



NATIONAL STANDARDS CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN A GROUP OF
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN JAMAICA

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Approval of the Thesis

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Abstract

NATIONAL STANDARDS CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN A GROUP OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN JAMAICA.

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The government of Jamaica implemented a new National Standards Curriculum (NSC) in 2018 to encourage competency-based learning in relation to established benchmarks across all educational levels. This was done so that students would be better prepared for the global workforce of the 21st century. The purpose of this research was to examine the implementation of the (NSC) in a group of primary schools with focus on the roles of the school leadership and of the CIT. It aimed to explore the roles of members of leadership teams, the strategies used to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, and the challenges encountered by teachers and principals in implementing the NSC.

This study employed a mixed method approach by combining quantitative and qualitative data collected by the use of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, observation checklist, and document analysis.

The investigation has established that although leadership has strong and positive support, a lack of resources, inadequate facilities, insufficient training, and resistance to change threaten the successful implementation of the NSC. Some of the most crucial findings are that educators are honing the kinds of teamwork and leadership that will be essential to successfully implementing the National Standards Curriculum; educators are already using the cooperative and leadership practices crucial to introducing the NSC. The accessibility of data has been a positive aspect of the implementation, which has been used in test creation and lesson preparation; implementation strategies, leadership support, the use of appropriate leadership methods, and compliance with policy directives and conditions are other factors with positive outcomes. In addition, the findings of the study provided evidence that the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM Model) is a valuable theoretical framework for monitoring and assessing educational innovation that may be utilized for further research.

The results of this study have generally given a favourable picture of the NSC's implementation in a group of primary schools in Jamaica. The CBAM model could be used in future studies to learn how to lessen the impact of the identified drawbacks to the implementation.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to the memory of my late father, Thaddeus, who believed greatness lies within me, evidenced by my being the only child out of fourteen (14) siblings who has obtained a doctoral degree. I thank God for your love and faithfulness and for taking me and my support team safely to this destination.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Jamaica falls into the category of a country with an upper middle income. This has been revealed from data provided by the World Bank (World Bank 2015). This classification can be attributed, in part, to the facts that access to primary education is at its highest point (100%) and that access to secondary education is significant (83%) (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2015). A concerted effort has been made, particularly after the island achieved its independence from Britain in 1962, to keep an education system that is current with developments in the field. This has been accomplished with the assistance of funding from outside sources provided through bilateral and multilateral initiatives (Ministry of Education, 2011). The curriculum has been the driving force behind the kinds of infrastructure and support employed throughout the many decades of educational reform. The Jamaican government and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (1999) claim that the country's educational programme is grounded in research, prioritizes the needs of its students, and helps them acquire the knowledge, beliefs, and dispositions necessary to succeed in the twenty-first century. One of the requirements that has wider implications for the implementation of the curriculum is for classrooms to have flexible seating arrangements so that students can work in groups in addition to working on their own. This requirement is part of an approach to education that is student-centred. This stipulation of the educational programme is made easier to fulfil by the layout of the modern school which allows for flexibility of the learning environment.

Educational transformation has been at the helm of the Jamaican education system; the roadmap to enabling Jamaicans to be empowered so that they can achieve their fullest potential through benefiting from a world class system of education and training that is inclusive and impartial and promotes lifelong learning for all (Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development

Plan, 2009; The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015). Within this educational transformation is the provision of a National Standards Curriculum (NSC) to make learning experiences more relevant and meaningful for students at the primary and secondary levels. The NSC enhances the required skills for the 21st Century that learners need to acquire in order to function effectively in the global society.

The **NSC** is designed to advance 21st Century skills in learners through the introduction of the four Cs, namely, collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking (MoEYI, 2018). There are continued changes in the global sphere and for learners to exit formal training with applicable skills. For this to become a reality, the curricula must remain relevant, and continually evolve to meet technological advancements. The embodiment of these skills in students will support their holistic development and is linked directly to effective curriculum implementation. The process involves the provision of policy guidelines to educational institutions, which is the mandate of the Ministry of Education.

Glatthorn et al. (2017) advocate for the same principles, which speak to what a quality curriculum should do in providing students with a springboard for being able to function efficiently and effectively in the societies of the twenty-first century, empowered with cognitive, creative, and practical skills. The mechanisms for implementing the curriculum to improve practice are inclusive of the installation of Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs) in all primary schools. The objective is to ensure that school leaders enable adept approaches for the full development of this policy directive from the Ministry of Education. Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) posit that curriculum implementation is aimed at improving performance and empowering changes in approaches in pedagogical delivery that are in alignment with the focus of the curriculum. Curriculum implementation requires change that transcends the classroom.

The role of leadership is pivotal in an organization or institution in overseeing the daily activities and the use of the schools' resources. This is consistently identified as an effectiveness enhancing condition (Wallace Foundation 2013). The upgrading of the curriculum such as the present development and implementation of the NSC, will not have a lasting impact if the sort of educational leadership in place is not also enhanced. Strong leadership attentive to the demands of education stakeholders and accountable to those stakeholders will support social justice and academic achievement (Ylimaki, 2012). Principals are able to exert some degree of control over the curriculum taught in their local schools when they respond creatively to national directives (Koyama, 2014).

Leadership at the institutional level is critical for curriculum implementation as leaders or managers are tasked with organising the curriculum process so school policies support the process (Pantic, 2015). Rather than using the policies to drive change in schools, this situation has presented a challenge in ensuring compliance at the school level. Current policies are not being put to effective use in influencing change in organizations. In any organization policies provide a framework and play a vital role in the development and influence organizational culture. Fullan (2004) posited that policies are used as guiding principle in organizational change and to communicate behavioural expectations to employees.

The introduction of the NSC at primary and secondary levels in Jamaican public schools was met with resistance from some educators who continued to teach using the previously introduced revised curriculum. The teachers' concerns were responded to by the principal and the CIT through the implementation of strategies to assist teachers to better understand their expectations in the delivery of the curriculum (JIS, 2018). The arguments linked to this staunch resistance is a failure to make adequate preparations at school level to introduce a new

curriculum. The teachers expressed a lack of motivation; they believed they were not equipped to enact the NSC effectively. Humans naturally resist change but with proper structure and the support from leadership, resistance to change can be lessened (Ford & Ford, 2010).

Many factors affect how a school decides to implement its curriculum. The Curriculum must be student-centred, addressing issues like cultural diversity (Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull, 2008) while yet conforming to local or state standards. The modern educational climate promotes a standardized curriculum that facilitates the administration of standardized tests, such as the annual assessment of students' capacity to make up for lost ground mandated by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) program (Ylimaki, 2012). The Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) in Jamaica has been replaced by the Primary Exit Profile (PEP), a more school-based, skills- and competency-based continuous assessment (Alleyne, et al., 2012; MoEYI, 2017).

The curriculum delivery process also takes into account community input. According to Price (2008), the community has a major responsibility to help low-achievers find the drive and support they need to break through and succeed. While initiatives like No Child Left Behind (NCLB) have been implemented to try and improve student performance in the classroom, high dropout rates and large achievement gaps persist, as pointed out by Price (2008). Price (2008) cited the challenges that disengaged students pose for educators, parents, and communities. He asserted that the community itself, which has high expectations for the education of students, should be given the opportunity to perform its role as a partner in fostering a culture of achievement in schools.

The development of a curriculum that is responsive, or "culturally sustaining" (Paris, 2012, p. 95), for students and the society, as well as the preparation of those who are entrusted with the supervision and monitoring of the effective delivery of the curriculum, has required a

significant amount of time, effort, and financial investment. This is in accordance with the Education for All goals that have been defined for Jamaica (UNESCO, 2015), which acknowledges that in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century, we need a system of education that is both effective and efficient. In the year 1990, the establishment of the Global Declaration on Education for All took place in the city of Jomtien, which is located in the country of Thailand. According to the Ministry of Education of Jamaica, every child in the country is tasked with the responsibility of learning, as long as they have the capability to do so (Ministry of Education, 2017a). This saying is an outstanding illustration of the application of the Global Declaration on Education for Everyone. Article 1 of this declaration reads, in part, that "Everyone," including children, adolescents, and adults, "should have access to educational opportunities tailored to their fundamental learning requirements." This includes the right to receive an education. (UNESCO, 1990, p.3). As one of its tenets, this Declaration is incorporated into the Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2010). As part of the first of the Vision's four national goals, which is to "empower" the Jamaican people, they are being encouraged to realize their fullest potential. This goal is part of the Vision. As a national outcome linked to this objective, providing access to education and training on par with the very best everywhere in the world is essential (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2010). The results of national assessments provide evidence that the level of progress that was expected is not being achieved at the current rate. In the school year 2010, 35% of students in grade 4 did not achieve the required minimum level in literacy to move on to grade 5, and 41% of students who took The Language Arts Communication Task paper on the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) did not reach the specified minimal level of achievement. These percentages are based on the results of the students who took the test. These are the percentages of students who were

not successful in meeting the criteria to move on to the next grade (Ministry of Education, 2011). These results had seen a positive trend up to 2015, with a reduction of the failure rate for Communication Task (a paper in language communication skills) in 2015 to 25% (Ministry of Education, 2015), but the results are still not commensurate with the inputs made to foster achievement at the primary level. These results had seen a positive trend up to 2015, with a reduction of the failure rate for Communication Task (a paper in language communication skills) in 2015 to 25% (Ministry of Education, 2015).

The Ministry of Education has implemented a wide range of initiatives, funded by both domestic and international donors, to meet the basic educational requirements of primary and secondary school students. The Social Sector Development Project (1992–1995), which focused on improving teacher training and community involvement in education; and the Government of Jamaica/Inter-American Development Bank Primary Education Improvement Project (GOJ/IDB PEIP II), which provided for more student-centred learning and placed a greater emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Both of these projects were carried out between 1992 and 1995. Both of these endeavours are widely recognized as being counted among the most important interventions (Ministry of Education, 1999). One of the other main initiatives that were included in this project was the creation of the National Assessment Programme, also known as the NAP. The activities that were started under the GOJ/IDB PEIP II were carried on and further developed under the Primary Education Support Project (PESP), which was carried out between the years 2001 and 2008. At the present time, (2023), a National Standards Curriculum is being implemented, having emerged from the last redesigning and modernising of the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC) that was previously in place. This curriculum was designed to answer the need for standards and accountability.

The Task Force on Educational Reform's (Davis, 2005) report publication indicated that the government as a whole, not only the Ministry of Education, acknowledged the need to find efficient means of implementing the curriculum. The numerous programmes and initiatives' recommendations or introductions of new methods for implementing the curriculum were consolidated and improved upon as part of this initiative. The year 2011 marked the beginning of the National Comprehensive Literacy Strategy's implementation (Ministry of Education, 2011). The purpose of the strategy was to achieve the goal of consolidating all of the national literacy programmes so that they could more effectively contribute to the development of a complete national literacy initiative. This activity was backed by two different policy directions. The first goal was to achieve universal literacy by the year 2015, and the second goal was to implement the Competence Based Transition Policy, which stated that only pupils who had been evaluated as literate at the level of the fourth grade should be admitted to the fifth grade (Morris, Allen, & Evering, 2008).

Throughout the process of putting the RPC into action, one of the leadership strategies that was implemented was the formation of CITs at the school level. Yet, a monitoring system that was intended to ensure the long-term viability of the teams was only partially put into place. The Task Force for Educational Reform also recommended the operation of CITs; however, they should be operated at the level of the Regional Education Authority, which is the administrative body to which schools (and CITs) in the region, report (Davis, 2005). Efforts were made to re-implement and expand the operation of CITs across the entire island. As part of this new initiative, a structure for accountability was designed. This structure required each level of the system to report their activities to the level that is directly above them. The local monitoring teams (LMTs) are accountable to their respective regional monitoring teams (RMTs), which are

accountable to the national monitoring team (NMT). The Chief Education Officer (CEO) is responsible for reporting to the NMT. To develop any necessary plans of action, the CEO will collaborate with the Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO) of Curriculum and Assessment, the Regional Directors, and the Director of the Department of School Services (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014).

It was prudent, given the renewed effort being put into the re-establishment and strengthening of CITs, to assess the types of support systems that are required to sustain them and make them effective. This is because the work being put into these endeavours has been reinvigorated. The educational system could only stand to benefit from a strategy such as this. It was because of these prevailing sentiments that the advent of the NSC was met with much optimism, hope, and expectancy. During the process of introducing the NSC into the Jamaican educational system, the minister of education at the time, the Honourable, Senator Ruel Reid, CD, stated that education has always been essential to the growth of both society and the economy. As a result, Jamaica has not been shaken and continues to hold out optimism that its ambition of being "the location of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business" will be accomplished one day. He stated that the realization that Jamaica has a rich supply of people who have been gifted by God with talent and creativity, and as a nation which holds strongly to spirituality and faith in God, and with a belief in being resilient, they can harness their abilities to have a marked impression on the world, was the source of confidence that all of the elements of this vision are achievable. This was the basis of confidence that all the elements of the vision were realizable. We want to promote this goal of the education system while also becoming more relevant, modern, and dynamic, he said, and we plan to do so by implementing the new National Standards Curriculum (NSC), which he referred to as "the NSC."

He noted that the staff at the MOEYI was aware that the curriculum is still the most effective way for a nation to progress and remain sustainable. He also stated that the team is aware that the curriculum has been around for a long time. He went on to clarify that the reason he had brought up this fact was to show that the MOEYI is aware of it. The NSC was developed in an era of rapid advancements in global landscape in physical, social, economic, and other areas. This was done with the knowledge that people, education, and the development of our nation are fundamental to our very existence. It was important for the curriculum to reflect this reality. He gave all the credit to the foresight of those who developed the curriculum, who, by engaging a large number of civic and other organizations with a keen interest in education, had provided a positive response for the necessity for an education that prepares the nation's youth for living in today's world, while extending to more experienced citizens the invitation to take on the challenge of lifelong education. He said that the developers should be given full credit for their foresight. He stated that he would offer credit to the developers for their intelligence when he felt that it was warranted.

As promised by the Minister, this collaboration and partnership for the advancement of education will continue to be of high priority in the Ministry's efforts to ensure that this journey will continue to transform education. He emphasized the Ministry of Education's commitment to each student's development, as well as its support and appreciation for the various stakeholder groups that collaborate with the Ministry to provide quality education. Moreover, he thanked the various parties involved for their cooperation with the Ministry. He acknowledged that this commitment is communicated via the adoption of a Pathway Approach to learning, which requires the Ministry to provide individualized learning experiences, differentiated programming, and specialized support for the nation's learners. As indicated by the mechanisms

and conditions put in place to enable successful execution, the Minister remarked that it is clear that the efforts made to achieve these goals have been fruitful. He stated that he, along with the rest of Jamaica, was looking forward to hearing from students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders about the National Standards Curriculum's empowering effect. He added that he remained optimistic that it would contribute to Jamaica's fame.

The current Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO) of the Core Curriculum Unit, Dr. Clover Hamilton Flowers, has stated that the curriculum is founded on the concept that all students possess the abilities, gifts, and talents necessary to fulfil their divine destiny. This statement was made in reference to the NSC. This line of thinking is consistent with the views that were expressed by the Minister. She made the point that it was the responsibility of the educational system to cultivate or strengthen these qualities in an atmosphere that was compassionate, motivational, and inclusive, and that catered to the whole person, taking into account his/her spirituality, as well as the physical, mental and emotional dimensions. When working with the NSC, she envisioned the learners' roles and duties as developing an ability to think critically and reflectively, solving problems creatively, and communicating and collaborating successfully with their peers and others. She envisioned these roles and responsibilities as being achievable. She was of the opinion that this was the role that students were supposed to play and the responsibility that they should take on in a situation like this.

According to Dr. Flowers, who used Elkind (2004) as her source, a curriculum design of this sort requires social reform in addition to changes in schools and classrooms. Dr. Flowers made this assertion when referencing her source. She made a clarion appeal to all of the people who utilize the curriculum, urging them to embrace the practice of thinking critically, reflectively and reflexively, and to emulate the learners in their search for meaning, purpose, and

stability as they build the world. She was successful in encouraging all to assist in accomplishing this goal by stating that all curriculum users are stakeholders. Learners will have opportunities to express their creativity, engage in authentic problem-solving, and have enlightening experiences thanks to the curriculum, which approaches topics from both a traditional academic standpoint and the perspective of learning in the workplace. These benefits are accomplished through the implementation of academic principles and the procedures that go along with them. This is because the National Science Foundation (NSF) recognizes the significance of each discipline in problem-solving and the creation of new things, which has led to this result. This recognition was vital in helping to shape the philosophy of the NSC.

The ACEO was aware of the fact that when assessment is incorporated into the curriculum, it primarily serves as a learning process with the objective of monitoring the progress of the student through measures of self-assessment that are informed by feedback from their peers and teachers who take on the role as facilitators. Teachers are strongly encouraged to assist students in functioning as both self-evaluators and peer-evaluators through the incorporation of assessment criteria statements into the curriculum. She believed that by employing this strategy, a student should be able to cultivate an approach to learning that is self-directed with the assistance of mentors and coaches, in addition to possessing an innate desire to be successful. She was emphatic that these qualities equipped children to face high-stakes tests with bravery, a sense of readiness, insight, and ingenuity. She characterized the challenges students would face in the classroom and in the world as requiring all of these qualities. She declared with certainty and conviction that a high-stakes evaluation is a challenge that needs to be addressed with bravery, preparation, understanding, and creativity.

These properties of the NSC have the ability to influence learners' profiles as Jamaicans who have been gifted with an identity of cultural excellence that includes its full share of moral obligations, intellectual rigor, inventiveness, stewardship of the environment, and productivity. Students will be able to confidently assert that they are Jamaicans who take pride in possessing such an identity. She went on to assert and praise the fact that the curriculum expresses the same ideals as the National Anthem, National Song, and Pledge of the island nation of Jamaica and serves as a rich and credible source of the values and virtues that are brought together in these national symbols to convey the Jamaican identity. She expressed her hope that those working with the document, including the administrators at the school level, classroom teachers, students, and other stakeholders, would experience success and expressed her full confidence that this would be the case.

This study was conducted in a group of primary schools in QEC 0.03. The schools are located in Kingston, the capital city of Jamaica. Most of the students that attend these primary schools live in violence-prone inner-city communities. These students are not exposed to certain modern and privileged ways of life. They are at a disadvantage as they are lacking in the instructional tools to assist them in the teaching and learning activities. As such, the inclusive focus of the NSC with the 21st Century skills and competences, and with a focus on the needs of the students themselves, augurs well for catering to these students.

Models of Supervision of Curriculum Implementation. According to Hollingworth (2012), there are two fundamental approaches to the supervision of educational curriculum: the traditional and the non-traditional models. The traditional method of measuring teacher performance requires the principal's active participation. The superintendent, who, in turn, would be overseen by the district, would oversee the principal, who in turn would oversee the teacher.

The non-traditional approach calls for the formation of collaborative teams of teachers, who, with the assistance of the administrator in the role of facilitators, are tasked with directing the delivery of the curriculum inside the school. The superintendent and district office would continue to fulfil their monitoring responsibilities, which (due to the adoption of the non-traditional approach) now extend to promoting collaborative efforts among teachers (Pruit, 2013). According to Moswela (2010), the traditional paradigm is one of "inspection and control," and the non-traditional approaches are referred to as humanistic and collegial.

The CIT, which represents an alternative method of monitoring instructional delivery, is in line with the non-traditional mode since collaboration forms the very essence of this strategy. According to Moswela (2010), there is currently an effort being made to place an emphasis on the growth of the educator as he or she collaborates with other educators to promote the learning of students. This effort is being made while there is also an emphasis being placed on the growth of students. Almanzar (2014) found that the morale of teachers in urban high schools increased as a result of professional learning communities (PLCs). This is just one of the many benefits of working together, which also includes the fact that it is an activity that builds camaraderie. In their study of educators working in low-income schools, Gray, Kruse, and Tartar (2015) discovered that professional learning communities had a significant correlation with enabling school structures, collegial trust, and an academic emphasis. In addition, these three factors were found to be interrelated with one another. These findings indicate that there is no loss of value in the trend toward increased emphasis on non-traditional modalities of curriculum implementation, such as the establishment of CITs, as the goal is still student learning and academic achievement. One example of such a non-traditional mode of curriculum implementation or instructional design is the use of flipped classrooms in which students engage in cooperative activities after

having researched on their own for the required information. A strength of the institution is the faculty's ability to work cooperatively and participate in self-reflection on their shared projects, which, in turn, enriches the students' educational experiences (Chen et al. 2016).

Factors Promoting Sustainability and Effectiveness of Curriculum Initiatives. In their exploratory study examining the projected sustainability of more than one hundred projects funded by the Australian government, Savaya, Elsworth, and Rogers (2009) identified anticipated continuation of auspice organization involvement as the strongest indication of projected sustainability in terms of project continuation and diversification. This was discovered after conducting blockwise regression analyses.

The Ministry of Education in Jamaica performs the role of the CIT programme's sponsoring organization once it was decided to implement and run CIT programmes in the country's primary schools. One would expect the Ministry of Education to be involved in the areas of training of CIT members, provision of an adequate amount of funds for the purchase of instructional materials and other necessary provisions for the effective implementation of the curriculum, and provision of adequate guidance and supervision of the teams (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). Each of these characteristics would also have a good impact on the successful implementation of curriculum initiatives. Several major variables, each in its own manner, aid in spreading awareness about the importance of sustainability. Scheirer (2005) compiled a summary of the elements affecting program sustainability and numerous examples of factors that would also benefit curriculum initiatives from a review and synthesis of 19 empirical studies of the sustainability of American and Canadian health-related programs. He was able to accomplish this by analyzing the outcomes of the numerous investigations and drawing comparisons and conclusions from them. The existence of a champion or advocate, the

adaptability of the program, and the availability of funding were three of the most significant parts of this equation. Moswela (2010), in his study on instructional supervision in Botswana, underlined the responsibilities that the central ministry, parents, and the political climate play in fostering effective curriculum implementation.

The execution of the curriculum would be made more sustainable and effective if efforts were made to counteract any resistance to the introduction of new curricular elements.

Lunenburg (2010) proposed six methods for overcoming resistance to organizational change.

These methods are as follows: education and communication about the innovation; participation and involvement of the participants; facilitation and support by the administration; negotiation and agreement on the terms of the innovation; manipulation and co-optation; and explicit and implicit coercion. Education and communication about the innovation; participation and involvement of the participants; facilitation and support by the administration; explicit and implicit coercion; negotiation and agreement on the terms of the innovation; (by management).

In a study conducted by Reid (2014) with the purpose of determining why certain curricular initiatives are successful while others are not, the author found three parameters on which to base the likelihood for success. The first of them is known as instrumentality, which refers to the clarity with which a notion is articulated in order to facilitate an easy transition from the proposed ideas and theories to actual classroom practice. The second consideration was the invention's compatibility with a school environment. Investment (non-financial) return ratio was the third consideration.

Moore's (2010) study shows that the performance of a school's Professional Learning Communities is closely tied to the quality of its leadership. Understanding the collaborative community, having a high level of knowledge, and having a commitment to achieving goals are

all necessary components of leadership. Hillery (2013) agreed with the concept that the idea ought to make provisions for the conditions necessary for shared and supportive leadership, both of which are fundamental components of PLC. Hillery (2013) also agreed with the idea that the concept ought to make provisions for the conditions necessary for inclusive leadership. There is a substantial relationship between PLCs, hierarchical structure, and organizational trust in primary educational institutions, according to the findings of Kalkan (2016). The great majority of schools lack the capacity to establish professional learning communities (PLCs). The research that was conducted by Kalkan (2016) revealed that educators place a higher level of trust in their principals than they do in any other stakeholder. This demonstrates the significance of the fundamentals with regard to the effectiveness and longevity of CIT.

Team roles. Older teachers supervise junior teachers daily. They advise teachers on classroom teaching and reporting. Senior teachers submit staff training needs to the principal along with other issues. Senior teachers help the principal arrange staff professional development to meet needs. The assessment coordinator in a school is responsible for keeping an eye on how the curriculum is being tested. External assessments such as the Grade 1 (1) Individual Learning Profile, Grade 3 Diagnostic Test, Grade 4 Performance Task, and Grade 6 Primary Exit Profile will be compared to internal evaluations such as end-of-unit and end-of-term tests (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014)

The community member should understand school operations and how the community may help. This person helps the CIT make the best community-school relations decisions (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). Community members will help the principal lead. Khalifa (2012) found that principals' community leadership improved student academic

outcomes. The principal can select any other CIT-helpful person. The school's curriculum determines this person's skill (Curriculum & Support Services, 2014).

In order to detect and address any concerns regarding CIT, the principal of the school and the teachers come together to form a Local Monitoring Team (LMT). The Department of Education's Regional Monitoring Teams (RMTs) are made up of one regional education officer, one member from a teacher education institution, and two curriculum education officers from the Department of Education (DSS). RMTs are supervised by NMTs, which are composed of curriculum officials and representatives from the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE). The Chief Education Officer, often known as the CEO, collaborates with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to develop national plans of action to address issues that have been identified by NMTs (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). In Jamaica, the post of CEO is analogous to the administrative support provided by the Central Office to the several districts. Pruitt (2013) emphasized six areas of assistance: the construction of collaborative teams, the deployment of staff, taking responsibility for the execution of teams, adult learning (of participants), involvement of stakeholders, and the development of school leaders. Help from the central office can be obtained more quickly than from DSS.

CIT sustainability issues. Due to insufficient teaching and learning support resources, training, and follow-up, some CITs in Jamaica have disbanded. The obstacles that stand in the way of educational growth will also have an effect on CITs, which are crucial in the implementation of the curriculum. Giles and Hargreaves (2006) conducted a study to determine how long innovative schools remain viable as learning organizations and professional learning communities. Three Canadian schools were sampled. Three elements appear to have weakened sustainability. Some professionals in the field of education argued that the innovative school

received preferential treatment and was not representative of similar institutions worldwide. This manifestly unequal treatment fostered animosity between the innovative school and the other nearby schools (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). "Move the school's center of gravity back toward the traditional grammar of schooling" is the second component outlined by Giles and Hargreaves (2006). (p. 125). Examples include changes in leadership, faculty turnover, student body size and composition, and district policy. These and other reasons generate "change attrition" (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). Giles and Hargreaves (2006) recognized changes in the external setting as the third obstacle to school innovation. Decreased resources, shifts in authority between the state and local districts, and the replacement of locally created ideas with large-scale reforms may follow.

Facilitating CITs. Research investigating the sustainability and usefulness of educator-led innovations has yielded conflicting findings. Moore (2010) looked at two rural South Carolina elementary schools to investigate the connection between PLC leadership, PLC acceptance, and PLC sustainability. Teachers can work together to create a unified TVET curriculum, according to research by Albashiry, Voogt, and Peters (2015). The study's participants, who worked in groups similar to the CIT, noted that the initiative benefited from a team-oriented culture, opportunities for career advancement, exceptional resources, and the participation of external stakeholders.

Coburn, Russell, Kaufman, and Stein (2012) conducted a three-year qualitative study in a single school district in the southwestern United States, using a sample of teachers from four urban primary schools. These schools were all affiliated with the same public education system. The educators that took part in the study were representative of the students they worked with. To what extent do professional ties among U.S. mathematics educators affect the likelihood that

reforms will be successful was the issue the study sought to address. Researchers identified a correlation between teachers' professional networks and their commitment to lifelong learning and job progression. High levels of competence, deep links, and in-depth conversation on significant mathematical and pedagogical themes are associated with more lasting change, as stated by Coburn et al. (2012). This improves the chances that the improvement will last.

Coburn et al. (2012) emphasized that sustainability is a significant barrier to improving classroom instruction and provided evidence that teacher network mechanisms (including CITs) improve reform-related strategies. CITs were one of the mechanisms that was specifically mentioned. This study was classified under the topic of Education and Science Teaching. Four years after the completion of the Indiana Essential Schools Network (IESN) project, Kilbane (2009) performed research to analyze the long-term effects of Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) on learning communities and collaborative inquiry. Kilbane (2009) found that the most important aspects determining the success of staff-collaboration reforms were leadership, resources, staff competency, faculty retention, alignment of effort, protection from competing reforms, professional development, and reform support. According to the findings of research carried out by Huffman, Olivier, Wang, Chen, Hairon, and Pang (2016). PLCs are supported in every single country in the entire world. These researchers came to the conclusion that PLCs are strengthened by organizational structures, rules and procedures, leadership, professionalism, and the capacity to learn. Chen et al. (2016) investigated the factors that contributed to the creation of Taiwanese PLC strategies. PLC tactics that were successful included trusting one another and practicing what was agreed upon, as well as shared leadership and vision.

Armed with the knowledge gained from research on the factors that promote and retard the functioning of collaborative structures such as the CITs, as well as the roles and features of

leaders and leadership structures in the educational setting, it is clear that a more thorough study into the NSC's leadership and leadership structures, as well as the policy guidelines currently in place, is urgently required. This is to be done so that CIT members may more effectively carry out their duties as instructional leaders, and so that leaders in educational settings can achieve the kind of institutional change required to put the NSC into practice in a way that is both efficient and effective. There has not been a lot of research done on this topic because the Jamaican National Standards Curriculum (NSC) only went into effect in the year 2018.

Statement of the Problem

The Jamaican education system has been under constant transformation with the aim of achieving better results, as it has been for education systems across the world. Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan, (2009); and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, (2015) all address the pursuit of national educational goals such as the achievement of the full potential of every Jamaican, the development of a world class education system, and enabling the pursuit of life-long learning for every individual. The NSC was developed to help to achieve these national goals by creating the foundation at the primary and secondary levels. This was made possible by creating more relevant and meaningful learning opportunities for students. This NSC promotes the acquisition of the skills that students must master in order to be successful members of the global society of the 21st Century.

The establishment of CITs was one of the leadership strategies put in place to ease the challenges in implementing policies in primary schools. The operation of CITs is geared to assist substantially in the drive of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information to successfully implement the NSC in primary level institutions. This involves enabling the leadership to faithfully adhere to the policy guidelines that have been laid out for curriculum

delivery (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). Leadership is important for the proper conduct of daily activities and efficient employment of resources in an institution or organization. In schools, effective leadership has been consistently shown to enhance operations (Wallace Foundation 2013). In the quest to make changes that will result in more efficient delivery of the curriculum, it is vital to examine the policy guidelines relating to the NSC in detail to determine how the CITs can make the necessary adaptations to their current practices. The findings emerging from this investigation will make a well needed addition to the relatively limited research conducted so far in regard to the NSC, especially since it is only in its fourth year of full implementation.

Within this educational transformation is the provision of a National Standards Curriculum (NSC) to make learning experiences more relevant and meaningful for students at the primary and secondary levels. The NSC was introduced in 2018 in Jamaican public schools for teachers to ensure that all students are fully involved in the teaching and learning process, and to promote the 21st-century skills of collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication and problem solving (JIS, 2018). The NSC enhances the required skills for the 21st Century that learners need to acquire in order to function effectively in the global society. The mechanisms for implementing the curriculum to improve practice are inclusive of the installation of Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs) in all primary schools. The objective is to ensure that school leaders enable adept approaches for the full development of this policy directive from the Ministry of Education.

The Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) was established as a response to the challenges at the policy implementation phase in primary schools to bring about organizational change. The CIT's role is to support the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Youth and

Information to enable the system to strengthen the implementation of the NSC in the nation's primary schools. This includes facilitating the leadership to effectively follow the policy guidelines that are governed by the Ministry of Education in implementation of the curriculum (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018).

The Ministry of Education has launched a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of using CITs in schools in order to better implement and deliver the curriculum. This campaign coincides with the Ministry of Education's decision to make the establishment of CITs in schools a mandatory requirement. The Ministry acknowledged that a number of schools, both primary and secondary, were making strides in curriculum delivery as a result of their participation in this initiative. As a consequence of this, and in accordance with the policy guidelines for the establishment of CITs, it was envisaged that each and every primary and secondary school would set up their own CITs (Ministry of Education, 2014). Everything that goes into managing schools and teaching the various curricula is done with the students' success in mind. Reeves (2010) echoed this sentiment when he argued that administrators have a firm grasp on the fact that the ultimate goal of re-evaluating curricula and introducing new methods of instruction and evaluation is to improve student learning. The administrative staff bases all of their decisions on the academic performance of the student body. For the purpose of efficiently putting the curriculum into action, a variety of approaches has been utilized. Several of the solutions call for the concerted effort of multiple members of the educational establishment working together to achieve success in the implementation of the curriculum. There is a dearth of information on the response of teachers and leaders to NSC implementation through the vehicle of the CIT. The experiences of members of the CIT need to be documented to give feedback to the Ministry of Education as to whether any measure of success is being achieved and as to

whether the mode of operation of this team is workable at the primary level of the system. The few studies that have been carried out in Jamaica on the implementation of the NSC seem to be limited in nature. Scott, D (2020) carried out a study that focused on teachers' experiences implementing the NSC at a High School in Jamaica while Mayne et al. (2020) did a study that focused on student teachers' shared experiences of Jamaica's National Standards Curriculum (NSC). It is clear from literature that not so much has been researched on the implementation of the NSC in relation to the CIT and school leadership in a group of primary schools. This study therefore set out to examine the implementation of the NSC in a group of primary schools in Jamaica with particular emphasis on the role of the CIT as part of the school leadership. The study further endeavoured to find out the strategies used by the leadership teams to ensure that the curriculum is effectively delivered, and the difficulties experienced by the supervisory and teaching staff in its delivery. The ramifications of ineffective leadership in the NSC delivery, the enacting of education policies in the leadership of educational programmes, and how change is managed, were also studied.

Purpose of the Study, Research Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this research was to examine the implementation of the (NSC) in a group of primary schools with focus on the roles of the school leadership and of the CIT. It aimed to explore the roles of members of leadership teams, the strategies used to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, and the challenges encountered by teachers and principals in implementing the NSC. This study also sought to investigate the consequences of lack of involvement of members and effective leadership to influence change within the institution or organization. The objectives of the study were therefore to:

1. Find out the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the NSC implementation and leadership in QEC 0.03 as policy guidelines are adhered to.
2. Assess the experiences and strategies of CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC.
3. Ascertain the circumstances that surround the types of educational leadership practised by members of the CITs to effect organizational change in these institutions.
4. Examine how the roles and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in the institutions.

Nature and Significance of the Study

Nature of the Study

To undertake this study, a mixed method approach was employed. The team approach to implementing the NSC was investigated, unearthing the experiences of the team members and the school principal who leads the team. The examination of the experiences is intended for the interpretation of the perspectives of the teachers and principal regarding the implementation of the curriculum. Triangulation of multiple sources was employed as a means of ensuring the credibility of the findings. The mixed methodology research design was chosen for the study as a suitable vehicle for assessing and describing the study group. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. According to Creswell (2012), the use of both types of data enhances the interpretation of a research problem to a greater degree than either of the two methodologies (quantitative and qualitative) taken singly.

Authority to recruit the participants was sought from the school boards and the principals by means of formal letters. The researcher also visited schools to get permission from the principals, explain the purpose of the research, and provide consent forms for signing by the

participants. The researcher took questionnaires to the principals for distribution. The participants were selected from one (1) of the Quality Education Circles (QEC). The QECs are professional learning communities of support that are configured within (parish) boundaries per region by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information (MOEYI). The purpose of the QEC is to increase teachers' confidence within the education system as the NSC has been implemented. The Ministry of Education Youth and Information (MOEYI) has made it mandatory that every primary school be placed within a QEC. The QEC professional learning communities support the initiative of the Ministry of Education, that quality education for all students, is supported by competency, high standards, accountability and commitment. The primary schools were previously identified as having CIT issues are located in QEC 0.03 and region (x). There are 11 schools in QEC 0.03 in Kingston. Six (6) of which are primary schools and Five (5) are secondary schools.

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants, this is commonly used in qualitative research for the selection and identification of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest forming the case for the study. From each group that makes up QEC 0.03, out of the eight primary schools, six of the primary schools have an active CIT. In selecting and identifying individuals or groups that have experienced the phenomenon of interest, purposeful stratified sampling was used because the participants share similar characteristics and concerns. Creswell and Plano Clark, (2011) posited that purposeful stratified sampling is a technique that is extensively used in qualitative research for identifying and selecting. Patton (2001) postulated that to eliminate bias in the selection process, this requires separating the populations in smaller groups known as strata, then obtaining a random sample from each group.

This strategy has lent credibility to this study and has confronted the crisis of representation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

The (CIT) is made up of 48 members, this consists of six Grade Coordinators at each primary school from Grades 1 to 6, one (1) vice principal and the president for the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The CIT members consist of eight (8) members per school and there are six (6) primary schools in QEC 0.03, therefore, there is a total of 48 CIT members in QEC 0.03. Each Grade Coordinator in a CIT is responsible for their Grade to ensure that at planning sessions, the teaching and learning activities are planned from the NSC. Focus groups were held with teachers and face to face interviews were held with six (6) primary school principals. CIT meetings were observed and documentations from the meeting analysed. The benchmarks for choosing these primary schools, were:

- (a) The primary schools are located in: Region (X); QEC 0.03.
- (b) CITs are present and the issues and concerns that surround the problem were being observed in the schools.
- (c) The NSC was being implemented in the primary schools.

The research study employed the following methods to gather the necessary data: Focus group interviews, face to face interviews, an online questionnaire (which utilised open and closed-ended items that addressed the research questions) observing of the CIT meetings and analysing the documentations of the (CIT) meeting. The collection of data was executed as follows:

- a) The CIT members were interviewed as a group inclusive of (teachers, principals, and PTA presidents). The process of the interview was guided and the information extracted by the strategies recommended by Creswell (2012), using open-ended

questions which allowed the participants to express their points of view and experiences.

- b) Focus group interviews were held with teachers.
- c) CIT meetings were attended, and observations were made and recorded using a checklist for at least three (3) of these meetings.
- d) Reports and/or documents made available by the schools were analysed using a criteria checklist.

Significance of the Study

The (NSC) was introduced in 2018 in Jamaican public schools for teachers to ensure that all students are fully involved in the teaching and learning process to promote the of 21st-century skills: collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication and problem solving (JIS, 2018). As postulated by Fullan (2005), “only principals who are equipped to handle a complex, rapidly changing environment, can implement the reform that leads to sustainable improvement in student achievement”. The school leaders are at the helm of educational policies to ensure that the policy guidelines are carried out effectively (Fullan, 2014). Given that the educational landscape that school leaders now operate in, is changing drastically and the pressures are surmountable, in order to lead the curriculum, change effectively in this dispensation, the view and the development of education policies have to be framed to be responsive to globalization.

The short time span since the beginning of the implementation of the NSC means that there is limited research that has been conducted in the area of effective implementation of the NSC within the Jamaican context. Therefore, this study will contribute significantly to filling the gaps in the literature on the role of leadership in curriculum implementation not only in Jamaica but other parts of the world. This study is anticipated to make original and significant

contributions to knowledge in the operation of the CIT and school leadership, and to give guidelines to address the need for change with specific reference to the NSC. The research has implications for stakeholders in the Education sector at both the national and regional levels in terms of its potential to:

- a) Contribute to curriculum implementation in the local context. This will garner a better understanding and in turn contribute to the reconceptualization of roles and responsibilities of school leaders.
- b) Give a better understanding of the school leaders' and (CIT) leadership role within the 21st Century.

The results of this study will raise awareness of the policy makers about the key challenges and issues that school leaders are faced with when implementing a national curriculum. This will assist them to develop future policies in education. As a result, this will contribute to the enhancement of the vision of the school leaders in successfully implementing future policies and education reform. Vinnet and Pont, (2017) posited that it is the role and responsibility of the school leaders, to process change in the implementation of policies. This study will assist the leaders in enabling their teachers to be engaged in activities such as professional development and in turn assist them in becoming efficient and effective in implementing the new curriculum. It will inform educational policy makers and curriculum developers of how curriculum implementation is impacted by those entrusted to lead the process - teachers, school leaders and members of the (CIT), and help to begin to chart the path for the future development and directions of the Jamaican Curriculum. The research will also add to existing studies that have been conducted on the implementation of the national curriculum.

The outcomes of this study will help to indicate the accomplishment of the national educational goals by providing empirical evidence to show the role that CITs and the leadership of the educational institutions play in enhancing curriculum delivery, and by extension, national economic development. According to Biesta (2010), the theory of pragmatism supports open lines of communication and active engagement. Teaching is not viewed as something that is done to students in this context; rather, it is viewed as an activity that is carried out jointly by teachers and students. This theory is similar to the thinking that informed the institution of CITs in that it places a strong emphasis on communication and involvement. This puts it in line with the collaborative nature of CITs and similar leadership groups. A look of collaboration from both a theoretical and historical perspective. According to Kilbane (2009), the idea of the Curriculum Implementation Team, also known as CIT (or Professional Learning Community, or School Improvement Team, or Building Leadership Team), fits in very well with the philosophy of John Dewey and other advocates of the child-centred curriculum.

Dewey (1938) advocated for the merits of establishing the curriculum that speaks to the experiences of the students, cultivating the individuality of the students, allowing students to construct their own knowledge, and encouraging students to continually seek new knowledge and increase their level of comprehension. When students were viewed as members of a class rather than a social group, according to Dewey's argument from 1938, the teacher was required to function primarily from the outside and not as a director of processes of exchange in which all students participated. The circumstance undergoes a dramatic shift once it is understood that the educational experience is a social process, and that education is founded on personal experience. The role of external boss or dictator is relinquished by the instructor, who instead takes on the role of activity leader for the class. (p. 25) As a result of Dewey's promotion of these concepts,

the pedagogical foundations of collaborative learning communities were established by him. These communities allow for the sharing of information and the personalization of that information for each participant (Kilbane, 2009). This viewpoint is supported by Green (2013), who wrote the following in reference to Dewey “His lesson plans revolved around hands-on activities that encouraged pupils to participate in what is now known as ‘active learning’, such as cultivating wheat, milling it into flour, constructing an oven, baking bread, preparing lunch, and so on (and thereby learning chemistry, mathematics and biology)”.

Since it involved cooperative activity in which each child played a role, Dewey believed that this style of education was crucial in developing an educated citizenry, which is the essential element in a democratic society. Dewey thought that this kind of education, in which each child is given a responsibility, was essential for creating a well-informed populace (p. 28). In agreement with this view, Jessup-Anger (2015) noted that putting all of Dewey's theories into practice at the collegiate level is not always simple. Jessup-Anger (2015) further elaborated on how the intellectual engagement typical of a learning community can be structured into higher education programs. Senge (1990) is credited with laying the groundwork for the discussion of collaboration in the planning and execution of classroom instruction when he introduced the concept of organizational learning and defined it in terms similar to those of the CIT. This debate dates back to the very first CIT meetings. The work of educational psychologists and cognitive, socio-cultural, and behavioural theorists such as Pavlov, Skinner, Bandura, Bloom, Piaget, and Vygotsky can be seen to have had an early advocate for the value of teamwork in education. This can be seen to have occurred at an earlier stage. Piaget acknowledged that he was the pioneer of constructivism (Brainerd, 1996), which is credited with introducing to the field of educational practice a variety of instructional strategies that have been lauded over the years as being

examples of excellent classroom instruction. Methodologies such as these include discovery-based learning (Alfieri, Brooks, Aldrich, & Tenenbaum, 2011); collaborative group work; project-based learning; and problem-solving, as illustrated by Larmer and Merzendoller (2010), as one example of each (Clark, Kirschner, & Sweller, 2012). According to Archer and Hughes (2011), effective classroom practice ought to include the following indicators: optimizing engaged time; promoting high levels of success; increasing content coverage; spending more time in instructional groups; scaffolding instruction; and addressing different forms of knowledge. It is possible to observe how these aspects involve the concepts that are embedded in several learning theories, including the cognitive, behavioural, and socio-cultural theories.

Spending time in instructional groups, scaffolding instruction, and addressing different forms of knowledge are all factors that require thinking, collaboration, and planning. Cognitive theory principles are involved in these factors because they are factors that require thinking, collaboration, and planning. Ormrod (2012) provided evidence to support cognitive theory (2012). According to Ormrod (2012), one of the most important tenets of behavioural theories is that learning is the product of events that occur in the environment. According to Ormrod (2012), one of the pedagogical implications of this study is that students should be exposed to academic subject matter in an upbeat environment and should correlate it with positive feelings. Students should engage in academic activities in settings that generate positive sentiments, such as enjoyment, enthusiasm, and excitement, rather than in settings that stimulate negative feelings such as worry, disappointment, and anger. This will help them learn more effectively. Students are more likely to study academic subject matter of their own accord if they correlate it with positive sensations (Ormrod, 2012, p. 45). Spending time in groups and interacting with peers on

work that is both relevant and interesting fits the description of the excellent approaches outlined by Archer and Hughes (2011).

The crucial roles that social interaction and culture play in human learning and cognitive development are the focus of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theories. These theories may be traced back to Vygotsky (Ormrod 2012). According to Ormrod (2012), some significant ramifications for the practice of education include the following:

1. When students are able to grasp the fundamental cognitive skills that are used in a variety of activities and academic fields, they are able to think more effectively.
2. When children talk about their experiences, they take in more information and are better able to recall it.
3. It is important for children to have the opportunity to participate in activities that are analogous to those they will experience in the adult world.
4. When children work together with adults on difficult projects, they frequently come up with superior strategies.
5. It is expected that challenging tasks will stimulate maximum cognitive development, especially when the tasks are appropriately scaffolded.
6. An evaluation of a child's skills ought to be carried out in a number of different work settings.
7. Participating in group educational activities can assist children in internalizing cognitive processes.

Commonalities between the various theories of organizational learning and learning communities were identified by Chen et al. (2016). Collegiality or trust relations, initiative flexibility, shared vision or principles, and reflection on core processes, and leadership that can

adapt to new situations are all examples of these factors. This was uncovered through their research into the most important aspects of creating successful PLCs in the setting of Taiwan.

This study has presented the opportunity to present a perspective on shared leadership in the Jamaican setting. Hollingworth (2012) argues that having shared leadership at the school is one of the most essential ways to boost the quality of the educational programme as a whole. Shared leadership has borne several names besides "curriculum implementation team" (CIT) that can be used to describe the organizational unit inside a school that is responsible for effectively putting the curriculum into practice. These forms of teacher collaborations also go by the names: school improvement teams, building leadership teams, and professional learning communities, to give just a few of their other names (Chen, Lee, Lin, & Zhang, 2016; Hollingworth, 2012; and Olivier, 2003). Regardless of the appellation used; the emphasis is on teamwork, with instructors collaborating with one another to plan and carry out teaching approaches that bring out the full potential of their students. This approach is supported by the findings of a significant number of scholars, such as Burgess and Bates (2014), Chen et al. (2016), Giles and Hargreaves (2006), and Kilbane (2009), amongst others.

The nature of this investigation is even more greatly appreciated when it is taken into account that it is being conducted in the face of recent evidence which suggests that some schools had not yet mastered the dynamics of operating a functional CIT and lacked the knowledge and motivation to embark on appropriate initiatives for the supervision and implementation of the curriculum (Curriculum and Support Services). The natural expectation is that effective leaders who practise collaboration should pass on to their staff a theoretical and historical perspective of collaborative efforts, the models, the challenges, and the factors that promote the sustainability and effectiveness of collaborative teams. While it is true that CITs

might be challenging to keep up, the factors that help them thrive in their school communities should be celebrated and encouraged. Attention should also be paid to the most recent research in order to benefit from the insights and solutions presented by the collection and examination of empirical data. The current situation with regard to the perceptions of teachers about the collaborative nature of the CIT, and the pedagogical demands of the NSC is tapped in this study. The reality of the existence of pockets of resistance to the operation of the CIT and the new methods and principles inherent in the implementation of the NSC are also issues that are addressed. This research is adding data that is necessary for presenting solutions to some of the implementation challenges being experienced.

The country of Jamaica, where this research is being conducted, has not always had a promising social, economic, and educational outlook. Unemployment, poverty, and crime rates have all been on the rise in recent decades, causing widespread anxiety. The nation has struggled for many years with high public debt, and over the past few decades, the real per capita GDP has increased at an average rate of only one percent per year (World Bank, 2015). Additionally, national assessments at the primary level (at Grades 1, 4, and 6), have not been yielding the favourable results anticipated (UNICEF, 2011). Nonetheless, there are encouraging developments taking place in the social and educational environment, which put the nation in a strong position to experience economic expansion. The positive changes in the social and economic spheres have enabled the most populous and economically developed nation in the English-speaking Caribbean, Jamaica, to gain its “upper middle-income country” reclassification (World Bank, 2015). There is a skilled labour force, the bulk of which is employed in the service sector (64 percent), followed by the industrial sector (19 percent), and then agriculture (17 percent) (World Bank, 2015). In recent years, an Economic Transformation Agenda that was

supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was established with the goal of stabilizing the economy, decreasing debt, and providing the conditions for fresh growth. This agenda's debut There are signs that the government's efforts to reform the economy are bearing fruit, and investors' trust is returning (World Bank, 2015). In addition, both primary (100%) and secondary education (83%) are widely available (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2015).

To fulfil its duty of educating the general public, the Ministry of Education relies on the contributions of many people working in a variety of professions. In the classroom, teachers have daily interactions with their pupils, during which they instruct and guide the students in various subjects. Participation from a large number of various worker groups is required for successful engagement in the classroom. The ancillary staff is responsible for ensuring that the environment is clean and, as a result, conducive to learning, as well as catering to the dietary requirements of both the instructors and the pupils. Technical staff at head office and regional offices are responsible for taking care of the administrative aspects of the process. These staff members perform duties such as making provisions for the remuneration of teachers and other workers, training of teachers and other groups, supervising the delivery of education in the schools, developing curricula and national tests, and maintaining the structural integrity of school plants.

In order to achieve the objectives mentioned in the National Development Plan, the educational system is currently being transformed to be in line with the attendant requirements. As a consequence of this, the curriculum has to be modified in order to accommodate the ever-evolving requirements of the students as well as the newly developed standards that are congruent with the Plan. The report that was compiled by the Task Force (Davis, 2005) brought to light the deficiencies that are now present evidenced by the level of accomplishment that students are achieving in the fields of literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy programs

have recently been introduced since these subject areas were chosen to receive a significant amount of attention by the system. The creation of new lesson plans is a significant component of the strategy to enable the accomplishment of the objectives outlined in the National Development Plan. In Strategic Objective 3, the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) 2011-2020 lays out in specific terms the goal of increasing the rate of print literacy to 100% among the learners in the education system by the year 2020, and the goal of increasing the numeracy rate to 85% during the same period of time (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Research Questions

It is now propitious for investigations to be conducted in the area of how the implementation of the NSC in Jamaica is being managed by school leaders at the primary level. The underpinning research questions for this study are:

- Q1. What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03?
- Q2. What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?
- Q3. How do the educational leadership styles practised by members of the CIT in these institutions affect organizational change?
- Q4. How do the roles and implications of educational policies used in curriculum implementation contribute to change in these institutions?

