aborigines. In addition there have been many other books written with the purpose of eradicating the ethnocentric view of Australia's history by including Indigenous perspectives and contributions to Australia's history. Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier* (1981), Moorehead's, *The Fatal Impact* (1968) and Willey's *When the Sky Fell down* (1979) focused on Australia's contact history with understanding for Aboriginal people. These books had a large influence in changing the way people view this area of our history.

Changes in school history curricula since the 1970's have lead to a greater awareness of Aboriginal perspectives in our history. On the basis of this a number of suitable resources have been composed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors to complement these changes. The new Queensland Schools Curriculum Council SOSE

curriculum (2000) is centered on the key values of: democratic process, social justice, ecological and economic sustainability and peace.

The value of democratic process is based on a belief in the integrity and rights of all people. It promotes the ideals of equal participation and access for all individuals and groups. The key value of social justice is based on a belief that all people share a common humanity and therefore have a right to equitable treatment and a fair allocation of community resources. The syllabus says that the key value of social justice seeks to challenge the inequalities inherent in social institutions and structures and to deconstruct dominant views of society. The value of peace is based on the promotion of positive relations with others and with the environment. This implies the need to maintain and develop hope, optimism, a sense of belonging to local, national and global communities, cooperative and peaceful relations with others and a sense of a shared destiny and custody of the Earth (p. 5).

It is evident that the inclusion of these key values provides the opportunity to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into the school curriculum. If the reconciliation process is to be furthered in schools (as government and departmental imperatives demand) this attitudinal change must be mirrored by classroom teachers. The next section of this review seeks to define, describe, and discuss the significance of teachers' attitudes and their influence on teaching and learning.

### **2.3.3. Attitudes**

Attitudes are defined by Rokeach (1976) as a relatively enduring organisation of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner. Each belief within an attitude organisation is conceived to have three components:

- a cognitive component, because it represents a person's knowledge, held with varying degrees of certitude, about what is true or false, good or bad, desirable or undesirable;
- an affective component, because under suitable conditions the belief is capable of arousing affect of varying intensity centering around the object of belief, around other objects (individuals or groups) taking a positive or negative

position with respect to the object of belief, or around the belief itself, when its validity is seriously questioned, as in an argument;

- a behavioural component, because the belief, being a response predisposition of varying threshold, must lead to some action when it is suitably activated. The kind of action its leads it is dictated strictly by the content of the belief. (This component is sometimes referred to as the cognitive component of an attitude as this classification encompasses behavioural inclinations and intentions and not merely overt behaviors towards the attitude object.)

(Ajzen, 2005; Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1976; Triandis, 1971)

This study focuses on the cognitive (knowledge) component of teachers' beliefs and attitudes. It is hypothesised that individuals with a thorough knowledge of Indigenous history will be favourably disposed towards reconciliation across all three belief components. This is important from a practical perspective because it is the affective and behavioural aspects of an individual's beliefs that translate into action (Ajzen, 2005; Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1976; Triandis, 1971).

The significance of teachers' beliefs, conceptions, and attitude as a factor in the process of teaching and learning, and the attainment of educational goals, is well established in education literature (Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000; Brickhouse, 1990; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, Partington, Harslett, & Richer, 2000; Phillippou & Christou, 1998). Teachers often teach the content of a subject area according to the values, beliefs, attitudes or conceptions held on the content itself (Pajares, 1992, p. 310). Thus if the goal of promoting reconciliation within schools is to be achieved it is important that the majority of teachers have a favourable attitude towards this issue. This review of literature examines the significance of teacher attitudes and the impact of teacher knowledge on the formation of these attitudes.

#### **2.3.4. The Significance of Teacher Attitudes**

The recognition of the importance of teacher attitudes is not a recent phenomenon. Fanshawe (1976) identified attitudes and values as one of the five key dimensions of effective teaching. The other dimensions identified included personal characteristics, essential knowledge and experiences, strategies and roles.

A number of more recent studies have examined this phenomenon from a general perspective, whilst others have studied the importance of attitude with respect to the teaching of specific disciplines. Mathematics is one subject area in which the teacher's attitude has been shown to play an important role. Much research has been conducted into the role that affective variables such as conceptions, beliefs, and attitudes towards mathematics play in the development of teaching practices (e.g. Brady & Bowd, 2005; McLeod, 1994; Pehkonen, 1994; Thompson, 1992). This research has confirmed the importance of these variables in successful mathematics teaching.

An example of a specific study into the impact of teacher attitude on mathematics teaching is Thompson's (1984) study of the relationship between teacher's conceptions of mathematics and instructional practice. This case study involved three high school mathematics teachers. The teachers' classroom practice was observed for two weeks. This was followed by a further two weeks observation, during which each lesson was followed by an interview in which the preceding lesson was discussed. Data were also gathered via six written response questionnaires. Analysis of these data showed a consistency between the teachers' professed conceptions of mathematics and the manner in which they taught the subject. On this basis the researchers concluded that the teachers' beliefs, view, and preferences significantly influenced their method of instruction.

The significant role that attitudes play in the effective teaching of mathematics has prompted researchers to examine ways in which these attitudes can be influenced. Phillippou and Christou (1998) state that most pre-service programs do not consider pre-service teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards mathematics. They suggest that by studying teachers' thoughts, beliefs and attitudes teacher educators could use that information to improve teacher education courses. In studying the effects of a preparatory mathematics program in changing prospective teachers' attitudes towards mathematics these researchers found that such programs provide opportunity to influence attitudes positively.

Research into other disciplines has placed similar emphasis on the link between attitudes and practice. An example of this is Brickouse's (1990) investigation of teacher beliefs about the nature of science and their relationship to classroom practice. The researcher interviewed seven science teachers to determine their beliefs about the

nature of science. On the basis of these interviews, three teachers with diverse perspectives were selected for an extended period of observation. It was observed that the attitudes and beliefs that a teacher held about science influenced the way in which they taught and the way in which students responded to teaching. The researcher concluded that teachers' beliefs influence their actions, and that teachers' actions influence the way that students learn science.

The influence of teacher beliefs on classroom practices was also observed by Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) in an investigation of reading comprehension instruction. This study involved 39 primary school teachers and used an anthropological belief interview technique. Predictions about teaching practices were made on the basis of these interviews. Subsequent observation of classroom teaching indicated that in the majority of cases the predictions were accurate – beliefs related strongly to practices. Case study research was used to examine an instance in which the predictions were flawed. It was observed that this individual was in the process of changing beliefs and practices, but that the changes in practices lagged somewhat behind the changes in beliefs.

The importance of teacher attitudes has also been established within the context of broad cultural issues. Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke (2004) examined three prerequisite understandings that determine a teacher's ability to manage culturally diverse classrooms: Firstly, teachers must recognise that they are cultural beings with their own beliefs, biases and assumptions about human behaviour. Secondly, teachers must acknowledge that differences such as cultural, class, ethnic and racial, exist. Thirdly, teachers must understand the ways which schools reflect and perpetuate discriminatory practices of the larger classroom. A clear understanding of these three ideas enabled teachers to reflect on the ways their classroom management practices promote or obstruct access to learning. The first prerequisite understanding relates specifically to the relationship between teacher attitude and effective classroom practice in a multicultural classroom.

The positive correlation between attitude and practice in the effective management of culturally diverse classrooms observed by Weinstein et al. (2004) was previously identified by Villegas and Lucas (2002). These researchers contend that to successfully move teacher education past the fragmented and superficial treatment of diversity that currently exists, "teacher educators must articulate a vision to



systematically guide the infusion of multicultural issues throughout the teacher education curriculum” (p. 21). The researchers suggest a six strand approach for teaching in a culturally diverse society. In this approach culturally responsive teachers (a) are socio-culturally conscious, (b) have affirming views of students from culturally diverse backgrounds, (c) see themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable, (d) understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction, (e) know about the lives of their students, and (f) design instruction that builds upon what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar. The first 2 strands are particularly relevant to this investigation:

- The first challenges teachers to develop their “social consciousness”. They define ‘social consciousness’ as an ‘understanding that people’s ways of thinking, behaving, and being are deeply influenced by such factors as race/ethnicity, social class, and language (Banks, 1996). They argue that this insight will enable teachers to cross the socio-cultural boundaries that separate them from their students. In order to do this they must first examine and understand their own socio-cultural identities and come to “recognise the intricate connection between schools and society” (p. 3).
- The second strand, identified as crucial to successful teaching in a culturally diverse society, is having an affirming attitude towards students who differ from the dominant culture. It is widely recognised that teachers attitudes toward students shape the expectations they have for student learning, their treatment of students and what students learn (Irvine, 1990; Pang & Sablan, 1998). Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggest that teacher educators can help student understand the consequences that teacher attitudes have on students and their learning. They believe that the more challenging task will require student teachers to examine their own beliefs about students from non-dominant groups and to address negative attitudes they might have.

A number of studies have made specific reference to the importance of teacher attitudes in the teaching of Indigenous Australian pupils (e.g., Andrews, 1993; Craven & Mooney, 2000; Godfrey, et al., 2000; Fanshawe, 1989; O’Keefe, 1989). One such investigation was a collaborative research project involving the Centre for Indigenous Studies at Monash University and the Aboriginal Research Institute of the University

of Australia (Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000). This study examined ways in which the school attendance of Indigenous students could be improved. This examination involved the analysis of data gathered from relevant literature, site visits and consultations. Teacher attitudes were identified as a significant 'school based' factor that influenced the attendance of Indigenous students. It was found that the lack of a safe and caring environment, coupled with a lack of cultural awareness contributed negatively to the attendance of Indigenous pupils. The researchers recommended education for pre-service teachers and professional development for existing teachers.

It is clear from this brief literature review that teacher attitudes are important to all of the stakeholders in education. It is also clear that negative attitudes towards aspects of teaching must be addressed if satisfactory outcomes are to be achieved. While many studies have examined attitudes and their influence on teaching and learning, there has been a paucity of research on teachers' content knowledge about Indigenous issues and its influence on teaching and learning. The next portion of this review examines the impact of knowledge on teacher attitudes.

### **2.3.5. The Influence of Knowledge on Teacher Attitudes**

Having established the importance of teacher attitudes, it is important to investigate what contributes to the formation of these attitudes. It has been observed that teacher attitude can have a significant influence on classroom practice. Teaching can be improved by improving teacher attitudes (Bourke, et al., 2000; Brickhouse, 1990; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, et al., 2000; Phillippou, & Christou, 1998). Knowledge of factors contributing to attitude formation could ultimately lead to improve teacher and student outcomes.

Positive attitudes towards students from other cultures are influenced by knowledge about the cultural background of the students (Craven, 2002; Shultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996; Youngs, & Youngs, 2001). This is particularly pertinent when dealing with students whose second language is English. Youngs and Youngs (2001) investigated the nature of mainstream teachers' attitudes towards ESL students and the predictors of these attitudes. They found that most teachers had a slightly positive attitude towards ESL students. In addition the results of their investigation suggest that mainstream teachers are more likely to have a positive attitude towards ESL students if they had participated in a foreign language or multicultural education

course, ESL training, and interacted with a culturally diverse population of ESL students (p. 116).

Literature suggests that the inclusion of a multicultural component in pre-service education should have a positive effect on teacher attitudes to cultural issues. Shultz, Neyhart, and Reck, (1996), in their study to determine the attitudes and beliefs of teacher education students with regards to cultural diversity, found that a greater emphasis on multicultural education is needed to help these students acquire the knowledge and attitudes required for teaching in a changing society. They suggested that these knowledge and attitudes can be acquired by exposing teacher education students to school and community experiences that will make them relate with other cultural groups.

A more recent investigation focused specifically on the impact of mandatory Aboriginal Studies teacher education courses (Craven, 2002). It was observed that core courses had a profound positive impact on student teachers' values in relation to the rationale for teaching Aboriginal Studies, their regard for departmental Aboriginal Studies education policies, and their commitment to teaching Aboriginals Studies effectively.

O'Keefe's (1989) review of Fanshawe's previously mentioned (1976) work identified professional and personal characteristics that are necessary for teachers to be effective. These are:

1. Personal characteristics
2. Attitudes and values
3. Essential knowledge and experiences of students and content
4. Strategies: varied, logical and sequential.
5. Roles: being responsible, businesslike and systematic.

O'Keefe (1989) suggested that many of these characteristics can be applied to teachers involved in teaching Aboriginal students. Central to this paper are notions of teachers' attitudes and values. O'Keefe, in accordance with Fanshawe (1976), suggested that the most important attitude teachers of Indigenous students need "is confidence in the child's ability to achieve" (p. 25). As an extension of this attitude teachers also need to have confidence in their own ability to teach Indigenous

students. They “must be aware of the cultural differences that are experienced by Aboriginal children” (p. 25).

O’Keefe foreshadows the recommendations of Andrews (1993); who studied the effect of teacher socialisation and attitudes on students’ ability to succeed/fail at school. She found that teachers’ experiences usually come from “a non-Indigenous, western, capitalist hegemony” (p. 23). This causes tension in the classroom when a non-Indigenous teacher expects students to behave in accordance with this paradigm. She suggests that “all teachers, as part of their initial training, should undertake compulsory courses about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history, particularly that part of Australian history concerned with Aboriginal and European conflict, and the institutionalisation of Aboriginal people” (p. 27).

This view was also expressed in consultations with the Queensland education community. In 2003 the Working Party on Indigenous Studies in Preservice Teacher Education was established to examine the area of Indigenous Studies in teacher education. During 2004 Working Party members conducted a series of interviews and consultations with teachers, school principals, para-professionals, administrators, parents and Elders. Analysis of the responses given during these interviews revealed that teachers’ knowledge and understanding of Indigenous history and culture was considered vitally important to effective teaching. Areas of culture mentioned specifically by respondents included government policies, significant historical events, aspects of Indigenous spirituality, and specific cultural norms. On this basis the Working Party recommended that all new teachers should be provided with information about local Indigenous history and culture and that “all graduate teachers need to have some generic cross-cultural awareness and knowledge of the history of Indigenous people in Australia” (Queensland Board of Teacher Registration: 2004, p. 5).

Implicit in these suggestions, as well as those of O’Keefe (1989) and Andrews (1993) is the idea that increased knowledge and awareness will result in a more favourable attitude, which will in turn lead to improved teaching practices and student outcomes. To date there is no hard evidence demonstrating this. It is this link between knowledge and attitudes that the present research investigation attempts to establish with specific reference to teacher knowledge of Indigenous history and attitudes towards reconciliation.

## 2.4. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The initial section of this literature review focused on reconciliation in the Australian context. In doing so the changing historical perspectives of politicians, historians, educators and the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation were examined. It is apparent that acknowledgement of Indigenous history since European settlement is an important aspect of reconciliation. Indigenous history has, however, often been misrepresented. This misrepresentation has had the potential to adversely affect teachers' knowledge of Indigenous history.

The second and third parts of this review examined the nature of knowledge and its relationship to attitude formation. Research has suggested that knowledge exerts an influence on the cognitive component of an individual's beliefs and attitudes.

From the literature reviewed arises the hypothesis that an individual's knowledge of Indigenous history will have a measurable effect on his/her attitude towards Indigenous issues such as reconciliation. This study seeks to test this hypothesis by answering the following research questions:

- What are the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers to the reconciliation process?
- How knowledgeable is this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers with respect to key aspects of Indigenous history?
- What influence does participation in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component have on the knowledge and attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers?
- What is the relationship between this sample of teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history?

Chapter three describes the methodology and research design utilised in answering these research questions.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the methodology and design used in this study. In particular it includes a statement of purpose of the research, the theoretical framework, details of the research sample, and the development of the research instruments. Validity and reliability procedures and an overview of the data analysis are also included. This chapter concludes with the ethical issues that were taken into consideration for this study.

The purpose of this research, as introduced in section 1.2, was to investigate the link between the attitudes of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history.

#### **3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

When conducting an investigation the perspective of the researcher has a significant bearing on the methods used, the data collected, and the conclusions (if any) that are drawn. Two broad research paradigms exist: quantitative, and qualitative. Quantitative research involves issues of hypothesis testing, measurement and sampling. As distinct from this, qualitative research is concerned with issues of context, texture and the insights gained from raw data (Howe, 2001).

In addition to these perspectives, two broad, epistemological viewpoints exist: the positivist and the anti-positivist. The positivist paradigm “views social science research as an organised method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations so that casual laws can be established”(Dorman & Zajda, 2001, p. 11). In attempts to quantify and justify these causal laws, researchers that subscribe to this approach generally use quantitative methods to gather data.

Opponents of positivism collectively dismiss the belief that human behaviour can be ruled by general laws and governed by underlying principles. Anti-positivists argue that the social world can only be understood from the unique perspective of the subject being studied (Cohen & Manion, 1994). It is apparent that the theoretical orientation adopted by qualitative researchers can be considered anti-positivist. Some

specific anti-positivist approaches identified by Neuman (2000) include the interpretive approach and the critical approach.

The interpretive approach is the “systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds.”(Neuman, 2000, p. 122). The fact that the subjects in educational research cannot be extracted from their natural environment (the school) means that they must be observed in this setting. Such observation can be considered qualitative research with an interpretive orientation. Interpretive theorists criticise positivists for their failure to deal with the thoughts and feelings of real people.

The critical approach can be considered to be an extension of the interpretive orientation. Researchers who subscribe to this approach see reality as a function of those who experience it. They reject all traditional authority as oppressive. The focus of these theorists is generally on the marginalised and silenced participants (Patton, 1990). Critical theorists value a multitude of perspectives and views, and are committed to social criticism and the empowerment of individuals (Denzin, & Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research allows a large amount of detailed information to be gathered, from which theories can emerge. This is a major advantage of using qualitative research techniques.

There are, however, several drawbacks to qualitative methods of inquiry that render them unsuitable for this investigation. Foremost among these weaknesses is that this paradigm lacks validity. The observations made in a qualitative investigation do not always conform to an externally imposed reality. Contexts, situations, events, conditions and interactions cannot be replicated. “Qualitative methods rarely attempt to control any of the factors that affect situations, so although one factor may appear to have caused an event, its influence cannot be confirmed without conducting more precise investigations” (Moore, 2001, p. 2).

An additional weakness is the small sample size associated with most qualitative investigations. Whilst a small number of subjects are amenable to detailed data collection, it does reduce the statistical power of the research. As a result of this generalisations cannot be made to a wider context than the one studied.

A more practical limitation of qualitative research is the time and effort it takes to collect, analyze and interpret the data. A considerable amount of time is spent in the research setting “in order to examine, holistically and aggregately, the interactions, reactions and activities” (Burns, 1994, p. 13).

This research investigation has been approached from the positivist epistemological viewpoint. This paradigm lends itself to the establishment of causal relationships between observed phenomena (Dorman & Zajda, 2001). The present study attempted to identify links between teachers’ attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history, and involved the sampling of a large population of teachers. It was believed that a positivist approach, coupled with quantitative methods of data collection and analysis would expose this link most effectively.

### **3.3 THE SAMPLE SELECTION PROCESS**

In selecting the research sample random methods were used to obtain a cluster of schools from which to draw participants. Once the cluster had been selected the researcher was reliant on non-random methods (volunteer sampling) to obtain schools and individuals willing to participate.

The sample was comprised of 100 staff from 11 Brisbane Catholic Education Primary Schools. These 11 schools were those that agreed to participate from a group of 50 schools approached by the researcher. The schools approached were randomly selected from all of the Catholic Education Primary Schools within the Brisbane Diocese. The selection process is subsequently discussed.

Each of the 107 schools within the Diocese was assigned a number. A random number generator was used to select 25 numbers. The schools whose numbers corresponded with the numbers selected were approached to participate in the study. Prior to approaching the individual schools the researcher sought the permission of the Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education. Once permission was granted each of the schools was contacted via a mail out.

The mail out consisted of an introductory letter to the principal describing the nature of the research project (Appendix B) and an example of the research instrument. The principal was then required to indicate the school’s willingness to participate in the investigation via return fax (Appendix C). In addition to this, the principals of participating schools were asked to nominate the likely number of participants. This



information was to allow the researcher to mail out the required amount of numbered surveys and answer sheets.

Each of the twenty-five schools was contacted by phone approximately two weeks after the mail out in order to improve the response rate. This was necessary, as at this stage the researcher had only received four replies, one of which was affirmative. These phone conversations elicited an additional five responses and also provided an insight into the reasons for non-participation.

A number of reasons were offered for non-participation in the survey. Two principals felt that the topic was ‘too sensitive’ for their staff, and others said that they had been inundated with research projects and did not have time to participate in another. Commitments to other school issues also prevented a number of principals inviting their staff to participate.

The percentage of teachers taking part in the study varied between the six schools in this initial sample. At one school the whole staff participated but at the others only a small number of staff participated. The size of the schools and the number of participants from each school in this initial sample are outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1  
*School Size and Number of Participants (Initial sample)*

School	Number of staff at the school	Number of staff who participated	Percentage of staff who participated
A	26	19	73
B	12	2	17
C	19	2	11
D	23	6	26
E	27	4	15
F	24	6	25
Total	131	39	30

Schumacher and McMillan (1993) suggested that correlational research should have a minimum of 30 subjects to provided sufficient data to answer the question. They also recommended that in survey research studies there should be around 100 subjects. For this reason the researcher decided that 39 responses to the survey would not be sufficient to lend statistical power to the study.

Another 25 schools were randomly selected from the remaining 82 Catholic Primary Schools in the Diocese. These schools were selected using the same random number generator and process as stated above in the first selection. Again the researcher had to gain approval from ‘The Office of the Executive Director’ at Brisbane Catholic Education to approach these schools. Permission was granted and the schools were approached.

Phone contacts subsequent to the initial mail-out revealed similar reasons for non-participation as those offered by principals of the first group of schools approached. Five schools in this second group agreed to participate, that is a participation rate of 20% (similar to the 25% participation rate in the initial approach). Two of the schools completed the survey as a whole school staff at a staff meeting. One principal requested the results of his schools performance, so that as a staff they could address any of the issues that arose from the survey, unfortunately not all of the staff chose to participate in the project.

