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Ministry of Education Management Committee Members' Perceptions of Shared Organizational Vision

Theresa Obiageli Mbonu
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Theresa Mbonu

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

Ministry of Education Management Committee Members' Perceptions of Shared
Organizational Vision

by

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MA, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, Nigeria, 1998

BS, University of Benin, Nigeria, 1982

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Leadership, Policy, and Change in Education

Walden University

May, 2021

Abstract

Persistent challenges in the Nigerian educational system have made education delivery ineffective as students' performance levels on national examinations have remained low. Students' average performance has been below 40% on the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) for 7 consecutive years in the region of this research. Stakeholders blamed heads of schools and teachers, yet the Ministry of Education made significant decisions about schools' inputs. Leaders at the Ministry of Education may need to adopt a shared vision approach to addressing persistent educational challenges. There was no study available to indicate the understanding of educational leaders at this level concerning the shared vision concept. This generic qualitative inductive research explored the understanding of management committee members at a ministry of education about a shared vision and how it could address their persistent education problems. The conceptual framework of shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership helped to focus the study while an adapted Walker and Avant concept analysis framework guided data analysis. Interview data collected from 15 members of management were analyzed using themes from the literature. The results indicated that members had a substantial understanding of a shared vision's attributes but did not show the same level of understanding of some aspects of the antecedents and consequences of a shared vision. There were indications that a shared vision approach could have some positive effects on members' work. This research contributes to knowledge on educational leadership at the systems level, and may engender a planned change on educational leadership and management in the focus organization and the country.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family and to the Nigerian educational system. It is my ardent wish that systems level leadership in the Nigerian educational sector would improve on their strategies, for more effective educational delivery and outcomes.

Acknowledgments

I thank God with all my heart for bringing me to the fruitful end of this journey at Walden. I remember with immense gratitude the continuous prod from my Committee Chair Dr. L. L. Bearden and the gentle and encouraging words of Dr. Janet Strickland, my second Committee member. Their contributions to my success in this PhD endeavor are incalculable. The URR member of my Committee Dr. Andrew Thomas was the game changer whose insistent comments on my dissertation proposals led me to the final realization of what I needed to do to succeed. I followed his advice and I have succeeded. Additionally, I give sincere thanks to Dr. Cheryl Keen and other members of the faculty of Education for their various guidance in the entire process of my study at Walden.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background.....	6
Problem Statement.....	8
Purpose of Study.....	10
Research Question	11
Main Research Question.....	11
Sub questions	11
Conceptual Framework.....	11
Nature of Study.....	15
Definitions.....	17
Assumptions.....	20
Scope and Delimitations	21
Limitations	22
Significance of Study.....	23
Summary.....	24
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	27
Literature Search Strategy.....	29
Conceptual Framework.....	30
Shared Vision.....	30

Systems Thinking.....	34
Shared Leadership.....	36
Review of Related Concepts.....	42
Organizational Management.....	43
Management Theories.....	44
Organizational Vision.....	46
Communicating Organizational Vision.....	48
Leadership and Management.....	50
Leadership.....	50
Management.....	52
Shared Leadership or Leadership in Teams.....	53
Systems Approach to Organizational Management.....	55
Educational Leadership and Management.....	60
Models of Educational Leadership.....	61
Distinguishing Educational Leadership From Educational Management.....	65
Educational Management.....	67
Collaboration and Change.....	68
Collaboration.....	69
Change Management.....	73
Research Approach.....	76
Main Research Question.....	76
Sub questions.....	77

Summary and Conclusion	79
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	81
Research Design and Rationale	81
Main Research Question	81
Sub questions	82
Role of the Researcher	84
Methodology	87
Participant Selection Logic	87
Instrumentation	90
Procedure for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection	92
Data Analysis Plan	94
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	97
Credibility	98
Transferability.....	99
Dependability	100
Confirmability.....	100
Ethical Procedures	101
Summary	104
Chapter 4: Results	105
Setting	106
Demographics	107
Data Collection	108

Data Analysis	111
Coding Process.....	113
Clustering of Codes to Themes From Literature	118
Additional Themes.....	121
Refining Themes.....	122
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	127
Credibility	128
Transferability.....	128
Dependability	129
Confirmability.....	129
Results.....	130
Main Research Question	132
Research Sub questions.....	145
The Outliers	148
Summary	151
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	153
Interpretation of Findings	154
Interpretation Concerning Literature	155
Interpretation With the Conceptual Framework	165
Limitations of the Study.....	167
Recommendations.....	169
Implications.....	170

Conclusion	172
References.....	174
Appendix: Interview Protocol for Faza Ministry of Education Management	
Members' Perceptions of a Shared Organizational Vision.....	199

List of Tables

Table 1. Grouping of Themes From Literature Under Categories of the Analysis	
Framework	41
Table 2. Demographics of Participants	108
Table 3. Participants' Interview Dates and Durations	111
Table 4. Summary of Codes According to Categories in the Analysis Framework	116
Table 5. Attributes of a Shared Vision: Sample Codes Arranged According to	
Themes	119
Table 6. Antecedents of a Shared Vision	120
Table 7. Consequences of a Shared Vision: Summary of Codes Arranged According to	
Themes	121
Table 8. Additional Themes Arranged According to Categories in the Analysis	
Framework	122
Table 9. Refined Themes and Subthemes	126
Table 10. Outlier: Codes Arranged According to Emerging Themes	127

List of Figures

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for A Shared Vision 39

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Countries require planned and systematic management of the education system to deliver quality education (Arop et al., 2018; Ayonmike et al., 2015). Available literature and other anecdotal evidence indicate problems in the Nigerian educational system have made education delivery ineffective and inefficient, with unsatisfactory student performance (Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Odukoya et al., 2018). These problems include indiscriminate policy changes, a wide gap between policy and practice, an unsustainable funding pattern for different levels of education, and low-quality inputs (Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015; Utibe & Agwagah, 2015). Available information from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other scholars have indicated that 10.5 million children are out of school, and there has been persistent low student performance in national examinations (Bolaji et al., 2015; Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015; Odukoya et al., 2018; Utibe & Agwagah, 2015). Yearly report of student achievement on the country's national Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE) indicate that their performance had remained consistently below 40% for 7 years (2011 to 2016). Additionally, according to the Nigeria National Education Data Survey (National Population Commission, 2015), 65% of children out of school in the Faza region said that the cost of sending children to school was their major constraint. The Nigerian government provides compulsory free primary education, and the Faza Ministry of Education has a department in charge of providing scholarships to indigent children.

Members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee believed that they had done everything within their power to address the challenges to the delivery of quality education, yet problems persisted. The members worked hard at their respective departments or boards as though they were in competition with one another. They struggled to get as much budget as possible for their departments during fund allocations, irrespective of whether another department needed the funds more than they did in a given year. Their efforts resembled what Kaufman et al. (2003) described as working to achieve microlevel goals without an eye on the overall organizational goals. Children who enroll in school require holistic development (Yoon & Järvinen, 2016) and seamless transitions through educational levels. Managers of the education system need to work collaboratively to achieve their ultimate goal: enrolling and graduating students with relevant competencies and skills that are useful to their region and the world (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007; Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016).

The Faza Ministry of Education's management might not have tried a shared vision approach. Such an approach requires that people in an organization focus on a common cause that is important to the organization, without which they might not solve their problem (Senge, 2006). When I began this study, no work existed to support a claim to these 'members' understanding of the concept of a shared vision. Sharing a common vision of the organization could help management members of the Faza Ministry of Education achieve the organization's primary and essential goal, irrespective of the level or aspect of education that each management member has the responsibility to serve in. Demand for more effective services from educational leaders at the Faza Ministry of

Education level was borne out of education management's hierarchical structure in Nigeria, as in other developing countries (Bush, 2019; Connolly et al., 2017). The hierarchical management process required leaders at the systems' level of educational management formulate education policies and decide on school inputs. They pass instructions down the hierarchy to the school leaders and teachers (Bolaji et al., 2015; Connolly et al., 2017). When problems manifested at the school level, including low levels of student performance, school heads and teachers take the blame (Bello et al., 2016; Daily Post, 2015; Kpolovie et al., 2014).

According to Senge (2006), a shared vision creates a sense of trust that enables people to become connected out of a feeling of collective caring; it is a force that makes people take action, not because someone asks them to do so, but because they find the need to take action. Scholars and organizational practitioners have found that a shared vision is effective in getting diverse groups to work collaboratively toward achieving a common goal (Wong et al., 2009). Evidence in the literature abounds of how organizations, including educational institutions, have leveraged a shared vision approach to address various challenges (Kantabutra, 2012; Senge et al., 2015). However, many of these studies were conducted in the United States (Gurley et al., 2015; Senge et al., 2015), Europe (Macedo et al., 2016), Pacific countries (Chi-hsiang, 2015; Chen et al., 2015; Kantabutra, 2012), and other parts of the developed world. Only a few recent works exist on shared vision and shared leadership in Nigeria (Adésínà, 2015; Olokundun et al., 2017; Olujuwon & Perumal, 2015; Pearce et al., 2014).

When I initiated this study, there was doubt regarding the availability of information on the understanding of the shared vision concept and its application among Faza Ministry of Education management and other educational leaders at the systems level in Nigeria's states. It became worth exploring the understanding of educational leaders in Nigeria at the top management level regarding a shared vision and its influence in addressing their education challenges. This research may awaken the consciousness of members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee and other system-level educational leaders in Nigeria to the importance of implementing a shared organizational vision as they discharge their different departmental mandates.

Research on educational leadership in the United States, Europe, and recently some East Asian countries has focused on the school level. This focus on the school level may have resulted from the decentralized educational administration systems and management in those countries that give schools autonomy and school leaders authority to make school improvement interventions (Gumus et al., 2018; Halinger, 2018b; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Only a few studies have focused on the impact of state-level educational leaders' activities on schools and students (Louis, 2015). In the Nigerian context, as in most developing countries, a bureaucratic and hierarchical structure has persisted in education governance despite the creation of tiers of governance structures that should support decentralization of power (Abdullahi & Abdulkareem, 2017; Bolaji et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2018). Bolaji et al. (2015) identified the bureaucratic model of educational management as a significant reason for the low-level implementation of educational policies in Nigeria.

Given the situation in Nigeria, there is a need to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared vision and how it could be a possible strategy for addressing their educational challenges. Despite the overarching responsibility of educational leaders at the systems level for significant educational policy decisions that impact schools, education stakeholders at the national and the Faza region levels have blamed school heads and teachers for the persistent problems in the education system (Bello et al., 2016; Daily Post, 2015; Kpolovie et al., 2014). This research report may contribute to existing studies in awakening educational leaders' consciousness toward examining their actions and inaction while searching for solutions to the many educational problems they face. Researchers on educational leadership in Nigeria could study the impact of systems-level educational leaders' attitudes and manifest behaviors on school operations, including teaching and learning processes.

The rest of this chapter addresses the research problem and the purpose of this research, which explored the understanding of 15 members of Faza Ministry of Education management about a shared vision. I explored the problem through one main question and two sub questions that captured the Faza Ministry of Education management's understanding of a shared vision and how it could help the members deliver better educational services for improved outcomes. I discuss the conceptual framework that guided the entire research process and the framework supporting data analysis and generation of the findings. The central concepts that formed the conceptual framework included Peter Senge's (2006) shared vision as a discipline of a learning organization

with other literature on a shared vision; systems thinking (Manuele, 2019, Senge, 2006; Senge et al., 2015), and shared leadership (D’Innocenzo et al., 2016; Grille et al., 2015; Slantcheva-Durst, 2014). Pieces of evidence in the literature have shown that systems thinking and shared leadership are necessary conditions for implementing a shared vision, and the interrelationship improves productivity (Banson et al., 2015; Slantcheva-Durst, 2014; Wilkinson et al., 2018).

Background

For many years, scholars and practitioners have affirmed that vision is essential at both personal and organizational levels in motivating people to achieve their goals (Berson et al., 2016; Boyatzis et al., 2015; Senge, 2006). Some scholars have explained an organizational vision in ways that make the concept seem synonymous with leadership (Chai et al., 2017; Chi-hsiang, 2015; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018). In other words, organizations’ leadership has the significant responsibility of crafting and driving organizational vision achievement. Collins and Porras (1996) conducted 6-year empirical research about building an organizational vision. In the end, the authors posited that a vision is an envisioned future of an organization that hinges on the organization’s core ideology, which consists of its core values and purpose for existence.

Senge (2006) presented a shared vision as having some recurrent themes that serve as characteristics of a shared vision. According to Senge, when people genuinely share in a vision, they are connected and bound together by a common aspiration, and people who mistrust each other can begin to work together. Senge explained that shared vision had permeated many kinds of literature and inspired many organizations to

transform their settings into learning organizations (Fillion et al., 2015). Moreover, Senge maintained that great organizations sustain greatness through having values, goals, and missions, which every member of the organization holds to heart and is committed to achieving. Wong et al. (2009) posited that a shared vision “could help departments overcome out-group feelings common to organizations” (p. 2897) and that harnessing various resources distributed across various departments would contribute to overall organizational improvement.

Despite the sustained popularity of a shared vision as an effective organizational strategy in the management and leadership literature, few studies existed on shared vision in the Nigerian environment, and there were none to support a claim on the understanding of the concept of a shared vision among education leaders at the systems level.

Additionally, numerous studies on educational leadership in the United States, Europe, and Eastern countries have focused on the school level. The school heads in those countries had the responsibility and authority to make decisions about their schools (Bush, 2015; Bush et al., 2019; Hallinger, 2018a). In Nigeria, the situation was different because leaders at the top management level made policies and decided about schools’ operations (Abdullahi & Abdulkareem, 2017; Bolaji et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2018). It became necessary to understand the meanings that educational leaders in the Faza Ministry of Education, at the systems level, ascribed to a shared vision and how it could influence their efforts in tackling education challenges in the Faza region. This research could contribute to the literature on shared vision within the Nigerian educational environment. It could also contribute to awakening the need for further research on

attitudes and activities of top-level leaders and managers of the Nigerian educational sector and their impact on school operations and student performance.

Problem Statement

The Nigerian educational system has experienced several problems that have included indiscriminate policy changes, a wide gap between policy and practice, unsustainable funding patterns for different levels of education, 10.5 million children out of school, and persistent low performance of students in national examinations (Bolaji et al., 2015; Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015; Odukoya et al., 2018; Utibe & Agwagah, 2015). In the Faza region, students' average pass rate in the national SSSCE remained below 40% for 7 consecutive years. A passing score on this examination guarantees students' further progress in life.

The Nigeria Education Data Survey (2015) showed that 68% of children in the Faza region could not enroll in primary and junior secondary schools for lack of family funds. However, the Universal Basic Education program in Nigeria is free and compulsory (UBE, 2004). The Faza Ministry of Education had a Scholarship Board that should have ensured that no child was out of school due to a family's low economic status. Meanwhile, educational leaders at the Faza Ministry of Education level were sure that they had done all there was to be done, including reposting principals and teachers and making teachers conduct after school lessons for students, but the problems persisted. They might not have considered implementing a shared vision approach (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018; Senge, 2006) in addressing the problems.

Educational stakeholders have blamed school heads and teachers for the eventual outcome of problems, which have manifested in low student pass rates (Bello et al., 2016; Kpolovie et al., 2014), yet school heads and teachers have not participated in policy formulation or decisions about the distribution of educational resources to schools. Members of Faza Ministry of Education management have rarely taken the blame for problems in the educational system.

The Nigerian National Policy on Education has a significant purpose of graduating students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be good citizens of the country and compare favorably with their counterparts in the world (Federal Ministry of Education, 2008, 2013). Every ministry of education in Nigeria derived its vision and purpose of existence from the National Policy on Education. Shared vision remains an effective organizational strategy with which leaders handle complex organizational challenges and achieve success (Berson et al., 2016; Expósito-Langa et al., 2015; Jantz, 2017; Patti et al., 2015). Within this study's location and population, a shared vision terminology rarely featured at meetings or departmental deliberations. There was no literature available to ascertain the understanding of a shared organizational vision among educational leaders at this level. It became expedient that this research explore Faza Ministry of Education management members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its possible influence on their efforts to address education problems (Fillion et al. 2015; Patti et al., 2015; Young et al., 2017).

Most studies on a shared vision have focused on the United States, Europe, and Pacific countries, with little or no research in the Nigerian context. This study contributes

to the growing body of knowledge on a shared vision in organizations in Nigeria, as Amah and Ahiauzu (2014) did concerning shared values in the Nigerian banking sector. Most educational leadership studies have focused on the school level (Gumus et al., 2018; Hallinger, 2018b; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). In contrast, educational leaders at the systems level have developed policies and made significant decisions about school operations in Nigeria (Bolaji et al., 2015; Day et al., 2016; Hallinger, 2018; Walker et al., 2018). Consequently, they have constituted leaders and managers of education in Nigeria, whose actions and inaction have some implications for schools (Connolly, 2017). The current study may raise awareness of the need for further research to establish empirical evidence on the impact that systems-level educational leaders could have on school operations and student learning outcomes.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this generic qualitative research was to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and how it could be relevant in addressing their persistent education challenges in the region. For clarity, the term "a shared organizational vision" in this context means an overall goal, vision, mission, or purpose of existence. Twenty members of the Faza Ministry of Education management were the target population for this study, but 15 members who had served for six months or more in the management committee constituted the sample. I used the remote interview method through phone or WhatsApp calls to conduct interviews. The interviews explored the views of 15 members of the management committee about a shared organizational vision and how it could influence

their efforts toward addressing the persistent education challenges in the Faza region of Nigeria.

Research Question

To achieve the above purpose of the study, I used the following main research question and sub questions to guide the study:

Main Research Question

What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared organizational vision?

Sub questions

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing Faza region's persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

Conceptual Framework

I used concepts of shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership to form the framework for focusing this research. Studies available on the three concepts, in isolation and sometimes in combinations of two, indicated that the three concepts were interrelated for effective team management of complex organizational challenges to achieve set goals (Berson et al., 2016). Several studies affirmed the importance of organizational vision and, consequently, that a shared vision is a vital tool for leadership and organizational achievement. These organizations included educational organizations and schools (Gurley et al., 2015; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018). Majdi (2015) doubted the

effectiveness of a shared vision in enhancing team innovation. The author's doubt about the effectiveness of a shared vision in enhancing team innovation is a consequence of a shared vision that participants in this research may raise in their responses.

Senge's (2006) conception of a shared vision and other literature on shared vision (Chai et al., 2017; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018) formed a major lens for gaining deep insight into the concept. Scholars' contributions have addressed various aspects of shared vision, such as communicating a shared vision (Jantz, 2017; Mayfield et al., 2015), developing and implementing a shared vision (Martin et al., 2014), as well as the impact of a shared vision on productivity and learning outcomes (Expósito-Langa et al., 2015; Jing & Avery, 2016; Macedo et al., 2016). Several essential elements emerged from the work of Senge and other authors writing about shared vision (Smutkupt, 2014; Suriyankietkaew & Avery, 2016; Tjosvold & Tjosvold, 2015).