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The aim of initiating change in an educational setting is to bring about improvement at both school and classroom levels. The expectation is that the innovation in the implementation of programmes and curricula will result in improved student achievement. It is however conceded that it is difficult to launch innovative programmes in the school setting. The desired goal of academic improvement is not always achieved. On such occasions, the normal course of action is for schools to move on to other programmes that they perceive will bring better results. The preferred response, however, would be for some effort to be made by the academic staff to understand the process that was embarked on and the possible reasons for obtaining the results observed. It is imperative that evaluators and leaders in the academic setting be supplied with the tools and means they require to gauge and describe the effect of executing the innovation.

In 2018 the implementation of the new National Standards Curriculum (NSC) began in Jamaican primary and secondary schools. The initiative was welcomed by both teachers and administrators, and many shared the sentiment expressed by Dr Michele Pinnock a Regional Director of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information. who said, “I am excited about the NSC, as it promotes the establishment of a learner-centred classroom. Teachers will be able to engage all learners, especially the boys, as they partner in teaching-learning activities that promote the development of 21st-century skills of collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication and problem solving” (JIS, 2018). Fullan (2004) suggests the kind of leader that will successfully manage the process of change in curriculum implementation: “only principals who are equipped to handle a complex, rapidly changing environment, can implement the reform that leads to sustainable improvement in student achievement” (Fullan, 2004, p.16).

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) was selected to provide the theoretical framework for investigating the challenges teachers and principals experience in the implementation of the NSC. The model provides a template for the effective operation of the Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs) in steering the changes necessary in a group of primary level institutions in Region 0.03. This framework provides ways for studying change in the context of the implementation stage of educational innovation (Wang, 2014, p.

23) The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) (Air, 2016) as a theoretical framework was used as the framework to set the parameters for the research. CBAM was originally formulated by Frances Fuller to investigate how others respond to innovation as one focusses on educational change (Fuller, 1969). This model was used in the 1970s and 1980s by a group of researchers from the Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education in the University of Texas, Austin. Further development was done on CBAM of its diagnostic dimensions (Hall, Wallace, & Dossett, 1973).

This theoretical framework aimed at data collection in order to explain evaluate, monitor the implemented changes that ensue in education (George, Hall & Stiegelbauer, 2013).

According to the CBAM research team, changes begin with the individual, generally the teacher or adopter, the focus is on the early effort or stage on what happens to teachers and leaders when presented with a change. CBAM assists leaders to identify the stages when implementing an innovation and to meet the needs of adopters.

The CBAM as a framework was developed to better understand the concerns of educators, their behaviours, change process and variations used in the implementation process of education innovation (Hall & Hord, 2020). The reliability and validity of CBAM were tested by competent investigators. The model was also updated in 2006 to ensure that it could be applied

as an accurate strategy for measuring the change process. CBAM continued to be used in educational settings in the 21st century to facilitate the assessment of change in curriculum implementation since it provides the tools and techniques for this purpose. It has been proven useful to leaders as well as evaluators and researchers as a guide for navigating the complex process of initiating innovation (Hall & Hord, 2011).

The CBAM has been effectively used in a variety of educational contexts, such as medical, nursing, and dental schools, and K-12 science, to ensure the sustainability of the implementation of a diversity of approaches to curriculum instruction and assessment. It is also being successfully used in various countries including Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Ghana, Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden and Belgium (Norman, 2002). Examples that are cited using the CBAM with revealed findings and research are as follows:

- Sultana (2015) researched administrative and academic staff's concerns on the offer of on-line courses for the Master of Philosophy of Education at Iqbal Open University. For this new study, the researcher used the CBAM format for the survey. The findings showed that the administrative and academic staff experienced an appreciable level of concern toward the on-line programme. This prompted the University to incorporate an Information Technology component in some parts of the programme.
- Roselita, Badush, Alias, and Said (2017) used the CBAM to gauge levels of concern among national coaches and preschool teachers, on how students learn by way of the integration of play in the teaching process, in Basha, Malaysia. The finding was that the sample was at the impact stage. The MANOVA analysis revealed a difference which proved significant, in the teachers' concerns regarding their educational attainment and gender.

- Tan and Lee (2015) engaged CBAM to create user profiles for the Primary Standard Curriculum. The data collection employed a sample comprising 192 teachers in Barat Daya Pulau Pinang, China, from 114 Vernacular schools. The analysis of the data took into account both demographic and generalized characteristics. Teachers with postgraduate degrees were found to display experienced user profiles, and other teachers were at the level of inexperienced non-user profiles.
- Donovan, Hartley, and Strudler (2007) investigated teachers' concerns with regard to the "One and One" computer project that encountered many challenges at the implementation stage. The findings placed their teachers into two categories according to their concerns. The first concern as exhibited by the majority of the respondents, was about the effect of the notebook that was suddenly introduced into the school environment. A second concern was their inability to use the notebook and to effectively attend to student needs. Donovan, Hartley, and Strudler (2007) suggested that for the concerns to be reduced, professional development should be provided to address the specific concerns raised by the teachers and highlighted the necessity to equip teachers and give them a voice in the implementation process.

The CBAM provides a set of perspectives which opens up avenues for viewing and understanding the process of change. It provides three such dimensions or constructs: Stages of Concern (SoC), Levels of Concern (LoC) and Innovation Configuration (IC). These three stages offer evidence of implementation connected to a work innovation and data are included to drive actions. The Framework also provides leaders with the methods and resources to gauge staff concerns within the institution and the programme that is being implemented to give each person the necessary support to guarantee success (Hall & Hord, 2020). This theoretical framework

affords users with insight regarding the concerns, potential users and even inexperienced users have when confronted with implementation or an adoption of an innovation (Lochner, Conrad and Graham, 2015 p. 63).

Stages of Concern (SoC)

The stages of concern (SoC) level uses a questionnaire to elucidate the concerns of education practitioners in implementing a curriculum initiative. Their attitudes, reactions and feelings about the initiative are sampled. In effect, the affective domain is measured.

Levels of Use (LoC)

Levels of Use (LoC) with the use of an interview protocol, assesses the level at which a new curriculum feature is being implemented by teachers. The extent of use of the innovation may vary from thinking about using it, to using it mechanically, to using and refining it to ensure that it gives maximum results. The innovation must be in full use for a period which gives enough time for solid data collection, in order for its effectiveness to be displayed.

Innovation Configurations (IC)

Innovation Configuration (IC) facilitates the identification and description of the varied forms of innovations adapted by teachers to fit the unique needs of their students and the particular environments in which they operate. The IC stage explicitly demonstrates what the implementation of the innovation will entail when it is being practised in the classroom.

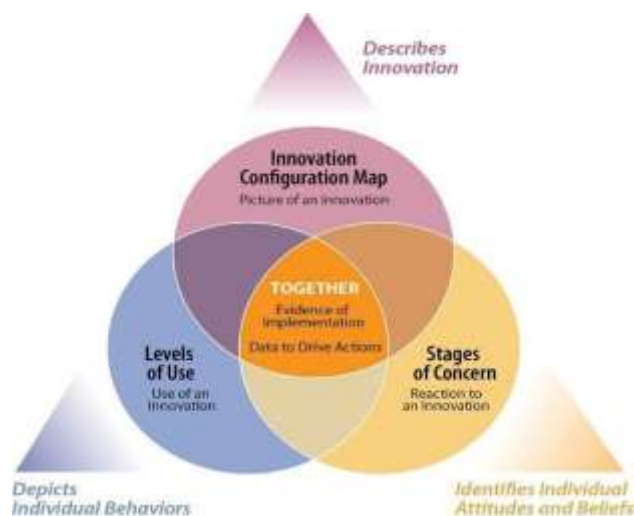


Figure 1: Change Process (Air, 2016)

The CBAM model has been faithfully followed during the course of this study. The concerns, fears, attitudes, and general reactions of teachers in the implementation of the NSC were tapped, mirroring the SoC stage. The information elicited at this stage was crucial in determining the extent to which innovation of the NSC is accepted by the teaching cohort or the sample, and the areas leadership should target for diffusing any resistance there might be to the change (Ford & Ford, 2010).

The LoC stage was evident in that the extent to which environmental factors enabled the teacher to implement the NSC efficiently and effectively was assessed. The level to which teachers are using the innovation, from lack of use to adapting the NSC, was determined, and the nature of the adaptations was explored, satisfying the IC stage of the model.

The data gathered has yielded results which will point to the way school leadership and leadership structures such as the CIT have to be configured for the implementation of the NSC to be maximised. This is in harmony with the aim of the study and corresponds with the initial purpose of CBAM as a framework for understanding the dynamics of educational change

through data collection, (George, Hall & Stiegelbauer, 2013) thereby setting the stage for forging effective leadership strategies to enable the benefits of the change to be realized.

The CBAM affirms that for successful change to be ensured within an institution or organization, the onus is on the individual and his/her willingness to make the change.

Addressing the concerns of teachers is the focus for the successful implementation of the innovation (George, Hall & Stiegelbauer, 2013). It is clear that the CBAM can present a true assessment of teachers' concerns with regard to the roll-out of the NSC in the sample of primary schools in the present study. The findings produced will give the Ministry of Education and Information an indication of the content of further training that will be necessary for educators at classroom and administrative level to fully implement the NSC.

CBAM and School Leadership

The utility and suitability of the CBAM has been proven by the results of studies that have employed the model. It is expected that teachers, the implementers of innovations at the classroom level, will have challenges as they process change or traverse the stages of concern in any innovation, during and after the implementation stage. The CBAM will prove to be a reliable means of capturing these concerns so that suitable corrective measures can be applied by school leadership. SEDL points out the diagnostic use of the CBAM framework. Any problem or issue affecting teachers which is unearthed by the SoC Questionnaire, for example can be addressed by leadership (SEDL Archive, n.d.). The example of concerns about preparation time for Mathematics causing disquiet among teachers is used. The solution applied by school leadership is to provide more time for planning and organisation to the teachers.

The Change Principles charted in CBAM assist the leader in the educational setting by setting out a template for handling change such as adapting to the introduction of a new

curriculum. The first and second Change Principles emphasize learning to operate in the process of change by engaging in professional development. This is important as many aspects of the environment of the leader and teacher are affected at the same time by the innovation (Hall & Hord, 2006). There must be the understanding that time is required, since most changes in education take three to five years to be implemented, and if key elements to effect the change are not put in place, more years will be added to the process (Hall & Hord 2006).

The need to differentiate between resistance and grief when leading change is also highlighted as a necessity by Hall and Ford (2006), as sadness exhibited by teachers over having to move from the comfort of doing what they feel competent to do, to doing something new might be mistaken for resistance. Change Principle 3 recognizes that the school is the Primary Organizational Unit for change and identifies the school's role in the larger district (QEC), state (region) and federal (national) context. When the bodies external to the school realize and appreciate the key role the school plays in effecting change in the entire education system, then success will be more easily achieved. It is also evident that different schools will progress at different rates based on their unique features (Hall & Ford, 2006). Principle 4 (Organizations Adopt Change, Individuals Implement Change) recognizes that the change process has to be taken into account at both individual and institutional levels, creating an Implementation Bridge (Hall & Hord, 2006). The Implementation Bridge prevents the implementors of the innovation from "falling into the chasm" (Hall & Hord, 2006, p.14).

Change Principle 6 (Appropriate Interventions Reduce Resistance to Change) highlights the need to provide interventions to educate participants about the change and to attend to their concerns. Change Principles 7-9 focus on the role of the leaders in initiating seamless change within the different levels of the system, recognizing the implementation of the change is a team

effort, and that those tasked with bring about the change on the ground should be empowered. Leaders have to support the change, helping the movement of the implementors of the change over the Implementation Bridge by on-going coaching, learning and general support (Hall & Hord, 2006). Change Principle 10 (Both Internal and External Factors Greatly Influence Implementation Success. This principle recognizes the presence and importance of the cultural norms of the schools and related structures and organizations affected, and the varied interpretations that might be brought to the initiative. Success can however be fostered in different ways in the varied situations. Principles 11 and 12 focus on the tasks to be accomplished once the change has been adopted, and the means and ways of sustaining the innovation for the benefit of the system. The need for evaluative measures is also recognized.

The CBAM Principles present a template for school leadership and other leaders in the educational landscape to adopt in implementing change including the introduction of a curriculum tailored to meet the needs of the student population as they move to embrace the possibilities that have and will continue to emerge in the 21st Century, which the NSC constitutes.

Leadership Styles in Educational Settings

The opportunity to participate in school leadership and to mould the lives of children at school and national levels, is a wonderful privilege. Effective leadership fosters student success and positively transforms the national economy. Preparing principals for school leadership in a continuously evolving environment involves not only the sharpening of their leadership skills, but also enabling them to steer the transformation process in the quest to prepare students to operate in a constantly changing world. Carmichael et al. (2011) corroborates these sentiments and brings to the fore the role of effective empowerment initiatives in leadership in fostering

growth and development of educational institutions. The special features of the educational setting produce varying effects and place unique demands on the school community and its various stakeholders. The principal's leadership style plays a significant role in shaping the beliefs, values, and routines of the academic staff and pupils. Principals that follow the democratic leadership model act in accordance with the values of fairness and equality as they implement the school's strategies and objectives. Evidence for this can be seen in the way in which responsibilities are divided up across employees (Frese, Garst & Fay 2007; Fay, & Frese 2001).

In the autocratic leadership style, the principal's power comes from the board of management and the Ministry of Education. Decisions are made by the principals and the vice principals and Grade Coordinators are expected to implement the decisions. In some Jamaican primary schools, principals want these middle managers to follow orders without being given valid explanations (Cherry, 2020). On the other hand, principals exhibiting the transformational leadership style challenge and stimulate their charges and inspire and enlighten them on the attainment of their desired goals (Gellis, 2001; Judge and Piccolo, 2004).

This is a leadership style that allows middle managers and teachers to be equipped with the means to attain the desired targets and programmes for the institution independently (Eren, 2012; Koçel, 2013; Coban & Atasoy, 2020).

The job of the principal is wide ranging – covering the areas of staff and student assessment, school politics, guiding the development of essential learning skills (including critical thinking and creativity) content and relevant attitudes in students to lay the foundation for future success (Lash & Belfiore 2017). The environment in which school leaders operate is dynamic and open to the vagaries of cultural and social influences, legal and political idiosyncrasies, technological advances, and personal demands. At the same time, the role of

principal has not undergone any significant adjustment to navigate the demands of the 21st Century. The act of leading school does not reside solely in enacting ready-made solutions, but in meeting the challenges as they occur and responding with thinking and creativity deploying problem solving skills to make the necessary response in each case (AckerHoccevar, 2015). According to Hutton and Johnson (2017), success in school leadership also resides in maintaining close working relationships with communities. This enables problems with student indiscipline to be addressed and for staff to be empowered to achieve greater levels of competence and interest in their job.

The post-industrial society is experiencing a considerable shift in terms of the nature of labour, and this shift has an effect on the position of educational leader. Recognizing how work is being defined and organized in the 21st century is the foundation upon which one must build an understanding of both the function and the nature of the preparations for it. OECD member countries are "experimenting with new methods to manage and administer schools in ways that are right for the 21st century," according to the OECD. "School systems and individual schools are experimenting with new approaches to management." (OECD, 2001, p.13). As a result, the factors that shape government priorities are potentially important influences on the perceived need for school reform, the resources that are available to carry out the reform, and the nature of the reforms. This is because schools are largely or entirely the responsibility of the government in the majority of countries.

Field/ Industry Description

The years 2000 - 2004 marked the introduction of the CIT as a strategy for monitoring and enhancing curriculum implementation in primary schools in Jamaica. The strategy was put in place during the roll-out of the Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC), which preceded the

National Standards Curriculum. The strategy which was novel to the Jamaican education system at the time, was met with enthusiasm. Some schools have however ceased to operate these teams and have not been deriving the benefits that the CIT would offer in the implementation of the curriculum. As Honig (2012) indicates, principals are the leaders of curriculum implementation in the school and as such, they along with teacher leaders, are the personnel with the power to facilitate teachers working in collaborative teams to enable the most effective and efficient implementation of the curriculum. A special bulletin was released by the Ministry of Education with a second directive regarding the establishment of CITs (Ministry of Education, 2014). On this occasion it was to be instituted at both primary and secondary levels of the system. Bulletin Number 2014 stated in part:

The Ministry of Education wishes to inform that the setting up of Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs) in schools is a vital activity to enable the efficient implementation and general delivery of the curriculum. The Ministry recognizes that several schools at the primary and secondary levels are benefitting from this experience. In accordance, therefore, with the Policy Guidelines for the implementation of Curriculum Implementation Teams – CITs all primary and secondary schools are expected to establish CITs (Ministry of Education, 2014a, p. 1). Reeves (2010) supports the view that the achievement of students is the reason behind all the work put into running schools and implementing curricula; stating that leaders in education have full knowledge that evaluating teaching, the curriculum and the assessment strategies are all done to enable students to learn.

Several strategies have been employed over the years for the effective implementation of the curriculum. Some strategies involve the members of an educational institution working cooperatively. Hollingworth (2012) highlighted the significance of shared leadership to bring

about improvement in the instructional program of a school. The group which assumes leadership of curriculum implementation in a school is given various designations apart from CIT. Examples of other names used to denote such teacher collaborations are: school improvement team, building leadership team and professional learning communities in Region x (Chen, Lee, Lin, & Zhang, 2016; Hollingworth, 2012; and Olivier, 2003). In every case, whatever name is used, the emphasis is on teachers working collaboratively to plan and implement strategies and programmes that enable students to achieve.

For this study, we drew on the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) (Air, 2016) as our theoretical framework. This chapter's content is suited for studies of NSC implementation in a sample of primary schools, particularly those that zero in on the major roles played by school administration and the CIT. The CIT and other curriculum implementation methodologies were discussed, as well as the leadership's role in guiding the process through a review of the relevant literature. The Nature of Curricula is addressed. Imperatives for Curriculum Implementation,

National Policy and Curriculum Implementation, Leadership Styles in Educational Settings, Leadership and Change in Educational Settings, The CIT as a Vehicle for Change Adaptation in the Jamaican Setting and The Interplay of National Policy, Educational Leadership and Change are also discussed. The topics address aspects of the title of the study and form the foundation for the research questions. The chapter ends with a synopsis of the reviewed literature.

The Nature of the Curricula

Having a quality standard curriculum with which students can engage effectively in this dispensation, requires that concepts such as problem solving be addressed as well as developing new strategies to inform the teaching and learning process (Remillard, 2016). For these reasons

school leaders and curriculum leaders should view the curriculum as a compendium of students' learning experiences and focus on the on how to enable teachers to deliver lessons effectively. Understanding the nature and scope of the curriculum requires looking at its descriptive and prescriptive definition as articulated by past and present leaders of educational thought. The descriptive curriculum is the curriculum in action and experience, while the prescriptive addresses how things are real in the classroom (Ellis, 2004). There are several definitions that attempt to capture the nature of a curriculum.

Brady and Kennedy (2010) stated that the purpose of the curriculum in the 21st century, is to make sure that the students are empowered with the necessary tools to handle the experiences presented in this dispensation. Curriculum is defined as the document or blue-print to guide instructions or the plan which is used for the teaching and learning process to bring about positive and desired learning behaviour change (Offorma, 2014). Marsh and Willis (2007) define curriculum as a set of interrelated plans and experiences which students complete effectively and efficiently under the guidance of the institution. Moss and Harvie (2015) postulated that the conservative definitions of curriculum are often used by teachers, policy makers and school leaders. Whiles and Bondi (2007) stated that it not feasible for teachers to use recall substantially in the delivery of curricula since they are always evolving and the knowledge required is immense. Wiles and Bondi, (2007) stated curriculum is a plan occurring within the classroom. Curriculum is a set of rules that students benefit from by providing them with the necessary practice in both content and social curriculum through active learning, character building, civic duties, and community building (Winterbottom, 2010 in Cattington, 2010). A curriculum is more than a just a syllabus that is made up of content topics. It consists of various components and influences (Kelly, 2009).

Apsari (2018) offers some additional insights on the nature of curricula by presenting the curriculum as a fundamental tool which is a measure of the standard and the effect of the education that the country offers to its learners. According to Apsari (2018), it is the curriculum that acts as a roadmap for the learning that is intended to take place at each stage of the education system. There is no other teaching tool that can do all of these things in a single document or series of documents like this important educational tool. The curriculum, in its written form, serves as both a blueprint and a guide; but, when it is put into action in the teaching and learning environment, it does far more. It liberates the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that students need to master at a specific level of the system in order for them to progress further. It is possible to modify it so that it is suitable for a specific class of pupils (Muskin 2015), taking into account the student's culture, their requirements, and their individual position and set of circumstances. The curriculum is an instructional tool that, due to its dynamic nature, has far-reaching consequences on the educational system as a whole (Mojkowski, 2000; McLachlan, et al., 2018).

Any change in the curriculum as a result of the adoption of new philosophical and methodological approaches would have a ripple effect on the other aspects and parameters of an educational system. This is because the curriculum is the foundation of an educational system. This is due to the fact that the curriculum is the pillar around which an educational system is built (Retnawati et al., 2016). In addition to guiding educators in the selection of content, preparation, and delivery of lessons, including the assessment dimension (Nevenglosky, 2018), and organization of the environment for learning and teaching (McLachlan, et al., 2018), the curriculum is often considered to be a major contributor to the progression and development of society. This is due to the fact that it assists students in acquiring the knowledge and abilities that are necessary for them to be successful in the current world (Badugela, 2012). The

implementation of the constructivist method of teaching and learning has served as an excellent illustration of how the incorporation of philosophical and methodological advancements into the educational system can transform educational theory and practice, as well as influence all aspects of the way teaching and learning are carried out within the system as a whole. This has served as an excellent illustration because it has served as an excellent example of how the incorporation of philosophical and methodological advancements into the educational system can transform educational theory and practice. When it comes to learning and assessment, the constructivist approach places more of an emphasis on the learning process itself as well as the work that students produce (Akkoc et al., 2008). In the past, the development of a finished product was seen as the single most significant facet of one's educational experience.

The curriculum is what establishes the infrastructure and resources that need to be present for the fulfilment of the learning goals, as well as the quality and method of interaction between the learners and the instructor (Olamo et al., 2019). The curriculum allows for the pursuit of information and skills outside of the limits of the classroom, which means that it also creates place for unexpected activities. It is essential that the educational objectives be met, as this is the most important thing (Olamo et al., 2019). The curriculum takes into account the aspects of society that are deemed important enough to be taught, as well as the roles that students and teachers should play in actively engaging the knowledge and skills that are to be learned (McLachlan, et al., 2018, Hickey, 2005). There is significant discussion over the roles played by the administration of schools and the families from whom the pupils originate. According to Akkoc et al. (2008) and Mkandawire (2010), the overarching role of the philosophy that drives the development of the curriculum and the way in which it is implemented, as well as the socio-

economic, cultural, and political influences to which curriculum is subjected, are some of the most important aspects that determine the nature of a curriculum (2010)

Components of the Curriculum

Curriculum plays a fundamental part in the education system. It is the plan that leads the teacher and students to attain the required objectives. With this established, it is the duty of the leaders and policy makers at school and national levels have to plan in such a way that the curriculum is designed to place the teacher and learner on the path to attaining the planned learning outcomes. The four major components of curriculum are: Curriculum aims, goals and objectives; 2) Curriculum content or subject matter; 3) Curriculum experience; 4) curriculum evaluation.

Curriculum Objectives

The aims, goals and objectives within a curriculum indicate what are to be achieved at the conclusion of a teaching unit or course. This component captures the objectives, vision, mission statement and philosophy (Van Blerkom, 2003). Richards, (2007) postulated that objectives within a curriculum are the goals to bring about change in the learners. The objectives contribute significantly to the achievement and purpose of the curriculum (Huizinga, Handelzalts, Nieveen, & Voogt, 2014; Zeff, 2007;). In order for the objectives to be met within a curriculum, it is imperative that the information is presented and organized for each unit in the entire programme (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004; Van Driel, Bulte, & Verloop, 2008; Harvey & Baumann, 2012).

It is vital to have objectives in order to provide a particular expression of the precise output that is sought to be attained in the course of the learning experience. Students displaying the qualities and capabilities that the learning experiences were supposed to elicit in them is

sometimes apparent evidence that the desired output has become a reality. This is evidence that the learning experiences have been successful (Chatterjee & Corral, 2017; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2014; Akpinar, 2010). Ornstein and Hunkins (2014) place a strong focus on the requirement for objectives to have worth and purpose not only for the learner on an individual level but also for society as a whole.

Curriculum Content/ Subject Matter

The second component of the curriculum the subject matter or content. It contains the relevant information that students should learn. This component is a medium through which the objectives are consummated. The subject matter or content refers to the body of knowledge that students will acquire after the lesson or course is taught. It must be guaranteed that the objectives are appropriately met. The subject matter is summarized, detailed and precise (Dempster, Benfield, & Francis, 2012; Wang, Elicker, & McMullen, 2008; Krippendorff & Bock, 2009) that is incorporated into the curriculum. The pre-requisite indicates the needed knowledge abilities, and skills that will enable a person to adapt to the new curriculum's content and gain new knowledge, abilities and skills (Anderson, Bullen, Alltree, & Thornton, 2008; BAŞ, 2013; Bovill, Bulley & Morss, 2011) that learners need to function effectively.

Curriculum Learning Experiences

The third component is the learning activities or learning experiences implemented by the teachers during the teaching – learning process. This includes the method of teaching both in and outside of the classroom or institution, the learning environments, the material the teachers use and as well as the students' materials (Kaschman, 2011; Ovens, 2011). Learning experience or learning activities is not the same as content; the learning experience is an interaction between the learner and his or her external environment.

Over the years there has been emphasis on students learning and student-centred instruction. The focus in education is that the teacher is seen as the facilitator. The tasks are geared towards students acquiring the knowledge and abilities that are specified by curriculum (Greer, Pokorny, Clay, Brown, & Steele, 2010).

In their explanation of the Tyler Reasoning, Bellack and Kliebard (1966) emphasize that the selection and organizing of learning events stem from the formulation of objectives. When students have engaged in the planned activities, an assessment is made of how well the goals were achieved. Tyler's concept of curriculum is the interaction between the student and his surroundings. As a result, Tyler (1949) perceives a difficulty in the teacher or curriculum writer properly picking learning experiences when they are so closely tied to the student's sensitivities, interests, prior exposure, and life circumstances. The selection of learning experiences can only be authentic if the activities or assignments chosen are dependent on the student's characteristics and circumstances. Nonetheless, the instructor can exert influence over the learning experience by providing the type of atmosphere required to elicit the desired student behaviours and responses. The manipulation of the environment becomes the purview of the teacher, so that he or she can present to the student opportunities to stimulate creativity and the acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are desired and that are stated in the curriculum.

Curriculum Evaluation

Curriculum evaluation emphasizes the value of the curriculum. Evaluation focuses mainly on the content, process, design, outcomes and implementation. It verifies the effectiveness and standard of the curriculum programme, and products. It is important to evaluate the curriculum whether the objectives and aims are met or not (Harris, Driscoll, Lewis, Mathews, Russell, & Cumming, 2010). It determines whether the teaching strategies and other

components are being effectively executed. Evaluation experts modify the curriculum by bringing about necessary changes. The assessment process includes evaluation procedures that occur at the end of a programme's period of execution. (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2001). The purpose is to ensure that both teacher and learner responsibility are discharged with understanding and the expertise to apply the curriculum effectively (Giles, Martin, Bryce, & Hendry, 2004; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The interpretation of evaluation provides the feedback about the curriculum and its components.

The procedure of evaluating the effectiveness of a curriculum's implementation is a crucial stage in both the teaching and learning processes. Evaluation is the process that allows for the identification of any difficulties that are being faced by the learner as well as the instructor. After the difficulties have been recognized and characterized, it will be possible to devise tactics that will attempt to stop them from occurring in the future. In addition, there are actions that can be performed to mitigate both the causes and the effects of the problem. After the curriculum has been examined, one of the most important strategies that can be put into effect is the modification of the curriculum in such a way that it strives to make the necessary adjustments to alleviate the difficulties and obstacles that have been discovered (Cheung & Wong, 2012; Badugela, 2012). Because of this, a more efficient and fruitful application of the curriculum is going to be guaranteed (Erden, 2010; Chapman, 2019; Nevenglosky, et al., 2019) because the new information that is gained at each stage of evaluation is used at each stage of revision and fed into each repetition of the stage of implementation. The utilization of the information that is gathered at each evaluation is what brings the written curriculum and the curriculum that is actually taught into closer alignment with one another (Zedda, et al., 2017). The information that may be obtained from each review is not only valuable for school administrators, but also for

teacher educators and lawmakers (Ogar & Opoh, 2015). The evaluation procedure makes it possible to find solutions to the challenges that have been hindering the execution of the curriculum. According to Cobbold (2017), failure becomes a tangible possibility when there is a failure to recognize and address the issues that crop up during the process of putting the curriculum into practice.

Imperatives for Curriculum Implementation

Lochner, Conrad, and Graham (2015), posited that it is important for teachers to know whether curriculum delivery is effective, efficient and consistent to permit students to progress and grow in their learning. Curriculum implementation is an activity highly dependent on the teacher and how he/she enacts or delivers lessons and assessments using the specified resources in the curriculum. The design of the Curriculum generally provides the instructional lesson plans, and assessment options aligned with the objectives. According to Wiles and Bondi, (2014) the curriculum design is predicated on the teacher consistently and successfully maintaining the structure of curricula in order to meet the different objectives.

Tweedie and Kim, (2015) stated that it is very important that there is alignment of curriculum content and other components between the same and subsequent grade levels, since this offers consistency in tracking and validating learning objectives and other expectations put in place to optimize the extent to which student preparedness and growth are achieved. The concerns teachers have about their students can give an indication as to whether the curriculum as implemented, will meet their needs. McNeill, (2016) and Rakes and Dunn, (2015) have all validated this view by addressing the impact of teachers' concerns in curriculum implementation. McNeill et al., (2016) also made the finding that teachers' decisions about how they teach are influenced by their concerns and beliefs. If teachers' beliefs are so important in the delivery of

the curriculum, then tapping their concerns, perceptions and values should be an automatic step in any effort to improve the implementation of the curriculum (Al-Shabatat, 2014; Rakes & Dunn, 2015). The need for teachers to fully understand the objectives through training and development and collaborative and practical experiences, was highlighted by McNeill (2016). As substantiated by (AIR, 2016), further research would assist in identifying and overcoming the barriers to effective implementation of new curricula.

To ensure effective curriculum implementation, the painstaking and specific alignment of learning activities with learning goals is paramount (McDonald, Barton, Baguley, & Hartwig, 2016; Phillips, Ingrole, Burris, & Tabulda, 2017). Reliability must be an integral part of curriculum delivery. The teaching and learning methods and activities must be aligned with the curriculum and cater to the needs of individual learners (Causarano, 2015). Teacher preparedness is also an important element in the process (McNeill et al., 2016). Causarano (2015) alluded to this based on a research done on the impact of teacher and student relationship in the teaching of Mathematics in an urban school. The finding supported the proposal that the teachers need to know the curriculum to bring across the lesson effectively. The instructional content depends on the effectiveness of the delivery and explanation (McDonald et al., 2016). McDonald et al. (2016) underlined the necessity for effective teaching through dedication to duty and making the effort to be available for training in ongoing workshops that will assist the teachers to deliver the recommended curriculum effectively. Sometimes problems arise from the actual curriculum being implemented (Caropreso, Haggerty, & Ladenheim, 2016). Bell (2015) indicated that when a new curriculum is being introduced, proper training is important, as this builds teacher confidence. (Caropreso et al., 2016; McNeill et al., 2016). In further support of this finding, Bell (2015) went on to substantiate that inadequate guidance or training hindered

effective and accurate delivery of lessons to students. Causarano (2015) added further evidence that this hindrance or impediment of inadequate preparation has been found to affect the development and growth of student learning.

When students and teachers collaborate in a classroom or other learning setting toward the same educational objectives, the goals of the curriculum are brought to fruition (Fullan, 2015). The gradual implementation of curricular shifts is probably connected to the fact that school administrators are unable to fulfil the role of instructional curriculum leaders in their institutions. This explains why administrators are unable to serve in the role of directors of instructional curriculum (Reynolds, Hopkins, Potter, & Chapman, 2002 & Supovitz, Sirinides, 2015). It is also true that teachers are being given more latitude to make their own decisions regarding the content, tone, and other aspects of the curriculum that they are implementing in the classroom. This is true for both public and private schools. It appears that this pattern will carry on at the same rapid rate it has been demonstrating for the foreseeable future. If this is the case, then it is difficult to determine whether or not schools will adhere to a certain curriculum (Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt (1992); Braun, Maguire, and Ball, 2010).

Challenges in the Supervision of Curriculum Implementation

In the context of the process of teaching the student population, the responsibility of supervising and monitoring the application of the curriculum is an extremely significant one. Nonetheless, difficulties can be encountered at any level. As is the case with other kinds of change, new approaches to implementing the curriculum are occasionally met with resistance. Lunenburg (2010) identified six factors that work against efforts to bring about organizational change. These factors include uncertainty about the path that the innovation will take, concern over personal loss, resistance from the group, dependence, trust in the (current) administration,

and awareness of weaknesses in the proposed change. According to Moswela (2010), the lack of an overarching policy to direct the process of curriculum implementation in Botswana was a significant obstacle in the process of supervising the implementation of the curriculum. Because of this, there was no overarching principle that could be used to coordinate the various efforts that were being made.

The inadequate training of personnel in certain subject areas, such as Science, reduced contact teaching time, and inadequate school and public library facilities are some of the other problems and challenges that have been named by the Task Force Report (Davis, 2005). The deficiency of instructional materials has been cited as a factor in the Jamaican education system (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). Sanders (2006) found that neglecting the process to get the job done, doing too much with too little, and failing to follow through were obstacles to sustaining team leadership of curriculum implementation. The study was conducted with six novice teachers in a sample of six urban middle schools in the United States. The combination of these and other obstacles works to undermine the efforts that have been put into the implementation of the curriculum and puts the process of monitoring at risk.

Curriculum Implementation and Students' Academic Achievement

Principals make a significant difference where high academic achievement is observed in schools (Moswela, 2010). It is expected that a school with a principal who is cognizant of the needs of staff and students, will produce students who perform well academically. Studies exploring the effect on student academic achievement of collaborative efforts in curriculum implementation have added to the body of knowledge that school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders in education can draw on as they attempt to improve school performance. The data that have been uncovered about the relationship between teacher collaboration and student

accomplishment have been somewhat variable. Linton's (2014) research examining the relationship between PLC effectiveness and student achievement found no such link after applying the Pearson correlation technique to data from a subset of Mississippi schools. Patrick (2013), in a meta-analysis of 21 dissertation research papers produced between 1997 and 2012, found only partial support for the hypothesis that PLC implementation in pre-K-12 schools significantly increases reading achievement. Nevertheless, Backman (2013), using data from 26 elementary schools, 439 teachers, and 11,000 children, revealed that each of eight clearly defined characteristics of Professional Learning Communities was significantly related to student achievement (according to Williams, Matthews, Stewart, & Hilton 2007).

Using a number of methods, DiNardo (2010) looked at how professional development affected student achievement in a large elementary school in the south-eastern United States. The study included six teachers from participating in collaborative sessions and 121 students. At the high school level, it was also discovered that collaborative engagement was a favourable for student achievement. Arias (2012) conducted research at an urban high school and collected, categorized, and triangulated data from four purposefully selected PLC teacher participants. With this information and his own meeting observations and document and artefact perusal, he came to the conclusion that when teachers in a PLC had productive conversations about their students' learning, they were better able to come up with activities that met the students' individual academic needs. These findings were derived from the fact that he used all of these methods. In a study that looked at the assessment outcomes of an Illinois school district following PLC implementation, Story (2012) found similar favourable results on the impact that PLCs had on student achievement. The study examined the consequences of PLC implementation. In a study that compared the levels of student accomplishment in elementary

and high schools that had PLCs to those that did not, Hamilton (2013) discovered that the outcomes were different for Hispanic and English Language Learner subgroups. At the high school level, academic achievement was only significant in schools that did not utilize PLCs, whereas, at the elementary school level, academic accomplishment was significant for all subgroups in schools that utilized PLCs. According to Onyije and Olawolu (2012), there are several environmental and other elements, such as poverty, that might have a negative effect on the capacity of pupils to make full use of the curriculum that is currently being implemented.

National Education Policy and Curriculum Implementation

National education policy is comprised of principles and guidelines that are framed by public authorities, using informed values and ideas to govern how decisions are made within the education sector. The direct implementation of policy within schools is carried out by education professionals and school leaders (Rayou & Zanten, 2015). Ministry of Education (2014) outlined an education policy framework as a guide to addressing the challenges in the education system as learners are empowered to live in the 21st Century. This framework sought to address the diverse needs in schools which have become evident in the effort to equip the education system to adapt to changes occurring on the international scene and to emphasize quality education for life-long learning. “There is a paradigm shift within the Education system within in the 21st Century; education is the driver to develop the skills in our learners to meet the needs in society” (Lessard & Carpentier, 2015 p. 13). There is a concurrent movement by stakeholders and policy makers to concentrate their efforts on raising the schools’ performance, in terms of the quality of education and the services delivered.

Teachers are given the assurance by the education policy that they will be at the head of any reforms, and as a result, they should be in the essential position in order to mold students

into being learners for life and better members of society (Anupam, 2021). It provides educators with the assurance that their work will be valued by some of the most intelligent people in the world, and as a result, it encourages them to pursue careers in education so that they can continue molding the minds of students to prepare them to function successfully in today's society.

Education is being used as a tool toward achieving social and economic equality, and the policy permeates deeply into the social lives of students, stating that all students are to have quality education regardless of their socio-economic status, allowing them equal opportunities to excel in their studies. As a result of this policy, education is being utilized as a tool toward collaborating social and economic impartiality.

It is a stark reality that education policies have been developed with minimal consideration for effectively implementing them. Questions may be asked such as, “Do teachers have the effective skills to teach the new curriculum?” Often “administrators and policy makers overlook this reality during implementation” (OECD, 2010 p. 16). Etim and Okey (2015) agreed that while the country’s leadership prescribes the skills that should be included in the curriculum, the teacher, (by familiarity with the curriculum and the dynamics of its delivery), is best suited to recommend the skills to be specified. In implementing a curriculum, therefore, the attendant policies must take into account teachers’ practice, beliefs and resources used. Loruntegbe (2011) reiterates the need for the involvement of teachers and communities by stating that curriculum implementation and any structural changes to the delivery process will only bring success if there is such an involvement.

According to Porter (2015), effective curriculum implementation necessitates the curriculum to be conceptualized, understood, interpreted, and internalized at personal, group and administrative levels. The aim of policy is to bring change to the education system and

implementing policy will bring with it multiple challenges in the process. The professionals in the education system constantly grapple with the responsibilities of ensuring adequate organizational resources, and full compliance with policy makers' targets (Weaver, 2014). Education governance is complicated because of the multiple levels that exist. This affects the education system negatively, because the procedure for implementation often "creates fatigue and confusion for those who have to implement the policy" (Hong, 2006 p. 27). Implementing new policy is complex and more challenging in the education system than in many other areas of the public sector (Van Der Voet, Kupers & Groeneveld, 2015).

The teachers are the ones who activate the designed curriculum. The process begins with developing the instructional experiences and ends with evaluation (Konokman, Yelken, Karasolak, & Sesur 2017). Handler (2010) reiterates that teacher involvement is crucial from the planning stage, so that, as substantiated by Bounds, (2009), the requisite knowledge and skills are provided for the learner. The learning goals built on the foundation laid in the educational policy that activates and determines the processes to be followed in the implementation, while involving the teachers and other practitioners, by connecting their understanding of learning, with the instruction and subject matter shared with students. (Spillane, Reiser & Gomez, 2006; Stein & Nelson, 2003). Research that has been conducted on policy implementation from this perspective focuses intensively on the aspects of policy teachers apply in their teaching (Honig, 2006). Elmore, (2004) posited that studies are called into question on the assumption that the failure of implementation involves resistance or wilful misunderstanding, and incentives and consequences could have prevented or remedied the situation.

The structure of the NSC represents a significant change for the Jamaican education system. Instead of an emphasis on the knowledge-based approach, priority is placed on the

acquisition of skills and competences. The NSC demonstrates how to actively pursue knowledge, skills and attitudes through project based and problem-solving activities. This process employed in the development of the NSC will consistently ensure that all learners acquire knowledge skills and attitudes to fit them for success for personal life, the work environment and the global space (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Components of National Education Policy

UNESCO (2021a) highlights the importance of solid and coherent policies and plans in forming the foundation for sustainable education systems, making it possible to bring to fruition educational development goals and support lifelong learning. It is expected that national education policy would consist of components or domains that address several crucial areas of the operation of a national education system. As supported by UNESCO (2021a), some of the areas that would be mandatory components in a national education policy or set of policies, are: equity in access to quality education, curriculum development and reform, the role of ICT (in quality and access to education), evaluation and assessment of achievement, and capacity building of the system.

There is at present (the year 2021) no single policy on education in Jamaica. There are however, several policies addressing various areas in the education arena. The National Education Strategic Plan (2011-2020) makes mention of policies, some of which are being developed, and some which have already been developed, which are consistent with the philosophy of NSC which speaks to the acquisition of 21st Century skills: They are also consistent with guidelines suggested by UNESCO as to the domains that should be addressed in education policy (UNESCO, 2021a) and UNESCO 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 4 “Ensure quality education for all”(UNESCO 2021b).

Equity in Access to Quality Education. Examples of the component of equity in access to quality education being addressed, reside in the Compulsory Education Policy, the Special Education Policy, and the Lifelong Learning Policy. The Compulsory Education Policy (CEP) designates compulsory enrolment or attachment and regular attendance of school age persons in an organised learning programme. The policy covers a wide range of issues involving responsibilities of parents and children, and the regulation of programmes. There are 14 elements of the CEP which are also covered in the guidelines governing the Early Childhood Commission which is the agency managing early childhood education in Jamaica (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The Special Education Policy will aim to steer the provision of special education services equitably, inclusively and adequately for students needing these services. This policy will address learners at both ends of the learning spectrum - gifted students and students with learning disabilities (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The Lifelong Learning Policy aims to promote continuous acquisition of skills and knowledge by members of the population. This will result in stronger productivity, fostering employment, active citizenship, stronger family life, a population with low incidence of health issues, and a personally fulfilling life.

A high-quality education is essential for everyone to realize their full potential, and everyone should have access to it. Every child is endowed with a one-of-a-kind combination of traits and abilities. The goal of a child's schooling should be to help them grow and flourish, so that they can reach their greatest potential (Gardner, 1983). Particularly in a developing country like Jamaica, it is important that rural schools have access to the same resources as their urban counterparts so that all students have a fair opportunity for success. The educational system in

Jamaica ought to recognize the significance of the responsibilities that teachers play in determining the destinies of their pupils (Samruhaizad & Azahian, 2017). There is no correlation between the level of development and the quality of education. Students who have access to solid education are more likely to have a deeper understanding of a variety of topics and current events. Every school ought to have access to a variety of materials so that pupils are not restricted to just the fundamentals of their education. It is important for educational institutions to be outfitted with technology that enables students to access a variety of programs that may be found on the internet in order to acquire diverse information on a topic (Norhiza, Zamri & Wan Muna Ruzanna, 2016).

Curriculum Development and Reform. This facet of national education policy is heavily influenced by the national curriculum policy. The National Curriculum Policy, drafted in 2011, has created a regulatory framework providing clear and specific guidelines leading the way for the development of quality curricula. Specifications for the efficient implementation of curricula are part and parcel of this policy (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The advocacy of curricular reform which makes a case for several beneficial modifications to the way educational leadership, teaching, and learning are carried out, can only be a positive phenomenon for the educational system. As a direct consequence of this, new and more appropriate standards for the competency levels being advocated, have to be adopted to enact the updated curriculum (Lornas & Ivtzan, 2016; Mercer, 2017). There have been certain specific adjustments made to the curricula as a result of the curriculum reform, most notably in the learning goals, which superficially refer to the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and values that students should acquire. Since the curriculum determines the vision of a society by determining what kinds of knowledge and skills are useful for its people and what kinds of knowledge and

skills are worthwhile passing on, it is of the utmost importance that they be politically and culturally neutral. On the other hand, a curriculum is supposed to reflect political and social agreement (Amadio et al., 2016), and as society develops, the curriculum needs to change along with it. Hence, "curriculum reforms" are attempts to examine or update the "content" of material, including its selection and structure, as well as related concerns linked to student learning. The word "reform" is often used interchangeably with this term to describe these changes (Gilbert, 2010).

In an effort to better prepare students for a world that is undergoing rapid change, governments all over the world have in recent times, initiated curriculum reforms utilizing a wide array of different philosophies and methodologies. The public's interest in rethinking educational programs has been piqued by the importance of providing today's youth with the skills and worldview they need to thrive in the 21st Century. However, there is also the possibility that the implementation of a given curriculum may affect students' achievement (Chingos, Russ & Whitehurst, 2012; Boser, Chingos & Straus, 2015; Steiner, 2017). Despite this, it may be difficult to bring about changes in the educational programs that are being offered. It is possible that the inability of administrators to serve as effective instructional leaders is related to the failure of schools to implement curricular reforms effectively (Reynolds, Hopkins, Potter, & Chapman, 2002; Supovitz, Sirinides, & May, 2010). Some school administrators might not have a complete understanding of the obligations that come with their positions as instructional leaders (Mitchell & Castle, 2005).

ICT in Education. The component of ICT is directed by the ICT in Education Policy. The policy will provide a standard for the provision of ICT to support educational administration, teachers and students in maximising its use in administration, teaching and

learning in schools. This policy naturally complements but is separate from the National Curriculum Policy (Ministry of Education, 2012).

A recent study (Castro Sánchez & Alemán, 2011) found that the use of information and communications technology (ICT) can assist in transforming a classroom environment into one that is oriented to the student. Because students actively participate in the learning processes in ICT classrooms, teachers grant their permission for students to make decisions, plans, and perform other tasks related to their education (Lu, Hou & Huang, 2010). As a result, students and instructors alike benefit from an increase in the educational opportunities and possibilities afforded by ICT. Student use of ICT to identify learning themes, resolve difficulties, and propose solutions to problems encountered during the learning process is supported by research by Brush, Glazewski, and Hew (2008). With ICT, students can participate in the use of electronic media and a wide range of applications, and it can facilitate their knowledge acquisition and comprehension of academic subjects.

The use of technology in the classroom must go beyond supplementary roles (Tezci, 2011a). Teachers, according to Castro Sánchez and Alemán (2011), should approach the integration of ICT into the curriculum with an open mind. While using technology in the classroom, educators must refine their methods to make the most of the new resources at their disposal. Yildirim (2007) found, however, that rather than encouraging critical thinking among pupils, teachers are increasingly turning to computers for exam and handout preparation. When researching how educators utilize technology in the classroom, Palak and Walls (2009) reached very similar results. They discovered that most of the time, educators use technology to bolster the pedagogical approaches they already use, but that this trend rarely extends to the facilitation of student-centred learning. The authors speculate that this is due, in part, to a dearth of

illustrative case studies on how to employ technological strategies to improve educational outcomes, as well as the constraints imposed by factors such as class size and students' individual levels of ability.

A grim picture is painted by Brush, Glazewski, and Hew (2008), who found that preservice teacher preparation did not adequately show appropriate techniques for integrating technology into a curriculum or give adequate ICT skills to enable technology-based teaching and learning. Teachers need to be given more opportunities to develop their ICT skills, and this training should be incorporated into teacher preparation programs. For the widespread use of efficient technological methods, this has been proven essential (Supon & Ruffini 2009). Chen (2008) suggested that scholars in the field of information and communication technology (ICT) chronicle examples of how teachers successfully integrate technology to suit their educational goals and needs, fulfilling the requirements and outcomes outlined in educational policies. This is necessary in order to help teachers, overcome the difficulties they encounter in implementing ICT in the classroom in a manner that enables students to take charge of their own learning.

Other Policies. In order for the education system to operate at its optimum, a compendium of policies, has to be engaged, to empower and build capacity for personnel e.g. teachers and principals (UNESCO, 2021) and the facilities of the system. The policies in the components of equity in access, curriculum development and ICT play roles in building capacity for teaching and learning. Numerous studies on the integration of ICT have shown that initiatives fail to reach their goals because teachers continue to rely on traditional methods of teaching and teaching methods (Gersten, 2000; Cuban, 1993; and Honey, 2003). In order for educators to continue implementing innovative strategies for teaching, they need to believe that these strategies are effective and will be to the students' advantage. To sustain advances in areas such

as project-based learning or student-centred techniques, which ask for fundamental alterations to a teacher's instructional practice, instructors' grasp of the material and their passion to the field are of the utmost importance (Gersten, 2000). Understanding how technology can be integrated into the dynamic and ever-changing nature of classrooms has been crucial to the development of education in industrialized nations (Honey, 2003; Soemkh, 2003). There has not been significant instances of research done on instructional technology projects in schools in developing countries. The day-to-day operations of schools is another aspect that will give an indication of the overall capacity of the system for learning and instructing. The operations here are governed by statutes, rules, and programs such as the School Improvement Policy, the Safe Schools Policy, the School Infrastructure Policy, and the Centre of Excellence Scheme of Management (Ministry of Education, 2012).

National Policy and Educational Leadership and Implementation

The school leaders/principals are essential in the implementation of education policy agendas both nationally and internationally. An education policy plays a vital role in improving the achievement of students and teachers, in the motivation of teachers, as well as creating the school climate. It is also important in achieving equity and efficiency of schooling (OECD, 2016). School leadership is defined by researchers (Hallinger, 2014; Harris, 2009; Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008; Robinson, Rowe, & Lloyd, 2009), as persons or teams that manage or lead an educational institution at the primary and secondary levels. Eurydice, (2013) posited that school leaders are called upon to ensure that the daily activities of the school are run in accordance with what is directed by policy, appropriate practices in curriculum implementation, and the assessment and evaluation of teachers. Leaders may also be responsible for the financial aspect of the school operations and in some cases, take on teaching duties. Although principals

manage the affairs within an institution, they are in a difficult position to mediate the policy environment while interacting with multiple stakeholders (Kowalski, 2010; Lortie, 2009; Rallis & Goldring, 2000; Tucker & Coddling, 2002). Recent policies have placed principals at the centre of education reform efforts granting these school leaders the opportunity to have much freedom, greater accountability and new responsibilities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Orr et al., 2005; Ouchi, 2009; Wong & Nicotera, 2007). Large scale reforms have shifted to more inclusiveness and support of instructional improvement and placed pressure on school leaders/principals to act as transformational leaders or agents of change in implementing education policy (Fullan, 2002; Orr et al., 2005).