The size of the schools and the number of participants from each school in this second sample are outlined in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2

*School Size and Number of Participants*

School	Number of staff	Number of staff that participated	Percentage of staff who participated
G	9	3	34
H	32	29	91
I	30	8	27
J	28	17	61
K	9	4	45
Total	108	61	56

Time constraints prevented more schools being approached. A total of 100 Brisbane Catholic Education teaching and administration staff (39 from the initial sample and 61 from the second sample) participated in the research project.

### **3.4 THE SAMPLE**

As outlined previously the survey was administered to staff at 11 Brisbane Catholic Education Primary Schools. These schools varied in staff size from 9 to 32 and were

randomly selected from the Catholic primary schools within the Brisbane Catholic Education Diocese.

The participants surveyed consisted of male and female teachers, although specific numbers of each gender was not asked for. The number of years teaching experience varied, it ranged between less than 1 years teaching experience to 45 years experience. The sample of teachers also consisted of a variety of classroom teachers, principals, special education teachers, specialised teachers and librarians. A summary of this demographic information is presented below. Six participants elected not to complete the demographics section of the survey.

Figure 3.1 shows a pictorial representation of the relative age distribution of participants' in comparison to the distribution of teachers' age across the Brisbane diocese.

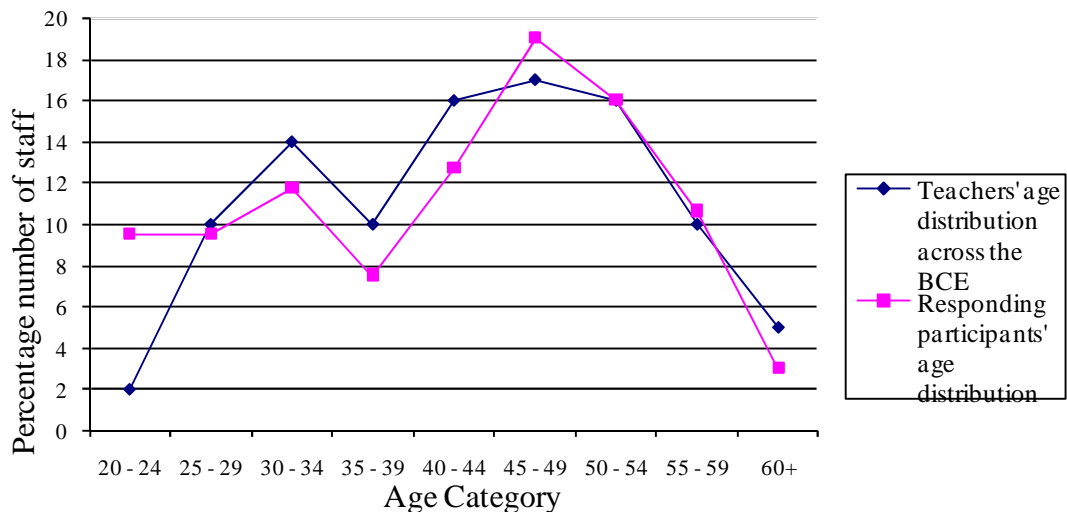


Figure 3.1. Participants' age as compared to the distribution of teachers' age across the Brisbane diocese.

It can be seen that the age of participants in this study reflects the age distribution of teachers employed in Catholic primary schools in Brisbane.

Table 3.3 shows the number of years spent teaching by the participants of this investigation. The years teaching experience, as at the year 2002, of all primary teachers in Brisbane Catholic Education is displayed in Table 3.3.

From this comparison it is apparent that the sample contains relatively more teachers who had taught for a longer period than the general BCEC teaching population. For example, as at 2002, the percentage of Brisbane Catholic Education teachers who had

taught for 15 or less years was 66.5%, whereas the corresponding percentage of participants who had taught for 15 or less years was 37%.

The seventy-eight out of the ninety-four participants who completed the demographic part of the survey considered themselves to be classroom teachers. Lower primary school teacher was the most frequently nominated category.

Table 3.3.

*Participants' number of years teaching experience as compared to the distribution of teachers' experience across the Brisbane diocese in 2002*

Number of Years	Frequency of participants		Frequency of BCE staff	
	N	%	N	%
0-4	17	17	609	25.3
5-9	10	10	476	19.8
10-15	10	10	515	21.4
16-20	9	9	413	17.2
21-25	24	24	246	10.2
26-30	9	9	120	5.0
31-35	8	8	25	1.0
36-40	6	6	1	0.1
40+	1	1	0	
Not stated	6	6		
Total	100	100	2405	100

Table 3.4 shows the participant responses when asked to nominate their teacher category.

Table 3.4.

*Teacher Category (self-nominated)*

Teacher Category	Frequency
Lower	29
Middle	25
Upper	24
Specialist	10
Principal	2
Assistant principal in Religious Education	2
Administration	1
Teacher Aide	1
Not stated	6
Total	100

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they had participated in any courses related to the topics being surveyed; in particular any Indigenous studies courses, Indigenous history courses or the Cultural awareness course implemented by Brisbane Catholic Education. The results are summarised in Tables 3.5.

Table 3.5.

*Number of respondents who participated in Formal Education*

Formal Education	Frequency
Indigenous studies courses	21
Indigenous History courses	20
BCEC Cultural Awareness Course	28
Any of the three courses	43

The number of participants who attended any of the courses was forty-three. Fifty-one respondents indicated that they had not participated in any formal education in the areas of Indigenous studies or Indigenous history. As mentioned previously the remaining six participants chose not to complete the demographics section of the survey.

Further analysis of the attending forty-three participants showed that fifteen had attended only the BCE Cultural Awareness Course, five had only attended a course in Indigenous studies and two had only participated in a Indigenous history course. Five of the respondents had participated in all three of the courses; three had attended the

BCE Cultural Awareness Course and an Indigenous studies course; five had attended the BCE Cultural Awareness Course and an Indigenous history course; and eight had attended both an Indigenous studies and Indigenous history course. Table 3.6 summarises this data.

Table 3.6.  
*Further analysis of course attendance*

Course Combinations	Number of participants
BCEC Cultural Awareness Course	15
Indigenous Studies	5
Indigenous History	2
BCEC Cultural Awareness Course, Indigenous Studies <b>and</b> Indigenous History	5
BCEC Cultural Awareness Course <b>and</b> Indigenous Studies	3
BCEC Cultural Awareness Course <b>and</b> Indigenous History	5
Indigenous Studies <b>and</b> Indigenous History	8
Total	43

It should be noted that the survey did not identify specific courses. Courses existing in the Brisbane area with regards to these issues tend to fall into two distinct categories; Indigenous studies or Indigenous history. Appendices C and D list the courses available to students at QUT, ACU and UQ in the area of Indigenous Studies (Appendix D) and Indigenous History (Appendix E).

### 3.5 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

It was decided to use two questionnaires to gather data for this investigation. It is more cost effective (in financial as well as temporal terms) to administer a questionnaire to a dispersed population than to conduct face to face interviews, especially when the instructions can be explained clearly in print. Other benefits of questionnaires include the consistent manner in which questions can be presented to the respondents, a greater perception of anonymity among subjects, and the fact that administering a questionnaire is not overly time consuming (Lewis & Munn, 1987; Munn & Drever, 1990). The general benefits of a questionnaire make this an appropriate means of collecting data for this investigation.

The questionnaires for this research project were developed in 2002 by the researcher. This was necessary as there were no established questionnaires to assess attitudes

towards the reconciliation process. The survey was made up of four parts: the introduction; a set of demographic questions; the first questionnaire designed to assess teachers' attitudes to the reconciliation process; and the second questionnaire designed to assess teachers' knowledge of Australian Indigenous history. Each of these components of the survey is described below.

### **3.5.1 The Introduction**

The introductory component (Appendix F) of the survey was a letter that introduced the project and the researcher to the participants. This letter stated that the research project was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee, the Catholic Education Executive Office and the principal of the participant's school. In addition to this, the letter also provided contact information that the respondent could use in the event that a problem or concern arose from the administration of, or participation in the survey.

### **3.5.2 Demographic Questions**

The second section of the survey (Appendix G) contained a series of demographic questions. Information collected in this segment of the survey included data on participant age, teaching experience, and area of expertise. The researcher sought to collect information on the gender of the participants in this study. The collection of these data was not approved by the ethics committee as it was thought to remove a degree of anonymity. Teachers were also asked to indicate whether or not they had participated in formal education on Indigenous studies, Indigenous history, or cultural awareness.

The placement of the demographic questions at this stage of the survey is in keeping with the recommendations of Burns (1997, p. 475). Burns suggested that demographic questions should be positioned early in the survey because they are usually inoffensive and "lead the respondent well into the questionnaire, thereby making it more difficult to withdraw" (Burns 1997, p. 475). This was an important consideration for an investigation such as this.

### **3.5.3 The Development of the Questionnaire Relating to Attitudes to Reconciliation**

The third part of the survey (Appendix H) was a questionnaire designed to measure the participants' attitudes towards the reconciliation process. The questionnaire

consists of 40 closed questions. These questions were composed within the context of the Reconciliation Documents (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993a-i). The participants were asked to rate their feelings on a Likert scale (0-10) in response to a number of statements relating to the 10 key issues for reconciliation outlined by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (refer to Appendix H). The 10 key issues were Understanding Country, Improving Relationships, Valuing Cultures, Sharing History, Addressing Disadvantage, Custody Levels, Controlling Destiny, Formal Document, Native Title and Stolen Generations. (See Literature Review, Section 2.2.2 for a fuller description).

Major themes were selected from each of the key issues raised by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1993a-i). These themes were used to write four statements relating to each issue. These statements were used on the attitude instrument. Agreement with these statements was seen as evidence of a positive attitude towards reconciliation. An example of how these statements were generated for the issue of Sharing History is outlined below.

The document “Addressing the Key Issues for Reconciliation” (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993b) refers to the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history to the reconciliation process. It suggests that, “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel aggrieved that their histories have been ignored. It is very important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that histories which have hitherto been biased against them are subjected to rigorous analysis or replaced in educational programs and institutional work...” (p. 38). In addition it is indicated that for reconciliation to take place “a sense of acceptance about the past wrongs committed against Australia’s Indigenous peoples, and that the plight of many today is recognised as the consequence of that history” (p.38). The following statements were formulated as representative of these themes:

- Australia was illegally settled in 1788.
- It is important to know the Indigenous history of your local area.
- The history taught in schools places undue emphasis on the European perspective.
- Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.



Appendix I summarises the statements used to represent the other nine issues for reconciliation. The statements and their links to the 10 key issues were reviewed and approved by people with expertise in the area of Indigenous Affairs, SOSE and research methods. These experts were drawn from Australian Catholic University and the Brisbane Catholic Education office (including members of the Indigenous units of both of these authorities). The review process involved the distribution of the survey to respected individuals in each of the aforementioned areas (e.g. Associate Professor Jeff Dorman from ACU (McAuley Campus) reviewed the survey from a research perspective). After the surveys had been perused, minor format changes were made on the basis of the reviewers' suggestions.

### **3.5.3.1 Nature of questionnaire items**

Closed questions were used in this data collection tool in order to provide responses that could be objectively coded, compared and statistically analysed. The use of a Likert scale allowed the researcher to quantify the strength of each participant's response to the issue raised. This was an important advantage as the researcher wished to analyse these data quantitatively. Likert scales have also been demonstrated to provide a reliable ordering of subjects with respect to a particular attitude (Oppenheim, 1992). This was important to this investigation as teacher attitude was the construct to be measured by this instrument. Other advantages of using the Likert method include the ease with which the instrument can be prepared, and the fact that the data collected reflects the subjects' responses rather than the subjective opinion or interpretation of the researcher (Burns, 1997). A final advantage is the ease with which participants can complete a Likert scale. The researcher believed that by reducing the time taken to complete the questionnaire the response rate to the survey would improve.

It should be noted that although the scale given to the respondents had scores from 0-10, the permissible responses only included discrete even numbers, that is, 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. The purpose of this was to avoid giving the number 5 as a possible response. The omission of the central number of this range was done to reduce the number of "non-attitude" responses exhibited by the participants.

### **3.5.4 The Development of the Questionnaire Relating to Knowledge of Indigenous History**

The fourth part of the survey (Appendix J) was a questionnaire that was developed to ascertain the participants' level of knowledge about Australia's history, with particular reference to Indigenous perspectives. It was initially composed of open questions that asked teachers to demonstrate their knowledge. These questions were derived from reputable encyclopedic sources such as *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins* (Jupp, (Ed)) *The Macquarie Encyclopedia of Australian Events* and *The Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia* (Horton, (Ed.)). In selecting questions the researcher sought to address a number of categories including sport, culture, government, art, geography, history, and language.

During pilot testing it was found that the original items on the history test were too difficult. This was apparent in the low scores achieved by the seventeen participants in the pilot project. In addition it was difficult to objectively evaluate different responses to the same question. In response to these findings a less difficult multiple-choice test was developed for this part of the survey. In keeping with the recommendations of Oppenheim (1966) the responses to the original free-response form of the test were used to guide appropriate responses to the multiple-choice items. In addition the number of items on the history test was reduced from forty to twenty to reduce the time taken to complete the test and hence increase response rate and reduce the likelihood of non-response errors.

The history test was placed after the attitude questionnaire so that there was less chance of the respondents' attitudes being temporarily modified by their consideration of the items on this test. It could not be determined whether completing the history test prior to the attitude survey would have any effect on participant attitudes, but, it is possible that considering the points raised might exercise the more cognitive elements of the attitude spectrum being measured and lead to a greater tendency to provide a socially desirable response (Oppenheim, 1966). Furthermore, the use of two slightly different questionnaires makes it possible that respondents might be affected differently depending on which questionnaire they had completed first.

As previously stated, the survey was pre-tested in a pilot project. The pilot project sample consisted of about 20 staff from one Catholic primary school. The use of pre-testing is recommended by Burns (1997) as a way of determining whether or not a

particular investigation should proceed. The pilot project revealed information that led to the continuation of this study. In addition to this the pilot study was also valuable in identifying a number of problems (described above) with the initial questionnaire. These problems were addressed prior to the implementation of this investigation.

### **3.6 VALIDATION AND RELIABILITY PROCEDURES**

The key constructs measured by this investigation were the attitudes to reconciliation, and the level of knowledge about Australia's History that teachers in Catholic Primary Schools have. If this was to be a valid and reliable investigation the indicators of these constructs (the questionnaire responses) had to reflect accurately their feelings and actions regarding the knowledge of Australia's History and teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation.

#### **3.6.1 Reliability**

Reliability refers to the stability, accuracy and dependability of the data – “how consistent test scores or other evaluation results are from one measurement to another.” (Gronlund, 1985, p. 93)

The method used in this investigation to measure reliability is the internal consistency method. Internal consistency is determined by checking the components of a questionnaire against each other by means of the calculation of a series of correlation coefficients (Burns, 2000, p 343). The researcher selected Cronbach's Alpha as the standard for assessing the reliability of the attitude inventory. This statistical measure is based on the average correlation of questions within a scale. A positive response to one item on the questionnaire should be mirrored by positive responses to related items on the instrument. The correlation between questions can vary between -1.00 and 1.00, with 0.00 meaning no correlation and 1.00 meaning perfect positive correlation. The guidelines in Table 3.7 have been proposed by DeVellis (1991) regarding acceptable reliabilities for research instrument scales:

Table 3.7

*DeVellis Reliability Guidelines*

Cronbach's Alpha	Guideline
Below .60	Unacceptable
Between .60 and .65	Undesirable
Between .65 and .70	Minimally acceptable
Between .70 and .80	Respectable
Between .80 and .95	Very Good

(DeVellis, 1991, p. 85).

It can be seen in Table 3.8 that a value of .7 or above indicates an acceptable level of reliability. The value of Cronbach's Alpha for the instrument used in this study was .96 (refer Appendix K), hence the scale used can be considered reliable.

Appendix L shows item characteristics including item-total correlations. It should be noted that items 12 and 22 are very poorly correlated with the sum of the remaining items (Corrected Item-Total Correlation = .126 and .195 respectively). The statements in question are:

Item 12: When walking in my town I feel threatened when I see an Aboriginal person.

Item 22: Aboriginal Australians and other Australians will always be in conflict.

A number of further steps were taken to ensure that the instrument was reliable:

- The history test was re-written as a multiple choice inventory so as to minimize any subjectivity of judgment.
- Clear and concise language was used to avoid misinterpretation of the questions and ambiguous responses.
- The researcher avoided leading questions that could pressure participants into giving responses that did not reflect their true feelings. (e.g. "Australia was illegally settled in 1788." is used instead of "Australia was invaded in 1788." This wording avoids the emotive connotations associated with the word "invaded", connotations that may prompt an inaccurate response.

- Multiple indicators of the same measure were used as a reliability check. For example: the following questions required the participants to rate their attitudes on a Likert scale:

Statement 10: An apology to the stolen generations would facilitate the reconciliation process.

<b>0</b> <b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Disagree</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>6</b> <b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>8</b> <b>Agree</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Strongly Agree</b>
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Statement 20: Apologising to the stolen generations is not necessary to the reconciliation process.

<b>0</b> <b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Disagree</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>6</b> <b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>8</b> <b>Agree</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Strongly Agree</b>
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It can be seen that agreement with the first statement is likely to correspond with disagreement with the second statement. Similarly disagreement with the first statement should be coupled with agreement to the second statement. The second statement thus acted as a reliability check for the first statement.

The scatterplot below shows the relationship between participants' responses to statement 10 and their responses to statement 20. For the purposes of comparison the scores registered in response to statement 20 were negatively loaded to reflect the negative wording of this item. The resulting plot revealed a strong positive relationship. This relationship was investigated by calculating Pearson's product-moment coefficient, and a strong positive correlation was revealed [ $r=.846$ ,  $n=100$ ,  $p<.01$ ]. This correlation indicates that similar scores are being recorded for these separate indicators of the same measure, suggesting consistency within the instrument.

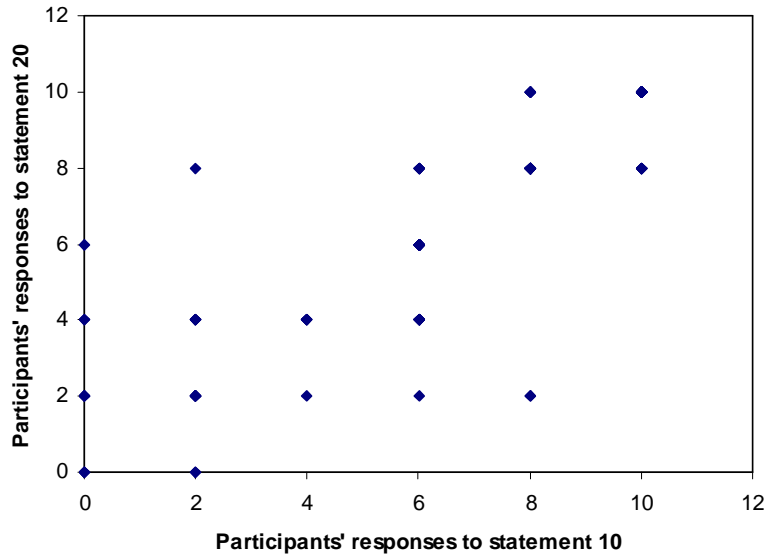


Figure 3.2. Participants' responses to statement 10 correlated with participants' responses to statement 20

### 3.6.2 Validity

“Validity refers to how well a test measures a given area, under certain circumstances and with a given group” (Burns, 2000, p. 350).

#### 3.6.2.1 Internal Validity

In an effort to ensure that any observed correlation between knowledge and attitude could be attributed to the variables measured, the researcher attempted to control a number of aspects of the investigation to maximise internal validity.

The reliability of the attitude questionnaire was established using the methods outlined in 3.5.1. The Introduction. In addition to this the validity of the instrument was also analysed by people with expertise in the areas of Indigenous Issues, Curriculum and research methods. The questionnaire was sent to Catholic Education Brisbane to be reviewed by the Indigenous Education department. The instrument was also viewed by staff from Weemala, the Indigenous assistance department, at the McAuley Campus of ACU. A senior lecturer with expertise in the SOSE curriculum also analysed the instrument. The structure of the instrument was approved by senior staff at ACU with expertise in educational research and research design. Feedback from the various sources indicated that the survey reflected the 10 key issues outlined by the Council for Reconciliation.

The history test was also subjected to considerable scrutiny and underwent modification in response to observations made during pilot testing. The history test

was placed after the attitude questionnaire so that there was less chance of the respondents' attitudes being temporarily modified by their consideration of items on the test. The chance of observer error was removed, as it was not necessary to supervise the participants. The test was self-administered and participants were provided with clear and unambiguous instructions.

### **3.6.2.2 External Validity**

The external validity of an investigation relates to the ability of the findings to be generalised to a broader range of settings. Appropriate sampling techniques are important in ensuring external validity.

Cluster sampling techniques were used to randomly obtain a list of schools from which to draw participants for this study. This was achieved by assigning a number to each of the 107 schools in the diocese and then randomly selecting a cluster of 50 schools to represent the total population. The principal of each of the schools selected was approached with regard to participation in the study. Beyond the initial stages of selection, the sampling technique could best be categorised as non-random, volunteer sampling in which schools and participants were invited to participate. In response to these invitations 11 schools agreed to be involved in the study from which 100 participants were obtained. These processes are outlined in detail in section 3.3 The Sample Selection Process.

There are a number of potential sources of error inherent in the sampling methods used in this investigation. These include the potential for cluster sampling to produce less accurate results due to higher sampling error, as well as the possibility that the schools and teachers from within the cluster who volunteered for the study not being representative of the overall population.

Although there was the aforementioned possibility of sampling error, the cluster sampling technique used has the advantage of being cost effective and practical. In addition the use of volunteer sampling ensured that privacy issues and teacher workload were taken into consideration. Despite these shortcomings, the broad range of age and experience of the participants is representative of the staff at any Catholic primary school.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

The use of closed questions in the data collection tool provided responses that the researcher could accurately code, compare and statistically analyse. The use of a Likert scale allowed the researcher to quantify the strength of each participant's response to the issue raised. It should be noted that although the scale given to the respondents has scores from 0-10, the permissible responses only include discrete even numbers that is 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10. The purpose of this is to avoid giving the number 5 as a possible response. The omission of the central number of this range is done to reduce the number of "non-attitude" responses exhibited by the participants.