From Senge's (2006) perspective, (a) shared vision is a force that exists within people and makes them take action; (b) shared vision creates a sense of trust; (c) shared vision makes people feel connected in a bond; and (d) people are committed to a shared vision because it reflects their own visions. Senge added that a genuine vision makes people excel and learn because they are convinced that they should but not that someone forced them to do so. For Chai et al. (2017), a shared vision connects a group, different units, and individuals in an organization toward understanding collectively the vision, mission, and core values of that organization. These characteristics of a shared vision informed the conceptual framework, interview questions, and identification of themes for the analysis of data within the concept analysis framework. Smutkupt (2018) affirmed

that a leader's communication of the organizational vision is one of the determinants of the success of a shared vision.

Researchers have paid much attention as well to the systems thinking competency in various fields (Manuele, 2019; Senge, 2006; Shaked & Schechter, 2016). Manuele (2019) presented systems thinking as a synonym for macro thinking, which helps people in organizations take a holistic view of issues, identify root causes of a problem, and see new opportunities for tackling the problem. Manuele, (2019), though talking specifically about addressing safety problems, noted that systems thinking requires the following: (a) a holistic view of a problem in focus; (b) engendering a collaborative discussion around it, and (c) distinguishing symptoms from the root cause of the problem. According to Manuele, (2019), systems thinking requires examining the relationships, dependencies, and connectedness of units and human interactions involved in the entire organization. Communication, feedback, and readiness to make change are critical for systems thinking to work. These characteristics constitute a summary of different perspectives on systems thinking in the literature (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Manuele, 2019; Shaked & Schechter, 2014/2016). Senge (2006) observed that systems thinking competency is a necessary skill for leaders in an organization to implement a shared vision. Patti et al (2015) opined that school leaders who think systemically can identify gaps in the school system and put into place a work culture that connects different units and persons within the school and beyond. Many works on shared vision and systems thinking have identified collaboration, interrelationships, and communication of core values, with a common purpose, as attitudes and behaviors that connect shared vision and systems thinking. These features

have made shared vision and systems thinking suitable concepts for the framework that guided this research on Faza Ministry of Education management members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and how it could influence their effort to solve their educational problems.

Similarly, the concept of shared leadership brought into proper focus the team characteristic of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee members who planned and directed implementation of educational activities in the Faza region (Mihalache et al., 2014). Chai et al. (2017) described a shared vision as a collective understanding of an organization's goals and the values of a group. This view put a shared vision at the center of shared or team leadership. Barnett and Weidenfeller (2016) described shared leadership as a process of dynamic and interactive influence among a group of persons with a common purpose of leading one another to the achievement of common goals. In this definition, shared leadership manifests the same characteristics of common goals, group influence, and interactions that are dominant in systems thinking and a shared vision.

I used an adapted model of Walker and Avant's (2005) concept analysis strategy as a framework for the arrangement of predetermined themes from the literature and eventual analysis of the research data. Walker and Avant detailed, in an authoritative manner, a step-by-step strategy for the development of theory in nursing, of which an eight-point concept analysis procedure was part of the plan. The framework (Walker & Avant, 2005) guided me to explore participants' understanding of a shared organizational vision from the perspective of its (a) attributes, (b) antecedents, and (c) consequences

within their organizational context. The large volume of literature on the three concepts of shared vision, systems thinking, and team leadership provided themes for each component of the framework. These frameworks informed the interview questions and provided a basis for organization, analysis, and reporting of data from this generic qualitative research. I present further details about the framework in Chapter 2. Given the research problem, the questions, and the conceptual framework for focusing this study, the qualitative approach emerged as the best option for realizing the purpose of the research.

Nature of Study

Qualitative research, in the general sense of the term, makes available suitable ways for researchers to provide findings on what people do, feel, think, know, and perceive, through observing, interviewing, and analyzing documents (Patton, 2015). There are several qualitative approaches through which researchers make these findings possible, but I looked at the generic qualitative method, case study, ethnography, and phenomenology. I discovered that ethnography suits a research problem that involves questioning organizational culture (Creswell, 2013; Laureate Education, 2013; Patton, 2015). Phenomenology would have been perfect if this study had explored lived experiences of individuals regarding a phenomenon and the stories around an event (Creswell, 2013; Laureate Education, 2013; Patton, 2015). Case study would have been another good choice if I had been seeking in-depth knowledge of the group I studied (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). I required a more general approach that would give me a free hand in exploring the 'participants' views, attitudes, actions, and inaction as they

indicated their understanding of a shared organizational vision and its relevance to their needs.

A generic qualitative research approach best suited my research topic and question. Caelli et al. (2003) viewed generic qualitative research as a suitable approach for exploring people's perceptions and feelings about a phenomenon instead of using any of the known qualitative methodology. Scholars have advanced many arguments around generic qualitative research to the effect that it does not have any philosophical assumptions or fit into any existing methods and thus cannot produce a high-quality research result (Caelli et al., 2003; Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). Others have held that philosophical assumptions are not necessary for research to contribute to knowledge (Kahlke, 2014; Sandelowski, 2000; Smith et al., 2011). Caelli et al. concluded that all qualitative researchers, including generic qualitative researchers, need to be clear about their approach to rigor and should select a study approach that suits their inquiry from the perspective of philosophical assumptions and methodology. Kahlke (2014) supported that researchers using a generic qualitative approach should ensure theoretical and methodological rigor. Kahlke doubted the possibility that existing established methods for qualitative research would fit every available research question that researchers needed to ask. Additionally, Kahlke acknowledged that advocates of generic approaches had shown that generic methods offered room for innovation and adaptation in the use of methodologies to suit the researchers' disciplines and questions of inquiry. In this way, available literature provided a plausible argument in support of the use of a generic approach where other qualitative methods did not fit my questions and purpose of this

research. This study on the understanding of Faza region education management members about a shared organizational vision lent itself to the use of generic qualitative research to provide flexibility in exploring the members' understanding of the shared vision concept and its relevance to the target participants.

Definitions

Unfamiliar terms used in this research were defined as follows:

Faza Ministry of Education (pseudonym): The arm of the Faza region that handles education, as in the state ministries of education. There are five mandate ministries in the Faza region: Education, Health and Human Services, Transport, Agriculture and Rural Development, and Social Development Secretariat.

Faza Ministry of Education management committee: The Faza Ministry of Education management committee is made up of directors and other officers at the directorate level who headed departments and special units in the education sector. The provost of the one public college of education in the Faza region is also a member, as are the chairmen of the Faza Region Basic Education Board, Faza Secondary Education Board, and Faza Region Scholarship Board. The committee was headed by the Commissioner of Education, as in the 36 states of the federation. In normal circumstances, the education management committee would meet once or twice in a month to deliberate on education issues in the Faza region. The committee makes major decisions on what gets implemented at the school level in the Faza region (Louis, 2015; Sinha, 2013).

Levels of education: These are basic education, senior secondary education, and higher education. Basic education is made up of preprimary education for children aged 3-5 years, primary education for children aged 6-11 years, and junior secondary education for students aged 12-14 years. Senior secondary level is the level after basic school. Students transition into senior secondary school through an examination called the Basic School Certificate Examination (BECE), which is for students 15-17 years of age. A higher level of education refers to education after the senior secondary level. It is offered at universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2008). Each of these levels of education has a director as the head.

Type of education: Refers to (a) formal education, which students of official school age attend at the appropriate levels of education; (b) science education, which caters to students at the senior secondary level who have an interest in science subjects, and (c) non formal education, which accommodates children and adults who dropped out of formal education or who never attended school and need to acquire education in adulthood (Federal Ministry of Education, 2008).

High-performing students: In the context of this study, high-performing students are those who left the final level of junior secondary education, senior secondary education, or the higher education level with above-average scores (Musa et al.; 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015).

Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE): A West African regional examination that all students who reach the last year of senior secondary education (Senior Secondary 3) participate in. A student is said to have passed if the

student scored 50% and above in five subjects, which include English language and mathematics (Musa et al., 2016; Musa & Harteley, 2015).

Cross-functional team: In the context of this study, the term *cross-functional team* is used as Wong et al. (2009) presented it. It refers to an organizational level team made up of members with different expertise who were drawn from different departments and cadres in the organization. Typically, team members' work should focus on the general goal of the organization and not just on their individual departmental goals.

Educational leaders at the Ministry level: These were the directors and other heads of special units who constituted the Faza Ministry of Education management committee. These were macrolevel education leaders in the Nigerian context (Sinha, 2013) whose activities impacted what happened at the school level (Louis, 2015).

Culture of sharing: This implies the feeling and practice of collaborative ownership of a goal or project and joint participation in its execution, usually practiced among people of the same ethnic group or with common ancestral roots (Agboola et al., 2016).

Goal congruence: Definitions of this concept in the literature suggest agreement of goals among groups within the same organization or in different organizations (De Clercq et al., 2014; Lundin, 2007). The term also suggests agreement between an individual employee's goal and the organizational goal.

Shared vision: Shared vision, as it is used in this study, is synonymous with shared organizational vision and refers to the art of holding a common image or concept of an organization's main goal, mission, or purpose of existence (Senge, 2006).

Systems thinking: In this study, the term is used as a leadership competence that requires seeing the big picture or whole picture of the organization (Patton, 2015; Senge et al., 2015). Systems thinking in this context refers to Senge's (2006) proposition that systems thinking is a requirement for building a shared vision.

Shared leadership: Refers to the leadership situation in which every leader feels committed to achieving the overall organizational goal. It presupposes that microlevel departmental goals should align with the big goal/vision of the overall organization (Fransen et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2014).

Assumptions

As Leedy and Ormrod (2015, as cited in Rudolph, 2018) advised, researchers should clearly state assumptions regarding their studies to enable readers to ascertain the quality of their work. A critical assumption for this research was that a shared organizational vision, as a management concept or strategy, was rarely used in education discussions in the environment of this research. Despite the familiarity of the culture of sharing goods and collaboration among the participants' kindred in their rural communities (Agboola et al., 2016), there were no clear indications that participants shared or collaborated in their work environment toward achievement of the central organizational goals. I also assumed that participants would respond to the interview questions sincerely from their perspectives and understanding because they had nothing to gain or lose in giving false responses. The report of an assessment of the Faza Ministry of Education with the departments and boards in 2010 had informed members of management that each department worked in isolation without collaboration with other

departments This research was not the first to identify this issue of little or no collaboration among the Faza Ministry of Education departments. I have not disclosed names and official titles of participants in this research so that no one can ascribe any aspect of the interview responses to any specific member of management.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focused on the understanding held by members of management at the Faza Ministry of Education regarding a shared organizational vision and its possible relevance to their work. There were 20 members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee at the time of this research; 15 of whom were directors and chairmen of boards who had spent 6 months or more as members of management and qualified to be in the sample for this research. Members of management who were at deputy director level and below were not part of the sample to eliminate authority bias (Creswell, 2013; Walden University, 2016), given that I was their senior when I was in service at the ministry of research. In any case, once individuals have retired from the Nigerian Civil Service, they lose all authority and privileges that they once had and are seen as persons of lower status. The chairmen of boards and provost of the one college of education in the region were higher in cadre than the directors. Because this was a qualitative study, having a manageable number of participants who could serve as rich information sources was better than having an overwhelming number that I would not have been able to manage (Patton, 2015). Each of the departments under the Ministry had its management team. Members of the departmental management were not part of the

target population for this study. The study was also limited to the Faza region, where I conceived the problem of the research.

I identified the research problem from my personal experiences over the years in the organization. My contact with Walden brought the concept of a shared vision into focus for me, and I discovered an expression for a thought that I had held for long without knowing how to articulate it. Other researchers could conduct further studies with samples from other state ministries of education in Nigeria or at the Federal Ministry of Education using the same methodology to gain a broader perspective on the issue under study.

Limitations

Scholars who belong to the positivist or postpositivist paradigm might view the choice of a generic qualitative design as a limitation of this study (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015), despite my use of several measures to ensure rigor and trustworthiness in the study (Cresswell, 2013; Kahlke, 2014; Shenton, 2004). The selection of participants from among some of my former colleagues in Faza Ministry of Education management was thought to be a source of bias (Walden University, 2016), but it was not a source of bias. I took care of issues of possible bias in writing the consent note for participants and in the letter of invitation for them to participate in the research. In the specific environment where the study took place, and in Nigeria generally, participants in research are more likely to give sincere responses to interview questions when they are aware that the researcher is familiar with the environment of the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

I coordinated activities of research as one of my statutory duties when I was in the service of the Faza Ministry of Education. Some participants in this study were familiar with my role of bringing research consultants to them for interview and focus group discussions when my duty required that. Creswell (2013) advised researchers to make their roles in research known to their audience to enhance trustworthiness in their research reports. Biases arising from researchers' beliefs, values, and experiences are potential limitations to research because these may affect their analysis and reporting of a study (Noble & Smith, 2015; Percy et al., 2015). It requires discipline and professionalism on the part of the researcher to view information from the perspective of each participant, bearing in mind that many factors influence each individual's perceptions, attitudes, and actions (Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). This was what Willig (2017) referred to as "bracketing" of the researcher's assumptions and perspectives in relating with participants' views in research.

Significance of Study

This research may contribute to ongoing research on the influence of system-level leadership and other levels of educational leadership on a school (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Louis, 2015). Most studies on educational leadership within Europe and the United States have focused on the school level, probably because school leaders in those environments have responsibility and authority to decide what happens at the schools (Bush et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2015; Hallinger, 2018). In Nigeria, leaders at the top management level formulate policies and make decisions about school operations (Abdullahi & Abdulkareem, 2017; Bolaji et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2018). The shared vision concept

has been popular and widely researched in the literature on leadership and organizational development, but studies have only addressed the concept in the United States, Europe, and Asian countries (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Fillion et al., 2015; Manuele, 2019; Patti et al., 2015; Senge, 2006). Little or no research exists on the shared vision concept in Nigeria. This research could also contribute to the emerging body of knowledge in Nigeria with regard to the adoption of a shared organizational vision approach in dealing with organizational challenges, especially in the educational system. Researchers could conduct further empirical studies to establish the extent of the impact of a shared vision among top-level education managers on school operations and student performance. This study could be useful to both public and private-sector education managers and leaders who need to improve collaboration and goal congruence in their organizations (De Clercq et al., 2014; Lundin, 2007; Rycroft-Malone et al., 2015).

Above all, the process and report of this research on a shared organizational vision could engender social change in strategies for educational leadership in the Faza Ministry of Education. The shared vision practice could eventually cascade to the school level for improvement in learning outcomes.

Summary

The purpose of this generic qualitative research was to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its possible relevance to addressing their current persistent educational challenges. There are several problems in the Nigerian educational system, which manifest in the persistently low performance of students on the SSSCE, including Faza

region students. The SSSCE is a regional standardized examination that determines student's' further progress to higher education or employment in some low-level jobs. Faza Ministry of Education management members' efforts to find a solution to these problems have not been successful. Stakeholders in education have blamed school leaders and teachers (Bello et al., 2016; Kpolovie et al., 2014), yet the authority for leadership and management of education rests with education management committee members. These leaders at the top level might not have applied a shared vision approach to addressing the problems. A shared vision is not a common concept in the country's education literature, though a handful of studies exist on shared knowledge and related terms (Okai & Worlu, 2015; Olokundun et al., 2017). Studies that indicated understanding of a shared vision among this level of education leaders were not available. I anticipated this study could bring the concept of a shared vision into the limelight, contribute to the body of knowledge on educational leadership at the systems level in Nigeria, and engender further empirical research to establish the impact of top-level leaders' activities at the school level. This chapter stated the problem and purpose of this research with the main research question (What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared organizational vision?) as well as two sub questions:

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing their persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

Additionally, I took a cursory look at shared vision with systems thinking (Patton, 2015; Senge, 2006) and shared leadership (Berson et al., 2016; Gurley, et al., 2015; Kantabutra, 2012) as concepts for the development of a conceptual framework. In this chapter, I also presented an adaptation of Walker and Avant's (2015) concept analysis framework, which helped in framing the research questions, interview questions, and analysis of the research results. The design of the research was also presented as the generic research approach, which helped me to explore the research problem freely and generate answers capable of indicating the Faza Ministry of Education committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its possible relevance to their work.

Finally, I stated the assumptions and experiences that I brought to this study, defined relevant terms for clarity, and shed light on the significance of the study and its social change impact. In Chapter 2, I explore the conceptual foundations for the research work as well as related terms in the existing literature that positioned the study in its proper perspective (Creswell, 2013) within educational leadership and organizational management research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The Nigerian educational system has faced challenges of frequent changes in educational policies and ineffective implementation of its National Policy on Education since the policy's adoption in 1977 (Odukoya et al., 2018). According to Odukoya et al. the same ineffective implementation has applied to the Universal Basic Education Policy (UBE Act, 2004). There are 10.5 million children out of school and other challenges of inadequate and inequitable distribution of learning resources across schools, including qualified teachers (Arop et al., 2018; Ayonmike., 2015). These challenges have resulted in the persistently poor performance of students on the SSSCE (Bolaji et al., 2015; Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Musa & Hartly, 2015; Oguguo & Uboh, 2020; Utibe & Agwagha, 2015). The Faza region, for instance, did not record up to 50% pass rate on the SSSCE for 7 consecutive years, from 2011 to 2016. Meanwhile, success on this examination has been a requirement for students' further progress into higher intuitions such as universities or polytechnics or teacher training colleges in Nigeria and other countries (Musa & Hartley, 2015; Oguguo & Uboh, 2020; Utibe & Agwagah, 2015). Education stakeholders across the country and in the Faza region have blamed heads of schools and teachers for the persistently low pass rate of students (Bello et al., 2016; Kpolovie et al., 2014), yet the responsibility and authority for the provision of meaningful inputs into schools has rested with the top managers at the ministry of education level in the states and the Faza Ministry of Education level (Bush, 2019; Bush & Glover, 2016; Louis, 2015). Education stakeholders have paid little attention to the possible impact of attitudes, actions, and inaction of educational leaders and managers at the systems level

on the delivery of effective and efficient education to students (Abdullahi & Abdulkareem, 2017; Bamgboje-Ayodele & Ellis, 2015; Bolaji et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2018).

In the Faza Ministry of Education, educational leaders at the top management level have worked hard in their departments to implement what they have considered their statutory functions, with little regard to the systems-level challenges and goals that require collaborative actions among departments, despite having a joint management committee. These leaders believe that they have deployed all measures possible to address the educational challenges without success. They might not have considered a shared vision approach to addressing the problems (Kantabutra, 2012; Macedo et al., 2016; Senge, 2006). There have been no studies to indicate the views and understanding of educational leaders at this level about a shared organizational vision. This generic qualitative study explored Faza Ministry of Education management members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its possible relevance to addressing the persistent educational challenges in their domain. The literature that I reviewed for this study dealt with further explanations of the concepts (shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership) used for the development of the conceptual framework for focusing this generic qualitative research. It also identified and presented concepts and theories of organization, leadership, and management associated with a shared vision and the use of the generic qualitative approach for the study.