Diem and Young (2015) proposed an adoption of a Critical Policy Analysis (CPA) framework for school leadership to analyze factors regarding the context and the complexity of education policies. They have suggested that more work is needed in effecting research on the processes, context and other factors of policy development in school leadership (Diem & Young, 2015).

The 450 changes made to the educational systems of the OECD member countries between 2008 and 2014 are substantial. (OECD, 2015). Given the dynamic nature of the context in which education operates, it is reasonable to expect educational systems to strive for change and development. The demographics, social structure, and economic climate all play a role. Nonetheless, there is not much evidence to suggest that more education has any effect. This is because the effects of education are hard to measure and are only seldom investigated. Stakeholders are often unsatisfied with the results even when the intended result is attained, and they often blame policymakers for their dissatisfaction (Gallup, 2017; Corbier, 2017).

There was a total of 450 educational changes that were put into action in the countries that make up the OECD during the years of 2008 and 2014. (OECD, 2015). Given the dynamic nature of the economic, social, and demographic factors influencing education, it makes sense to aim for education systems to adapt, improve, and shape the future. The belief that education can and should change the future should underpin these objectives. Yet, there is scant evidence to suggest that improvements to educational opportunities have any kind of impact at all. This is as a result of the fact that it is challenging to evaluate the impacts of education and that they are rarely explored. Even when the changes that were implemented have the desired effect, stakeholders are frequently unhappy with the outcomes, and they frequently place the blame for such outcomes on policymakers. Even when the changes have the desired effect, stakeholders are frequently dissatisfied with the outcomes. Even when the alterations achieve the effect that was hoped for, stakeholders are frequently dissatisfied with the results (Gallup, 2017; Corbier, 2017).

In addition, the procedures that in fact produce the outcomes that are desired, or that are meant to produce the outcomes that are desired, are not fully comprehended. There is some debate over the precise meaning of the term "policy implementation," but most agree that it describes the steps taken "between the establishment of a policy and its repercussions in the world of action" (O'Toole, 2000). This is the case even if there is disagreement regarding the terminology. It is correct to say that there is a distinction between legislating a policy, rule, or plan and integrating it into the day-to-day activities of educators, school administrators, and community members in a given area. The former involves passing the policy, rule, or plan into law. The latter involves incorporating the policy, rule, or plan into the daily functioning of the institution. It is possible that the reform process will be abandoned in its entirety if decisions on implementation are delegated to school administrators and classroom instructors (Hess, 2013).

The achievement of students is the primary focus of all administrative and instructional decisions made in schools. Reeves (2010) stated that administrators have a good grip on the notion that the ultimate purpose of re-evaluating curriculum and adopting new methods of instruction and evaluation is to promote student learning. This statement can be readily accepted, when it is taken into account that administrative teams make choices based on the students' academic performance. It is possible that the proper execution of education policy could be hampered by a number of variables, including issues with coordination, a lack of organizational resources, teacher capability, and hostility to progress. Yet, as a result of the complexity of the system, the challenges that must be conquered in order to implement reform, have shifted. People are becoming increasingly concerned about education, and those who are concerned have high standards for the way that educational institutions should operate.

The implementation of technological tools makes the processes involved in education more difficult. In the process of formulating education policies, the interactions between the numerous actors and the national, regional, and local education systems are becoming increasingly crucial. According to Burns, Koster, and Fuster (2016), new questions are being asked about who within the system is accountable for what, how to keep people accountable, and how the implementation process itself may improve education.

When it comes down to it, the phrase "education policy implementation" can mean a variety of different things depending on who is using the term. For instance, educators and students can regard the implementation of policy as the modifications they make to their customary approaches to the operation of schools, the delivery of instruction, and the acquisition of knowledge. It's possible that "implementation" refers to the procedures that need to be taken to get a new policy down to local governments and schools for the benefit of national policy

makers. Policymakers on a regional or local level may have to make judgments regarding shifting priorities and the deployment of resources if the situation warrants it.

There are many different perspectives on the policymaking procedure reflected in the many different definitions referring to the executing education policies that have been discovered in the literature (Datnow and Park, 2009). Education policymakers often view implementation as a technical step in the policymaking process, during which administrators and teachers in the system carry out the decision makers' preferences. Even if they are aware of implementation problems, they frequently employ better public management strategies and increase monitoring of the implementation procedures.

This implementation standpoint from the top down, presents challenges, particularly in the context of educational institutions that are becoming increasingly complex. In today's academic world, the term "implementation" is most commonly understood to relate to a political process that is iterative and in which actors influence the outputs and results of a policy. Literature that focuses on "bottom-up" perspectives rather than implementation in and of itself portrays the policymaking process as a complicated political game with multiple levels of player interaction. It can be challenging to incorporate such opinions into helpful recommendations for individuals involved in education policy, particularly those who are responsible for national policy. Such viewpoints are essential for appreciating how intricate implementation is, but it can be challenging to put it into action.

In order for policymakers and other stakeholders to be able to collaborate during the procedure of drafting policies, they need to have a common understanding of how policies will be put into effect if they are to be successful in advancing education. It has been proven that, despite the fact that it is possible to implement new educational policies., The real process of

putting education policy into action is quite a complicated one, since it requires a combination of top-down and bottom-up strategies for the formation of new policies (Mason, 2016).

National Policy and Change in Educational Settings

There are several consequences to changes imposed by governments which sometimes hinder policy implementation and subsequently the success of national policy. Governments adjust educational policies to meet national or global needs, imposing rapid changes and endless modifications on the education systems (Arar, Brooks, and Bogotch, 2019; Darling- Hammond and Rothman, 2013). Education policies have come under pressure or scrutiny globally to comply with standardized examination. Based on the literature, change interventions in education usually fail (Cheng & Walker, 2008; Dickson, 2007); Fullan, 2007; Hargeaves & Shirley, 2009; Loogma, Tafel-Viaa & Umarik, 2013; McLaughlin, 2008; Payne, 2008). Harris, (2011) postulated that politicians' assessment towards change is very weak. Politicians have the tendency to adopt policies that work in the educational systems of other jurisdictions, because this places them in a good position for re-election, based on proven success of the policy adopted (Nir, Kondaki & Emil, 2018; Taysum & Iqbal, 2012). Shirley, (2009) posited that necessary changes in the educational setting are imposed by government and are directed to be implemented by school leaders/principal and teachers. Although the pressure of change is real, research attests that the method and content do not usually achieve the aim. Harlen and Hayward (2010) stated that it is crucial to reflect on changes especially for the purpose of sustaining development.

It is inevitable that educational systems will need to undergo continuous reform in order to improve their efficacy and productivity as drivers of societal advancement. According to Clarke and O'Donoghue (2016), in the effort to successfully reform the educational system, it is

necessary to place emphasis on a number of context-specific characteristics. For instance, as time goes on, the needs of society, teachers, and students may change. Additionally, new problems and challenges may arise, which may necessitate a reform of the educational system to make it more responsive to the needs of the present, which frequently differ from the needs of the past. Therefore, when making modifications to the current educational system, it is of vital time to amalgamated into the educational environ in a transparent and explicit manner. The manner in which educational transformation does not take place in a void but rather against a backdrop. It seeks to address problems and build on existing strengths so that proper operation of the system for the benefit of the people may be guaranteed (Harris & Jones, 2018). It is absolutely true that the leadership and maintenance of the educational system is challenging. A school is more than its physical structures and the people who use them; it is comprised of multiple components, all of which need to work together in order for it to function properly. However, this is not always the case. When implementing a change, it is essential to take into consideration how the change will impact the system in its entirety. Instead of focusing on isolated aspects of the problem, a system-level perspective is required for effective resolution. Those who want to make changes to an educational system need to examine all of the system's components simultaneously and evaluate how each is likely to affect the reform process. This is necessary because the components of an educational system are interdependent (Wedell & Alshumaimeri, 2014). Through the provision of context, decision-making is facilitated in relation to the changes that are being contemplated. When the rationale for any change to be made is shared and understood, persons who will be affected by the change will I have a greater sense of direction.

The fact that schools are both located in communities with their own cultures and operate within those communities has a significant bearing on the values and culture of the schools

themselves. This is particularly true because primary stakeholders, including communities and schools, work together on educational projects. The disruption that results from implementing changes that are in conflict with the principles and traditions of an educational institution will make the processes of teaching and learning more difficult (Burner, 2018). Traditions and beliefs are a part of context, travel with people from place to place, and have an effect on the educational system as a whole. When a change in schooling has the potential to enhance an issue or fix sections of a process where something has gone wrong, it will be taken into consideration. To be able to defend this, officials need to have a comprehensive awareness of the perspectives held by the community as well as the current culture towards the educational process. With this newfound knowledge, it will be possible to execute change in a manner that will be beneficial to both the educational environment as a whole and to each individual participant.

Education in Jamaica

There are 973 public institutions offering education from early childhood (students aged four to six years) primary (six to twelve) and junior high (12-15 years). The school populations of these cohorts, together totalled 850,000 in 2016. The teachers of the public sector number approximately 25,000 of which just under 1,200 are principals (Ministry of Education 2018). These personnel of the education sector are responsible for playing their part in working towards achievement of the United Nations Development Goals by 2030, a feat which would secure for Jamaica (and the UN community) greater economic security (Ministry of Education, 2016).

Education in Jamaica is administered by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information (MOEYI) with a head office in the capital city of Kingston and a network of six Regional Offices across the island. The MOEYI partners with churches and trusts in the provision of education at all levels of the education system, in government and privately owned

institutions. The Education Act (the latest formal declaration of which was in 1982) stipulates compulsory education for 6–12-year-old students, which corresponds to the primary level (UNESCO 2010).

Principals are vital in building of an education system of high standard. It is expected that each country will attain the highest level in providing an education for its populace and leaders play a key role in achieving this (OECD, 2001). High performing principals will result in high performing students and an improved education system; and principals with the required qualifications and a high level of motivation, who practise effective leadership, will bring about improvement and progress in school performance (Hutton, 2013).

Principals and teachers who perform at a high level of proficiency are beneficial to the growth of society because of the impact they have on education. There is reason for worry over the quality of school leaders in a number of Jamaica's primary schools, as indicated by reports from the National Education Inspectorate (2013). According to research that was carried out by the Wallace Foundation (2013), The formulation of a vision for the school achievement of children is the single most essential duty of those who hold leadership positions in schools. In addition, the environment must be conducive to education, with a focus on developing leadership qualities in others, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, ensuring efficient administration of employees, and making use of data to enhance the quality of the school. These stipulations are also important responsibilities. It is necessary for the leadership of the school to provide support for these functions in order to foster the growth of a sense of shared purpose among the student body. It is well known that good leadership plays a large part in the management of the resources, and it is frequently cited as an effective way of improving the conditions in an institution. This is because strong leadership is generally cited as an effective

means of improving conditions (Leithwood, 2005; The Wallace Foundation, 2013; Louis, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Dinham, 2005).

It was recommended in the 2005 Report of the Task Force on Educational reform, that certain entities be established, to make the delivery of education in the country more efficient. In addition to various other adjustments made to Jamaica's educational system, new institutions such as the National College for Educational Leadership, the National Council of Education, the National Education Inspectorate, the Jamaica Teaching Council, and the Jamaica Tertiary Education Commission were put in place. The National College for Educational Leadership, the National Council of Education, the National Education Inspectorate, and the Jamaica Teaching Council are some of the institutions that are still in operation today. The Programme for the Reform of the Education System, which went into force in 2010, was conceived with the Education Sector in the year 2030 in mind when it was designed. The purpose of this all-encompassing plan, which is being referred to as the National Development Plan Jamaica, is to steer Jamaica toward the realization of its objective of acquiring the developed status of a country by the year 2030. It was established in the Education Sector of Vision 2030 that having a pool of principals and teachers who are well qualified is crucial to guaranteeing the success of the National Development Plan.

Effective Leadership Styles for Educational Settings

The National College for Educational Leadership (2015) has indicated that there is some deficit in effective leadership in the Jamaican education system, notably at the primary level. It is therefore crucial that the necessary steps be taken to enable principals to satisfy students' and stakeholders' needs. Lezotte and Mckee, (2006) posited that successful leaders should commit to implementing their successful strategies and encourage others to aspire to become leaders, using

the expertise and knowledge with which they are equipped, to bring about viable change. Fullan (2014) stated that for improvement to take place within a school, there must be a goal set by the entire organization and the principal is crucial in bringing this goal to fruition, to achieve success. Researching and examining the goal to ensure its efficacy, must be a major focus.

Hallinger (2003) asserts that the leadership style of the principal influences students' academic performance, teacher self-esteem and the school environment. Cotton, (2003), in an investigation involving the review of 81 reports from educational institutions, found that school leadership does not affect students' performance directly, but the leadership styles of principals have an effect. This finding implies that principals need to create a school climate for staff with teachers working collaboratively to share in the decision-making to improve students' performance. Previous findings (such as Roth, 2007) have suggested that leadership styles of principals or other school leaders, and the climate that is created, are among the main factors that influence and motivate teachers to perform their duties. The finding that the principal's leadership style also motivates teachers to perform specific tasks is shared by Fernet, (2008). Principals' leadership styles also influence the self-sufficiency and organization of schools (Ahn, 2014). On the other hand, teachers can feel pressure and challenges at work because of the leadership style practised by the leader, thereby leading to frustration and unproductiveness (Roth et al., 2007).

Various theories explain and compare the effectiveness of the various types of leadership. Transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles have been singled out as having a strong impact on the performance of employees (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen, & Lowe, 2009). Sergiovanni (2007) states that a major function of the principal is to address the requirements of all stakeholders in the academic process, and he/she must use the

effective leadership style, especially in regard to decision making, shared leadership, instructional practices and effective development and implementation of school policies.

Transformational leadership is a collaboration between school leaders and teachers. In the process, they are seen as role models for students to emulate, and it is seen how authority that is apportioned among stakeholders achieves effective outcomes (Lewis, Boston & Peterson, 2017). In order to foster a cohesive environment, school leaders/principals must communicate effectively with their staff and fortify connections that accentuate principals and teachers as working in unity (Valentine & Prater, 2011). Alsaeedi and Male, (2012) stated that principals recognize their strengths and weaknesses that they encounter daily and support their staff when transformation is being undertaken within the institution. Hartinah, (2020) posited that being a transformational school leader helps to impact the performance of teachers' work within the educational setting and assists teachers to excel in their values and interests through three dimensions: building the school's vision and future, providing support to individuals/colleagues and providing motivation. This finding is also shared by Geijsel, (2003) and Leithwood and Jantzi, (2006). Research suggests that the school principals who practise transformational leadership inspire their staff with the school leaders' vision, organizational goals and impact and motivate the teachers autonomously (Roth et al., 2007; Eyal and Roth 2011; Kanat- Maymom et al., 2020). When principals employ the transformational leadership style, they feel empowered and competent (Geijsel et al., 2003). It is evident that principals with transformational leadership skills do not only motivate but give the teachers autonomy, allow them to share their vision, encourage their effort and give guidance where necessary (Barnett & McCormick, 2003; Eyal & Roth, 2010).

Transactional leadership encompasses an extensive array of leadership practices, from laissez-faire, active management to providing incentives and deterrents (Gilbert & Kelloway, 2018). Transactional leadership impacts significantly the activities of identifying the skills of followers and proposing compensation for tasks successfully completed. (Eyal & Roth, 2010). It is evident that transactional leadership advocates autonomy within the education sphere (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Although the transformational leadership style is from a different end of the spectrum than the transactional style, they are easily observed (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Whilst transactional leaders respond to their followers' in terms of their endeavours and outputs rewarding them for the behaviours exhibited, transformational leaders motivate their charges on the necessity of achieving results and provide assistance to them. The reasoning is that successful leadership is grounded in observable and task specific behaviours such as directing staff actions, motivating them, and providing them with guidance and structure within educational settings (Hannah, Sumanth, Lester & Cavarretta, 2014; Mumford & Fried, 2014).

The impact that educational leaders have on the classroom instruction and the growth of their students is demonstrated by this position. The term for this type of leadership is instructional leadership (Boyce & Bowers, 2018). Teachers are now in a position to perform an examination of the standards, curriculum, and related policy instruments in their classrooms as a result of instructional leaders providing the resources necessary for such an investigation. These materials offer illustrative units for the curriculum, directions for a variety of pedagogical approaches, and activities for continuing one's professional education (Clune, 2001; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Penuel et al., 2007). This position is crucial because school administrators are often teachers' first points of contact for information about standards-based education (Supovitz et al., 2015). In addition, educational leaders are responsible for setting the tone for the culture

that surrounds the process of curriculum implementation (Ylimaki, 2012). However, taking the initiative to lead the charge for curricular change is not a simple task. One of the challenges that continues to be a factor is the absence of dependable access to content that is of a high academic standard. During the time that the No Child Left Behind initiative was being implemented, this problem became glaringly obvious.

The Common Core State Standards have been accepted by more than 40 states in the USA at this point, which has resulted in the creation of a market that is nearly as large as the market on a national level for high-quality resources that can be shared between states. These resources could be used to improve education in the states. In spite of the seemingly positive development, the change resulted in a fresh batch of difficulties regarding the leadership of the organization. The Common Core State Standards required that modifications to teaching methods be implemented, with the goal of placing more of an emphasis on the conceptual than on the procedural, on having knowledge in the subject matter of the discipline, and on being able to comprehend challenging texts. Early evaluations showed that traditional textbook companies had exaggerated their claims of conformity with the standards which they had promised (Polikoff, 2018). However, these companies did begin providing curricular materials that were reportedly connected to the standards.

Transformational Leadership

Leadership is one of the main noticeable factors that motivate learning, teaching and research in a major transformation (Chawla and Lenka 2015). Transformational leadership promotes performance of organizations and collegiality among team members (Wang, 2011). When there is an interconnection between people and leadership, the result is greater professional work ethic and a more passionate response (Stewart, Courtright & Manz, 2011).

Transformational leadership helps to overcome conflicts between groups and works towards equity (Lewis, Boston & Peterson, 2017). A study done by Supermane and Tahir, (2017) revealed that leaders who are innovative act to enhance the competence of teacher educators in teacher training colleges. Transformational leaders inspire enthusiasm in their charges and advise them to as to the best way to achieve their desired goals (Gellis 2001; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Masi and Cooke (2000) postulated that transformational leaders have a very powerful influence over followers, who respect and trust them. According to Dinh et al., (2014) in a review done on general management education and research, the theory of transformational leadership is still the one that is accorded the most attention in this era.

Geijssel (2003) asserts that transformational leadership impacts teachers' views and their willingness to accept change, positively. He also found that transformational leadership builds vision, stimulates intellect, and influences in a significant way, the loyalty of teachers to the change and enhances the effort to carry out educational reform. These findings relate well with those of Friedman (2004) who revealed that transformational leadership changes the ethos of the workplace and appeals to high ethical standards, by building common goals and commitment, while changing attitudes and objectives. Transformational leadership positively impacts teachers' satisfaction and enriches the tenor and atmosphere of the school effectively (Korkmaz (2007). In an investigation of the impact of ethical climate and effective leadership, Sagnak Mesut (2010) found that the correlation between these factors in the exercise of transformational leadership within the school setting is a positive one. Shared decision making, which is inherent in shared leadership, is an important component of transformational leadership (Elmore 2004). This leadership approach motivates the staff in a bottom up, rather than a top-down effect. Leadership positions are accorded to the staff possessing the best skill sets or track record to

offer the essential direction within the institution. This process produces an atmosphere of collaboration and collegiality, in which the school community is committed to change and shared vision (Elmore, 2004). Transformational leadership calls for commitment rather than obedience. It forges a school community where all stakeholders have an impact on the school's mission (Martin, Crossland & Johnson, 2001).

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership theory has been applied in diverse ways in educational settings. Gedifew (2014) defined instructional leadership based on the numerous activities that school leaders set out to accomplish in regard to the teaching and learning activities. Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) stated that transactional leadership operates heavily on the basis of the interchange of performance and reward. Bass (2003) stated that transactional leadership spells out what is expected to be done and recognizes individuals on the attainment of goals. Goodwin, Wofford, and Whittington, (2001) made the finding that when goals are attained, endorsement is achieved in a positive way that strengthens the professional circle of faculty and staff. Transactional leadership is driven by external and basic demands, with high priority on the satisfaction of those demands (Northouse, 2016). Leaders reward and support staff effort, and satisfy the demands that are relevant to fulfil the need of staff members for self- esteem. It is to be recognised however, that persons displaying the transactional leadership style assist in working on poor performance or negative outcomes, until the problem is rectified. (Bass, 2003).

Motivating employees to do their job effectively based on external motivators such as organizational incentives is in line with transactional leadership (Bass, 2000). Transactional leaders demonstrate the characteristics of charismatic leaders and do so quite effectively in many situations ensuring that participants in the process are motivated. Transactional leaders are expert

at settling agreements to motivate their staff and this has proven to be beneficial to the organization or the institution. The problem is simply one of sustaining the benefits gained (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013; Northouse, 2016). Effective transactional leaders identify problems before they come to the fore and expedite the necessary corrective action (Jung, 2001). Transactional leadership style while requiring having an openness to innovation, places much emphasis on adherence to standards of practice (Jung, 2001). Transactional leadership therefore leads to acceptance of innovation through reward and reinforcement.

One of the most essential variables that determines the success or failure of an educational reform is the practices of the school leadership. In addition to the part that is played by external circumstances in the process of determining whether or not an educational reform is successful, this component also plays a role. Studies done in the past have unequivocally proven that in order for principals to successfully manage change, they first and foremost need to hold positions of instructional leadership (Printy & Marks, 2006). It is the job of instructional leaders to guarantee that school academic goals are attained with the support of teachers whenever there are alterations in the educational landscape. They are also eager to commit their efforts to implementing school improvements with an emphasis on pedagogical features, teaching methods, and learning in order to improve the academic quality of the school. They are also willing to put in the effort required. Additionally, they are prepared to exert the required effort. As a result, this would suggest that principals need to become instructional leaders if they want to influence teachers to adopt new practices. Hence, instructional leaders are one of the most crucial elements in ensuring the smooth introduction of reforms in schools (Carrier, 2011; Leithwood & Day, 2008; Sahin, 2011; Southworth, 2002). The need for establishing instructional leadership is emphasized across all educational system reform initiatives. This is an important

consideration that is highlighted. The significance of the outcome from student-teacher interaction at the class level justifies its elevated status as a top priority in any educational reform. The classroom level interaction becomes a crucial part of the whole school and country level educational outcomes. For this and many other reasons, instructional leadership ranks high among the essential elements of a functioning education system, especially one that is engaging in renewal and renovation (Carrier, 2011; Leithwood & Day, 2008; Sahin, 2011; Southworth, 2002). Incorporating new forms of instructional leadership is a central focus of nearly every education-related reform initiative. This is one of the factors to which much thought and attention is given. This is due to the fact that the innovation being considered will not be effective until it is manifested at the classroom level. The importance of instructional leadership cannot be overstated, therefore and cannot be separated from the general reform that is being put in motion (Carrier, 2011; Leithwood & Day, 2008; Sahin, 2011; Southworth, 2002).

The Team Approach to Leadership of Curriculum Implementation

With educational subsidiarity gaining impetus, and the accompanying changes in roles and responsibilities of all players, there is an increased onus on school leaders to attain better academic results (Dinham, 2005; Gajardo & Carmenado, 2012). There is an expectation that school leaders will gradually move beyond the usual administrative responsibilities, to embracing to a greater degree, activities such as charting programmes, optimizing student learning engagements, and managing internal and external curriculum-related repercussions. These are becoming more and more major responsibilities of curriculum implementation leaders in the new dispensation (Fullan, 2007; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Dinham, 2005; Lattuca & Stark, 2009; Neumerski, 2013). This requires working hand in hand with all players involved in curriculum implementation.

Curriculum leadership is characterized as an endeavour in which leaders operate as facilitators to discover a common ground, "create collegiality and collaborative teams, structure a manner of working together, and coordinate several complicated activities" (Wiles, 2009, p. 21). According to Wiles (2009), curriculum implementation and development are crucial to the school's operation. Whether this function is performed by department heads or administrators, the curriculum dictates the function of others in the school. The major responsibilities of principals and middle managers include the development and implementation of curriculum. It therefore follows that their leadership is vital in the achievement of outstanding results in the delivery of the curriculum (Dinham, 2005).

Creating a positive learning environment, promoting professional development for the staff, setting goals and objectives, coordinating curriculum implementation and planning and evaluating students and teachers' achievements are daily activities of school leaders (Mattar, 2012). Mattar (2012) revealed that principals leading a school known for academic excellence perform at a higher level than those who lead schools with lower levels of achievement. Another study found that academic departments evaluated by senior managers utilized effective instructional practices and performed related tasks such as identifying curriculum issues and opportunities, providing a structured environment for teacher collaboration, and presenting plans for curriculum transformation, effectively (Stark, Griggs, Rowland, & Poplawski, 2002). Realizing the important role school leaders can play in maintaining and advancing curricula, there is clear evidence in the literature in regard to providing support for school managers to enable them to operate as effective leaders of curriculum implementation (Brown, Rutherford, & Boyle, 2000; Neumerski, 2012; Nguyen, 2012; Vieira da Motta & Bolan, 2008). School leaders who engage in job training are more self-assured and capable in carrying out successful practices

than those who do not make use of these opportunities for enhancement (Darling, Hammond et al., 2009). Lack of professional development, insufficient support and encouragement, especially towards middle managers, can hinder them from executing their curriculum leadership responsibilities effectively (Nguyen, 2012; Stark et al., 2002; Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005).

Teams need support through effective leadership to bring into effect the intended transformation in curriculum delivery. School leadership needs to include purposeful curriculum leadership to ensure that learning is taking place, teachers are supported, collegiality is being encouraged, goals and visions are supported, developed, and shared, the curriculum is developed, and is well aligned and coordinated (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, LaPointe, & Orr, 2009; Neumerski, 2013; Wiles, 2009). For the improvement of teaching quality to occur, collaboration and building trust amongst staff in the school must be a reality (Penuel et al., 2007). The existence of loyalty and commitment amongst school leaders and teachers lends autonomy and freedom in decision-making, promotes better understanding of tasks and responsibilities, and encourages full commitment in optimising learning outcomes. Teacher collaboration establishes a resource for teachers in implementing and supporting reforms, which can serve as a means of socialization (Penuel, Riel, Krause, & Frank, 2009).

The conditions that are necessary for a successful implementation are mostly shaped by the leaders of the organizations that they serve (Bertram, Blase, Shern, Shea, & Fixsen, 2011). Leaders at the systems level are frequently the ones who are tasked with the responsibility of establishing the context for organizational change. This entails providing a vision and a direction for the change, supplying the resources and training that are necessary, and developing an overall mindset for improvement (Aarons, Ehrart, & Farahnak, 2014). The pressures that are imposed on

local leaders to mediate between the day-to-day needs of their direct reports and the pressures that are placed on them by the various organizational agendas is a significant source of stress for these leaders (White-Smith & White, 2009). When a leader is not an active participant in the decision to bring about change, it can be very impactful to pinpoint particular activities that a leader can take to assist in the process of implementation (Sloan, 2013).

The quality of relationships is crucial for collaborative leadership. Chrislip (2002) argues that the reciprocal advantage of collaboration extends beyond the sharing of knowledge and information. In reality, the relationship allows each party to pursue their own objectives. If the shared goal is to be realized, it is crucial that mature, professional, and high-quality interpersonal interactions exist. In the presence of collaborative leadership, a collaborative culture can form and flourish. Importantly, reciprocal ties contribute to the development of a collaborative culture. In addition, Chrislip (2002) argues that shared decision making in reciprocal relationships generates coherence, which in turn generates action. Hence, inclusion is a defining trait of collaborative cultures. The value of relationships, which Rubin (2002) identifies as fundamental to collaborative cultures, derives from inclusivity. He refers to them as "binding relationships" (Rubin 2002, p.17).

The idea of collaborative leadership as well as the cultivation of a collaborative culture are presented as a leadership technique that is likely to promote and make it easier to successfully execute curricular changes. The environment that is produced as a result of collaborative leadership functions as a basis for the successful implementation of curriculum. According to Sergiovanni (2004), this strategy results in the establishment of a "collaborative culture" in which each individual must consider their particular job as part of a "reciprocal

relationship that outlines shared commitments" (Sergiovanni 2002, p.49). This connection achieves a balance between individual autonomy and joint work.

The Principal and Instructional Leadership

The definition for instructional leadership in the 21st Century, the school leader's role and duties have change immensely after the 'No Child Left Behind' (NCBL) Act (Thessin, 2019).

The responsibilities of the school leader have evolved to encompass a myriad of other duties and roles and involving a wider array of stakeholders. School leaders have a high level of accountability in his or her interactions with teachers, students, parents and the entire school community. Teachers need a knowledgeable leader who will motivate and support them. A principal who is well rounded is able to select from a repertoire of leadership styles, the one that is appropriate for the occasion.

Leadership is a vital factor in school operations in ensuring excellent student outcomes (Hallinger, 2011; Ainley & Carsten, 2018). It is well recognised that effective instructional leadership, provides guidance for setting a clear vision and goals for both teachers, students and the total institution, and supporting teachers through professional development, mentoring and coaching (Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2008). When an effective principal is recognised and accepted as the instructional leader, the result will be a positive impact on students' achievement (Hansen & Larudstottir, 2015; Rigby, 2012; Robinson et al., 2008). This finding of an effective instructional leader having significant impact on students learning and outcomes is reiterated by Carraway and Young, (2014), and Graczewski, Knudson, and Holtzman, (2009) who attest that when goals are clearly outlined for teachers, they are more likely to arrange their professional development and plans to the school goals, which provides the stage for setting and actualising high standards for students' achievement. Practical support is also presented by Horng et al,

(2010) who conducted a study in the Urbculuman school district on leadership and his main finding, supported the position that has been well established by Thessin (2019) and other researchers, that strong growth in academic achievements results from the existence of a strong instructional leadership team.

One of the principal's primary roles is to keep an eye on what's being taught and how. Several authors, including Boyce and Bowers (2018), Gurley et al., (2015), and Salo et al., (2015), believe that this responsibility is important to the principal's job. Effective instructional leaders, according to research by Horng and Loeb (2010), are not afraid to carry out tasks that would be considered below their level. They would therefore make it their responsibility to carry out duties like making regular classroom visits to provide supervision. Because of the significant influence they have, instructional leaders were once held in high esteem (Lashway, 2002). According to Thessin (2019), school leaders have a wide variety of responsibilities including those in which they give attention to instruction, to facilitate the professional development of personnel, and many other tasks in leading instruction. A knowledgeable school leader will also use data to inform instructional and pedagogical decisions. More responsibility and increased expectations for success are part of the new paradigm for school leadership (Boyce & Bowers, 2018).

In some large schools, principals sometimes delegate all the activities that relate to the supervision of curriculum implementation to heads of departments/Grade coordinators. Some authors are in support of this, expressing the view that a school community of teacher leaders could serve as an effective and efficient alternative to a school principal (Gronn, 2000; Campbell, 2018) The literature has established, however, that effective schools are characterized by school principals who see themselves as instructional leaders. Effective principals show the

necessary concern with the teaching and learning activities that are planned and executed by teachers. Knight, (2004) and Hallinger, (2005) state that some principals underestimate their ability to act as instructional leaders, especially if they have been out of active classroom engagement for some time. Some principals are even of the view that instructional leadership is not a part of their purview (Mitchell & Castles, 2005). Goddard, Goddard, Kim and Miller, (2015) assert, however that principals who are knowledgeable of classroom practices are able to motivate their teachers to work together in a manner that will create the best learning opportunities for students. These sentiments are also echoed by (Hallinger, 2005; Young, Anderson & Nash, 2017) who reiterate that principals who frequently monitor the teaching and learning process, provide instructional support, and work closely with their teaching staff reap the reward of improved curriculum implementation and student achievement. Demattthews, (2014) and Gawlik, (2018) postulated it is incumbent on school principals to reduce the gap between the written and delivered curriculum by allowing teachers to share the challenges they encounter when implementing the curriculum. Failure in implementing the curriculum effectively can result from a lack of skills in curriculum leadership (Walker, Hayan & Shuang, 2011).

A principal's leadership style has repercussions on both the learning and teaching environment of a school (Hallinger, 2011; Gawlik, 2018). The outcomes and accomplishments of students will be greatly influenced by a principal who exercises professional instructional leadership and who has seen to the best structure of the learning environment (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008, Sun & Leithwood, 2015). To better support instructors in making curricular concepts and themes relevant to students, the principal should have a thorough understanding of the curriculum. Principals at schools with exceptional academic records have mastered the art of

educational leadership and management (Lunenburg & Luenburg, 2013). Inadequate oversight of the curriculum's delivery can result in subpar learning outcomes and a breach of the duty to educate (Ruebling, Stow, Kayon & Clarke, 2004; Walker, Haiyan, Shuang, 2011).

Despite evidence that when the principal takes the helm in directing the instructional programme in schools, there is a positive impact on students' achievement, many principals see hindrances to becoming effective instructional leaders. Principals have reported that they feel some level of discomfort visiting teachers' classrooms, that they are without the knowledge or capacity to guide teachers' practice, and that time constraints prevent them from focusing on instructional tasks (Carraway & Young; Salo et al., 2014). A good way to overcome these obstacles, is to become learners themselves, working alongside their teachers to acquire new strategies and skills in curriculum delivery. Engaging master teachers in this endeavour has been proven useful (McEwan, 2003). The existence of challenges in assuming the role of instructional leader cannot be denied; but the ultimate aim of student achievement should give the impetus to work to overcome the challenges. The effort will lead to the building of a positive school community and a safe environment where teachers are able to take bold steps to engender learning and communication (DuPlessis, 2013).

According to Forsyth, (2018) the establishment of a team to work with principals to overcome challenges in the instructional setting provides a promising solution to work cohesively to maintain the mission and vision, and therefore a recipe for success in the school setting. Liou and Daly (2020) as define this team as the "network for instructional leadership team." This type of approach brings a variety of skill sets and successful strategies from different schools to the expertise of a team. The principal heads this team and works in collaboration with other curriculum and instructional specialists in the group, forming an

instructional leadership team (Heffernan & Longmuir, 2019). Forsyth, (2018) further substantiates this team approach, stating that the principal is not only the sole instructional leader in a school and cannot achieve instructional targets alone. Stamper and Elder, (2019) posited that an instructional leadership team is essential to guide the teaching and learning process within an institution to attain students' academic success. Edwards and Gammell (2016), stated that the principal is the one who forms the team by bringing together small groups of teachers and middle managers to guide and supervise instruction. The principal with a collective effort from his or her staff, can with wisdom and commitment, move the school forward (Edwards & Gammell, 2016). It is therefore not difficult to give credence to the assertion by Armstrong (2004) that leadership is the legitimate authority of running and transforming an institution by its mission, vision and resources.

Principals have the authority to affect the school's instructional framework, policies, and staff, which can lead to improved student outcomes. The principal is in the best position to manage the school's development into a more conducive learning environment because of his or her expertise in the field (Lunenberg & Orstein, 2012). The principal's leadership style is the most important aspect in determining whether or not teachers feel fulfilled in their work and whether or not the school as a whole is successful. This is due to a strong correlation between teacher happiness and overall school success. This is because excellent student achievement is a direct result of teachers who take pride in their profession and who are therefore more likely to apply the curriculum effectively (Kars & Inandi, 2018; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Baptiste, 2019). To effectively oversee curriculum and instruction, the principal must have a deep understanding of the setting in which the school functions. This is fundamental for the theory to work. This is due to the fact that a school's context is what ultimately decides which

educational strategies it can implement successfully. As Hallinger (2011) and Clarke and O'Donoghue (2017) point out, this means that effective pedagogical strategies at one institution may not be applicable in another.

The principal of a school is in charge of organizing and supervising all extracurricular activities and events. The principal is responsible for ensuring that all school-related activities are well-coordinated in order to achieve the school's mission. The principal is also accountable for the smooth operation of the school and the timely and accurate completion of all duties (Quinn, 2002; Bendikson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012). This demonstrates the critical value principals bring to improving schools.

It has been found out that a principal who demonstrates instructional leadership and coordinates the fundamental activities of schools has a significant influence on the outcomes of the students' educational pursuits while those students are under their tutelage. This is because a principal who demonstrates instructional leadership and coordinates the fundamental activities of schools has a significant influence. This is because the principal is ultimately responsible for the most essential obligations that are associated with the school (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe 2008; Sun & Leithwood, 2015). For there to be meaningful planning, it is necessary for the educator to have a comprehensive comprehension of the anticipated results. It is absolutely necessary to provide an extremely detailed explanation of the objectives of the lessons being delivered. As part of their responsibilities as leaders of curriculum and instruction, administrators are expected to assist instructors in the process of translating concepts and topics are relevant to the activities for students. This is one of the expectations placed on administrators in their capacity as leaders of instructional implementation. One of the obligations that come along with holding this position is handling financial transactions. In order to successfully carry out this function, school

leaders will need to be trained in financial administration in addition to the training they would have received in curriculum delivery. Principals at successful schools are those who, in addition to having strong managerial abilities, are also capable of exhibiting significant leadership in the areas of pedagogy and the academic program. This is because pedagogy and the academic program are two of the most important aspects of an educational institution. (Lunenburg & Lunenburg, 2013). One factor that contributes to low levels of academic achievement among students is a failure of principals and other school leaders to supervise the implementation of the curriculum in an acceptable manner (Ruebling, Stow, Kayona & Clarke, 2004; Walker, Haiyan, Shuang, 2011).

Leadership and Change in Educational Settings

Managing school in this dynamic era is among the most complex tasks for school leaders. School leaders need to have an intimate knowledge of the change process in order to manage change effectively and efficiently. Principals can enable change within their school by infusing new initiatives and priorities within the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Principals can make a significant difference by operating in a manner that teachers can emulate and taking ownership of change. The staff/team will follow the principal's lead while he or she demonstrates the integration of new policies, systems, resources and directs the plans for the school (Fullan, 2004). The term leadership has gained much prominence among researchers, although other terms have been used (Bolivar, Lopez, & Murillo, 2013; Hallinger, 2014; Harris, 2009, Pont Nusche, 2008; Robinson, Rowe, & Lloyd, 2009; Robinson et al., 2009). School leadership has reflected changes in the way leaders operate over the past twenty to thirty years. In the educational settings there has been a shift from an administrative and bureaucratic role to

involving teachers and the other staff members in the improvement school performance (Adams & Gaetane, 2011; Glatter, 2014; Roach, Smith, & Boutin, 2010; Spillane & Kenney, 2012).

The Ministry of Education had instituted a central management system of education. There was a paradigm shift to decentralization and a greater freedom to make decisions for school improvement. Decentralization was joined with greater attention to positive outcomes in education and accountability (Fullan, 2009; Hattie, 2015; Malone, 2013; OECD, 2014; Salhberg, 2010). This has allowed leaders in the educational setting to be more adaptive to managing educational performance, with emphasis on the achievement of the goals of the school. This is especially true for countries like Jamaica. Systemic changes in educational settings in regard to school administration especially in developing countries such as Jamaica have changed the way school leaders function (Chapman et al., 2010; Barrer-Osorio, 2009).

Investigations over the years have indicated that leadership within school settings has a strong influence on the standard and outcome of the learning, qualification, evaluation, access to social and professional pursuits and motivation of students of all categories (Donmoyer, Yennie Donmoyer & Galloway, 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 2011). School leadership plays an essential part to play in coping with the challenges of change (Harris, Jones, & Adams, 2016). It is therefore crucial to be knowledgeable in the fundamentals of leadership and its many facets in effecting transformation, and dealing with the attendant challenges (Bell, den Ouden, & Ziggers, 2006; Fjelstad et al., 2012). Leaders would therefore be able to get a good understanding of how the institution is able to function and face the challenges in the change process. Fullan (2001) argues that society has been more complex than before. He also mentioned the objectives for pursuing pertinent skills to master the change process. These include moral purpose, knowledge building, building relationship, and understanding change. It is important for leaders to develop

the required competencies to lead in this changing environment. Leaders in educational settings are similarly summoned. Principals' change leadership influence and enhance teachers' responses toward change (Kin, Kareem, Nordin & Khaun, 2017). Providing adequate professional development for the staff has become one of the essential tasks in schools (National Academy for Educational Research, 2016). Change is inevitable, educators must play key roles in bringing about change in schools, but the burden is even greater for school leaders. Principals must respond effectively to change and guide their team on the journey to change. Change in educational settings is dynamic and the principals must be equipped to take the school staff with them on the challenging journeys, not leaving them on their own.

Teachers may be given the opportunity to learn and adopt new instructional strategies if they participate in continuous professional development. So, it is necessary to engage in ongoing education throughout their tenure in the profession. The challenges associated with modifying a teaching practice can be made more manageable by receiving assistance. Previous studies have found that active learning opportunities are beneficial for instructors. Readings, role-playing, open-ended talks, live modelling, and visits to classrooms are some of the strategies that might be included in the activities. Educators can benefit from active learning in a great variety of distinct manners, including being assisted in decoding concepts, theories, and research-based teaching methodologies, as well as being shown new practices (Zarrow, 2014). Because of the rapid advances that our era has undergone, educational change has emerged as an essential component for enhancing academic achievement in schools.

It was believed that innovative leadership in educational institutions might better handle the quick pace of change, hence enhancing educational outcomes for students. To be successful, one must "communicate, exchange, and use information to solve complex problems," "adapt and

innovate in response to new demands and changing circumstances," "leverage and expand the potential of technology for knowledge creation," and "improve people's capacities and output" (Binkley, et al., 2012).

Hallmarks of Effective Leadership for Organisational Change

Effective leadership is a vital component of any programme of transformation in an institution. It is evident that with effective leadership, the head of an organization will “sail the ship” in its right direction. Leaders with the right styles and approaches can make the right changes for an organization. When there is a strategy to be implemented or an innovation, which builds people socially and professionally, the approach of the leader will influence the final product (Akinbide & Al Shuhumi, 2018). In order to monitor the transformation process, it is highly necessary for the institution to obtain competent leaders with good skill sets and who understand the change management process (Akinbide & Al Shuhumi, 2018). They need to be equipped with the appropriate styles of leadership in order to effectively monitor the process of transformation.

It is indisputable that the fundamental practices and values of management and leadership have had an appreciable impact over the years (Dike, Odiwe & Ehujor, 2015). It has become more difficult to see the effect of this impact because of the dynamism evident in organisations of the 21st century, and the globalised economy. The leader must have a clear perspective of the strategic objectives of the entity, delineate the objectives that need to be achieved and conduct an evaluation or analysis of the organization’s present beliefs (Bella & Koustellos, 2014). Senior and Fleming (2006) describe an effective leader as one who promotes change in an institution by its vision statement, mission, and strategic actions. According to Prestwood and Schumann (2002) leadership is not a position but a state of mind. The effective

leaders are capable of sensing the unexpected conditions and have the coping skills to deal with situations that arise accordingly.

Hussain (2018) posited that change in an organisation is the movement of that entity from its present position to the unrevealed future. Awour and Kamu (2015) stated that effective leaders help the members of their organisations to cultivate the relevant skills and help them to cope with changes within their work environment. A leader who intends to make a positive and lasting impact in his/her organisation has to be *au fait* with sustaining the change efforts, formulating and implementing the change. In this dispensation with the vast technology advancement, in order for the organization to attain its goals and gain an advantageous position among their competitors, organizations should be able to readily make the necessary adjustments in a time of change. Singh (2011) states that adaptation to change can be arrived at through effective management within the organization. Leadership can generate the required level of power and perks that can elicit and bring about a change in the value systems, beliefs and attitudes that workers display towards each other (Ganta & Manukonda, 2014). A leader with strong and effective leadership skills will be a good exemplar to his/her charges and staff members, and as a result of this, will gain trust among the staff and automatically change their behaviour, attitudes and values (Grint, 2007). This is highly supported by Northouse (2004), who stated that a leader who possess exemplary leadership abilities and qualities is able to gain trust and thereby be put in a position to guide others to achieve the objectives and goals of the institution.

Trust is essential in any organization. To gain the trust of a group of members could aid in the raising the commitment and level of performance of workers (Lee, 2010). If trust exists in the relationship between leaders and employees, it portrays a positive reflection of the

effectiveness of the leader. Change will not be successfully implemented until there is trust between employees and their leader. Members of an organisation will follow the one who they perceive would lead them in the right path; not a leader who gives much to pronouncements which do not materialise or do not have the benefit of a proven track record (Stacey, Paul & Alice, 2011). Trust between employees and leaders will result in an improvement in performance and commitment amongst staff members. When there is trust between leaders and employees this shapes a positive organizational culture (Ionescu, 2014) because leaders are able to arouse this quality in their employees to the benefit of the organisation. Leaders that facilitate effective change should motivate their employees to constantly collaborate with each other and keep the communication channels open and functional (Gilley, Dixon and Gilley, 2008), this will engender greater productivity for the organization and promote the desire for employees to seek and make use of learning opportunities within and outside of the organisation. Wuestman and Casey (2015) posited that some members of the organisation may embrace the change while some may not. To maintain a long-term process of change, the leaders should communicate and work together with their employees. Effective leaders encourage members of their organization to improve their competence through motivation, promotions, and rewards (Azzam, 2014).

Continuous professional development is one of the strategies used to enhance the productivity of the establishment. Personnel in leadership positions should enrol themselves in professional development training that includes strategies for execution (Freifield, 2013). Employees should also receive training to improve their performance on the job and to enable the changes that are desired, to be implemented in a successful manner. This will assist the institution to enhance the performance and productivity of the staff (Abou-Moghli, 2015). The vision of the leaders is precise and systematic to effect change in the organization. If leadership is not in place, there

will be no need for transformation in organizational management (Atkinson, 2015). An effective leader will automatically bring change to the organization that he/she becomes a part of. If leadership does not exist in the entity, there would be pandemonium (Atkinson, 2015).

Kuipers , Higgs and Kickert (2014) postulated that researchers or stakeholders would identify whether there is successful organizational change and analyze the perception of certain change initiatives. A strong point that was posited was that a thriving organization will produce quality results. It is also the view of other investigators that positive organizational change results from leadership giving support to their staff and motivating them. Lawrence (2015) stated that the traditional approach to effecting change in organizations will not address the need for change for present organizations. There is therefore a need for a new mind set of how leaders are guided in effecting change. Several researchers and scholars have identified flaws in the perception and practice of organizational change. There are several models regarding change implementation in schools (Garvin, 2000; Mento, 2002; Whelan-Berry, 2003). These are structured steps in executing transformation which utilize agents of change in institutions.

There has been some level of concern regarding high failure rates raised by several researchers (Cheng & Walker, 2008; Nir et al., 2017). There are other explanations for high failure rate such as human factor (Kondakci, 2014). There are some common reasons for employees having a negative attitude towards change such as: the change agency fails to record the necessity for change; not informing those affected in regard to the process of change; and members of the institution feeling uncomfortable about the possible results. There are several criticisms which indicate disagreement with the manner in which change is theorized and implemented in schools (Galluci, 2008). In most instances when interventions are carried out in schools, using the traditional approach to understanding change, there are not significant

improvements in the organizational structure and functioning of the institutions (Hargreaves, 2002, Nir et al., 2017). Some scholars of educational change hold to the stance that the traditional approach in change practice separates the teacher and sometimes, school leaders from the change process, which results in the ignoring of the process and failing to own the process in a significant way (Castelijns et al., 2013). Having success in answering to the continuous demands of various forces which indicate the need for change, points to the possession of hallmarks and strategies of effective leadership for implementing change and developing the daily routine of the school community. Included in the strategies is making use of the opportunities for effecting minor adjustments and adaptations.

For any change to be successfully implemented, strong leadership is crucial. This role is aided by the company's basic values and the quality of the medium of communication. The Leadership Trust cites "demonstrating the route" and "using personal authority to win the hearts and minds of people to work together towards a common objective" as two definitions of leadership (Gill, 2001). In order to achieve sustained organizational growth, the greatest challenge for global leaders during the transformation process is the requirement to build a productive and long-lasting work environment (Dubrin, 2001). On an intellectual and emotional level, the traits of transformational leaders will promote the appreciation of the need for change and address the challenges associated with it (Dubrin, 2001).

During the process of change, the most difficult task for a leader is to align all organizational members to adopt the change, establish the future vision, formulate a plan, and create synergy in the efforts towards the organizational objectives. However, the leader is also responsible for developing the future vision for the organization (Hopper & Potter 2000; Heifetz & Laurie, 1997). It is difficult to successfully manage the workforce and cultivate individuals in

the current environment because of the tremendous competition that exists. This makes it challenging to manage the workforce efficiently. The task then is to establish what features a team must have in order to successfully complete shared responsibilities or objectives in an expedient manner (Belias & Koustelios, 2014). The process of establishing productive settings inside firms is greatly aided by the contributions of various leaderships. The formation of skilled teams and careful management of personnel, with the end goal of ensuring that all work is finished, can provide such settings.

Challenges in Effecting Change in Curriculum Implementation

The change process in any endeavour is not bereft of challenges. The matter of resistance to change is as real for innovations in curriculum implementation as it is for other endeavours. Six factors which counteract attempts to bring about change in organizations were listed by Lunenburg (2010). These are: uncertainty about the course of the innovation, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance by the group, dependence, trust in the (prevailing) management team, and awareness of flaws in the intended change. A major challenge identified by Moswela (2010) in supervising curriculum implementation in Botswana, was the fact that there was no overarching policy to guide innovations. The result was that efforts were not being undertaken in tandem.

The shortage of classroom resources has been noted as a problem in Jamaica's school system (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). The Task Force Report (Davis, 2005) outlines the following problems: insufficient professional development in some subject areas, such as Science, reduced contact teaching time, and inadequate school and public library facilities. In an investigation involving six novice middle school teachers in urban areas in the USA, Sanders (2006), found the following obstacles to maintaining team leadership in curriculum

implementation: lack of attention to the process to expedite the tasks, attempting much without adequate resources, and failing to follow through (on commitments or agreed procedures). These and other challenges hinder the efforts made in curriculum implementation and undermine the supervisory process.