The results of the test were correlated with the results of the attitude scale. The results of this comparison were used to verify the researcher's hypothesis: that a positive attitude towards reconciliation coincides with a thorough knowledge of Australian History. A complete description of the data analysis together with summary tables and figures are presented in Chapter 4.

### **3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES**

Ethical clearance to carry out this research project was obtained from the Australian Catholic University National Human Research Ethics Committee and the Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education. Numbering all surveys with a corresponding answer sheet ensured anonymity of the information provided by the participants. The surveys were then returned to the principal who in turn mailed the surveys and answer sheets to the researcher. Individual responses to the survey are referred to numerically in subsequent data analysis or discussion. In addition to this the schools' names are not mentioned in the presentation of the research findings.

Each questionnaire was prefaced by an explanation to facilitate proper completion of the survey. For the convenience of the participants it was suggested to the principals of the participating schools that the data collection instrument should be distributed to the participants at a staff meeting. Respondents could then be allocated time during the staff meeting to complete the questionnaire. The researcher is not aware of whether these recommendations were adhered to. The completed surveys were returned by mail to the researcher in the numbered A4 envelopes provided.



### 3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the link between Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. The investigation was approached from the positivist epistemological paradigm, and used quantitative methods of data collection and analysis.

The sample consisted of 100 staff from 11 Brisbane Catholic Education Primary Schools. These were those that agreed to participate from a group of 50 schools approached by the researcher. The schools approached were randomly selected from all of the Catholic Education Primary Schools within the Brisbane Diocese. The participants surveyed consisted of teachers whose number of years teaching experience varied from less than 1 year to 45 years. The teachers sampled included classroom teachers, principals, special education teachers, specialised teachers and librarians. The age of the participants in this study reflect the age distribution of teachers employed in Catholic primary schools in Brisbane, whereas the years of teaching experience of the participants was somewhat more than the general BCEC teaching population. Forty three of the participants had received some formal education in the areas of Indigenous studies or Indigenous history.

A questionnaire was used to survey the teachers' attitudes towards the reconciliation process. The survey questions were composed within the context of the reconciliation Documents (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993). The participants were required to rate their feelings on a Likert scale (0-10) in response to a number of statements relating to the 10 key issues for reconciliation outlined by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. Agreement with these statements was seen as evidence of a positive attitude towards reconciliation.

A second questionnaire was administered to assess the teachers' knowledge of Australian Indigenous history. This consisted of 20 multiple choice questions derived from sources such as *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins* (Jupp, 2001), *The Macquarie Encyclopedia of Australian Events* and *The Encyclopedia of Aboriginal Australia* (Horton, 1994). The questions addressed a number of categories including sport, culture, government, art, geography, history, and language.

All items developed for the investigation were subjected to reliability and validity checks and were also analysed by people with expertise in the area of Indigenous Issues, Curriculum and research methods. The structure of the instruments was approved by senior lecturers at ACU with expertise in educational research and research design. Feedback from the appropriate sources indicated that the survey reflected the 10 key issues outlined by the Council for Reconciliation. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Australian Catholic University National Human Research Ethics Committee and the Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education.

The data from each instrument were quantitatively analysed. The next chapter describes the results of these analyses in detail.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In order to ascertain the relationship between teachers' attitude towards the process of reconciliation and knowledge of Indigenous Australian history two surveys were administered to a sample of 100 teachers employed in 11 Brisbane Catholic Education primary schools. This chapter presents the results in four sections.

Section 4.2 reports basic descriptive data about the participants' responses to the attitude survey, response patterns to individual items and the response patterns of each school. The results of a factor analysis and a one-way analysis of variance between groups are then presented and explained. The groups analysed in relation to the five scales identified from the factor analysis were:

- Teacher category (upper, middle, or lower primary)
- Teacher experience (0-10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30, 31< years)
- Teacher age (21-30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years, 51< years)

Section 4.3 presents basic descriptive data about the participants' responses to the history test.

Section 4.4 outlines data in relation to respondents' participation in formal education in the area of Indigenous studies or Indigenous history. Relationships between course participation and attitude score are analysed for significance. In addition the relationship between course participation and mean attitude score towards each of the five factors is also analysed.

Section 4.5 examines the correlation between individual scores on the attitude survey history test results.

This study investigates the link between the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. The specific research questions addressed were:

- What are the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers to the reconciliation process?

- How knowledgeable is this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers with respect to key aspects of Indigenous history?
- What influence does participation in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component have on the knowledge and attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers?
- What is the relationship between this sample of teacher attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history?

## **4.2 ATTITUDES OF BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION PRIMARY TEACHERS TO THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS**

In order to explore Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers attitudes to the reconciliation process an attitude questionnaire was designed. The questions asked reflected 10 key issues for reconciliation as outlined by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation; 1993a-i). The specific aim of the questionnaire was to assess teachers' attitudes towards the reconciliation process.

The questionnaire consisted of 40 statements to which participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement. A Likert scale was used to quantify the participants' responses to each statement. The scale given to the respondents had scores from 0-10, the permissible responses only included discrete even numbers, that is 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. (Refer to methodology 3.6.3 for the specifics of this scale.). The questionnaire was distributed across 11 primary schools in the Brisbane Diocese, with 100 teachers returning the completed questionnaire. The number of teachers in each school and the number of respondents from each school is summarised in Section 3 in tables 3.1 and 3.2.

### **4.2.1 Analysis of participants' responses to attitude survey**

Basic descriptive statistical data were gathered to summarise the participants' responses. For each item the number of participant responses, the range, mean and standard deviation was calculated using SPSS. This was achieved by assigning a numerical value to each of the Likert scale responses. Answers 'strongly agree' were assigned the upper value of ten, with each response descending in value until reaching a value of 0 for the response 'strongly disagree'.

The overall attitude score for each teacher was obtained by adding all of the responses to each of the 40 items on the questionnaire. The mean score of all of the teachers sampled was on the positive side of the Likert scale of agreement ( $M = 261.8$  and  $SD = 64.4$ ). This indicates a mean of 6.5 was scored per questionnaire item, indicating that the participants tended to agree with the majority of items on the survey rather than disagree with them.

#### **4.2.1.1 Analysis of Attitude Score according to item**

The mean attitude score for each item is presented in the Appendix M. Table 4.1 outlines descriptive statistics for selected items on the attitude survey. The items selected are those with the five highest mean level of agreement, as well as the two statements with which level of agreement was lowest. The items are presented in descending order according to the mean attitude response. The higher the mean score the more favourable the participants' attitude towards the individual statement. The lower the mean score the less favourable the participants' attitude towards the individual statement.

It can be seen in the following table that there are five statements with a mean attitude response greater than eight. These items relate to the understanding of Indigenous history and culture. Section 4.2.2 examines these trends in greater detail. The item with the highest mean score of 8.36 was statement 33: "Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago." The next highest mean score is 8.26 for statement 2: "It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community." The third highest mean score is 8.19 for statement 14: "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong cultural and spiritual attachments to the land and sea."

Table 4.1

*Descriptive Statistics for High-scored and Low-scored Attitude Items*

<i>Highest scored Attitude Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
33. Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.	97	2	10	8.43	1.51
2. It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community.	99	0	10	8.28	1.59
14 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong cultural and spiritual attachments to the land and sea.	99	0	10	8.22	2.27
34. Our Indigenous cultures are a core part of what is distinctive about Australia.	98	2	10	8.14	1.78
32. Including Australian history from an Indigenous perspective should be an essential part of our curriculum.	97	2	10	8.08	1.78
<i>Lowest scored Attitude Items</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
39. Recent rulings on native title do not threaten the security of non-Indigenous landowners.	94	0	10	4.45	2.58
28. Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments.	97	0	10	4.39	2.67

B: For clarity the items that were negatively loaded have been reworded.

It can also be seen that there are two statements with a mean attitude response less than five. Lowest mean scores are 4.39 for statement 28: “Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments.” The second lowest mean score was 4.45 for statement 39: “Recent rulings on native title do not threaten the security of non-Indigenous landowners.”

The response patterns to individual items were also examined. The distribution of participant responses for each of the 40 items is provided in Appendix N. It can be seen from these data that the majority of the patterns of response mirror a normal distribution with a slight positive bias. The participants’ responses to statement 9 exemplify this pattern. This response pattern is presented in Figure 4.1.

**Traditional landowners and language groups of a particular region should be recognised.**

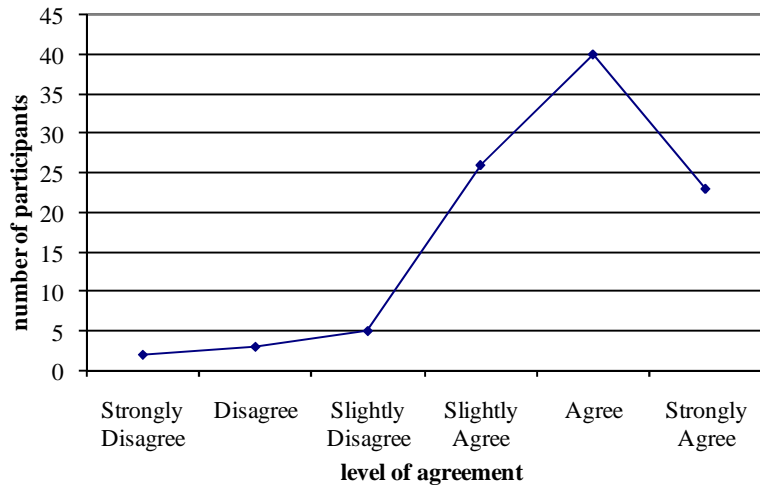


Figure 4.1. Participants' responses to statement 9

Exceptions to this trend of positive responses with a normal distribution include the responses to statement 8: "A formal apology from the government would aid the reconciliation process". In responding to this statement the participants appear to occupy two distinct groups – those in agreement with the statement, and those who disagree. This is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

**A formal apology from the government would aid the reconciliation process.**

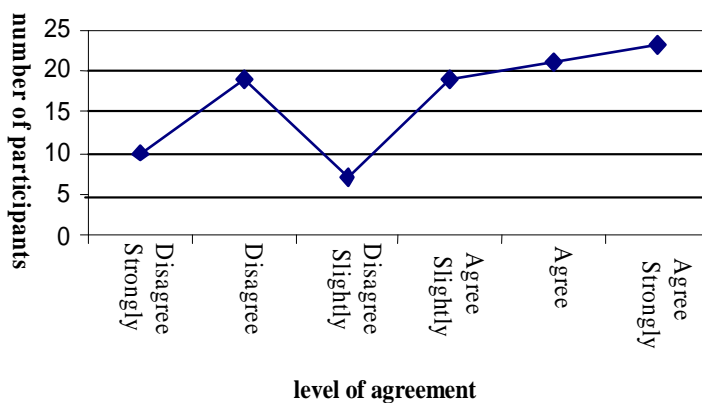


Figure 4.2. Participants' responses to statement 8.

An almost unanimous agreement was observed in response to statement 33: "Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago". Only one respondent registered disagreement with this statement. This is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

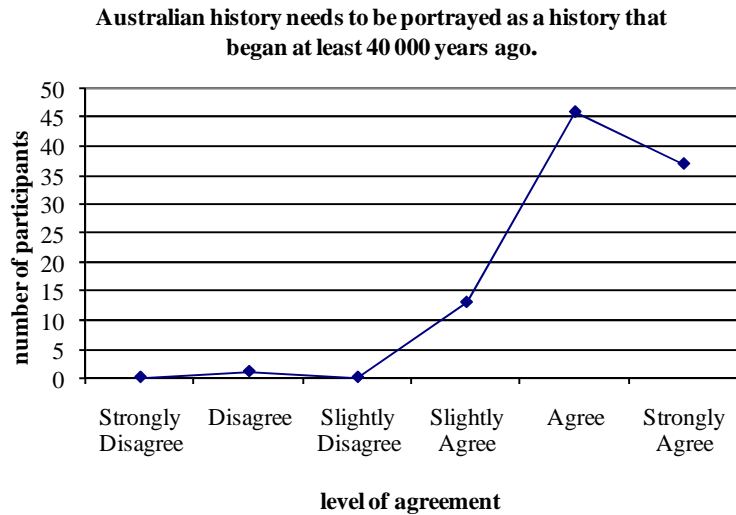


Figure 4.3 Participant's responses to statement 33.

A further exception to the overall pattern of agreement was observed in the responses to statement 28: "Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments".

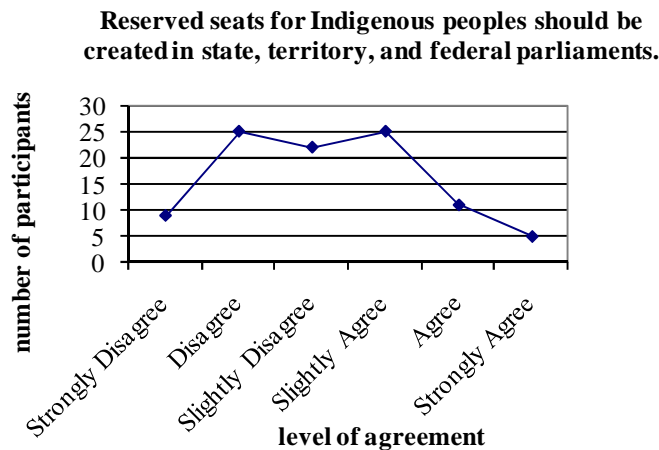


Figure 4.4. Participants' responses to statement 28

Figure 4.4 shows that more than half (56 out of 100) of the respondents disagreed with this statement, indicating that majority of the sample do not support the idea of creating reserved seats for Indigenous peoples in state, territory and federal parliaments.

It is apparent from these initial analyses of mean responses to the attitude survey that most of the participants strongly agreed with items relating to acknowledging that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong connections to the land, are a core part of Australian culture, and have a history that should be included in school



curricula. The two areas with which these teachers appeared most concerned were the perceived threat that native title may have to non-Indigenous landowners, and Indigenous peoples having reserved seats in governing bodies such as state, territory and federal parliaments. The trends within the data are examined in greater depth in Section 4.2.2.

#### **4.2.1.2 Analysis of Attitude Score according to location (school)**

In addition to calculating a mean attitude score for the entire sample, the response patterns of each school were also examined. A mean attitude total for each school was calculated. This calculation was achieved by adding the attitude totals of each participant from the school. Each participant had a maximum possible score of 400 - achieved by registering a score of 10 (“strongly agree”) for each of the 40 items. The school’s aggregate attitude score was divided by the number of participants at that school. Figure 4.5 shows the mean attitude totals of each of the 11 participating schools arranged in descending order.

It can be seen that all schools’ totals are above the midpoint of the attitude scale (i.e. all scores exceed 200). Despite this apparent similarity there was a statistically significant difference between the mean attitude totals of the different schools ( $F_{(10,89)}=2.98, p<.05$ ).

The difference in mean attitude totals was greatest between schools G and H. School G was observed to have the highest mean attitude totals, whilst School H had the lowest score. School G is an inner Brisbane school with a population cap of 120 students and a staff of nine. Three of the staff from school G participated in the survey. Approximately 30% of the students at school G identify as Indigenous and the schools vision is one of “Reconciliation through Education”. School H is a larger suburban school with an enrolment of over 500 pupils and 32 staff members, 29 of which participated in the survey.

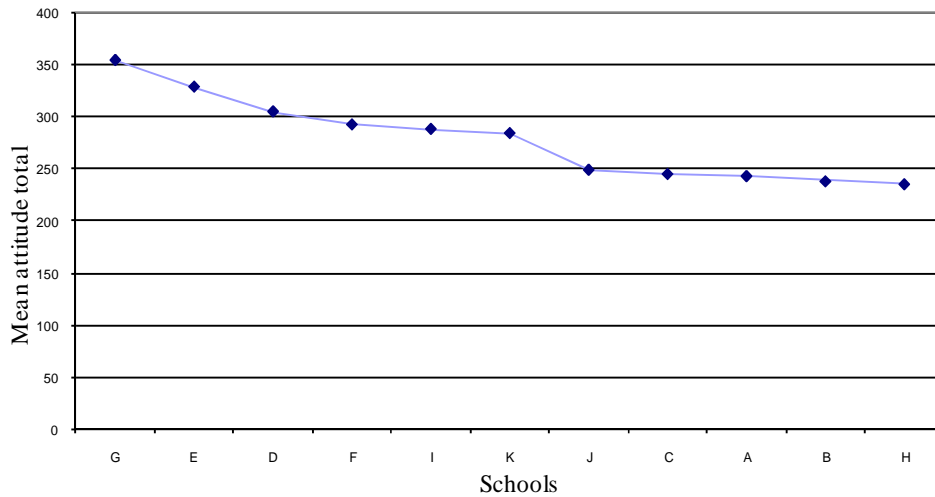


Figure 4.5. Individual Schools' Mean Attitude total.

The other schools' mean attitude totals were distributed between these two extremes. Examination of the graph shows that this distribution is clustered, with one group of schools (G, E, D, F I. K) displaying a tendency toward higher mean attitude totals, and a second group (J, C, A, B, H) registering lower totals.

Schools J and K represented the upper and lower extremes (respectively) of each cluster. Statistical analysis indicated that no significant difference in attitude total existed between these individual schools,  $t_{(19)}=1.04$ ,  $p=0.31$ . It should be noted that this t-test had low statistical power due to the small size of school K ( $n=4$ ).

The data for cluster one (schools G, E, D, F I. K) and cluster two (schools J, C, A, B, H) were also analysed. Descriptively the mean attitude total for cluster one was 302.89, whereas the mean for cluster two was 241.39. The student t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the two clusters. The results of the t-test ( $t_{(98)}=5.02$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) indicate a significant difference in mean attitude total between the two clusters. There was no discernible reason for this observed difference: Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 both included large and small schools, from similar ranges of geographic location, and similar variability in socioeconomic status.

#### 4.2.1.3 Analysis of Attitude Score according to participation rate

In a further effort to locate patterns within the data the relationship between attitude score and participation rate (refer to table 3.2 in section 3.3) was examined. A negative correlation (-.553) was observed between school participation rate and attitude score, i.e. the greater proportion of a school's staff that participated in the survey, the lower the mean attitude score for that school. It could be inferred that the

respondents from schools with a lower participation rate had elected to do so as a result of a personal interest in reconciliation or Indigenous history. This personal interest may have been reflected in a more favourable score on the attitude questionnaire.

#### **4.2.1.4 Analysis of Attitude Score according to teacher category**

A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to investigate the relationship between the self identified teacher category and attitude towards reconciliation. Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of the year level at which they taught (Group 1: lower primary, Group 2: middle primary, Group 3: upper primary, and Group 4: specialist). The attitude score of teachers from these categories did not differ significantly.

#### **4.2.1.5 Analysis of Attitude Score according to years of teaching experience**

A one-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to investigate the relationship between the years teaching experience and attitude towards reconciliation. Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of the number of years of teaching experience (Group 1: 0- 9 years, Group 2: 10-20 years, Group 3: 21-30 years, Group 4: 31-40 years). Years of teaching experience did not appear to have a significant influence on attitude.

#### **4.2.1.6 Analysis of Attitude according to age of participants**

An additional ANOVA was conducted to investigate the relationship between the age of participants and attitude. Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of age (Group 1: 21-30, Group 2: 31-40, Group 3: 41-50, Group 4: 51-65 years). There was no significant difference between the attitude scores of participants of different ages.

These analyses of the impact of demographic data on overall attitude to reconciliation revealed that teacher category, teaching experience and age of participants did not appear to influence the participants' overall attitude score. There was, however, a significant difference between the attitude scores of different schools. This difference was greatest between schools G and H. School G, a small inner Brisbane school with a focus on "Reconciliation through Education", had the highest score. School H, a large suburban school had the lowest score. Another difference between these schools was that only one third of the nine staff at school G elected to participate in the

survey, whereas 29 of the 32 staff at school H were involved. When this relationship was examined more broadly it was found that this negative correlation between participation rate and attitude score was true for the whole dataset.

The subsequent section discusses the results of data reduction methods that were employed to detect underlying themes within the survey response data.

#### **4.2.2 Identification of underlying themes (Factor Analysis)**

In order to detect the structural relationship between participants' responses, factor analytic techniques were utilised. The specific technique selected was a principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation. This data reduction method involves summarising the correlation between several variables. Close relationships between variables can be used to define factors that are representative of the larger dataset. These new factors are linear combinations of the variables that they describe and represent underlying themes in the data.

To identify these underlying themes, the set of items S1 to S40 were analysed using principal components factor analysis followed by a varimax rotation. Inspection of the results indicated that two factors were degenerate, each consisting of a substantial loading on only one item. Accordingly, items 4, "Aboriginal people today have a strong culture", and 12, "When walking in my town I do not feel threatened when I see an Aboriginal person", were deleted and the remaining 38 items were analysed again using a principal components factor analysis followed by a varimax rotation. The resulting scree plot is displayed in figure 4.6.

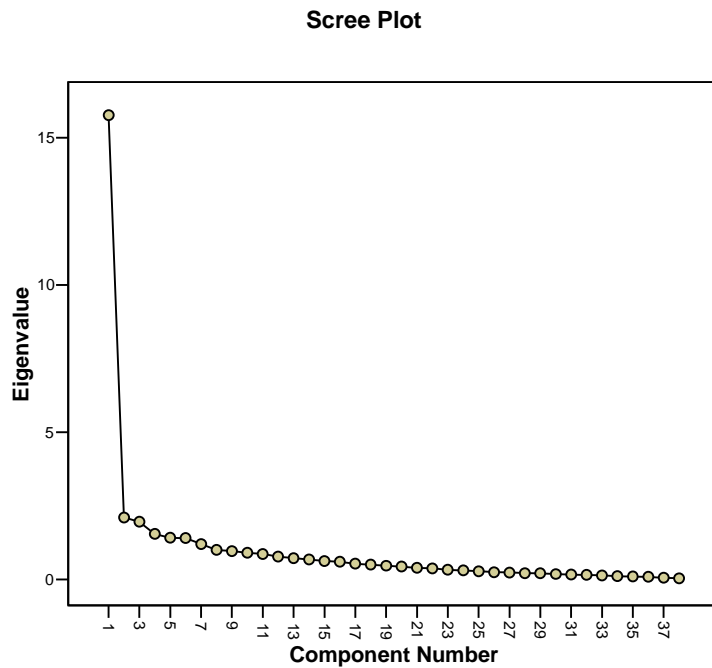


Figure 4.6. Scree plot of factor analysis

The scree test was used to identify the factors that had the largest contribution to the explanation of the variation in the dataset. In keeping with the recommendations of Cattell (1966) all factors above the point at which the scree plot became horizontal were retained. There were 7 factors identified by this method. In addition to Cattell's recommendations, Kaiser's criterion states when identifying factors consideration should be given to factors with eigenvalues that exceed 1. All 7 factors identified using Catell's scree test met this criterion.