Literature Search Strategy

I conducted a review of literature on shared vision and related concepts that helped to focus and provide deeper insight into this study, using the following databases: (a) Education Source, (b) Education Database complete, (c) Social Science Database, (d) Education Database, (e) ProQuest Central, (f) Sage Premier, and (g) EBSCO, Open Access Science Direct Subject Collections. I accessed most of these databases through Google Scholar and the Walden University Library. An initial search of the literature on shared vision was conducted with such terms as (a) *shared vision*, (b) *organizational vision and mission*, (c) *Peter Senge*, (d) *learning organization*, (e) *goal congruence*, (f) *organizational goals*, and (g) *history of a shared vision*. These terms yielded the first articles that gave insight into the concept of shared vision and its use in organizations. A further search targeted “shared vision to education” and “the Nigerian context” using such terms as (a) *shared vision in education*, (b) *shared vision in Nigeria*, (c) *collaboration in Nigeria*, and (d) *learning organizations (in education)*. It was difficult to find articles that focused on “shared vision in education organizations at the ministry level” (mega level in the state) and in Nigeria. I looked up any form of “sharing,” including (a) knowledge sharing, (b) collaboration, and (c) collaborative leadership. SAGE Journals provided many current articles on “learning organization.”

Other significant search terms for my review of the literature included (a) *systems thinking*, (b) *history of systems thinking*, (c) *organizational management*, (d) *leadership practices*, (e) *shared leadership*, (f) *distributed leadership*, (g) *transformational leadership*, (h) *leadership styles*, (i) *education leadership*, and (j) *leadership in teams*.

This second group of significant search terms helped in exploring concepts of leadership and shared leadership or leadership in teams as well as systems thinking. Finally, I searched the literature for “collaboration and change management”, first as individual terms and then together as a phrase through Google Scholar and the Walden Library.

Conceptual Framework

Shared Vision

Earlier and current literature has indicated that organizational leaders perceive vision as the image of an organization’s future, which should have organizational values and purpose as the touchstone (Collins & Porras, 1996; Larwood et al., 1995; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018; Senge, 2006). Other literature in the field presents the term *vision* as representing a vital quality of a leader who gives clear direction to an organization (Berson et al., 2016; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018; Watts et al., 2019). Flowing from these perceptions and explanations of organizational vision, one could easily infer that a shared vision is a vision that organizational members share along with their leader. In this research, I used Senge’s (2006) discipline of shared vision in the context of the learning organization as part of the conceptual framework for focusing this study. Since Senge’s (1990/2006) work hit the management literature, several other scholars have conducted further studies on the five disciplines of learning organizations, which are (a) building shared vision, (b) team learning, (c) personal mastery, (d) mental models, and (e) systems thinking (Kantabutra, 2012; Timanson & Da Costa, 2016). Some scholars have attempted to apply the five disciplines to practices in different organizations, including schools and hospitals (Fillion et al., 2015), while a few other studies have dealt with the application of

one discipline at a time (Boyatzis et al., 2015; Young et al., 2017), as I did in this research.

Senge (2006) used several analogies to make vivid explanations of the concept of shared vision within an organizational setting. Recurrent themes that emerged from Senge's presentation include the following:

- Shared vision is a force that exists within people and makes them take action.
- Shared vision creates a sense of trust.
- Shared vision makes people feel connected in a bond through collective caring.
- People are committed to a shared vision because it reflects their visions.
- Genuine vision makes people excel because they want to do so.

Senge's explanations of shared vision as a component of the learning organization has permeated much literature and inspired organizations to initiate efforts to transform their settings into learning organizations (Fillion et al., 2015). This research followed Senge's (2006) seminal work on learning organizations, but with a focus on shared vision and systems thinking. Several other works of literature on shared vision and systems thinking have given greater insight into the two concepts (Fillion et al., 2015; Patti et al., 2015).

Patti et al. (2015) identified shared vision as the first core skill that a "socially, emotionally and cognitively competent school leader" (p. 442) should possess, contending that a competent leader should be able to think systemically. Patti et al. (2015) recognized the ever-changing nature of the current world, with its complex interdependencies, which also demand change in the way that organizations do things.

Additionally, Fillion et al. (2015) identified the application of Senge's (2006) learning organization disciplines as a credible change strategy for handling the complex nature of current organizations but proposed the addition of "knowledge generation and sharing" as well as "organizational behavior" as disciplines for organizations to work more collaboratively. Young et al. (2017) took the concept of shared vision a step further by locating it within the "patient's vision of care" (p. 3), which, when the members of a "community of clinical practice" (p. 3) have identified and shared it among themselves, contributes much to clinical practice. Young et al. emphasized the importance of shared values of trust, respect, compassion, and authenticity among health workers in promoting their shared implementation of the patient's vision of care. Luo et al. (2004) recorded a contrary rating for a shared vision in their cross-sectional study of perceptions of Chinese principals regarding American educational leadership standards. The principals rated shared vision and community collaboration dimensions of the leadership standard lower than other leadership dimensions such as school instruction and school organizational operations. The methodology for data collection and other intervening variables may have also influenced the self-reported ratings on the principals.

Nevertheless, some other scholars have contributed to additional dimensions of a shared vision that enhance its effectiveness. These include the communication of shared vision (Jantz, 2017; Mayfield et al., 2015), developing and implementing a shared vision (Martin et al., 2014), as well as the impact of a shared vision on productivity and learning outcomes (Expósito-Langa et al., 2015; Jing & Avery, 2016; Macedo et al., 2016). Several key elements emerged from the work of Senge (2006) and other scholarly

writings on shared vision (Smutkupt, 2014; Suriyankietkaew & Avery, 2016; Tjosvold & Tjosvold, 2015).

As my search shifted to the Nigerian environment, I found little literature on shared vision, especially within the educational context. However, there was a handful of literature in diverse fields that focused on vision, shared value, knowledge sharing, and teamwork (Adésínà, 2015; Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Bello & Oyekunle, 2014; Olokundun et al., 2017; Omotayo & Babalola, 2016; Pearce et al., 2014). Based on Senge's (2006) concept of shared vision and existing literature on shared vision in organizations, it became clear that shared vision is not only a useful leadership tool in learning organizations, but also facilitates the achievement of general organizational goals in business, health, and education (Chi-hsiang, 2015; Kantabutra, 2012; Patti et al., 2015; Young et al., 2017), working in consonance with organizational core values and the purpose of existence (Collins & Porras, 1996; Patti et al., 2015; Senge, 2006).

A close examination of Senge's (2006) work and other literature on shared vision indicates some recurrent characteristics of a shared vision. These include (a) having a core value and common purpose among people, (b) having a sense of trust and care among the persons involved, (c) having enough inner conviction to act toward the common interest, (d) feeling a need to communicate the vision to every member of the group, and (e) having a sense of connection with others in the group. These recurring themes informed the selection of predetermined themes from the literature that I grouped as attributes, antecedents, and consequences (Walker & Avant, 2005) of a shared vision within the framework for analysis of the research data.

Systems Thinking

Mele et al. (2010) traced systems theory to Aristotle's claim that systems have to do with knowledge derived from understanding the whole and not the single units of a phenomenon. Mele et al. presented systems theory as interdisciplinary and as a framework for investigating every phenomenon from a holistic perspective. They further opined that with the systemic perspective, people need to apply a holistic vision of a phenomenon in order to understand its functioning. The authors' presentation on systems theory and systems characteristics addressed the thoughts of early exponents of systems theory such as Von Bertalanffy and others. The concept of systems thinking, which Senge (2006) contributed to making more accessible, stemmed from the systems theory.

One of the reasons for adding systems thinking to the list of concepts that formed the conceptual framework of this research was Senge's (2006) assertion that systems thinking is an essential competence for building and fostering a shared vision. This assertion placed systems thinking competencies among antecedents to developing and fostering a shared vision. Additionally, Senge et al. (2015) demonstrated how systems leaders could perform because of their commitment to seeing and holistically addressing organizational or country-level problems. Patti et al. (2015) recalled Senge's (2006) explanation of systems thinking and referred to a school as a collective whose members work together, sharing a common vision of achieving the schools' goal. One can make a similar assertion about a ministry of education in a developing country such as Nigeria, where different departments with directors as the leaders ought to share in a common vision of achieving a common goal that binds all of the departments and, ultimately, the

schools. Systems thinking competency was necessary for the leaders to share in the common vision and to work collaboratively in order to deal with their persistent educational challenges (Patti et al., 2015).

Patti et al. (2015) explained further the implications of systems thinking to a leader, which include the following: (a) the leader's readiness to make a tradeoff with assumptions in order to improve the organizations' situation, (b) making use of information available to the leader to engage in a collective view of issues, and (c) the leader should not exchange strategies for solving deep-rooted causes of problems for those that employ quick fixes that are not enduring. Finally, the authors noted thinking systemically as one of the four core skills that a socially, emotionally, and cognitively competent school leader should possess. Manuele (2019) presented systems thinking as a synonym for macro thinking and, though talking specifically about safety problems, made some recommendations about systems thinking competencies that could relate to other sectors. These include (a) taking a holistic view of a problem in focus and engendering a collaborative discussion around it; (b) examining the interrelationships, interdependencies, and interconnectedness of units and human interactions involved in the entire system of the organization; (c) distinguishing symptoms from root causes; (d) acknowledging the importance of communication and feedback mechanisms; and (e) determining to make a change even when it involves the promotion of unpopular strategies. These characteristics discussed so far constitute a summary of different perspectives on systems thinking in the literature (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Shaked & Schechter, 2014/2016).

There are common characteristics between a shared vision and systems thinking, as some literature showed, which include the following: (a) taking a joint stand on issues, (b) employing a collaborative approach instead of working in silos, (c) information and communication serving as main vehicles for the two concepts, and (d) the interconnectedness of everyone and the units involved in the system (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Manuele, 2019; Patti et al., 2015; Senge, 2006; Senge et al., 2015; Shaked & Schechter, 2014/2016). These pieces of information on shared vision and systems thinking competence indicated that the two concepts qualified to be part of a conceptual framework (Jabareen, 2009) with shared leadership. The three concepts informed the development of the interview protocol, identification of themes for the analysis of data, and reporting of this generic qualitative research on a shared vision.

Shared Leadership

Leadership in an organization drives vision, with vision communication and sharing components (Mayfield et al., 2015). Because this research involved a team of leaders at the top management level of the Faza Ministry of Education as its participants, it became expedient to use shared leadership or leadership in teams (Wang et al., 2014) as one of the concepts for the development of the conceptual framework to focus this research. In their meta-analysis of shared leadership or leadership in teams, Wang et al. (2014) examined 42 independent samples of shared leadership in relationship to team effectiveness and found a strong positive relationship. Furthermore, they identified that shared leadership had a stronger relationship to “attitudinal outcomes, behavioral process, and emergent team states” (p. 1) than with team performance. These findings by Wang et

al. (2014) have implications for exploring the understanding of FCT management committee members with regard to a shared organizational vision.

Slantcheva-Durst (2014) examined the underlying forces of collaborative work that prompted leadership as an outcome of team processes at a community college. A shared commitment to the organization's core values, commitment to learning, coordinated teamwork, and team building are essential conditions that engendered shared leadership at the college. The authors presented governance as a group phenomenon rather than as an individual responsibility. Barnett and Weidenfeller (2016) described shared leadership as a process of dynamic and interactive influence among a group of persons with a common purpose of leading one another to the achievement of common goals. In this definition, with other discussions so far, shared leadership manifested the same characteristics of common goals, group influence, and interactions as were dominant in systems thinking and shared a vision.

From the presentation so far on a shared vision, shared leadership, and systems thinking, system thinking and shared leadership are strong enablers for development, practice, and sustenance of a shared vision. Similarly, systems thinking and shared leadership have a shared vision as an important requirement for success.

I used the Walker and Avant's (2005) as framework for grouping the themes from the literature for this research and the framework aided in the data analysis. The Walker and Avant eight steps for concept analysis, which researchers commonly referred to as concept analysis framework, consisted of (a) selecting the concept to be analyzed, (b) determining purpose of the analysis, (c) identifying uses of the concept from literature,

(d) determining the defining attributes of the concept, (e) constructing a model case of the concept, (f) identifying the borderline and outlier cases, (g) identifying antecedents, and consequences, and (h) definition of empirical referents to the concept's attributes.

These eight steps apply to a typical analysis of a concept in the nursing field of practice, which needs appropriate definition and understanding for further development of theory. Many scholarly works, especially in medicine and nursing, have based their framework for concept analysis on Walker and Avant (2005) as seen in Fontenelle et al. (2017), McCabe & Sambrook (2014), Flott and Linden (2016), Kaartemo (2018), and other works. In the current research, I worked from existing themes in the literature regarding the concepts of shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership to collect data, analyze and report the findings within the Walter and Avant's framework. (2005). According to Jabareen (2009), a conceptual framework is not just a collection of concepts, but one in which every concept used contributes to forming the whole. This Jabareen's view applies to the use of shared vision, systems thinking and shared leadership as conceptual framework for this study. The adapted analysis framework helped in the analysis of data on shared vision from the perspective of its (a) attributes, (b) antecedents, and (c) consequences. The framework formed an additional lens for exploring the participants' understanding of the concept of a shared vision, as individuals and as members of Faza ministry's education management

According to Walker and Avant (2005), attributes are those clusters of characteristics that people or scholars ascribe to the concept when discussing it or alluding to the concept. Antecedents are those factors, actions, or situations necessary for

the concept to occur or manifest, and consequences are those events or incidents resulting from occurrences of the concept (Walker & Avant, 2005). The literature on the three concepts provided information to identify themes for the three components of the framework. This research was not out to measure the impact of shared vision, instead it explored participants' understanding of a shared vision and possible application of the concept to their organization. The following schematic representation in figure 1 and table 1 illustrate the conceptual framework of this research and the analytical framework for grouping of themes, respectively.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework for A Shared Vision

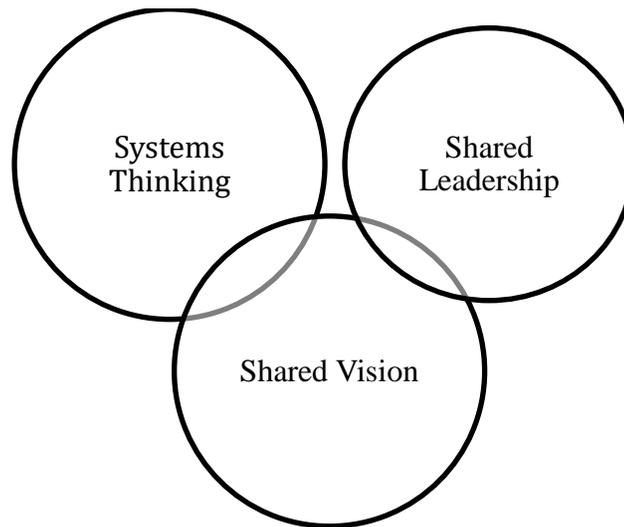


Table 1 demonstrates the grouping of the themes emerging from literature regarding the three concepts of shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership within the analysis framework as attributes, antecedents, and consequences of shared vision. These themes were not exhaustive or prescriptive because other themes emerged

during the interviews and some themes not listed but existed in literature emerged also.

The themes provided cues that supported my exploration of participants' understanding regarding a shared organizational vision.

Table 1*Grouping of Themes From Literature Under Categories of the Analysis Framework*

Components of framework	Themes from literature	Authors
Attributes	Envisioned future	Senge (2006)
	Sense of trust	Arnold & Wade (2015)
	People connected in a bond	Shaked & Schechter (2014/2016)
	Common caring	Smutkupt (2018)
	Reflects individual vision	Senge et al. (2015)
	Commitment to goal	Manuele (2019)
	Connects groups, departments, or units	Wong et al. (2009); Wang et al. (2014)
	Collaboration	Berson et al. (2016)
	Leadership is shared	Slantcheva-Durst (2014)
	Teamwork	
Antecedents	Common goal	
	Purpose or value	Boyatzis et al. (2015)
	Identification of core values and purpose of existence	Senge (2006)
	Related to individual vision	Patti et al. (2015)
	The commitment of members	Senge et al. (2015)
	Clear communication of the vision	Mayfield et al. (2015); (Jantz, 2017)
	A holistic view of a problem in focus	Kantabutra (2012);
	Recognize interrelationship, interconnectedness, and interdependencies	Manuele (2019)
	Acknowledge communication feedback	Lattuch & Dankert (2018)
	Take actions to change situations	Young et al. (2017)
Consequences	Differentiate symptoms of problems from root causes	Manuele (2019)
	Makes people to excel and learn	Senge (2006); Patti et al. (2015)
	Facilitates achievement of general organizational goals	Senge et al. (2015)
	Team effectiveness	Chi-hsiang (2015); Kantabutra (2012); Young
	Addresses complex organizational challenges	Young et al. (2017)
	Promotes collaboration and team leadership	Chai, Hwang, & Joo (2017)
	Glue that holds an organization together	Lattuch & Dankert (2018); Collins and Porras' (1996)

Review of Related Concepts

The centralized system of educational management in Nigeria, which reflected the disposition of the central government, have remained unchanged (Bamgboje-Ayodele & Ellis, 2015; Solaja & Ogunola, 2016). The centralized system is associated with some challenges in the education system that resulted in persistent low student performance in national and regional examinations (Bolaji et al., 2015; Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015; Odukoya et al., 2018; Utibe & Agwagah, 2015). Most education stakeholders blamed teachers and school heads for the continued poor student performance at the national and regional examinations (Bello et al., 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015; Musa, et al., 2016), whereas education leaders and managers at the system's level made significant decisions about school inputs and operations (Bolaji et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2018). management committee members, who constituted The team of educational leaders and managers at the Faza Ministry of Education believed they worked hard at curbing the educational challenges with little success. They might not have tried a shared vision approach to management and leadership in solving the persistent challenges. The leaders exhibited more characteristics of competition than collaboration in the discharge of their duties as members worked hard in their departments to achieve department level objectives (Okai & Worlu, 2015; Tjosvold & Tjosvold, 2015) without attention to the systems level goals. There were no studies to indicate this category of leaders' understanding of a shared vision concept. It became necessary that this study should explore and report on these members' understanding of

the shared vision concept as a basis for further research on the shared vision concept as it concerns the ministry level educational leaders.

I used the generic qualitative approach to explore the Faza Ministry of Education management members' understanding of a shared organizational vision, and how useful it could be to them as a possible strategy for addressing their current educational problems. A shared vision is a leadership and management concept that has helped education and noneducation leaders to focus on their main issues of concern and achieve results (Carton et al., 2014; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018; Senge, 2006; Timanson & Da Costa, 2016). This part of the chapter, examined other literature related to the topic of this research. The literatures provided knowledge available in the discipline that helped me to place the current research in its proper perspective. Additionally, this chapter examined the research methodology that related to the problem of this study. The related terms include organizational management with an emphasis on organizational vision and leadership, models of management and leadership, including systems approach, educational leadership, concepts of collaboration, and change management. Finally, I examined the generic research methodology within the context of the research problem and the scope of this study.

Organizational Management

In order to explore the concept of organizational management adequately, I examined the history and current perspectives in organizational management theories, some organizational components such as vision and leadership, as well as systems theory/thinking approach to management. These concepts relate to leadership and shared

vision that formed the topic of this research. A review of these organizational concepts will lead to discussions on educational leadership and management.