A negative aspect of change is its tendency to evoke emotions and cause despair. There is a positive side, however in that it can also heighten expectations, engender development, and enable advancement. Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2004) reveal that even though teachers are prepared through professional development for changes in curriculum delivery, they are challenged to apply the innovations at the classroom level. In implementing any innovation, the aspect of perception and emotions has to be addressed. In accepting change, a person's beliefs, perceptions, and traditional ways of operating, which might have been well established, have to be reconfigured. Such an adjustment can be quite unsettling. This idea is shared by Smith and Lovat (2003), who reiterate that fears in implementing innovations have to be effectively addressed if the change is to be successful. It is expedient to divide the change process into achievable segments. The vital role played by principals in translating policies and procedures to make them applicable and workable in the school setting is highlighted by Sayed and Jansen (2001). Smith (2003) sums up the case well by acknowledging that executing the legal and communication aspects of policies for educational innovations rely greatly on the thoughts, actions, dispositions, and feelings of teachers in regard to the proposed change. The way in which teachers navigate and act on education policy regarding the implementation of innovations, has a profound impact on the results which are eventually realised.

Kotter (2006) adds the dimension of the importance of a vision fitting for the transformation, to prevent the innovation from descending into attaining a succession of

disconnected items in a confusing and time-consuming effort. Undertaking the innovation without the creation of an implementation plan which creates practical steps for the vision to be achieved, including the expected targets at each stage, is the greatest of errors that could be made by the leader of an innovation.

A challenge that has been identified by Fullan (2007) is the lack of clarity during the course of the implementation of the curriculum innovation. This situation, he claims, can “represent a major problem” (p. 89). A common occurrence is that teachers and other implementers of the innovation find that the process is “not very clear . . . in practice” (Fullan, 2007, p. 89). Fullan (2007) identifies as “false clarity” the situation in which the leaders and implementers interpret the innovation in a manner which oversimplifies the intent of the transformation. Fullan (2007) urges that teachers be afforded the specific details that are required, to prevent the changes from being implemented superficially, but with the required rigor. This sentiment is echoed by (Smith & Lovat, 2003), who advocates clarity in the expectations inherent in the implementation process to enable teachers to be amenable to the innovation, owning it in the process.

Cheung and Wong, (2012), highlight the need for patience to be exhibited in the management of the change process. While acknowledging that the rate of the implementation of the innovation will increase with time, Cheung and Wong, (2012) point out that the correct time to measure the impact of a new curriculum is after the teachers are comfortable in its use. School leaders and government officials are urged to allow enough time to elapse before attempting to evaluate its impact or making further change. Finland adopts this principle and allows a ten-year gap between curriculum reviews (Pietarinen et al., 2017).

The actual implementation stage for the roll-out of a curriculum innovation is very important in determining its usefulness (Pietarinen et al., 2017). The matter of equity in the delivery of the curriculum innovation (with modifications as necessary) to ensure that all students in varied settings can access the personal and social benefits that will accrue is also of high importance. Quantity and quality of the support given to teachers, students, principals and other leaders, government officials, community organisations, the general public and all stakeholders in the education sector, constitute a crucial aspect of the curriculum reform process (Tan & Low 2016).

Iteratively constructing fundamental reforms to the status quo requires leaders to communicate with other parties and gain insight from their perspectives (Carter et al., 2020). When there is a discrepancy between the stated values of an organization and the values that govern day-to-day operations, problems known as adaptive challenges occur. This feature of adaptive conflict is representative of the challenges that surface whenever there is a discrepancy between the principles espoused by an organization and the values that define the realities that occur within that organization. A example of adaptive conflict is when pedagogical expectations that are written into the curriculum, are different from those that are meant to be imparted by the standards. This means that there is a conflict of values in the context of the ongoing endeavour to update the educational program, which needs to be addressed. This is done so that there is no room for misunderstanding. It is therefore understood that sometimes there are significant alignment gaps between the curricula that are made available to teachers and the actual intent of the standards that are specified by the state. These gaps might make it difficult for students to achieve the desired results. The challenge of adaptive leadership in this setting consists of

figuring out how to close the gaps while reducing the amount of disruption that it causes (Heifetz et al., 2009).

A common characteristic of educational systems is the presence of a situation in which forces from several levels (including legislatures, governors, teachers' unions, and parents) all converge on educational leaders. This phenomenon is referred to as "convergence." This happens quite frequently in a variety of different types of educational settings. (Wirt & Kirst, 2009). As a result, it is not uncommon for leaders to make judgments on the curriculum that appear to be in conflict as they attempt to negotiate the different demands they face (Coburn et al., 2016). One of the challenges of adaptive leadership is figuring out how to make judgments that sometimes serve competing interests so that curriculum can "match with the prevailing pedagogical perspective and position" in the school community. This is important so that instructional programs "align with the prevalent educational perspective and position" (Heifetz et al., 2009). This is necessary to ensure that students receive the greatest possible education (Remillard & Taton, 2015, p. 56). Occasionally, the manner in which curricular reform is implemented provides the appearance that the complexity inherent in the process of changing the instructional programme is oversimplified. According to Chingos and Whitehurst (2012), for instance, it is possible to produce high-quality instructional materials in a straightforward, efficient, and cost-effective manner. As an initial effort toward altering instructional practice, supplying instructors with higher-quality resources is insufficient on its own. It is common for leaders to encounter curricular barriers while trying to build a curriculum infrastructure to aid teachers in adopting the standards. This is because of the difficulties associated with rolling out a brand new curriculum to a large population. This is because authorities are working on a curriculum framework to support educators as they implement the requirements (Koedel et al., 2017; Polikoff, 2018;

Remillard & Taton, 2015). School administrators carry out a vital responsibility in reinforcing the connections between their school and the community they serve (Fullan, 2001). Parental involvement in and confidence in school administration are common characteristics of high-performing schools. This is particularly true for schools that are working under adverse conditions (Hargreaves et al., 2008). In addition to this, they make an effort to raise academic performance and overall quality of life for students by strengthening ties with community organizations, faith-based organizations, civic clubs, and businesses in the area, as well as by integrating the activities of the school with those of social services, law enforcement, and other government organizations (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007).

In summary, an approach which takes into account the knowledge that has been gained in the various facets of leading change, has to be adopted in ensuring that innovative and meaningful instructional practices are implemented. Equity should also be observed to ensure that the innovation is brought to all classrooms in a sustainable way, to bring about the desired learning outcomes.

The CIT as a Vehicle for Change Adaptation in the Jamaican Setting

The Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) was initiated in Jamaica along with the introduction and island-wide implementation of the Revised Primary Curriculum, during the years 2000 to 2004. It was introduced for the monitoring and enhancing of curriculum implementation in primary schools, followed by the initiation in secondary schools. The enthusiasm which marked the introduction of this strategy has waned over the years. Some primary schools and secondary schools have ceased to utilize the initiative and therefore are not reaping the benefits that the Ministry of Education indicated that the CIT would offer in the implementation of the curriculum.

The National Standards Curriculum that was implemented in 2018 has been the driving force within the 21st Century to ensure that students in primary and secondary schools, are equipped with the skills to function and compete in the global sphere. Principals, as the leaders of curriculum implementation in the school (Honig, 2012) along with teacher leaders, are the personnel with the authority to enable teachers to work collaboratively and cohesively as a team to make the transformation required to facilitate the most effective and efficient implementation of the curriculum. The Ministry of Education in a special bulletin (Ministry of Education, 2014) gave a second mandate for the establishment of CITs at both primary and secondary levels of the system. The revised version of the Bulletin (Ministry of Education, 2014) made available in 2018, stated in part:

The Ministry of Education wishes to inform that the setting up of Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs) in schools is a vital activity to enable the efficient implementation and general delivery of the curriculum. The Ministry recognizes that several schools at the primary and secondary levels are benefitting from this experience. In accordance, therefore, with the Policy Guidelines for the implementation of Curriculum Implementation Teams – CITs all schools at the primary and secondary levels are expected to establish CITs (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Every activity that is carried out within and outside the confines of schools to enable them to operate, support the implementation of the curriculum and accrue to the achievement of students. School leadership is deemed to have the competence to determine whether strategies to deliver and assess the delivery of the curriculum are appropriate and will result in student learning (Reeves, 2010). The aim of the decisions made with regard to strategies used to engage students and to enable learning, is to bring about student achievement.

Competent members of an educational institution are expected to share their expertise with the use of various strategies with others in their setting, to enable the effective implementation of the curriculum. This shared leadership enhances success in instructional delivery (Hollingworth, 2012). The phenomenon of a leadership team with members of varying skills and abilities giving direction and guidance to the instructional programme within the institution in which it resides, has been given a number of labels in the educational setting. The term CIT which came into prominence in Jamaica in the early 2000s, represents the same structure and function of teams which are given labels such as: building leadership team, school improvement team and professional learning communities (Chen, Lee, Lin, & Zhang, 2016; Hollingworth, 2012; Olivier, 2003). Teamwork and collaboration define how members plan and integrate their efforts to ensure the result of full student engagement and achievement to their full potential.

The continued efficient functioning of structures put in place to enhance curriculum delivery such as those reported on by researchers including Burgess and Bates (2014), Chen et al. (2016) and Giles and Hargreaves, (2006), would be considered ideal in any educational setting. It is the reality, however, that some CITs in Jamaica are not functioning at a viable level of efficiency but have lost the motivation or impetus that was originally present (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). Perspectives, responsibilities, and behaviours must be modified to accommodate the changing nature of the times. Alterations in societal, cultural, and political realities have an effect on the manner in which school leadership is exercised, in addition to having an effect on the curriculum. Experts concur that the external environment has influenced the responsibilities of school administrators, making these professions increasingly complex and

diverse (Bezzina, 2013; Fullan, 2001; Harris, 2008; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2001).

Role of the CIT

The Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) is at the helm of the school, supervising and guiding the teachers during the teaching and learning process. The team ensures that the teachers are effectively and creatively empowering learners with the content and skills that are embedded in the NSC. A functioning CIT also facilitates the identification and sharing of best practices among teachers, such as conducting action research to solve classroom instructional issues. In QEC 0.03, the CIT satisfies the foregoing factors and enables teachers to work together to overcome the challenges being faced with regard to the implementation of the NSC (Ministry of Education, 2018). The varied skills of members of the CIT come together in the performance of the task of monitoring curriculum implementation at the school level. (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). The efficient performance of the tasks assigned to the members of the team whose skills are enhanced by professional development) is expected to yield optimal student performance.

The PLC as described by Avila (2011) is composed of facilitators, monitors, grade team leaders and other members. In Jamaica, the team members suggested by the Ministry of Education include the principal, and senior teachers in their various roles (grade coordinators, school-based assessment coordinators), the appointment of a community member and a special appointee is also advised. The supervisory officer for the school is an ex-officio member of the CIT (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014).

CIT is a key factor in students' ability to succeed in the classroom. Curriculum, teaching methods, and evaluation methodologies are all shaped by the CIT's expertise in these areas, as

well as the CIT's familiarity with current research and the ability to use student achievement data (Copland & Knapp, 2006). Leaders in the classroom earn the respect of their colleagues when they use their expertise and unique perspective on teaching to improve the learning environment (Patterson & Patterson, 2004). It is common for leaders to encounter curricular barriers while trying to build a curricular infrastructure to aid teachers in adopting the standards. This is because of the difficulties associated with rolling out a brand new curriculum to a large population. This is because authorities are working on a curriculum framework to support educators as they implement the requirements (Koedel et al., 2017; Polikoff, 2018; Remillard & Taton, 2015). To do this, emphasis is placed on education, mentoring, and tracking of development (King, 2002).

When it comes to the effectiveness of a school's teaching staff, many people point to the curriculum director as the most crucial aspect (Donaldson, 2006; DuFour & Eaker, 1998). When it comes to hiring, coaching, and grading teachers, effective curriculum leaders prioritize raising the bar for their colleagues. They achieve this by providing teachers with clear guidelines for professional development and using individualized methods of assistance and evaluation (Danielson, 2001). In addition, an effective curriculum leader provides extensive staff development, maintains opportunities for regular teacher engagement, and supports the establishment of professional learning communities, all of which result in change from inside the institution (Copland & Knapp, 2006; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001; Patterson & Patterson, 2004). Teachers and students work together on a variety of educational activities, including study groups, field trips, and student assessments. They also help teachers and administrators improve their own skills and knowledge by providing an example of effective pedagogy (Ackerman & MacKenzie, 2006; King, 2002).

Leaders in the field of curriculum design are tasked with a wide range of responsibilities, such as creating new courses, enhancing current ones, and weighing the impact of both internal and external factors on the curriculum. One of these obligations is making sure that the curriculum takes into account relevant information from both within and outside the classroom (Fullan, 2007; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Dinham, 2005; Lattuca & Stark, 2009; Neumerski, 2012). Curriculum-relevant definitions of leadership include an approach to facilitation in which the leader engages others to create a shared vision, form cohesive groups, establishes norms of behaviour, and juggles a number of interdependent tasks. This is just one of many potential curricular applications of this example to demonstrate leadership. Wiles (2009) states, Leaders in schools must prioritize curriculum above everything else in schools. (Wiles, 2009, p. 21). justifying his position as follows. The curriculum is the defining factor for every other task performed in a school, regardless of whether it is performed by the principal, a department head, or someone else entirely. This is because the curriculum dictates both the content and delivery of education. This is true regardless of who currently possesses power over the office of leader. This has always been the situation; thus it makes no difference who is at the helm at any point in time. The level of success that may be reached in the educational system is primarily based on a variety of elements, one of the most important of which is the leadership and the middle. Several elements play a crucial role in academic achievement, many other factors also play a part. The degree of success that a person is able to achieve is also impacted by a variety of other factors (Dinham, 2005).

When high-performing school principals were asked to break down their leadership into climate-related acts, Mattar (2012) discovered that they outperformed low-performing school principals. As a result, principals with high performance outperformed those with low

performance. The success of a school can be contributed to a conducive learning environment, ongoing professional development for teachers, and fewer interruptions that are not related to education. The leadership gaps that existed between high-performing schools and low-performing schools were identified through the process of assuring these behaviours and were then closed through the application of strategies such as setting goals, coordinating the creation and implementation of curricula, and measuring students' levels of success. Another study's conclusions state that substantial roles in the creation of the school's overall curriculum were given to those departments that were widely regarded as using effective curriculum design methods. Students were required to create cooperative teaching structures as part of the assignment, identify issues with the curriculum and potential fixes, and present their suggestions for curriculum changes. Curriculum leadership entailed identifying issues and gaps in the curriculum, setting up processes for teachers to work together, and proposing modifications to the curriculum (Stark, Briggs, & Rowland-Poplawski, 2002). To adequately prepare them for leadership roles within the curriculum, it is of the utmost importance that academic managers have access to opportunities for continued professional development. This realization has already piqued the curiosity of academic administrators about the roles they might play in the upkeep and improvement of existing programs (Brown, Rutherford, & Boyle, 2000; Neumerski, 2012; Nguyen, 2012; Vieira da Motta & Bolan, 2008).

Managers in academic institutions who make use of numerous learning opportunities are generally regarded as more competent, more confident in themselves, and more invested in the introduction of efficient procedures than their colleagues who do not (DarlingHammond et al., 2009). These managers can be prevented from carrying out successful activities related to curricular leadership in practice due to a lack of available training opportunities, as well as

inadequate support and motivation, in particular for middle managers (such as HoDs). This scenario is especially likely to play out in cases where there are insufficient possibilities for middle managers to participate in training programs (Nguyen, 2012; Stark et al., 2002; Wolverton, Ackerman, & Holt, 2005).

A number of studies have arrived at the conclusion that both students and teachers enjoy the greatest amount of success in their academic endeavours when they are able to work in an environment that is characterized by trust, mutual support, and empathy for one another. This has been found to be the case in environments in which students and teachers are able to work together (Patterson & Patterson, 2004). Therefore, curricular leadership entails a process of connecting with other stakeholders who, by enhancing the environment of the classroom and providing students with motivation, can contribute to curricular leadership. The overall educational experience can be improved by such innovations as well as by the inspirations they inspire (Gabriel & Farmer, 2005; Hoerr, 2005). The ability to maintain a constant presence, timely and clear communication of the organization's vision and goals, responsiveness to employee requirements, wishes, and concerns, and resolute follow-through are characteristics of good leadership (Gabriel & Farmer, 2005). The leaders of the curriculum need to have the ability to cultivate an environment that is conducive to professional discourse, to delegate or divide up responsibilities, to respect the viewpoints of their peers, to put to good use the particular skills that members of their staff bring to the table, to construct powerful leadership teams, and to create robust support networks. In addition, they need to have the ability to delegate or divide up responsibilities (Donaldson, 2006; Marzano, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005).

Successful department chairs, in a nutshell, foster common goals and a sense of community, recognize the importance of interpersonal dynamics in shaping the institution's

culture, and create strong channels of communication and interaction to build new resources that add to the organization's growth and development (Goletnan, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Spillane, 2006; Marzano et al., 2005). Management students' academic development is correlated with the effectiveness with which administrative tasks are completed (Davis et al., 2005). Improvements in student learning can only be achieved if those in charge of the curriculum have a firm grasp on the “nuts and bolts” of the institution, including its personnel, finances, and regulations.

The effectiveness of leadership and organizational procedures has an impact on academic performance (Davis et al., 2005). In order to promote improvements in student learning, those in charge of the curriculum need to effectively manage the relevant school operations, such as matters pertaining to staffing, the budget, and compliance requirements. The monitoring of organizational performance, the modification of organizational structures that may impede effective practice, and the application of systems thinking to address concerns that connect administrative procedures to student achievement are all responsibilities of the curriculum leaders (Leithwood et al., 2004). A solid grasp of management principles makes it possible for all of the other aspects of education to contribute to the enhancement of academic performance among students (Knapp et al., 2003).

The Role of the Principal

The principal is the leader of curriculum delivery at the school level, but as revealed by Koyama (2014), principals also carry out a social agenda, actively influencing the formulation and implementation of education policy. A study conducted by Koyama (2014) with the subjects being 45 principals in the city of New York showed that principals participated in the negotiations of federal education regulations as well as the conduct of local projects and

programmes, while seeking creative and novel ways to carry out their roles as leaders in educational and social spheres.

The principal assumes the position of chairman for the CIT, conducting meetings, and supervising team operations. The principal is also the link with the overall administration of education – the Ministry of Education, through the supervisory education officer (superintendent) who has oversight of the school. It is the principal's responsibility to apprise the supervisory officer of all matters concerning the delivery of the curriculum and the supporting structures and programmes for its delivery. The principal, as representative of the CIT also hosts individual visitors and delegations from the Ministry of Education, accompanied by members of the team as necessary. Such visitors and delegations might comprise officers from the Core Curriculum, Guidance and Counselling, Student Assessment or other Units of the Ministry, literacy, numeracy and other specialists, building officers, and many other individuals and groups. The principal also receives community members and organizations seeking to have audience or to make donations of funding, supplies and equipment, or to render support to the programmes of the school in any other way. All these roles and duties must be carried out as the principal keeps vigilant over the implementation of the curriculum in the school, as he or she leads the team in carrying out its mandate (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). Every duty carried out by the principal ultimately supports the delivery of the curriculum, affirming the principal as the leader of the school's curricular and instructional programmes (Honig, 2012).

The principal is of paramount importance in setting up structures for the implementation and longevity of the CIT. Moore (2010) in working with Professional Learning Communities (a similar construct as the CIT) found a strong positive correlation between leadership of that

curriculum leadership strategy and its implementation and sustainability. It is however necessary that the benefits of collaboration in leadership be understood by those who are at the helm of curriculum implementation. Leaders must also be competent in their craft and be committed to reaping success from their efforts. Hillery (2013) affirmed and highlighted the role of the principal in enabling a culture of shared and supportive leadership, in the school. Kalkan (2016) in exploring the matter of trust in the exercise of educational leadership, found that teachers placed a greater level of trust in their principals as against their counterparts and other partners in the education arena. This finding gives credence to the perceived importance of the role of principals in setting the tone for and enabling vibrancy and sustainability in the functioning of CITs and other shared leadership structures in the school setting.

Academics have suggested that promoting "organizational learning" is a crucial part of a school administrator's job (Elmore, 2008; Mulford, 2003). This was mentioned as a crucial role for school administrators to play. Organizational learning refers to the ways in which a school's administration fosters a culture of excellence and constant growth. Any school can improve its teaching by investing in its teachers' professional development, fostering an environment that promotes teamwork and the sharing of ideas, and using data to inform curricular decisions. The school will be better able to accommodate its students as result of this.

There is a lot of pressure on schools all around the USA to change due to factors such as the expanding number of state-wide standards and programs, the changing demographics of the student body, and the expansion of research on what constitutes good practice. This has resulted in a significant amount of competition among the various educational institutions in the United States. The transformational processes are someone's responsibility to manage, and that person is the head of the school. The most essential manner in which educational institutions,

particularly classrooms and schools, bring about the transformation of policy into results is by changing the practice that is already in place. This is because classrooms and schools are the places where the policy is really implemented. If you want the procedure to be carried out in the correct manner, it is vitally necessary for you to supply direction that is both intentional and knowledgeable. This is because of the high level of intricacy that is involved.

It is possible that in order to overcome resistance to change, it will be necessary to provide well-considered reinforcement, relevant information, a clear sense of purpose and goals, as well as the opportunity to acquire the appropriate skills. This is because of the possibility that it will be necessary to provide well-considered reinforcement, relevant information, and a clear sense of purpose and goals. This is due to the fact that there is a chance that it will be necessary to provide well-chosen reinforcement, relevant information, as well as a clear sense of purpose and goals (Hall & Hord, 2005). Some of the alterations are primarily technological in nature and may be implemented with a moderate amount of work, while others need a considerable paradigm shift with regard to the role that the activity in question plays in the overall scheme of things (Heifetz, 1998). A good leader is identified by his/her mastery of skills inherent in what are described as "adaptive" (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002) and "transformational" (Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) management.

The Roles of Team Members

The monitoring role of the CIT at the classroom level is carried out largely by senior teachers. Senior teachers act as a source of guidance and assistance to the classroom teachers under their supervision. Many senior teachers are also classroom teachers and are able to model the teaching strategies that classroom teachers are required to implement in the delivery of the curriculum on a daily basis. Senior teachers are expected to be able to assess the teachers under

their charge, thereby determining the areas in which they need training and support. Training to address any areas of deficiency detected is incorporated into professional development sessions planned by the senior teachers and principal, and other members of the team (Curriculum and Support Services, 2018).

A senior teacher whose work impacts in a direct way the work of every other member of the staff, is the school-based assessment coordinator. This senior teacher monitors the preparation and administration of the internal and external assessment processes of the school. In the Jamaican setting, internal assessments at the primary level comprise mainly end-of-unit, end-of-term, and end-of-year tests. External assessments comprise the Grade One Individual Learning Profile, the Grade Three Diagnostic Test, the Grade 4 Performance Task, the Grade 5 Performance Task and the Grade 6 Primary Exit Profile (PEP). School-based assessment coordinators as members of the CIT, are critical to the smooth operation of the assessment programme of the school (Curriculum and Support Services, 2018)

The community member is valuable in providing an input in the making of decisions that will have a positive impact on how the school-community interface is conducted. The community member is knowledgeable about school operations and community nuances. This representative of the CIT is a helpful resource person and his or her participation in the making of decisions is crucial for the successful functioning of school programmes in the context of the community. (Curriculum and Support Services, 2018). The principal who doubles as community leader, will find a useful ally and source of support in the community member. Khalifa (2012) provided evidence that when the principal plays his or her role as community leader, positive results are obtained in student achievement. Apart from the community member, the principal is free to make another appointment to the CIT external to the school staff, which will be

beneficial to the school and will assist in enhancing its image and ability to respond to needs that arise as the school fulfils its mandate to its stakeholders. (Curriculum & Support Services, 2018).

Principals who are familiar with classroom dynamics have a better chance of persuading teachers to work together to enhance instruction and student development (Goddard, Goddard, Kim, & Miller, 2015). Effective principals are those who keep an eye on teaching and learning, provide assistance to teachers, and collaborate with one another. The assistance that principals provide for teachers contributes to improvements in curricular delivery and academic performance (Hallinger 2005; Young, Anderson & Nash, 2017).

The CIT Network

The work of the CIT exists within a larger reporting and monitoring structure which has its base at the level of the school where the CIT is maintained by the Local Monitoring Team (LMT) comprised of the principal and teachers. At this level, issues that affect the delivery of the curriculum are identified as well as strategies to address them. LMTs report to and are monitored by Regional Monitoring Teams (RMTs), which are made up of a representative of a teacher education institution in the Region, one education officer in the Region and two curriculum education officers of the Department of School Services (DSS). At the next level are National Monitoring Teams (NMTs), to which RMTs report. NMTs are made up of curriculum officers, and representatives of the Joint Board of Teacher Education (JBTE), the body responsible for teacher certification. NMTs report to the Chief Education Officer (CEO). It is at this highest level that issues which have not been addressed at lower levels are dealt with through the intervention of the CEO with the support of the DSS. (Curriculum and Support Services, 2018). The function of the CEO with the DSS in the Jamaican context mirrors that of

the Central Offices in the United States giving administrative support to the districts under their purview. Assistance to schools and Regions from the Central Offices or DSS can be divided into six types, as proposed by Pruitt (2013). They are: establishment of the collaborative teams (CITs), deployment of staff, accountability for the implementation of the team, collaboration among stakeholders, and development of school leaders. There is copious evidence that functioning CITs and the leadership network they generate, give strong support to the implementation of curricula at primary and secondary levels and this should bolster the education system in a manner that makes it more receptive to curriculum innovations.

CIT and Change Management

Curriculum initiatives and quality working systems should be preserved by the teaching staff in whose hands lie the responsibility for their successful development. Innovations, initiatives, and procedures work well when they are introduced “bottom up” and the staff have a willingness to implement them. The teaching staff should be given the opportunity to share in the responsibility for shaping the innovative implementation of the curriculum and the quality systems that they are required to maintain.

Change is one of the essential components of an institution or organization, at operational and strategic levels (Burnes, 2004; Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004; Luecke, 2003; Senior, 2002). Moran and Brightman (2011) defined change management as a process in which there is continued evaluation of the directions and structure of the organization, as well as the capabilities and skills of its personnel to serve the evolving needs of the external and internal customers. In order to achieve desired change effective and efficient communication is essential in any organization or institution especially in this 21st century (Moran et al., 2001). Effective communication is identified as a human input that is necessary for gaining acceptance of change

within any institution. Several investigations have been conducted on developing change strategies for managing multiple facets of concerns, and stakeholder's needs during the planned change of a new initiative (Lewis, 2007; Lewis & Seibold, 2009). Kotter (2006) stated that it is incumbent on the management of the change to communicate with employees about the change that is to happen and how it will be achieved. Communication is key for implementing new programmes as it is the tool for explaining, announcing, and preparing individuals for the positive and negative effects of change (Verhust & Lambrechts, 2015). Consistent communication and reassurance are vital during the implementation stage. These are essential and necessary to give the project a chance to succeed by counteracting resistance to change which is a normal occurrence in any project that brings about any form of innovation (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2006)

As principals reflect directly on common core standards, instruction, and best practices they realize that teachers are at the core of change. It is unfortunate that not all teachers want change, and some of the teachers who do not want change, choose to resist it. Their resistance to change is often due to fear of the unknown. Change must begin with transforming the mindset especially of veteran teachers who are comfortable with traditional practices and have invested much in the school community. These are the individuals who are comfortable in doing things their way (Gwynne-Atwater & Taylor, 2010). School leaders promote change to achieve and make substantial progress in education reform. Fullan (2009), a global director of Oracle Education Foundation, stated that real change needs to move beyond the walls of the principal's office and penetrate the walls of the classroom. Fullan (2009) postulated that meaningful change needs a complete system reform. For principals to evoke the type of transformation that is

needed, they should cultivate, develop, and continuously support individual leaders or middle managers. This will enable and solidify the idea of 21st century change (Fullan, 2009).

All of the aforementioned authors—Darling-Hammond (1998), Fullan (2007), Petko et al., (2015), and Smith and O'Day (1991)—are in agreement that change management is essential for ensuring that educators are able to effectively learn new skills and knowledge. It has been stated that change management is a significant method that is capable of helping to make professional development for teachers more efficient. It has been suggested that in order for members of a community to benefit from a school's growth, they must have access to capable leadership (Harris, 2003; Spillane et al., 2004; Leithwood et al., 2020). Change management that emphasizes collaborative skill development, open communication, and a supportive work environment for educators has been shown to increase teachers' motivation for professional development and school improvement. It is possible to employ this strategy for managing change in order to urge teachers to work for the betterment of their schools (Geijsel et al., 2003; Hallinger, 2003; Hannay & Earl, 2014; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Lai & Cheung, 2015; Ramberg, 2014; Stoll & Kools, 2017). In order for the work to be successful and understood, it is crucial that educators have first-hand experience with the dissemination of information and the delegation of responsibilities. This is crucial in creating conditions where educators can work together to construct shared meaning about how to best implement curricular changes into daily classroom routines (see Amels et al., 2020; Day et al., 2010; Ganon-Shilon & Schechter, 2019; Geijsel et al., 2003; Hannay & Earl, 2014).

The establishment and operation of CITs and other structures which promote collaboration among leaders in the school setting sets the stage for the system to accept and embrace innovation. The leaders are deemed to be competent (Reeves 2010) and therefore will

see the value in the innovations being introduced and would be expected to find ways to secure buy-in and acceptance by the teaching staff. When teachers accept an innovation, it provides evidence that there has been a change of mindset (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008) which signifies that a firm foundation has been laid for the further development and integration of the change. The complete reform of the system which, according to Fullan (2009) will make the change meaningful, would be a feasible task since the CIT operates within a network which permeates all levels of the system. Communication which is a key element in preparing the system for the reform (Verhust & Lambrechts, 2015) is also facilitated by the networking that is built into the operation of the CIT.

The element of resistance to change (Verhust & Lambrechts, 2015, Moran et al. 2001), would not be a significant threat to the establishment of the innovation, given the structures for effective communication and all the other features accompanying the operation of the CIT described by Pruitt (2013), such as effective staff deployment, accountability at all levels, collaboration with stakeholders, and the continuous professional development of the school leaders. Cerimagic and Hasan (2019) in their study at a medical school in Australia, corroborate the findings of Pruitt (2013) in the need for clear communication, and involvement and motivation of staff in implementing change in curriculum implementation. The presence and all these features in an efficiently functioning network of CITs provides a firm footing for the establishment, operation and sustainability of beneficial curriculum and curriculum-related initiatives in the education system.

Challenges in sustaining CITs.

It has been determined that the most significant challenges that CITs in Jamaica face are a lack of adequate training and follow-up support, as well as an inadequate supply of teaching

and learning support materials. This has led to the dissolution of some of these teams. (2014). Instructional and Administrative Support Services CITs, as an innovation to improve the implementation of curriculum, will be susceptible to the variables that have a detrimental impact on the overall sustainability of educational innovations. This is because CITs are an innovation to improve curriculum implementation. An investigation on the long-term viability of innovative schools as professional learning communities and learning organizations was carried out by Giles and Hargreaves (2006). The sample was made up of three different schools from Canada. According to the data, there appeared to be three contributing variables that led to a poor record of sustainability. The first factor was the opinion of other professionals (at other schools) that the school with the innovation receives preferential treatment and, as a result, does not accurately represent the scenario faced by other schools that are comparable to it across the nation. This was a significant consideration. This allegedly unequal treatment generated animosity between the school that was responsible for the innovation and the school communities that were located nearby (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006).

Giles and Hargreaves (2006) identify a second element as those that "pull the school's center of gravity back toward the conventional grammar of schooling" (p. 125). They include but are not limited to transfers in administration, the loss and replacement of key faculty members, the growth or decline of the student body, and modifications to district policy. The term "attrition of change" describes the effects of these and similar factors (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). As a third issue that poses a threat to maintaining innovative practices in schools, Giles and Hargreaves (2006) cite shifts in the surrounding environment. Reducing funding, shifting the balance of power between the state and individual districts, and substituting locally driven innovations with state-wide initiatives are all possibilities.

The Interplay of Educational Leadership, National Policy and Change

The changing demands of the 21st Century have prompted school leadership all over the world to ensure that adherence to national policy is a priority as the effort to align education systems to current needs of stakeholders, progresses. The result is that expectations of school leaders have been changing profoundly. Globalization continues to drive educational policies, with better educational outcomes being the imperative for policy makers. The necessity to change, improve and transform the education system has never been so critical. Better leadership and teacher quality remain the mantra and the pathway to improve education systems (Mourshed et al., 2010). The success of a policy depends heavily on the leadership selection and the mix of the styles of leadership displayed. The aim is to achieve a synergy between the specified contexts and circumstances that underly the use of those particular combinations of leadership styles and their alignment with national policy (Brauckmann & Pashiardis 2011, Nir & Hameiri 2014, Brezicha et al. 2015). These are some of the dynamics which must be considered in the interplay between educational leadership, national policy, and change.

Educational Leadership in Today's Context

The function of the principal has changed over time to include mastery of several skills and competences. Principals are expected to manage the school plant, lead the implementation of the curriculum, analyse the school budget, play a leading role in community building, ensure that discipline is maintained, seek to find new strategies to deliver education in an age of rapidly increasing technology, communicate effectively with all stakeholders in the educational arena, and initiate and mandate policies. The reach of the principal's role goes beyond the academic needs of students. The extent to which the interests and emotional needs of not only the students, but also of the staff, affect their performance is also within his or her purview. The sphere of

influence of the principal therefore spreads from the school (staff and students) to the parents and communities. (Ministry of Education, 2016). It is the principal that is expected to initiate and monitor projects and programmes for the improvement of the curriculum and its delivery, and for the improvement of the physical facilities. (Bryk 2010; Davis, Kearney, Sanders, Thomas, & Leon, 2011; Fullan, 2014). The on-going challenge of student achievement in line with national standards is the responsibility of the principal, as is the readiness of students to move from one level of the school system to another. The responsibility gets even more momentous when it is taken into account that in performing his or her role, the principal is in effect guiding the preparation of each student to live successfully in the society of today and the future. The principal is therefore an important and critical element in the transformation of education to produce the results necessary to engender success in the life of the student (Davis, 2011, Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2005)

The skills needed for educational leadership in the 21st Century could be described as complex and critical. This is due to the fact that the principal or leadership team is required to carry out the necessary tasks to create a school climate that enhances learning, and to improve the quality of instruction that takes place (Bryk, 2010). Over the past two decades, especially, the expectations of the office of principal have increased dramatically. In addition to being instructional leader, the job description covers the areas of managing the school plant, being responsive to the social needs of students, teachers and parents, seeing to the safety of all in the learning environment, and to carry out the necessary innovations and transformations at the school level to be current with progressive educational trends, while ensuring that targets are attained (Fullan, 2014). Some workers contend, however, that the existence of wide-ranging roles and responsibilities of the principal is not a new phenomenon, and that principals have

always been charged with the duties that ensure that all areas of the management of school functions are covered. Marzano, Waters, and Nulty, (2005) is one such proponent and puts forward the view that expectations of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, together with the contractions and adjustments to bring about efficiency in the economy and the resultant strictures in the work force, the current situation is not likely to change. Since 2001 when the NCLB legislation was enacted, while the general scope of duties has not changed much, the changing environment and increase in technology have imposed new demands.

The recent shutdown of school plants due to the emergence of the COVID-19 epidemic was a test of principals' expertise and reactivity to find answers to an unexpected and abrupt onslaught of a new challenge. At the international level, teachers had to find new ways of engaging students without their presence in the classroom, and principals had to be responsive to the new needs of the teachers for provision of facilities and equipment (such as Internet provision and selection of on-line platforms), for coaching in the use of the facilities and for the creation of modalities and methods of operation to make teaching and learning with the platforms viable. Johnson et. al., (2020) describes the experience of the public schools in Lawrence, Massachusetts, USA, sharing how principals stepped into action from March 2020 to make the necessary provisions for teachers and students and to carry out on-line teaching and learning. Purchasing of Internet domains, coaching of teachers in the use of the platforms, setting up of teacher teams, and working with teachers to explore instructional options, were some the urgent actions that the situation demanded. The pandemic situation also had to be navigated in Jamaica, and similar strategies were engaged by principals with the support of the Ministry of Education and Information.

The importance of leadership support for the principal of 21st Century Jamaica, was highlighted by the NEI (2013). The role of middle managers such as grade coordinators, resource teachers, master teachers, heads of departments, deans of discipline and other middle management personnel engaged in schools on a permanent or temporary basis, helps the principal to galvanise the staff to successfully adapt, deliver and assess curricula to meet the needs of changing environmental and other conditions, and to provide other student and staff services in embracing the schools' vision and mission. An important element is to engender in teachers the desire to be accountable for the performance of their students.

Principals wield a great influence on the success of the schools they lead (School leadership that works, 2005). It is imperative, therefore for principals to be effective and suitably qualified to perform their role (NEI, 2013). The need for expert and inspired leadership is especially crucial in this 21st century, with the new expectations of a society that has seen a massive increase in the use of technology, and where social, financial other structures have changed. Schools are seen as the source of the provision to the society of competent and effective leaders, responsible citizens and skilled workers. School leadership will continue to play a vital role in ensuring that the society is adequately served in the provision of this service. Adopting the appropriate leadership strategies and styles and applying the accepted moral standards, will prove advantageous in this pursuit (Norton & Kelly, 2013). As attested to by Norton and Kelly (2013), by performing the role of leader in the society, and as the representative of an institution that develops citizens to contribute meaningfully to the society, the principal is expected to mirror the values and attitudes that are expected of such citizens. The result of being faithful to this mandate and to have the wellbeing of the staff, students, and parents at the forefront, will be a response of support and commitment from these stakeholders.

Professional development, classroom exposure, and in-school experience have all been emphasized in recent years with the goal of preparing future school leaders to be effective in their positions (Scott, 2015; Hilliard & Jackson, 2011). If we want to make sure that classrooms reflect contemporary reality, we must have educational leaders who are themselves products of the 21st century (Reeves, 2011). To keep up with the frenetic speed of the modern period, the International Online Journal of Educational Leadership has concluded that it must "acquire a new discourse" and "adopt a new mission" in educational leadership for the twenty-first century. This is not an attempt to get ahead; rather, it is a response to the speed with which educational leadership is evolving. Studies have shown that shared communication mechanisms between administrators and school constituents give school constituents the power to address problems and concerns in a manner that is more relevant and pressure-free, thereby allowing them to see the other side of the coin (Elfrianto et al., 2020, Sapian et. al, 2020, Smith et al., 2021). In a similar fashion, Yao, You, and Zhu (2020) all concurred with this result. Leaders in educational institutions must be able to communicate effectively and serve as a unifying force among their staff if they hope to foster an environment conducive to the growth of trust among teachers.

National Policy and Educational Leadership

The demands made of school leaders to remain responsive to the needs of their stakeholders has caused them to adopt new perspectives on school leadership, national policy and education systems. National education systems are in competition with each other in the area of monitoring and accountability and as such, realigning or renewing their focus has become necessary. Accordingly, for national governments in developing countries such as Jamaica, as well as for developed countries, the search is on to find new ways to incorporate policies which

engender improvement of school performance as the quality of education becomes crucial at this time of global competitiveness and stringent economic constraints” (UNESCO, 2016).

The manner in which national policy plays out at the school level must be relevant and beneficial to the institution. Miller (2016) reported that when policymakers make unexpected and weighty requests of school leaders, the leaders act to assess the demands and respond in ways that are practical for the institution. They meet the requests to the extent and capacity of their human and material resources, thereby mediating what national policy dictates with what the institution can deliver (Miller, 2016). Bell and Stevenson (2006) agree that school leadership and staff should be able to understand and relate national policy to their local context so that they will be able to implement the emanating directives. School leaders are specially placed to enact the requirements of national policy since they are at a position where they can perceive how the internal policy of the institution interfaces with national policy. Bell and Stevenson, (2006) posit that in making the relevant decisions relating to implementing national policy at the school level, school leaders contend with a number of intervening factors such as the personal values of those who are involved at every level, the resources available, the positions of influence and the perceptions of the stakeholders. It is incumbent on school leadership personnel, therefore, to be able to understand the workings of the school’s external policy environment in a manner that will enable them to prepare the school’s policy environment to readily respond with the required mix or resources and other support mechanisms (Bell & Stevenson, 2006). This will “test the mettle” of school leadership in the area of policy implementation.

Principals play a crucial role in the formation of productive learning environments because of the impact they have on factors including the professional growth and collaboration of teachers, their motivations, and their working conditions (OECD, 2018). They can instil a feeling

of leadership in their faculty members, allowing them to take on more responsibility for bettering the institutional contexts in which their students and colleagues learn and teach. Furthermore, school administrators have an important role in connecting their institutions to the larger communities in which they are located, and in bridging the gap between education policy and practice. Due to societal and educational advances toward greater decentralization and school autonomy, the introduction of accountability measures, and other considerations, the demand for both effective school leadership and the evaluation of school leaders has increased (OECD, 2014). While these advancements have been beneficial, they have also increased the workload of school administrators and changed traditional roles of leadership. It is difficult to recruit suitable individuals into the profession of school leadership due to a lack of adequate support and benefits, career prospects, adequate preparation and training, and limited career opportunities. Furthermore, retirements of aged school leaders in some nations call for succession planning (Schleicher, 2012).

It is not uncommon for changes that have been ordered by the government to run against a variety of roadblocks on the path to implementation, which lowers the probability that they will be successful. The goals of education have been redirected by governments to conform to what they see to be the prerequisites of either national needs or globalization. This has been accomplished via the imposition of ongoing changes on educational institutions and the instigation of unstable transitions. Education is receiving a greater amount of attention from governments as part of an effort to satisfy what are being interpreted by these entities as the requirements of either nationalization or globalization. The expansion of the world's educational opportunities has led to this shift in focus. More and more countries are seeing higher levels of uncertainty in their educational systems as a direct result of this (Arar, Brooks, and Bogotch 2019; Darling-Hammond and Rothman 2013). However, there has been no evidence that government's top-down approach

to education has improved outcomes for students who are already at a disadvantage due to factors like socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity, gender, or the identification of learning disabilities (Taysum and Arar 2018).

Government-mandated education changes do not include the creation of policies at the school level with the involvement of principals who would be responsible for their implementation. Unfortunately, many countries' education reforms are still guided by politics rather than data, reason, or ethics. Furthermore, governments use education to achieve political goals, guarantee the survival of a specific philosophy, or sustain social order by suggesting and applying it. . In the meanwhile, educational measures implemented by the government continue to be met with mixed reactions, ranging from acclaim to criticism of varied degrees. This is especially the case when they are subjected to the pressure of global demands to comply with standardized examinations and standardized tables. These global demands frequently have negative repercussions for the conversation that takes place in schools as well as the routines that students and teachers engage in. According to the extensive body of research that has been carried out on the subject of educational transformation, change interventions frequently result in failure (see, for example, Cheng & Walker 2008; Dickinson 2007; Fullan 2007; Hargreaves and Shirley 2009; Loogma, Tafel-Viii, & Ümarik 2013; McLaughlin 2008; Payne 2008). This research can be found in a variety of publications, including: The dominance of political thinking in change interventions, which is one of the key causes for the high rate of failure in change interventions, is one of the primary reasons for the high rate of failure. These initiatives are pushed on schools. There are a variety of other factors to take into consideration as well. Research conducted over the course of several decades has consistently pointed to the conclusion that the political logic behind educational reform is more important than the intellectual reasons. The clear pragmatism of

achieving quick solutions and limiting the amount of time required on the formulation, development, and execution of policy is the driving force behind the political logic. As a direct result of this, politicians have a propensity to make incorrect assessments regarding the urgency of the need for change (Harris 2011).

Many educational transformation plans fail because politicians who want to be re-elected based on their track record embrace successful strategies from other educational systems (Nir, Kondakci, and Emil 2018; Taysum and Iqbal 2012). Finally, unannounced and frequent school relocations harm the viability of educational transformation efforts. Loogma, Tafel-Viia, and Ümarik (2013) indicate that when changes are done frequently and poorly, the system loses its valuable resources and the morale of important change implementers suffers (2015). Because of this, the generally positive connotations that people have always attached to change are coming under scrutiny (Moreno 2009). According to Shirley (2009), school personnel like teachers and principals are well-suited to implement most government-mandated reforms. Despite the vehement calls for change, studies show that neither the substance (what is changing) nor the process (how to go about the change) have come anywhere near where they need to be.

Educational Leadership, Policy and Change

An example of how change can impact educational leadership is the creative and purposeful response that school leaders have had to forge in the advent of the COVID-19 crisis, such as preparing the system for on-line learning while striving to maintain the efficacy of the learning and the conduct of examinations under the new circumstances. School leaders have also been forced to actively respond to paradigm shifts and other changes within the schools, while staying in line with national policy. Day (2004) suggested that school leaders who efficiently steer their institutions through a change process achieve success through committed service and to the

success of school operations. They communicate this through reflective attitude, parental involvement, empathy and encouraging students' self-esteem (Day, 2004). Schmidt and Groeneveld (2019) provide an example of a study which highlighted the fact that when a crisis arises in leadership, there is a need to respond immediately by the handing down of decisions from the higher echelons of the organization. Social psychologists (Jetten et al., 2020) in a Findings published early in the current pandemic, gives the view however, that the response that should be made should be one of encouraging and fostering cohesiveness and unity among the staff. This would bring about a common interpretation of the goals of the school, the national policy for education, the change being encountered, and how to move forward together while adhering to the requirements of all these elements.

Education policy across the OECD countries has undergone a process of change over the past thirty (30) years. This has affected the practice of leadership. The management of education was formerly guided by policy that was administered at the national level (Jarl, Frederiksson, & Persson, 2012). The content of education policies was the focus. (Datnow, 2000; Fullan, 2009;). Heck (2004), and Bell and Stevenson (2006), joining in the work of scholars who have studied the impact of education policy on school leadership, analysed education policy both from process perspective and in terms of content. Their work has been instrumental in fostering an understanding of the dynamics of the processes of education policy formation and function (Bell & Stevenson, 2006; Heck, 2004). Bolander Laksov and Tomson (2016) postulated that educational leaders must be mindful of the needs of society and the school while making changes which will impact policy implementation.

Autonomy, responsibility and accountability now characterize the way school leaders are expected to operate, as the decentralisation granted by the Ministry of Education would suggest

(Simola, Rinne & Kivirauma, 2002). According to Clarke and O'Donoghue, (2016) successful leaders are comfortable with and knowledgeable of their work environment and are able to navigate the various types of situations that confront them within that setting. Fullan (2009), Hargreaves and Fullan, (2009); Hargreaves and Goodson, (2006); Hargreaves and Shirley, (2012), and Harris (2009), studied the history of outcomes from the implementation of policies and programmes which drive innovations in educational settings, and the factors which bring improvement to the delivery of education. Hargreaves and Goodson (2006) focused on change and politics, stating that the theory of educational leadership omitted the historical, long-term dimensions that these elements would offer. They proposed that changes in economic conditions and demography (such as generational shifts of school leadership) have an impact on educational innovations. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) posited that there is no stability in change which is brought about without leadership. They suggested that the agenda of leadership is change itself. Any reform that is undertaken must create the necessary conditions to enable school leaders to satisfy the demands of external standards, while exercising the freedom to change policies to fit their school settings. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) suggested that shared leadership approaches among the teaching staff can keep leadership abreast of the changes and help to enable them to act as policy agents. The importance of this is realised when it is taken into account that it is possible that policy can influence how educational leadership is interpreted. National policy documents and reports such as the Task Force Report of Educational Reform (2004), the Education Transformation programme (2010) and the Draft Standards for the Education System in Jamaica (Jamaica Teaching Council, 2011) all emphasize the desired outcomes of increased management responsibilities; performance and results; measures to ensure accountability, aimed at efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Education policy is in constant evolution, as is the function of school leaders. Educational leaders are encouraged to facilitate conversations about policy and creating policy change on a national level (Andenoro et al., 2013). Effective school leaders have been found to use their skills and network to initiate success within their schools, by taking actions and providing innovative insights (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Leaders have been described as playing a strong motivational role, which should be taken into account (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, & Fleishman, 2000) and for future action (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). School leaders are arguably second in line to the most deciding factor that determines whether a school will fail or succeed. They have a critical role in ensuring that the transformations being undertaken result in sustainable improvements in schools and in the system as a whole. “As school leaders are custodians and drivers of social economic change in this era, their roles continue to evolve from a managerial traditional role to a distributed leadership role” (Mancinelli & Acker-Hocevar, 2017 p. 9), the demands are greater, requiring them to be “more socially and environmentally aware, reflective and contextual” (Miller 2018, p. 2).

The political environment of school leadership sets the stage for the implementation of educational policy in a manner which facilitates interaction and understanding between education practitioners and the government. Educational policy agenda can affect in a significant way, the school’s and school leader’s ability to deliver quality education (Miller, 2018; Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins 2011; Hallinger & Truong, 2014). There are factors external to the school’s environment that are impacting and changing how school leaders enact leadership. The conditions which surround national policy have a significant impact on the ability of school leaders to deliver, reshape and redefine their approach to leadership (Miller, 2012).

Change in the educational sphere, as with other endeavours, is a multi-actor multi-dimensional and multi-level process, involving simultaneously personnel of various positions, and impacting many aspects of a system. Accordingly, the management of changes in policy should be addressed from these dimensions. Hooghe and Marks, (2001) echo these sentiments while attesting to the national, regional, and international reach of policies. (Gornitzka, Kogan & Amaral 2005: 9) agree that government policies can engender change as well as provide a template for responding to change. Altınay, (2015) found that an institution which is perceived as having strong and visionary leadership and reflecting the standards and values expected of such establishments, predispose it to being amenable and adaptable to change which is an important characteristic for the success of reform and innovation efforts, and policy implementation. These findings were supported by Fasola et al., (2013) and Lumby and Coleman (2017). Lumby and Coleman, (2017) reiterated that policy affects both the conduct of teaching and learning and the interpersonal interactions between stakeholders in the education process. This is accompanied by pressure on the school to perform. School leaders face these realities as they share in the role of national, social, and economic development. A consequence of this is that it has made them vulnerable to political conflict Miller (2018a).