This resulting 7-factor solution accounted for 66.773% of the variance. Inspection of the solution indicated that all but the last two factors were interpretable. This solution was accepted. The factors that could not be interpreted (factor 6 and 7) had three and two items respectively (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3).

Table 4.2.

Factor 6: Rejected factor

#	Statements	Loading
S13	It is important to know the Indigenous history of your local area.	.68
S22	Aboriginal Australians and other Australians will always be in conflict.	.65
S2	It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community.	.55

Table 4.3.

Factor 7: Rejected factor

#	Statements	Loading
S28	Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments.	-.54
S17	Aborigines were conquered in an undeclared war, so they have a right of redress.	.63

Inspection of these items did not reveal any obvious conceptual links and hence these factors were rejected. In order to ascertain the internal reliability of items within each of the two factors Cronbach's Alphas were calculated. The low values of Cronbach's Alpha (Factor six: .57 and factor seven: .04) for these items supported the decision to exclude factor 6 and 7 from any further analysis. On these bases factors 6 and 7 cannot be considered reliable. These items can be considered "stand alone" items along with the other ungrouped items S4 and S12.

The five factors that were interpretable accounted for 56.730% of the variance. The five factors were made up of 34 items. For the purposes of clarity and presentation, items with a loading lower than .430 have been omitted.

The naming of factors was guided by the nature of the associated items. The factors generated and their respective names are as follows:

Factor 1: Acknowledgment of injustices

Factor 2: ATSI Rights: Land and Social

Factor 3: Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture

Factor 4: Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage

Factor 5: Self Determination

The five factors identified are discussed in the following section.

Factor one was identified with reference to eight items with major loadings. Table 4.4 lists these 8 items together with the loadings of each item for this factor.

Table 4.4.

*Factor 1: Acknowledgment of Injustices*

#	Statement	Loading
S38	A formalised statement would make a difference to the reconciliation process.	.78
S30	The systematic separation of Aboriginal children from their parents is a past wrong that must be formally acknowledged.	.76
S20	Apologising to the stolen generation is necessary to the reconciliation process.	.76
S10	An apology to the stolen generations would facilitate the reconciliation process.	.73
S8	A formal apology from the government would aid the reconciliation process.	.67
S40	The Stolen Generation should not be forgotten because there is nothing to be gained from dwelling on the past.	.60
S23	The history taught in schools places undue emphasis on the European perspective.	.53
S26	Entrenched racism and discrimination have contributed to the extent of Aboriginal deaths in custody.	.49

NB: Loadings were reported after correction of positive and negative directions of responses that were used for analysis.

It can be seen that items 10, 20, 30 and 40 refer to the stolen generation, whilst items 8 and 38 refer to a formal apology. The remaining two statements also relate to this theme of injustice. The common theme in these items is injustices and the acknowledgment thereof. Consequently, factor one has been named Acknowledgement of injustices.

Factor two was identified with reference to ten items with major loadings. Table 4.5 lists these 10 items together with the loadings of each item for this factor.

The table below shows that items 37, 21, 19, 1, 11, 3, 29 refer to land rights of traditional owners, whilst items 16, and 18 refer to traditional rights. The factor has been named ATSI Rights: Land and Social.

Table 4.5.

Factor 2: ATSI Rights: Land and Social

#	Statements	Loading
S16	Police and justice systems should recognise customary (traditional) law.	.63
S18	The process of reconciliation will be advanced by; passing a formal document that confirms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights.	.60
S37	The Commonwealth should pass laws providing a national system of land rights.	.56
S21	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should have access to sacred sites on private properties.	.58
S19	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander property rights pre-exist and survive colonization	.57
S1	Australian law should recognise native title.	.59
S15	The poor health of Aboriginal people is a government problem.	.54
S11	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly those living in remote Australia under traditional laws, should still hold native title.	.50
S3	Australia was settled in 1788.	.45
S29	Unoccupied crown land should be restored to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people claiming cultural, historical/traditional association.	.43

Factor three was identified with reference to four items with major loadings. These 4 items and their loadings are presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6

*Factor 3: Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture*

#	Statements	Loading
S33	Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.	.82
S24	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture should be taught in our schools.	.74
S32	Including Australian history from an Indigenous perspective should be an essential part of our curriculum.	.74
S34	Our Indigenous cultures are a core part of what is distinctive about Australia.	.70

Items 33, 24, and 32, call for the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history/culture in the school curriculum, whilst item 34 acknowledges Indigenous cultures as an integral part of Australia. These items focus on the history of Australia, hence the name: Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture has been adopted for this factor.

Factor four (Table 4.7) identified with reference to five items with major loadings was entitled Acknowledgement and Addressing Disadvantage.



Table 4.7

*Factor 4: Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage*

#	Statement	Loading
S6	High incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are a result of poor living standards.	.68
S35	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive too many benefits.	.64
S25	Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are materially and economically disadvantaged.	.57
S39	Recent rulings on native title do not threaten the security of non-Indigenous landowners.	.54
S5	Students of Aboriginal descent should receive benefits towards their education.	.52

Items 6 and 25 acknowledge that ATSI people are disadvantaged and items 35, 39, and 5 refer to the way that these disadvantages are being addressed.

Factor five was identified with reference to five items with major loadings and was named Self Determination. These statements relate to the rights and responsibilities associated with self determination and are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

*Factor 5: Self Determination*

#	Statements	Loading
S36	The Australian Government and people should officially recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights to self-determination and self-management.	.64
S14	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong cultural and spiritual attachments to the land and sea.	.61
S7	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians must be permitted to find their own solutions and be supported to the utmost extent in doing so.	.59
S27	Indigenous systems of customary law have been interfered with by the imposition of an alien legal system.	.49
S9	Traditional landowners and language groups of a particular region should be recognised.	.47

Cronbach's Alpha was selected as the standard for assessing the reliability of each factor. This statistical measure is based on the average correlation of questions within a scale. A positive response to one item on the questionnaire should be mirrored by positive responses to related items on the same instrument. The correlation between questions can vary between -1.00 and 1.00, with 0.00 meaning no correlation and 1.00 meaning perfect positive correlation. The guidelines in Table 3.7 have been proposed by DeVellis (1991) regarding acceptable reliabilities for each factor. It can be seen a value of .7 or above indicates an acceptable level of reliability. The values of

Cronbach's Alpha for each of the five factors emerging from this investigation are summarised in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

*Cronbach Alpha scores for each of the five factors*

Factor	Number of Items in each Factor	Cronbach's Alpha
Factor 1: Acknowledgment of injustices	8	.93
Factor 2: ATSI Rights: Land and Social	10	.89
Factor 3: Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture	4	.85
Factor 4: Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage	5	.81
Factor 5: Self Determination	5	.78

The Cronbach's Alpha for each of the 5 scales is above .7, hence the each of the factors can be considered reliable.

In order to gain some insight into how the sample agreed with each of the scales, the average level of agreement for each scale was calculated. This was achieved by adding the individual scores of all items contributing to a particular scale and then dividing this total by the number of scores tallied. The resulting average gives the mean level of agreement with each scale for the whole sample.

Table 4.10 shows the participants' average level of agreement with each of the 5 scales previously discussed. Agreement was rated on a Likert scale. The scale given to the respondents had scores from 0 - 10, the permissible responses only included discrete even numbers i.e. 0,2,4,6,8,10. The higher the mean score the more favourable the group's attitude towards each of the scales.

Table 4.10

*Average level of agreement to each scale.*

Scale	Average level of agreement	Std. Deviation
1. Acknowledgment of injustices	6.20	2.42
2. ATSI Rights: Land and Social	6.11	2.04
3. Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture	8.13	1.35
4. Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage	5.63	2.04
5. Self Determination	6.98	1.75

It can be seen that the highest level of agreement was with items associated with scale 3: "Recognition of ATSI history in Australian culture". A one-way analysis of

variance was used to compare the significance of this difference. The mean level of agreement with factor 3 ( $M=8.13$ ) significantly exceeded that of all of the other scales ( $F_{(4,490)}=28.51, p<.01$ ), indicating that the majority of participants registered strong agreement with all of the following statements:

- Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture should be taught in our schools.
- Including Australian history from an Indigenous perspective should be an essential part of our curriculum.
- Our Indigenous cultures are a core part of what is distinctive about Australia.
- It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community.

The same uniformity of agreement was not observed with the other scales however all of the averages are on the positive side of the agreement scale.

These analyses were conducted to examine the attitude of the participants towards reconciliation. In summary, factor analytic techniques were utilised in order to detect the structural relationship between the participants' responses to the attitude survey. These methods summarised the correlation between the participants' responses to items on the questionnaire. Close relationships were used to define factors that represent underlying themes in the data.

Five factors emerged that accounted for a large proportion of the variation within the dataset. These factors were named on the basis of the items comprising them. The names given to these five scales were:

Factor 1: Acknowledgment of injustices

Factor 2: ATSI Rights: Land and Social

Factor 3: Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture

Factor 4: Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage

Factor 5: Self Determination

In order to gain some insight into how the sample agreed with each of the scales, the average level of agreement for each scale was calculated. The highest level of agreement was with items associated with scale 3: "Recognition of ATSI history in

Australian culture”, indicating that the majority of participants registered strong agreement with statements relating to this issue.

The next section analyses the impact that demographic data, such as, school, teacher category, teaching experience and age of participants had on agreement with each of the five scales.

#### **4.2.2.1 Analysis of Scales according to schools**

To investigate the relationship between each of the eleven schools and the mean attitude towards each of the five themes identified during the scale analysis of responses to the attitude inventory a one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The results of the analysis indicated that schools differed significantly from each other in their mean response to items relating to scales 1 to 4; Acknowledgment of injustices [ $F_{(10,89)}= 3.565, p=.001$ ], ATSI Rights: Land and Social [ $F_{(10,89)}= 2.382, p=.015$ ], Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture [ $F_{(10,89)}= 2.086, p=.034$ ], and Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage [ $F_{(10,89)}= 2.036, p=.039$ ]. No significant difference was observed between schools for items relating to scale 5, Self Determination. [ $F_{(10,89)}= 1.737, p=.085$ ].

Post Hoc comparisons using Tukey’s Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test were conducted to locate specific differences between schools. It was found that school G ( $M=9.58, SD=.72$ ) scored significantly higher than school A ( $M=5.33, SD=1.89$ ) and school H ( $M=5.34, SD=2.02$ ) on items relating to Scale 1 (Acknowledgment of injustices). As previously indicated School G is a small inner Brisbane school with a vision of “Reconciliation through Education”, whereas School H is a larger suburban school. School A is a large outer northern city school with an enrolment of approximately 400 students. Figure 4.7 illustrates the sample scale mean for each school for each scale.

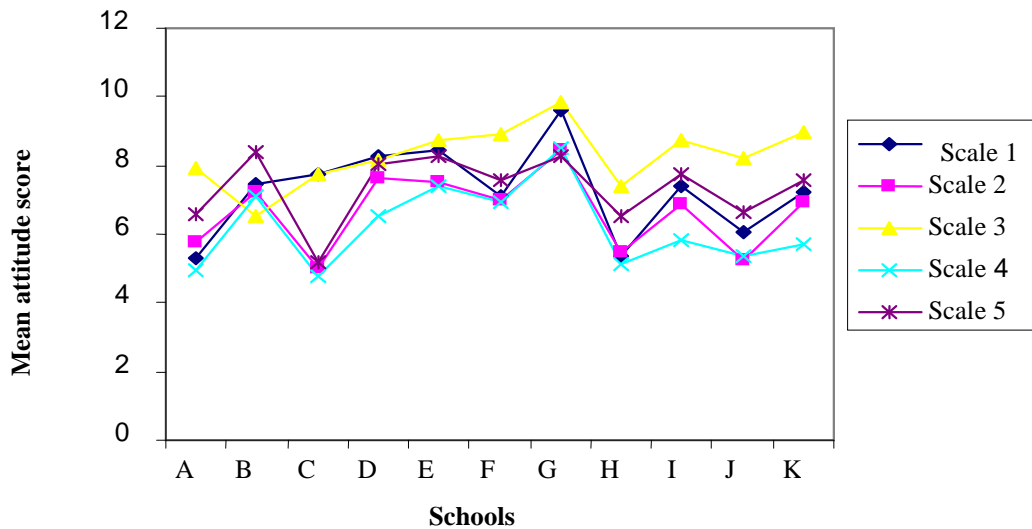


Figure 4.7. Individual School's Mean Attitude total to each of the five scales.

#### 4.2.2. 2 Analysis of Scales according to teacher category

A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to investigate the relationship between the self identified teacher category and attitude towards each of the five themes identified during the scale analysis of responses to the attitude inventory. Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of the year level at which they taught (Group 1: lower primary, Group 2: middle primary, Group 3: upper primary, and Group 4: specialist). The responses of teachers from these categories differed significantly to items on the questionnaire that related to the issue of acknowledging disadvantage (Scale 4) [ $F_{(3,90)} = 6.11, p = .001$ ].

Post Hoc comparisons using Tukey's (HSD) test were conducted to locate the differences between the groups. It was found that the mean attitude score of upper primary teachers ( $M = 6.78, SD = 1.62$ ) was significantly higher than their lower primary counterparts ( $M = 4.62, SD = 2.19$ ) and middle primary counterparts ( $M = 5.35, SD = 1.96$ ) on items relating to Scale 4 (acknowledging disadvantage). The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .169. This is a large effect size (Cohen, 1988) and indicates that a large proportion of the variance of the mean attitude score for Scale 4 is explained by the teaching level of the participants. Figure 4.8 illustrates the sample scale mean for each school for each scale.

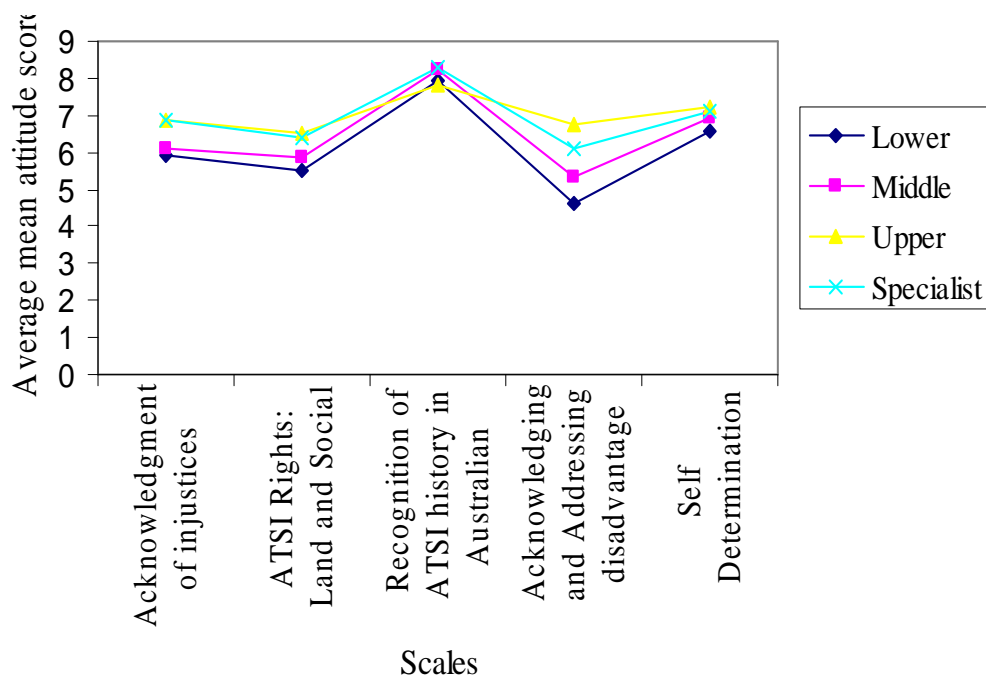


Figure 4.8. Mean attitude score for each scale and teacher category

As indicated in Figure 4.8, the greatest differences occurred on Scale 4, Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage, with the upper primary teachers being in significantly more agreement with the scale as compared to their lower primary school teachers. It also needs to be noted that on the whole upper primary teachers seemed to be in stronger agreement with all five scales than their lower primary counterparts.

#### 4.2.2.3 Analysis of Scales according to years of teaching experience

A one-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to investigate the relationship between the years of teaching experience and attitude towards each of the five themes identified during the scale analysis of responses to the attitude inventory. Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of the number of years of teaching experience (Group 1: 0- 9 years, Group 2: 10-20 years, Group 3: 21-30 years, Group 4: 31-40 years). Years of teaching experience did not appear to have a significant influence on attitude towards any of the five scales identified on the questionnaire. (Respective F scores for scales 1-5 were: [ $F_{(3,89)} = .47, p = .70$ ], [ $F_{(3,89)} = 1.21, p = .31$ ], [ $F_{(3,89)} = .36, p = .79$ ], [ $F_{(3,89)} = 2.21, p = .092$ ], and [ $F_{(3,89)} = 1.30, p = .28$ ]). Figure 4.9 illustrates the sample scale mean for each school for each scale.

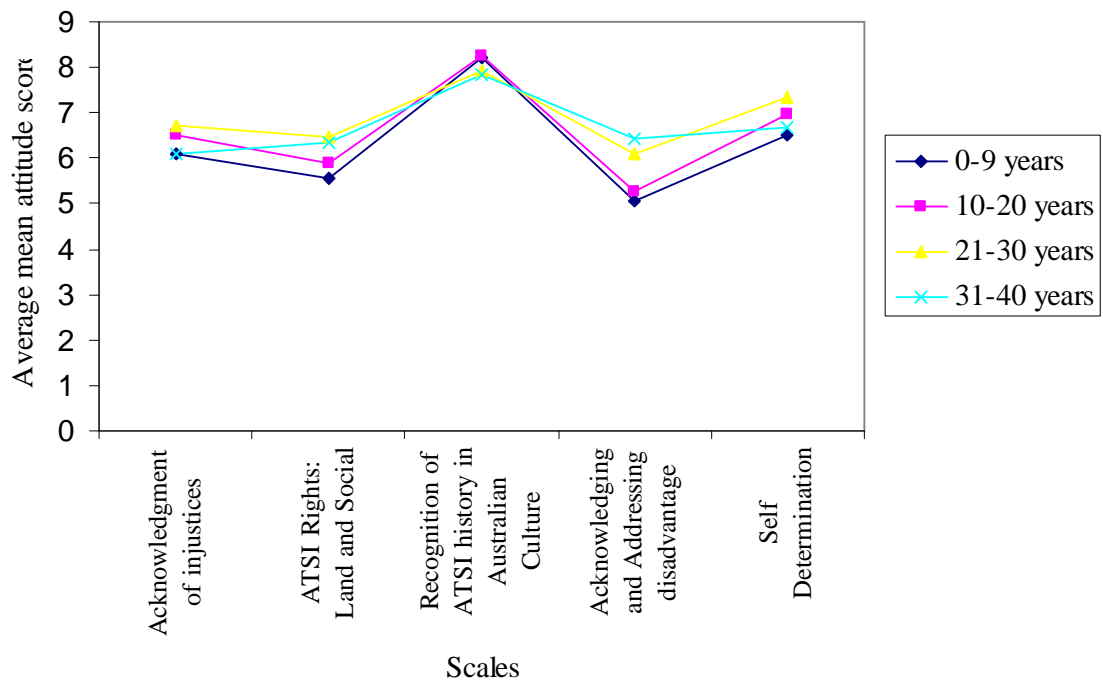


Figure 4.9. Mean attitude score for each scale and teacher experience.