Management Theories

Management theories evolved to take care of industry staff and production processes, but today the theories have permeated all spheres of man's activities, including education, with the same underlying principles (Khorasani & Almasifard, 2017) as in industries. According to Khorasani and Almasifard (2017), one could group the evolution of management science into five paradigm shifts within the 2nd Century, namely: (a) Scientific management theory, (b) The administrative management theory, (c) Behavioral management science theory, and (d) Organizational environment theory. Khorasani and Almasifard attributed scientific management to Fredrick Taylor with the main emphasis on an experimental approach to management, and how to manage labor to perform faster work and increase productivity. Khorasani and Almasifard noted that Fayol and Weber focused on organizational structure and management principles for the effective management of an organization. The principles were: (a) division of work, (b) authority, (c) Discipline, (d) unity of command, (e) balancing individual interest with organizational objectives, (f) unity of direction, (g) scalar principle, (h) remuneration, and (i) team spirit, etcetera. Weber specifically took credit for bureaucracy theory (Waren & Bedian, 2009, as cited in Khorasani & Almasifard, 2017). Many of these principles still guide the operations of organizations today. Mary Parker Follet followed after a decade and viewed management from a humanistic perspective within the behavioral management theory (Khorasani & Almasifard, 2017). The humanistic theory emphasized the motivation of

workers, knowledge-based authority, and labor participation in work. The authors further observed that Follet's behavioral theory progressed and contributed to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and McGregor's Theory X and Y with the accompanying total quality management. Finally, Khorasani and Almasifard (2017) presented organization environment theory as a new trend in management that is a result of the interaction of organizational knowledge and environmental science.

Cummings and Worley (2014) saw organizational development as a deliberate systemwide plan to bring about change in the form of better effectiveness and efficiency in organizational management. According to Cummings and Worley (2014), the improved change should be sufficient enough to bring about alignment and working together of critical dimensions of the organizations such as the mission, leadership, strategy, culture, structure, etcetera, and the external environment of the organization. Cummings and Worley viewed an organization as an open system that interacts with both its internal and external environments to survive. They identified some common characteristics of open systems as "environment, inputs, transformations, and outputs; boundaries, feedback, finality, and alignment" (pp.89-90). The Faza Ministry of Education has a structure and some aspects of its operations that fit into the Cumming and Woeley's (2014) model of open systems. Additionally, the properties of alignment in an open system, as Cumming and Worley espoused, helped to describe what the workings of the Faza Ministry of Education should be if the leadership applied a shared vision approach to the management of their education system.

Organizational Vision

Some available literature indicated that for many years both scholars and practitioners affirmed to the importance of vision, at a personal level and organizational level, in motivating people to the great achievement of goals (Boyatzis et al., 2015; Senge, 2006; Berson et al., 2016). Many scholars also defined vision in varied ways that made the concept synonymous with leadership in organizations (Chai et al., 2017; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018). Collins and Porras (1996) asserted that vision is an envisioned future of an organization, which do not emerge on its own, but hinge on the organizational core ideology made up of the core values and purpose of existence. The authors stated that their conceptual framework was borne out of six-year empirical research with executives of organizations and concluded that vision is not just a goal but "Big Hairy Audacious Goal" (p.72) of what the organization wants to be in the long future. In recent times, Lattuch and Dankert (2018) applied Collins and Porras' (1996) framework successfully for the top management team of an organization in developing an organizational vision. In this way, Lattuch and Dankert (2018) proved the relevance of organizational vision in modern organizational practices. Other scholars also explained vision from the perspective of mental models of a future that a leader desires or with the followers (Miller & Vaughn, 2015; Senge, 2006).

Just as the definition of vision appeared illusory (Larwood et al., 1995), the origin of vision seemed more so. Bruden (2010) traced the root of vision to the religion of different types that used the term thousands of years before people adapted it to general use and subsequently to business. According to Bruden (2010), vision depicts an

encounter with the sacred of future occurrences. Scholarly writings within the 20th and 21st centuries presented shared vision as a successful organizational strategy that brought success to many well-known organizations (Boyatzis et al., 2015; Senge, 2006). Boyatzis et al. (2015) postulated two psychophysiological states of Emotional Positive Attractor (PEA) and Negative Emotional Attractor (PEA) that were involved in the creation and realization of personal vision and a shared vision. In other words, for personal or organizational vision to be effective, it has to be anchored on actual personal values or organizational values (Boyatzis et al., 2015). Boyatzis et al views resonated with Collins and Porras' (1996) that core organizational ideology, made up of core purpose and core values, is the glue that holds an organization together and inspired its vision.

Organizational and leadership literature in different sectors have records of the effectiveness of a shared organizational vision. Before the current millennium, Larwood et al. (1995) had noted researchers' confirmation of the usefulness of organizational vision to leadership, implementation of organizational strategy, and managing change. Notably, Wong et al., (2009) used the theory of cooperation and competition as a framework to advance that departments in an organization could overcome competitiveness and promote collaboration through having a strong shared vision. This article reflected the scenario of Faza Ministry of Education departmental heads who, though they belong to one management team, tended to work in competition with one another. There were no studies to indicate the level of the members' understanding of collaboration or a shared vision. It was for this reason that this research sought to explore these education leaders' understanding of a shared vision and its possible relevance to the

discharge of their duties for better success. Expósito-Langa et al. (2015) used the sample of a cluster of textile firms in Spain to establish that firms' resources and networking with other firms affected performance independently, and shared vision accelerated innovation of firms while acting on firms internal and relational resources.

Macedo et al. (2016) used the term mission statement to prove that effective mission statements had a direct link with organizational performance as long as the mission statement was meant to promote shared organizational values and give direction to employees. In all the articles discussed so far, as well as in other literature, vision and shared vision recorded high-level success in organizational effectiveness (Berson et al., 2016; Carton et al., 2014; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018; Miller & Vaughn, 2015). Lattuch and Dankert (2018) stated that for the top management team of any organization to develop a compelling vision, which every one of them would align with, the vision needed to have a bearing on the organization's core values and purpose of existence. Amah and Ahiauzu (2014) conducted an empirical study on a shared value with banks in Nigeria and posited that shared organizational values are the sources of integration and coordination in an organization, which created employee commitment and higher organizational productivity. Amah and Ahiauzu's (2014) lent a voice to Lattuch and Dankert's (2018) that organizational values were essential for developing compelling visions.

Communicating Organizational Vision

Current literature on organizational vision noted that communication of organizational vision is critical in getting employees to share in the vision and for

improvement of organizational productivity (Berson et al., 2016; Jantz, 2017; Mayfield et al., 2015). Mayfield et al. (2015) used a tested model of Motivational Language Transmission (MLT) to explore and present a conceptual framework that would aid analysis and clear communication of organizational vision and other related terms to both internal and external stakeholders of an organization. The authors posited that effective communication of strategic vision would help improve organizational productivity in terms of staff commitment, organizational reputation, and stakeholders' satisfaction. Furthermore, Expósito-Langa et al. (2015) embedded communication as part of their definition of a shared vision as they explained that shared vision is about organizational values that engender active involvement of all members of the organization towards development, communication, and implementation of organizational goals.

Jantz (2017) brought to limelight that the manner of crafting a vision and mission statement has the potential of impacting on the achievement of organizational goals. Jantz (2017) observed that the organizational vision and mission statements express the goals. The author worked on the premise that when a compelling vision statement is communicated widely throughout an organization, it energizes and motivates employees to more significant commitment and innovative culture within the organization. The author concluded that crafting a vision is just the beginning of the process because vision comes alive only when it is communicated and shared. Gurley et al. (2015) added that the vision needs to be inspiring and motivational to make an impact on other organizational members. Similarly, Senge (2006) expressed that the clarity of vision, its communication, and the enthusiasm with which people talk about it bring about the spread of the vision in

an organization. As the vision spread with sustained enthusiasm, it would result in more "clarity and shared commitment towards the vision" (p. 211). Communication of the organizational vision is one of the critical themes from literature that formed antecedents of a shared vision in this research.

Leadership and Management

Leadership

Review of views from the literature related to the title of this study would not be complete without taking a look at the concept of leadership in relation to organizational vision. Models of leadership and specifically the educational leadership landscape deserves a look as well. Berson et al. (2016) intoned that being an effective leader includes the ability to articulate clear visions that can move employees to action. To this effect, vision remains a significant focus of leadership. Over the centuries, scholars as well as the public press have defined and presented the term "leadership" in different ways and from different perspectives, yet the definition of the concept continued to pose a challenge to all (Carter et al., 2015; Jing & Avery, 2016; McKimm & O'Sullivan, 2016; Northouse, 2013).

Northouse (2013/2018) examined leadership in various ways through a synthesis of seminal works in the literature over the years to demonstrate the origin and progress made in the definition and application of leadership. These included: (a) leadership as the focus of group processes, (a) a personality trait, (b) leader as an actor, (c) leadership as power relations between the leader and followers, and most recently, (d) leadership as possession of some identifiable set of skills, and (e) leadership as a transformational

process. McKimm and O'Sullivan (2016) observed that leadership is a socially constructed concept and means different things in different cultures. Similarly, Northouse (2013/2018) presented perceptions of leadership in different cultures and how these influenced employees' expectations and interactions with their leaders. According to the GLOBE study of Northouse (2013/2018), people in Sub-Saharan Africa, where Nigeria is categorized, are humane and their leaders emphasize family and friends more than themselves (the leaders). Perhaps, this may be responsible for why leadership in Nigeria is not value-based and followers do not feel compelled to demand accountability from their leaders. Northouse (2013/2018) defined leadership as a process through which an individual could influence others to actions that would culminate in the achievement of set goals. Implicitly, Northouse's definition encompassed most of the different perspectives of leadership presented in the book. Another essential aspect of leadership presented in Northouse (2013/2018) was the concept of assigned and emergent leadership, where the assigned leaders rose to position of leadership through appointment as a result of probably their grade level in the organization, while the emergent leaders became leaders as a result of their accomplishments (Northouse, 2013/2018). The assigned leadership is typical in the context of this research location, which is the Faza Ministry of Education. Most members of the management rose to positions through appointments and seniority in the administrative cadre, only a few became members of management due to their track record of achievements.

Northouse's (2013/2018) definition of leadership as a process falls within the same line of thought as Carter et al.'s (2015) suggestion that one should study leadership

through the lens of the social network because of its fluid and dynamic nature. The perspective of Northouse (2013/2018) and Carter et al. (2015) did not entertain historical dimensions of leadership as personal traits or wielding of power (Rost, 1991, as cited in Northouse, 2013/2018). Through an integrative review of the literature, Carter et al. (2015) cited recent studies on leadership which presented leadership as shared, global, strategic, socially dynamic, etcetera. Carter et al. (2015) identified four characteristics of leadership: (a) leadership is relational, (b) It is situated in specific contexts, (c) leadership is a patterned phenomenon, and (4) It could involve both formal and informal influence. The proposition of Carter et al. (2015) has implications for the topic of my research as it relates to a team of top education leaders whose actions and inactions could influence education processes and outcomes at the school level (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Sinha, 2013). The current research sought to explore the understanding of the FCT education management committee members about a shared vision and the possible relevance it could have in improving their organizational performance (Carton et al., 2014; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018; Timanson & Da Costa, 2016).

Management

There were ongoing debates within the leadership literature as to whether leadership was the same as management or each was distinct in its characteristics and application in an organization (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Bush et al., 2019; Connolly et al., 2017). There was a further overlap among leadership, management, and administration (Bush, 2008, as cited in Bush et al., 2019). Bush (2008, as cited in Bush et al., 2019) explained that leadership takes care of the highest order of matters;

management concerns itself with daily routine, while administration caters to the lowest other routine duties in an organization. Northouse (2013/2018) noted the overlap between leadership and management but ascribed such functions as planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling to management. Northouse's view was in line with the administrative management theories of Fayol and Weber (Khorasani & Almasifard, 2017). Northouse (2013/2018) presented leadership as a process that involved wielding influence across the organizational process for the achievement of the organization's goal. Current literature on organization and management tended to support the use of leadership in place of management to inspire managers towards assuming leadership roles as well (Bush, 2019). While discussing educational management within the Nigerian context, Amanchukwu et al. (2015) presented educational management practices as putting in place systems that result in effective implementation of policies, strategies, and action plans that work together across the entire organization to achieve organizational goal. Based on the foregone discussions, the Faza Ministry of Education management that form the target population for this research are managers and, at the same time, leaders of education in their region.

Shared Leadership or Leadership in Teams

There is much information in the Leadership literature about different models of leadership. Common among them are visionary leadership, charismatic leadership, servant leadership and, most currently, transformational leadership, shared leadership, or leadership in teams (Carter et al., 2015; McKimm & O'Sullivan, 2016; Northouse, 2013/2018). However, this section of the literature review is restricted to shared

leadership or leadership in teams from a general organizational perspective. Northouse (2013/2018) explained a team as a group of members in a committee, work units, or task force that are independent within an organization, with clearly defined roles and competencies for carrying out of such roles. The concept of team leadership applies to Faza Ministry of Education because leaders of each department and board constitute the education management committee. The committee members make decisions and take actions that influence education activities and outcomes both in their departments and at the school level. Northouse (2013/2018) asserted that perceiving power as a shared resource lessened the emphasis on the notion that leaders wielded all the powers. This view about shared resources would help to reduce a dictatorial approach to leadership where one person takes decision that impact on others.

Slantcheva-Durst (2014) proposed a shared leadership model, and posited that shared leadership vision emerged as an outcome of collaborative efforts of persons working together in a team through a gradual process of "knowledge conversation and intensive team interactions" (pp. 1024). According to the authors, shared purpose and vision, teamwork, empowerment, and learning are the conditions that enable the emergence of the shared leadership model. Through a longitudinal study, Fransen et al., (2018) gave insight into how shared leadership emerged from an initial vertical leadership structure. At the end of the studies, the authors proposed that though team leadership correlates better with organizational effectiveness than vertical structure and formal leadership, a hybrid of both could also work effectively in an organization. Their study brought to the limelight that team leadership emerge over time through constant

collaboration and interaction, just as in Fransen et al. (2018). The practice implication of these research findings is that communication, collaboration, and teamwork are necessary for a shared vision or shared value to take place. Referring specifically to top management, which relates to the target population of this study, Mihalache et al. (2014) proposed top management shared leadership as an enabler for exploring and exploiting innovative opportunities, mainly when top management team adopts "a cooperative conflict management style" and "comprehensive decision making" (pp.113). These views of Fransen et al. and Mihalache et al. emphasize cooperation of the team and the systems thinking manner of approach to decision making (Close et al., 2018; Manuele, 2019) for an effective shared vision.

Systems Approach to Organizational Management

Mele et al. (2010) traced systems thinking to Aristotle's claim that knowledge is gained more in understanding the concept of wholes and not the single parts. According to Mele et al. (2010), this philosophy of Aristotle spurred many researchers into studies that later evolved into systems theory. Mele et al. presented a review of significant systems theories that included (a) general systems theory of Von Bertalanffy with a focus on interactions among the different parts that make up the system, (b) cybernetics of Beer, which brought to limelight the adaptive characteristics of a system, and (c) organization theory of Katz and Kahn that sees an organization as an open system. This evolutionary trend in systems theory combined to form essential characteristics of a system. Many scholars of systems theory described it as an interdisciplinary theory as

well as a framework for investigating any phenomena from a holistic perspective (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Mele et al., 2010; Philipp & Whiteman, 2017; Senge, 2006).

Arnold and Wade (2015) leveraged on a gap in the literature, which is a definition of systems thinking in a manner that lent it to measurement. Arnold and Wade perceived that definition of systems thinking need not be presented in measurable terms. Alter (2018) supported the argument that systems theory should not be subjected to statistical analysis of variances because it deals with a holistic view of the phenomenon that are components rather than variables. After a review of available literature on systems theory and systems thinking, Arnold and Wade (2015) advanced that systems thinking consists of three main ideas (a) "elements," (b) "interconnections," and (c) "function, or purpose" (p. 670). The authors' work gave an insight into earlier definitions of systems thinking available in the literature, which included Senge (2006). Alter (2018) added to the understanding of systems theory and systems thinking as he observed there was a difference between systems theory and systems thinking despite that people used them interchangeably. According to Alter (2018), systems theory expresses systems perspectives and supports systems thinking, but we cannot put it in a converse manner because one could use systems perspective and systems thinking without referring to systems theory. Alter's (2018) definition of systems thinking as analytic skills that enable people to understand systems, predict behaviors and devise means of modifying them to achieve results aligned with Bolman and Deal's (2013) multi-frame thinking concept. According to Bolman and Deal (2013), since organizations have become more pervasive and sophisticated, understanding them was no longer smooth, and as such, managers

required multi-frame competencies to be able to work around the daily challenges. The multi-frames are the structural, human resource, political, and symbolic frames, which collectively armed the manager with multiple perspectives of diagnosing challenges devising solutions to them (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

An outstanding aspect of systems theory is its suitability for studying complex systems and viewing different parts of an organization as interrelated in order to understand the organization, the functioning, and outcomes (Alter, 2018; Mele et al., 2010; Senge, 2006). Also, scholars have simultaneously applied the systems theory in different fields such as engineering, business, management, health, education, ecology, agriculture, urban development, etcetera with positive outcomes (Arnold & Wade, 2015; Bai et al., 2016; Mele et al., 2010; Williams et al., 2017). In all of these perspectives, Manuele (2019) added that systems thinking is a tool for diagnosing problems; it is a deliberate discipline approach to examining situations from a holistic perspective before interventions. Although Manuele (2019) wrote for a safety audience, the findings and recommendations regarding systems thinking are relevant to every other sector of services provision. The author's recommendations to organizations that wish to apply systems/macro thinking skills in an effective manner included:

1. Take a holistic view of the situations in question and engender collaborative discussions.
2. Examine the entire interrelationships, interdependencies, and interconnectedness of the different units that make up the system and the human interactions within it.

3. Accurately diagnose the systems to identify root causes of issues, including obtaining data for examining the human interactions and other processes to predict future occurrences.
4. Put in place mechanism for feedback and
5. Be prepared to champion effective intervention strategies that may not be appealing to everyone.

The above recommendations from Manuele (2019) have implications for exploring Faza Ministry of Education management team members' perceptions of a shared vision because the recommendations formed part of antecedents of a shared vision and also reflected aspects of the attribute and consequences.

Some other scholars have examined the systems thinking characteristics with the management of education. Hayes (2018), in the review of Shaked and Schechter (2017), identified systems thinking as a holistic approach to leadership of the school in the current diverse world to bring about sustained improvement. Shaked and Schechter (2017, as cited in Hayes, 2018) also highlighted how the application of systems thinking to the learning organizations would help leaders understand internal and external environmental factors that impact on the organization. Specifically, in education, Shaked and Schechter posited that a holistic leadership approach in education would help deliver better educational outcomes that would meet expectations of all stakeholders working within the school and its environment. The environment includes department of education, parents, and community. This assertion gave impetus to this research, which intended to explore Faza Ministry of Education systems level education leaders'

understanding of a shared vision, using systems thinking approach as one of the concepts for studying the population. Current literature on shared vision and systems thinking competency among leadership in education are centered on the school environment (Shaked & Schechter, 2016) whereas, in Nigeria, leadership at the ministry of education level has a greater influence on what happens at the school level (Sinha, 2013). In their review of Shaked and Schechter (2017, as cited in Maina-Singer & Erickson, 2018), Maina-Singer and Erickson identified two outstanding characteristics of systems thinking that aligned with previous literature reviewed in this study: (a) "seeing the whole beyond the parts", and (b) seeing the parts in the context of the whole" (pp.11). Additionally, Shaked & Schechter (2016) studied and identified, through qualitative research, some sources of systems thinking competencies in school leaders. The sources are (a) "managerial experience," (b) "role model," (c) "academic study," and (d) "neural tendency" (pp. 477-485).