Educational policy environments at the international level differ in terms of the cultural, social, economic and political and other factors at play in each country. It therefore follows that policy implementation can be expedited or delayed depending on resources or political expediency. With regard to the latter, policies are often hastily announced from political and other platforms without regard for serious assessment of the capacity of the system to deliver on what is pronounced (Miller, 2018a, Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011) In this scenario, Bell and

Stevenson (2006) assert that school leaders are not to be seen as a submissive group, with no active voice in responding to the policy directives handed down to them.

The level of consultation will have an effect on the response to the proposed changes to the policy, in particular when the policy is being changed rapidly. Complaints received from the implementation are exacerbated by the lack of opportunity for engagement, rather than by the specifics of the modifications themselves (Peery et al. 2010). This hints that certain audiences may have a different and unfavourable perspective on policy, which may ultimately result in the process being weakened.

Leadership and the Implementation of Jamaica's Education Strategy and Policies

The importance of the calibre of leadership and administration of schools and the resultant benefits to the general performance of the school population, have been given prominence in the Jamaican Ministry of Education policies (JMoE 2007, 2009). The success of Jamaica's development plan is dependent on a sound educational base in the population. It is in view of this that the JMoE constantly monitors student performance at the primary level with the aim of ensuring that all students of primary school age are enrolled in an educational institution and are accessing the services provided. The leadership that is engaged in primary schools must be capable of motivating and mobilising the staff of these educational institutions to attain the national goals for student performance in literacy and numeracy. The cohort of leaders in the education system comprising senior teachers, guidance counsellors and other specialists supporting principals in the supervision of the delivery of education to student stakeholders, could be considered middle-ground leadership. Gill (2011) attests to the importance of this level of leadership in any entity, in acting as liaison, intermediary, and mediator between the top leadership and staff at lower levels. This level of leaders will figure in an important way in

assisting the system to bring to fruition the mantra of Jamaica's Ministry of Education: "Every child can learn every child must learn".

The Jamaica National Education Strategic Plan 2008-2013 (JMoE, 2012) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for literacy and numeracy for children of school age are in tandem with the education target for 2015. Goals for excellence in education are also echoed in the Vision 2030 document (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009). The fruition of Vision 2030 goals will see Jamaica developing an education system from which multiskilled and highly certified individuals will emerge. These individuals will also practice life-long learning and will be able to bring creativity and productivity to the practice of their careers and professions, while being locally and globally competitive. Education is therefore the main route to productivity on an individual basis, which will automatically translate to national productivity.

Underperformance in leadership and management was the first factor identified by the National Education Inspectorate (NEI) as impeding academic performance using data from 135 schools that were inspected between September 2010 and March 2011 (NEI, 2012). The other factors identified were: teaching support; student achievement in English and mathematics; personal and social development; appropriate use of human and material resources; curriculum and enhancement programs; and safety, security, health, and well-being (NEI, 2012). The rectification of the factors identified is necessary for Jamaica to achieve its potential to realise the desired educational development and to attain the Vision 2030 goals. As the nation moves forward to attain the educational goals set to engender student success on a national scale, the policies in education will play a supporting role in the achievement of the targets set (JMoE 2007, 2009).

According to Miller (2016), educational policies "are the fuel on which education/schooling is run, simultaneously establishing parameters and providing direction" (p.

142) Additionally, Miller (2016) states that "educational policies give shape and structure to an education system and can lead to both coherence and mayhem for those who must enforce, deliver, or otherwise experience them" (p. 142). The process of formulating educational policy is not typically one that is linear or predictable, and it is frequently not transparent either. As a result, it invariably invites or contributes to the confusion and uncertainty that is experienced within the system. Miller (2016) found that some of the Jamaican school administrators she interviewed acknowledged feeling 'shut out' (p. 82) of the process of policy formulation. According to the findings of Olssen et al. (2004), the formulation of educational policy has evolved into a highly politicized endeavour. The stimulation of wide and varied stakeholder interests at both the informal and formal organizational levels is one of the distinguishing features of the policy debate in the education sector.

The maxim that "education is everyone's business" is borne out in the reality of life in Jamaica, where practically every person possesses some sort of viewpoint regarding the subject of education. When compared with other professions such as medicine, law, and so on, teaching is often considered to be only a "para profession" in Jamaica, as well as in other parts of the world. This means that teachers are not expected to have any specific or unique body of knowledge and expertise in their field. So, public involvement in educational debates tend to be ill-structured and individualistic, and inputs from the mass public are meaningless in terms of the policy outcome. As a result, the concept that anybody can prescribe for the sector has emerged as a consequence. It is not always the case that those in positions of political power and policymaking are aware of how educational policies affect schools (Bell & Stevenson 2006). This lack of awareness contributes to educational policy-making that is "quite fragmented" and "frequently fails to provide a compelling explanation of the policy process." (Bell & Stevenson 2006). This might

make it challenging "for individuals working in schools that are subject to educational policies to make sense of the policy frameworks within which they are required to operate" (Bell & Stevenson 2006). The Ministry of Education, which is Jamaica's government agency with overall responsibility for the education portfolio, serves as the nation's primary policy-making body for the country's educational system.

The organizational structure and responsibilities of the Ministry include a division that is responsible for planning and development. Part of this division's mission statement reads as follows: "...offer strategic leadership and policy guidance for quality education for all Jamaicans" (Ministry of Education and Youth 2018). Being a government entity, the Ministry's policy-making process entails the formulation of a strategic plan and policy priorities, both of which are subsequently condensed into an operational plan for all of its functional divisions. This plan is then implemented. The development of the strategic plan is predicated on the existence of a methodical procedure that involves all of the relevant players. On the other hand, it is a commonly held belief that the policy-making process is frequently reactive, meaning that it is directed more by the ongoing public dialogue than by a long-term, in-depth investigation of the way education works.

The OECD, through the Education Policy Outlook 2015 (OECD,2015), has indicated some trends that will engage the global education arena in the near future. The trends have shown that there are more similarities than differences global education systems. The trends include monitoring the change process in schools, development and support for school leaders, new models of professional development for teachers, personalized and blended learning, leveraging on resources, and building community partnerships. Consistent with expectations, the policy outlook document highlights the fact that educational leaders bear the pressure of satisfying

accountability requirements in the school system, which has taken on the characteristics of a ‘results driven’ business. These pressures will continue to increase, requiring that leaders in educational institutions improve their skills and competences in the areas of resourcefulness and resilience, and by keeping abreast of developments in the education sector. This is necessary for educational leaders to keep their institutions viable and successful. The educational leader must therefore be flexible, willing to change the course of actions and strategies that have lost their usefulness in the changing environment and circumstances Botha (2013). It is also necessary for this shift in paradigm to embrace and address change meaningfully, should be dealt with in national education policy, and that training be offered to school leadership teams, including middle managers, to equip them to function effectively in the new dispensation. Scott, 2015; Hilliard & Jackson, (2011) attest to the need for this training and mention that efforts have been made over the last decade to administer to school leaders the relevant accredited training with theoretical exposure and practical experiences. The adequacy of the training to empower school leaders for the needs of the 21st Century has however been questioned.

It is argued that the training offered to school leaders is limited by the curricula that are implemented in the institutions. Efforts have been made in Jamaica to develop curricula that are relevant to today’s learning needs and environment. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (2016) describes the current primary curriculum as student-centred, placing a focus on the whole child, taking into account current education research, helping students to develop positive values and attitudes, incorporating greater use of technology, promoting greater appreciation of Jamaican heritage and identity, integrating tools, knowledge, skills and attitudes across subject areas, and teams and community oriented. The International Online Journal of Educational Leadership, (2017) however purports that present curricula are too faithful to the past,

focusing on content and basic skill acquisition, and questions the extent to which the use of technology, standardised tests are adequately serving their purpose. It has been well established that educational leadership is not complete without competence and practice in instructional leadership, and that this is an imperative in this part of the 21st Century (Reeves 2011). Any discourse and the development of any policy or strategy, should take this reality into account. Educational leaders who recognise this fact should advocate for changes at international and national policy levels that will address the current voids.

In order to prepare today's youth for tomorrow's challenges, the OECD says that decisive action must be taken to not only improve but also reimagine educational systems. This is because nations are "rapidly moving toward becoming knowledge societies with new demands for learning and new expectations of citizenship." Leadership in schools should help teachers prepare for the unexpected by providing them with guidance on dealing with change. This burden is increasing day by day. In order to keep up with the demands of the wider world and to rethink the institution's function in light of the constant environmental shifts, they are frequently forced to make alterations to their school (Stoll et al., 2017). Principals are tasked with helping their staff and students succeed in spite of the obstacles they confront by cultivating a positive learning and working environment.

Summary

This chapter has used findings from the rigor of research to review matters concerning curriculum, its implementation, and change, with regard to national policy, and how leadership in its various forms, figures in these dynamics. This was done with a view to garnering evidence to justify the investigation of the topic, National Standards Curriculum Implementation – Implications for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in a Group of Primary Schools.

The following paragraphs highlight points which have emerged from the review, which have been selected because they are deemed to have captured the essence of the discourse from the literature.

In addressing the purpose of curriculum, in the 21st Century, Brady and Kennedy, (2010) contend that if the existence of curriculum is to equip students to be responsive to and to be competent in managing themselves and the environment, then the aims, goals, objectives, content, learning experiences, and evaluation procedures should reflect this. A wider view of curriculum which goes beyond the curriculum being a syllabus and learning schedule, or a blueprint to guide instruction (Offorma, 2014), should also be embraced (Kelly, 2009). Efforts have been made in Jamaica to develop curricula that are student-centred, responsive to research findings, attentive to the development of positive values and attitudes, places the required emphasis on ICT, and that generally prepare students to operate successfully in the 21st Century (Ministry of Education, 2016). This view is not shared however by some researchers who contend that curricula are too faithful to the past, putting emphasis on basic skills and knowledge (International Online Journal of Educational Leadership).

A requirement for effective curriculum implementation is sequential alignment at succeeding grade levels (Tweedie & Kim 2015) and alignment of curriculum elements (McDonald Barton, Baguley, & Hartwig 2016). Burns (2016) echoes these sentiments and places and emphasis on the alignment of learning activities with the learning goals. Effective curriculum implementation also addresses teachers' concerns (McNeil, 2016), and requires teachers, through training, to be familiar with content and delivery demands (McDonald et al, 2016). Teacher preparedness in implementing the curriculum is of prime importance (McNeill, 2017), and knowledge of the curriculum is an essential element (Cuausarano, 2015). McDonald

et al, (2016) emphasizes dedication to duty of those who deliver the curriculum and for the teacher to avail him or herself for training. The necessity for training is echoed by Bell (2015). Porter (2015) highlights the importance for the curriculum to be conceptualised, understood, interpreted and internalised at personal, group and administrative levels.

The principal plays a crucial role as instructional leader, and training must be afforded to him or her to carry out this function. Nguyen (2012) goes even further to assert that professional development of both school staff and principal is paramount. Lunenburg (2010) admits that challenges will be encountered in leading change and the sources of reticence and resistance should be identified and addressed. The challenges identified by Lunenburg, (2010) are, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance of the change by the group, dependence on others for implementation lack of trust in the prevailing management team, and awareness of flaws in the intended change. These and other challenges which may emerge should be mitigated by improving communication strategies (Pruit 2013), engaging team expertise, of which the CIT is a strategy, engaging the community, (Hollingsworth 2012), and building trust in the leadership (Ionescu, 2014. Penuel et al., (2009) adds the element of quality collaboration coexisting with the building of trust to help to maximise success in curriculum delivery. The team approach to leadership of curriculum implementation is given prominence. Wiles (2009) considers curriculum leadership as a collaborative effort in which team members work to coordinate complex activities to enable the smooth implementation of the curriculum. The leadership team works constantly to create a positive learning environment for students, promoting professional development for staff, setting goals and objectives, planning and coordinating learning activities, and evaluating students and teachers (Mattar 2012).

National education policy implementation, effected at the school level by leaders and other professionals (Rayou & Zanten, 2015) is a complex activity, requiring leaders to grapple with limited resources and other constraints (Van Der Voet, et al., 2015). National education policy, as it does in Jamaica, should also address the values of equity, access, and quality. Equity, to ensure that students in varied circumstances can access the personal and social benefits of curriculum implementation (Tan & Low, 2016). Students should also have equal access to quality curriculum delivery and related services, assisted by the support of private sector and other entities (Tan & Low, 2016). Compulsory enrolment and attendance of students in Jamaica in an organised learning programme is facilitated by the Education Act of 1982 (UNESCO 2010).

Global governance will holistically tackle the difficulties affecting education inside countries, as UNESCO (2008) so ably demonstrates; however, this may also require tackling the disparities and power dynamics between rich and poor countries. Governance issues at the national level are those that fall within the borders of a certain country and can include any level of government, including the national government, the government of a state or province, the government of a district or municipality, and the government of a municipal or district. Whether a business is publicly traded or privately held, the company's management must be held accountable in addition to the company's shareholders and by the company's customers and employees.

In the effort to meet national and global requirements, policy changes are often rapidly unleashed on the education system (Arar, Brooks, & Bogotch, 2019) without due regard for the capacity of the system to deliver (Miller 2018a). School leaders should have a voice in countering this practice (Bell & Stevenson, 2006). Education policy changes constantly, even as

the roles of school leaders evolve. Adenoro et al. (2013) acknowledges the existence of this phenomenon and suggests that school leaders should participate in dialogue about policy and policy changes at the national level. This corroborates with the view of Loruntegbe, (2011) that there should be educator involvement in policy development.

Leadership styles influence students' academic performance, teacher self-esteem, and the school environment (Hallinger, 2003). The leadership style exhibited by the principal is important for developing the desired attitudes, interests, and general behaviour patterns of staff and students. A democratic leadership style fosters principles of equality and fairplay (Frese, et al., 2007; Fay & Frese, 2007). Principals who practise autocratic leadership feel secure that their directives and the authority to make their demands which are expected to be complied with without question, come from their board of management or the Ministry of Education (Cherry 2020). Transformational and transactional leadership styles impact employee performance in a significant way (Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen & Lowe, 2009), but transformational leadership gives principals a sense of empowerment (Geijsel et al., 2003). This study presents the opportunity for the validity of these this finding in the Jamaican context to be tested.

If a statement is to be found that captures in a profound way, the essence and basis of this research, it is the position taken by Hargreaves and Shirley, (2012) that there is no stability in change which is brought about without competent leadership. The important and pivotal role of the principal and leadership teams which implement national policy directives and authoritative instructions from the Ministry of Education while carrying out their instructional roles, is effectively highlighted, and the implications of this finding are paramount in the conduct of this study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The Jamaican education system has been under constant transformation with the aim of achieving better results, as it has been for education systems across the world. Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan, (2009); and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, (2015) all address the pursuit of national educational goals such as the achievement of the full potential of every Jamaican, the development of a world class education system, and enabling the pursuit of life-long learning for every individual. The NSC was developed to help to achieve these national goals by creating the foundation at the primary and secondary levels. This was made possible by creating more relevant and meaningful learning opportunities for students. The NSC promotes the acquisition of the skills that students must master in order to be successful members of the global society of the 21st Century.

The establishment of CITs was one of the strategies put in place to ease the challenges in implementing policies in primary schools. The operation of CITs is geared to assist substantially in the drive of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information to successfully implement the NSC in primary level institutions. This involves enabling the leadership to faithfully adhere to the policy guidelines that have been laid out for curriculum delivery (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). Leadership is important for the proper conduct of daily activities and efficient employment of resources in an institution or organization. In schools, effective leadership has been consistently shown to enhance operations (Wallace Foundation 2013). In the quest to make changes that will result in more efficient delivery of the curriculum, it is vital to examine the policy guidelines relating to the NSC in detail to determine how the CITs can make the necessary adaptations to their current practices. The findings emerging from

this investigation will make a well needed addition to the relatively limited research conducted so far in regard to the Jamaican National Standards Curriculum (NSC), especially since it is only in its fourth year of full implementation.

This mixed methods research has as its purpose to investigate the NSC as it is implemented in a grouping of schools with particular emphasis on the role of the CIT as part of the school leadership. The strategies used by leadership teams to ensure that the curriculum is effectively delivered, and the difficulties experienced by the supervisory and teaching staff in its delivery. The ramifications of ineffective leadership in the NSC delivery, the enacting of education policies in the leadership of educational programmes, and how change is managed, was also studied.

The current chapter will next describe the mixed methods research approach and design that was used, introduce the population and the sample of the study, describe the instrumentation of research tools, operationally define the variables, present the study procedures and ethical assurances, and present the methods of data collection and analysis. The key points presented will then be summarised.

Research Approach and Design

The researcher used the mixed methods strategy to investigate the role of leadership and the CIT, and the impact of organizational change in the implementation of the NSC. Scope for using both qualitative and quantitative methods was well represented in this study. Qualitative research is the approach that is widely used to investigate and provide information and insights on the dynamics of social issues (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Merriam, 1998). The aspect of the present study which sought to find out how school leadership plays its role effectively, especially in how it implements organisational change, fits into the

qualitative approach. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) give further credence to the use of the qualitative approach, by affirming that qualitative research places the researcher in the context of the environment or world. The approach accomplishes this by the interpretive material that are carried out to reveal and highlight the world. The world of the researcher is in essence captured by the tools of the research, which are brought to the site to be investigated, enabling the interpretation of phenomena where they occur, in their natural setting. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), phenomena are then viewed and understood in terms of the meanings which are accorded to them by the persons at the site of the investigation.

The matter of context is emphasized in qualitative research, and it is of prime importance in this study. The context within which school leaders, leadership structures, teachers and other participants in the school system operate, are unique in each environment and situation. These local contexts also relate in some general ways to wider contexts and environments such as the regional administrative level and at the national level of the system. Neuman (2000) supports the view that the context of a social action or a pronouncement, figures greatly in determining its meaning. Without its accompanying context, the report or interpretation of an event or action, could generate misrepresentations and imbalance (Neuman, 2000). Stake (2010) also highlights the matter of context, promoting it as a key element in qualitative research. Stake (2010) also puts a premium on context in qualitative research, describing this kind of research as being situational, depending on the characteristics and the peculiarities of the environment of the phenomenon being investigated. It is for this reason that qualitative reports give rich descriptions of the context of the phenomenon under investigation, ensuring that there is no distortion of views or wrong interpretations of statements and other communications.

Some aspects of the context of the Jamaican educational environment are worthy of being highlighted to further validate the use of the use of a research method which includes a qualitative element. The educational system was recently introduced to a curriculum at the primary and lower secondary levels that espoused the virtues of meaningful learning and the acquisition of relevant skills for the 21st Century, such as collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking (MOEYI, 2018). It is also worthy of note that the Government of Jamaica, through the Ministry of Education, as presented in the Planning and Development Mission Statement, its 2030 Vision Statement, and its National Education Strategic Plan - NESP (2011-2020), placed a premium on quality education for all. A specific example of the move towards an education system that promotes active, relevant, and effective learning, was the NESP Strategic Objective 3 to increase literacy rate of the population to 100%, and the numeracy rate to 85%, by 2020. In concert with these statements and plans, the motto of the Ministry of Education confidently stated: “Every child can learn Every child must learn.

It becomes apparent that the context is one that places a high demand on teachers to perform since high expectations are placed on student success. The qualitative method is the one that represents the sensibilities and feelings of teachers and school leadership as they attempt to satisfy the expectations for the delivery, and the outcomes of the curriculum (the NSC in this instance) as laid down by plans, policies, and mission statements. The approach supports and extends the data provided by the quantitative methods (Wisdom & Cresswell 2013) providing the more affective and social aspects of the data. The sampling of the feelings and attitudes of the teachers towards the leadership and implementation of the NSC is important to this study since these have heavy implications for how teachers respond to the leadership in their schools as the effort is made to satisfy the demands for the implementation of the curriculum and for creating

the student “product” of the curriculum as one fit for operating in the 21st century. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) point to the importance of assessing the meanings given to phenomena by the participants themselves, and this is afforded and facilitated by the qualitative method.

Quantitative research also has some benefits to offer in this study. The quantitative component of this mixed methods process enabled a description and analysis of trends detected (Creswell, 2012). Groups in the study (such as CIT leaders, principals and teachers) can be compared, and the statistical analyses make it possible to show how the variables relate to each other. This would not be possible in a totally qualitative study, since quantitative analysis procedures have to be applied to quantitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Including quantitative procedures in this study enabled, at the outset, the framing of purpose statements, hypotheses and research questions which are well delineated (Cresswell, 2012). Quantitative data gathering enabled a larger sample to be used than what qualitative data gathering would have enabled (Creswell 2012), given the restrictions of time and human resources. A component of the sample of this study comprises 120 teachers, for example. The data gathered from this component is largely quantitative, with the use of a semi-structured questionnaire.

The present study focused on the team approach to the implementation of the NSC.

It investigated the implications arising from the what the team members have experienced in employing the measures and methods needed in the organization to bring about leadership that is effective and change that is meaningful in a group of primary schools. This context fits the mixed methods approach that was employed. The use of the mixed method design in this study produced contrasting data, but each set of data enhanced the other in a way that produced a rich body of evidence. The data were collected separately in some instances and simultaneously in others, and the results were merged before being interpreted. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011)

outline four steps for the merging of the two kinds of data. They can be combined at the design step, at the data collection step, during data analysis, at the data interpretation step.

The mixed-methods design offers several benefits in the investigation of intricate research problems as the philosophical frameworks of both post-positivism and interpretivism (Fetters, 2016), are brought together, combining data from both qualitative and quantitative sources to meaningfully bring to light research problems. The approach also offers a logical framework, several options for conducting the study and a deep understanding of research issues which are less complex (Maxwell, 2016). Using mixed methods allows researchers to give responses of the right dimensions to research questions (Enosh et al., 2014) and helps to give the findings arrived at a clearer picture of how they play out in the entire population since the quantitative approach enables data to be collected from a larger number of subjects. Conversely, the qualitative approach affords a clearer insight on the issue under investigation, giving prominence to the views of its participants. It is the quantitative data that will add breadth to the study while data collected by qualitative means will add depth. Triangulation of results from both types of approaches is also possible. Triangulation involves employing several sources of data and data processing methods to arrive at an in-depth appreciation of a problem, or to determine the validity of a set of results (Carter et al., 2014). Using a mixed methods approach presents the advantage of explanations or solutions to research questions by drawing on the strong points of both methods, while acting simultaneously to identify the weaknesses inherent in each method (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Saville (2012) agrees that in a growing number of instances, impact research questions are being substantially addressed by the mixed-methods approach.

A mix of the two methods helps to create a holistic representation of the attending issues and accommodates views that are divergent or complementary. This adds value to the research as it contributes to a fuller understanding of the nature and behaviour of a phenomenon and opens up avenues for future research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Mixed-methods research provides both a holistic view of phenomena and insights of its components. This allows the formation of theories which can be substantive (Ventakesh et al., 2013). The mixed methods approach helps to harmonise the sharpen distinctions between the two types of research paradigms and gives a better opportunity for facts and truths to be unearthed (Bergman, 2008). It is clear that, as supported by Lund, (2012), a thoughtfully executed combination of the two methods augurs well for creating an all-embracing overview of an issue or question being researched. The quantitative method allows for the operationalization of concepts. This is achieved by the framing of clear indicators, the tracking of trends, the identification of relationships and correlations. This is coupled with the use of large samples, which represent the total population. The qualitative method brings the quality identifying multiple and subtle meanings, being logical in its bid to construct theory from data, and flexible in the choice of methods. Smaller samples are used than in the quantitative method, making it possible for more in-depth study, which also lends itself to detecting the stages of a process and patterns of change. Plano Clark and Ivankova, (2016) support the finding that the mixed methods approach helps to obtain more rigorous conclusions because of the mechanism of compensation that applies. Where one method is weak, the other method offers a more rigorous operation. This supplied a substantive reason for the selection of mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) methods over a single one.

Another advantage of the mixed methods approach is the process of triangulation which accompanies it. Triangulation validates the results generated by the operation of the single

methods (Bergman, 2008). The combined methods present understandings and insights that are stronger and of greater value than a single method. Inferences take on more validity and strength than for a single method. More credible and viable conclusions therefore result (Teddle & Tashakori, 2009). Using the mixed methods approach helps to sharpen and refine the conclusions that are arrived at because the methods work together in a symbiotic way (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016).

Much evidence has been presented that the mixed methods approach is more advantageous than using either quantitative or qualitative method as the likelihood of gaining rich insights into research phenomena, is heightened. A mixed-methods design is the choice to study more complex phenomena because of the integration of multiple data sources which is part of the procedure (Poth & Munce, 2020). Using mixed methods research allows for the consolidation of data in a purposeful way, which enables researchers to obtain a multi-dimensional and panoramic view of an investigation (Shorten & Smith, 2017)

An important advantage of the use of mixed methods for the study was the fact that the researcher him/herself was the collector of the data and is also the one who analysed them. The collection of the data in the setting where the phenomena being studied are operating, gives the investigator the chance to develop a deep appreciation of the phenomena as the conduct of the study unfolds. The researcher was also able to use multiple methods to collect and analyse data, thereby gaining a complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation.

The framing of the research questions for the present study also pointed to the use of the mixed methods design. The following are the research questions of this study:

1. What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the NSC and the leadership in QEC 0.03?

2. What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT as leadership in the implementation of the NSC?
3. How do the circumstances surrounding the types and styles of educational leadership practised by members of the CIT affect organisational change?
4. How do the role and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in these institutions?

It can be seen that a half of the questions begin with “how”, which creates the opportunity for the researcher to delve into the various phenomena being addressed (national policy and the team approach to curriculum implementation, the experiences of members of the CIT in curriculum delivery, and change in relation to the circumstances of leadership styles and types, and the roles and implications of educational policies) with the use of the necessary data collection instruments and methods.

Population and Sample of the Research Study

The population of this study was comprised of the principals, teachers, and presidents of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of the primary schools in Region X. The total number of primary schools in Region X is 69. Within Region X there are Quality Education Circles (QECs), each comprising a group of ten schools. Numerical assignments are made to each QEC (Ministry of Education, 2019). The participants were recruited from six of the ten schools from QEC 0.03 which is located in an urban area in Jamaica. The urban setting was chosen over the rural area because the researcher works in the urban setting and saw the potential benefit of applying any relevant findings of the study to her own setting.

Two of the schools are secondary and two are private schools. The remaining six (6) schools are primary schools which are owned by the Government of Jamaica and have active

CITs. A total of 120 teachers participated in this study and 48 CIT members in the six primary schools. The effective implementation of the curriculum (including the NSC) is the remit of the CIT. This involves seeing to it that teachers engage with the curriculum in accordance with the attainment targets, aims and objectives as outlined by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information. (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018).

Each primary school in the study, which caters for students from six to 12 years of age, has a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT). It can be hypothesized that the major issues which affect one school are common to all. Among the issues at play is the resistance of teachers to change in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) which has been created for preparing students for the 21st Century, by equipping them with skills such as communication, creativity, and critical thinking, to enable their survival in the global space as it evolves along with technology.

Sampling Method for Selecting Respondents

According to Bernard (2002) in choosing a sampling technique, it must be borne in mind that the sampling should represent the population being studied and the data collected should be relevant. The sampling method used in the selection of the participants of the study was purposeful sampling from the population of QECs of the six (6) Regions. Yin (2011) describes purposive sampling as being in line with the research questions of the study. Bernard (2002) equates purposive sampling with judgemental sampling, because of the intentional choice of participants. Patton (2002) supports the use of the purposeful sampling technique, for the reason that this will enable other researchers to gain specific information (and therefore use the findings) on the issues of the study as it relates to the type of sample that is used. Purposeful sampling is also cost effective, time effective and sets the stage for providing a good indication

of the effect the findings will have on the population. For these reasons, this sampling technique was ideal for this research study. In addition to the reasons stated, it is to be noted that the researcher works at the leadership level in one of the primary schools situated in QEC 0.03. This made it more feasible and cost effective for the research to be conducted within this geographical and regional setting.

The study was done within the geographical boundaries that make up the QEC. The QECs exist in every parish and Region of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI) as a network of support for teachers in the implementation of the NSC. Teachers are able to have their challenges and queries addressed as they collaborate with others in the QEC. The MOEYI places each school in a QEC. The QEC is a vehicle for answering to the expectations of stakeholders for a high standard of education delivered by competent and committed educators working in a system which requires them to be accountable.

The population within QEC 0.03 consisted of 10 schools. There are six primary schools each with its own principal, vice principal and staff, making a total of six principals, 12 vice principals, 120, teachers, and 48 CIT members. The criteria for choosing these primary schools were: 1) Location: Region (X); QEC 0.03. 2) CIT is present, and the school portrays the set of issues presented in the problem statement of the study. 3) Implementation of the NSC. All was done to ensure that the requirements outlined by Creswell and Clark (2011), were met. Creswell and Clark (2011) stated that in choosing subjects for study, they must possess knowledge of or exhibit the factors of interest or have experience specific to the problem being studied. The sample represented schools with functioning CITs (6 primary schools in which teams of teachers who play varied roles in ensuring that the curriculum is efficiently managed, were in place) and two of the schools are independent schools and two secondary schools.

Materials/Instrumentation of Research Tools

The researcher used several of the appropriate methods and instruments that have been prepared in the mixed methods approach to enable the aims and objectives of the research to be met. Questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observations were employed to gain the data needed to formulate the implications that the implementation of the NSC has for effective leadership in schools in the Jamaican setting, and for change to be efficiently and effectively carried out.

The data were collected using a teachers' questionnaire, a semi-structured interview schedule for principals, a semi-structured interview schedule for CIT leaders, A focus group discussion with CIT members, a checklist for the observation of CIT meetings and a checklist for document review (See Appendix for Instruments).

The design of mixed methods was chosen as a suitable vehicle for assessing and describing the study group. According to Creswell (2012), the use of both quantitative and qualitative of data enhances the interpretation of a research problem to a greater level than either of the two methodologies taken singly. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) in supporting the use of the mixed methodology approach asserted that a major advantage is that it allows the investigator to seek for solutions and explanations to both confirmatory and exploratory questions concurrently, and similarly, verifies information and the generation of theory at the same time.

The use of focus groups as a means of gathering qualitative data to support and extend data gathered by quantitative means, is acknowledged by Creswell (2012). The advantages listed by Creswell (2012) include (a) the ease of setting up, (b) the provision by the group

dynamic of more in-depth and specific data than other methods, and (c) the provision of a viable option when other methods will prove more difficult or unsuitable.

The data collected were integrated and presented in a manner that provided a rich, inclusive, and comprehensive picture of the factors at play. Statistical computations on the quantitative and qualitative data collected gave an indication of the level of influence and effect of school leadership and the CITs on the implementation of the NSC in Jamaica at the primary level, as exhibited by the sample of schools in QEC 0.03.

The data that were gathered from participants came from the varied sources used. First, questions were composed for a Teachers' Focus Group Discussion. This group comprised CIT members from the sample schools. Two Semi-structured interviews were also done: one with principals and the other with CIT leaders. Questionnaires were administered to 120 teachers from the selected schools. Answers were of fixed response (Strongly Agree, Undecided, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, and open-ended types). Documents were also reviewed, and Guidelines for Document Review were used by the researcher to guide the document review process. A Checklist for the Observation of CIT Meetings was used to collect information from the CIT meetings held by the sample schools. Active CITs hold regular weekly, biweekly or monthly meetings to keep teachers updated on the implementation of the curriculum and to render assistance to teachers needing support. During one or two meetings in each selected school, the researcher noted on the observation sheet, the occurrence or absence of behaviours, happenings and procedures that were expected at such meetings. For example, the use of an agenda and the production of minutes. Additional observations not already represented on the Checklist for the Observation of CIT Meetings were noted. The instruments and methods for data gathering were of both qualitative (document review, observations, interviews, focus group

discussions) and quantitative (questionnaires with fixed responses) types, making it a mixed methods study. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) asserted that a firm advantage in mixed methods research is that it allows the researcher to respond to both questions that require specific and those that require non-specific answers at the same time.

Authority to recruit the participants was sought from the Ministry of Education and the letter granting permission was sent as evidence to school boards and principals. The researcher visited the schools to meet with the principals to confirm that permission was given by the Ministry of Education and Information, presented the aims and objectives of the research and handed over consent forms for the participants to endorse, including the teachers that completed questionnaires.

Operational Definition of the Variables

Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT)

The Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) is a leadership group in primary and secondary schools, established as a response to the challenges at the policy implementation phase in primary schools to bring about organizational change. The effective implementation of the curriculum (including the NSC) is the remit of the CIT. This involves seeing to it that teachers engage with the curriculum in accordance with the attainment targets, aims and objectives as outlined by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information. (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). The CIT is an independent variable (IV).

National Standards Curriculum (NSC)

The National Standards Curriculum (NSC) is the curriculum currently (2022) being implemented in primary and secondary schools in Jamaica, covering Grades 1-9. It replaced the

Revised Primary Curriculum (RPC) and the Reform of Secondary (ROSE) Curriculum at Grades 7-9 (Ministry of Education, 2016). The NSC is an independent variable.

Organizational Change

For the purposes of this study, Organizational Change refers to transformation in the conduct of schools and the delivery of the curriculum that promote performance of the institutions. This is line with transformational leadership as espoused by Wang (2011). Organizational change is a dependent variable.

Study Procedures and Ethical Assurances

In compliance with standard practice in research, and as advised by Wilkinson (2001), ethical considerations were employed throughout the conduct of the research, covering all activities of the study. The wishes of subjects who decline to participate in the study were respected. Bryman (2012) posited that approval must be secured from the relevant authorities and proposed participants before research is conducted. Permission was obtained from all subjects before the procedures were carried out. Wellington (2000) supports this position, pointing out that ethical considerations must be taken into account before the researcher analyses documents.

The conduct of this research did not involve any vulnerable individuals, or any psychological experiments with its subjects. This stance was taken in an effort to avoid major ethical issues. Confidentiality, the main ethical dimension, was guaranteed by the researcher to the subjects. The signing of consent certificates gave tangible evidence that the subjects agreed to participate in the study, and accepted the efforts made to ensure confidentiality.

The procedure for gaining permission for the conduct of the study involved several steps. The first was to request authority to recruit the participants from the Ministry of Education. The

principals of the sample schools were then approached. The researcher visited the schools to administer the questionnaires, taking the permission to recruit participants received from the Ministry of Education, as well as a letter explaining the aim of the study. The researcher then met with the teachers and CIT members to explain the research to them. The consent form and certificate of consent were given to those who agreed to participate in the study. After signing the consent form, the questionnaires were distributed to the participants.

Further action to comply with ethical procedures involved keeping questionnaire respondents anonymous to the researcher. The matter of confidentiality was discussed with the participants both in writing and orally, at the start of the interview. All interviews were recorded using the Zoom application, and an audio voice recorder. The audio files were subsequently safely stored. All information with the possibility identifying the participants or the institution were removed from the transcripts and has not been included in this research. Codes have been employed where possible (for example Region X). The researcher sought permission from others whose work has been substantially utilized in this study, before it is published. The researcher ensured that the relevant persons were consulted, and that the principles guiding the research were accepted in advance by the participants.

Data Collection and Data Analysis Techniques

The purpose of this mixed methods research was to investigate the implementation of the NSC in a group of primary schools with particular emphasis on the roles of the school leadership personnel and of the CIT. The strategies used by leadership teams to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum, and the challenges encountered by teachers and principals in implementing the NSC were part of the investigation. This study also investigated the consequences of ineffective

leadership in the school setting. The implementation of education policies in the leadership of curriculum implementation and how change is managed were also elements considered.

The data were collected using a variety of instruments – a teachers' questionnaire, a semi-structured interview schedule for principals, a semi-structured interview schedule for CIT leaders, focus group interviews, a checklist for the observation of CIT meetings and a document review tool in the form of a checklist. The mixed methods research design was chosen for the study as a suitable vehicle for assessing and describing the study group. According to Creswell (2018), the use of both quantitative and qualitative of data enhances the interpretation of a research problem to a greater level than either of the two methodologies taken singly. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) in supporting the use of the mixed methodology approach asserted that a major advantage is that it allows the researcher to explore solutions and explanations to both confirmatory and exploratory questions concurrently, and similarly, verifies information and the generation of theory at the same time.

The use of focus groups as a means of gathering qualitative data to support and extend data gathered by quantitative means, is acknowledged by Wisdom and Creswell (2013). The advantages listed by Wisdom and Creswell (2013) include (a) the ease of setting up, (b) the provision by the group dynamic of more in-depth and specific data than other methods, and (c) the provision of a viable option when other methods will prove more difficult or unsuitable.

The data collected were integrated and presented in a manner that provided a comprehensive picture of the factors at play. Computations on the quantitative and qualitative data gathered, using NVivo and provided in total, an indication of the level of influence of school leadership and the CITs on the implementation of the NSC in Jamaica at the primary level, as exhibited by the sample of schools in QEC 0.03. NVivo was used for the import of the

qualitative data and to assist in facilitating the wider analysis of the data in this mixed methods study. Quantitative data were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. Attribute data for each participant were imported from SPSS into NVivo. The coded qualitative data were then explored for relationships with participants' attribute data (gender, years of service, etc.). The NVivo software also aided the synthesis of the qualitative and quantitative components of the collected data.

The Data Gathering Process

The data for this study were gathered from the following sources as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Sources of Data

Instrument/Method	Target Group	Type of Data
Teachers' Questionnaire	120 teachers of sample schools	Quantitative and qualitative
Semi-structured Interviews for Principals	Principals of the six sample schools	Qualitative
Semi-structured Interviews for CIT Leaders	CIT leaders of the six sample schools	Qualitative
Checklist from Focus Group Discussion by CIT Members	CIT members	Qualitative
Checklist from Document Review	CIT members (who will present the documents)	Quantitative
Checklist from Observation of CIT Meetings	CIT members	Quantitative

The questionnaires were administered to 120 teachers from the selected schools. The answers to the items were of fixed response (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and open-ended types). The reliability of the questionnaires was analysed and a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha=.948$ was obtained, indicating excellent reliability. Two sets of semi-structured interviews were done: one with principals and the other with CIT leaders. A checklist was

completed for a Focus Group Discussion by CIT members from the sample schools, and another was used by the researcher to guide the Document Review process. A checklist was also used for the observation of CIT Meetings held by the sample schools (See all instruments in the Appendix). The six primary schools that are selected are located in Region x, 0.03 which is in an urban area in Jamaica

This research employed both face to face and electronic methods for data gathering. The 120 questionnaires were delivered personally to the six (6) primary schools. Teachers completed the questionnaires at their leisure within the timeline given to them. Three of the interviews conducted with principals three were done on the Zoom platform and the other three (3) were conducted face to face. All six interviews were recorded. The focus group session which involved CIT members from the six schools was recorded. The interviews with the six Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) leaders were done on Zoom. The researcher conducted the observation of CIT meetings as a non-participant observer. The checklist for the review of documents used by CITs was completed as the researcher perused the documents for relevant information. It is pertinent in this study to place equal emphasis on both the wide survey conducted with the teachers and the selective in-depth interview data. Both types of data were gathered at the same time, meeting a regular practice in the triangulation procedure (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011).

Table 2 below, gives a summary of the processes that were engaged in the analysis of the data that were collected:

Table 2: Processes for the Analysis of Data

Type of Analysis	Relevant Instruments/Procedures
<u>Use of the SPSS Software</u>	Teachers' Questionnaire

Descriptive analysis (frequencies, means, etc.)	Checklist from Focus Group Discussion by CIT Members
	Checklist from Document Review
<u>Use of SPSS Software</u>	Teachers' Questionnaire
Inferential statistics (hypothesis testing, one-sample t-tests)	Checklist from Focus Group Discussion by CIT Members
	Checklist from Document Review
<u>Use of Nvivo Software</u>	
Recording and transcription	Semi-structured Interviews for Principals
Content analysis	Semi-structured Interviews for CIT Leaders
Coding	Teachers' Questionnaire (open-ended section)
Identification of themes and subthemes	
<u>Manual Coding and Recoding</u> (if/where necessary)	Semi-structured Interviews for Principals
	Semi-structured Interviews for CIT Leaders
Refinement of themes and subthemes	Teachers' Questionnaire (open-ended section)

Processes to be Used in the Analysis of the Data

The data were processed and analysed using the SPSS and NVivo software programmes. The SPSS programme was used to analyse the quantitative data (descriptive and inferential statistics) and the NVivo programme, the qualitative data. The two data sets (qualitative and quantitative) were merged at the appropriate stage. The bringing together of both types of data enabled a general interpretation of the results. The quantitative data analysis proceeded from descriptive (frequencies, means, etc.) to inferential analysis (hypothesis testing, one sample t-tests, etc.) in order to build a more refined analysis. Qualitative data analysis began with coding and the creation of categories (themes). Nvivo analysis was supported by manual coding, in which the elements of conventional and summative approaches of content analysis were used. As explained by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the conventional approach involves coding of

information derived directly from text data, while the summative approach involves counting and comparisons of key words used in the data collected from participants of the study.

Descriptive and Inferential Analysis

Quantitative data from the teachers' questionnaires, the checklist for the focus group discussion, and the checklist for document review were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26 to enable descriptive and inferential analysis. Before the input of the data to the statistical programme, the data were prepared by scoring (Creswell 2012). Numerical values were assigned to responses. For example, in the Likert scale responses to the items on the teachers' questionnaire, Strongly Agree was accorded a value of 5, Agree a value of 4, Undecided a value of 3, Disagree a value of 2 and Strongly Disagree a value of 1. Every variable analysed was scored and the scored data from the instruments were displayed on a grid and entered into the statistical programme, SPSS. Missing data, or data outside of the accepted range were identified and dealt with by being excluded from the analysis, since the small number of instances did not adversely affect the statistical procedure (Creswell 2012). **Factor Analysis was one of the procedures carried out on the quantitative data. Factor analysis is a statistical procedure that uses correlations amongst many observed variables to identify groups of variables / questions that show similar characteristics (Frost, 2023).**

Descriptive analysis of the data involved the calculation of measures of central tendency and variations by the statistical programme (e.g. frequencies, means, medians, modes, standard deviations). Inferential analysis involved hypothesis testing which was done for research questions 1 and 2. Research Question 1 asked: What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03? **and 2:** What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT

Leadership in the implementation of the NSC? **Hypothesis testing was also done for**

Research Question 1. The null and alternative hypotheses generated were: H_0 : All

teachers have same perceptions of NSC implementation and its leadership H_1 : All

teachers do not have same perceptions of NSC implementation and its leadership. For

Research Question 2, the null and alternative hypotheses were formulated as : H_0 : The

experiences of strategies of the CIT leadership in the implementation of the NSC are

similar, and H_1 : The experiences of strategies of the CIT leadership in the

implementation of the NSC are not similar setting of a confidence interval to identify the

range of scores accommodating the population mean, and calculation of effect size to assess

the strength of differences identified in the comparisons of the groups in the study (Creswell

2012). The programme generated graphs and tables which assisted in the interpretation of the

data.

Codifying and Categorising

Data from the semi-structured interviews for principals, the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were codified and categorised. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) describe the process of coding in qualitative data analysis as identifying a word or short phrase that effectively summarises and captures the essence of a portion of language-based or visual data. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) further explain that the data being coded are usually in the form of transcripts, participant observation field notes, journals, documents and articles in the realm of visual arts such as drawings, artefacts, photographs, video, Internet sites, e-mail correspondence, literature, and other such items. There are two cycles of coding. First cycle coding involves portions of data ranging widely in volume. The data can be a single word, a full paragraph, or an entire page of text, or even a stream of moving images. In second cycle coding

processes, the portions coded can be the same units as in the first cycle, more lengthy passages of text, analytic memos about the data, or a reconfiguration of the codes that have already been developed.

Charmaz (2008) describes coding as the “critical link” between the collection and interpretation of the data. To codify is to classify and order elements of data or evidence, so that they can be grouped, that is, to categorize. When codes are applied and reapplied to qualitative data, the process is termed codifying – a process that permits data to be “segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation” (Grbich, 2007, p. 21). Getting the data ready for coding involves recording and transcription of interviews, content analysis and identification of themes and subthemes. Even after the software is used to process the data, manual coding might be necessary. Bernard (2011) states that in this kind of analysis, one searches for patterns in data and for explanations as to the source and reasons for the patterns. Coding is therefore a method that enables the researcher to organize and group similarly coded data into categories or “families” sharing some characteristic or an emerging pattern. Detailed line-by-line coding is described by Charmaz (2008) as promoting a robust analysis that reduces the likelihood of colouring the responses of participants and the collected data in general, with the motives, fears, or unresolved issues of the researcher. Abbott (2004) vividly illustrates the process of coding by using the analogy of “decorating a room; you try it, step back, move a few things, step back again, try a serious reorganization, and so on” (p. 215).

NVivo was used for the import of the qualitative data and to assist in facilitating the wider analysis of the data in this mixed methods study. Quantitative data were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. Attribute data for each participant were imported from SPSS into NVivo. The coded qualitative data were then explored

for relationships with participants' attribute data (gender, years of service, etc.). The use of NVivo software proved beneficial in facilitating the synthesis of the qualitative and quantitative components of the collected data. This strengthened and enriched the findings of the study.

Summary

Problem and Purpose

In the absence of a sufficient number of in-depth studies on the implementation of the NSC and the impact of educational leadership on its implementation, the purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of the NSC in a group of primary schools, with particular emphasis on the role of the CIT in school leadership.

Research approach and design

The mixed method design, supported by the positive features described by workers such as Creswell and Plano Clark, (2011) and Tashakkori and Teddlie, (2003) was chosen to carry out this study. The mix of quantitative and qualitative methods gave a deep understanding of the issues at play in the implementation of the NSC, with particular emphasis on the role of the CIT in school leadership.

Population and sample of the research study

The population of the study was the 69 schools and their related administrative, teaching and student bodies in one of the geographical regions of the Ministry of Education Youth and Information. The sample comprised 6 schools, 48 CIT members and 120 teachers.

Materials/Instrumentation of Research Tools

A variety of tools was used to gather data. A questionnaire for teachers, a semi-structured interview schedule for principals, a semi-structured interview schedule for CIT leaders, a

checklist for observation of CIT meetings, a checklist for document review, and a focus group discussion.

A reliability analysis was carried out on the **Questionnaires for Teachers** comprising 36 Likert items. Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach excellent reliability, $\alpha = .948$ (applied scenario). Most items appeared to be worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the alpha if deleted. The two exceptions to this were items 29 and 33, which would increase the alpha to $\alpha = .95$ and $\alpha = .949$.

Table 3

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.948	.950	36

Operational Definition of the variables

Operational definitions were given for the variables: NSC, and CIT, and for the term Organizational Change.

Study procedures and ethical assurances

Ethical assurances of confidentiality, and permission for interviews, document reviews and related procedures were outlined. Personal wishes were respected in the data collection process.

Data collection and Analysis

The data to provide information on the effect of CIT and general leadership on the implementation of the NSC and how strategies, challenges, consequences and change affect this interplay, were collected by various means to address the quantitative and qualitative components of the data: a teachers' questionnaire which was circulated to 120 teachers, a semi-

structured interview for principals, a semi-structured interview for CIT leaders, a focus group discussion, a checklist for the observation of CIT meetings, and a checklist for document review.

The instruments used spanned both quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering. Support for the mixed methods design was provided by several workers such as Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) who indicate that this method enables the exploration of solutions to both confirmatory and exploratory issues, verifying information and generating theory simultaneously. Creswell (2018) adds that interpretation of the research problem is enhanced by this method. The ease of use of focus groups, together with its value in extending quantitative data is also supported by Wisdom and Cresswell (2018)

The analysis of the data was expedited by the SPSS, NVivo programmes and manual transcription, to address the quantitative (descriptive and inferential) and qualitative data, respectively. The processing of data by the NVivo software involved the critical links of coding and categorizing (Charmaz, 2001) and the recognition of patterns in the data (Bernard, 2011). The merging of information provided by the two data sets provide a rich source of information to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction to the Section

This study sought to fill the need to conduct a closer examination of the implementation of the NSC with a view to evaluating how leadership responds to the dynamic environment of the classroom and the wider school setting. The Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT), as part of the leadership for curriculum delivery, was instituted to provide a structure for the implementation of the curriculum to be carried out in accordance with Ministry of Education and Information policy guidelines. The CIT has the potential to serve a stabilising role as schools grapple with organizational change and the accompanying changes in curriculum implementation. The CIT's role in supporting the strategy of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information to effectively implement the NSC in primary schools, is pivotal. The functioning of the CIT enables the school leadership to implement the policy guidelines laid out by the Ministry of Education for NSC delivery (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018).

This study has been carried out in a set of primary level institutions and has focussed on the roles played by the school leadership, including the CIT, in NSC implementation. It explored the strategies used by leadership teams to deliver the NSC in an effective way. It also investigated the challenges that have become apparent in NSC delivery. This study also investigated the consequences which arise from the lack of involvement of leadership and staff members in influencing change within the institution. The objectives of the study involve the investigation of the approach used in embracing change in the NSC implementation using policy guidelines to be adhered to by primary schools. The study also sought to assess the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership.

An adapted version of the Professional Learning Communities Assessment – Revised (PLCA-R) instrument (Olivier et al., 2010) was used to provide data from teachers of the sample for quantitative treatment, to determine the degree of operation in the schools in relation to the attributes of a Professional Learning Community, which equates with the CIT in the Jamaican setting. For the quantitative discourse, descriptive (frequencies, percentiles, means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics were generated. Hypothesis testing was carried out and Cronbach's Alpha was computed on the data provided to determine the extent to which the implementation of the NSC is being carried out in response to the policy directives of the Ministry of Education Youth and Information. For the qualitative discourse, data collected from interviews held with principals and CIT leaders as well as a focus group discussion with the teachers, were coded and analysed to determine the factors that challenge and support NSC implementation. Supplemental information was provided from the examination of minutes of meetings of CITs and other documents presented.

The qualitative method was important to be represented because it is the one that represents the sensibilities and feelings of teachers and school leadership as they attempt to satisfy the expectations for the delivery, and the outcomes of the NSC as laid down by plans, policies, and mission statements. The approach supports and extends the data provided by the quantitative methods (Wisdom & Cresswell, 2013) providing the more affective and social aspects of the data. The sampling of the feelings and attitudes of the teachers towards the leadership and implementation of the NSC is important to this study since these have heavy implications for how teachers respond to the leadership in their schools as the effort is made to satisfy the demands for the implementation of the curriculum and for creating the student “product” of the curriculum as one fit for operating in the 21st century. Denzin and Lincoln

(2008) emphasize the importance of assessing the meanings given to phenomena by the participants themselves, and this is afforded and facilitated by the qualitative method. The qualitative and quantitative mix of methods of analysis was considered ideal for the substantial treatment of data collected for this study to explore strategies employed, challenges encountered, and perceptions shaped by school leadership (including CITs) and teachers as they strive to effectively implement the NSC.