#### 4.2.2.4 Analysis of Scales according to age of participants

An additional ANOVA was conducted to investigate the relationship between the age of participants and attitude towards each of the five themes identified during the scale analysis of responses to the attitude inventory. Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of age (Group 1: 21-30, Group 2: 31-40, Group 3: 41-50, Group 4: 51-65 years). (Respective F scores for scales 1-5 were: [ $F_{(3,90)}=.801, p=.496$ ], [ $F_{(3,90)}=.87, p=.46$ ], [ $F_{(3,90)}=1.08, p=.362$ ], [ $F_{(3,90)}=1.68, p=.178$ ], and [ $F_{(3,90)}=1.19, p=.318$ ]). There was no significant difference between responses to each of the five scales identified on the questionnaire and the age of participants. Figure 4.10 illustrates the sample scale mean for each school for each scale

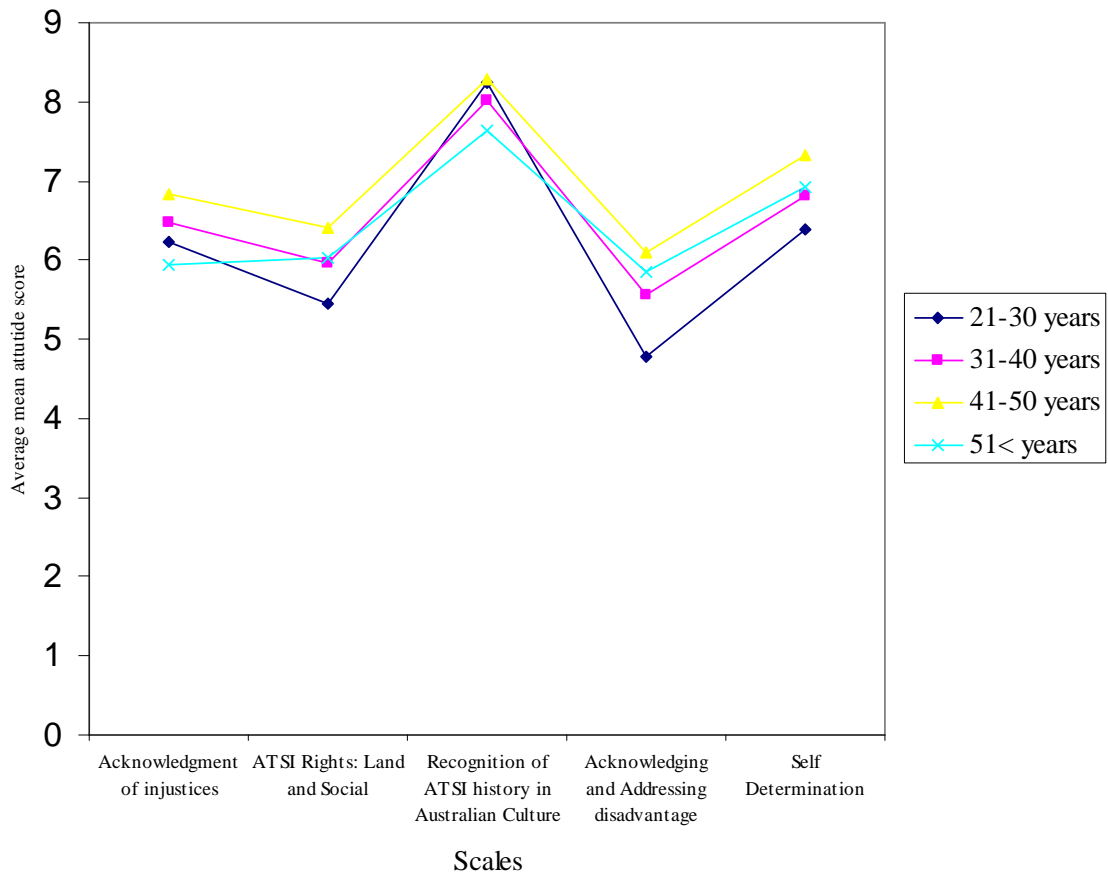


Figure 4.10. Mean attitude score for each scale and teacher age

These analyses of the impact of demographic data on agreement with each of the five scales revealed that age and years of teaching experience did not have a significant influence on attitude towards any of the five scales identified on the questionnaire. There was, however, a link between teacher category and one of the scales. It was found that the mean attitude score of upper primary teachers) was significantly higher than their lower primary and middle primary counterparts on items relating to Scale 4 (“Acknowledging disadvantage”).

It was also revealed that location had an impact on agreement with items relating to several of the scales. Schools differed significantly on items relating to scales 1-4 (Acknowledgment of injustices, ATSI Rights: Land and Social, Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture, and Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage). No significant difference was observed between schools for items relating to scale 5, Self Determination.



### 4.3 KNOWLEDGE OF KEY ASPECT OF INDIGENOUS HISTORY EXHIBITED BY BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION PRIMARY TEACHERS

In order to gauge Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers' knowledge about key aspect of Indigenous history, an Indigenous Australian History test was constructed. The test consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions. These questions were derived from reputable encyclopedic sources. In selecting questions the researcher sought to address a number of categories including sport, culture, government, art, geography, history, and language. Basic descriptive statistical data were gathered to summarise the participants' responses. The results of these analyses are outlined in the next section. Each question was marked either correct or incorrect. Thus the total possible score that could be allocated to any participant was 20.

The scores achieved by participants roughly reflected a normal distribution. This "Bell curve" pattern can be observed in Figure 4.6. The scores ranged from range 0 out of 20 to 17 out of 20. The modal score for the test was 9 out of 20. The modal score was achieved by 14% of the participants. The mean score for this test was 9.1 indicating that the average participant answered less than half of the questions correctly. Figure 4.11 illustrates the range of possible total scores on the history test and the frequency of participants that gained particular scores.

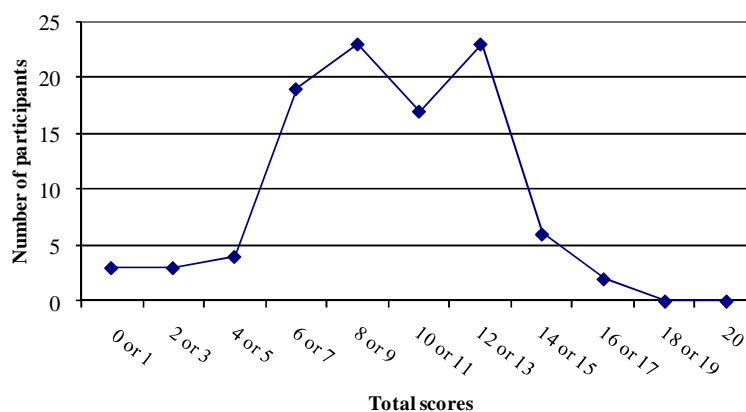


Figure 4.11. Frequency of history test results

As can be seen by the trends in the above figure, the total scores allocated to the majority of participants ranged between 6 and 13, with 1 person scoring 17, two people scoring 0 and one person scoring 1. Additional data were gathered examining the participants' responses to specific test items. The test item and relative frequency of particular responses can be found in Appendix O. Question 19 had the highest

correct response. This question was answered correctly by 87% of the participants. Question 19 is included below with the correct response highlighted:

Q19. The yellow, red and black on the Aboriginal flag, designed in 1971, represent:

- a) the moon, bloodshed experienced by Aborigines, mourning
- b) the sun, bloodshed experienced by Aborigines, the people
- c) the sun, the earth and the people**
- d) the sun, the earth, mourning

Question 12 had the lowest correct response, with only 10 % of the participants answering the question correctly. Question 12 is included below with the correct response highlighted:

Q12. The Day of Mourning is a day of Aboriginal protest, it first was organised to coincide with the:

- a) 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- b) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- c) 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- d) 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement**

Figure 4.12 shows the mean test scores of individual schools arranged in descending order.

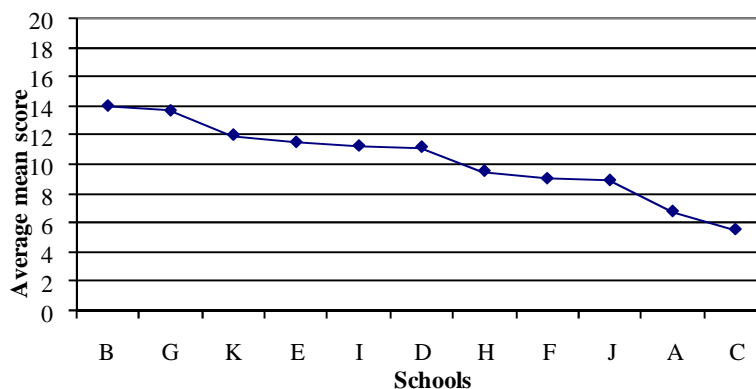


Figure 4.12. Individual schools mean test total

It can be seen that six (B,G,K,E,I, and D) of the eleven participating schools' means are above fifty percent, with school B scoring the highest score and school C scoring the lowest score. A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was

conducted with the independent variables being the different schools and the dependent variable being the average mean score on the history test. This revealed a statistically significant difference among the school means [ $F_{(10,89)}=3.787, p<.0001$ ].

Post Hoc comparisons using Tukey's (HSD) test were conducted to locate specific differences between schools. It was found that school G ( $M=13.67, SD=.557$ ) and school I ( $M=11.25, SD=3.96$ ) scored significantly higher than school A ( $M=6.74, SD=3.46$ ) on the history test. As stated elsewhere School G is a small inner city school with a vision of "Reconciliation through Education", whilst School A is an outer suburban school with an approximately 400 pupils. School I is a somewhat larger school, located in much the same area as school H.

The magnitude of the difference between the highest and lowest test scores was assessed by measuring the effect size. Cohen's (1988) method involving the pooled standard deviation was used. The effect size of 2.33 can be characterized as large (Cohen, 1988). This indicates a large difference between the history test score of the top performing school and the lowest performing school, although the small sample size prevents statistical significance being attached to this difference. It should also be noted that the school with the highest Indigenous student population (school G) scored the second highest score on the aspects of Indigenous history test.

In summary, it seems that that participating teachers' knowledge of aspects of Indigenous history as measured by this test was normally distributed with a slight negative bias. In addition to this there was a significant difference among the mean scores of the participating schools.

#### **4.4 PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL INDIGENOUS EDUCATION COURSES**

The participants were asked to indicate whether or not they had participated in any formal education in the area of Indigenous studies or Indigenous history. In addition to this they were also asked to state whether or not they had attended the course on Cultural Awareness facilitated by Catholic Education. Of the 100 participants in this investigation 94 responded to this section of the questionnaire.

A total of 43 participants had received some type of formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness. There were 51 participants who had received no such training. Table 3.6 (as seen in the methodology section) summarises

the participants' responses to these questions. The mean attitude score achieved by each of these groups (formal training vs. no formal training) was compared. These data are summarised in Table 4.11.

The mean attitude score of the teachers who had participated in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness was 274.93. This exceeded the mean of 248.04, achieved by those who had received no formal training.

Table 4.11

Group Statistics

Training	n	Attitude Score*	Std. Deviation
Formal training in Indigenous History, Studies or Cultural Awareness.	43	274.93	66.63
No formal training in Indigenous History, Studies or Cultural Awareness.	51	248.04	58.69

\* *Mean attitude survey total.*

A two-sample t statistic was calculated to compare the significance of this observed difference. The mean attitude score of teachers with formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness was significantly higher than that of teachers without such training ( $t_{(42)}=2.06, p<.025$ ).

A comparison was also conducted to examine the degree to which formal training influenced the attitude to the five scales identified during factor analysis. The average mean attitude score for each of the five scales of the teachers who had participated in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness was higher than the average mean attitude score achieved by those who had received no formal training (see Fig. 4.13).

A series of t-tests were also conducted to examine the relationship between participation in specific courses and the mean attitude towards each of the 5 factors generated by analysis of responses to the attitude questionnaire. This type of test is appropriate when comparing the mean scores of two different groups (Pallant, 2005, p. 205). In this case for each course the two groups are participants and non-participants and the dependent variable was the attitude score in relation to each factor. This resulted in 15 separate t-tests (3 courses x 5 factors). The use of such a large number of comparisons from within a given dataset could potentially increase the possibility of a type 1 error, however the large sample size was deemed sufficient

to obviate this risk, and hence further control measures, such as the Bonferroni adjustment were not considered.

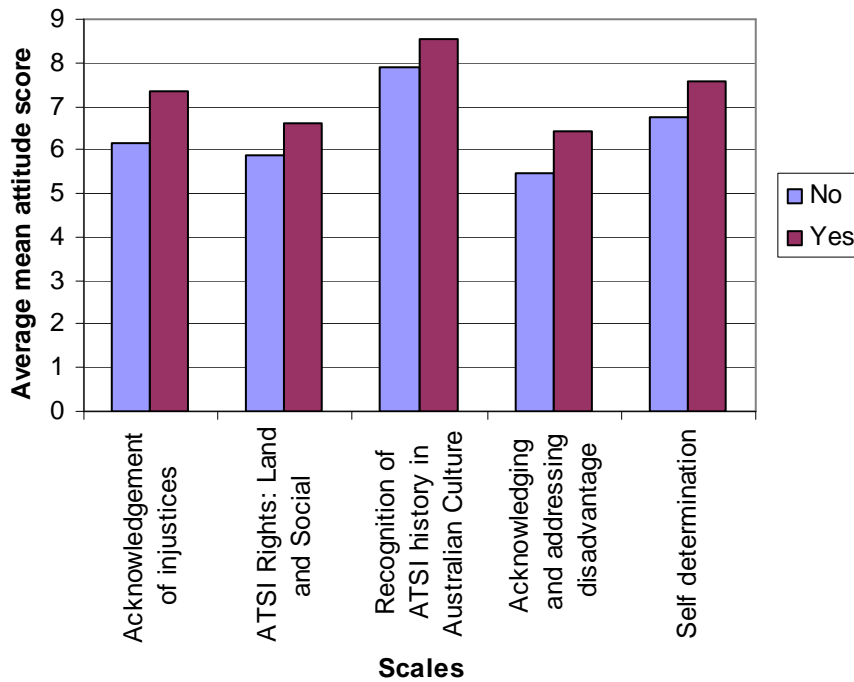


Figure 4.13. Influence of formal training on attitude to each of the five scales

It was found that respondents who participated in Indigenous history courses scored significantly higher ( $M=7.35$ ,  $SD=1.94$ ) than non-participants [ $M=6.13$ ,  $SD=2.47$ ;  $t_{(86)}=-2.31, p=.02$ ] on attitude items relating to Scale 1 (Acknowledgement of Injustices). Similar differences were also observed between participants ( $M=8.55$ ,  $SD=1.06$ ) and non-participants [ $M=7.90$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ;  $t_{(86)}=-2.03, p=.046$ ] with respect to Scale 3 (Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture). Participants in Indigenous studies and cultural awareness courses also scored significantly higher than non-participants in relation to Scale 3.

It was found that respondents who participated in Indigenous studies courses also scored significantly higher ( $M=8.69$ ,  $SD=.98$ ) than non-participants [ $M=7.85$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ;  $t_{(86)}=-2.47, p=.02$ ] on attitude items relating to Scale 3 (Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture).

The same trend was also observed with respect to participants in cultural awareness courses ( $M=8.60$ ,  $SD=.1.13$ ), who scored significantly higher than non-participants on items relating to the recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture (Scale 3) [ $M=7.80$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ;  $t_{(86)}=-2.14, p=.04$ ].

In summary teachers who participated in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness scored significantly higher on the attitude inventory. This was most apparent in responses to items relating to Scale 3 (Recognition of ATSI history in Australian culture). It was not possible to attribute these differences to a specific course because of the small number of respondents who had only participated in one course (refer to Table 3.7, page 59).

#### **4.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARDS RECONCILIATION AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF INDIGENOUS HISTORY.**

To examine the relationship between teacher attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history, subjects' results from the history test were correlated with their individual scores on the attitude survey. Prior to selecting the technique to use for this comparison, a histogram of the scores on each variable was viewed, in addition to this a scatter-plot was constructed and inspected. The normal distribution of the data, the apparent (somewhat) linearity scatterplot, and the large sample size ( $n=100$ ) all suggested that the Pearson correlation coefficient be used instead of the less robust, non-parametric alternative (Spearman rank order correlation).

The Pearson coefficient of correlation was calculated at .372. This is a small to moderate positive correlation (Cohen, 2003). The magnitude of this correlation exceeds the value of .254 required for significance at the .01 level in a comparison of two variables with 100 degrees of freedom.

To further examine the relationship between knowledge of aspects of Indigenous history, subjects' results from the history test were correlated with their individual scores for each of the five themes identified during the factor analysis of responses to the attitude inventory. The Pearson coefficient of correlation was calculated and the results are shown in the table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12

*Correlation of history test score with individual factor score*

Factors	Pearson coefficient
Factor 1: Acknowledgment of injustices	0.27*
Factor 2: ATSI Rights: Land and Social	0.40*
Factor 3: Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture	0.19
Factor 4: Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage	0.41*
Factor 5: Self Determination	0.39*

\* = significant at .01 level

Four of the five factors exhibit a small to moderate positive correlation and exceed the value of .254 required for significance at the .01 level. The lowest correlation (.190) was between an individual's history test results and their level of agreement with statements relating to the recognition of ATSI history in Australian culture, this correlation is not significant. The highest correlations (.412 and .404) were between test results and Factors 4 and 2 respectively.

A point biserial correlation matrix was constructed to investigate the degree of association the attitude of participants to each of the five factors and their answers to individual items on the history test. This analytical technique was used because it allowed comparison between a binary variable (correct or incorrect answer to the test item) and a continuous variable (mean attitude score to each scale). The results are in Appendix P.

A number of observations can be made in relation to these data. It is apparent that there is a tendency for factor 3 to have the lowest correlation with a correct response for the majority of items. This can perhaps be attributed to the fact that almost all participants had a positive attitude towards items comprising this scale. The impact of this is to weaken any correlation because this large group includes the majority of the sample that is, those with high and low knowledge of aspects of Indigenous history.

A substantial negative correlation (-.291) was found between response to item 19 (see below) and factor 4: Acknowledging and Addressing Disadvantage. A possible explanation for this is that individuals with a predisposition towards recognising Indigenous disadvantage may have identified with the negative wording (mourning, bloodshed) associated with the incorrect responses.

19. The yellow, red, and black on the Aboriginal flag, designed 1971, represent:

- a) the moon, bloodshed experienced by Aborigines, mourning
- b) the sun, bloodshed experienced by Aborigines, the people
- c) the sun, the earth, and the people
- d) the sun, the earth, mourning

In terms of correlations between items on the history test the strongest correlation (.96) was observed between items 11 and 14 (see below).

11. Which Aboriginal bowler was one of the few cricketers to ever dismiss Donald Bradman for nought?

- a) Eddie Gilbert
- b) Chucka Collins
- c) David Sands
- d) Lionel Rose

14. A 'Dog tag' was the name used by Aboriginal people for the certificates of:

- a) ownership of land
- b) identification of family and community group
- c) permit to travel from State to State
- d) exemption of restrictions applying to Aborigines

A similarly strong correlation (.935) was observed between items 12 and 20.

12. The Day of Mourning is a day of Aboriginal protest, it first was organised to coincide with the

- a) 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- b) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- c) 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- d) 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement

20. In what year and for what reason was the 'Tent Embassy' erected on the lawns opposite Parliament House in Canberra on the 26<sup>th</sup> January.

- a) 1972, to pressure the government into housing projects
- b) 1965, to obtain voting rights for Aborigines
- c) 1976, to gain Aboriginal representation in the lower house of Federal Parliament
- d) 1972, demonstrating for land rights



Despite the strength of these correlations there is no obvious link between the items that suggests why such an association exists.

In summary the higher an individual scored on the history test, the more favourable the attitude towards reconciliation. This was particularly true with respect to items relating to the acknowledgement of ATSI rights and addressing disadvantage.

#### **4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

From the analysis of the results of this study a number of key points have emerged that warrant discussion in relation to the research questions:

- Findings from instrument one, the Attitude Survey, revealed that the response patterns of participants could be grouped into five broad themes, and that the highest level of agreement was observed on items relating to the theme of “Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture”. In addition to this it was observed that schools differed significantly in their mean attitude scores.
- It was found that a favourable attitude towards reconciliation (as evinced by a high score on the Attitude Survey) correlated with participation in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or the BCEC Cultural Awareness Course. Course participants (irrespective of the combination of courses) tended to achieve higher scores on the attitude inventory.
- Schools were seen to differ significantly with respect to their results on the history test.
- There was a small to moderate positive correlation between a teacher’s knowledge of Indigenous history and their attitude towards reconciliation.

The significance of these findings in relation to the research questions is discussed in Chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

This final chapter reviews the previous chapters and draws conclusions from the results of the research investigation. This chapter comprises 5 sections. The initial section gives an overview of the study and briefly reviews the purpose, context, and methodology. The second section relates the results of this investigation to the research questions posed. The third section discusses the results with regard to the literature. The fourth section of this chapter outlines the implications of these findings to the education profession and proposes directions for future research in this field. Finally the limitations of the study are acknowledged in section 5.8.

#### **5.2. PURPOSE, CONTEXT, AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH**

##### **5.2.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this research was to investigate how teachers' understanding of and knowledge about Indigenous history impacts on teachers' attitudes to reconciliation. This purpose provided the basis for the development of the research questions:

- What are the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers to the reconciliation process?
- How knowledgeable is this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers with respect to key aspects of Indigenous history?
- What influence does participation in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component have on the knowledge and attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers?
- What is the relationship between this sample of teachers' attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history?

##### **5.2.2 Context**

The research purpose is of particular significance to the context in which the investigation was undertaken. Catholic teachers are required to model gospel values,

one of which is the notion of reconciliation. This is a key issue in modern Australian society.

In spite of the previously discussed differences between the secular and religious connotations of this term, departmental, theological and social directives compel Catholic primary school teachers to advance 'both' forms of reconciliation (Phillips, 2005; Brisbane Catholic Education, 2006; Reconciliation Australia, 2007).

Teachers in Catholic primary schools are the interface between reconciliation, the Catholic ethos and pupils. Because of this, teacher attitude towards reconciliation will have a major influence on the efficacy of this process, as well as the educational outcomes of Indigenous students. The National Catholic Education Commission (1998), states that a positive and productive approach to reconciliation is reliant on appreciation of Indigenous Australian history with specific focus on the implications and consequences of the shared history of the last 200 years. This study sought to measure the strength of this relationship by answering the research questions outlined previously.

### **5.2.3 Design**

In order to answer the research questions, quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used. Data about teachers' attitudes towards the reconciliation process were collected via an attitude survey. Because there was no existing tool to objectively measure teacher attitude to this issue, it was necessary for the researcher to develop an instrument for the specific purposes of this study.

A multiple-choice test, administered after the attitude survey, was used to determine the subjects' knowledge of Australian History. The focus of this test was the shared history of the last 215 years.

## **5.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS ADDRESSED**

The research questions, arising from the purpose of the study, provide a framework for summarising the findings of this investigation. Each of the questions is addressed subsequently.

### **5.3.1 What are the attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers to the reconciliation process?**

This research question sought to quantify the overall attitude of a small sample of Brisbane Catholic Education teachers to the reconciliation process. This was done using an attitude inventory designed specifically for this task. The instrument developed for this research begins to assist us to ascertain teachers' attitude towards reconciliation by identifying five scales that define the dimensions of attitude, namely

- Acknowledgment of injustices
- ATSI Rights: Land and Social
- Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture
- Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage
- Self Determination

This indicates that there are at least five components to the construct of attitude towards reconciliation, and that strong support for one aspect of reconciliation may not indicate a similar level of support for the other themes. This has implications for not only reporting attitudes but also with regard to changing them.

The sample of teachers who participated in this research indicated that they had a positive attitude towards all five dimensions of reconciliation (see Table 4.10). In particular they exhibited a significantly higher level of agreement to the dimension relating to Scale 3, the Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture. The population sampled agreed that Indigenous history and culture are significant components of schooling and reconciliation in Australia.