According to Senge (2006), the discipline of shared vision would lack an essential foundation if practiced without systems thinking competencies. Since systems thinking has to do with seeing the whole rather than the parts, and the parts in the whole (Shaked & Schechter, 2016), it becomes logical to also seek understanding of competencies of systems thinking in the target leaders of Faza Ministry of Education as indicators of the extent to which they understood the shared vision concept. It could also show dispositions of the leaders towards the practice of a share organizational vision. In addition, Senge (2006) advanced that if non-system thinking or linear thinking were prevalent among leaders in an organization, the first effort at engendering shared vision

would wither and die. This view of Senge is apt given that systems thinking competencies enable leaders to look at the phenomenon from a holistic perspective, not in fragments.

Educational Leadership and Management

Every organization, including education, seeks effective leadership (Berkovich, 2016; Hallinger, 2018a; Hammad & Hallinger, 2017; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Gumus et al. (2018) reviewed leadership models in education from 1980-2014 to identify the trend, famous authors, the journals that published them, and countries where the articles were based. According to Gumus et al. (2018), researches on educational leadership picked momentum in the 20th century with the coming of the scientific theory of management, which sought improvement in quality and quantity of results in business activities. Before this period, the emphasis was on curriculum and teaching with no distinct focus on leadership, as scholars and education administrators discuss it today (Gumus et al., 2018). The authors also noted that Taylor's scientific theory with Weber's advocacy bureaucracy and Fayol's universal management principle had a significant effect on the hierarchical and bureaucratic systems of educational management that were still prevalent at the time of their study (Gumus et al., 2018).

Bush, et al. (2019) defined leadership as the influence that lead to the achievement of desired goals and described successful leaders as those who created a vision of the school's aspiration and influenced others to share in the vision. The philosophy, structure, and activities of the school are positioned to achieve that vision. Bush, et al. identified three dimensions of leadership from this definition. These are (a)

Leadership as an influence, (b) Leadership and values, and (c) Leadership and vision.

According to the editors, leadership as influence entails an intentional process of influencing others to achieve a set purpose instead of through authority, which belonged to management, and any one or group could exercise that influence. Leadership as influence gave impetus to arguments in favor of distributed leadership and "senior leadership teams" (pp. 4). Leadership and values implies that leaders are supposed to base their leadership on personal and professional values, although sometimes the government determined these values and imposed them on the school. Then, for leadership and vision, the authors observed that vision is a core competency of effective leadership, and the vision of a school should emerge as a collaborative effort of both the principal and teachers. However, Bush et al. (2019) expressed doubts as to whether school leaders in England and other countries could have the free hand to develop such visions. In Nigeria, schools are free to develop their visions, but they may not have a free hand in implementing the vision. The Ministry will make most of the decisions for implementation

Models of Educational Leadership

At the end of their systematic review, Gumus et al. (2018) identified distributed leadership, instructional leadership, teacher Leadership, and transformational leadership as the most studied leadership models in education, with distributed leadership at the top of the list although it is new in the study of educational leadership models. There were also research on visionary leadership and charismatic leadership, in recent studies that concerned educational management (Leithwood & Azah, 2016). All of the educational

leadership researches shared a common purpose; they directly or indirectly sought to proffer solutions to improving student performance (Day & Sammons, 2016; Gumus et al., 2018; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). As part of the efforts to focus this study using shared leadership or leadership in teams as one of the concepts, I took a cursory look at the popular leadership models in education, such as transformational leadership, instructional leadership, distributed leadership, and managerial leadership.

Instructional Leadership

Bush et al. (2019) identified instructional leadership as the earliest concept that linked learning with leadership. Other names for instructional leadership were "pedagogic leadership, curriculum leadership and leadership for learning" (pp. 5). Bush et al. (2019) pointed out that scholars criticized this form of leadership for connoting that leadership lied with the school head and also was limited to pedagogy, leaving out the learning. In other words, the concept emphasized the direction of leadership rather than how the leader should exercise leadership.

Managerial Leadership

This leadership focused on functions, tasks, and behaviors (Bush et al., 2019; Gumus et al., 2018) and assumed that members of the organization were rational and once the leaders did his or her work, everything would work out well. Authority and power were linked with this type of leadership because it was usually an appointed position. The characteristics of this managerial leadership connected much with educational leadership practices standard in Nigeria and specifically with the target population of the current research.

Distributed Leadership

Bush et al. (2019) described this form of leadership as the normatively preferred form of leadership in the 21st century as against collegial and participative leadership that were popular in the 20th century. The editors identified an essential aspect of this leadership model as its existence within the organization rather than residing in a positional leader. Moreover, this model identified with pulling expertise together in the organization to reduce the burden of leadership on the head, but did not reduce the leadership status of the school head (Bush et al., 2019). However, Bush et al. also pointed out the flip side of distributed leadership, as seen in some literature. These included the bureaucratic and hierarchical structure in the schools that hamper full emergence of distributed leadership, and blurring of power relations between the school leader and the followers. Despite these setbacks, there are evidences from research to show that where distributed leadership existed, students recorded higher performance than where the entire authority lay on one individual (Bush et al., 2019; Heck & Halinger, 2010).

Teacher Leadership

Some current literatures identified hallmarks of teacher leadership as: (a) Teacher leadership operates beyond confines of the classroom, (b) It is sometimes termed distributed leadership and, (c) It empowers teachers with leadership skills and makes available a critical mass of leadership personnel at the school that could take up school leadership role whenever the situation arises. Some arguments against teacher leadership, included: teacher leadership is more of a concept than a reality, teacher leadership would not happen unless there were a clear structure and vision of the direction the school was

moving towards, and a culture of trust and collaboration is required to ensure that everyone shared in the school vision (Bush et al., 2019). Similarly, the support of heads and senior leaders in the school is necessary to foster teacher leadership, where it existed (Bush, 2015; Bush et al. (2019).

Transformational Leadership

Contrasting transformational leadership from transactional leadership, Bass (1999) defined transformational leadership as one that inspired, stimulated employees intellectually, and gave individualistic attention to subordinate staff. Bass (1999) asserted that transformational leadership can be directive or participatory; it requires high moral development, and women tend to manifest transformational leadership more than men. This definition permeated many other discussions of transformational leadership, especially in the field of education (Berkovich, 2016; Day et al., 2016; Gumus, 2018). Stewart (2006) reviewed the conceptual and empirical development of transformational leadership through the works of education management and administration giants such as MacGregor Burns, Bernard M. Bass, Bruce J. Avolio, and Kenneth Leithwood (pp. 1). At the end of the analysis of these studies, Stewart (2006) stated that there were pieces of evidence that transformational leadership had many benefits. In the business world, Soosay, & Reaiche (2015) reported that transformational leadership had an impact on global businesses that required effective leadership to make an organization competitive in the global market. According to Ghasabeh et al. (2016), transformational leadership brought about significant changes at the organizational level through the strategy of changing people's attitudes towards collaborative actions that lead to "shared and

inspiring vision for the future" (pp. 464). Gumus (2018) viewed the emergence of transformational leadership as opposed to transactional leadership at the time.

Conversely, Bass (1999) maintained that leaders could manifest both transformational and transactional leadership styles at different times, depending on the situation at hand.

Specifically, Berkovich (2016) noted how the transformational model of leadership found its way into the field of education and became one of the most dominant paradigms in educational leadership research. Transformational leadership became an enduring form of ideal leadership model in education, but suddenly, critics attacked the model for deficiencies in its compliance with theory requirements and methodology issues (Berkovich, 2016). Despite the apparent shortfall in the model, scholars did not ask that the model be put aside, completely (Berkovich, 2016; Stewart, 2006).

Distinguishing Educational Leadership From Educational Management

Sometimes, the term educational management was used interchangeably with education leadership, in such a way that people wondered whether the two terms were the same or were different. Bolden (2016) suggested that leadership, management, and administration are all parts of the process of developing both the structural and human capacity of an organization to improve the achievement of the organization's purpose of existence. Connolly et al. (2017) analyzed and contrasted educational management and educational leadership. Connolly et al. posited that the concepts of educational management and educational leadership are critical in understanding the process of organizing in education institutions, but that the two terms are different, and people should not use them as if they were the same. Connolly et al. (2017) concluded that

education management is about taking up the responsibility for the functioning of a system in which other people participated; it is more of a state of mind than actions, and it entails a hierarchical structure. The authors intoned however, that in practice, management becomes a delegation of such responsibility for ensuring that a system functioned effectively. The way Connolly et al. (2017) defined management aligned with some other scholars and particularly with Bush et al. (2019), which emphasized that leadership is about influencing others to act in order to achieve an objective. Daramola & Amos (2016) held that management deals with complexities and coping with them in order to bring order to the organization, while leadership has to do with initiating change and getting others to move towards the change direction. All the authors were similar in their views about leadership having to do with change and influence, while management deals with the more complex issues of ensuring that the system works smoothly. Taken together, Bush (2019) pointed out that the term educational leadership is the 21st-century name for educational administration and management in the 19th and 20th centuries, respectively. In other words, the three terms have fused into one and are referred to in current literature as educational leadership.

According to Bush (2019), the use of the term leadership for school heads marked a more decentralized form of educational leadership in which the schools had greater autonomy from the administrative hierarchy of the higher departments outside of the school. He maintained that even while education leadership is associated with school leadership, the term administration is still relevant in the United States, New Zealand, Canada, and other countries, while the United Kingdom and some other European

countries preferred the term management (Bush, 2019). Connolly et al. (2017) noted that when those who had the responsibility of getting a system function effectively also influenced others to act, they are both engaged in management and leadership. This thought of Connolly et al. (2017) resonates with the system level education managers in Nigeria. They are both leaders and managers.

Educational Management

Most scholars presented management consistently as invoking the organizational structure of hierarchy and bureaucracy (Bush, 2019; Bust et al., 2019; Connolly et al., 2017; Gumus et al., 2018). Under this vertical structure, usually, the senior management is at the top with powers and influence more than those lower in the hierarchy and they monitored those lower the management ladder in order to ensure efficiency (Connolly et al., 2017) in the system. More traditional literature defined management as directing, coordinating, controlling, and guiding personnel in an organization to achieve organizational goals (Khorasani & Almasifard, 2017; Northouse, 2013). Connolly et al. (2017) alluded to the traditional definition of management as being responsible for the confusion between management and leadership. They advanced that most often when there was a failure at a school, leadership took the blame, whereas it could be the failure of management. Despite the fact that authors of these studies on educational management and leadership focused on the school level, in Nigeria management is the dominant term used for all levels of educational organizations and institutions. In the context of the current research, members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee are directors of different levels of education and chairs of education boards under the

Ministry of Education. They have the authority to manage schools that are within the level of education they controlled. These management members delegate responsibility of managing the schools to the school heads, at least in principle, but they still take most decisions about what happened at the schools (Mihalache et al., 2014; Sinha, 2013).

Top management wield influence that bring about actions for achieving the education set goals. These are the reasons this research refer to the target population as education leaders at the ministry level. When students performed poorly at school, education stakeholders blamed heads of schools and the teachers, whereas this category of senior members of management at the ministry take decisions on most activities that concern teaching and learning at the school. Taking an in-depth view of literature on educational management and leadership became critical for a better understanding of the background of this research. In a systematic review of African literature on educational leadership and management, Halinger (2018b) observed that most literature in the context of the school did not discuss school leadership and management as were common in western and American literature. According to Halinger (2018), the most prevalent literature explored leadership/management in the context of governance reforms such as decentralization and the implementation of school-based management initiatives. Halinger (2018) confirmed earlier observation about the place of leadership and management in the context of the Nigerian education system.

Collaboration and Change

Collaboration and change are two important concepts that featured along with a shared vision, shared leadership, systems thinking, and organizational success (Wagner et

al., 2012; Hall and Hord, 2015). It was for this reason that I included collaboration and change as part of the concepts necessary for deepening the knowledge for this research on exploring perceptions of Faza Ministry of Education management about a shared vision.

Collaboration

Information on collaboration were replete in the organizational and leadership literature in different sectors, within and between organizations (Lee, 2019; McCoverly & Matusitz, 2014), but most of the authors did not make an explicit attempt at defining collaboration. Gajda (2004) observed that the definition of the term collaboration was elusive and instead gave some principles of collaboration theory that the author believed would guide practitioners who wished to engage in collaborative activities within an organization. These included:

- Collaboration is imperative for organizations.
- Many people present it with different names.
- Collaboration is a journey towards a goal and not the destination of the goal.
- Human resource element in collaboration is as important as the process underlying the collaboration.
- Collaboration does not happen abruptly; it develops in stages.

These principles helped to put the concept of collaboration into a proper perspective that informed theme identification, data analysis, and explanation of findings for this research. Ashkenas (2015) cautioned that collaboration and cooperation are not the same. The author elaborated that collaboration required making tough decisions and tradeoffs, and it transcended mere willingness among departments to share resources and information. In

other words, different departments and organizations can cooperate in carrying out tasks, but it may not result in collaboration. Collaboration required identifying the goal that the parties wished to achieve and mapping out a step-by-step process on how to get to the goal (Ashkenas, 2015).

Sullivan and Skelcher (2017) located the popularity of collaboration in government institutions within the context of the United Kingdom government public sector restructuring of 1980 and early 1990s. The restructure was an expression of the U.K. government's desire to have a more integrated approach to the development of public policy, activities of management, and delivery of outcomes in government projects (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2017). According to Sullivan and Skelcher it was a response to criticism of the government for its lack of capacity to deliver on issues that required coordinated action. Part of the problems was the bureaucratic structure of its public institutions with its underlying principles. Nigeria is a member of the Common Wealth of Nations and may still be manifesting the same organizational structure that do not support collaboration and synergy in the delivery of complex organizational goals. For instance, the scenario of the annual budgetary process in the U.K., at the time, as Sullivan and Skelcher (2017) presented it resonated with current practices in Nigeria and the Faza region, as well. Issues such as budget allocation sessions were typical activities in the Faza Ministry of Education that created tension among departments and could slow down collaborative processes.

In identifying drivers of collaboration failure, McNamara et al. (2019) first identified common factors in the literature that made for successful collaboration. These

included (a) shared vision or having a common goal, (b) mutual resource allocation, (c) interdependence, (d) understanding of shared risk, and (e) voluntary participation. These elements of collaboration are common to those underlying shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership. McNamara et al. (2019) further added three factors that supported shared power and a collective decision-making process in the collaboration process as trust, legitimacy, and social capital. From McNamara et al.'s (2019) presentation, having a shared goal is not enough to bring about collaboration, mutual resource allocation and understanding of shared risks would promote the trust that could make way for collaboration. According to McNamara et al., problems linked to value differences, conflicting goals, as well as personality clashes, need to be put into consideration while developing structures to support participants' interpretations of actions and events. McNamara et al. (2019) concluded with a request for more research into factors that could impede collaboration as a way for ensuring proper initiation and sustenance of collaboration efforts. Rycroft-Malone et al.'s (2015) longitudinal studies of three big organizations on collaboration resonated with McNamara et al.'s (2019) findings on collaboration. Rycroft-Malone et al.'s (2015) presented that collaboration is not a one-time off practice that emerged from a vacuum at the start of an organization, rather collaboration requires time to be learned and developed.

Lim (2018) approached collaboration from the perspective of a collaborative leader through a summary of Dewitt's (2017, as cited in Lim, 2018) work. Lim (2018) presented Dewitt's collaborative leader as one that builds a relationship with all stakeholders. This leader provides voice, co-constructs a shared vision, and works with

others to enhance student learning. According to Lim (2018), the author under discussion reported collaborative leadership as hard work, transparency, honesty, trustworthiness, compassion, and being responsible for fostering solid relationships with all stakeholders. Many other works of literature on collaboration presented it also as a positive approach to handling modern organizational challenges with success (Hill & Bartol, 2016; Lee, 2019; Tompkins, 2018). Lee (2019) analyzed data obtained from U.S. Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey using a structural equation model to suggest that interdepartmental collaboration has both positive and negative effects, but that the positive effects are more remarkable than the adverse effects. The positive impact was seen both in staff development and resource acquisition for improvement of overall organizational performance. Besides, the author advised that managers at the top of public organizations should ensure that a plan was put in place to coordinate their collaborative efforts.

Rycroft-Malone et al. (2015) summarized all points identified so far about collaboration by putting forward some instructions that would move collaboration from mere theorizing into action. These were:

1. Having pre-existing relationships among parties would help in bringing a quicker appreciation of each other's' positions and purpose on which to build joint plans and the implementation.
2. Having governance structures for collaboration that facilitated opportunities for face-to-face, social, and cognitive connections among stakeholders would result in better conversations about more concrete decisions.

3. Having a shared vision and other alignments among partners in terms of the governance framework and targeting of resources would help unblock existing barriers among partners in collaboration.
4. Existing tension between collaboration and competition was both useful and hampering, but constant monitoring and balancing of the two concepts would be useful for collaboration.

Change Management

Ololube and Ololube (2017) explained organizational change as a strategic activity that bases its operation on the concept of organizations as systems. Similarly, Wagner et al. (2012) explained change efforts as a system because of the interrelated nature, and also explained change as a process rather than an activity. Hall and Hord (2015) stated one could understand change from different perspectives, three of which are diffusion perspective, system perspective, and organizational development perspective. Generally, Scholars perceived the concept of visioning and initiating change as significant components of the leadership functions (Wagner et al., 2012). Wagner et al. (2012) described a system as a whole, in which the parts affect one another continuously as they hang together, while systems thinking implies having the whole in mind while working differently on the various parts. Senge (2006) affirmed that the systems thinking competence is the nexus that holds the art of shared vision together. Additionally, Wagner et al. (2012) envisioned that this change in the thinking process required different competences in the leaders to understand the underlying interrelated nature of different parts of an organization before they could make targeted interventions.

As Hall and Hord (2015) observed, another way to explain change is from the perspective of organizational development. From this perspective of change, Cummings & Worley (2014) posited that the fast rate at which the world recorded economic, social, and political developments makes change inevitable in the life of an organization. In other words, discussions about organizations would seem to be incomplete without a look at the concept of organizational change and the accompanying strategies for its management. Cummings and Worely (2014) presented three models of planned change: “Lewin’s change model, action research model, and the positive model” (pp. 23). The literature on organizational management cited Kurt Lewin often as one of the earliest writers on planned change (Cummings & Worley, 2014; Cummings et al., 2016; Wojciechowski et al., 2016). Lewin viewed change as a shift in the forces that struggle to keep an organization system’s behavior in a stable state (Cummings & Woely, 2014). According to scholars of organizational change, Lewin’s model posited that in the life of every organization, two behavior patterns are in a contest: those who push to maintain the status quo, and those who push for change. The organization remains stable at a state of quasi-equilibrium when the two forces are at par (Cummings & Worley, 2014; Cummings et al., 2018).