Trustworthiness of the Data

Several efforts were made to ensure trustworthiness of the data collected in this study. Credibility was established by triangulation (Cresswell, 2012), as data from the different subjects of the study were examined to confirm corroboration of the ideas and experiences shared by the different individuals and groups in the study. An example of an experience which was expressed by CIT leaders and individual teachers, was the support rendered by the principal to teachers in the implementation of the curriculum. Evidence was presented in the responses made across several methods of data capture - the survey instruments, interviews, and focus group discussions. Principal/School support emerged as a strong theme in the examination of the Nvivo wordles and in the manual examination of the transcripts from the interviews and focus group discussions.

A concerted effort was made to give a clear and in-depth description of the methods used in the collection of data in this study. If this study were to be repeated, the clear and logical process followed would be easily replicated. The clarity and full disclosure of the data collection process support the affirmation of the effort to make the process dependable and therefore, trustworthy. It is however admitted that in statistical procedures, some margin of error is to be expected, and some limitations apply. Limitations, which are identified by the researcher

(Creswell 2012), outline any potential weaknesses that might be present in the study. This gives credence to the study as the extent to which generalisation of the findings can be made can be determined. The limitations of this study are outlined in Chapter 5.

Reliability and Validity of the Data

A reliability analysis was executed on the Questionnaire for Teachers which was comprised of 36 Likert items. Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach excellent reliability, $\alpha = .948$ (applied scenario). The majority of the items could be confidently retained, because deleting them would result in a decrease in the alpha measurement. The two exceptions to this were items 29 and 33, which would increase the alpha to $\alpha = .95$ and $\alpha = .949$. (See Appendix for Item-Total Statistics)

A validity analysis was also carried out on the Questionnaires for Teachers. Construct (Convergent) validity: Spearman rank correlation, was run to examine the strength of the relationship for the thirty-six questions. The strength of correlation was interpreted as high $R_s (104) > 0.7$, $p < .05$, moderate $R_s (104) < .7$, $p < .05$, low $R_s (104)$, $p < 0.4$) and very low $R_s (104) < \pm .19$, $p < .05$. (See Appendix for statistical data of validity)

Results of Findings – Quantitative Study

The variables of the study. The independent variables included the demographic variables of gender, age, educational attainment, and years of experience. The statements within the research study are aligned with the related Research Questions (RQs) one and two: 1) What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the NSC and the leadership in QEC 0.03? And 2) What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT leadership in the implementation of the NSC? Survey Questions (SQs) also appear on the Questionnaires for teachers.

The labelling of the variables. A code book which contained the list of variables and how each would be named or scored in the responses from the instruments (Creswell, 2012), guided the coding for the statistical analysis. In terms of the demographic variable of gender, males were given a value of 0 and females, a value of 1. Age was denoted in the categories of 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, and 55-64. Educational attainment was labelled EDA and consisted of two levels: Teachers' College/University level. Teaching experience (TEX) consisted of different levels, starting at 1-5, and going up to more than 30 years. The responses for the Likert scale used for the Teachers' instrument were scored Strongly Disagree (SD) =1, Disagree (D) =2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, Strongly Agree (SA) =5. The other variables relevant to the statistical analysis are: CIT, an independent variable, NSC, an independent variable, and organisational change, a dependent variable.

This chapter revisits the research questions and discusses background characteristics, school demographic factors, independent and dependent variables, and the statistical analysis of the research questions. The chapter will close with a summary of the results.

Background characteristics. The background characteristics of the sample that were investigated were: the demographic variables, gender and age, and the academic variables of educational attainment and teaching experience. An examination of the graphs, and tables shows that there was a heavy representation of females. The concentration of the age composition around the 18-64 age group, the high representation of participants having college diploma/degrees, and the majority of participants having university degrees 64%, are also revealed. Tables showing the statistical details are laid out in the ensuing pages, and graphs are shown in the Appendix.

Teachers' demographic factors. Table 1 and figure 1 represent the gender characteristics of teachers. It is evident that female participants account for the majority of respondents - 85% as against males - 11%.

Table 4

Teacher Participants' Gender Characteristics

		N	N %
Gender	No Response	4	4%
	Male	12	11%
	Female	90	85%
	Total	106	100%

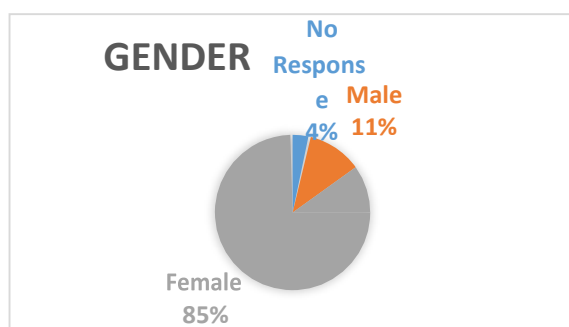
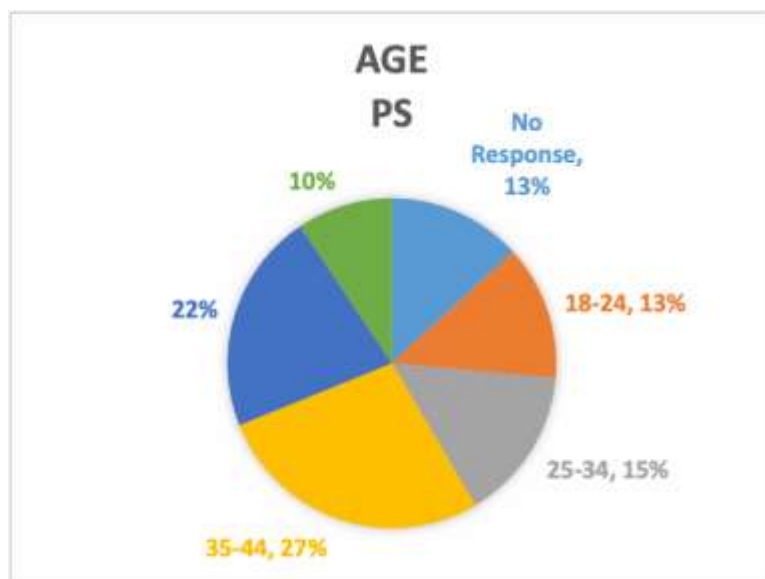


Figure 1

Table 5 and Figure 2 outline the age characteristics of teacher participants. The majority of the participants is in the 35-44 age range (27%) followed by the 45-54 (22%) age range, then the under 25-34 (15%) age range, followed by the 18-24 (13%) age range and no response (13%). The lowest segment in the age category is the 55-64 and over range (9%).

Table 5*Teachers' Participants' Age Characteristics*

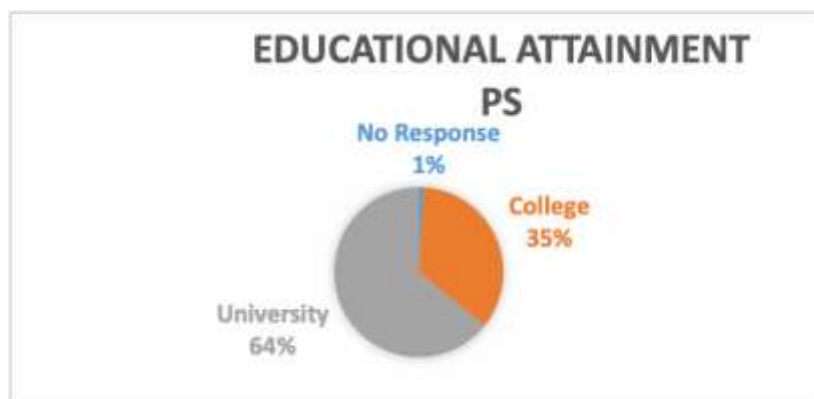
		N	N%
Age Group	No Response	14	13%
	18-24	14	13%
	25-34	16	15%
	35-44	29	27%
	45-54	23	22%
	55-64	10	9%
	Total	106	100%

**Figure 2**

Educational Attainment. The educational attainment characteristics of teacher participants are outlined in Table 6 and Figure 3. The largest academic cohort comprised participants with a university degree (68 of the 106 participants, or 64%). The remaining 36% of participants was comprised of 35% with college degrees, and 1% no response.

Table 6*Teacher Participants' Educational Attainment Characteristics*

		N	N%
Your	No Response	1	1%
highest	College	37	35%
Educational	University	68	64%
Attainment.	Total	106	100%

**Figure 3**

Years of Experience and Employment. The academic characteristics of teachers, years of experience and employment are presented in Table 7. Table 7 shows that the majority of participants' years of experience is bi-modal 1-5 (22%) or 16-20 (21%) is reasonable experience and 1-5 (21%) are fairly new teachers. Data on the teacher participants' employment characteristics show that the majority of participants (32%) have been employed for at least 1-5 years. The distribution of years of employment for the remaining 68% of participants show that 17% have been employed 16-20 years, 26% have been employed 6-15 years, 4% have been employed 21-25 years, 10% have been employed 26-30 years, and 3% have been employed for more than 31 years. There was no response from 8% of the teachers.

Table 7*Teacher Participants' Years of Experience and Employment*

Exp. Group		Years of Experience		Years of Employment	
		N	N%	N	N%
	No Response	6	6%	8	8%
	1-5	22	21%	34	32%
	6-10	12	11%	14	13%
	11-15	13	12%	14	13%
	16-20	22	21%	18	17%
	21-25	11	10%	4	4%
	26-30	15	14%	11	10%
	31+	5	5%	3	3%
	Total	106	100%	106	100%

Training Received. Training received in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) and training in the operation of the Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT), years of experience and employment are presented in Table 8. Table 8 shows N=81 (76%) received training in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) and N=20 (19)% did not receive training in the implementation of the NSC. N=25 (24%) received training in the operation of the CIT and N= 69 (65%) did not receive training.

Table 8*Training Received in the Implementation of the NSC and the Operation of CIT*

		Received Training in the Implementation of the NSC		Received Training in the Operation of the CIT	
		N	N%	N	N%
Received Training	No Response	5	5%	12	11%
	Yes	81	76%	25	24%
	No	20	19%	69	65%
	Total	106	100%	106	100%

The questionnaire that was administered to teachers consists of 36 Likert-type items (statements), with 6 of these items allowing space for additional comments. The responses would be used to answer two of the Research Questions – Number 1, and Number 2. Scale: Strongly Disagree (SD) =1, Disagree (D) =2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, Strongly Agree (SA) =5. The questionnaire was administered to 120 teachers and out of the 120 teachers only 106 teachers completed the questionnaire from the 6 primary schools in the study. The questions were grouped into factors for easier interpretation of the results.

Factor Analysis is a statistical procedure that uses the correlations amongst many observed variables to identify groups of variables/questions that show similar characteristics (Frost, 2023). These groups are called factors and can be named by considering the subject or other concepts assessed by the groups of questions. The Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis was conducted on the responses to thirty-six (36) survey questions and the analysis showed alignment of the initial questions to seven (7) factors. The results of the factor loadings question by factor are in the Appendix. (Note that Question 29 was omitted from the analysis as this question has 43.4% ‘undecided’ and 20.8% ‘omit’ with a total of 64.2% not agreeing nor disagreeing).

Table 9 shows the results of the items on the Teacher Questionnaire assigned through the results of a Factor Analysis to Research Question 1 - **What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03?** Two factors were identified for Research Question 1.

Factor 1: Thirteen (13) questions on the survey, (TQ18 through TQ28, TQ30 and TQ31) have their highest loading on Factor 1. Factor 1 explains 22% of the variance in the answers to the

survey. This is the highest amount of variance explained by any of the seven factors. The questions that are grouped for this Factor ask about staff commitment (Q20) and collaboration to achieve instructional goals (e.g. Q18, Q22, Q23, Q21, & Q25). Question 22 (0.843). Question 20 (0.838) and Question 21 (0.834) have the highest factor loadings on this factor.

For Factor 1, a low of 54.7% (TQ31) to 74.52% (TQ27) of the respondents agree (A + SA), with the question statements. The mean scores range from 3.35 (TQ31) to 3.79 (TQ20).

Factor 3: Eight questions on the Teacher Survey, TQ9, TQ11 to TQ14, TQ16, TQ17, & TQ32, have their highest loading on Factor 3. Factor 3 explains 11% of the variance in the answers to the survey. The questions here gather information about other aspects of staff shared values and the delivery of the curriculum. Question 16 (0.758), and Question 13 (0.600) have the highest loading on this factor.

All of the questions on Factor 3 have over 53% agreement (A + SA). TQ13 has 74.4% of respondent agreeing with the statement, while 53.8% of persons agreed with TQ16. The mean scores range from 3.29 (TQ17) to 3.81 (TQ12).

Table 9

Research Question 1: Teachers' Perception of Aspects of NSC Curriculum Implementation & its Leadership

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale points						Mean	Std. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	U	A	SA		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
FACTOR 1 – Staff commitment and collaboration									

Research Question 1: Teachers' Perception of Aspects of NSC Curriculum Implementation & its Leadership

Questionnaire for teachers

No	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale points						Mean	Std. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	U	A	SA		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
F1TQ18	The <u>diversity of the needs of students</u> is an area that staff members <u>work collaboratively</u> to attend to.	3.8	2.8	4.7	23.6	50.9	14.2	3.58	1.121
F1TQ19	Many opportunities exist for teachers to <u>work collaboratively</u> and <u>communicate freely</u> .	3.8	2.8	12.3	18.9	46.2	16.0	3.49	1.205
F1TQ20	School staff members are committed to programs that <u>enhance learning</u> .	3.8	1.9	2.8	19.8	50.9	20.8	3.75	1.113
F1TQ21	Staff members <u>use multiple sources of data</u> to assess the effectiveness of instructional practices.	2.8	1.9	6.6	27.4	42.5	18.9	3.61	1.100

Research Question 1: Teachers' Perception of Aspects of NSC Curriculum Implementation & its Leadership

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale points						Mean	Std. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	U	A	SA		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
F1TQ22	Staff members <u>collaboratively analyze student work</u> to improve teaching and learning.	5.7	0.9	5.7	18.9	44.3	24.5	3.69	1.253
F1TQ23	Staff members often provide <u>feedback on instructional practices to peers.</u>	3.8	1.9	1.9	24.5	47.2	20.8	3.72	1.111
F1TQ24	Staff members <u>feel at ease to share</u> ideas and suggestions to improve student achievement.	2.8	1.9	6.6	18.9	45.3	24.5	3.75	1.128
F1TQ25	Staff members work together to <u>examine student</u> and work to share and improve instructional practices.	2.8	0.9	5.7	23.6	48.1	18.9	3.70	1.053
F1TQ26	Opportunities exist for <u>coaching</u> and mentoring.	4.7	3.8	5.7	25.5	50.0	10.4	3.43	1.171

Research Question 1: Teachers' Perception of Aspects of NSC Curriculum Implementation & its Leadership

Questionnaire for teachers

No	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale points						Mean	Std. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	U	A	SA		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
F1TQ27	Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and <u>share the results</u> of their practices.	5.7	1.9	2.8	15.1	60.4	14.2	3.65	1.171
F1TQ28	Care, trust and respect exist in the <u>relationships among staff and students.</u>	9.4	2.8	7.5	15.1	48.1	17.0	3.41	1.433
F1TQ30	The achievement of students and staff is recognized and celebrated as a regular activity in our school.	2.8	1.9	8.5	20.8	44.3	21.7	3.67	1.136
F1TQ31	School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed <u>change</u> into the culture of the school	3.8	2.8	10.4	28.3	47.2	7.5	3.35	1.104

FACTOR 3 – Delivery of Curriculum

Research Question 1: Teachers' Perception of Aspects of NSC Curriculum Implementation & its Leadership

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale points						Mean	Std. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	U	A	SA		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
F3TQ9	Stakeholders feel <u>comfortable to share in</u> being responsible and accountable for <u>student learning</u> .	1.9	2.8	12.3	24.5	49.1	9.4	3.44	1.043
F3TQ11	Decisions about the <u>delivery of the curriculum</u> are made on the basis of <u>shared values</u> and norms of behaviour.	2.8	2.8	4.7	21.7	51.9	16.0	3.65	1.078
F3TQ12	Decisions on <u>curriculum delivery</u> are congruent with the <u>values, mission and vision</u> of the school.	0	0.9	6.6	20.8	53.8	17.9	3.81	.841
F3TQ13	School goals focus on the “whole” child, not just their academic achievement.	2.8	0.9	6.6	15.1	57.5	17.0	3.75	1.033
F3TQ14	The vision statement of the school guides all policies and	4.7	1.9	5.7	26.4	45.3	16.0	3.54	1.172

Research Question 1: Teachers' Perception of Aspects of NSC Curriculum Implementation & its Leadership

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale points						Mean	Std. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	U	A	SA		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
	programmes supported and implemented.								
F3TQ16	<u>Data are used</u> to set priorities and to come to a consensus on desired actions.	2.8	1.9	10.4	31.1	41.5	12.3	3.43	1.078
F3TQ17	Innovations and strategies brought about by the <u>collaborative action of staff</u> members are put into practice so that the intended benefits might be gained	6.6	3.8	7.5	25.5	49.1	7.5	3.29	1.242
F3TQ32	<u>Collaborative work</u> of staff members is time-tabled and executed.	3.8	3.8	16.0	17.0	43.4	16.0	3.41	1.256

RQ 2: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?

Table 10 shows the descriptive statistics of the responses to the questions on the Teacher Survey that were assigned, through the results of a Factor Analysis, to Research Question 2 - **What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?**

The questions were assigned to four Factors.

Factor 2. Seven (7) questions on the survey, (TQ01, TQ02, TQ03, TQ05, TQ06, TQ08, and TQ10) have their highest loading on Factor 2. Factor 2 explains 13.39% of the variance in the answers to the survey. The questions that are grouped for this Factor are about the opportunities staff members have to be included in the change process (see TQ05, TQ03, TQ01). Question 05 (0.860), Question 01 (0.764) and Question 02 (0.740) have the highest loadings on this factor. For Factor 2, 44.4% (TQ05) to 68.8% (TQ06) of the respondents agree (A + SA), with the statements. The mean scores range from 3.07 (TQ05) to 3.60 (TQ06).

Factor 4: Three questions on the Teacher Survey, TQ04, TQ07, & TQ33 have their highest loading on Factor 4. Factor 4 explains 4.95% of the variance in the survey. The questions here gather information about teacher support in terms of principal's problem-solving skills, access to mentoring for leadership, and access to Information Technology and instructional material. The loading on this factor are 0.542 (TQ04), 0.580 (TQ07) and 0.572 (TQ33). All of the questions on Factor 4 have less than 50% (42.4% to 46.2%) of persons agreeing (A + SA) with the statements. The mean scores range from 3.05 (TQ33) to 3.15 (TQ04).

Factor 5: Three questions on the Teacher Survey, TQ34, TQ35, & TQ36 have their highest loading on Factor 5. Factor 5 explains 4.86% of the variance in the survey. The questions here gather information about the flow of communication between the school

leadership with the school and wider educational community, principal's ability to get support for student learning and data for planning from the community. The loadings for this factor are 0.451 (TQ34), 0.554 (TQ35) and 0.789 (TQ36). One question (TQ36) grouped with Factor 5 has less than 50% of persons agreeing (A + SA) with the statements, while the other two questions in the group have 54.7% & 57.5% of persons agreeing. The mean scores range from 3.21 (TQ36) to 3.39 (TQ35).

Factor 6: Only one question on the Teacher Survey, TQ15, has its highest loading on Factor 6. Factor 6 explains 3.66% of the variance in the survey. This question gathers information about stakeholder participation in setting standards for student achievement. The loading on this factor is 0.798 for TQ15. TQ15 also has a loading of 0.512 with Factor 3. TQ15 on Factor 6 has 59.4% of persons agreeing (A + SA) with the statement. The mean score is 3.45.

Table 10

Research Question 2: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?									
<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No.	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale						Mean	St. Dev.
		Omit	SD	D	points	U	A	SA	
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
FACTOR 2 – Opportunities for change									
F2TQ1	Teachers are always <u>included</u> in the discussions and decisions about important school matters.	0	12.3	16.0	19.8	41.5	10.4	3.22	1.203

Research Question 2: **What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?**

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No.	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale						Mean	St. Dev.
		O mit	S D	D points	U	A	S A		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
F2TQ2	The principal takes into account the advice of staff members in making decisions.	0	4.7	16.0	18.9	50.9	9.4	3.44	1.024
F2TQ3	Staff members have access to key information for school use	0.9	2.8	17.0	29.2	43.4	6.6	3.31	.989
F2TQ5	Staff members are given the opportunity to lobby for and begin the process of <u>change</u> .	2.8	9.4	14.2	29.2	40.6	3.8	3.07	1.157
F2TQ6	The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation.	0	2.8	10.4	17.9	61.3	7.5	3.60	.880
F2TQ8	<u>Decisions are not made by leadership</u> in an autocratic manner, but through established channels of communication with committees, and subject and grade level groups.	0.9	10.4	11.3	22.6	52.8	1.9	3.22	1.087
F2TQ10	There is a culture of <u>collaboration</u> and sharing of values among staff members.	1.9	2.8	16.0	22.6	45.3	11.3	3.41	1.094
FACTOR 4 – Teacher Support									
F4TQ4	The principal is able to detect problems before they escalate and addresses areas where	3.8	6.6	13.2	30.2	39.6	6.6	3.15	1.178

Research Question 2: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No.	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale						Mean	St. Dev.
		O mit	S D	D points	U	A	S A		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
	his/her intervention is needed.								
F4TQ7	Staff members are coached and nurtured to be leaders.	1.9	6.6	22.6	26.4	34.9	7.5	3.08	1.147
F4TQ33	Staff members have adequate access to information technology and instructional materials.	1.9	7.5	27.4	17.9	37.7	7.5	3.05	1.198
FACTOR 5 – Flow of Communication									
F5TQ34	School leadership retain the help of resource persons to provide support for student learning.	3.8	4.7	13.2	20.8	46.2	11.3	3.35	1.211
F5TQ35	Communication occurs without hindrance between school leadership and all levels of the education system, including head office personnel, parents, and community members.	1.9	5.7	15.1	22.6	38.7	16.0	3.39	1.200
F5TQ36	Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes.	2.8	6.6	15.1	30.2	33.0	12.3	3.21	1.209
FACTOR 6 – Stakeholder Participation									
F6TQ15	Stakeholders of the school participate in setting the high	4.7	1.9	9.4	24.5	46.2	13.2	3.45	1.180

Research Question 2: **What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?**

<i>Questionnaire for teachers</i>									
No.	Item	Percent (%) of teachers responding to scale						Mean	St. Dev.
		O mit	S D	D points	U	A	S A		
		0	1	2	3	4	5		
	<u>standards expected,</u> which redound to student achievement.								

Hypothesis testing. The study also tested the hypotheses on the two quantitative research questions. A hypothesis, like a research question, makes a purpose statement more precise or narrow (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Hypothesis testing also makes a prediction about the results of relating variables. A null hypothesis predicts that there is no significant difference between the variables, as against an alternative hypothesis, which predicts that there will be a significant difference between the variables under study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03? And RQ 2: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC? Survey question 36 Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes was used for the **testing the hypothesis for RQ 1 and survey question 6** The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation was used for testing the hypothesis for RQ 2.

RQ1. The null hypothesis stated All teachers have same perceptions of NSC implementation and its leadership and the alternative hypothesis was that all teachers' do not have same perceptions of NSC implementation and its leadership.

RQ 2. The experiences of strategies of the CIT leadership in the implementation of the NSC are similar. The experiences of strategies of the CIT leadership in the implementation of the NSC are not similar

. All assumptions were adhered to when conducting the Kruskal Wallce H test.

Assumption #1: Dependent variables were measured at the ordinal level.

Assumption #2: Independent variables had two or more categorical, independent groups.

Assumption #3: Independence of observation was adhered to.

Assumption #4: Distribution shapes violated each other's pattern, in that, not all the shapes of the distributions followed the same pattern. When such an instance occurs the Krushal Wallace H test allows a comparison of the mean ranks to be made.

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03?

N_0 : All teachers have same perceptions of NSC implementation and its leadership

H_1 : All teachers do not have same perceptions of NSC implementation and its leadership

Table 11-14. A Kruskal-Wallis H test indicates statistically significant difference of the availability of data for planning programmes, $\chi^2(5) = 13.715$, $p = .018$, with a mean rank score of 44.20 for Primary School 1, 48.75 for Primary School 2, 74.83 for Primary School 3, 49.23 for Primary School 4, 47.63 for Primary School 5 and 53.91 for Primary School 6.

We fail to accept the Null Hypothesis. A Post hoc test was conducted with Bonferroni correction ($p=.003$) to eliminate type 1 error. Statistical significance revealed that Primary

School 1 (Corporate Area school) differs from Primary school 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. More specifically the main difference occurs with Primary School 3.

Close inspection of the descriptive tables and chart for Primary schools 1 and 3, and the qualitative elements of this research indicate that in most instances, staff members had data easily available to them wherever they were needed for planning programmes.

Table 11

Test Statistics^{a,b}

Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes.

Kruskal-Wallis H	13.715
Df	5
Asymp. Sig.	0.018

a. Kruskal Wallis Test
b. Grouping Variable: Primary Schools

Table 12

Ranks			
Primary Schools		N	Mean Rank
Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they	Primary School 1	20	44.20

are needed for planning programmes.	Primary School 2	20	48.75
	Primary School 3	20	74.83
	Primary School 4	15	49.23
	Primary School 5	15	47.63
	Primary School 6	16	53.91
	Total	106	

Table 13**Test Statistics**

Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes.

Mann-Whitney U	85.000
Wilcoxon W	295.000
Z	-3.219
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.001 ^b

a. Grouping Variable: Primary Schools

b. Not corrected for ties.

Table 14

Each node shows the sample average rank of Primary schools

Sample 1 -Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.
Primary Sch 1 - Primary Sch 3	-30.625	9.380	-3.265	.001	.016

Primary Sch 2 - Primary Sch 3	-26.075	9.380	-2.780	.005	.082
Primary Sch 5 - Primary Sch 3	27.192	10.132	2.684	.007	.109
Primary Sch 4 - Primary Sch 3	25.592	10.132	2.526	.012	.173
Primary Sch 6 - Primary Sch 3	20.919	9.949	2.102	.036	.533
Primary Sch 1 - Primary Sch 2	-4.550	9.380	-.485	.628	1.000
Primary Sch 1 - Primary Sch 4	-5.033	10.132	-.497	.619	1.000
Primary Sch 1 - Primary Sch 5	-3.433	10.132	-.339	.735	1.000
Primary Sch 2 - Primary Sch 4	-.483	10.132	-.048	.962	1.000
Primary Sch 1 - Primary Sch 6	-9.706	9.949	-.976	.329	1.000
Primary Sch 5 - Primary Sch 2	1.117	10.132	.110	.912	1.000
Primary Sch 2 - Primary Sch 6	-5.156	9.949	-.518	.604	1.000
Primary Sch 5 - Primary Sch 4	1.600	10.832	.148	.883	1.000
Primary Sch 4 - Primary Sch 6	-4.673	10.661	-.438	.661	1.000
Primary Sch 5 - Primary Sch 6	-6.273	10.661	-.588	.556	1.000

Note: Each row tests the null hypothesis that sample 1 and sample 2 distributions are the same.

Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Significance values have been adjusted by the Bonferroni correction for multiple tests

RQ 2: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?

H₀: The experiences of strategies of the CIT leadership in the implementation of the NSC are similar

H₁: The experiences of strategies of the CIT leadership in the implementation of the NSC are not similar

Tables 15 and 16. Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was no statistical significant difference with delegating responsibilities and giving appropriate recognition when staff show innovation, $\chi^2(5) = 3.765$, $p = 0.584$, with a mean rank score of 47.28 for Primary school 1, 56.75 for Primary School 2, 57.85 for Primary School 3, 60.63 for Primary School 4, 49.00 for Primary School 5 and 49.31 for Primary School 6.

We fail to reject the Null Hypothesis and conclude that principals delegated responsibilities and gave recognition when staff showed innovation across all primary schools mentioned in this research.

Table 15

Ranks		N	Mean Rank
Primary Schools			
The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation.	Primary School 1	20	47.28
	Primary School 2	20	56.75
	Primary School 3	20	57.85
	Primary School 4	15	60.63
	Primary School 5	15	49.00
	Primary School 6	16	49.31
	Total	106	

Table 16**Test Statistics^{a,b}**

The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation.

Kruskal-Wallis H	3.765
Df	5
Asymp. Sig.	0.584

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Primary Schools

Results of Findings – Qualitative Study

RQs 3 and 4 directed the qualitative aspect of the research:

3. How do the circumstances surrounding the types and styles of educational leadership practised by members of the CIT affect organisational change?
4. How do the role and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in the institution?

Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Research Questions 3 and 4

The participants. Qualitative data (relating to RQs 3 and 4) were extracted from the information supplied by a purposive sample of 106 teachers out of 120 from the larger sample used for the quantitative analysis. Six principals, six CIT leaders and eight CIT members, for which a focus group interview was done, participated in the qualitative exercise. Demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in the Appendix.

Issues addressed. The principal and CIT leaders' interviews and the focus group discussion addressed the same major items, which were: 1. The CIT's assistance in NSC

implementation, 2. The willingness of teachers to take risks, 3. The opportunities for teachers to take their challenges to the leadership, 4. The effect of the arrangement of the facilities, 5. The response of leadership to Ministry of Education, Youth and Information policy directives, 6. Equipping teachers for effective NSC implementation, 7. The strategies being used to implement the NSC more effectively in the schools, 8. External and internal support factors for the NSC, 9. The rendering of assistance by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information in the implementation of the NSC.

Thematic analysis of RQ3 (qualitative). How do the circumstances surrounding the types and styles of educational leadership practised by members of the CIT affect organisational change? Information for this question was provided by interviewing six principals, six CIT leaders and conducting a focus group discussion with six teachers.

Principals and teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which each of the items addressed in the questions asked were exhibited in their schools, and to indicate whether there were challenges encountered by principals, CIT leaders and teachers in implementing the NSC. The participants were also asked to contribute information on any other factors which support or hinder the operation of the CIT and the leadership of their schools in the implementation of the NSC.

The interviews of six CIT leaders and four of the principals were conducted on the Zoom platform. These interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study and a conscious effort was made to reduce any bias during the interviews. The focus group discussions and two of the principal interviews were done face to face. These interviews were recorded with an Android voice recorder, and for transcription both Otter Ai – Voice Meeting Notes and Real – Time

Transcription software and manual transcription were utilized. The identification of themes and subthemes was done by both a manual examination of the scripts and the use of the NVivo software. Appendix 1 displays the table with the themes and Sub themes and Nvivo analysis of the principal, CIT interviews, and Focus Group discussions. Appendix 2 gives the Leadership styles and strategies identified from the principal and CIT leaders' interviews and focus group discussion for research question three (3).

Leadership and Strategies. Leadership and Strategies remained as a theme for the identification of subthemes which would detail the types and styles of educational leadership practised by members of the CIT and how they affect organisational change. The following subthemes for leadership arose from an examination of the NVivo scripts and a manual examination of the scripts of the interviews and focus group discussion: Theme 2 Leadership: CIT Leader Support, Leadership Style and Support of Principal. Theme 5 Strategies: Strategies, feedback, frequent meetings, on-going training and planning sessions. Excerpts from the interview and discussion are presented as they provided the codes to indicate the derivation of the subthemes.

Leadership. Leadership was a theme emerged from the interviews and focus group discussion the subthemes are CIT leader support, leadership style and support from principal.

CIT Leader Support. A member from the focus group shared, "We the CIT team work closely with the assessment team. In that whatever test we're going to give the children for assessment we would normally pass them on to the team to ensure that they approve it". Another member from a focus group discussion reported, "we are all the while being that driving force in making the NSC work. So we go to the common planning, and we assisted the teachers, with peer teaching and modelling the different strategies within the new curriculum, providing the

resources available and lend support to the teachers who don't have it. So we are there we stand as a group. Because we know that together we can achieve great things. Both the CIT and the school leadership have really provided that support to address the responsive policies and guidelines of the Ministry of Education effectively, and I'm going to reiterate again, we stand as a group and provide the support necessary for us to work together and build together”.

Leadership Style. A principal shared, “implementing the curriculum, as a principal, as an instructional leader, you have to see what is being taught in the classroom. I don't know the curriculum is being taught from unless I see what the lesson plans look like when I visited classrooms to see”. A member from the focus group discussion reported, “not that she's going to bully you or anything, but she has a way of putting it so nicely, we just can't refuse. She has like a transformational leadership style at times, she includes everyone in the decision making and she's actually supportive of her staff more”. Another member from a focus group discussion shared, “we know in every organization there's a need for a mixed approach, so that is what is used at our school. Because no one leadership style will work, it depended on the nature, what is it about then you choose which one”.

Support from Principal. A member of focus group discussion remarked, “He sells the school and the curriculum itself, as he is curriculum-based principal. He pushes the curriculum and he's there with us right through the process. He will not come to a meeting and just sit down; he would make known his intentions and suggestions to the teachers in expressing what's in his mind and what he needs us to know”. Another member of the focus group stated, “She may even come in the classroom observe and see if there's something she can assist with; or if we go to her about something, you know, she'll try; if it is materials, she tries to make it although we might not get everything that they asked for”.

Strategies. Strategies was a theme that emerged from the interviews and focus group discussion the subthemes are: feedback, frequent meetings, on-going training, planning sessions and approach/strategies.

Feedback. A member from the focus group discussion shared, “the team would provide feedback to the teachers on how to improve the test instrument using the Depth of Knowledge approach”. Another member from another focus group reported, “At our monthly meeting, we asked for a report from each grade, and they know we provide them with feedback. So, the report will be from the different subject areas for Grades 1-2-3 and would report on the math, how the math is being taught at the grade levels, along with Language Arts and Integrated Studies. For grades 4-5-6, those subject areas how does the teacher implement or how does the teacher execute? So those reports will come to us at our meetings, and then we will give suggestions and feedback to them so they can take it to their various grades’ meetings”. A principal stated, “I’ll be visiting, see what is happening give a feedback, of course leading up to the final appraisal”.

Frequent Meetings. A member from the focus group reported, “As a team, we do have meetings with the teachers, and we send out messages via WhatsApp to the different groups. We also share lesson plans and give them tips on best practices”. A principal shared, “What happens at our institution is that we have grade meeting on Thursday afternoon, a planning session”. Another principal stated, “Parent Teachers meeting, you speak to the parents about the School Improvement Plan. And so, what I do at the beginning of the school year is to share snippets of the school improvement about the objectives, and you tie the objectives to where you want the students go. So, the objectives you talk about, you know, the

reading levels of the students, you talk about the projection for the school year, and where you want the students to go, where you want the school to go, and so on”.

On-going Training. A principal shared, “I believe more support is needed in terms of training. You know, I think that more training is needed. I think, while the curriculum was rolled out, I believe that the curriculum is good. Because this is where we need to go in terms of building critical thinking and so on. I believe that more training is necessary and needed. It can't be too much. I think that lecturing was not enough”. A member from the focus group discussion reported, “We still need the training in order to be more effective in our approach, you know, to help these teachers”. Another focus group discussion member stated, “We think the CIT would need training because all we were given is the manual from the Ministry of Education. If somebody could come in and as I said, we don't know if anybody at the school has ever received the CIT training”.

Planning sessions. A principals shared,” there's one hour every week where planning is done, we look at where we are at with the curriculum. And then we plan accordingly”. A member of the focus reported, “We have common planning time, which is done every Thursday. During planning we plan the activities for the week or the next week. In addition, during that time the teachers and junior teachers are allowed to relate the problem that they're having in teaching; looking at strengths and weaknesses and then decide based on that they plan for next week”. Another member from a focus group shared, “We go to the common planning, and assist the teachers with peer teaching and modelling the different strategies within the new curriculum”.

Strategies. A CIT leader stated, “Strategy at the classroom level. We have best practices at school. And oftentimes, the five C's were very critical in using that because we use up the

students' skills that they have to get the curriculum". Another CIT leader reported, "The most effective strategies are what I'll be using in the implementation of the NSC while understanding the need for change in this critical time and being open minded to the process of change in order to effectively meet the needs of the students in my care".

Thematic analysis of RQ 4 (qualitative). How do the role and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in these institutions? Information for this question was provided by interviewing six principals, six CIT leaders and conducting a focus group discussion with six teachers.

Principals and teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which each of the items addressed in the questions asked were exhibited in their schools, and to indicate whether there are challenges encountered by Principals, CIT leaders, teachers and principals in implementing the NSC. The participants were also asked to contribute information on any other factors which support or hinder the operation of the CIT and the leadership of their schools in the implementation of the NSC.

Interviews with the six CIT leaders and four of the principals were conducted on Zoom. These interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants. Every effort was made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study and to reduce any bias during the interviews. The focus group discussions and two of the principal interviews were done face to face. These interviews were also recorded with an Android voice recorder, for transcription, Otter. Ai-Voice Meeting Notes and Real-Time Transcription software were used, and manual transcription was done.

The identification of themes and subthemes was done by both a manual examination of the scripts and the use of the NVivo software. The Appendix displays the table with the themes

and subthemes and NVivo analysis of the principal interviews, CIT interviews and Focus Group discussion. The themes identified from the principal and CIT leaders' interviews and the focus group discussion for RQ 4 were: Implementation, challenges, and Resources availability.

Curriculum Implementation, Challenges and Resource Availability. Curriculum implementation, challenges and resource availability remained as themes for the identification of subthemes which detailed the surrounding roles and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation as they contribute to change in the institution. The following subthemes for curriculum implementation, challenges and resource availability arose from an examination of the NVivo scripts and a manual examination of the scripts of the interviews and focus group discussion: Theme 1 Curriculum Implementation: Curriculum Implementation, Curriculum Delivery, Educational Policy, School Support, Community Support and State of Facilitates. Theme 3 Challenges: Challenges. Theme 4 Resources Availability: Adequacy and lack of resources. Examples of statements from which the themes and subthemes have been derived are presented below:

Curriculum Implementation. A member of focus group discussion shared, “together we can collaborate and share best practices in order to move the children to different levels”. Another member from a focus group discussion reported, “if somebody is having a problem then sometimes, we have another teacher teach that particular topic. This teacher will visit the other classes in the grade and teach the topic”. “We the CIT team work closely with the assessment team. In that whatever test we're going to give the children for assessment we would normally pass them on to the team to ensure that they approve it”. Another CIT leader shared, “Teachers will come to the team if they are not clear about something. Anytime there is grave concern, teachers are free to voice it. And from there, we're able either to help each other or we seek help

otherwise. Meetings with the teachers, messages via WhatsApp, share lesson plans, give tips on best practices. We encourage our teachers to learn best practices from each other.”

Curriculum Delivery. A CIT leader from one of the focus groups reported, “The curriculum is straightforward, and everybody has been trained using the different elements of the lesson planning, and the new format of the 5Es, the engage, explore, evaluate and so on. In light of this people's intelligence have allowed them to navigate these areas and come out successful in using the five E's and the three C's, to manipulate the delivery of the curriculum, as mandated by the Ministry”. Another CIT member from a focus group discussion reported, “So, we do one-on-one sessions with teachers just to help them in delivery of the curriculum”. A principal shared, “What are the gaps and ways we improve, you know, by way of presentation, testing, you know..... and you look at the table of specification as assessment is a part of the delivery of the curriculum. Continuous assessment that we do requires that the students every six weeks they will do a sit down test..... Parents are asked to come in for consultations”.

Educational Policy. A CIT leader stated, “Maths and Language must be taught every day for an hour is the policy, but I think that this is too rushed”. “So, I think the Language Arts must be simplified”. A member of a focus group discussion shared. If we apply these guidelines along with the CIT supervision, then we're supposed to be able to move the students to maximize their learning”.

School Support. A CIT leader shared, “The school will try to give us some of the material that we need, especially the materials for Math, like a Math kit to assist the students to develop their Mathematics skills. Another CIT leader remarked, “Expertise within the school, like myself, the maths coordinator, the literacy coordinator would give support to the other teachers”.

Community Support. A CIT leader shared, “Another support that I would say, is a family support, especially for me, seeing that I am very passionate about what I do, and the time that is necessary and required for me to plan and prepare effectively”. Another CIT leader reported, “Not the school at large, because we get stuff from NCB (a bank) at times with regards to the curriculum, the Chase Fund, concerts... We get some computers and a photocopying machine”.

A CIT leader remarked, “We have to seek assistance from outside because we don't get everything from the Ministry and when we receive these resources we have share the one resource for each grade. One school indicated that they had obtained equipment - some computers and a photocopying machine but did not name the organization which had given them the equipment”.

State of Facilities. A CIT Leader from the focus group discussion reacted, “Without a doubt, the physical conditions most definitely are an issue with space that is required because we know that the curriculum is hands on. So, the overcrowding of the classroom spaces is the challenge that we might experience”. The NVivo codes were the words State of Facilities.

Challenges. Challenges was another theme that arose from the interviews. A principal, a member from the focus group discussion and CIT leader reported challenges based on the implementation of the NSC as follows: A principal shared, “As I said before there were some challenges implementing the NSC. One of the drawbacks, we didn't have the technology in enhancing the teaching and learning aspect, we decided to outsource and get sponsors from past students, who set up a lab and gave us other equipment to aid us with the teaching and learning. The Ministry assist us where they can by providing human resources but not the resources that we wanted to assist us further with this curriculum”.

A member from the focus group reported, “Even though we expect everybody to be on board in implementing the skills that are in the curriculum to assist these students, we might find one or more teacher/s who may not and might have a don’t care attitude. However, for the most part everybody tries. If we don't have the right resources, you know, then we’ll try and use the make-shift ones”.

A CIT leader reported,” one of the greatest challenges that I presently have, is that the set of students that I have are non- readers. I got these students at grade four with none reading at grade one. And, yes, the textbooks are there that speak to the NSC, but I find I have to do additional research to find additional activities that can simplify the concepts so that they can understand. That is the challenge that I have”.

A CIT leader reported, “the major challenges I have experienced in implementing the curriculum both at the class level and school level is only one training they have given really. So I really believe that they need to step it up in this regard. So, the lack of adequate support in implementing something that is new, and feedback and accountability”.

Resource Availability. Resource Availability was a theme emerged from the interviews and focus group discussion the subthemes are adequate and lack of resources. Lack of resources was also identified as presenting a challenge as reported by principal, CIT leader and focus group discussion. Excerpts from the interview and discussion are presented as they provided the codes to indicate the derivation of the subthemes.

Adequate Resources. A member of the Focus group discussion shared, “We have resource persons that we can call on even at some point in time depending on the topic, we might even go down to the office and ask for the resource persons there to come and brief the students; even the canteen staff depending on the topic that we are doing, and maybe someone from the Lower

School, someone from the upper school”. A CIT leader remarked, “The ministry provides the textbooks, I can't complain on that, and I have the opportunity of being on the team that selects the books that are sent from the ministry, that we used and it is good so far”.

Lack of Resources. Lack of resources was also identified as presenting challenges for implementing the NSC. A principal shared, “We have to seek assistance from outside because we don't get everything from the Ministry and when we receive these resources, we have to share the one resource for each grade”. Another principal reported, “They are the ones who know the curriculum, they are the ones who are in the same mix. We need extra resources to be able to meet the requirements or whatever is expected for the NSC. We need more resources from the minister. We need constant resources, constant replacement. A member from the focus group shared, “Technology, that's what we are really in need of; using technology, we really need our own classroom”. Another principal reported, “We need to obtain the resources that are necessary in order to reap the benefits of this new curriculum”.

A CIT leader reported, “the major challenges I have experienced in implementing the curriculum both at the class level and school level is the lack of resources in order to effectively support the curriculum very poor on the Ministry end...”

Findings of the Study

The findings of this study are compatible current research and local and international trends in education. The major findings identified are:

1. The number of females far outweigh the number of males in primary/elementary level schools.

The percentage of female participants in this study is 85%. This result is in line with research by Wijaya (2017), which gives a percentage of 75% of female teachers at the

primary level in the European Union (EU). Several EU states report a figure of 90% female, the average is a little lower at 85%. EU states with 97% females are Lithuania, Hungary, and Slovenia. Denmark, Greece, and Luxembourg report 69%, 70%, and 75% female teachers respectfully.

2. More than half of the sample (64%) had university education. This indicates that teachers are making themselves more qualified as opportunities for educational advancement become more available.
3. There are high Cronbach Alpha values for each item of the Teachers' Questionnaire indicating that the teachers are practising the collaborative and leadership skills necessary for the implementation of the NSC. They are also having unique but positive experiences in the classroom.
4. The qualitative study revealed that support from the leadership is a strong positive factor in the implementation of the NSC.
5. Challenges being experienced in the implementation of the NSC include lack of resources, unsuitable state of facilities, lack of sufficient training and resistance to change.
6. Successes in the implementation include accessibility of data for planning, effective use of implementation strategies, support from leadership, the practice of suitable leadership styles (e.g. the transformational leadership style), and adherence to policy directives and conditions.

Summary of the Section

The findings are summarised below under headings indicating the relevant variables questions.

Background variables. The findings of the background variables, constituting the demographic variables of gender, and age and the academic variables of teaching experience and educational attainment are summarized below.

Gender. Females constitute a large majority of the sample, (85% of the primary schools). This mirrors the situation in the target population (and the wider national status).

Age. The majority of the sample fell within the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups. Both age groups constituted 49% of the teacher population of six primary schools, as against The smallest segment in the age category is the 55-64 and over range.

Other Findings. The sample is educated (64% with university education). 76% received training in the implementation of the NSC.

Teachers are practising collaborative skills in the implementation of the NSC. Principal and school support are in evidence. Other factors impacting implementation of the NSC are the state of facilities; strategies for feedback, meeting, planning and training; resource availability. The NSC is being implemented with strong leadership support and in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Education policies.

Evaluation of Findings

Introduction

This conduct of this study which deals with matters concerning the NSC, its implementation, including the effect of change, and the impact of leadership in its various forms, was influenced by findings from previous research and grounded in the CBAM model. At the present stage where the collection of quantitative and qualitative data has been achieved and findings have been made, it is useful to see the extent to which results from previous research are in line with the those that have been obtained, and the extent to which the theoretical framework adopted has shed any light on the nature of the results obtained.

The delivery of the curriculum and the leadership in its delivery are paramount factors in enabling the curriculum to achieve its goal. The curriculum is therefore more than just a blueprint or guide to instruction. It is wider in its scope of influence, transcending the actual learning experiences it engenders in the classroom (Offorma, 2014, Kelly 2009). McNeil, (2016), asserts that the effective implementation of the curriculum requires that teachers' concerns be taken into account. It is also of prime importance that teachers are prepared for and are committed in its delivery (McNeil 2017, Bell 2015, MacDonald *et al*, 2016). The necessity for leaders in the delivery of the curriculum to be also prepared to carry out their roles is also echoed by Nguyen (2012). The fact that challenges will be involved in leading change in institutions, is noted by Lunenburg (2010), who acknowledges that reticence and resistance are important impediments to change that should be detected and dealt with. Other challenges identified by researchers in the educational arena are: communication of the team involved in the innovation **(Pruit 2013, Penuel et al. 2007, Wiles 2009)**, and **building trust in the leadership (Lorescu, 2014)**.

National education policy implementation, effected at the school level by leaders and other professionals (Rajou & Zanten, 2015) is a complex activity, requiring leaders to grapple with limited resources and other constraints (Van Der Voet, Kupers & Groeneveld, 2015). Issues and matters which arise in efforts to adhere to national education policy implementation in Jamaica, include the values of equity, access, and quality (Tan & Low, 2016); the capacity of the system to deliver the innovation (Arar, Brooks, & Bogotch, 2019, Miller 2018), and the need for school leaders to be engaged in any major policy discussions at government or national level (Adenoro *et al* 2013), Loruntegbe, 2011).

The matter of Leadership styles and their importance in curriculum implementation have been highlighted. It has been established that leadership styles have an impact on student academic and social performance, teacher self-esteem and performance, and the school environment (Hallinger 2003). The principles of equity of the democratic style of leadership have been acknowledged (Frese, Garst & Fay, 2007; Fay & Frese, 2007). The authoritative stance of autocratic leadership (Cherry 2020) has been noted, as well as the positive impact on performance of the transformational and transactional leadership styles.

The findings generated by the processing of the data collected in the conduct of this study will validate the extent to which the issues that have been presented in the literature play out in the Jamaican setting under the present conditions and circumstances.

Findings Related to RQ1- Teacher Perceptions. Findings related to the perceptions of teachers are presented here under the subheadings: Lack of resources, State of facilities, Use of strategies, Lack of training, and Accessibility of data.

Lack of resources. In the quantitative analysis of the data from the teachers' questionnaires, Item 33 which states: "Staff members have adequate access to information technology and instructional materials", a mean of 3.05 and a standard deviation of 1.198 were produced. While these results would seem to point to a positive status with the availability of resources in the areas of information technology and instructional materials, the interviews with CIT leaders revealed that the lack of resources for the implementation of the curriculum, is a problem that teachers are grappling with. In making this declaration, one CIT leader reported this deficiency as a major challenge that she experienced in implementing the curriculum both at the class level and school level and suggested that the Ministry of Education redouble efforts in this regard.

This finding is not unexpected and is in line with issues that figure generally in curriculum implementation. Van Der Voet, Kupers & Groeneveld, (2015) agreed that the implementation of the curriculum in response to national education policy is a multi-faceted activity, and one of the factors that must be contended with its limited resources. The challenge of the paucity of instructional materials, a major resource in curriculum implementation, has already been established as a factor operating in the Jamaican education system (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014; Davis, 2005) The futility of attempting innovation without the provision of adequate resources was also highlighted by Sanders (2006), for institutions in the USA. These and other challenges retard the progress that would have been made in implementing educational innovations.

State of facilities. The state of facilities was not directly addressed in the quantitative analysis of the data, but a finding from the qualitative treatment was that there were in some cases, issues with the state of the facilities in which the curriculum is being implemented. A CIT Leader from the focus group discussion indicated that the teachers in her school were operating without the required space. The CIT Leader declared “Without a doubt, the physical conditions most definitely are an issue with space that is required because we know that the curriculum is hands on. So, the overcrowded classroom spaces are the challenge that we might experience.” This situation, she said affected implementation of the curriculum because the nature of the curriculum required space for hands-on activities.