Despite this agreement it was observed that the participating schools differed significantly in their mean attitude scores. This could suggest that attitude towards reconciliation is influenced by situational or environmental factors such as location, ethos, teaching peers, and student population. School G had the highest mean attitude score. This school was also significantly higher on the importance they placed on Scale 1, Acknowledgement of Injustices. This school has an Indigenous population of 30% and a vision of "Reconciliation through Education". It is likely that this specific focus on reconciliation and the presence of Indigenous pupils in the school community has a positive influence on teacher attitude towards reconciliation.

Conversely, teachers with a positive attitude towards reconciliation may tend to gravitate towards a school of this nature.

There were no significant differences observed between the attitudes of teachers of different ages and experience. There was, however, a significant difference between the attitude score of Upper and Lower primary school teachers on the dimension relating to Acknowledging and Addressing Disadvantage. Upper primary school teachers placed significantly higher importance on this dimension than teachers from other categories.

A negative correlation between participation rate and attitude was observed. It is possible that staff from schools with a lower participation rate that elected to participate in the survey were those with an interest in Indigenous issues. This interest may have contributed to their positive attitude score. Conversely, staff from schools with a higher participation rate may have been under some compulsion to do the survey – the school with the highest participation rate completed the survey at a staff meeting on a pupil free day. This larger sample is likely to have included a broader range of attitude scores, contributing to the negative correlation observed.

Educational research has demonstrated that one's attitude towards a given subject or topic has a significant influence on teaching practice, particularly with respect to cultural issues (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Weinstein et al, 2003). Furthermore, a large number of researchers have made specific reference to the importance of teacher attitudes in the teaching of Indigenous Australian pupils (Andrews, 1993; Craven & Mooney, 2000; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, Partington, Harslett & Richer, 2000; O'Keefe, 1988). Despite this there has been very limited empirical data gathered in attempting to ascertain teachers' attitude to reconciliation. The instrument developed for this investigation provides some data of this type.

The data from this study indicates that there are five distinct dimensions that comprise an individual's attitude towards reconciliation. It follows from this that any efforts to address attitudes towards this issue should attend to each of these five areas on an individual basis. The knowledge that school and teaching level appear to have an influence on attitude but age and teaching experience does not could assist in the targeting of these efforts.

This investigation has also demonstrated that Brisbane Catholic Education primary school teachers consider Indigenous history and culture to be significant aspects of schooling and reconciliation in Australia. This corresponds with The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (1993) which stated that “a sharing of history has the potential to be an influential agent of reconciliation”. The knowledge of teachers in relation to this construct is examined by the next research question.

### **5.3.2 How knowledgeable is this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers with respect to key aspects of Indigenous history?**

While it could be inferred from the results of this study that in general these teachers were lacking in knowledge of key aspects of Indigenous history, six of the eleven participating schools’ scored above fifty percent on the history test. In addition there was a statistically significant difference between the school means on this instrument. Anonymity concerns and inconsistent response rates notwithstanding, these data indicate that knowledge of key aspects of Indigenous history is influenced by some aspect of the individual’s current teaching environment. One environmental aspect that could be identified is the school ethos. It was observed that teachers from schools with a clearly articulated vision for reconciliation scored highest on the test. This is exemplified by the results of school G, an inner city school with a high Indigenous student population.

An additional variable that may account for the differences observed between schools (and individuals) is the degree to which they participate in formal education courses in Indigenous history or cultural studies. This influence is the subject of the next research question.

### **5.3.3 What influence does participation in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component have on the knowledge and attitudes of this sample of Brisbane Catholic Education primary teachers?**

The data revealed that those who participated in formal education courses with an Indigenous history component had a more positive attitude to reconciliation than those who did not. This reflects the findings of previous research suggesting that attitudes are favourably influenced by participation in formal education courses (Craven, 2002; Shultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996; Youngs & Youngs, 2001).

It was found that respondents who participated in any combination of Indigenous studies, Indigenous history or Cultural awareness courses scored significantly higher than non-participants on attitude items relating to the Scale 3, Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture.

There are two feasible explanations for these differences. The first is that teachers who have a favourable attitude towards Indigenous issues such as reconciliation are more likely to attend courses in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness. It is not possible to determine if this is the case from the existing data because the participants were not asked to indicate whether their participation was voluntary, part of their university studies or mandated by the administration of their particular school. This latter possibility may account for the significant difference in school attitude score.

A second reason for the differences observed could be that the courses improved the knowledge and awareness of the participants, particularly with respect to historical issues and wrongdoings. This would positively influence the attitude of the participants. It is difficult to make this assertion as the specific historical content in each of the courses is unknown. This is a limitation of this study discussed in section 5.8. It is not possible to say definitively that the knowledge obtained from these courses was responsible for the more positive attitude scores observed in course participation.

When their data were examined independently it was found that respondents who participated in Indigenous history courses scored significantly higher than non-participants on attitude items relating to the Acknowledgement of Injustices. This finding may suggest that specific knowledge of historical events has raised the participants' awareness of injustices inflicted on Indigenous Australians. As a consequence it is likely that statements relating to the acknowledgment of these injustices could resonate more strongly with these individuals, influencing their attitude to this facet of reconciliation.

While many researchers and policy documents have viewed participation in such courses as a way forward, the statement in each has had very little evidence that participation in such courses does indeed make a difference (e.g., Carven and Rigby, 1999; QIECC, 2004; QSCC, 2000). The significance of this research is that it

provides empirical evidence with regard to the positive relationship between beliefs about reconciliation and participation in formal education courses. It also begins to delineate the differing impact that cultural awareness courses and Indigenous history courses have on teachers beliefs.

#### **5.3.4 What is the relationship between this sample of teacher attitudes towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history?**

Subjects' results from the history test were correlated with their individual scores on the attitude survey. This is a small to moderate positive correlation (Cohen, 2003), suggesting that for this sample of teachers, scores on the history test are significantly related to scores on the attitude survey. Further examination of the relationship revealed that four of the five Scales correlated positively with historical knowledge. The lowest correlation was between an individual's history test results and their level of agreement with statements relating to the recognition of ATSI history in Australian culture. This is possibly due to Scale 3 being the one with which the entire sample had the highest level of agreement. A consequence of this is that all participants, regardless of their knowledge of Indigenous history, had a positive score on items relating to this scale, effectively weakening any correlation.

The highest correlations were between history test results and Scales 4 and 2 respectively. Scale 4 related to Acknowledging and addressing disadvantage, whereas Scale 2 related to ATSI rights: land and social. There are two interpretations of these results. Firstly, it is possible that the history test contained a large number of questions relating to ATSI rights and disadvantage, and hence is biased towards individuals with an interest in these aspects of reconciliation. An examination of the items on the instrument indicates that this is not the case. It is more likely that individuals with an awareness of Indigenous history are sympathetic to social issues arising from disadvantage and removal of Indigenous peoples from their traditional lands, or that people with such sympathies are more likely to take an interest in the broader aspects of Indigenous history.

### **5.4 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO POLICY AND LITERATURE**

This section discusses the findings with respect to the existing literature. In particular it elaborates on how the findings extend the literature and presents new ways of addressing and understanding reconciliation from an educational perspective.



### **5.4.1 Reconciliation in Contemporary Australia**

Reconciliation is a process that strives to improve relations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider community. It aims to do this through recognising past wrongdoings, addressing the disadvantages faced by Indigenous people today, and working together as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for a better future (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993a,b,g).

The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was the predecessor of Reconciliation Australia, whose vision is “A united Australia which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all.” (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1993a, p. 1; Reconciliation Australia, 2007). This vision has been adopted by education departments nationwide (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1998; Education Queensland, 2000; Department of Education Science and Training, 1999).

The findings of this research investigation indicate that attitudes of sample of Brisbane Catholic Education teachers are consistent with the aims of the reconciliation movement and departmental objectives. The survey responses of the teachers that participated indicated a positive attitude towards reconciliation. This was most apparent in relation to issues involving the “Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture”. Furthermore it was found that a positive attitude towards reconciliation correlated with knowledge of aspects of Indigenous history. These two findings attest to the importance of the teaching and learning of Indigenous history to the reconciliation process.

This research also extends the current literature on reconciliation by revealing the dimensions that underpin this concept. Whilst Education Queensland (2000) identified ten key issues as an essential part of reconciliation, the empirical findings of this research suggest that for the teaching profession reconciliation can be represented by five scales, namely, *Acknowledging injustices*, *Recognising Indigenous peoples land and social rights*, *Recognising ATSI history in Australian Culture*, *Acknowledging and addressing disadvantage*, and *Self determination*. The instrument developed in this research is a tool with which teachers can ascertain their attitudes to these scales, providing a platform for reflection and self evaluation. The research also begins to delineate the role an understanding of Indigenous History plays in discussions surrounding reconciliation.

### **5.4.2 Indigenous History and Reconciliation**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history is a recurrent theme in the issues identified by the council for Aboriginal Reconciliation as well as educational institutions (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2000, Education Queensland, 2000, p. 5). In response to this the way in which “Australian” history has been perceived, recorded and taught has come under scrutiny.

A number of academics and historians have criticised the way in which Indigenous history has been represented and taught and have suggested that this has contributed to the marginalisation and disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australians (Castan, 1993; Cavanagh, 1999; Reynolds, 2000; Schwede, 2000; Tickner, 1993). Cultural, political, and educational biases strongly influence these sources of knowledge. This has often been the case with depictions of Indigenous Australians in educational texts (Bourke, Bourke, & Edwards, 1994). One of the findings of this study was that the majority of participants scored less than 50% on the Indigenous history test. This “poor” performance may have been due to inaccuracies and omissions associated with the aforementioned ethnocentric depiction of history.

The way in which history is taught, represented and understood is important because of its potential impact on the present and the future: “Through studying history students learn to approach the present and the future in a creative way, characterised by critical thinking, careful reflection and well-founded decision-making” (Queensland Schools Curriculum Council, 2000, p. 87); “Understanding how today’s society was shaped by history enables students to plan and map a better future together.” (Craven & Rigney, 1999, p. 62).

A major observation of this study was that knowledge of Indigenous history correlated with a positive attitude towards reconciliation. On this basis, a further inference could be made that inadequate or inappropriate representations of Indigenous history have not only contributed to a lack of knowledge of these issues, but also to a negative attitude towards reconciliation.

### **5.4.3 Knowledge of Indigenous History and Teaching.**

Past research with regard to teachers’ knowledge and the profession has focused on the cognitive domain, particularly subject matter knowledge. Understanding the subject matter (content knowledge), be it Mathematics, Science, or Indigenous

history, is the foundation of effective teaching. Content knowledge has been found to play a central role in teachers' development of professional understandings and competencies (Ball & McDiarmid, 1990; Hill, Rowan, & Lowenberg Ball, 2005; van Driel, Verloop, & Vos 1998). Content knowledge has also been shown to impact on effective teaching in the classroom context (Ball, 1991; Baturu, Warren & Cooper, 2004; Hill, Rowan & Loewenberg Ball, 2005; Stacey, Helme, Steinle, Baturu, Irwin, & Bana, 2001; van Driel, Verloop, & Vos, 1998). The results of this research extend this discussion. This research begins to show that teachers' content knowledge can also impact on other dimensions of teaching beyond the cognitive domain. Specifically, this investigation demonstrates that there is a positive correlation between teachers, attitude towards reconciliation and their content knowledge of aspects of Indigenous history.

The importance of Indigenous Australian historical content knowledge to the teaching profession was acknowledged in the recommendations made by the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body in their position paper on schooling and teacher education (2004). It was suggested that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies be a compulsory component of all pre-service education courses in Queensland.

This recommendation is supported by the results of the Teachers in Australian Schools study (Dempster, Sim, Beere, & Logan, 2000) which emphasised the limited exposure of Australian teachers to Indigenous Studies. Queensland teachers received less training than all of their interstate peers. A qualitative investigation, *The National Inquiry into School History*, (Taylor, 2000a) found inadequacies in teacher preparation and professional development for "dealing with content and sensitivities of Indigenous history" (Taylor, 2000b, p. vi).

The results of this past research are of concern given the negative consequences attributed to a lack of specific content knowledge. These include: teacher avoidance of unfamiliar material, excessive reliance on text books, the inability to critique texts, and adopting an unnecessarily autocratic teaching style to avoid uncomfortable questions (Grossman, et al. 1989). It is apparent from the literature that content knowledge is important for enhancing student learning and that Queensland and Australian teachers appear to have deficiencies in their knowledge of aspects of Indigenous history. The findings of this study support these observations and

recommendations. In addition this research adds to this body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence of the positive correlation between knowledge and the construct of attitude.

The Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body (2004) suggests various means of addressing these shortcomings, including the development of discrete courses or modules within existing units. This research suggests that an important component of these units is an exploration of recent Indigenous history, particularly the history that has occurred since European settlement.

#### **5.4.4 Knowledge of Indigenous History and Attitude to Reconciliation**

The significance of teachers' beliefs, conceptions, and attitude as a factor in the process of teaching and learning, and the attainment of educational goals, is well established in education literature (Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000; Brickhouse, 1990; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, Partington, Harslett, & Richer, 2000; Phillippou & Christou, 1998). Teachers often teach the content of a subject area according to the values, beliefs, attitudes or conceptions held on the content itself (Pajares, 1992, p. 310). Furthermore, a number of studies have made specific reference to the importance of teacher attitudes in the teaching of Indigenous Australian pupils (e.g., Andrews, 1993; Craven & Mooney, 2000; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, et al., 2000; O'Keefe, 1989).

It is clear from existing research that if the goal of promoting reconciliation within schools is to be achieved it is important that the majority of teachers have a favourable attitude towards this issue. Such an attitude was apparent in this investigation. As previously stated this attitude was most favourable with respect to "Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture". This finding, coupled with the observed correlation between knowledge of Indigenous history and attitude to reconciliation, emphasises the importance of Indigenous history, and knowledge thereof, to the reconciliation process.

A key contributor to the cognitive component of attitude is knowledge (Ajzen, 2005; Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1976; Triandis, 1971). This research suggests other components may be as equally important. The schools were observed to differ significantly in their mean attitude scores and history test results, with school (G) recording the highest mean attitude score and the second highest history test result.

This school has an Indigenous population of 30% and a vision of “Reconciliation through Education”. The broad findings of this study and this specific case support the idea that environmental factors such as involvement with Indigenous students, clearly articulated visions and school goals also have a positive influence on attitude. A number of previous investigations that have shown positive attitudes towards students from other cultures are influenced by knowledge about the cultural background of the students (Craven, 2002; Shultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). This study supports these and adds to the body of literature as it is the first to make specific reference to the link between teachers’ knowledge about aspects of Indigenous history and their attitude to reconciliation.

The observed positive correlation between knowledge and attitude identified in this study suggests that improving teacher knowledge could improve teacher attitude towards reconciliation, and hence assist this process. This is not a new idea. In 2003 the Working Party on Indigenous Studies in Preservice Teacher Education was established to examine the area of Indigenous Studies in teacher education. On this basis the Working Party recommended that all new teachers should be provided with information about local Indigenous history and culture and that “all graduate teachers need to have some generic cross-cultural awareness and knowledge of the history of Indigenous people in Australia” (Queensland Board of Teacher Registration: 2004, p. 5). While many of these recommendations are commendable they have been based on little evidence that such exposure does indeed make a difference.

These recommendations, and those of the Queensland Indigenous Education Consultative Body (2004), are supported by findings of this present investigation. Not only was there a link between knowledge of Indigenous history and attitude to reconciliation, it was also observed that the mean attitude score of teachers who had participated in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or cultural awareness was significantly higher than those who had not. This would suggest that formal training would be an effective means of improving teacher attitude towards reconciliation. The fact that schools were observed to differ significantly in their attitude scores and history test results suggests that there may be an opportunity to “target” this training. Further research into these issues is warranted.

## **5.5 CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The major research findings can be summarised as follows:

- This sample of Brisbane Catholic Education Primary teachers have a positive attitude towards reconciliation, in particular to issues relating to the “Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture”.
- The mean attitude score of teachers who had participated in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or the BCEC Cultural Awareness Course was significantly higher than those who had not.
- Teacher attitude towards reconciliation correlated positively with teacher knowledge of Indigenous history.
- There was a significant difference between schools in both their attitude towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history.

## **5.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

These results are compelling for a number of reasons. Reconciliation is a significant issue in Australian society and this is recognised by Education Departments nationwide (Department of Education Science and Training, 1999, p.2.; *Reconciliation: Walking and Working Together, Towards the Future- A Guide for Schools*, 2000; Policy Statement for Brisbane Catholic Education Schools – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Education, 1998; 2006).

Teacher attitudes towards this issue are important because they have a major impact on classroom practice (Bourke, Rigby, & Burden, 2000; Brickhouse, 1990; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, Partington, Harslett, & Richer, 2000; Phillippou, & Christou, 1998). As direct consequence of this impact they have the potential to determine the degree to which the reconciliation process is advanced within schools (and as a consequence the wider community).

The key finding of this study is that a teacher’s knowledge of Indigenous history has a positive relationship with teacher attitude towards reconciliation. The implication of this is that increasing teacher knowledge of Indigenous history (via specific pre-service and in-service training) may have an influence on teacher attitudes towards reconciliation and hence facilitate the reconciliation process.

This contention is supported by a further finding of the study that participating in formal training in Indigenous history, Indigenous studies or the BCEC cultural awareness in-service had a significant positive effect on teacher attitude towards reconciliation. This is important an implication given that 51% of the participants (more than half) received no such training. Although this is better than the 91.6% of teachers receiving no training in Indigenous studies (history or otherwise), identified in the Teachers in Australian Schools study (Dempster et al, 2000), it is clear that there is substantial room for improvement. If training improves knowledge, which in turn exerts a positive influence on attitude, then education systems are obliged to provide such training.

The content of this training could be informed by the findings relating to the factor analysis on the response patterns of participants to items on the attitude questionnaire. As discussed in section 5.3 the participants' responses could be grouped into five broad themes.

- Acknowledgment of injustices
- ATSI Rights: Land and Social
- Recognition of ATSI history in Australian Culture
- Acknowledging and Addressing disadvantage
- Self Determination

This indicates that there are at least five components to the construct of attitude towards reconciliation, and that a favorable disposition towards one scale does not necessarily equate with a positive attitude towards the other four. If overall attitude is to be improved by enhancing knowledge, then it is reasonable to suggest that the content of any training designed to do this will address knowledge in relation to all five of the aforementioned themes.

The existence of significant knowledge and attitude differences between schools is also of significance. This finding suggests that there may be school specific factors that impact upon these constructs. These factors do not appear to include teacher category, expertise or age. The knowledge and attitude differences between schools may be a function of gender mix, teaching peers, ethos, administration, or student population. There is some evidence in this study to implicate the last two factors as

potential contributors (school administration and student population) to the differences between schools. With regards to the potentially significant influence of school administration on attitude it was observed that two schools did not participate in the investigation because their principals deemed it “too sensitive”. The possible impact of student population was apparent in the highest attitude and second highest knowledge scores being registered by participants from school G, a school with a 30% Indigenous population. Further study into these observed differences is warranted.

Broadly speaking this investigation has implications for individual teachers, school administrators and policymakers. Classroom teachers can enhance their knowledge of Indigenous history (and possibly their attitude towards reconciliation) by engaging in private study and nominating for in-service courses relating to this topic. School administrators can play a role by providing opportunities for their staff to participate in professional development pertaining to Indigenous history. Policy makers can reinforce the connection between Indigenous history and attitude towards reconciliation by ensuring that Indigenous history is a component of pre-service teacher education and that ongoing in-service courses are maintained and promoted.

## **5.7 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Although this research study revealed a correlation between teacher attitude towards reconciliation and knowledge of Indigenous history, there are a number of ways in which this link could be further investigated. This section provides suggestions as to how the study could be improved or extended.

One of the challenges of this investigation was the absence of an instrument to effectively measure teacher attitude towards reconciliation. One positive result of this investigation was the development of such a tool. Reliability checks determined the value of Cronbach’s Alpha for the questionnaire used in this study was .96, which substantially exceeds the value of .8 required for instrument reliability. On this basis the attitude survey could be shortened. This may improve the low response rate (another challenge of this investigation) as some teachers may have found the completion of a 40-item questionnaire too onerous. If this was to be the case pilot testing would be necessary to ensure that the shortened questionnaire was still a reliable instrument.



A disadvantage of shortening the instrument is that it would prevent direct comparison of the attitude score of this sample with that of future samples. It was difficult to quantify (in absolute terms) the overall attitude of Brisbane Catholic Education primary school teachers. The data gathered in this investigation could provide this basis for comparison with other sectors of the profession and the wider community.

The attitude questionnaire could be administered to state education teachers, high school teachers, teachers from rural schools and individuals outside the teaching profession. These data could allow the attitude to reconciliation of various groups to be quantified and compared.

Future studies could gather more detailed demographic data on individual participants (e.g. gender, specifics of courses of study etc.) to allow more avenues for investigating the relationships between these scales and attitude towards reconciliation. In addition to this it may be beneficial to gather more detailed information on the schools involved to try and investigate any school-based factors that may account for observed differences in knowledge and attitude.

This study appears to rule out the influence of teacher category, experience and age on knowledge and attitude to reconciliation. As a consequence future studies could focus on the role of student population, socio-economic factors, school location and gender mix on these constructs.

One of the recommendations of this research investigation is the implementation of specific in-service and pre-service training in Indigenous history based on the five themes that emerged from the participant responses to the attitude questionnaire. This tool could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of these courses by comparing the attitude of course participants (after a suitable time had elapsed), with that of non-participants or participants from existing courses. Gathering more detailed demographic and school-specific data (as suggested above) would allow the researcher to control for other contributing factors.

The investigation could be extended by including students and examining (with modified instruments) the impact of knowledge of Indigenous history on attitude towards reconciliation in primary school pupils. These data could be compared with teacher data to examine the link between teacher attitude and student attitude,

providing an insight into the extent to which “all students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians” (Department of Education Science and Training, 1999, p.2).

This research identified the perceived attitudes of the teachers with respect to reconciliation. It does not ascertain if these teachers’ attitudes towards reconciliation transfer into classroom practice. It is not possible determine this is the case on the basis of this research investigation. This has, however, been observed in a number of other disciplines including mathematics, science and reading (Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd, 1991; Brickouse, 1990; Phillippou and Christou, 1998). Further research into the specific impact of attitudinal change is warranted. Case studies could be used to begin to answer this question.