Since advent of the Lewin’s model, many scholarly works have trailed the Lewin’s change model as shown in Cummings and Woely (2014), These were Wojciechowski (2016), Hill and Hord (2015), Hussani et al. (2018), etcetera. Hussain et al. (2018) conducted a review of Lewin’s model of change and posited that leadership is a critical catalyst in Lewin’s model of organizational change, and leadership style

influences the level of employees' participation in the change process. Without referring to Lewin's change model specifically, Ololube and Ololube (2017) evaluated the relationship between leadership perceptions and attitudes towards organizational change as well as the application of the change among principal officers, their deputies, and faculty within a university setting. The authors used a structured questionnaire to elicit responses from their target population, and at the end of the analysis, reported a positive relationship between leadership perceptions and attitudes, and application of organizational change.

Hall & Hord (2015) identified 12 principles that underscore the change process, four of which were: (a) change is a process and not a one-time off activity, (b) change is learning because learning is at the heart of improvement, (c) the school is the primary unit of change in the education system, and (d) organizations adopt the model of change they want, but individuals implement the change. These four principles and others brought out the salient issues about change, which organizations most often overlooked, and they got stalled in the process of their change initiatives (Hall & Hord, 2015). Similarly, from an educational perspective, Wagner et al. (2012) advocated systems thinking for addressing the challenges and significant goals of change in the school environment through examining competencies, conditions, culture, and context within which the change process would take place. Van der Voet (2014) examined the implementation of organizational change in public organizations with its bureaucratic structure to ascertain the effect of transformational leadership of immediate supervisors on employee readiness to participate in planned and emergent change processes. At the

end of the research, the author concluded that both emergent and planned change could be useful in a bureaucratic public organization setting. However, transformational leadership of immediate supervisors did not affect employee response to change in a bureaucratic setting, but rather in a low bureaucratic structure. Also, the author noted that planned change depended on top management to start the process. Findings from Van der Voet confirmed the vital role of a management team, in a bureaucratic and hierarchical organizational position, in bringing about a change in challenges experienced even at the school level. One assumption of this research was that if members of the top management team of Faza Ministry of Education eventually come to share in the Ministry's overall vision through systems thinking competencies and shared leadership approach, it would engender positive social change that could in some way impact the school level.

Research Approach

This inductive qualitative research aimed to explore Faza Ministry of Education management members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its implications to the discharge of their departmental duties and meeting the Ministry-level goals. The research questions for eliciting responses to achieve the purpose of this research were:

Main Research Question

What is the clear understanding of FCT Education Secretariat Management Committee members about a shared organizational vision?

Sub questions

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing their persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

Given the purpose of this research and the questions for achieving the purpose, I examined different research approaches available in existing current literature (Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015; Twining et al., 2017) and identified generic qualitative research as the suitable approach for conducting this research. The generic approach in qualitative study lends itself to flexibility in the choice of methods, though it does not imply discarding necessary rigors that would ensure reliability and credibility in the study (Kahlke, 2014; Twining et al., 2017). Percy et al. (2015) maintained that research questions seeking to obtain information about people's personal opinion, attitude, beliefs and perceptions of phenomenon should use generic method of inquiry instead of the more recognized traditional approaches to qualitative research. Percy et al. posited that the generic approach would allow the researcher have the flexibility required to explore participants perception on the phenomenon in question.

Some advocates of qualitative research may have preferred that researchers used more traditional approaches such as case study, phenomenology, ethnography, or narrative approach (Creswell, 2013;). Because the choice of approach depended on the problem, purpose of the study, as well as the research questions, it became necessary for me to choose the generic qualitative method as the approach for this study (Patton, 2015;

Twining et al., 2017). Available literature showed that phenomenology often investigated people's inner feelings regarding their lived experiences, whereas a generic approach investigated "external referents that may trigger" the inner cognitive processes of the research participants (Percy et al., 2015, pp.77). The grounded theory approach aimed to develop theory from data collected and ethnography focused on social or cultural groups; (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015). The generic approach emerged as the best choice because those other traditional approaches did not fit requirements for answering the research questions of this study. Many organizational and leadership literature proved that a shared vision is a veritable tool with which leaders in different sectors achieved positive change in their organizations. But these studies were carried out on participants in the United States, Eastern countries and Europe (Fillion et al., 2015; Macedo et al., 2016; Mayfield et al., 2015; Patti et al., 2015; Senge, 2006). Scholars have also explored the shared vision concept in educational leadership and recorded much success and great insight (Berson et al., 2016; Gurley et al., 2015; Patti et al., 2015) The current research sought to explore perceptions of education leaders at the Faza Ministry of Education regarding a shared vision. The report of this research could enrich available education leadership literature in Nigeria and contribute to bringing the shared vision concept to the limelight. Research work on a shared vision in the Nigerian context were not many (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Iyiola, 2017). Iyiola (2017) explored shared vision concerning the identification of business opportunities among university students in Nigeria, while Amah and Ahiauzu (2014) examined shared values in the Nigerian

banking sector. I presented details of choice of the generic approach and method of data collection in Chapter three.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter examined the conceptual framework for this research by exploring the concepts of shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership or leadership in teams. The analytical framework consisted of the attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared vision. Both the conceptual framework and analytical framework helped to focus this generic qualitative research on the Faza Ministry of Education management team members' understanding of a shared vision. The abundant literature about the concepts, and synthesis of the literature revealed an interdependent and logical link among shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership. A shared vision is a concept that requires those sharing in the vision to possess systems thinking competencies to be able to see beyond their departments and focus on the overall Faza Ministry of Education goals and purpose of existence. The Faza Ministry of Education management committee is a visible example of team leadership, which should use shared vision and systems thinking to support their leadership approach. Apart from the conceptual framework, this chapter explored other related literature to the topic of this research. The first was organizational management from the perspective of visioning in an organization, management, leadership, shared leadership, and systems approach to management. The second aspect was on educational leadership and management through examining conventional education leadership models, and the differences between educational leadership and management. Furthermore, the chapter explored and presented

the concepts of collaboration and change. Collaboration is a common factor in the three concepts for grinding this research. It also facilitates change, which is a natural occurrence in the life of an organization. Additionally, this chapter looked at the vital change models and how change is linked to leadership and systems thinking.

There was a gap in the literature concerning the effect of systems-level educational management and leadership on the school level operations. Many of the literature on educational leadership focused at the school level in the Western and American literature, whereas in Nigeria, leadership and management resided first and foremost with the top management team at the state or the federal level (Daramola & Amos, 2016). These group of leaders make decisions about what happened at the school level. Only a few meta-analytical works alluded to educational leadership in the context of countries such as Nigeria and other African countries. Hallinger (2018a) accurately reported that the context of research on educational leadership in countries such as Nigeria focused on governance, decentralization, and school-based management committees. Similarly, shared vision research was not common in the conventional Nigerian educational literature. Only a few works of literature on shared values in the banking and business sector existed in Nigeria and little or nothing in education.

The result of this study could engender social change in the education sector in Nigeria towards further research to empirically ascertain the extent of the impact of ministry level and Faza Ministry level educational leadership on school operations and even student learning outcomes. This research could also bring the concept of shared vision to the lime light in the Nigerian educational sector.

Chapter 3: Research Method

In this generic qualitative research, I sought to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of shared vision and its possible relevance to the management of their educational system. Shared vision is a management strategy widely acknowledged in American and Western literature as successful for improvement of organizational performance (Expósito-Langa et al., 2015; Fillion et al., 2015; Gurley et al., 2015; Macedo et al., 2016; Senge, 2006); it could also be relevant in the Nigerian educational leadership environment.

In this chapter, I state the design and methodology for the conduct of this study, including issues of data analysis and reporting. The chapter starts with presentation of the study approach and justification for the choice of approach, my role as researcher, target participants, and the strategy for recruitment (Creswell, 2013). It also addresses the choice and type of data collection instrument, data collection procedure, analysis, and presentation of the report, as well as means of ensuring reliability and trustworthiness. Finally, this chapter details the plan for minimizing the risks of the research activities for the participants (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Walden University, 2016).

Research Design and Rationale

In order to achieve the purpose of this research, I posed the following research questions:

Main Research Question

What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education Secretariat Management Committee members about a shared organizational vision?

Sub questions

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence member' effort at addressing Faza Ministry of Education's educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

Shared vision, in this paper, is synonymous with shared organizational vision, and it refers to the art of holding a common image or concept of an organization's primary goal, mission, or purpose for existence (Senge, 2006). The target organization for this research was the Faza Ministry of Education. It had a stated vision of being one of the best service providers of education in the world through providing education to school-aged children and illiterate adults. However, the country's educational system, including the Faza region's educational system, had many challenges that made delivery of education inefficient and ineffective. Members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee seemed not to be addressing the issues appropriately as they worked in silos in their various departments. They might not have tried a shared vision approach to solving the problems, but there was no existing literature that indicated the understanding of educational leaders at this level about a shared vision. There were many contemporary sources in the literature that proved that leaders sharing in a common vision of an organization was effective in the management of persistent and complex challenges in business, health, and education, among other fields (Berson et al., 2016; Boyatzis, 2015; Patti et al., 2015; Senge, 2006; Senge et al., 2015).

This study explored Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and the possibility of members adopting it as a management strategy to address their persistent educational challenges. To provide an answer to the research questions of this study in a manner that would address the problem and purpose of the study, I used a generic qualitative research approach (Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015). Patton (2015) explained that generic qualitative inquiry as one that `seeks to answer simple research questions effectively without aligning to any specific traditional philosophical, epistemological, or ontological paradigm. Patton viewed the generic research approach as a group of studies with qualitative research characteristics, but do not focus the study through the traditionally known approaches of qualitative research. A generic study might combine more than one approach or take the position of not using any approach at all. The choice of a qualitative approach to research poses a challenge for positivist and postpositivist scholars to the effect that the qualitative approach is not scientific and would not produce reliable results (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). Choosing outside the traditionally recognized qualitative approaches widened further the divide between quantitatively biased scholars and their qualitative counterparts. Even scholars of qualitative inquiry had debated and were still engaged in ongoing debates about researchers' choice of methods of inquiry outside phenomenology, ethnography, case study, narrative, autography, and grounded theory (Caelli et al., 2003; Cutcliffe & Ramcharan, 2002; Kahlke, 2014; Madill, 2015). However, there were also strong propositions for generic qualitative research (Percy et al., 2015). Percy et al. (2015) affirmed that generic qualitative research is most suitable in

a situation where the researcher has previous information or knowledge about a concept and needs to describe the concept from the participants' perspective.

These discussions supported my choice of the generic qualitative approach because it enabled me to explore Faza Ministry of Education management members' understanding of a shared vision approach to educational leadership in the region. The generic qualitative approach suited the aim of obtaining information through the participants' responses to interview questions regarding their understanding of a shared vision.

Role of the Researcher

A number of authors on qualitative research have emphasized the need for researchers to make explicit their assumptions, beliefs, and roles in research projects to establish confidence on the part of readers in their research reports because doing so enhances the credibility of a study process and report (Caelli et al., 2003; Cope, 2014; Creswell, 2013). I carried out this research in an organization in which I worked for 22 years. Most of the directors whom I met as a deputy director in the management committee had retired before I conducted interviews for this research. However, a few of them were still in the Faza Ministry of Education management at the time of data collection for this research. These older directors were part of a long standing culture of protecting their departmental budgets and working hard on their departmental mandates with little or no attention to the overall vision of the Faza Ministry of Education.

The topic for this research emerged from my experiences (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015) in the Faza Ministry of Education. Some members of the Faza

Ministry of Education management at the time used the term “territorialism” to describe the competition that occurred as individual directors struggled for budget allocations to their departments as well as protection of their departmental activities without keeping an eye on the entire ministry’s goal. Members of the management rarely used available data to determine the budget allocation to their departments. All members needed more funds for their departments, but it did not augur well for the entire ministry.

Because I had worked with some of the participants in this research in the past, I had to apply greater rigor and more detailed explanations of actions to ensure that data from the research were not compromised for the benefit of the research report (Creswell, 2013; Walden University, 2016). My former position in the organization, however, did not pose any threat of power influence or coercion to participants in providing information to the research interview questions. This was because I was not in a position to influence their promotion, work, or budget allocation in any way.

I obtained a letter from the director of administration and finance of the Faza Ministry of Education, who acted for the commissioner of education at that time because the region had not appointed a new commissioner. The letter that granted me permission to interview members of management was quoted in the letter of invitation for each selected member of management to participate in the interview. All members accepted the invitation to participate in the interview and did participate. Heads of special units who were below the director level but were members of management were not invited and did not participate in the interviews to avoid any form of power influence.

Creswell (2009) observed that the conduct of research in a researcher's "backyard" (i.e., the researcher's organization; p. 177) can raise issues of power, and biases, or incomplete data that would not augur well for the research report. The major issue was to ensure that there was no undue power influence (Creswell, 2013; Walden University, 2016), which was not applicable here among senior and former colleagues. Creswell (2013) advised that where the conduct of such research is necessary, researchers should employ multiple strategies to ensure validity and the confidence of readers of the research report. This current study was important and necessary, so despite my firmly held perceptions and assumptions about the organization and attitudes of members of management, I employed the bracketing strategy to set aside all those assumptions and listen to the participants' responses, experiences, and perceptions in order to collect meaningful and valid data from the interviews (Gentles et al., 2015; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011; Willig, 2017). Having left the organization some 2 years before, I viewed the situation in the organization from an outsider's perspective. One of the assumptions that I had was that research participants would be businesslike and professional in their responses to the interview questions, as the consent form and invitation letter requested them to be. The participants complied with the instructions on the university's consent form as anticipated.

I sent invitations personally to participants and got their responses through WhatsApp messages or text messages in my smartphone. I scheduled an interview for each of the participants at the date and time each requested. I conducted the interviews without assistance from anyone. The use of incentives for research participants was

not a familiar practice in the environment of this research, but anecdotal experiences indicated that the provision of light entertainment during meetings and trainings helped to keep participants alert and patient until the end of the sessions. In line with what was indicated in the consent form, each participant was told that a provision would be made for light refreshments after the interview and that refreshments could not be delivered immediately because of the COVID-19 protocol. After the interview, when the COVID-19 protocol was relaxed, each participant was given light refreshments not worth more than \$5.

Methodology

The generic qualitative approach was the design used for this research, and it allowed me more flexibility in the conduct of the inquiry into the perceptions of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared vision (Patton, 2015). Patton (2015) observed that one could answer practical and concrete questions that people asked about everyday problems without the application of specific traditional philosophical worldviews, and that explained the relevance of the generic qualitative research approach.

Participant Selection Logic

The target population for this research was Faza Ministry of Education management committee members. They were 20 members at the time, but 15 members out of the 20 formed the sample size for this generic qualitative research. Members of this committee were chairmen of three boards under the Faza Ministry of Education: the Regional Basic Education Board (pseudonym), Secondary Education Board, and

Scholarship Board. Other members were directors who headed departments such as Administration and Finance at the Ministry headquarters, Planning, Research and Statistics, Quality Assurance, Education Resource Centre, Special Needs Education, Mass Education, and Higher Education. The provost of the Faza region's college of education and the director of works at the upcoming Faza University of Science and Technology were also members. Other directors who headed departments within the boards were also members of management. The director of works at the Ministry headquarters and head of the legal unit were members of the management committee. The deputy directors in charge of gender issues, health and HIV, the public relations office, and the head of administration at the Education Secretariat also attended management meetings, but they were not official members. The head of the legal unit was the secretary to the management committee meeting. In the environment of this research, the beliefs, actions, and inaction of education leaders in this category at their various departments and boards, as well as at the management committee level, might have affected the realization of Faza region educational goals (Bamgboje-Ayodele & Ellis, 2015), but no one suspected that they had far-reaching consequences.

I used purposeful sampling as the appropriate sampling method for this study, rather than the random sampling that is common to basic research or the quantitative method (Patton, 2015). Patton's typology of purposeful sampling best suited the needs of this research. According to Patton, purposeful sampling entails selecting information-rich cases that will provide needed information for the research, and the 15 members selected were sufficiently rich in information to provide answers to the research questions.

Among the 20 members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee, 15 members who were at the grade level of director or higher, as in the case of chairs of the boards and the provost of the Faza Ministry College of Education, and had spent up to 6 months as directors in the management committee, were eligible to participate in the research. These more experienced directors constituted better information-rich cases than newly appointed directors because they had been in management long enough to understand the workings of the management committee and its members (Patton, 2015). Patton (2015) proposed that because a researcher might not be able to study everyone and everything, a researcher needs to concentrate on the person or thing that will provide a great deal of information for a study. I based my decision regarding the sample size for this study on the achievement of the purpose of the research, homogeneity of the target population, limited size of the population of study, and choice of information-rich participants (Guest et al., 2006; Mason, 2010; Patton, 2015).

Mason (2010) accepted that various factors affect the choice of sample size in qualitative research but maintained that achieving saturation is a determining factor for sample size. However, Mason added that the concept of saturation is not understood clearly among PhD researchers and has been applied as it has suited the researcher's preferences or those of supervising institutions. Guest et al. (2012) confirmed that the concept of saturation is relevant in determining sample size, but only at the conceptual stage of research. According to Guest et al., in practice, saturation does not give an appropriate guide to researchers who need to predetermine sample size at the beginning

of their research. In the current generic qualitative research, there was a need to state the sample size at the proposal stage because the research was not using grounded theory or a phenomenology approach (Creswell, 2013). Patton observed that even a single case sample could suffice for a research sample, depending on the purpose and context of the research, and was not prescriptive about numbers that could constitute appropriate samples for qualitative research.

Selected participants received personal letters of invitation through WhatsApp to participate in the interviews with permission of the director administration and finance at the Faza Ministry of Education (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016; Mikecz, 2012). The main content of the consent form was also summarized and sent to participants through WhatsApp and text messages for those who opted to receive text messages. The consent forms were not sent along with the invitation letters because participants were at home as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. Nevertheless, the content of the consent form formed part of the interview protocol and was read out to all participants to allow them to determine their willingness to continue with the interview process. The consent form and the light refreshments, after the interview, were sent to participants at a later date when they could sign the forms safely and return them.

Instrumentation

The purpose of this generic qualitative research was to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its possible relevance to their work in addressing persistent educational

challenges of the faza region. The following research questions were put forward to guide the collection of data required to achieve the purpose of this research:

Main Research Question

What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared organizational vision?

Sub questions

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing FCT's persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

I used the semi-structured interview method for data collection, and I administered the questions through WhatsApp call or telephone conversation. (Opdenakker, 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2012) to elicit the participants' perceptions about a shared organizational vision within the context of their work environment (Patton, 2015). As in most qualitative researches, I was the instrument and administrator of the instrument (Creswell, 2013). The semi-structured interview design was suitable in this research because shared vision is an existing concept of focus that I needed to explore the understanding of participants regarding the concept (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). I developed the interview protocol that guided the administration of the interview questions to participants (Jacob & Furgeson, 2012). The questions were not itemized randomly. Instead, the pre-determined themes from literature based on the conceptual framework for the research, and components of the Walker and Avant (2005) concept

analysis framework, informed choice of questions. The approach to question selection was to ensure that responses from participants addressed the research questions and purpose of the research. Extensive information from literature on terms related to the topic of research (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) contributed to the pre-determined themes.

Procedure for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Data gathering for this research was through responsive interviewing (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) of the selected 15 Faza Ministry of Education members of management that met the criteria for selection. In line with the purpose of this generic qualitative research, the responsive interviewing was suitable as a method of data collection. According to Percy et al. (2015), since a generic qualitative approach usually focused on real-life events and phenomena, the use of structured interviewing design was preferable to the open-ended approach.