UNESCO acknowledges that the provision of adequate facilities is one of the necessities for the education system to operate optimally, and policies should therefore be in place to ensure this as well as for other aspects of the system such as building capacity for teachers, principals and other personnel (UNESCO, 2021). The Task Force Report (Davis, 2005) identified

inadequate school and library facilities among the problems impacting curriculum implementation in the Jamaican education system. The other problems outlined, were insufficient professional development in some subject areas, such as Science, and reduced contact teaching time.

Use of strategies. In the qualitative discourse, teachers reported the use of workable strategies for giving feedback to their leaders in the school setting.

This result was also supported by the quantitative results in which the item on strategies and other related items all yielded high means. Item Number 17 of the Teachers' Questionnaire stated, "Innovations and strategies brought about by the collaborative action of staff members are put into practice so that the intended benefits might be gained". A mean of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 1.24 were obtained for this item. Some of the Items which outlined specific strategies, together with their means and standard deviations, are presented in Table 17 which follows.

Table 17

Strategies, Means and Standard Deviations

Strategy	Mean	Standard Deviation
16. Timetabling collaborative work of staff	3.41	1.25
11. Making decisions based on shared norms and behaviour	3.65	1.07
18. Working collaboratively to attend to diversity of student needs	3.58	1.12
12. Making decisions based on values and mission of the school	3.81	.841
3. Giving staff access to key information for school use	3.31	.989
1. Including teachers in discussion and decisions about school matters	3.22	1.20

The strategies involve collaboration of leadership with staff and inclusion of staff in decision making. The identification of those strategies which are effective in the implementation of the NSC is very important for maintaining the success of this innovation. This factor (of strategies for effective implementation of the NSC) was also incorporated in the objectives of this study.

The effort to find effective strategies to implement curricula has long been engaged. Shared leadership, as defined by Hollingworth, (2012) has been one such strategy pursued to bring about the implementation of an innovation. Team leadership rather than individual leadership (such as the operation of the CIT) is engaged in this strategy. The ultimate aim is to have teachers in collaborative engagement for the effective implementation of the innovation and therefore success in student learning (Chen, Lee, Lin, & Zhang, 2016; Hollingworth, 2012; and Olivier, 2003). A member in a focus group discussion declared “We are on the wheel, being that driving force in making the NSC work.” The focus group participant named some strategies used in “making the NSC work” as: common planning, peer teaching and modelling the different strategies within the new curriculum, providing the resources available, and lending support to the teachers who need it. Other strategies reported by principals, CIT leaders and teachers as being used at leadership and classroom levels are: the engagement of the “5 Cs” (collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, character/connectedness) giving feedback, frequent meetings, on-going training, and planning sessions.

Lack of training. One of the few negative findings on the implementation of the NSC that was the fact that principals, CIT leaders and teachers perceived that the training given to teachers and CIT leaders was not adequate. The same sentiments were expressed by principals,

one of whom shared, “I believe more support is needed in terms of training. You know, I think that more training is needed. I think, while the curriculum was rolled out, I believe that the curriculum is good. Because this is where we need to go in terms of building critical thinking and so on. I believe that more training is necessary and needed”. The finding from the quantitative analysis is that 81 respondents (76%) received training in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) and 20 (19) % did not receive training in the implementation of the NSC. With regard to training in the Operation of the CIT, 25 respondents (24%) received training in the Operation of the CIT and 69 (65%) did not receive training.

This finding has negative implications for the implementation of the NSC according to policy guidelines of the Ministry of Education and for the delivery of the curriculum in accordance with the innovations that were built into its development. MacDonald et al. (2016) placed high importance on on-going training to enable teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively. Bell (2015) underlined the role of training in building teacher confidence and provided evidence to prove that inadequate guidance of teachers compromised the delivery of lessons by teachers. Causarano (2015) indicated that serious learning loss could result. A recommendation arising from this finding of lack of training of teachers and other practitioners, is that the Ministry of Education should bolster its training programme for the NSC implementation.

Accessibility of data. Both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study revealed that teachers for the most part had ready access to data when such data were needed for planning purposes. The data are used in planning sessions which act as a springboard for the development of lesson plans. Planning usually takes place at weekly intervals during the term. Principals, CIT leaders and teachers have reported weekly planning sessions, each lasting at least one hour. At

planning sessions, activities to be implemented in the following week are reviewed, updates on progress with the curriculum are given, guidance is given to less experienced teachers, peer teaching is planned, and continual assessment of the programme being implemented, are carried out.

The availability of data such as student grades, student biographic information, results of research pertinent to the delivery of the curriculum, is very important to enable planning geared to meet the needs of each student, and to advance the implementation of the curriculum innovation. Handler (2010) emphasizes that teacher involvement from the stage of planning is crucial from the planning stage, so that, as reiterated by Bounds (2009), the knowledge and skills required by each learner are provided. In this way the implementation of the curriculum, in this case the NSC, will proceed in line with the innovations introduced.

In the sample studied, the availability of data to teachers in the schools, varied significantly, as shown in Tables 11-14. A Kruskal-Wallis H test indicated a statistically significant difference in the availability of data for planning programmes, $\chi^2(5) = 13.715$, $p = .018$, with a mean rank score of 44.20 for Primary school 1, 48.75 for Primary School2 2, 74.83 for Primary School3, 49.23 for Primary School 4. 47.63 for Primary School 5 and 53.91 for Primary School 6.

We fail to accept the Null Hypothesis (which states that there is no significant difference in the availability of data among the schools). A Post hoc test was conducted with Bonfironi correction ($p=.003$) to eliminate type 1 error. Statistical significance revealed that Primary School 1 (Corporate city School) differs from Primary school 2,3, 4, 5 and 6. More specifically the main difference occurs with Primary School 3.

Close inspection of the descriptive tables and chart for Primary schools 1 and 3, and the qualitative elements of this research indicate that in most instances, staff members had data easily available to them wherever they are needed for planning programmes.

Findings Related to RQ2 – Leadership Experiences. Findings related to leadership experiences are presented under the subtopics: Support from leadership, and Resistance to change.

Support from leadership. The quantitative data findings indicate that principals delegated responsibilities and gave recognition when staff showed innovation across all primary schools involved in this research. In the sample investigated, a Kruskal-Wallis H test (presented in Tables 15 and 16) showed that there was no statistically significant difference with delegating responsibilities **and** giving appropriate recognition when staff showed innovation ($\chi^2(5) = 3.765$, $p = 0.584$, with a mean rank score of 47.28 for Primary school 1, 56.75 for Primary School 2, 57.85 for Primary School 3, 60.63 for Primary School 4, 49.00 for Primary School 5 and 49.31 for Primary School 6). We therefore fail to reject the Null Hypothesis and conclude that principals delegated responsibilities and gave recognition when staff showed innovation across all primary schools mentioned in this research.

The qualitative findings are also in line with this finding and indicated that support from the leadership is a strong positive factor in the implementation of the NSC. This speaks to the engagement of the transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership is a collaboration between school leaders and teachers. In the process, they are seen as role models for students to emulate, and it is seen how authority that is apportioned among stakeholders achieves effective outcomes (Lewis, Boston & Peterson, 2017). In order to foster a cohesive environment, school leaders/principals must communicate effectively with their staff and fortify

connections that accentuate principals and teachers as working in unity (Valentine & Prater, 2011). Alsaeedi and Male, (2012) stated that principals recognize their strengths and weaknesses that they encounter daily and support their staff when transformation is being undertaken within the institution. Hartinah, (2020) posited that being a transformational school leader helps to impact the performance of teachers' work within the educational setting and assists teachers to excel in their values and interests through three dimensions: building the school's vision and future, providing support to individuals/colleagues and providing motivation. This finding is also shared by (Geijssels, 2003; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2006) and is well supported by this study.

Resistance to change. A second issue relating to leadership experiences that has been found operating in the implementation of the NSC is resistance to change by staff members. A member from the focus group reported that a minority of staff members was not fully on board with the mission to employ their effort and skills in the implementation of the NSC and displayed what is described as a “don't care attitude”. Another CIT leader expressed how important it is to be “open-minded to the process of change”. Challenges are part and parcel of change in any area of endeavour, including the field of education, and in this specific area of curriculum implementation. The work of Lunenburg (2010), who has been previously cited in this study regarding six factors that present challenges in the implementation of an innovation (uncertainty about the course of the innovation, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance by the group, dependence, trust in the management team, and awareness of flaws in the intended change) has presented the opportunity for future research in the Jamaican setting as to which of the six are the overriding factors that cause resistance to curriculum innovation. Moswela (2010) highlighted the need for a policy to be in place to give overall direction to the

implementation of the innovation. Since the lack of direction, is identified as one of the causes of resistance, Moswela's work is also worthy of further investigation in the Jamaican setting.

The matter of implementing innovations that have been introduced in the classroom has implications for the ease (or difficulty) with which teachers adjust or generally respond to the new methods, strategies, devices or practices introduced. If teachers are finding the change difficult, even with preparation by training, they can be excessively challenged by the change (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, 2004), it follows then that such a situation could act as fertile ground for resistance. The mental and psychological state of the teachers or other implementers in relation to an innovation in the educational setting, especially with regard to beliefs, perception and emotions, is an important aspect to consider in ensuring that the innovation is accepted and pursued. The acceptance of an innovation calls for parting of the established ways in which a teacher educator once operated. The difference between the previous practice and the proposed one can vary considerably depending on the situation. The presence of any trepidation, or fear of changing from a comfortable and established way of being and operating to a new situation should be addressed, as this could affect the acceptance of the innovation and cause resistance (Smith & Lovat, 2004).

Each innovation should have a vision to keep the activities in the course of its implementation coherent and connected and Teachers have to adopt the new vision while seeing the practicality and clarity of it (Kotter 2006, Fullan 2007). In order to achieve this, teachers must be given the full and necessary information about the innovation in a manner that is clear, understandable, specific and straightforward (Fullan 2007, Smith & Lovat 2003). Teachers should also be given enough time to achieve a level of comfort with the innovation before an attempt is made to measure its impact. Support of the right quality and proportion to all sectors

of the education system should also be in place for the reform or innovation to be accepted and implemented (Pietarinen et al. 2017, Tan & Low 2016).

Findings Related to RQ3 – Leadership Styles and Change. Findings related to RQ3 are presented under the subtopics Leadership styles, and the Team approach to leadership.

Leadership Styles. A finding from this study is that principals communicate effectively with their staff and ably perform their role as instructional leaders in the implementation of the curriculum. Principals in the sample vet lesson plans, visit classrooms, give teachers advice, offer assistance, and advocate for teachers' welfare. In the quantitative analysis, evidence of this finding is in the high means produced by items addressing the interaction between leadership and staff, such as Item 2 which states : “The principal takes into account the advice of staff members in making decisions”. A mean of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 1.024 was gained for this item. A supportive leadership style is also represented in the qualitative analysis. A member from the focus group discussion reported, “...not that she's going to bully you or anything, but she has a way of putting it so nicely, we just can't refuse. She has like a transformational leadership style at times, she includes everyone in the decision making and she's actually supportive of her staff more”.

The finding of supportive leadership style of the principals in this study and the conducive environment for learning and teaching that results, is in line with the finding by Hallinger, (2011) and Gawlik, (2018) of the positive influence that a principal who practices expert leadership has on the school environment. This will result in turn result in desirable student achievement, according to Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, (2008), and Sun and Leithwood, (2015). The idea expressed by Lunenburg & Lunenburg, (2013) that the principal should be familiar with the curriculum and be able to assist teachers in translating the curriculum

components to classroom practice can be well appreciated when the mode of action of principals of the sample is considered.

The principals of the sample are practising leadership styles which motivate employees (teachers) to perform their duties effectively and efficiently and benefit from good relations with the leadership and other external incentives. This describes transactional leadership (Bass, 2000) in which the teacher performs in expectation of some reward. In transformational leadership, teachers are challenged, stimulated inspired and enlightened to pursue their instructional goals (Gellis, 2001; Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles have been identified as having a strong impact on the performance of employees, in this case, teachers and others in the school setting (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen, & Lowe, 2009). The principal and leadership team are in a position to make the best decisions to serve the best interest of students, teachers and other stakeholders of the education system. The choice of leadership style that is most effective in his or her setting should be employed Sergiovanni (2007).

The absence of the autocratic leadership style is worthy of note. The autocratic leadership style has no place where teachers and leadership operate by communicating and collaborating to make decisions and to implement the strategies agreed on. In the autocratic leadership style, the principal and senior personnel defer to the board of management and the Ministry of Education, and stands by the decisions and directives made at that level, handing them down to middle management for implementation of teachers, without question (Cherry, 2020).

The team approach to curriculum implementation. Forsyth, (2018) advocates the team approach in the matter of leadership of curriculum implementation. This requires constant communication and collaboration and a motivation to overcome any challenges that present

themselves. The team and principal working together cohesively to enable the mission and vision of the school and the implementation of the curriculum as required by policy directives and the innovation being introduced, can only augur success for the students being served. The different skills and abilities resident in the team are brought together to form an effective network for instructional leadership and effects the strategies that will result in the efficient implementation of the practices that are part and parcel of the innovation (Heffernan & Longmuir, 2019 Stamper and Elder, (2019).

CITs were established in Jamaican primary and secondary schools to carry out this very mandate of instructional leadership. This team is essential in guiding all the activities that relate to teaching and learning, including its assessment and the creation of a conducive environment for students to achieve. In support of the research, principals, CIT leaders and teachers have espoused the effectiveness of the CIT in guiding the implementation of the NSC in their schools. Items dealing with collaboration and teamwork in curriculum implementation on the teachers' questionnaire, all yielded means of 3.0 and above. This supports the declaration by Gammell, (2016) that with a principal and an effective leadership team, a school will move forward to maintain excellence.

Findings related to RQ4 – Educational Policies and Change. This study has shown that leaders and teachers accept the innovation of the NSC and the structures and policies put in place for its successful implementation. This statement is validated in the declaration of a principal who stated in an interview that, “I believe that the curriculum is good, because this is where we need to go in terms of building critical thinking and so on” and in a CIT leader that stated, “I’ll be using the most effective strategies in the implementation of the NSC while

understanding the need for change in this critical time, and being open minded to the process of change in order to effectively meet the needs of the students in my care”.

The making of major decisions in the education sector is governed by policies, which are comprised of guidelines and principles which take into account the values and goals of the system. Policies are developed by public authorities and those policies which have a bearing on the education system are framed by education professionals and leaders at the level of the Ministry of Education. Leaders at the school level are tasked with the responsibility of carrying out policy directives at the school level (Rayou & Zanten, 2015). In Jamaica, a policy framework was devised to provide guidance in addressing challenges in the education system, taking into account the diverse needs of learners in the various types of schools and the demand to keep abreast of advances at the international level. In the drive to raise the performance of schools, there is a concurrent movement by policy makers to create those policies which put emphasis on the quality of education that is delivered, and the level of service that is provided. There is a concurrent movement by stakeholders and policy makers to concentrate their efforts on raising the schools’ performance, in terms of the quality of education and the services delivered (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Moswela (2010) emphasised the importance of having a policy to guide and give structure to the overall conduct of an innovation. The principal as leader of the curriculum implementation process is instrumental in translating policies and procedures to make them applicable and practicable in the school situation (Sayed & Jansen, 2001). Implementation of the curriculum in the manner directed by the related policies depends on effective communication to the teachers with regard to the requirements and procedures. Teachers also have to be prepared mentally to be compliant with policy directives (Smith 2001, Smith & Lovat, 2004).

The establishment of CITs in schools was one means of guiding adherence to Ministry of Education policy in the implementation of the curriculum at primary and secondary levels. The model requires the active involvement of leadership in guiding staff members in the implementation of the curriculum in ways compatible with the direction employed by policies and directives in the education setting (Curriculum & Support Services, 2014). One finding of this investigation is that the operation of CITs in schools is proceeding in the desired manner, especially in terms of the strong support that the leadership structure conveyed to the implementation by the CIT, is operating. Strong leadership support was not only an important finding in the qualitative treatment but is also well supported and represented in the quantitative results. The high mean scores generated by the responses to the items on the questionnaire for teachers (all except three items giving 50% agreement) confirm that teachers are practising the collaborative approach required by Ministry of Education policy, and that leadership support is effective. The results also indicate that teachers are having unique and positive experiences in the classroom engendered by the innovations introduced with the advent of the NSC, and in line with the thinking and philosophy that underpin the development and implementation of the NSC.

In order for the education system to operate at its optimum, a battery of policies has to be engaged, to empower and build capacity for personnel at classroom and administrative levels (UNESCO, 2021a) and to address the facilities of the system. The policies in the components of equity in access, curriculum development and ICT assist in building capacity for teaching and learning. Policies, acts and schemes such as the School Improvement Policy, the Safe Schools policy, the School Infrastructure Policy, the Centre of Excellence Scheme of Management provide support to the implementation of policies which address learning and teaching directly (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Summary of the Section

The data gathered for this study have validated some findings made in other jurisdictions and international settings and has reiterated the importance of some actions that have been accepted and agreed on at the local (Jamaican) level. The fact that challenges exist in the course of implementing curriculum innovations and are not unique to any one country, is established, and the role of the attendant policies in directing the course of innovations in the educational setting, has been reiterated. The involvement of teachers and other members of the school community in the planning and implementation of the innovation to ensure its success has been supported.

Challenges in NSC implementation have been identified as lack of resources, unsuitable state of facilities, lack of sufficient training, and resistance to change. Positive aspects of the implementation include accessibility of data for planning, the effective use of implementation strategies, support from leadership, the practice of suitable leadership styles including the team approach, and adherence to policy directives and conditions. On the whole, a positive picture is painted of the implementation of the NSC and recommendations for improvement in the areas of challenge are proposed

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) (Air 2016) provided the theoretical framework for investigating the challenges teachers and principals experience in the implementation of the NSC. The model ably provided a template for the framing of the conduct of the study and the identification and evaluation of the concerns, challenges and successes involved in operation of the leadership structure in schools, including the Curriculum Implementation Teams (CITs) in steering the changes necessary to enable the NSC to be successfully implemented.

CHAPTER FIVE: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Problem Statement and Purpose of the Study

Effective leadership is essential in successfully steering the daily activities of an institution and efficiently employing its resources (Wallace Foundation 2013). Effective leadership is necessary in the school setting to effect the changes and providing the conditions that are necessary to successfully implement the curriculum. This mixed methods study aimed to explore the strategies employed and the challenges encountered by school leadership in the quest to effectively implement the NSC, a curriculum introduced in the Jamaican education system in 2018, at primary and early secondary levels. The experience and role of teachers in the process was also investigated. The monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum at the school level was to be led by the CIT, which was established as part of the leadership structure, and was put in place to respond to the likely challenges that would arise from the changes inherent in the implementation of the NSC. This body would assist in ensuring that the policy guidelines of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information for the implementation of the curriculum would be adhered to (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). The impact of the CIT in the implementation of the NSC, also fell within the scope of this study.

Method of the Research

The research was carried out in a group of primary schools in an urban area of Jamaica. The population was comprised of principals, teachers, and CIT leaders of six primary schools in Region 0.03, a mixed methods approach was used, proponents of which include Tashakkori and Teddlie, (2003). Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to provide data on the

effect of CIT and general leadership on the implementation of the NSC and how strategies, challenges, consequences and change affect this interplay. For the collection of quantitative data, a questionnaire was distributed to teachers of the sample. A total of 106 teachers in the six schools completed the questionnaires. Focus group discussion, face to face interviews with principals and CIT leaders, the observation of CIT meetings and analysing the documentations of the (CIT) meetings provided data for the qualitative analysis. The data from the questionnaires were subjected to analysis by the SPSS programme and the recordings of the interviews were converted to printed format and put through Nvivo analysis for the identification of themes and subthemes through coding and categorizing of the information presented as described by Charmaz, (2008). Manual extraction of themes and subthemes was also carried out. Data from both quantitative and qualitative methods were merged to provide substantial evidence for arriving at findings and conclusions. This method of merging and thereby enhancing the data provided by the two data sets is supported by Creswell (2018). A special case is also made by Wisdom and Cresswell (2018) for the use of focus groups to intensify quantitative the data.

Ethical Dimensions

In accordance with Wilkinson (2001), ethical considerations were employed throughout the conduct of the research. The matter of gaining the consent of or acting in tandem with the wishes of subjects, as proposed by Bryman (2012), and Wellington (2000) was respected. Persons who declined to be interviewed or to participate in completing questionnaires were not coerced to do so or made to feel that they would be penalized for not complying with the request. Permission was first obtained from respondents for any procedure they were invited to participate in. Overall permission was first sought from the Ministry of Education Youth and Information and principals at the school level, before individuals were approached.

Vulnerable individuals were omitted from this study as well as any psychological experiments with its subjects. Subjects were assured of the confidentiality of the information they shared, since every effort was made to keep the respondents anonymous to the researcher. Any information that had the potential of identifying subjects was removed from the completed instrument or transcript, and audio recordings were safely stored. Codes were used where possible (for example Region X, QEC 0.03). The signing of consent certificates was employed to give suitable evidence.

Review of the Chapter

Following the foregoing introduction, this chapter will interpret and discuss the findings of this study and explore some implications for educational practice. Recommendations and conclusions will also be made. The discussion will involve the treatment of each of the research questions with the statement of the specific results. The context and limitations of the results is next discussed, and a comparison with and contribution to current literature. The chapter then closes with recommendations for application, recommendation for future research and draws conclusions of the research.

Implications of the Findings

Research Question 1

RQ 1 asked: What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03?

Findings and Discussion. A major finding related to RQ1 (both the quantitative and qualitative analyses) was that staff members had data easily available to them wherever they were needed for planning programmes. Although availability of data varied significantly (according to the Kruskal-Wallis H test: $\chi^2(5) = 13.715$, $p = .018$) from school to school, with a

mean rank score of 44.20 for Primary school 1, 48.75 for Primary School 2, 74.83 for Primary School3, 49.23 for Primary School 4. 47.63 for Primary School 5 and 53.91 for Primary School 6, the qualitative data indicated that data were in fact made available to staff members.

Other findings from the qualitative treatment revealed that there was a lack of resources for the implementation of the curriculum, inadequate state of facilities, and lack of training in the implementation of the NSC, with only 24% of the respondents receiving training in CIT operations. Positive findings were that teachers and principals were using collaborative methods in the implementation of the NSC (a quantitative and qualitative finding) and that appropriate strategies were being employed in the delivery of the curriculum, a strategy with the highest mean (3.81) being that of making decisions based on the mission and vision of the school.

Context and Limitations of the Results. The finding that data (such as student grades, student biographic information, research in curriculum delivery) are accessible is one that is expected, when it is considered that data are used in planning sessions for the production of lesson plans, for the developments of tests and other student resources. Data therefore aid in planning and are crucial for the effective delivery of the curriculum. Handler (2010) and Bounds (2009) agree that empowering the teacher with information for planning, assists in the implementation of the innovation – in this case, the NSC.

The inadequacy of the facilities was made most evident in the qualitative analysis. Among the respondents that gave evidence of the inadequacy of facilities was a CIT leader who stated emphatically that the issue of overcrowding (lack of space) was a real issue. The issue of the lack of resources was highlighted as a problem in the qualitative analysis with leaders. While a mean score of 3.05 in the quantitative analysis signalled a satisfactory situation, CIT leaders

and principals indicated in the interviews that inadequacy of resources was a problem they had to grapple with.

Insufficient training is one of the negative findings of the qualitative aspect of the study. The fact that serious deficits in learning could take place has also been indicated by Causarano (2015). Two positive findings are the use of appropriate strategies and collaborative methods to facilitate the effective implementation of the curriculum. The identification of those strategies which are effective in the implementation of the NSC is very important for maintaining the success of this innovation, and for this reason, was incorporated in the objectives of the study.

A limitation that must be borne in mind that the results gained from the qualitative aspect of the data are based on fewer incidents and might not be as pervasive as the results gained from the quantitative treatment. In this regard, it is noted that the negative results were gained from the qualitative data generated. The results of the quantitative analysis of the teachers' questionnaires were positive, as demonstrated by the high means gained for the items, which dealt with collaborative behaviours and procedures at classroom and school levels.

Comparison with/Contribution to Current Literature. The findings of lack of resources, lack of adequate facilities, use of collaborative strategies and the need for training, and the availability of data to teachers have been supported by findings from studies reported in current literature. Van Der Voet, Kupers & Groeneveld, (2015) name lack of resources as one of the challenges to be addressed in the implementation of the curriculum. This has also been recognized as a reality in the Jamaican education system that has to be addressed (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014; Davis, 2005). Sanders (2006) reiterates that attempting an innovation without the required resources is futile. UNESCO (2021) highlights the need for adequate facilities for optimal operation of the education system, while the Task Force Report

(Davis, 2005) identified the lack of a particular facility – libraries as affecting curriculum delivery in Jamaica.

The finding that the implementation of the curriculum is being effected with the use of collaborative strategies is given support by Chen, Lee, Lin, & Zhang, (2016); Hollingworth, (2012); and Olivier, (2003) in the assertion that shared leadership and collaborative engagement of leadership and staff yield positive results in the educational setting. MacDonald et al. (2016), and Bell (2015) have highlighted the role of on-going training in enabling effective and confident delivery of the curriculum.

Research Question 2

RQ 2 asked: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?

Findings and Discussion. Findings related to leadership experiences are that there is support from leadership to teachers in the implementation of the curriculum, and that there is resistance to the changes inherent in the implementation of the NSC. The quantitative data confirmed that principals delegated responsibilities and gave recognition when staff showed innovation across all primary schools mentioned in this research. Several items on the teachers' questionnaire dealing with the experience of leaders earned high means (above 3.0). For example, Item 7 – Staff members are coached to be leaders (3.08), Item 8 – Decisions are not made in an autocratic manner, but through established channels of communication (3.22). On the matter of resistance to change, the qualitative data provided support that this is an issue in the implementation of the NSC. During the focus group discussion, it was reported by a participant that some staff members who represented a small percentage of the staff of the institution of the

participant, were not cooperating fully in the implementation of the NSC and displayed what is described as a “don’t care attitude”.

Context and Limitations of the Results. The finding from the quantitative treatment of the data that principals practised the delegation of responsibilities and giving of recognition when staff members carried out the innovation successfully is a feature that is common to all primary schools involved in this research. This is supported by the qualitative findings which indicated that support from the leadership is a strong positive factor in NSC implementation.

The matter of resistance to change by staff members as revealed in the qualitative analysis of the data, is not a surprising response, and measures to mitigate resistance have been advanced by some workers, as outlined in the next section.

Comparison with/ Contribution to Current Literature. The practice of Transformational leadership in the collaboration between principals, leadership teams and staff, has been a finding in this study. The benefit of this type of leadership has been shown to accrue to both leadership and staff, and the outcome is cohesive and shared leadership, with the delegation of authority (Lewis, Boston & Peterson, 2017). There is regular and free communication between leadership and staff and the relationships established provide a model for students to emulate. Principals and other leaders support their staff through the transformation, working together with them in a cohesive engagement (Alsaeedi & Male, 2012), with a resulting positive impact on the output of the staff.

Kotter, (2006) and Fullan, (2007) emphasize that the innovation being introduced should have a vision to keep the activities coherent and focused, and the change should also be practical for the teachers, and all necessary information should be imparted to teachers in order to prevent resistance. The stipulation that this information be clear, specific, and straightforward is also

given by Fullan (2007) and Smith and Lovat (2003). Support of the right quality and proportion to all sectors of the education system should also be in place for the reform or innovation to be accepted and implemented (Pietarinen et al. 2017, Tan & Low 2016) introduce the idea that time for acclimatization of teachers to the innovation should be given before any attempt is made to measure the effect of the implementation, and support from all relevant sectors of the system should be provided. Other workers investigating the matter of resistance to change cite the following matters that should be addressed in order to mitigate resistance:

- 1) Uncertainty about the course of the innovation, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance by the group, dependence, trust in the management team, and awareness of flaws in the intended change (Lunenburg, 2010)
- 2) The need for a policy to give overall direction to the innovation (Moswela, 2010)
- 3) The need to prepare teachers to deal with new devices, methods, strategies inherent in the innovation (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, 2004)
- 4) The need to address sources of trepidation, fear, and the general psychological factors associated with moving from a comfortable way of operating to a new one (Smith & Lovat, 2004).

Research Question 3

RQ3 asks: How do the circumstances surrounding the types and styles of educational leadership practised by members of the CIT affect organizational change?

Findings and Discussion. A finding from this study is that principals communicate effectively with their staff and ably perform their role as instructional leaders in the implementation of the curriculum. Principals in the sample did not only carry out their

supervisory duties but also acted as advocates for the teachers' welfare. This mode of operation of principals set them apart as adopting a supportive leadership style.

The finding of supportive leadership style of the principals in this investigation and the positive effect it creates in the learning and teaching environment, is in line with the finding by Hallinger, (2011) and Gawlik, (2018) of the positive influence that a principal who practices expert leadership has on the school environment. Evidence of the supportive leadership style experienced by CIT members is seen in the following statements made during interviews and focus group discussions: "She has like a transformational leadership style at times, she includes everyone in the decision making and she's actually supportive of her staff more". Another member from a focus group discussion shared, "we know in every organization there's a need for a mixed approach, so that is what is used at our school. Because no one leadership style will work, it depended on the nature, what is it about then you choose which one".

Context and Limitations of the Results. CITs were established in Jamaican primary and secondary schools to carry out the mandate of instructional leadership. The creation of this team was as a result of a policy directive of the Ministry of Education Youth and Information to build support for the implementation of the NSC at the school level, guiding the conduct of teaching and learning, and the creation of an appropriate administrative structure and environment for NSC delivery. The results of the study support Gammell, (2016) that with a principal and an effective leadership team (in this case a CIT), a school will attain and maintain excellent performance.

Comparison with/Contribution to Current Literature. The principals of the sample are instituting leadership styles which encourage the teachers to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. The trade-off is to gain the good favour of the principal or other leadership

figures in the school setting thereby benefiting from any external incentives that might become applicable. This leadership style is termed transactional leadership (Bass, 2000) because some reward comes into play. Another leadership style that has become apparent is transformational leadership, since there are teachers who are inspired, motivated, and challenged intrinsically, to enhance student achievement and the goal of success in the school setting (Gellis, 2001; Judge and Piccolo, 2004). The link between excellent leadership and student achievement is also made by Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, (2008), and Sun and Leithwood, (2015). It is worthy of note that there is no room for the autocratic style of leadership, in which there is no room for discussion but the handing down of directives made from higher management levels directly to the middle management and lower levels, without question or (Cherry, 2020). The team approach to curriculum implementation is also in evidence. The operation of the CIT with its requirement for frequent communication and collaboration to identify and address challenges in the learning environment is in line with the team leadership approach described by Forsyth, (2018).

Research Question 4

RQ4 asks: How do the roles and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in these institutions?

Findings and Discussion. An important finding of this study is the fact that the CITs are operating in a satisfactory manner in the primary schools of the sample. One conclusion that could be generated is that this is due to the strong leadership support that the structure of the CIT lends to the leadership apparatus of the institution. Strong leadership support is in itself, another finding of the study. This is strongly represented not only in the quantitative analysis of the data, (the majority of items giving above 50% agreement) but also in the qualitative treatment. The establishment of CITs and the institution of collaborative practices that it requires is part and

parcel of approach required by Ministry of Education policy (Curriculum & Support Services, 2014). The findings of this study also indicate that teachers are having unique and positive experiences in the classroom linked to the advent of the NSC. Teachers are showing cohesiveness, unity and other values of collaborative engagement as they carry out their classroom tasks. A member of the focus group discussion was happy to share that “Together we can collaborate and share best practices in order to move the children to different levels”. Another member from a focus group discussion reported, “if somebody is having a problem then sometimes, we have another teacher teach that particular topic. This teacher will visit the other classes in the grade and teach the topic”. These statements are in line with the thinking and philosophy that underpins this curriculum’s development and implementation.

Comparisons with/Contribution to Current Literature. The importance of having a policy to guide and give structure to the overall conduct of an innovation, in this case, the implementation of the NSC, has been put forward by Moswela (2010). The central and instrumental role of the principal (as leader of the curriculum implementation process) in translating policies and procedures to make them applicable to the school setting is demonstrated by Sayed & Jansen, (2001). Smith (2001), and Smith & Lovat, (2004) highlight the importance of implementing the curriculum in accordance with policy guidelines and with proper teacher preparation.

UNESCO, 2021a) draws attention to the role of policies in paving the way to build capacity for personnel at all levels and in many areas of the education (and other) enterprises and systems. Policies cover the areas of equity in access, curriculum development, ICT, building capacity building for teaching and learning. (Ministry of Education, 2012). The central role of

policies in creating the framework for enabling the effective implementation of innovations such as the NSC is demonstrated.

Context and Limitations of the Results

Policies and their guidelines guide the conduct of activities in many organizations. This is especially true for the implementation of innovative curricula requiring school leaders, teachers, and other personnel in the education system to carry out the implementation in accordance with the philosophy of the new curriculum. In the implementation of the NSC, the operation of the CIT was in response to a policy directive that was initiated as a vehicle to enable the efficient delivery of the curriculum. The finding that CITs are operating effectively in the schools of the sample is evidence that the implementation of the curriculum is being enhanced by the policy directive, and that school leaders, who are responsible for the implementation of policy directives (Rayou & Zanten, 2015), are carrying out their mandate in this regard. It also follows that leaders that have the capacity to put policy directives into action will also enable curriculum implementation that promotes student performance (Ministry of Education, 2014).

The effective implementation of the NSC is the remit of the CIT. This includes seeing to it that teachers are empowered to engage effectively with the curriculum components (attainment targets, aims and objectives, etc.) as outlined by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information. (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). This study explored the roles of principals and CITs, the strategies used to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, and the challenges encountered by teachers and principals in implementing the NSC. The objectives that guided the conduct of the study, in summary, were to: investigate the approach employed in the NSC implementation, to assess the experiences and strategies of CIT leadership, to find out what circumstances surround the types of educational leadership practices

that are used by CITs to effect the changes to be carried out, and to investigate the role of educational policies in the implementation of the NSC, and the implications are presented for change in these schools.

The team approach to implementing the NSC was investigated, unearthing the experiences of the team members and the school principal as leader of the team. Positive engagement between the principal, CIT leaders and staff members was a major finding of this study.

Limitations and Delimitations

It is an accepted fact that limitations (potential weaknesses), delimitations, and margins of error apply in any data collection or statistical exercise. Creswell (2012) agrees that identifying these factors lends credence to the study, since the user of the information generated is guided as to the extent of application and generalization of the findings. In an effort to reduce the extent to which the study is limited, thereby extending the utility of the findings, the following measures were employed:

- 1) A clear and detailed description of the methods used in the collection of data in this study was given.
- 2) A clear description of the steps involved in the study was provided to enable replicability.
- 3) Full disclosure of the data collection process was made, to make the process trustworthy.

The matter of response bias, which is defined by Creswell (2012) as an inability to collect an adequate number of responses to accurately represent the views of the sample was not a substantial issue, because the percentage of subjects responding was satisfactory. For example, of the 120 teachers earmarked to complete the questionnaire, 106 (or 88%) did so. Controlling extraneous variables was also an area to be taken into account. An effort was made to control

those variables that could be foreseen and addressed. For example, participants were assured of the efforts keep their identities and responses confidential, in an effort to allay any confidentiality concerns that could have affected the scope and quality of their responses (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Another factor that could have been an issue is moderator or researcher bias, in that participants might have been influenced by the body language (facial and other body gestures and expressions) of the researcher during the interviews, (Chapman, 2014). It must also be acknowledged that the questionnaires and other interview protocols may not have fully captured the entire spectrum of issues relating to the leadership and implementation issues of the NSC.

The study contained the following delimitations: The participants of the study are principals and teachers of 6 schools selected from the Region X, QEC 0.03. The sample was an urban sample. These delimitations should be taken into account when consideration is being given to generalising the results generated from the data collected.

Recommendations for Application

The findings from the conduct of this study have made it possible for some recommendations to be generated, which when implemented, should make a positive difference in the delivery of the NSC or any other curriculum in the schools of Jamaica as well as other countries. The recommendations made are divided into those that have arisen out of challenges being encountered in the leadership and delivery of the curriculum, and those that are derived from eminent practices that should be supported and strengthened.

The use of the CBAM model to form a base and a structure of this research has proven beneficial. The model embraces the spirit of the implementation of the NSC with its inclusive nature. The concerns of the implementers of the curriculum are taken into account and all steps

and efforts which are made in accordance with this framework, are geared towards ameliorating or solving the problems surrounding those concerns. The use of the model is therefore recommended in investigating programmes and issues at school, regional and national levels.

Dealing with the Challenges

Lack of resources. The lack of resources is one of the findings which fall into the area of challenges. According to Weaver (2010), this is a matter that professionals in the education system constantly wrestle with. The necessity for adequate resources has to be addressed as this has implications for conducting all the activities in the educational space and complying with the policy targets in the educational system. Hong, (2006) agrees with this statement, and expresses the view that the lack of resources causes fatigue and lack of direction in the education system especially with regard to the implementation of policy directives. The implementation of the NSC needs the necessary resources – for practitioners and students at primary and lower secondary levels for the aims and objectives to be met. It is therefore recommended that the provision of resources – print, electronic, equipment, chemicals, and other materials, be made a priority at the level of leadership so that any unnecessary bureaucratic steps in the process can be eliminated, and the required funds can be put in place and the required procedures engaged to procure resources for the effective implementation of the NSC (and any curriculum in place).

Unsuitable Facilities. UNESCO (2021a) highlights the importance of suitable facilities for the system to operate at its optimum. The role of policy, working in tandem with the provision of facilities has been identified as a major strategy for building capacity for the professionals in the system, while enabling teaching and learning to proceed in an effective manner. The implementation of policy directives is dependent on the provision of adequate facilities, including adequate building space, provision for Internet, provision of furniture and

equipment. The physical provisions (as dictated by policies, acts and schemes) must be in place before the work of the professionals with their charges can be effectively accomplished (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The onus is therefore on the leadership arm of the institutions to do what is humanly possible to engage leadership (political or otherwise) at community and national levels, in the provision of adequate facilities for the implementation of the NSC in a manner required by the policy directives and standards of educational practice. The funds allocated to education in the national budget, which for 2020 was \$117 billion, 23% of the budget after debt payments are taken out (Jamaica Information Service, 2020) should be distributed with a view to providing adequately for the various types of facilities. Funds are usually not adequate to provide for a wide range of items each year, but certain types of facilities could be targeted in particular years. For example, for 2023, the target could be technological equipment for primary schools, such as tablets, computers and printers; for 2024, the focus could be outfitting Science laboratories or rooms, and for 2025, the focus could be on the refurbishing of buildings. The attention given to the various aspects of the facilities could be done on a cyclic basis. For the example given, there would be a return to the area of technology in 2026, making this sequence a three-year cycle.

Lack of Sufficient Training. A major recommendation arising from the finding of lack of training of teachers and other practitioners, is that the Ministry of Education should bolster its training programme for the NSC implementation. McNeill et al., (2016) and Cuausarano, (2015) emphasized the importance of adequately preparing teachers so that the implementation of the curriculum can be effective. This stance is further supported by (MacDonald et al., 2016) who indicated that in addition to the making training available to teachers, the effective delivery of the curriculum also entails dedication to duty and a willingness to access the training being

offered on an on-going basis. Remaining committed to accessing training programmes will prepare teachers for eventualities such as problems with interpretation of content and strategies, and any other challenge that might arise in the implementation of a new curriculum (Caropreso, Haggerty, & Ladenheim, 2016). Bell (2015), Caropreso et al., (2016), and McNeill et al., (2016), all indicate how important it is to train teachers for the implementation of a new curriculum and highlight the danger of the omission or lack of full implementation of this step in curriculum innovation.

The recommendation is therefore to make complete plans for the training of teachers and other education professionals who are instrumental in the implementation of the new curriculum, alongside the preparation and dissemination of the curriculum itself. Regular government provision of funds could be bolstered with project grants or loans from international agencies which support education such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the USAID, the Organization of American States, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, as well as the Private Sector.

Resistance to Change. The qualitative processing of the data revealed that there is some evidence of resistance to change in the implementation of the NSC. Lunenburg (2010) cites that possible causes of resistance are: uncertainty about the course of the innovation, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance of the innovation by the group it is being introduced to, dependence on the old systems in place that would thwart the acceptance of the innovation, and lack of trust in the management team that is leading the innovation. Moswela (2010) highlights the need for the development of a policy to give overall direction and structure to the innovation, and Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, (2004) highlight the need to prepare teachers to be competent in the use of any new devices, methods and strategies that are inherent in the

innovation, to give teachers and other professionals a sense of confidence as they engage in the new tools and strategies.

Smith & Lovat, (2004) address the need to eliminate the sources of fear, consternation, and discomposure and the general psychological factors of practitioners as they are placed in a situation where they have to move from a high level of comfort to a state of being unsure of what an innovation entails.

It stands to reason that every effort should be made to raise the level of comfort of teachers and other professionals in the education system to embrace curriculum innovations so that they will embrace the new way of operating. This is crucial if the innovation is to be successfully introduced and if the benefits of the new curriculum are to be realised in the teaching and learning space.

Positive Aspects of the Implementation

Ready Access to Data. One of the results produced by this study is that leadership in the schools provide access to data that are used by teachers for planning and lesson implementation. This eminent practise must continue and every effort must be made to strengthen this strategy in all schools. There is no doubt that the school leader also makes use of data and also shares data with the staff in his or her institution to drive the decisions made in the teaching and learning process, is a wise and knowledgeable one. In this way, the performance of the school leader is enhanced and the level of stress and anxiety associated with being accountable and effective, is likely to be reduced (Boyce & Bowers, 2018).

The effective use of Implementation Strategies. The study has shown that leadership and staff use many strategies at administrative and classroom level, to ensure the effective implementation of the NSC. Teachers work collaboratively with leadership and with each other

engaging such strategies as timetabling collaboration, making decisions about teaching and learning after collaboration with peers, addressing student diversity, and involving teachers in decisions about important administrative and instructional matters. This practice is in line with the philosophy behind the operation of the CIT, and should be continued and supported.

Support from Leadership. The support of staff by leadership is another exemplary practice that the present study has identified in the implementation of the NSC. The collaboration of leadership with staff in making decisions about the teaching and learning programme has already been highlighted. The support of leadership goes further to actual acts of support and help in the preparation for and the execution of lessons.

This finding is not surprising when it is taken into account that principals are being identified and empowered in their role as being central to curriculum reforms in their institutions (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Hill et al., 2009; Orr et al., 2005; Ouchi, 2009; Wong & Nicotera, 2007). The emphasis is now one of support and engagement of staff to share the responsibility of instructional improvement as principals engage in a more transformational type of leadership befitting the approach required in reforms such as the NSC (Fullan, 2002; Orr et al., 2005).

Leadership Styles and Change. The present study has shown that principals are engaging a more collaborative and inclusive type of leadership in their schools as they implement the NSC. They are adopting practices akin to the transformational leadership style, supporting, challenging and encouraging their staff, involving them in decisions and equipping and informing them on the attainment of their goals in the implementation of the new curriculum. This is in line with the type of leadership described by Gellis, (2001); Judge and Piccolo, (2004). Middle managers such as senior teachers and heads of departments are also

groomed and equipped in attaining classroom, departmental and school goals in line with the innovation (Eren, 2012; Koçel, 2013; Coban & Atasoy, 2020). The autocratic type of leadership in which decisions are handed down the hierarchy with no discussion or participation, (Cherry 2020) has no place in this dispensation. The transformational leadership style is congruent with the policies and philosophy governing the implementation of the NSC and should be strengthened and encouraged in schools.

The Team Approach to Leadership. The team approach or shared leadership, as defined by Hollingworth, (2012) has been instrumental in getting educational innovations “off the ground”. The business of leadership is not left to one individual but is the purview of several stakeholders in the school setting. The principal is supported by the senior teachers and managers such as grade coordinators, heads of departments, master teachers, resource teachers, and deans of discipline, all as a network of professionals at school and regional levels (NEI, 2015). Classroom teachers also participate in making their contributions and giving their feedback to proposals and plans at the school level. The whole aim is to exercise accountability as the curriculum is implemented in the best way to engender achievement and success for students. This is the culture that is being experienced in the schools as leaders, teachers and students engage in a manner encouraged by the philosophy and structure of the NSC.

CBAM as a Model to Monitor Change. The CBAM enables the researcher and the practitioner to understand the process of change in an institution, by viewing the process from the point of view or the concerns which arise during the implementation of the innovation. The model is divided into three dimensions or constructs: Stages of Concern (SoC), Levels of Concern (LoC) and Innovation Configuration (IC). Data are gathered using the stages as an organising framework, and the investigation of the innovation and the structure of programmes

to work through the issues and improve the situation and the circumstances of the participants, are developed, so that success of the change can be assured (Hall & Hord, 2020). The framework, though theoretical is useful in apprising leaders and participants of an innovation, of the dynamics and idiosyncrasies involved in the shaping an innovation to fit a particular educational setting or institution (Lochner, Conrad and Graham, 2015). The use of the CBAM model is highly recommended in this regard.

Summary. Making a projection from the sample studied, it can be generalised that the implementation of the NSC in Jamaican schools' benefits from effective and eminent leadership practices based on the transactional and transformational models. The use of collaborative methods of engagement permeates all levels in the school setting, with teachers giving a positive feedback on their experiences with colleagues and leadership. The CIT provides the structure for enhancing the delivery of the NSC while mitigating the challenges encountered. Despite the challenges of lack of resources, inadequacy of facilities, insufficiency of training, and resistance to change; it is the hope that with the help of initiatives driven by the CBAM model, the positive circumstances and practices of effective use of strategies, accessibility of data, support from leadership, effective leadership in change, and the team approach to leadership, will grow in strength and popularity so that the negative factors which act to retard curriculum innovations, will gradually be reduced to insignificant levels.

Recommendations for Future Research

Reviewing the Purpose of the Study

The National Standards Curriculum was introduced to the Jamaican education system in 2018. Its advent was accompanied by structures and practices at policy, regional and school levels, aimed at embracing the change and enhancing its implementation. The CIT was one such

structure established to support the implementation of the NSC. This support includes facilitating the leadership to effectively follow the policy guidelines that are governed by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). The pivotal role of leadership in overseeing the daily activities of an organisation or institution (including the use of resources, the adherence to established practices) is highlighted by Wallace Foundation (2013). The role that leadership is playing in the implementation of the NSC was also identified as an important factor that this investigation explored.

In specific terms, the purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of the NSC in a group of primary schools, with particular focus on the roles of school leadership and of the CIT. The practices of individuals (principals, teachers) and teams (CIT) such as the strategies used to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum, and the challenges being encountered were explored. The objectives sought to:

1. find out the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the leadership of NSC implementation
2. assess the experiences and strategies of CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC.
3. ascertain the circumstances that surround the types of educational leadership practised by members of the CITs to effect organizational change.
4. examine how the roles and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in the institutions.

Recommendations

Teacher Perceptions. The findings related to teacher perceptions were that staff had data readily available to them for planning and other activities; there is a lack of resources, there are

cases of inadequate facilities, there is insufficient training for the implementation of the NSC, collaborative methods are being used by teachers in the implementation of the NSC, and appropriate strategies are being used in NSC implementation.

From these findings, the following recommendations for future research are proposed:

1. Investigate the type of data that teachers most often request or access for planning and preparation for curriculum delivery. For example, are the requests mainly for biographic data, or are teachers interested in achievement data from former grade levels? Are teachers making decisions on the delivery of the curriculum based on the data gathered?
2. Investigate the types of resources that are lacking in the schools, and the possible effect on curriculum delivery and/or student achievement. The matter of resources is very important in the implementation of an innovation. Sanders (2006), named the lack of resources as one of the hindrances to successful curriculum implementation and team leadership.
3. Research the types of facilities that are most lacking in the school system and the possible impact on curriculum delivery and/or student achievement. Many workers, including Bryk (2010); Davis, Kearney, Sanders, Thomas, & Leon, (2011) and Fullan, (2014) place the responsibility of ensuring that the right facilities are in place for the implementation of the curriculum on the principal. This mandate is even greater when an innovation is involved. Does the principal see this as part of his/her role in the integration of the innovation in the school, or is it seen as the duty of the Ministry of Education?

4. Inquire into the effect of the gaps that exist in the training and preparation of teachers for the delivery of the NSC and how this deficit is being addressed (if at all) at the school level. The importance of preparing teachers and all staff involved through initial and ongoing training in the implementation of a new curriculum is highlighted by McDonald et al. (2016). Teachers trained effectively will in turn deliver the new curriculum effectively. Bell (2015), Caropreso et al., (2016) and McNeill et al., (2016), all reiterate this point, adding that preparing the teacher enables him/her to be confident in the delivery of the new curriculum.
5. Explore the collaborative methods that are being used in the implementation of the curriculum at the primary or secondary level. Lewis, Boston and Peterson, (2017) contend that when transformational leadership is being practised in an institution, students observe this collaboration in action and emulate how their teachers and leaders operate. Students observe the allocation of responsibilities, the effective communication, and the harmony in the operations. They then adopt this behaviour in their interactions in and out of the school environment (Valentine & Prater, 2011).
6. Explore in an in-depth manner the strategies that are being employed in the effective implementation of the NSC at primary or secondary level. The strategy of shared leadership (Hollingworth, 2012) is built into the implementation of the NSC at the school level. In practice, CIT members take on some tasks as an extension of the leadership of the principal to strengthen and give greater monitoring to aspects of the instructional programme in the school. Is this a reality in the schools which have functional CITs? Are CIT members seeing to

the monitoring of the assessment programme of the school? Are they assisting the principal with the implementation of the Language Arts and Mathematics benchmark tests at Grades 3 and 5 for example?

CIT Leadership Strategies. Out of RQ2, and Objective 2 which deal with the experiences of CIT members, the findings that teachers receive support from leaders, and that there is some resistance to change by teachers, were made. Possible areas of research emerging from these findings are:

1. Determining whether the level of support for teachers by school leadership is commensurate with teacher satisfaction or student achievement. Korkmaz (2007) asserts that teachers' satisfaction levels are heightened under transformational leadership, which then has a positive impact on the tone and atmosphere of the school. Fullan (2004) highlights the role of the principal in creating the environment in which students can achieve, but such principals first have to be equipped to do so.
2. Determining which of the causative factors for resistance proposed by Lunenburg (2010) is at play in the incidents of resistance shown in the implementation of the NSC (Uncertainty about the course of the innovation, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance by the group, dependence, trust in the management team, and awareness of flaws in the intended change)

Alternatively, determine which of the causative factors proposed by other workers are at play in the incidents of resistance shown by teachers:

The need for a policy to give overall direction to the innovation (Moswela, 2010); the need to prepare teachers to deal with new devices, methods, strategies inherent in the innovation (Jacobs, Vakalisa & Gawe, 2004)

The need to address sources of trepidation, fear, and the general psychological factors associated with moving from a comfortable way of operating to a new one (Smith & Lovat, 2004).