## **5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The key constructs measured by this investigation were the attitudes to reconciliation, and the level of knowledge about Australia’s Indigenous history of teachers in Catholic Primary Schools. It is acknowledged at this point that in spite of the significance of the study, it is somewhat limited in its scope. The research sample is small and is drawn from a small number (11) of systemic Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Brisbane. As a consequence the findings are only specific to this somewhat limited population. Although the schools involved are representative of the wider catholic school community, the limited nature of the sample prevents broad generalisations from being drawn.

A further limitation is the lack of tools with which to adequately measure the constructs of knowledge and attitude. Instruments had to be developed for the specific purpose of this investigation. Although this has previously been cited as a factor contributing to the significance of this study, inherent in any conclusions drawn from the research is the assumption that the tools developed effectively measure knowledge and attitudes. Every effort was made to ensure that this was the case (pilot testing, internal and external validity checks etc.), but it is an assumption nonetheless.

The attitude questionnaire was developed around on The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation 10 key issues (1993). The history test however, was based on the

researcher's perception of what constitutes a broad knowledge of Indigenous historical events. This perception was informed by consultation but it must be recognised as a potential limitation of the study.

An additional limitation is the use of correlation to link knowledge and attitudes. The use of correlation will not establish causal links between knowledge and attitudes but may suggest a connection between these variables.

A final limitation concerns the specificity of the data collected from the participants. Only limited demographic information was collected. The absence of more specific data made it difficult to fully account for the observed differences between schools in terms of attitude and historical knowledge. In addition to this the participants were not asked to indicate the specific nature of any formal education courses in Indigenous history and/or cultural studies that they had attended. The researcher used the terms Indigenous history, Indigenous studies and BCEC Cultural Awareness programs as the three course categories that participants could nominate. It is apparent that only one of these categories relates directly to the study of Indigenous history (knowledge thereof being one of the principle foci of this investigation). Despite this all three course types or combinations thereof are used in this study. This could detract from the aim of comparing attitudes and knowledge of Indigenous history. It is possible that participants in Indigenous studies and the BCEC Cultural Awareness course may have a favourable attitude towards reconciliation due to exposure to Indigenous issues and culture, rather than a knowledge of history. In an effort to lessen the likelihood of this attribution the researcher retrospectively consulted Queensland Catholic Education to ascertain the content of the Cultural Awareness Course. The course did have a historical component: "The Cultural Awareness program that was being conducted was a training program for the use of the then newly developed teaching resource Aboriginal Culture and History kit" (APPENDIX Q).

In retrospect the researcher believes that more specific data may have been beneficial to the investigation, particularly with respect to the recommendation of specific course types in response to an observed correlation between knowledge of history and attitudes towards reconciliation.

## 5.9 CLOSING COMMENT

Teachers in Catholic schools are expected to model gospel values, one of which is the notion reconciliation. This term has a specific relevance in modern Australian society, where the idea of reconciling differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous is at the forefront of political, academic and social dialogue. Educational disadvantage has been identified as an essential component of this process (Adams, 1998; DEET, 1994; Herbert, Anderson, Price, & Stehbens, 1999), and as a result the reconciliation process has the support of education departments nationwide (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1998; Department of Education and Science and Training, 1999; Education Queensland, 2000).

Teacher attitude has been shown to have a significant impact on classroom practices and hence student outcomes (Bourke, et al., 2000; Brickhouse, 1990; Fanshawe, 1989; Godfrey, et al., 2000; Phillippou, & Christou, 1998). In this context it is clear that to advance the process of reconciliation within schools it is desirable that teachers have a favourable attitude towards this issue.

This study has revealed a link between the attitude of a representative sample of Catholic primary school teachers towards reconciliation and their knowledge of Indigenous history. It was found that knowledge of Indigenous history had a positive correlation with teacher attitude towards reconciliation. On this basis it could be suggested that increasing teacher knowledge and awareness of Indigenous history would have a favourable impact on teacher attitudes and advance the process of reconciliation within schools. This could be achieved with specific in-service and pre-service training courses designed to familiarise teachers with key aspects of Indigenous history.

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## Appendix A

Australian Catholic University  
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne



### Human Research Ethics Committee

#### Committee Approval Form

<b>Principal Investigator/Supervisor:</b> Dr Jeffrey Dorman	<b>Campus:</b> Brisbane
<b>Co-Investigators:</b>	<b>Campus:</b>
<b>Student Researcher:</b> Mrs Diane McClure	<b>Campus:</b> Brisbane

<b>Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:</b> The Impact of Historical Knowledge on Attitudes to Reconciliation
<b>for the period:</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2002 - 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2002
<b>Human Research Ethics Committee Register Number:</b> Q2002.03-08

subject to the following **standard** conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (1999):

- (i) that Principal Investigators / Supervisors provide, on the form supplied by the Human Research Ethics Committee, annual reports on matters such as:
  - security of records
  - compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
  - compliance with special conditions, and
- (ii) that researchers report to the HREC immediately any matter that might affect the ethical acceptability of the protocol, such as:
  - proposed changes to the protocol
  - unforeseen circumstances or events
  - adverse effects on participants;

and subject to the following **special** conditions being met, as stipulated by the Human Research Ethics Committee:

#### 3.1 General Information

- 1.0 C1 – Brief description – should indicate what is identified as “reconciliation”. The word in the context means little on its own.
- 2.0 C2 – Researcher should identify what is the “reconciliation process”? The attitude instrument contains methodologically flawed items eg those who died in custody were victims of entrenched racism and discrimination. The item asks for attitude towards a statement that depends on each and every death in custody being of the one kind. This constitutes seeking an attitude towards a fact. (One + One = Two: What is your attitude towards that, how does that make you feel?) It is thus based on a false belief about the possible state of knowledge. A re-phrasing into “opinion” or “attitude” mode is recommended eg “Entrenched racism and discrimination have contributed to the extent of Aboriginal deaths in custody”.
- 3.0 All letters should included the correct name of the Committee ie Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University;

#### 3.2 Research Design and procedures

- 1.0 The literature review is scanty and appears to be dependent on what the researcher describes as “revisionist history” of Henry Reynolds. This is regarded as a highly contentious interpretation of history by a significant body of other historians who question whether “revisionist history” is as much polemic as it is history. Consequently, the project cannot be titled or described as a project to explore an hypothesized correlation between a positive attitude to reconciliation and “a thorough knowledge of

- Australian history". The most that can be claimed when describing the project and its conclusion is a possible correlation between attitude and knowledge of some aspects of the history of indigenous people of Australia and Torres Strait Island.
- 2.0 The attitude questionnaire requires tick-a-box answers which do not do justice to complex and contentious issues. The researcher claims to have eliminated all emotive connotations in the questionnaire and the test but includes the term "stolen generation" which itself is regarded by many as an inaccurate, emotive and tendentious term.
  - 3.0 It is appropriate in a Pilot Study to include terms in the "General Information" section that will be relevant in some later, larger study. Their presence, however, should be explained, in the research outline, by reference to relevant literature and/or to the use of the information in subsequent analysis.
  - 4.0 D1.5 How will teachers be approached? What steps have been taken by the researcher to avoid coercion where a teacher declines to participate when others are completing the questionnaire during the staff meeting?

### 3.3 Project Particulars

- 1.0 Please justify why demographic details (gender, age, teaching level) are required as the stated hypothesis is a correlation between knowledge of Australian History and Attitudes to Reconciliation – not gender, age etc. This is potentially identifying information as the sample size is small and from one school. If no justification, please delete such questions.

### 3.4 Gathering, security, disposal of data: dissemination of results

- 1.0 G1 – it is stated that individual surveys will be identified by a number and that this number may be referred to in subsequent discussion. This means that some of the data reported will be at the individual (not aggregated) level. Together with the "general information" items, statements that uniquely identify individuals could be made. Section G.2 is therefore to be completed with a statement undertaking that appropriate care will be taken to avoid this possibility.

### 3.5 Confidentiality, anonymity, privacy

- 1.0 F1 – participants are a small number of identified teachers at a school. They are not "anonymous" even if their responses are de-identified. Given the "General Introduction" questions on gender and age group, the researcher will know the identity of at least some respondents.

### 3.6 Information Letter to Participants

- 1.0 Information letter to teachers – the researcher should be frank in stating the hypothesis "up front". To say "I am conducting research about the 'reconciliation process' is inadequately informative and unfair to the participant. She should inform them in words similar to the following: "I am exploring my hypothesis which is the attitudes to the reconciliation process between indigenous people of Australia and Torres Strait Island and the broader community may correlate with your knowledge of a body of history of these peoples according to revisionist historians."
- 2.0 The letter should be personalized – participants should be "invited" not told they are "selected". The researcher should choose between pronouns "on" or "about". The letter should indicate the reason for the history test and the area to be tested (note that the suggested clearer statement of the hypothesis would address this);
- 3.0 The letter to the principal of the school – the researcher should make it clear that teachers are to be individually invited to take part and that this participation is voluntary.

### 3.7 Issues concerning consent (including consent forms)

- 1.0 Letters of permission from Catholic Education Office and the school principal should be provided to the HREC once they are obtained.

## **The Principal Investigator / Supervisor is requested to note the following comments:**

### 4.1 General Information

1.0 Comments by the Expedited Review Panel in relation to the research methodology should be noted. The researchers are invited to note the comments also in relation to methodologically flawed questions and respond to the Committee.

2.0 The format of "General Information" question 4 (about the 7 types of teachers) was faulty.

### 4.6 Information Letter to Participants

1.0 Perhaps add that the teachers' responses will be coded so they cannot be identified and that the name of the school will not be disclosed.

Within one month of the conclusion of the project, researchers are required to complete a *Final Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer.

If the project continues for more than one year, researchers are required to complete an *Annual Progress Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer within one month of the anniversary date of the ethics approval.

Signed: William J.Foster.....  
(Chair, HREC)

Date: 23/09/2002.....

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR  
OR BY THE SUPERVISOR AND STUDENT RESEARCHER**

The Principal Investigator, or the Supervisor and Student Researcher, are to sign, date and return this form to the local Research Services Officer. Evidence of compliance with any special conditions set by the HREC should be provided when the form is returned. Please note that data-collection must not commence until the stipulated special conditions have been met.

The date when I/we expect to commence contact with human participants or access their records is:  
.....

I/We hereby declare that I/We am/are aware of the principles and requirements governing research involving human participants, as expressed in the Human Research Ethics Committee's *Guidelines*, and I/We agree to the standard and special conditions (if applicable) stated above.

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
[Principal Investigator or Supervisor]

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
[Student Researcher]

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CHAIR / DEPUTY CHAIR HREC**

I confirm that the special conditions stipulated by the HREC in relation to the commencement of data-collection have been met and that the conditions to be adhered to in the course of the project have been acknowledged by the researcher/s.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

## Appendix B

Dear Principal,

I am conducting a research investigation about the Reconciliation process. The survey has been designed around the 10 key issues for reconciliation as identified by the Council for Reconciliation.

Your school has been selected to participate in this survey. Participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw your school from the research at any time. All information will be treated confidentially.

Participation in this study invites each member of your teaching staff to complete a questionnaire, and a short-answer test. It is anticipated that the completion of these instruments should take approximately 45 minutes.

This research is being conducted with the approval of Brisbane Catholic Education and the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University. Any questions regarding this research can be directed to me at the address below.

In the event that you have any concerns about the manner in which this study is being conducted, or if you have a query that the researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to

The Chair  
University Research Projects Ethics Committee  
C/- Office of Research  
Australian Catholic University  
P.O. Box 247  
Everton Park 4053  
Tel: 3855 7294 Fax: 3855 7328

Any issues raised will be treated in confidence, investigated fully and the participant will be informed of the outcome.

Yours Sincerely,

Diane McClure  
Masters of Education Student  
School of Education  
Australian Catholic University  
P.O. Box 247  
Everton Park 4053  
Tel: 38557219

### **Supervisor**

Dr Jeffery Dorman  
Senior Lecturer  
School of Education  
Australian Catholic  
University  
P.O. Box 247  
Everton Park 4053  
Tel: 38557219



## Appendix C

This fax was accompanied with the researcher's school letterhead.

Please return this fax as soon as possible, (the deadline for the data collection is the end of term 1) to the above address.

To ensure that data collected are valid it is desirable that surveys are completed at the same time without communication between participants (eg. in a staff meeting etc.). It is not necessary for the whole staff to complete the survey, but it would be much appreciated.

- No, we would not like to participate in this study.
- Yes, we would like to participate in this study.

School name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Expected number of participants \_\_\_\_\_

Expected date of survey completion \_\_\_\_\_

I will send the numbered surveys to your school on the return of this fax.

Thank-you for your time,

Diane McClure

## Appendix D

### *Indigenous Studies Courses*

<b>Indigenous Studies</b>	<b>University</b>
Culture Studies: Indigenous Education (EDB007)	QUT
Issues in Indigenous Education (CLB402)	QUT
Indigenous Australian Culture Studies (HHB123)	QUT
Indigenous Australian Politics (HHB255)	QUT
Indigenous Writing (KWB701).	QUT
Indigenous Spirituality 2 ( <a href="#">EDRE421</a> )	ACU
Indigenous Cultures and Peoples <sup>1</sup> ( <a href="#">EDAB111</a> )	ACU
Contemporary Issues in Indigenous Studies ( <a href="#">EDAB107</a> ), Advocacy, Power and Empowerment ( <a href="#">EDAC219</a> )	ACU
Social Justice: Ethical and Legal Issues ( <a href="#">EDAC424</a> )	ACU
Case Studies in Diversity ( <a href="#">EDAC427</a> )	ACU
Indigenous Education in Australia ( <a href="#">EDAC615</a> )	ACU
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Perspectives (ABTS1000)	UQ
Torres Strait Islander Studies (ABTS2000)	UQ
Aboriginal Women (ABTS2010 )	UQ
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Approaches to Knowledge (ABTS2020)	UQ
Aboriginal Politics & Political Issues (ABTS3000)	UQ
Working with Indigenous People (ABTS3020)	UQ
Working with Indigenous People(ABTS3020)	UQ
Black Australian Literature A(ABTS2040)	UQ
Black Australian Literature B(ABTS2050)	UQ
Women’s Music & Dance in Indigenous Australia(ABTS2120)	UQ
People & Environment Studies (Indigenous/Community Issues) (ARCH3210)	UQ
Australian Indigenous Art(ARTT2103)	UQ
Indigenous Health(INDH2005)	UQ
Australian Aboriginal Languages(LING2025)	UQ
Women, Culture, Race(GEND1000)	UQ
Aboriginal & Other Australian Spiritualities(RELN2003)	UQ
From Nationalism to Cosmopolitanism(SOCY2210)	UQ

## Appendix E

### *Indigenous History Courses*

<b>Indigenous History</b>	<b>University</b>
Country, Kin and Culture (HHB210)	QUT
Australian History in an Indigenous Context ( <u>EDAB300</u> )	ACU
Indigenous Lifestyles Past and Present ( <u>EDAB105</u> )	ACU
Post-Contact Indigenous History ( <u>EDAB106</u> )	ACU
Australian History in an Indigenous Context ( <u>EDAB300</u> )	ACU
Aboriginality & Australian Identity: Contested Realities (ANTH1010)	UQ
Reading the Country: Studies in Indigenous Ethno ecology (ANTH2060)	UQ
Aboriginal Heritage: Anthropological & Archaeological Perspectives(ANTH2098)	UQ
Origins of Australia (HIST1200)	UQ
From Nationalism to Cosmopolitanism (SOCY2210)	UQ
Aboriginal Music: Performing, Place, Power & Identity(ABTS2102)	UQ
Australia's Indigenous Languages(ANTH2150)	UQ
Indigenous Peoples in the Modern World System(ANTH2170)	UQ
Case Studies in Indigenous Australia(ANTH2140)	UQ
Australasian Archaeology(ARCA2020)	UQ
Queensland Archaeology(ARCA2080)	UQ

## Appendix F

### Reconciliation Survey

Dear Teacher,

I am conducting research into the link between the attitudes of Brisbane Catholic Education teachers towards reconciliation, and teachers' knowledge of aspects of Australia's Indigenous history. The survey has been designed around the 10 key issues for reconciliation as identified by the Council for Reconciliation.

As a teacher in a Catholic Primary School you are invited to participate in this survey. Participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any time. All information will be treated confidentially. Participants' responses will be coded so that they cannot be identified and the name of the school will not be disclosed.

Participation in this study involves the completion of a questionnaire, and a short-answer test. It is anticipated that the completion of these instruments should take approximately 45 minutes.

This research is being conducted with the approval of Brisbane Catholic Education, the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University and the Principal of your school. Any questions regarding this research can be directed to me at the address below.

In the event that you have any concerns about the manner in which this study is being conducted, or if you have a query that the researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to

The Chair  
University Research Projects Ethics Committee  
C/- Office of Research  
Australian Catholic University  
P.O. Box 456  
Virginia 4014  
Tel: 617 3623 7274 Fax: 617 3623 7274

Any issues raised will be treated in confidence, investigated fully and the participant will be informed of the outcome.

Yours Sincerely,

Diane McClure  
Masters of Education Student  
School of Education  
Australian Catholic University  
P.O. Box 456  
Virginia 4014  
Tel: 617 3623 7274 Fax: 617 3623 7274

Please turn the page to start the survey.



## Appendix H

### Reconciliation Survey

Please place a cross in the box that best corresponds with your feelings towards the following statements:

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Australian law should recognise native title.						
It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community.						
Australia was illegally settled in 1788.						
Aboriginal people today have a strong culture.						
Students of Aboriginal descent should receive benefits towards their education.						
High incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are a result of poor living standards.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians must be permitted to find their own solutions and be supported to the utmost extent in doing so.						
A formal apology from the government would aid the reconciliation process.						
Traditional landowners and language groups of a particular region should be recognised.						
An apology to the stolen generations would facilitate the reconciliation process.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly those living in remote Australia under traditional laws, should still hold native title.						
When walking in my town I feel threatened when I see an Aboriginal person.						
It is important to know the Indigenous history of your local area.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong cultural and spiritual attachments to the land and sea.						
The poor health of Aboriginal people is a government problem.						
Police and justice systems should recognise customary(traditional) law.						
Aborigines were conquered in an undeclared war, so they have no right of redress.						
The process of reconciliation will be advanced by; passing a formal document that confirms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander property rights pre-exist and survive colonisation.						
Apologising to the stolen generations is not necessary to the reconciliation process.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should have access to sacred sites on private properties.						

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Aboriginal Australians and other Australians will always be in conflict.						
The history taught in schools places undue emphasis on the European perspective.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture should be taught in our schools.						
Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are materially and economically disadvantaged.						
Entrenched racism and discrimination have contributed to the extent of Aboriginal deaths in custody.						
Indigenous systems of customary law have been interfered with by the imposition of an alien legal system.						
Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments.						
Unoccupied crown land should be restored to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people claiming cultural, historical/traditional association.						
The systematic separation of Aboriginal children from their parents is a past wrong that must be formally acknowledged.						
As a result of European settlement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were dispossessed of their land.						
Including Australian history from an Indigenous perspective should be an essential part of our curriculum.						
Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.						
Our Indigenous cultures are a core part of what is distinctive about Australia.						
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive too many benefits.						
The Australian Government and people should officially recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights to self-determination and self-management.						
The Commonwealth should pass laws providing a national system of land rights.						
A formalised statement would make no difference to the reconciliation process.						
Recent rulings on native title threaten the security of non-Indigenous landowners.						
The Stolen Generation should be forgotten because there is nothing to be gained from dwelling on the past.						

## Appendix I

<p><b>Issue 1: Understanding Country</b></p> <p>1. Australian law should recognise native title.  11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly those living in remote Australia under traditional laws, should still hold native title.  21 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should have access to sacred sites on private properties.  31. As a result of European settlement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were dispossessed of their land.</p>
<p><b>Issue 2: Improving Relationships</b></p> <p>2. It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community.  12. When walking in my town I feel threatened when I see an Aboriginal person.  22. Aboriginal Australians and other Australians will always be in conflict.  32. Including Australian history from an Indigenous perspective should be an essential part of our curriculum.</p>
<p><b>Issue 3: Valuing Cultures</b></p> <p>3. Australia was illegally settled in 1788.  13. It is important to know the Indigenous history of your local area.  23. The history taught in schools places undue emphasis on the European perspective.  33. Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.</p>
<p><b>Issue 4: Sharing History</b></p> <p>4. Aboriginal people today have a strong culture.  14. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong cultural and spiritual attachments to the land and sea.  24. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture should be taught in our schools.  34. Our Indigenous cultures are a core part of what is distinctive about Australia.</p>
<p><b>Issue 5: Addressing Disadvantage</b></p> <p>5. Students of Aboriginal descent should receive benefits towards their education.  15. The poor health of Aboriginal people is a government problem.  25. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are materially and economically disadvantaged.  35. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive too many benefits.</p>
<p><b>Issue 6: Custody Levels</b></p> <p>6. High incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are a result of poor living standards.  16. Police and justice systems should recognise customary(traditional) law.  26. Entrenched racism and discrimination have contributed to the extent of Aboriginal deaths in custody.  36. The Australian Government and people should officially recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights to self-determination and self-management.</p>
<p><b>Issue 7: Controlling Destiny</b></p> <p>7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians must be permitted to find their own solutions and be supported to the utmost extent in doing so.  17. Aborigines were conquered in an undeclared war, so they have no right of redress.  27. Indigenous systems of customary law have been interfered with by the imposition of an alien legal system.  37. The Commonwealth should pass laws providing a national system of land rights.</p>
<p><b>Issue 8: Formal Document</b></p> <p>8. A formal apology from the government would aid the reconciliation process.  18. The process of reconciliation will be advanced by; passing a formal document that confirms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights.  28. Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments.  38. A formalised statement would make no difference to the reconciliation process.</p>
<p><b>Issue 9: Native Title</b></p> <p>9. Traditional landowners and language groups of a particular region should be recognised.  19. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander property rights pre-exist and survive colonisation.  29. Unoccupied crown land should be restored to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people claiming cultural, historical/traditional association.  39. Recent rulings on native title threaten the security of non-Indigenous landowners.</p>
<p><b>Issue 10: Stolen Generations</b></p> <p>10. An apology to the stolen generations would facilitate the reconciliation process.  20. Apologising to the stolen generations is not necessary to the reconciliation process.  30. The systematic separation of Aboriginal children from their parents is a past wrong that must be formally</p>



acknowledged.