I administered the structured interview using the prepared interview protocol with the main questions to guide the interview process (Jacob & Furgeson, 2012; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Percy et al., 2015). Cleary et al. (2014) advised that when planning a qualitative study, it was essential for the researcher to explain in details the processes of the data collection to include the breadth, depth, and scope as a way of establishing credibility in the study. Some other qualitative method scholars observed that collection of data through qualitative interviews required fluency, clarity, and analytical abilities from both the interviewer and interviewee to gather in-depth information (Cleary et al., 2014; Patton, 2015). Participants in the current study are senior public servants in Nigeria, where English is the second and official language of communication. During the

interview process, all participants were fluent and responded to the questions without unnecessary ambiguity and the responses were manually transcribed in a verbatim manner. Mooney-Somers and Olsen (2017) emphasized that the competence of the researcher is an issue for ethical concern. The training I got at Walden University with the rigorous processes of undertaking this research is evidence that I had the competence to handle this research appropriately.

On the average, the interviews lasted between 27 minutes to 45 minutes, except for two sessions that lasted up to one hour because there was internet downtime that interrupted the processes. In the end, the network came up and the interviews were completed successfully. In addition, some interview questions needed further probing questions to get the participants focus on the issues without much digression, Some other participants gave short responses that needed further explanations. All these factors contributed in the variation in the duration of the interview sessions (Jacob & Furgeson, 2012). The interview of each participant was held once because there was no need for repeat sessions, though participants were informed that if there were need for any repeat interview, I would call the relevant participants (Janesick, 2011). Information about a possible repeat visit to the participant was made clear to the participants in the consent form and the interview protocol. During the interview, I recorded the conversations on a digital recorder as the main recorder and Samsung Smartphone as back up to ensure data was not lost when one device had a problem (Janesick, 2011). Directly after each interview, I transferred the audio file to a laptop and passworded the file for safety of data (Janesick, 2011).

Data Analysis Plan

According to Creswell (2013), analysis of data entailed making sense of a large volume of data generated during qualitative data collection. To make sense from data, researchers needed to undertake several processes that depended on the nature of the data, but which also had a procedure common to most qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). These included familiarizing one's self with the data; organizing data, coding the data, and identifying themes as they emerged or using predetermined themes to code the data (Creswell, 2013). Creswell (2013) explained that the process is iterative, continuous and involves many reflections, note-taking, and asking of analytic questions all geared towards making sense of the data to address the research questions and achieve the purpose of the research.

The data analysis procedure for this research followed an adaptation form of the Percy et al. (2015) step by step thematic analysis procedure using the adapted Walker and Avant (2005) concept analysis framework to focus the process. The Walker and Avant adapted framework consisted of three components: attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared vision. Themes emerging from the literature on the interrelated concepts of shared vision, systems thinking and shared leadership were used for identifying and organizing interview data under attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared vision. The framework already informed the research questions and interview questions and guided sorting, organizing, and coding of data from the interviews, also. The purpose of this generic qualitative research was to explore understanding of members of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared

organizational vision and its possible relevance to the members' work towards addressing their educational challenges. The following research questions were used to guide the collection and analysis of data required to achieve the purpose of this research.

Main Research Question

What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education Management Committee members about a shared organizational vision?

Sub questions

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing FCT's persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

Percy et al. (2015) opined that thematic analysis is suitable for generic qualitative research as it is flexible and suited many qualitative approaches. I employed deductive thematic analysis of data for this research using themes that identified from the literature on shared vision, systems thinking, and shared leadership. The themes included common purpose, collaboration, care, trust, connectedness, communication, and viewing issues from a holistic perspective. These themes and others constituted predetermined themes around which data was coded (Percy et al., 2015). Percy et al. (2015) and other researchers referred to this approach as theoretical thematic analysis since the researcher used predetermined themes from theories or concepts (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Elo et al, 2014) to categorize the data. I was open to capture other themes also that emerged from

the interview data , especially as the research location was different from those in the literature where the predetermined themes were identified.

Preparation of the data for coding started with checking that all data sets from interviewees were complete (Patton, 2015; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Then, manual transcribing the audio-recorded data followed to ensure fewer omissions and misrepresentation of the original words of the research interview respondents (Gale et al., 2013). Gale et al. recommended the verbatim transcription of data to obtain the best results in coding for thematic analysis. After the manual transcription in Microsoft Word, the rest of the coding and analysis of data were done manually to ensure that I was in control of the process and the eventual reporting of results. Field notes maintained during data collection were useful in reminding me of ideas and thoughts reflected upon during the data collection and playback of the audio files for the verbatim transcription (Sutton & Austin, 2015). These pieces of information helped the in interpretation of findings that followed after the data analysis.

According to Zamawe (2015), the main work of the computer-assisted software was to function as a tool that would aid data analysis, and NVivo had the advantage of being compatible with different methods of research (Zamawe, 2015). Since computer software aids data analysis, the researcher's thought process in data analysis remained relevant (Patton, 2015). Despite advantages of the NVivo aided analysis, at the point of analysis of data for this research, I envisaged that since I had done a manual verbatim transcription, it was better for me to continue with manual coding and analysis of the data to be in control of the process and report accurately on the findings. This was one of to

means of ensuring trustworthiness of the research process. Finally, I maintained an analysis journal for documenting analysis decisions, false steps, moments of critical discoveries, or breakthrough (Patton, 2015). Feedback from the journal helped me to fine tune the data analysis procedure as well as added to the rigor in the research process (Patton, 2015).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Scholars of both quantitative and qualitative research recognized the importance of evaluating and establishing the quality of research as a prerequisite for the incorporation of the research findings into practice, irrespective of the discipline concerned (Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015). However, advocates of the qualitative approach to the research emphasized the application of rigor in the processes that eventually lead to research findings to elicit integrity and trust from the research audience (Creswell, 2013; Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015). These advocates of qualitative method advanced some common strategies for ensuring integrity and trustworthiness in qualitative research findings as (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) conformability. Creswell (2013) and other scholars attributed the strategies enumerated above to Lincoln and Guba (1985). In this current research, I ensured trustworthiness of the process and eventual reporting through applying these common strategies of credibility, transferability, dependability confirmability in the research process, Details of how I handled the issues of trustworthiness in the research on Faza Ministry of Education management members' perceptions of a shared vision are presented next.

Credibility

Patton (2015) noted that the usefulness of every research depends on the credibility of the research strategies. To ensure the credibility of the current research process, I maintained a reflective journal for recording all reflections that went through my mind in the entire process of the research and the thoughts helped to shape the research report. This reflective journaling helped to give relevance and depth to the data collection process (Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Specifically, Sutton and Austin (2015) advocated that researchers should not ignore their biases and world views but should reflect on them carefully, and clearly state them in their research to enable readers to understand the perspective from which the research questions, design, data collection, and analysis processes came. My biases, assumptions and world view concerning the current research were clearly stated, Noble & Smith (2015) and Patton (2015) collaborated that clearly stating the researcher's personal biases and world view concerning the research topic, design, data collection, analysis, and other stages of the process would contribute to the credibility of the research. Finally, during the interview, participants were informed that the manuscript of the interview would be made available for them to crosscheck that the transcriptions of the recorded audio represented their responses, but only a few of them expressed interest in seeing the manuscript, and they were made available to them for confirmation (Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015). Patton emphasized that the neutrality and integrity of the researcher are critical issues to maintain throughout the process of a research. I maintained neutrality and integrity throughout the process of the research.

Transferability

Most scholars of qualitative research posited that qualitative research findings are not meant to be generalized to a broader population because of the non-random selection of participants and because qualitative research seek to collect data about people's thoughts and perceptions of a phenomenon or concept, which are usually nuanced by culture of the target population (Sutton & Austin, 2015). For research findings to suit other contexts like the location of the original research, the findings should have qualities of transferability, which is an equivalent of external validity in quantitative research. To ensure transferability of findings of this research, I maintained records of the research process meticulously, including my thought processes, as well as ensured detailed and thick verbatim report of participants' opinions as evidence to support findings of the research (Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015). Clear reporting of the process of this research, especially data collection, coding and analysis of data was another strategy for ensuring that work on the topic of this research could be repeated elsewhere, without much encumbrance (Noble & Smith, 2015). Thomas and Magilvy (2011), and other scholars of qualitative research asserted that these efforts to achieve the confidence and application of research findings to similar contexts is the rigor in qualitative research. Thomas and Magilvy (2011), and Cope (2014) added that another way of achieving the transferability of qualitative research findings is by presenting a dense description of the population selected for the study, including geographical locations and demographic data. Relevant information of participants within the context of this research were provided.

Dependability

Cope (2014), and other scholars of qualitative research explained that dependability is established in qualitative research findings when another researcher could use the decision trail of the initial researcher to achieve similar results in another environment (Noble & Smith, 2015). Detailed descriptions of the process for conduct of this research established an audit trail, which is my detailed description of how I arrived at the findings and conclusion of the research starting from problem statement, design of study, methods used, participants 'selection, data collection, analysis and reporting (Cope, 2014; Noble & Smith, 2015; Patton, 2015; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

Confirmability

Confirmability is another common variable that qualitative researchers advocated for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Ryan et al., 2007; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Some of the scholars asserted that when researchers have satisfied other strategies of trustworthiness in a study, they have achieved confirmability (Creswell, 2013; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In summary, scholars noted that confirmability require that researchers take time to ensure findings of research emerged from data and not from the researchers' thoughts or preconceived ideas (Patton, 2015). In view of these expressions of scholars on qualitative study trustworthiness, I maintained a reflective journal and ensured to record my reflections at every stage of the research. I did a verbatim and manual transcription of the tape-recorded interview responses to make sure that the manuscript captured exact responses of the respondents (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The

procedure for reporting the stage-by-stage coding and analysis of data from this research lent itself to a clear presentation that strengthened confirmability status of this research. Participants' checking of the data transcribed and eventual interpretation of findings also helped enhance trustworthiness of the research (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). Janesick (2011) and Creswell (2013) advised that qualitative researchers should look out for points that do not align with the researchers' expectations or do not make sense from the rest of the codes or themes because these points would help the researchers gain further insight into the phenomenon of research. Awareness of such differing outcomes from the data helped keep me in check for this research (Creswell, 2013; Janesick, 2011).

Ethical Procedures

This generic qualitative research sought to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee member's perceptions concerning a shared vision as a management strategy and how adopting the concept could help the members address their persistent educational challenges. Fifteen members of the management committee were selected as participants for this research, and they had their offices at different locations in the city, but gathered for their management meetings at the headquarters of the Ministry of Education, whenever the Commissioner of Education convened the meeting. The director of administration and finance (in charge of human resources activities) was acting for the commissioner of education in the Faza region at the time of this research. It was the acting commissioner that granted formal permission for me to invite participants for interview in the research (Mikecz, 2012). According to Cunliffe and Alcadipani (2016), access to a research site has to do with obtaining permission to research an

organization in the first place and further building relationships that would help sustain the access till end of the research. Access to interview participants was granted in the case of this research and the access was sustained to the end of the interviews and would include presentation of the research findings to the organization.

Cunliffe and Alcadipani (2016) cautioned that access is not as simple as scholars tended to present it in literature because beyond having detailed acceptable strategies for gaining access, there are political and ethical challenges that confront researchers in the field as they try to gain and maintain access to organizations. A lot of the challenges centered around trust and confidence in the researcher, who is as an outsider to an organization that strive to safeguard its integrity and other social issues (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016; Mikecz, 2012). Mikecz (2012) recommended that one way to gain trust and confidence with elite interviewees is to study and understand the background of the elite interviewees and for the researcher to have a good knowledge of the subject of the research. In the current research, I worked with the organization in the past and was familiar with their mannerisms. My prior knowledge of the research environment helped lessen the probability of any passive resistance from participants to granting interview and giving their candid opinion about issues raised during the interviews. In the context of the country of research, people suspected outsiders much and were less likely to accept an outsider researcher into the organization for such interview (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016; Mikecz, 2012).

One seeming issue of ethical concern in this research was my previous contact with the organization of research. However, participants at the research were directors or

political appointees on higher seniority ranks than directors. No director had any superiority role over another as to pose a threat of coercion or authority (Walden University, 2016). Only the director of administration and finance, who acted as a coordinating director, and also as the commissioner, in the absence of the commissioner, had a little edge over the rest of the directors.

Apart from the issue of authority, the topic of this research did not fall under the category of a sensitive subject that would warrant particular caution with handling the research participants (Walden University, 2016). The population for the current research fall within the category of elites in the Faza region because they are involved in both policy generation and implementation (Mikecz, 2012). They decide on major issues that define educational development in Nigeria's Faza region (pseudonym). Most of the challenges of building trust, confidence, and maintaining sustained access to the organization and participants, to the end did not arise in this research process.

The use of remote interview through WhatsApp call and telephone call at the participants' chosen time made data collection easier than anticipated. Requirements for Covid-19 protocols at the time of data collection restricted movements and close contacts and these became advantages that kept participants all through the interview sessions without interruption from other official activities. The respondents gave their sincere opinions about a shared vision and other experiences they had in the Faza region education sector. Another issue of ethical concern would have been that of identity of the organization and that of the participants. I used alphabetical codes to label participants in the research in such a way that no person could be identified. Also, I have used a

pseudonym in place of the name of the organization throughout this research report to ensure confidentiality and integrity. (Walden University, 2016). Apart from assuring anonymity to participants and the organization, I undertook interview of the 15 participants without an assistance and handled the interview data with confidence, as well. I transcribed the data manually and stored the manuscript with a password on my laptop and on an external hard drive. Before undertaking the entire data collection process, I got the Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval with the number 02-06-20-0421674. Data from the interview would be destroyed after the required number of years the Walden University authorizes for data to remain.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the generic qualitative approach as the method suited for answering the research questions for this research that explored Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and its relevance to their work. The chapter also detailed participants' selection strategy, means of data collection, and analysis. It also presented the strategies employed to addressing issues of trustworthiness and reliability. Finally, I presented how issues of ethical concern were addressed in the course of the research to mitigate any risk of the research to participants. From all indications, advantages of the research to participants and the organization outweighed any unforeseen possible risk to them. Chapter four would be on analysis of data and statement of the results of the analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this generic qualitative research was to explore Faza Ministry of Education (pseudonym) management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and how it could be relevant in addressing persistent education challenges in the region. For clarity, "a shared organizational vision" in this context implies members' alignment or connection with the overall goal, vision, mission, or purpose of existence of an organization.

The result of this study could contribute to further research to empirically ascertain the impact of ministry-level educational leadership on school operations and on student learning outcomes. The research result could also contribute to the body of literature on shared vision in the Nigerian educational sector and bring the need for a shared vision practice to the notice of the management members of the Faza Ministry of Education.

The main research question for the research was as follows: What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared organizational vision?

The sub questions were the following:

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing Faza Ministry of Education's persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

There are many challenges in the Nigerian educational sector, but a major obstacle to solving these problems is that stakeholders have blamed heads of schools and teachers for the persistently low performance of students on regional and national standardized tests, even though systems-level leaders in the ministries make major decisions on school operations. An implicit assumption underlying this research was that if members of management at the systems level of educational leadership shared in the organizational vision, it would help them address some of their persistent, complex educational problems (Jaiyeola & Aladegbola, 2016; Musa & Hartley, 2015). No research exists to demonstrate the understanding of leaders at this level of education about a shared organizational vision. There was no literature available to indicate the understanding of educational leaders at this level about a shared organizational vision. This research was aimed at contributing knowledge to address that gap.

In this chapter, I discuss participant demographics, the setting of the interview, data analysis, and reporting of findings from participants' data. I present tables to show how codes from participants' interviews were grouped to align with themes from the literature under the categories in an adapted Walker and Avant (2005) concept analysis framework.

Setting

The setting for this research was the Faza Ministry of Education, a typical ministry of education located in a cosmopolitan city of Nigeria. The director in charge of administration and finance, who at the time of the research acted as the commissioner for education, gave me a letter of permission to hold interviews with members of

management. With that letter, it was easy to recruit participants by invitations sent through WhatsApp, phone calls, and text messages. Participant recruitment took place at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria, and the general instruction from the Walden University IRB to conduct remote interviews helped to facilitate recruitment and the interview process through WhatsApp, text messages, and phone calls, which participants preferred to any other remote means of communication. Limited internet bandwidth in the country interrupted some interview sessions, but the interviews were eventually completed.

Demographics

Fifteen members of the Faza Ministry of Education who had spent at least 6 months as directors in the management committee were invited to take part in the interview through the sample invitation letter that the IRB had approved. Given the physical distancing and other safety protocols of the COVID-19 pandemic, the letters were sent by WhatsApp rather than delivered by hand. The content of the consent form was summarized and sent by text message to ensure that all participants understood it before sending their acceptance to participate. Additionally, contents of the consent form formed part of the interview protocol that I read out to each participant before the interview questions. The participants were heads of departments under the Faza Ministry, and they belonged to the management committee that took charge of policy formulation and prescription of guidelines for school operations and their regulation. They had 20 members, but 15 of them met the criteria of spending 6 months or more in management and were willing to participate in the interview. Table 2 shows participants'

demographics with respect to position in management and number of years or months spent as members of management.

Table 2

Demographics of Participants

Participant (Pseudonym)	Position	Membership in management (no. of years)
A	Member	5
B	Member	5
C	Member	2.5
D	Member	5
E	Member	3
F	Member	1.5
G	Member	1.5
H	Member	3
I	Member	1.5
J	Member	1.5
K	Member	1.5
L	Member	.5
M	Member	8
N	Member	1.5
O	Member	1.5

Data Collection

I collected data for this research through the responsive interviewing process using a semi structured interviewing protocol that suited generic qualitative research (Percy et al., 2015). According to Percy et al. (2015), because a generic qualitative approach usually focuses on real-life events and phenomena, the use of a structured interviewing design is preferred to an open-ended approach. Data collection took place through a phone call or WhatsApp call at the date and time that each participant indicated

was most convenient. The interviews started on May 7, 2020 and ended on August 14, 2020. One participant rescheduled his own interview three times because he needed to travel out of his work environment to a remote community where reception of calls was poor as a result of low internet access. The interview protocol, which included most items in the Walden University consent form, was read out to each participant, with the estimated duration of the interview put at between 40 and 45 minutes.

The interview questions proposed for the research were used for each of the 15 participants. The questions were designed to elicit responses from the participants with respect to their understanding of a shared organizational vision and what use, if any, a shared organizational vision would have for any organization or their organization. I recorded the interviews on a Sony IC recorder with a Samsung smartphone as backup to guard against data loss. After each interview, I transferred the audio data to a password-protected, secure file on a laptop. The duration of interview for most participants was within 40 to 45 minutes. The interview sessions for eight participants lasted less than 40 minutes, while other interviews lasted longer than 45 minutes. The main reason for the longer sessions was downtime in internet access, which halted the interviews for some time before internet access came back. Some respondents were asked further questions to get a clearer picture of their responses (Bengtsson, 2016), as in the cases of “Participants D, G, F, and D”. Each interview session took place once; there was no need for a repeat session because all of the recorded audio came out clearly for manual transcription.