There is also scope for identifying other barriers to the implementation of the curriculum by the classroom teacher, that may not have been identified and studied by other workers. The investigation of such barriers is proposed by Air (2016).

CIT and Organizational Change. The results of the section of the research guided by Objective (and RQ) 3, showed that in the process of implementing the new curriculum (the NSC), the principals and CIT members of the sample communicated well with each other. Principals advocated for teachers and performed their roles as instructional leaders well. Future research from this finding could investigate whether training of principals and CIT members played a role in this exemplary behaviour.

The important role played by the principal as instructional leader is highlighted by Nguyen (2012) who also suggests that training should be afforded to the principal so that he or she can carry out this role. Training for all staff so that the innovation can be effectively implemented in the school, is recommended by Nguyen (2012).

Policy Directives and Curriculum Implementation. A major finding related to FQ or Objective 4 is that CITs are operating satisfactorily in line with the mandate given by the Ministry of Education. Future research could consider the impact of regional structures for the

implementation of the curriculum, such as the QECs (Quality Education Circles) in enabling the principals and CIT members to perform their roles effectively. What support is being offered by these regional groupings as they meet to discuss the matter of the delivery of the curriculum. Are their problems being aired? Are solutions being offered? The QEC as a forum, like the CIT, was introduced before the advent of the NSC (Curriculum & Support Services, 2014) but the opportunity to strengthen and extend the use of these structures as important means of ensuring the effective delivery of the NSC was capitalized on.

The CBAM Model. The CBAM Model was used in this study to create a structure within which the research and gathering and processing of data could be carried out. It is therefore fitting to make an assessment as to whether this model could be used in future research on any aspect of this investigation. This model was found as fitting to carry out the role it was engaged to carry out. Wang (2014) points out that this framework, which is theoretical in nature is useful for studying the events in the implementation stage of an innovation. In this way, the process of the adoption of the change is examined in detail. Air (2016) points out that this framework is also of practical application in setting the parameters for a research project. This is the very way that this study has adopted the model. This model which was created by Frances Fuller to study the reaction to change (Fuller 1969) and which was used from as early as the 1970s and the 1980s by the Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education in the University of Texas in Austin, was further developed in the diagnostic aspect by Hall, Wallace, & Dossett, (1973). The model was a direct fit for the conduct of this research and provided a base and a superstructure on which the investigation was built. This model is therefore recommended for future research that will build on the findings of this research. It would also be useful use other models for managing change in conducting similar studies in the future. This would determine whether the

model would make a difference in the results of the investigation. Some current change models which could be used as alternatives to the CBAM model are: The Lewin's Change Management Model, The McKinsey 7-S Model, Kotter's Change Management Theory, ADKAR Change Management Model, the Nudge Theory, Bridges Transition Model, Kuber-Ross Change Management Framework, and the Satir Change Management Methodology. These models involve steps, stages, or goals with particular actions and targets at each level.

The findings of this study while being significant in their own right, have laid the foundation for further and future research to give more clarity and depth to new areas for investigation that became apparent during the course of the conduct of the research. Some areas of investigation that could not be included in the present study because the research would be too diffuse, were also given prominence as a result of the conduct of this investigation. An example of this is the need for the examination of the effectiveness of structures set up at regional level, such as the QEC in promoting effective delivery of the curriculum in the schools. The result of such an investigation would indicate whether the systems set up need to be revamped or whether they are indeed carrying out their role and are making effective use of the resources (including financial resources) that have been made available for their operation.

It is clear that much effort is being put into creating curricula that will equip students to be competent and independent learners, and to be able to respond appropriately to issues and happenings in their environment (Brady and Kennedy, 2010). As the needs of students' change, so must the curriculum, and the structures set up for its effective implementation, if the new demands for learning are to be met. Conducting research helps to delineate the actions that must be taken to continue to make the curriculum responsive to student learning needs. It is with this in mind that the results of this study are being offered for action by policy makers, curriculum

developers and supervisors of curriculum implementation of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; principals' associations, school boards, education foundations of the private sector, and any other entity that can influence and support the conduct of learning and teaching in the schools of the nation.

Conclusions of the Study

Brief Review of the Study

This study was born out of a desire to assess the ability of Jamaican education system at the primary level, to lead and manage change. The change in this instance involves the introduction of a new curriculum and the attendant structures to enable its full implementation. One such structure employed in the implementation of the curriculum is the CIT, the role of which is to facilitate the leadership hierarchy in the schools to efficiently follow the policy guidelines while effectively implementing the NSC (Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, Jamaica, 2018). The critical role of leadership in bringing about this and other innovations, by guiding the members of the institution to accept and internalise new perspectives and practices as they carry out their responsibilities, and the challenges that come into play, have been recognized by several workers. Fuller (1969) originated the CBAM model to manage change in organisations; and further work on this model was done by others including Hall, Wallace and Dossett (1973), George, Hall and Stiegelbauer (2013), and Air (2016). Lunenburg (2010) studied the matter of resistance to change and proposed reasons for lack of acceptance of innovations. Fullan (2007), Cheng and Walker (2008), and Kondakci (2004) investigated factors causing failure of innovations, and Fullan (2007) identified lack of clarity as a strong factor in unsuccessful introductions of innovations.

The results of this study have put forward some important findings for the Jamaican education system with regard to the implementation of the innovation of the NSC. The subjects were the leadership and staff in a group of primary schools in an urban location in the island. This investigation explored the roles of members of leadership teams, the strategies used, and the challenges they encountered in the delivery of the curriculum. The objectives of the study addressed:

1. The perceptions of teachers of the approach used in NSC implementation.
2. The experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership.
3. The types of educational leadership practised by members of the CITs to effect organizational change in the institutions.
4. The roles and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in the institutions.

Research questions which guided the conduct of the study were formulated from these objectives and will each be addressed as conclusions emanating from their related findings are presented.

Conclusions for Each Research Objective/RQ

Objective 1: To find out the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the NSC implementation and leadership as policy guidelines are adhered to.

RQ 1: What are the perceptions of teachers of the approach used in the implementation of the National Standard Curriculum (NSC) and the leadership in QEC O.03?

Finding. A major finding related to teacher perceptions was that staff had the data that they needed for planning and other activities, readily available to them.

Conclusion. This is a positive finding which points to a situation that should be supported and encouraged. The provision of information and other data for teachers to prepare

unit and lesson plans, tests, teaching materials and other items is necessary and vital for the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Mattar (2012) names planning for curriculum delivery as one of the important activities which leaders carry out. It would follow that leaders who make planning for curriculum implementation a priority would be well placed to support teachers in their planning for lesson delivery. Supporting the teachers with information and the various kinds of data is part of the provision that is needed in their quest to create suitable learning experiences for their students. Other aspects are student and teacher materials, appropriate teaching methods and the learning environment (Kaschman, 2011; Ovens, 2011). The total picture of the provision for the curriculum and its implementation, in addition to the learning experiences, is completed by the curriculum aims, goals and objectives, the content or subject matter, and methods for its evaluation. There is an equally important imperative that all these components be aligned with each other (Tweedie & Kim, 2015). The finding that the provision of data by school leaders for the use of teachers is a regular occurrence is a positive factor which should be encouraged and put into practice where it is not an automatic action in an institution.

Finding. Another finding related to the perception of the teachers is that there is a lack of resources for the implementation of the curriculum.

Conclusions. This finding identifies a challenge which is not unique to Jamaica. It is also not difficult to see that a lack of resources has a negative effect on team leadership in the implementation of the curriculum, as substantiated by Sanders (2006). Plans put in place for the implementation of programmes cannot be expedited if the resources are not in place; and the leadership would not get the opportunity to supervise the programme because it has not been implemented. The lack of resources is one of the constraints that leaders in the education and

other sectors have to deal with as they implement policy in their various institutions (Van Der Voet, Kupers & Groeneveld, 2015) This takes great skill and proves the mettle of the leader if the hurdle of the lack of resources along with other challenges is scaled. The matter of resources should be addressed to the highest level possible.

Finding. It has also been established from the analysis of the data from the study that inadequacy of facilities is another factor affecting NSC implementation. For the purposes of this study, it is understood that resources are the tools, implements and materials that are used in the implementation of the curriculum, the facilities are the places and structures which facilitate and house the teaching and learning activities. The Task Force Report (Davis 2005) found for example that a facility that needed improvement in schools was libraries.

Conclusion. The facilities of the system that enable and promote the implementation of the NSC such as classrooms, laboratories and special rooms, playing fields, staffrooms, school plants, need to be kept in the optimal condition to enable their use for the effective implementation of the curriculum, in this case, the NSC.

Finding. The preparation of teachers for the delivery of the NSC is another area of challenge.

Conclusions. Training is highly necessary in the introduction of a curriculum innovation. This has already been well established. Bell (2015) is among the researchers who have indicated that proper training is necessary when a new curriculum is being introduced, as this builds teacher confidence. The current situation is that there is insufficient training for the implementation of the NSC. This is a deficit that has to be urgently corrected if the NSC is to be implemented in a manner befitting the quality and relevance of the curriculum to the needs of today's primary (and secondary) school student. Allowing this deficit to continue will result in

students emerging from the primary level of the system without acquiring the battery of competences which is built into the NSC.

Finding. A major positive finding from the administration and analysis of the results of the teacher questionnaire is that collaborative methods are being used by teachers in the implementation of the NSC.

Conclusions. Members in school leadership share with and support each other. Among other actions, teachers are included in discussions and decisions about important school issues and the principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation. Staff members and leaders also share values and vision for the success of school programmes. One way this is achieved is by using the vision of the school as the overarching guide for school programmes. Student and teacher performance are also collaboratively assessed and strategies for improvement are applied. It is also the norm for individual staff members and teams relate with each other as they work to share knowledge and expertise. The relationships between staff and other members of the school community have a direct effect on the conduct of their work, and conditions and structures in the school support how teachers work with others to implement the curriculum.

The collaborative practices being engaged by leadership and among staff are intentional and are built into the implementation of the NSC. The existence of the CIT is one of the structures in the leadership hierarchy of the school which facilitates this collaboration. The fact that the collaborative way of operation is gaining traction as the system gains ease with the use of the NSC is a positive outcome for the implementation of the curriculum. Other practices being employed to enhance the collaborative way of operating are common planning, peer teaching, providing the resources available, lending support to the teachers who need it, and the

engagement of the “5 Cs” (collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, character/connectedness) giving feedback, frequent meetings, on-going training, and planning sessions. These are all positive practices which will augur well for continued student achievement as the implementation of the NSC progresses.

1. **Objective 2:** Assess the experiences and strategies of CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC.

RQ 2: What are the experiences and strategies of the CIT Leadership in the implementation of the NSC?

Finding. The findings that teachers receive support from leaders, and that there is some resistance to change by teachers, were made.

Conclusions. The support received from leaders in the implementation of the curriculum is an indication that more collaborative and cooperative styles of leadership are being practised in the school setting. This constitutes a departure from past methods of leadership which were closer to autocratic styles which acted to create a gulf between leadership and workers. Principals in the past adopted the autocratic leadership style, to play it safe and to be in the “good books” of the board of management and the Ministry of Education. In this new dispensation, decisions are not made by the principals acting as individuals in an autocratic fashion, but there is discussion, deliberation and collaboration with vice principals and Grade Coordinators, members of the CIT, teachers in other leadership positions, and staff members, before proposals are implemented. This is a vastly different from the situation described by Cherry (2020) in some Jamaican primary schools, in which principals acted in an autocratic manner, giving directives without explanations and rationale, with the intention that the instructions would be carried out without question or request for explanation.

It is not surprising that along with the support for the new methods introduced with the curriculum, some resistance would be apparent, and leadership should work at identifying diffusing the pockets of resistance that exist (Ford & Ford, 2010). The study therefore concluded that applying the CBAM model in dealing with the resistance would be instrumental in working to get teachers who have not accepted the change to be put through a process of transformation to become amenable to the change. It is however a positive situation in that the resistance is not pervasive and tools are available to convert resistance to acceptance.

Objective 3: To ascertain the circumstances that surround the types of educational leadership practised by members of the CITs to effect organizational change in these institutions.

RQ 3: How do the educational leadership styles practised by members of the CIT in these institutions affect organizational change?

Finding. It was shown that in the process of implementing the new curriculum (the NSC), the principals and CIT members of the sample communicated well with each other. Principals acted as strong advocates for teachers and performed their roles as instructional leaders well.

Conclusions. It could be concluded that the implementation of the NSC with its emphasis on collaborative and eminent practices is acting as a catalyst for the players in the school system to adopt those behaviours which align to the nature of the curriculum as they relate to each other in the working space. Teachers and principals are showing evidence of modelling the behaviour that is expected of students.

As instructional leaders, principals are “stepping up to the plate” by adopting the transactional, but to a greater extent, the transformational leadership style which is closely aligned with the practices expected in the implementation of the NSC. In line with

transformational leadership, principals are challenging, informing, encouraging, and equipping their teachers in the achievement of their goals (Gellis, 2001, Judge & Piccolo, 2004). They are acting as models for teachers and students to emulate (Lewis, Boston & Peterson, 2017).

Principals are assisting teachers to excel in their desired areas of work and in practising the values they have set. They are charting a positive outlook and a legacy for the conduct of curriculum delivery in their institutions (Hartinah 2020). In the school environment, principals and other leaders are inspiring commitment to the cause of the education of the students and all stakeholders are being invited to be involved in the actualisation of the school's mission (Martin, Crossland & Johnson, 2001).

It must be admitted that not all schools are at the same level of achievement with the practises and the results of transformational leadership. The outlook is however positive, and there is movement in the right direction, which will gain momentum as more and more teachers continue to adopt and practise collaborative methods in curriculum delivery at the classroom level, not only in the sharing of instructional content and skills, but in every behaviour exhibited in the classroom and anywhere teachers and students interact.

Objective 4: Examine how the roles and implications of educational policies in curriculum implementation contribute to change in the institutions.

RQ4: How do the roles and implications of educational policies used in curriculum implementation contribute to change in these institutions?

Finding. It has been shown that CITs are operating satisfactorily in line with the mandate given by the Ministry of Education.

Conclusions. The use of the CIT as an accompanying management structure for the implementation of the NSC was a good decision which has paid dividends to the success of the

roll out of the curriculum. The CIT is an example of policy directive to the education system that has reaped success in its implementation. It would therefore be desirable for principals and other school leaders to maintain the CIT as a management structure in their schools. Challenges that have been identified in maintaining CITs in the Jamaican education system are inadequate provision of teaching and learning support materials as well as inadequate training and follow-up support (Curriculum and Support Services, 2014). The factors which cause innovations to fail or be less successful than they could be also come into play with CITs, since they are innovations in their own right. These factors include lack of a vision to give focus to the innovation, lack of usefulness and a practical focus, and lack of adequate, specific and straightforward information on the innovation (Kotter, 2006 & Fullan, 2007, Smith & Lovat, 2003). Pietarinen et al. (2017) highlight the importance of strong support from other sectors of the education system, and Tan & Low, (2016) advise that time should be given for the innovation to be internalised by those who will implement it. Lunenburg, (2010) offered uncertainty about the course of the innovation, concern over losing personal effectiveness, lack of acceptance by the group, dependence, trust in the management team, and awareness of flaws in the intended change as reasons for resistance (and likely failure). Enterprising principals and leaders will avoid these situations in order to maintain the operation of the CIT in their institutions alongside the implementation of the NSC.

Summary/Conclusion

This study has put a positive light on the implementation of the NSC in the primary level institutions of the of Jamaica. Teachers have a positive outlook on the philosophy and methods inherent in the implementation of the NSC and are practising the collaborative methods in their classrooms, modelling the behaviour patterns for their students to emulate not just in the learning situation, but for in their daily interactions with others in the wider environment. The CIT has

been validated as a leadership tool and an administrative structure which is compatible with the philosophy, and methodology of the NSC and works well in enabling and enhancing its effective and efficient implementation. The transformational leadership style is aligned to the ideals of the NSC and is being practised in institutions as a viable method of enabling the leadership hierarchy to work collaboratively in implementing the curriculum. The CBAM Model has been validated by its successful use in this study as a model and framework to study how the innovation of the NSC is being implemented. This model is therefore recommended for future research that will build on the findings of this study.

A positive outlook for the future of curriculum implementation at the primary level has been created. While challenges of lack of resources and inadequacy of facilities and trepidation for the changes brought about by the NSC exist, the commitment and dedication shown by leaders in working against the odds to ensure the successful implementation of the curriculum in their schools, is laudable. It is hoped that future and further studies in curriculum innovation will make use of the foundation that has been laid to give more information and evidence in areas that have been identified for further investigation as a result of the conduct of this research.

As the world moves further into the 21st century, so will the direction of learning and teaching move further to enable students learn even more independently, and to take appropriate actions to save their environment from degradation and destruction (Brady and Kennedy, 2010). It is the hope that this research has brought more sensitivity to the need for leadership to respond in appropriate ways to heighten and enhance the successes being achieved in curriculum implementation. It is also the hope that this study will provide some basis for the Ministry of Education, the Private Sector, the Ministry of Labour and the general populace to expect from the leadership of schools practices and programmes which will engender collaboration and

cooperation so that when students move to the wider society as independent individuals, the practices they would have come to adopt in schools as they worked with their peers and teachers, would serve them well as they collaborate with their partners and colleagues in the working world.

This treatise on leadership in the primary school and how it is responding to the challenges that are inevitable in every area of endeavour, has opened some doors for further investigation and has put some new perspectives on the table. It has confirmed the complexity of the job of the school leader, carrying out roles as administrator and instructional leader, spanning areas of staff and student assessment, school governance, guiding the development of essential learning skills and content, and creating the opportunities for students to adopt attitudes and practices that will enable their success as independent individuals (Lash & Belfiore, 2017). The principal, along with the leadership structure in the school, is expected to lead and motivate staff in a manner which enables them to maintain the commitment to the students and to the continuation of exemplary practices that will create awareness and a willingness to answer to the needs that students exhibit in the learning environment. The school leader and the leadership structures created to support the principal, take on the complex task of steering the institution and responding appropriately to the needs of all stakeholders in an ever changing cultural social and political environment (AckerHoevar, 2015). This study has done its part by bringing to light the realities that principals and leadership structures such as the CIT have to navigate as innovations are introduced in the primary school setting in Jamaica.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Gatekeeper Letter


UU_GL - Version 2.0

Gatekeeper letter

Address: TH# 77 Unions Estate, St. Catherine.

Date: 14-Dec-2021

Subject: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Mrs. Maureen Dwyer
 Permanent Secretary
 Ministry of Education
 2-4 National Heroes Circle
 Kingston 4

Dear Mrs. Dwyer,

I am a Senior Teacher of the Half-Way-Tree Primary School, where I serve as classroom teacher and Coordinator of Grade 6.

I am in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation for UNICAF University Zambia. The study is entitled: "National Standards Curriculum Implementation – Implications for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in a Group of Primary Schools". The study seeks to confirm and highlight the important and pivotal role of the principal and leadership teams in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC), while they carry out national policy directives and authoritative instructions from the Ministry of Education. The implications arising from school leadership performing their role in steering curriculum implementation and performing other functions, will be explored.

In order to obtain the relevant information, I will need to conduct a survey with principals and teachers in a sample of schools in Region 1. The list of schools selected for the study is attached. I am seeking your approval in conducting the survey and accessing the required information. I would be happy to discuss the dissertation with you (face-to-face or by telephone) and provide any further information you might require.

I look forward to your positive response.

Yours Sincerely,
 Sherila Powell

Student's Name: Sherila Powell
Student's E-mail: sherila.powell@gmail.com
Student's Address and Telephone: 878-543-5957
Supervisor's Title and Name: Dr. Rachel Monde Kabeta
Supervisor's Position: Research Supervisor
Supervisor's E-mail: r.kabeta@unicaf.org

Appendix B: Permission to Conduct Research Letter (MOE)

<p>Reply or subsequent reference to this communication should be made to the Permanent Secretary and the following reference quoted:</p>		<p>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH & INFORMATION</p>
		<p>1-4 National Heroes Circle Kingston 4, Jamaica Tel: 876-612-5840 Fax: 876-948-7735 www.moe.gov.jm</p>
<p>December 20, 2021</p>		
<p>Ms. Sherila Powell – Doctoral Student UNICAF University Unicaf University, Plot 20842, Off Alick Nkhata Road</p>		
<p>Dear Ms. Powell:</p>		
<p>Re: Permission to Conduct Research</p>		
<p>This serves to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence requesting permission to conduct a survey with principals entitled "<i>National Standards Curriculum Implementation – Implications for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in a Group of Primary Schools</i>". The Ministry has approved this request on the condition that the administration of the selected schools are in agreement. Approval is also granted with the understanding that confidentiality and anonymity are maintained.</p>		
<p>The Ministry will be notifying the administration of the institutions of its approval for the research to be conducted and henceforth she will be treating with the institution.</p>		
<p>Kindly acquaint yourself with the guidelines for conducting research in the Ministry's institutions which can be found at www.moe.gov.jm under "Information Resources".</p>		
<p>We would appreciate you forwarding a copy of the findings of this survey to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information.</p>		
<p>Sincerely,</p>		
<p> Vivienne Johnson (Mrs.) Senior Director Planning and Development Division for Permanent Secretary</p>		
<p>COPY: Regional Director</p>		
<p><small>The Honourable Fayval Williams, MP, Minister • The Honourable Robert Nesta Morgan, BA, LLB (Hons), MP, Minister of State • Mrs. Maureen Dwyer, BSc (M), JP, Permanent Secretary (Acting)</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Every Child Can Learn Every Child Must Learn</i></p>		

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

UU_IC - Version 2.1

UNICAF
UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent Form

Part 1: Debriefing of Participants

Student's Name: Sherila Elizabeth Powell

Student's E-mail Address: sherila.powell@gmail.com

Student ID #: R1901D7201237

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Rachel Monde Kabeta

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: UUZ: Doctoral of Education

Research Project Title: National Standards Curriculum Implementation and Implications for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in a Group of Primary Schools.

Date: 12-Dec-2021

Provide a short description (purpose, aim and significance) of the research project, and explain why and how you have chosen this person to participate in this research (maximum 150 words).

The purpose of this research is to investigate the implementation of the (NSC) in a group of primary schools with focus on the roles of the school leadership and of the CIT. It aims to explore the roles of members of leadership teams, the strategies used to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum, and the challenges encountered by teachers and principals in implementing the NSC. This study is intended to examine the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) in Jamaica, and the role of school leaders and the Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT). The research has implications for stakeholders in the Education sector at both the national and regional levels in terms of its potential to: • Inform educational policy makers and curriculum developers of how curriculum implementation is impacted by those entrusted to lead the process, teachers, school leaders and members of the Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT). • Contribute to the body of knowledge on curriculum implementation in the local context. • Be a resource for school leaders, teachers, educational policy makers, student teachers, researchers, and the public.

The above named Student is committed in ensuring participant's voluntarily participation in the research project and guaranteeing there are no potential risks and/or harms to the participants.

Participants have the right to withdraw at any stage (prior or post the completion) of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In these cases, data collected will be deleted.

All data and information collected will be coded and will not be accessible to anyone outside this research. Data described and included in dissemination activities will only refer to coded information ensuring beyond the bounds of possibility participant identification.

I, Sherila Elizabeth Powell, ensure that all information stated above is true and that all conditions have been met.

Student's Signature: S. Powell



UU_JC - Version 2.1

Informed Consent Form

Part 2: Certificate of Consent

This section is mandatory and should to be signed by the participant(s)

Student's Name: Sherila Elizabeth Powell

Student's E-mail Address: sherila.powell@gmail.com

Student ID #: R1901D7201237

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Rachel Monde Kabeta

University Campus: Unicaf University Zambia (UUZ)

Program of Study: UUZ: Doctoral of Education

Research Project Title: National Standards Curriculum Implementation and Implications for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in a Group of Primary Schools.

I have read the foregoing information about this study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss about it. I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions and I have received enough information about this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason for withdrawing and without negative consequences. I consent to the use of multimedia (e.g. audio recordings, video recordings) for the purposes of my participation to this study. I understand that my data will remain anonymous and confidential, unless stated otherwise. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Participant's Print name:

Participant's Signature:

Date: 14-Dec-2021

If the Participant is illiterate:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had an opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the aforementioned individual has given consent freely.

Witness's Print name:

Witness's Signature:

Date:

Appendix D: UREC Decision (DS 1)



UREC's Decision

Student's Name Sherila Powell

Student's ID #: R1901D7201237

Supervisor's Name Dr. Rachel Monde Kabeta

Program of Study: UUZ: EdD Doctoral of Education

Offer ID /Group ID: O21418G21409

Dissertation Stage: 1

Research Project Title National Standards Curriculum Implementation and Implication for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in Primary Schools

Comments: Student's ID is wrong

4c: Please explain how the participants will be approached and recruited

Decision: B. Approved with comments for minor revision

Date: 03-Dec-2020

Appendix E: UREC Decision (DS 3)



UREC Decision, Version 2.0

Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee Decision

Student's Name: Sherila Elizabeth Powell

Student's ID #: R1901D7201237

Supervisor's Name: Dr Rachel Monde Kabeta

Program of Study: UU-EDUD-900-3-ZM

Offer ID /Group ID: O32288G34594

Dissertation Stage: DS 3

Research Project Title: National Standard Curriculum Implementation and Implication for Effective Leadership and Organizational Change in a Primary School

Comments: No comments

Decision*: A. Approved without revision or comments

Date: 17-Feb-2022

*Provisional approval provided at the Dissertation Stage 1, whereas the final approval is provided at the Dissertation stage 3. The student is allowed to proceed to data collection following the final approval.

Appendix F: Focus Group Discussions

Questions for Teachers' Focus Group Discussion

(CIT members: CIT leader, Grade Coordinators from Grades 1-6)

Participants will provide the following data before or after the discussion

1. Your Gender (Circle the appropriate response)	Male / Female
2. Your Age	
3. Your highest educational attainment (Teachers' College/University level)	
4. Years of experience as a teacher	
5. For how many years have you been teaching at your present school?	
6. Did you receive training in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC)?	
7. Did you receive training in the operation of a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT)?	

1. Describe the environment in your school in terms of the willingness of teachers to take risks to try new techniques in order to improve their implementation of the NSC? How does the principal assist in enabling teachers to adapt to the new techniques? How does the CIT assist in preparing teachers to implement the NSC as mandated by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information?
2. Describe the expectations teachers have of their students' ability to learn and that their willingness to make a difference in their students' learning. How do the expectations of teachers' support/ undermine the operations of the CIT? What provisions are made by the CIT

and school leadership to enhance the ability of teachers to respond appropriately to student needs?

3. What are the provisions for enabling staff members to discuss with each other the challenges they are facing? What provisions are made for teachers to discuss their challenges and issues with the principal, senior teachers or the CIT?
4. How are the physical conditions arranged to address the need for teachers to meet and discuss teaching and learning practices? How does the arrangement of these facilities affect the operation of the CIT?
5. Does the timetable or general schedule of the school provide the opportunity for teachers to assess and reflect on their instructional methods? How does the CIT help in making this possible? How does the CIT and school leadership respond to this and other policy directives from the Ministry of Education Youth and Information?
6. How would you describe the leadership style practised by the principal and leadership team (CIT) at your school? Does it help in equipping teachers to successfully implement the NSC and to perform related tasks?
7. Do you have any other comments on the factors which support or hinder the operation of the CIT and the leadership of your school in the implementation of the NSC?

Adapted from: Kruse, S. Seashore Louis, K., and Bryk, K.. (n.d.). Professional learning communities survey. National School Reform Faculty. Retrieved from:

https://www.nsrffharmony.org/system/files/protocols/_survey_0.pdf

Appendix G: Interview Schedule for Principals

Interview Schedule for Principals Part 1. Demographic Information

1. Your Gender	Male / Female
2. Your Age	
3. Your highest educational attainment (Teachers' College/University level)	
4. Years of experience as a principal	
5. For how many years have you been employed at your present school?	
6. Did you receive training in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC)?	
7. Did you receive training in the operation of a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT)?	

Interview Questions

1. Please indicate what you have been doing to supervise the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum.
2. Explain one of the most effective actions you have taken to enable the effective implementation of the NSC in your school.
3. How would you describe your overall approach in leading the implementation of the NSC?
4. Describe how you work with members of the CIT and teachers to implement the NSC. What difference has the presence of the CIT made to your leadership role?
5. What have been the responses to your efforts from others within the school in leading the NSC implementation?
6. Would you change any of the strategies you are using to implement the NSC more effectively in your school?
7. What challenges have you encountered in attempting to implement the NSC as directed by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information? How have you tried to address them?

8. Are there other factors at the community level which have presented challenges in the implementation of the NSC? How have you tried to address these challenges?
9. What factors within and outside of the school setting support you in the implementation of the NSC?
10. How has the Ministry of Education Youth and Information directly assisted you in the implementation of the NSC ?

Appendix H: Interview Schedule for CIT Leaders

Part 1. Demographic Information

1. Your Gender	Male / Female
2. Your Age	
3. Your highest educational attainment (Teachers' College/University level)	
4. Years of experience as a teacher	
5. For how many years have you been employed at your present school?	
6. Did you receive training in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC)?	
7. Did you receive training in the operation of a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT)?	

Part 2

Interview Questions

1. Describe your experience in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum.
2. Explain one of the most effective strategies you have used in to effectively implement the NSC at the classroom level.
3. How would you describe your overall approach in the implementation of the NSC?
4. Describe how the CIT and other teachers have helped you to implement the NSC. What difference has the presence of the CIT made to your work as a teacher?
5. What have been the responses to your efforts to implement the NSC as mandated by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information, from others within the school?

6. Would you change any of the strategies you are using to implement the NSC more effectively in your classroom?
7. What challenges have you encountered in attempting to implement the NSC as directed by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information? How have you tried to address them?
8. Are there other factors at the community level which have presented challenges in the implementation of the NSC? How have you tried to address these challenges?
9. What factors within and outside of the school setting support you in the implementation of the NSC?
10. How has the Ministry of Education Youth and Information directly assisted you in the implementation of the NSC ?

Appendix I: Questionnaire for Teachers

Please supply the following biographic details:

1. Your Gender	Male / Female
2. Your Age	
3. Your highest educational attainment (Teachers' College/University level)	
4. Years of experience as a teacher	
5. For how many years have you been employed at your present school?	
6. Did you receive training in the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC)?	
7. Did you receive training in the operation of a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT)?	

The following questionnaire assesses your perceptions about your principal, staff, and stakeholders (parents and community members) based on the dimensions and attributes of a Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT). Read each statement and then use the scale below to select (✓) the scale point that best reflects your personal degree of agreement with the statement. Be certain to select only one response for each statement. Please make additional comments in the spaces provided.

Scale:

Strongly Disagree (SD) =1, Disagree (D) =2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, Strongly Agree (SA) =5

	Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	U (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1.	Teachers are always included in the discussions and decisions about important school matters					

2.	The principal takes into account the advice of staff members in making decisions.					
3.	Staff members have access to key information for school use					
4.	The principal is able to detect problems before they escalate and addresses areas where his/her intervention is needed.					

	Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	U (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
5.	Staff members are given the opportunity to lobby for and begin the process of change.					
6.	The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation.					
7.	Staff members are coached and nurtured to be leaders.					
8.	Decisions are not made by leadership in an autocratic manner, but through established channels of communication with committees, and subject and grade level groups.					
9.	Stakeholders feel comfortable to share in being responsible and accountable for student learning.					
	Write one or more additional comments about how members in school leadership share with and support each other					
10.	There is a culture of collaboration and sharing of values among staff members.					
11.	Decisions about the delivery of the curriculum are made on the basis of shared values and norms of behaviour.					
12.	Decisions on curriculum delivery are congruent with the values, mission and vision of the school.					
13.	School goals focus on the “whole” child, not just their academic achievement.					

14.	The vision statement of the school guides all policies and programmes supported and implemented.
15.	Stakeholders of the school participate in setting the high standards expected, which redound to student achievement.
16.	Data are used to set priorities and to come to a consensus on desired actions.
17.	Innovations and strategies brought about by the collaborative action of staff members are put into practice so that the intended benefits might be gained
	Write one or more additional comments about how members share values and vision for the success of school programmes

	Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	U (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
18.	The diversity of the needs of students is an area that staff members work collaboratively to attend to.					
19.	Many opportunities exist for teachers to work collaboratively and communicate freely.					
20.	School staff members are committed to programs that enhance learning.					
21.	Staff members use multiple sources of data to collaboratively assess the effectiveness of instructional practices.					
22.	Staff members collaboratively analyze student work to improve teaching and learning.					
	Write one or more additional comments about the way staff members collaboratively assess student and teacher performance and apply strategies for improvement					

23.	Staff members often provide feedback on instructional practices to peers.					
24.	Staff members feel at ease to share ideas and suggestions to improve student achievement.					
25.	Staff members work together to examine student and work to share and improve instructional practices.					
26.	Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.					
27.	Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and share the results of their practices.					
28.	Care, trust and respect exist in the relationships among staff and students.					
	Write one or more additional comments about how individual staff members and teams relate with each other as they work to share knowledge and expertise					
29.	Taking risks is considered the norm.					
30.	The achievement of students and staff is recognized and celebrated as a regular activity in our school.					
31.	School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed change into the culture of the school					
	Statement	SD (1)	D (2)	U (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
32.	Collaborative work of staff members is timetabled and executed.					
	Write one or more additional comments about how your relationships with staff and other members of the school community affect the conduct of your work					
33.	Staff members have adequate access to information technology and instructional materials.					

34.	School leadership retain the help of resource persons to provide support for student learning.
35.	Communication occurs without hindrance between school leadership and all levels of the education system, including head office personnel, parents, and community members.
36.	Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes.
	Write one or more additional comments about how conditions and structures in the school support how you work with others to implement the curriculum

Adapted from: Olivier, D. F., Hipp, K. K., & Huffman, J. B. (2010). Assessing and analyzing schools. In K. K. Hipp & J. B. Huffman (Eds.). *Demystifying professional learning communities: School leadership at its Best*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Appendix J: Guidelines for Document Review

Apply the following guidelines in reviewing documents related to school leadership matters. Proceed on actions for which a positive response can be provided.

#	Guideline	Yes (√)	No (x)
1.	Permission is granted for consulting the document		
2.	The document relates to the topic of the study		
3.	Names appearing in the document are not disclosed in the study		
4.	Acknowledgement of the organisation is given for the use of the document		
5.	Physical (paper) documents are returned in the same condition in which they were issued		
6.	The documents are recorded in the references of the study		
7.	An appropriate number of documents is used to give a rich source of information on the topic being reviewed		
8.	Use of the documents by other parties while they are the responsibility of the researcher is avoided		
9.	APA guidelines are followed in making references from the documents		
10.	Any damage to the document before use is pointed out to the person issuing the document		
11.	Care is taken in using the physical document		
12.	The source of the document (if not directly the issuer) is requested and acknowledged		
13.	Documents sourced virtually (on-line) are given the same attention as physical documents, in terms of referencing and acknowledgement		

Appendix K: Checklist for the Observation of CIT Meetings

Place a tick (v) to indicate the presence of an action and an x to indicate its absence

Activity/Statement		Present (v)	Absent (x)
1.	The principal or his designated representative convenes the meeting		
2.	An agenda is present and adhered to		
3.	Minutes (or notes of previous meetings) are reviewed/read		
4.	Each member of the gathering has equal opportunity to present ideas/suggestions		
5.	Members volunteer readily to carry out tasks appointed		
6.	Teachers' issues and challenges are discussed with a view to resolving them		
7.	Participants relate to each other with respect.		
8.	Forward planning is carried out		
9.	Feedback is generated on the leadership practices of the principal		
10.	Feedback is generated on the leadership practices of the CIT and of the principal		
11.	Decisions of past meetings are implemented		
12.	Plans generated involve training of teachers in the effective implementation of the NSC		
13.	Plans are made to recognise achievement by staff and students		
14.	Plans involve sharing of responsibility		
15.	The needs of students take priority in the planning process		
16.	Information presented to teachers is in line with Ministry of Education directives		
17.	Attendance is representative of the membership		
18.	Community members attend on a regular basis		
19.	Meetings are held on a regular basis (bi-weekly, monthly, etc.)		

20.	Plans are made to have resources available to staff and students		
21.	Accommodation is made to have ICT incorporated in learning and teaching		
22.	The principal/CIT leader takes advice/suggestions made by staff members		
23.	Decisions are made with the input of participants of the meeting		
24.	Information on the content of the meeting is provided to teachers beforehand		
25.	A schedule of meetings with the matters to be discussed at each, is in place.		

Appendix L: Reliability and Validity

Quantitative Study

Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Internal consistency	<i>Table 1: Reliability of items for Teacher's Questionnaire</i>
$0.9 \leq \alpha$	Excellent (applied Scenario)	
$0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good	
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$	Acceptable	
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Questionable	
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor	
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable	

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.948	.950	36

Validity

<i>The strength of a correlation</i>	
Value of coefficient	Meaning
0.00 to 0.19	A very weak correlation
0.20 to 0.39	A weak correlation
0.40 to 0.69	A moderate correlation
0.70 to 0.89	A strong correlation
0.90 to 1.00	A very strong correlation

Appendix M: Item-Total Statistics

Quantitative

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
Teachers are always included in the discussions and decisions about important school matters.	120.10	571.275	.541	.707	.947
The principal takes into account the advice of staff members in making decisions.	119.88	575.594	.554	.711	.947
Staff members have access to key information for school use	120.01	574.695	.594	.728	.947
The principal is able to detect problems before they escalate and addresses areas where his/her intervention is needed.	120.17	580.314	.391	.576	.948
mStaff members are given the opportunity to lobby for and begin the process of change.	120.25	570.858	.573	.807	.947

The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation.	119.72	584.414	.439	.640	.948
Staff members are coached and nurtured to be leaders.	120.24	578.258	.440	.686	.948
Decisions are not made by leadership in an autocratic manner, but through established channels of communication with committees, and subject and grade level groups.	120.10	580.646	.421	.498	.948
Stakeholders feel comfortable to share in being responsible and accountable for student learning.	119.88	572.032	.616	.639	.946
There is a culture of collaboration and sharing of values among staff members.	119.92	572.783	.571	.609	.947
Decisions about the delivery of the curriculum are made on the basis of shared values and norms of behaviour.	119.67	574.528	.545	.605	.947
Decisions on curriculum delivery are congruent with the values, mission	119.51	575.757	.679	.762	.946

and vision of the school.					
School goals focus on the “whole” child, not just their academic achievement.	119.58	575.999	.540	.631	.947
The vision statement of the school guides all policies and programmes supported and implemented.	119.78	572.476	.535	.742	.947
Stakeholders of the school participate in setting the high standards expected, which redound to student achievement.	119.87	571.716	.545	.739	.947
Data are used to set priorities and to come to a consensus on desired actions.	119.89	570.749	.620	.783	.946
Innovations and strategies brought about by the collaborative action of staff members are put into practice so that the intended benefits might be gained	120.03	572.123	.508	.669	.947
The diversity of the needs of students is an area that staff members work collaboratively to attend to.	119.75	567.430	.659	.766	.946
Many opportunities exist for teachers to	119.83	560.580	.733	.744	.945

work collaboratively and communicate freely.					
School staff members are committed to programs that enhance learning.	119.58	565.351	.704	.853	.946
Staff members use multiple sources of data to collaboratively assess the effectiveness of instructional practices.	119.71	565.637	.707	.814	.946
Staff members collaboratively analyze student work to improve teaching and learning.	119.63	564.730	.631	.849	.946
Staff members often provide feedback on instructional practices to peers.	119.60	570.527	.605	.777	.947
Staff members feel at ease to share ideas and suggestions to improve student achievement.	119.57	565.277	.696	.823	.946
Staff members work together to examine student and work to share and improve instructional practices.	119.62	569.532	.661	.821	.946
Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.	119.89	563.987	.692	.801	.946
Individuals and teams have the opportunity	119.67	567.728	.623	.788	.946

to apply learning and share the results of their practices.					
Care, trust and respect exist in the relationships among staff and students.	119.92	563.774	.559	.683	.947
Taking risks is considered the norm.	121.06	585.787	.236	.571	.950
The achievement of students and staff is recognized and celebrated as a regular activity in our school.	119.65	567.563	.647	.689	.946
School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed change into the culture of the school	119.97	568.637	.645	.666	.946
Collaborative work of staff members is time-tabled and executed.	119.92	565.374	.618	.689	.946
Staff members have adequate access to information technology and instructional materials.	120.27	582.448	.345	.589	.949
School leadership retain the help of resource persons to provide support for student learning.	119.97	570.028	.559	.731	.947
Communication occurs without hindrance between school leadership and	119.93	567.167	.617	.751	.946

**all levels of the
education system,
including head office
personnel, parents,
and community
members.**

Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes.	120.11	572.578	.515	.682	.947
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Appendix M (2): Rotated Factor Matrix with Factor by Question Loading

Rotated Factor Matrix with Factor by Question Loading

RQ	TQ#	Question	Factor						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R1	Q22	Staff members collaboratively analyze student work to improve teaching and learning.	.843	.032	.224	-.014	-.012	-.081	.187
R1	Q20	School staff members are committed to programs that enhance learning.	.838	.125	.199	.075	.028	-.004	.015
R1	Q21	Staff members use multiple sources of data to collaboratively assess the effectiveness of instructional practices.	.834	.114	.220	.103	-.007	.034	.034
R1	Q23	Staff members often provide feedback on instructional practices to peers.	.806	.193	-.069	-.113	.154	.201	-.099
R1	Q25	Staff members work together to examine student and work to share and improve instructional practices.	.785	.065	.198	.214	.042	-.062	-.048
R1	Q18	The diversity of the needs of students is an area that staff members work collaboratively to attend to.	.777	.136	.174	.026	.102	.014	-.097
R1	Q26	Opportunities exist for coaching and mentoring.	.754	.160	.246	.078	-.013	-.009	.333
R1	Q27	Individuals and teams have the opportunity to apply learning and share the results of their practices.	.724	.003	.166	-.105	.304	.240	.186
R1	Q24	Staff members feel at ease to share ideas and suggestions to improve student achievement.	.722	.199	.163	.232	.138	-.013	-.228
R1	Q28	Care, trust and respect exist in the relationships among staff and students.	.634	.136	.070	.064	.024	.189	.345
R1	Q31	School staff and stakeholders exhibit a sustained and unified effort to embed change into the culture of the school	.627	.120	.210	.155	.188	.087	-.035
R1	Q19	Many opportunities exist for teachers to work collaboratively and communicate freely.	.622	.332	.355	.023	.034	.043	-.023

Rotated Factor Matrix with Factor by Question Loading

RQ	TQ#	Question	Factor						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R1	Q30	The achievement of students and staff is recognized and celebrated as a regular activity in our school.	.554	.404	.135	.081	.116	.050	-.170
R2	Q10	There is a culture of collaboration and sharing of values among staff members.	.276	.490	.303	.076	.087	-.070	-.087
R2	Q5	Staff members are given the opportunity to lobby for and begin the process of change .	.175	.860	.005	-.001	.138	.257	.063
R2	Q3	Staff members have access to key information for school use	.159	.635	.245	.272	.055	.131	-.101
R2	Q1	Teachers are always included in the discussions and decisions about important school matters.	.152	.764	.133	.129	.038	-.020	.159
R2	Q2	The principal takes into account the advice of staff members in making decisions.	.140	.740	.144	.124	.117	-.037	.104
R2	Q8	Decisions are not made by leadership in an autocratic manner, but through established channels of communication with committees, and subject and grade level groups.	.112	.422	.205	.133	.148	.001	.008
R2	Q6	The principal delegates responsibilities and gives appropriate recognition when staff show innovation.	.021	.591	.237	.161	.090	-.001	-.144
R1	Q12	Decisions on curriculum delivery are congruent with the values, mission and vision of the school.	.330	.364	.476	.274	.022	.256	.008
R1	Q32	Collaborative work of staff members is time-tabled and executed.	.325	.239	.465	.234	.147	-.015	.290
R1	Q11	Decisions about the delivery of the curriculum are made on the basis of shared values and norms of behaviour.	.321	.235	.345	.151	.148	.125	.100
R1	Q9	Stakeholders feel comfortable to share in being responsible and accountable for student learning.	.288	.372	.412	.131	.124	.197	.165
R1	Q13	School goals focus on the “whole” child, not just their academic achievement.	.262	.181	.600	.042	.074	-.012	.086
R1	Q16	Data are used to set priorities and to come to a consensus on desired actions.	.206	.227	.758	.001	.251	.181	-.161

Rotated Factor Matrix with Factor by Question Loading

RQ	TQ#	Question	Factor						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R1	Q17	Innovations and strategies brought about by the collaborative action of staff members are put into practice so that the intended benefits might be gained	.194	.128	.666	-.055	.160	.051	.098
R1	Q14	The vision statement of the school guides all policies and programmes supported and implemented.	.188	.184	.685	.125	.044	.068	-.103
R2	Q33	Staff members have adequate access to information technology and instructional materials.	.120	.134	-.033	.573	.361	.096	-.047
R2	Q4	The principal is able to detect problems before they escalate and addresses areas where his/her intervention is needed.	.065	.279	.131	.542	.060	.054	.057
R2	Q7	Staff members are coached and nurtured to be leaders.	.029	.521	.075	.580	.011	-.013	-.010
R2	Q35	Communication occurs without hindrance between school leadership and all levels of the education system, including head office personnel, parents, and community members.	.255	.359	.306	.218	.554	-.070	-.162
R2	Q34	School leadership retain the help of resource persons to provide support for student learning.	.190	.342	.179	.364	.451	.096	.106
R2	Q36	Staff members have data easily available to them whenever they are needed for planning programmes.	.114	.191	.340	.146	.789	.053	.053
R2	Q15	Stakeholders of the school participate in setting the high standards expected, which redound to student achievement.	.180	.129	.512	.214	.077	.798	.021

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
Percent of Variance explained	22.008	13.391	11.176	4.950	4.862	3.066	2.016
Total Variance Explained	62.37%						

Appendix N: Themes and Sub-themes

Qualitative Study

Themes and Subthemes for Focus Group Discussions, Principal and CIT interviews

(Nvivo 12)

Codes

Name	Files	References
TEHEME 1 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION	2	2
Cohesiveness	5	12
Community Support	5	5
Curriculum Delivery	10	15
Educational Policy	9	15
Implementation	14	49
School Support	4	5
State of Facilities	3	7
THEME 2 LEADERSHIP	0	0
CIT Leader Support	5	12
Leadership Style	10	15

Name	Files	References
Support from principal	12	23
THEME 3 CHALLENGES	1	2
Challenges	16	44
THEME 4 RESOURCES AVAILABILITY	3	3
Adequate Resources	2	2
Lack of Resources	7	15
THEME 5 STRATEGIES	0	0
Feedback	4	7
Frequent Meetings	10	20
On-going Training	10	17
Planning Sessions	5	11
Strategies	13	28

Themes and Subthemes Identified

Theme Leadership Factors (RQ3)
Subthemes
CIT Leader Support Leadership Style Support for Principal

Qualitative Study (Cont'd)

Themes and Subthemes Identified

Theme Strategies (RQ3)
Subthemes
Feedback Frequent meetings Ongoing training Planning sessions

Theme Leadership (RQ3)
Subthemes
Feedback Frequent meetings Ongoing training Planning sessions

Theme Implementation (RQ4)
Subthemes
Cohesiveness Community Support Curriculum Delivery Education Policy School Support State of Facilities

Theme Resource Availability (RQ4)

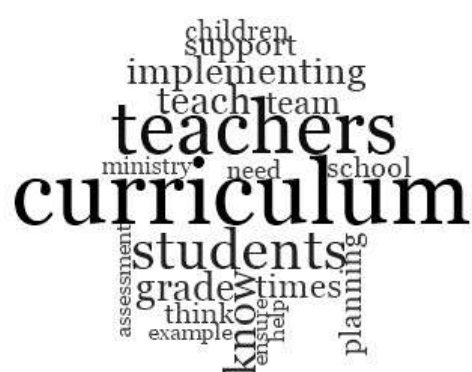
Theme Challenges (RQ4)
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Appendix O: Wordles

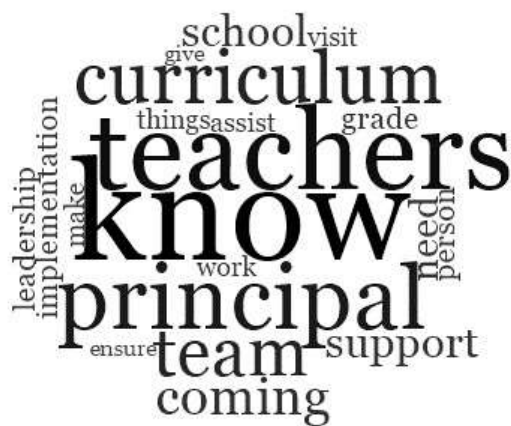
Wordles

Nodes

Theme 1 Curriculum Implementation



Theme 2 Leadership



Theme 3 Challenges



Theme 4 Resource Availability



Theme 5 Strategies



Appendix P: Data Collection Summary

Data Collection Summary/ Details

<u>Type of Survey (i.e. Questionnaire or Interview OR Both)</u>	<i>To be completed by the student</i> Both
<u>Distribution Method (i.e. Hand Administered/ online, face to face etc)</u>	<i>To be completed by the student</i> The Survey questionnaires and Inform Consent forms were distributed at the Six (6) primary schools this was done face to face. Interviews were done face to face and online.
<u>Date survey was issued/ commences</u>	<i>To be completed by the student</i> 11 th March, 2022.
<u>Number of respondents participated</u>	<i>To be completed by the student</i> 154 out of 168
<u>Type of respondents (i.e. Students of secondary education, accountants etc)</u>	<i>To be completed by the student</i> Primary School Level: Principal, CIT leader, Grade Coordinators from Grades 1-6 and Teachers.
<u>Location of respondents</u>	A group of Primary schools in Region 1, QEC 0.03 (Kingston Jamaica)
<u>Date survey was completed/ ended</u>	30 th March, 2022