40. The Stolen Generation should be forgotten because there is nothing to be gained from dwelling on the past.

## Appendix J

### History Questionnaire

- *Please attempt all questions.*
- *Record your responses on the answer sheet provided.*

1. The doctrine based on the belief that at the time colonisation the land belonged to no-one was
  - a) Wik
  - b) Mabo
  - c) Terra nullius
  - d) Terra australis
2. In what year was it ruled that native titled could continue to exist on a pastoral lease if the original lease did not specifically extinguish it?
  - a) 1993
  - b) 1995
  - c) 1996
  - d) 1989
3. Oodgeroo Noonuccal was born in which South-East Queensland area?
  - a) Moreton Island
  - b) Stradbroke Island
  - c) Fraser Island
  - d) Redcliffe
4. Murri is the common word used by \_\_\_\_\_ Aboriginal people as a name for themselves.
  - a) Queensland
  - b) New South Wales and Victorian
  - c) South Australian
  - d) Western Australian

5. Who said this?

I do not think that the doctrine of equality of man was ever really intended to include racial equality.

*(Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, cited in Pattel-Gray 1998:56)*

- a) John Howard
  - b) Edmund Barton
  - c) Robert Menzies
  - d) Pauline Hanson
6. Which Aboriginal activist is associated with 'The Freedom Rides' in 1965?
    - a) Phillip Pepper
    - b) Kath Walker
    - c) Charlie Perkins
    - d) Neville Bonner
  7. In 1869, The Board for the Protection of Aborigines was given power to take charge of Aboriginal children whom it considered to be in need of care, custody and education. Similar laws were later introduced in Qld, W.A., N.S.W. and S.A. Under these laws children were taken away from their families right up until the \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) 1970's
- b) 1960's
- c) 1980's
- d) 1950's

8. Who led the resistance against European Settlement in the late 1700's?

- a) Bennelong
- b) Colbee
- c) Pemulwuy
- d) Wylie

9. In which year did Australian People approve the ending of constitutional discrimination against Aborigines?

- a) 1967
- b) 1953
- c) 1937
- d) 1971

10. Which political party was Neville Bonner a member of:

- a) Democrats
- b) Liberals
- c) Labour
- d) Nationals

11. Which Aboriginal bowler was one of the few cricketers to ever dismiss Donald Bradman for nought?

- a) Eddie Gilbert
- b) Chucka Collins
- c) David Sands
- d) Lionel Rose

12. The Day of Mourning is a day of Aboriginal protest, it first was organised to coincide with the

- e) 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- f) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- g) 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement
- h) 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European settlement

13. Didjeridus were originally used only in the:

- a) south of Australia
- b) north of Australia
- c) east of Australia
- d) west of Australia

14. A 'Dog tag' was the name used by Aboriginal people for the certificates of:

- e) ownership of land
- f) identification of family and community group
- g) permit to travel from State to State
- h) exemption of restrictions applying to Aborigines

15. Which place was the oldest and largest government reserve in Queensland?

- a) Cherbourg
- b) Fraser Island
- c) Laura
- d) Palm Island

16. Jimmy Governor was an Aboriginal:

- a) bushranger
- b) doctor
- c) stockman
- d) politician

17. The title deeds to Uluru were presented to the traditional owners in \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) 1987
- b) 1980
- c) 1985
- d) 1979

18 In \_\_\_\_\_ NT patrol officers 'brought in' the last groups of Aborigines (Pintubi Tribe) living an independent traditional lifestyle to Papunya and Yuendumu settlements.

- a) 1935
- b) 1925
- c) 1905
- d) 1965

19. The yellow, red, and black on the Aboriginal flag, designed 1971, represent:

- a) the moon, bloodshed experienced by Aborigines, mourning
- b) the sun, bloodshed experienced by Aborigines, the people
- c) the sun, the earth, and the people
- d) the sun, the earth, mourning

20. In what year and for what reason was the 'Tent Embassy' erected on the lawns opposite Parliament House in Canberra on the 26<sup>th</sup> January.

- a) 1972, to pressure the government into housing projects
- b) 1965, to obtain voting rights for Aborigines
- c) 1976, to gain Aboriginal representation in the lower house of Federal Parliament
- d) 1972, demonstrating for land rights

***Thank you for your participation!***

## History Questionnaire

### *Answer Sheet*

- Please circle the most correct response.

<b>Question</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
1	A	B	C	D
2	A	B	C	D
3	A	B	C	D
4	A	B	C	D
5	A	B	C	D
6	A	B	C	D
7	A	B	C	D
8	A	B	C	D
9	A	B	C	D
10	A	B	C	D
11	A	B	C	D
12	A	B	C	D
13	A	B	C	D
14	A	B	C	D
15	A	B	C	D
16	A	B	C	D
17	A	B	C	D
18	A	B	C	D
19	A	B	C	D
20	A	B	C	D

*Thank you for your participation!*

## Appendix K

### Reliability of Attitude Instrument

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.956	.957	40

Item Statistics							
Statement Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Statement Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
S1	7.73	4.000	99	S21	5.68	2.878	99
S2	8.26	1.626	99	S22	6.30	2.513	99
S3	5.19	3.231	99	S23	5.29	2.862	99
S4	5.87	2.534	99	S24	7.86	1.790	99
S5	5.71	2.723	99	S25	6.37	2.694	99
S6	6.37	2.754	99	S26	5.55	2.760	99
S7	7.17	2.857	99	S27	5.69	2.538	99
S8	5.79	3.387	99	S28	4.40	2.645	99
S9	7.34	2.200	99	S29	5.68	2.547	99
S10	6.22	3.303	99	S30	7.37	2.746	99
S11	6.91	2.635	99	S31	7.71	1.929	99
S12	7.73	2.461	99	S32	8.02	1.813	99
S13	7.82	2.002	99	S33	8.36	1.568	99
S14	8.17	2.281	99	S34	8.11	1.795	99
S15	6.21	2.666	99	S35	5.11	2.733	99
S16	5.88	2.467	99	S36	6.42	2.134	99
S17	7.47	2.215	99	S37	6.17	2.491	99
S18	6.38	2.702	99	S38	5.60	2.899	99
S19	5.24	2.730	99	S39	4.47	2.513	99
S20	6.35	3.111	99	S40	7.32	2.470	99

## Appendix L

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
S1	253.60	3716.162	.492	.595	.956
S2	253.06	3878.935	.447	.749	.955
S3	256.13	3726.442	.596	.731	.955
S4	255.45	3866.985	.313	.460	.956
S5	255.62	3739.565	.676	.673	.954
S6	254.95	3797.130	.493	.600	.955
S7	254.15	3830.518	.377	.612	.956
S8	255.54	3615.129	.848	.879	.953
S9	253.98	3781.061	.688	.779	.954
S10	255.10	3632.316	.826	.938	.953
S11	254.41	3728.633	.735	.758	.954
<b>S12</b>	<b>253.60</b>	<b>3926.978</b>	<b>.126</b>	<b>.460</b>	<b>.957</b>
S13	253.51	3839.681	.517	.766	.955
S14	253.15	3809.763	.558	.623	.955
S15	255.11	3780.181	.564	.678	.955
S16	255.44	3765.902	.661	.736	.954
S17	253.85	3898.232	.249	.454	.956
S18	254.94	3731.874	.705	.841	.954
S19	256.08	3748.238	.647	.640	.954
S20	254.97	3670.805	.773	.904	.953
S21	255.65	3717.313	.702	.690	.954
<b>S22</b>	<b>255.02</b>	<b>3904.387</b>	<b>.195</b>	<b>.421</b>	<b>.957</b>
S23	256.03	3769.397	.553	.620	.955
S24	253.46	3842.864	.568	.746	.955
S25	254.95	3749.946	.651	.667	.954
S26	255.78	3715.113	.741	.763	.954
S27	255.64	3757.724	.668	.832	.954
S28	256.92	3818.014	.450	.580	.955
S29	255.65	3751.374	.687	.719	.954
S30	253.95	3725.416	.713	.866	.954
S31	253.62	3793.688	.735	.765	.954
S32	253.30	3831.111	.613	.811	.955
S33	252.96	3848.325	.623	.798	.955
S34	253.21	3845.128	.556	.611	.955

S35	256.21	3721.720	.728	.807	.954
S36	254.90	3816.255	.574	.650	.955
S37	255.15	3772.273	.633	.701	.954
S38	255.73	3728.976	.663	.764	.954
S39	256.85	3821.007	.466	.633	.955
S40	254.00	3793.551	.567	.698	.955



## Appendix M

### *Descriptive Statistics for Attitude Survey*

<i>Statement</i>	N	Min.	Max	Mean	S.D.
33. Australian history needs to be portrayed as a history that began at least 40 000 years ago.	97	2	10	8.43	1.51
2. It is important to know about the local Aboriginal community.	99	0	10	8.28	1.59
14 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strong cultural and spiritual attachments to the land and sea.	99	0	10	8.22	2.27
34. Our Indigenous cultures are a core part of what is distinctive about Australia.	98	2	10	8.14	1.78
32. Including Australian history from an Indigenous perspective should be an essential part of our curriculum.	97	2	10	8.08	1.78
24. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture should be taught in our schools.	99	2	10	7.86	1.79
13. It is important to know the Indigenous history of your local area.	100	0	10	7.82	1.99
12. When walking in my town I do not feel threatened when I see an Aboriginal person.	99	0	10	7.76	2.45
17. Aborigines were conquered in an undeclared war, so they have a right of redress.	96	2	10	7.60	2.20
1. Australian law should recognise native title.	97	0	10	7.51	2.29
30. The systematic separation of Aboriginal children from their parents is a past wrong that must be formally acknowledged.	97	0	10	7.42	2.75
40. The Stolen Generation should not be forgotten because there is nothing to be gained from dwelling on the past.	97	0	10	7.38	2.46
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians must be permitted to find their own solutions and be supported to the utmost extent in doing so.	100	0	10	7.02	2.60
11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly those living in remote Australia under traditional laws, should still hold native title.	98	2	10	6.96	2.64
36. The Australian Government and people should officially recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights to self-determination and self-management.	95	0	10	6.48	2.16
18. The process of reconciliation will be advanced by; passing a formal document that confirms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights.	98	0	10	6.43	2.71
20. Apologising to the stolen generation is necessary to the reconciliation process.	99	0	10	6.40	3.13
6. High incarceration rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are a result of poor living standards.	99	0	10	6.40	2.76

<i>Statement</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
25. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are materially and economically disadvantaged.	98	0	10	6.39	2.70
22. Aboriginal Australians and other Australians will always be in conflict.	99	0	10	6.30	2.51
10. An apology to the stolen generations would facilitate the reconciliation process.	98	0	10	6.29	3.34
15. The poor health of Aboriginal people is a government problem.	99	0	10	6.22	2.66
37. The Commonwealth should pass laws providing a national system of land rights.	96	0	10	6.21	2.52
16. Police and justice systems should recognise customary (traditional) law.	98	0	10	5.90	2.48
4. Aboriginal people today have a strong culture.	97	0	10	5.90	2.56
8. A formal apology from the government would aid the reconciliation process.	99	0	10	5.84	3.41
5. Students of Aboriginal descent should receive benefits towards their education.	97	0	10	5.73	2.75
27. Indigenous systems of customary law have been interfered with by the imposition of an alien legal system.	94	0	10	5.72	2.60
21. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should have access to sacred sights on private properties.	98	0	10	5.69	2.89
29. Unoccupied crown land should be restored to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people claiming cultural, historical/traditional association.	97	0	10	5.69	2.57
38. A formalised statement would make a difference to the reconciliation process.	96	0	10	5.61	2.94
26. Entrenched racism and discrimination have contributed to the extent of Aboriginal deaths in custody.	96	0	10	5.56	2.80
23. The history taught in schools places undue emphasis on the European perspective.	99	0	10	5.29	2.86
19. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander property rights pre-exist and survive colonization.	97	0	10	5.28	2.77
3. Australia was settled in 1788.	100	0	10	5.20	3.22
35. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive too many benefits.	93	0	10	5.12	2.82
39. Recent rulings on native title do not threaten the security of non-Indigenous landowners.	94	0	10	4.45	2.58
28. Reserved seats for Indigenous peoples should be created in state, territory and federal parliaments.	97	0	10	4.39	2.67

NB: For clarity the items that were negatively loaded have been reworded.

## Appendix N

The distribution of participant response for each of the 40 items.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	4	5	22	42	25
2	1	0	1	14	52	32
3	9	26	8	25	16	16
4	2	14	14	35	26	9
5	7	15	11	27	34	6
6	3	11	14	22	34	16
7	4	4	10	24	32	26
8	10	19	7	20	21	23
9	1	4	6	26	40	23
10	10	13	5	22	5	25
11	1	13	8	22	31	25
12	2	2	15	6	39	36
13	2	1	3	20	47	27
14	2	2	3	12	36	45
15	2	14	15	22	34	13
16	2	15	15	33	27	8
17	0	6	8	17	43	26
18	3	13	10	24	35	15
19	7	16	20	27	23	7
20	5	14	17	11	28	25
21	6	17	14	23	30	10
22	2	6	30	9	41	11
23	7	19	17	23	25	8
24	0	4	0	19	52	24
25	3	11	15	20	35	15
26	7	13	16	30	24	9
27	1	20	15	27	29	7
28	9	25	22	27	11	5
29	2	17	19	28	24	9
30	5	6	3	21	31	33
31	0	2	7	20	44	26
32	0	2	2	20	43	32
33	0	1	0	15	46	37
34	0	2	2	18	43	34
35	9	11	27	24	21	7
36	1	5	18	30	37	8
37	3	10	15	25	38	8
38	3	23	16	16	30	11
39	4	28	29	18	16	4
40	1	5	11	21	31	30

## Appendix O

Number of participant responses to each history question.

Question	A	B	C	D
1	13	14	<b>60</b>	10
2	<b>19</b>	22	28	23
3	9	<b>72</b>	11	5
4	<b>48</b>	41	3	2
5	16	<b>21</b>	21	37
6	8	14	<b>55</b>	21
7	<b>48</b>	24	9	12
8	35	13	<b>30</b>	14
9	<b>58</b>	4	2	27
10	19	<b>49</b>	14	10
11	<b>60</b>	20	7	2
12	31	4	49	<b>10</b>
13	6	<b>60</b>	12	12
14	3	36	33	<b>14</b>
15	<b>50</b>	17	4	22
16	<b>24</b>	10	43	10
17	47	10	<b>28</b>	9
18	8	8	8	<b>67</b>
19	0	7	<b>87</b>	4
20	4	12	14	<b>64</b>

Appendix P

A point biserial correlation matrix

	ITEM_1	ITEM_2	ITEM_3	ITEM_4	ITEM_5
ITEM_1	1.000				
ITEM_2	0.075	1.000			
ITEM_3	0.411	0.316	1.000		
ITEM_4	0.181	-0.059	0.215	1.000	
ITEM_5	0.051	-0.049	0.248	-0.265	1.000
ITEM_6	-0.152	0.217	0.244	-0.003	0.029
ITEM_7	0.508	-0.072	0.162	0.187	0.103
ITEM_8	0.365	0.353	0.461	-0.030	0.106
ITEM_9	0.692	0.129	0.481	-0.032	0.021
ITEM_10	0.352	0.531	0.464	0.209	-0.169
ITEM_11	0.226	0.385	0.390	0.227	0.342
ITEM_12	-0.078	0.233	0.115	-0.183	0.193
ITEM_13	0.134	0.302	0.300	0.204	0.089
ITEM_14	0.303	0.032	0.299	0.196	0.132
ITEM_15	0.163	0.356	0.110	0.345	0.085
ITEM_16	0.577	0.399	0.317	-0.252	0.052
ITEM_17	-0.115	0.064	-0.266	-0.113	0.006
ITEM_18	0.326	0.079	0.385	0.302	0.139
ITEM_19	-0.135	0.107	0.031	-0.021	0.147
ITEM_20	-0.099	0.038	0.172	0.298	0.196
SCALE_1	0.363	-0.042	0.239	0.196	0.008
SCALE_2	0.366	0.203	0.314	0.079	0.105
SCALE_3	0.161	0.103	0.184	0.255	-0.106
SCALE_4	0.440	0.148	0.424	0.162	0.175
SCALE_5	0.371	0.191	0.204	0.201	0.000
HISTTEST	0.123	0.140	0.115	0.210	-0.278

Correlation Matrix (continued)

	ITEM_6	ITEM_7	ITEM_8	ITEM_9	ITEM_10
ITEM_7	0.002	1.000			
ITEM_8	0.205	0.356	1.000		
ITEM_9	0.270	0.228	0.261	1.000	
ITEM_10	0.280	0.031	0.337	0.547	1.000
ITEM_11	0.392	0.356	0.383	0.455	0.319
ITEM_12	0.359	-0.220	0.102	-0.035	-0.077
ITEM_13	0.301	0.384	0.005	0.369	0.522
ITEM_14	0.180	0.241	0.386	0.222	0.226
ITEM_15	0.094	-0.031	0.189	0.128	0.249
ITEM_16	0.529	0.369	0.448	0.533	0.274
ITEM_17	0.129	-0.093	0.152	0.104	0.114
ITEM_18	0.205	0.113	0.184	0.119	0.271
ITEM_19	-0.133	-0.193	0.075	0.183	0.298
ITEM_20	0.238	0.075	-0.080	0.231	0.295
SCALE_1	0.150	0.344	0.227	0.226	0.158
SCALE_2	0.311	0.426	0.379	0.271	0.161
SCALE_3	0.023	0.193	0.377	0.091	-0.032
SCALE_4	0.268	0.433	0.357	0.312	0.268
SCALE_5	0.173	0.415	0.322	0.219	0.225
HISTTEST	0.164	0.097	0.271	0.071	0.159

Correlation Matrix (continued)

	ITEM_11	ITEM_12	ITEM_13	ITEM_14	ITEM_15
ITEM_12	0.470				

ITEM_13	0.299	0.111	1.000		
ITEM_14	<b>0.960</b>	-0.076	0.086	1.000	
ITEM_15	0.193	0.077	0.097	0.000	1.000
ITEM_16	0.503	0.300	0.350	0.425	0.039
ITEM_17	-0.169	-0.083	0.005	0.158	-0.189
ITEM_18	0.302	0.401	0.278	-0.147	0.068
ITEM_19	0.097	-0.208	0.081	0.198	0.059
ITEM_20	0.216	<b>0.935</b>	0.256	-0.209	0.165
SCALE_1	<b>0.103</b>	<b>0.115</b>	<b>-0.016</b>	<b>0.183</b>	<b>0.180</b>
SCALE_2	<b>0.213</b>	<b>0.166</b>	<b>0.015</b>	<b>0.125</b>	<b>0.096</b>
SCALE_3	<b>0.067</b>	<b>0.324</b>	<b>-0.056</b>	<b>0.121</b>	<b>0.159</b>
SCALE_4	<b>0.258</b>	<b>0.081</b>	<b>0.125</b>	<b>0.236</b>	<b>0.132</b>
SCALE_5	<b>0.194</b>	<b>0.039</b>	<b>-0.014</b>	<b>0.181</b>	<b>0.223</b>
HISTTEST	0.110	-0.117	0.061	0.186	0.000

Correlation Matrix (continued)

	ITEM_16	ITEM_17	ITEM_18	ITEM_19	ITEM_20
ITEM_17	0.024	1.000			
ITEM_28	0.043	0.359	1.000		
ITEM_19	-0.239	0.075	0.195	1.000	
ITEM_20	-0.062	-0.001	0.309	0.145	1.000
SCALE_1	<b>0.095</b>	<b>0.020</b>	<b>0.252</b>	<b>0.007</b>	<b>-0.023</b>
SCALE_2	<b>0.254</b>	<b>0.100</b>	<b>0.324</b>	<b>0.020</b>	<b>0.039</b>
SCALE_3	<b>0.061</b>	<b>-0.011</b>	<b>0.323</b>	<b>0.070</b>	<b>0.076</b>
SCALE_4	<b>0.306</b>	<b>-0.023</b>	<b>0.223</b>	<b>-0.291</b>	<b>0.018</b>
SCALE_5	<b>0.225</b>	<b>0.102</b>	<b>0.394</b>	<b>0.030</b>	<b>0.076</b>
HISTTEST	0.309	0.077	0.081	0.177	0.156

Correlation Matrix (continued)

	SCALE_1	SCALE_2	SCALE_3	SCALE_4	SCALE_5
SCALE_1	1.000				
SCALE_2	0.762	1.000			
SCALE_3	0.636	0.640	1.000		
SCALE_4	0.731	0.744	0.475	1.000	
SCALE_5	0.658	0.763	0.569	0.660	1.000
HISTTEST	0.195	0.139	0.113	0.086	0.171

## RE: Cultural Awareness

[Close](#)

**From:**

Kevin Eastment<[keastment@bne.catholic.edu.au](mailto:keastment@bne.catholic.edu.au)>

📧 | **Date:** 10 November 2008 09:53:21 AM

**To:** Diane McClure<[paul\\_dianemcclure@bigpond.com](mailto:paul_dianemcclure@bigpond.com)>;

Good morning Diane

The Cultural Awareness program that was being conducted was a training program for the use of the then newly developed teaching resource Aboriginal Culture and History kit.

This resource is a continuation of Brisbane Catholic Education's commitment to Reconciliation through Education. The kit was developed in order to give classroom teachers a school personnel an understanding of the purpose of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and how to develop and implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives across the key learning areas.

Initially the kit was designed to be used after inservice from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Team.

A range of themes and activities are used to assist classroom teachers to develop local area studies. The area which was focused on within this kit was the Brisbane area.

The kit was designed to provide all children an understanding of culture, lifestyle and the ways of the Aboriginal people, and an understanding that Aboriginal people have lived in this region for thousands of years.

It will also highlight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students self esteem and strengthen their identity as Catholic schools will be strengthened in continuing the process of Reconciliation through Education.

Diane I hope this information has helped. If you have any further questions please contact me.

Regards

Kevin

*Kevin Eastment*

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