Transcription of data posed a minor setback. I initiated actions and agreed with my committee members to increase the sample size for this research from nine to 15 so as

to ensure that enough data were collected from participants, and the IRB approved the change. The increase in the number of participants led me to agree with the chairman of my dissertation committee that the use of software that could hasten the process of transcription was necessary. I explored transcription software such as NVivo, Reason8, and Otter.ai. I chose Otter.ai because it seemed most sensitive to transcription of the voices of users of English as a second language in comparison to the other two tools. Otter.ai later proved to have limitations, in that outputs from the transcriptions were poor. The software transcribed my questions during the interviewing process correctly, yet the participants' responses were unreadable. I had to use Windows 10 VLC Media Player on my laptop to play back the audio for each recorded interview at an appropriate speed that allowed me make a verbatim transcription of all 15 interview responses. The process was arduous but afforded me the opportunity to listen repeatedly to the audio for each interview and acquaint myself with the content.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the safety protocol of working from home during this period gave most of the participants time to sit for the interview from beginning to end, except for instances of interruption from loss of internet access. I put a call through to each participant at the appointed date and time and interviewed the person. It was a success worth noting because arranging face-to-face interviews would have required repeated visits to track down each participant. This is because this category of participants usually attended a number of impromptu meetings scheduled by their superior officers. Table 3 details the date and duration of each participant's interview session.

Table 3*Participants' Interview Dates and Durations*

Participant (pseudonym)	Position	Date of interview	Duration of interview
A	Member	17/06/2020	33:12
B	Member	07/05/2020	44:47
C	Member	12/05/2020	29:36
D	Member	14/05/2020	45:41
E	Member	20/05/2020	46:44
F	Member	25/05/2020	01:05:54
G	Member	27/05/2020	46:30
H	Member	28/05/2020	36:53
I	Member	26/05/2020	35:41
J	Member	18/06/2020	27:26
K	Member	27/05/2020	28:55
L	Member	09/07/2020	29:37
M	Member	25/05/2020	40:40
N	Member	10/07/2020	39:14
O	Member	14/08/2020	59:44

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out using theoretical thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Percy et al., 2015). I used an adapted form of Percy's et al. (2015) step-by-step explanations for theoretical thematic analysis through the process of coding and arrangement of codes to the pre-existing themes that I had identified from the literature. The same steps were followed for grouping of other meaningful codes from data that would contribute to interpretation of the research findings. The adapted Walker and Avant (2005) concept analysis framework provided categories that guided answering of the main research question and sub questions of this research. The framework analysis consists of three components—attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared

organizational vision—and it simplified my analysis and reporting of findings with respect to participants’ understanding of a shared organizational vision, from different perspectives. Smith et al. (2011) observed that the framework approach to data analysis enables researchers to address different perspectives on a descriptive concept with a cross-sectional characteristic so that no element of the phenomenon is lost.

Percy et al. (2015) described 13 steps for conducting theoretical thematic analysis in generic qualitative research, but I adapted and summarized the 13 steps into the following group of activities:

- familiarization with each participant’s data and highlighting of important data segments, with the pre-existing themes and the analysis framework in mind;
- isolation and grouping of all highlighted data under the three components of the analytical framework for each participant, but grouping other data segments that do not immediately fit into the framework separately as outliers;
- coding of each data segment under the analytical framework through open coding to identify meaningful words and phrases that make meaning of the concept of research;
- clustering of codes under each theme under the broad categories in the analytical framework, in such a way as to capture wide perspectives of the 15 participants;
- revisiting of data segments that did not immediately fit in and aligning them to the appropriate themes and categories in the analytical framework; and

- synthesis of the themes under the framework to form an integrated but diverse perspective for answering the research questions.

Coding Process

Most literature on the step-by-step process for thematic analysis indicates that after researchers familiarize themselves with data sets, the next step is to generate codes through systematic labeling of segments of data sets that have meanings with respect to the research questions (Braun & Clark, 2006; Percy et al., 2015; Terry et al., 2017).

Braun and Clark (2013) explained that codes may be in form of explicit statements or implicit statements, depending on the researchers' interpretation of the statements within the context. In line with Percy' et al.'s (2015) instructions, I used open and inclusive coding to identify and mark segments of the interview data sets that conveyed meanings related to the research question, bearing in mind the broad categories in the analytical framework and the themes from the literature. Each participant's interview manuscript was highlighted first with the three broad categories of Walker and Avant's (2005) framework as guide. All data segments related to attributes of a shared vision as in the literature were marked "green," all segments relating to antecedents were marked yellow," and blue was used for all segments linked to consequences of a shared organizational vision. Revisiting the data manuscripts resulted in the identification of additional data segments that expressed participants' understanding of the generic term "organizational vision" as a prelude for exploring their perceptions of a shared vision. These data on the definition of organizational vision were marked "red" All other data

segments that conveyed some useful information but seemed not to fit into the categories in the analytic framework were highlighted in grey as outliers.

The next phase of the analysis was open coding of the data excerpts from the participants' interviews. I used open coding to label each word, phrase, or clause that communicated meaning with respect to the research questions. Then I extracted the codes, arranged them, and placed them in a table under the categories of (a) attributes of a shared vision, (b) antecedents of a shared vision, (c) consequences of a shared vision, (d) view about organizational vision, and (e) outliers. Attributes of a shared vision, in line with Walker and Avant's (2005) framework, referred to those segments of respondents' data that explicitly or implicitly alluded to the characteristics ascribed to a shared vision. For instance, a participant said in talking about a shared vision, "whatever we are doing must come to align with this vision of the Ministry [the central ministry]." The statement alluded to one of the characteristics of a shared vision. Antecedents of a shared vision referred to those actions, situations, and attitudes necessary for a shared vision to occur in an organization. In another question concerning whether there were factors that promoted shared vision, a participant said, "leaders must first and foremost state clearly what is the goal of the organization." Consequences of a shared vision were those actions, factors, or situations resulting from the occurrence of a shared organizational vision. One of the participants said, "It promotes understanding among the various components of the organization." Data segments in which participants gave their personal views about organizational vision were coded and grouped as well. This category referred to participants' understanding of what an organizational vision was about, and the responses

gave me a basis for asking further questions about shared organizational vision. A participant explained an organizational vision as “a compelling future that inspires commitment in a particular organization.”

The outliers are those data sets that conveyed important information that initially seemed out of place in the analysis framework but later contributed in the confirmation of some implicit assumptions in the research proposal and provided deeper insight to my understanding of the respondents’ information on shared vision. “Let me tell you about my own board, I can talk of my own board; am not in a position to talk for other departments” was the response of a participant in a question that required how the leaders distributed educational resources. Another participant in answer to another question about the duty of their Ministry’s management committee said:

They take a good policy stance on how lessons should be taught or how schools should be monitored, or how, you know, school heads have to be appointed, or how teachers are to be recruited, or how to teach how to be supervised or how, you know, education, you know...

After arrangement of codes from the interview manuscripts of each participant, I developed a summary table to harmonize the codes. Table 4 shows arrangement of codes according to the categories in the analysis framework, including the two additional categories of participants’ views of organizational vision and the outliers from data. I created the two categories to facilitate analysis of data.

Table 4

Summary of Codes According to Categories in the Analysis Framework

Color	Category description	Codes from participant interviews
Red	Definition of organizational vision	<p>A desire by the organization, with the consent of the various components of the organization to achieve a common goal</p> <p>Something that guides someone to work</p> <p>A future that will assist somebody to achieve a particular vision</p> <p>It is a compelling future that inspires commitment</p> <p>Something that can encourage people to work or to have something they can achieve</p>
Green	Attributes of a shared organizational vision	<p>Meet a common goal</p> <p>Efforts all the members</p> <p>Aligning with the vision of the Faza Ministry headquarters</p> <p>Achieve the organization goal</p> <p>Share in this vision</p> <p>Harmony in the operations</p> <p>Ready to take risks</p> <p>Cooperate</p> <p>See themselves as one</p> <p>Working together to make it a reality</p> <p>Source of support to any other one</p>
Yellow	Antecedents of a shared organizational vision	<p>Team work</p> <p>See to the success of the vision</p> <p>Understand the vision</p> <p>Everybody's opinion counts</p> <p>Come together as one whole</p> <p>We prepare annual report, continuity of the service</p> <p>Support of the vision</p> <p>Very friendly among themselves</p> <p>Interdependent system</p> <p>Departments are interrelated</p> <p>It is a system</p> <p>A clearly defined vision</p> <p>Have well-articulated strategies</p>

(table continues)

Color	Category description	Codes from participant interviews
Blue	Consequences of a shared organizational vision	Energizing people Creates meaning in the workers' life Meeting establishes a standard of excellence You achieve a lot Save energy Save costs A seamless operational output Not duplicating duties Carrying everybody else's burden Synergy in the system
Grey	Outliers	Management makes policies Don't have enough teachers Arbitrary allocation of budget Envelop system of budgeting Insufficiency of the resources Management provides guidance Provide participatory management Bulk of funds go to teachers' salary Protection of one's department We already share in the vision Cannot readily mention student score Management coordinates activities Our budget is small Departments work in silos without a commissioner; "we don't have a commissioner Ministry activities impact the school Teacher recruitment is not need based Slow progress in ICT Low achievement of goals Departments work in silos in the absence of a commissioner Not enough teachers for core subjects

Clustering of Codes to Themes From Literature

The next step in the analysis was clustering of the codes under the framework according to the pre-determined themes from literature. The themes were recurrent characteristics of the concepts of shared vision, systems thinking and shared leadership that constitute the conceptual framework. They formed lenses for focusing the research questions. In the research proposal, I identified 14 themes under attributes of a shared vision; nine under antecedents and six themes under consequences of a shared vision. The characteristics of a shared vision, including the definition and its relationship with shared leadership and systems thinking were grouped under attributes of a shared vision. The themes that make up antecedents of a shared vision were drawn from the competences of systems thinking as necessary ingredients for organizational vision to be shared vision (Senge, 2006; Senge & Hamilton, 2015). Every other critical feature in the three concepts that supported a shared vision were also listed under antecedents of a shared vision. Finally, the notable advantages of a shared organizational vision as well as the negative outcomes constituted themes under consequences of a shared vision shared. Tables 5, 6 and 7 show summaries of arrangement of identified codes under the pre-determined themes for the three categories in the framework.

Table 5*Attributes of a Shared Vision: Sample Codes Arranged According to Themes*

Themes from literature	Sample codes from participant interview
Envisioned future	from the present to the future
People connected in a bond	work with one mind; interplay and interdependence feel interconnected; see selves as brothers and sisters
Common caring	devoid of any rancor; robust relationship relate with one another; source of support to any other one; symbiotic relationship; see themselves as one
Sense of trust	sense of trust
Reflects individual vision [departmental vision]	department visions align with the Ministry vision, personal vision in line with the ministry;
Commitment to goal	carry out responsibilities as a shared vision; commitment and concern; ready to take risks; efforts of all the members; commitment
Collaboration	collaborative deliberations reflected in the various meetings; share ideas; management meeting; interactions; open with ideas; sense of collaboration
Connects groups, departments, or units	interpersonal relationship; synergy; see themselves as one; relate as friends
Teamwork	understanding of all the tools required; collectively sit down to deliberate; come together; speak the same language in terms of goals; regular meetings; work with one mind
Leadership is shared	policies are formulated by Management; defined roles for individuals; creation of the leadership and members; discuss in a mutual way; working together
Common goal, purpose, or value	meet a common goal; they try to achieve one goal; uniform policy; same aspiration; common interest; harmony in the operations; meet a common goal; share in this vision, what everybody is working towards to

Table 6*Antecedents of a Shared Vision*

Themes from literature	Sample codes from participant data
Identification of core values and purpose of existence	provision of qualitative education; a clearly defined vision; a general understanding of the vision; state clearly what is the goal of the organization;
Related to individual/ [departmental vision]	department visions derived from the Ministry's vision, participant's aspiration in line with ministry's goal
The commitment of members	working tirelessly; commitment from the leadership; wiliness to accomplish; efforts of all the members; commitment of members; see to success of the vision
Clear communication of the vision	supposed to be shared by interaction
A holistic view of a problem in focus	look at the education sector holistically; look at all these departments; integrated approach to problem solving;
Recognize interrelationship; interconnectedness and interdependencies	It is a system; interdependent system; departments are interrelated; one department cannot achieve all
Acknowledge communication feedback	feedback from the system; annual report
Take actions to change situations	think of how to improve on situation; they take action; take measures to solve problem; come up with a communique; brain storm and find solution
Differentiate symptoms of problems from root causes	-

Table 7*Consequences of a Shared Vision: Summary of Codes Arranged According to Themes*

Themes from literature	Sample codes from participant interview
Makes people to excel and learn	Satisfaction; capacity will improve; energizes people; creates meaning in workers life
Facilitates achievement of general organizational goals	increase in enrolment; performance will be great; result oriented education system; meet the needs of the society; provide the best quality education
Team effectiveness	attracts commitment; save energy; save costs; seamless operational output; enhanced teaching and learning, expeditious service delivery; efficiency; “much [many] hands make light work “
Addresses complex organizational challenges	-
Promotes collaboration and team leadership	no duplication of duties; encourages healthy competition; integrated approach to problem solving is achieved; same understanding
Glue that holds an organization together	respect for each other; synergy in the system; carrying everybody else’s burden; there is peace; there is love; there is unity; common interest; sense of identity; working like a family; harmony

Additional Themes

During the coding of data, some segments in the participants’ responses stood out strongly from the interview transcript and I considered them as not emergent themes but existing themes in literature that were not prominent to my noting and consequent listing in the proposal. It was these segments that I labeled additional themes and grouped under the analytical framework as antecedents of a shared vision because that was the context within which participants emphasized the *need for a coordinating lead* and *personal traits of a leader*. Table 8 indicates these two themes and their grouping.

Table 8*Additional Themes Arranged According to Categories in the Analysis Framework*

Category of framework	Sample codes from participant interview	Additional theme from participant data
Antecedents	overall leadership that guides and coordinates; depends mostly on the leadership; anchor person; need for a commissioner of education; superintends over education agencies [departments]	Need for a coordinating lead
	‘practice what we preach,” living out the vision; put a square peg in a square hole; purposefulness of a leader; charisma; sense of responsibility; honesty; passion for that job; be truthful; respect for one another; have a listening ear; open to superior arguments; not be opaque; selfless;not corrupt	Leader traits

Refining Themes

At the stage of aligning the participants’ codes to specific themes, a closer look at the codes from interview data indicated that some of the themes did not have data codes linked to them. Other codes posed some challenge for me in taking a decision about which themes to assign the codes, especially themes within the same category of the framework. The themes in the proposal were interrelated and this was expected because of the interrelated nature of the concepts that make up the conceptual framework of the research. Nevertheless, some codes fitted better under certain themes than others. Nowell et al. (2017) advised that at this stage, researchers usually discover some inadequacies in the coding and handling of themes and the inadequacies should be taken care before progressing further in the data analysis process. Vaismoradi et al. (2016) noted some characteristics of a theme which include that a theme has capability of being a general

caption that could unify ideas about the concept of study. With these thoughts in mind, I refined the original themes.

I reduced the number of themes as it was in the research proposal, as indicated in Tables 5,6 and 7, and re-grouped some of the themes as sub themes because they had reference points to some main themes. I did this refining of themes according to the categories in the analysis framework – attributes, antecedents and consequences of a shared vision. Table 8 shows the re-grouped themes and sub themes according to categories in the analysis framework.

Attributes of a Shared Vision

Under the category of attributes, for instance, the theme “people connected in a bond” formed a main theme with the sub themes as (a) Sense of trust, (b) Common caring, (c) Connects groups, departments or units. The attribute of “Envisaged future” had one data code linked to it in the entire data sets, and that got me thinking and I realized that “Common goal, purpose or value” should be a common theme for (a) envisioned future, and (b) reflects individual vision or departmental vision, in this case. Finally, the coding of data segments to the predetermined themes was most challenging with “collaboration,” “teamwork” and “leadership is shared.” I took a further look at participants’ responses under these themes and decided that collaboration should be the main theme, while the others become the sub themes. At the end of the process of refining themes for attributes of a shared, the themes reduced from 11 to four: (a) common goal, purpose or value, (b) people connected in a bond, (c) commitment to goal, and (d) collaboration. Table 8 shows details of the regrouping.

Antecedents of a Shared Vision

Some themes were re-grouped as sub themes in line with the same considerations that informed decisions for attributes of a shared vision. The nine themes assigned initially under this category were reduced to five. The main themes identified were (a) identification of core values and purpose of existence, (b) the commitment of members, (c) clear communication of the vision, (d) a holistic view of a problem in focus and (e) take actions to change situations. The second segment of Table 8 indicates the themes and sub themes for antecedents of a shared vision. The two themes (a) need for a coordinating lead, and (b) leadership traits were grouped as sub themes under an emergent theme “responsive leadership”.

Consequences of a Shared Vision

Under this component of the framework, the thoughts of grouping sub theme into a larger generalizing theme (Vaismoradi et al., 2016) prevailed also. The initial six themes under this component of the framework were reduced to two: (a) team effectiveness, and (b) glue that holds organization together. Table 7 demonstrates the sub themes under these two broad themes in the last category of the framework known as consequences of a shared vision.

Additional Themes

There are three categories of what are called additional themes in this analysis. The first is the additional themes that emerged from participants’ data, which were not new but were not listed initially in the research proposal. At this stage of refinement of themes, the two themes shown in Table 8 are taken as sub themes under “responsive

leadership” and retained under antecedents of a shared vision. The other two sets of additional themes are those from participants’ views about organizational vision and those considered as outliers in the data sets, but are useful in the research report.

Definition of Organizational Vision. As a prelude to asking questions about a shared organizational vision, I requested to know each participant’s views about an organizational vision and they all gave their views. These views were also coded and one common theme emerged as “future aspired goal of an organization.” Some data segments from respondents included “Organizational vision will be like your dream; what you aim to achieve”; “Organizational vision is that picture of where the organization wants to be in the future” “how the organization wants its business to be managed to get to the desired point”.

Outliers. The data segments I grouped as outliers are those that contained important information that did not align with the framework for analysis and appeared not to fit within the research question. These data codes and segments nevertheless provided information that supported implicit assumptions that formed part of the background information to this research. The data segments were also coded to produce three themes that unified all data under this group named “outliers.” data. The themes are: (a) role of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee, (b) allocation of resources in the organization and (c) student performance in national and regional examinations.

Table 9 demonstrates the refined themes and sub themes, including the additional themes from data, while Table 10 shows sample of codes labelled as outliers with the themes that emerged from them.

Table 9

Refined Themes and Sub theme

Framework category	Themes and subthemes
Attributes of a shared vision	Common goal, purpose, or value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Envisioned future • Reflects individual vision People connected in a bond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of trust • Common caring • Connects groups, departments, or units Commitment to goal Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is shared • Teamwork
Antecedents of a shared vision	Identification of core values and purpose of existence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related to individual vision/departmental vision The commitment of members Clear communication of the vision A holistic view of a problem in focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize interrelationship; interconnectedness and interdependencies • Differentiate symptoms of problems from root causes Take actions to change situations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge communication feedback Responsive leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for a coordinating lead • Positive leadership traits
Consequences of a shared vision	Team effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes people to excel and learn • Facilitates achievement of general organizational goals • Addresses complex organizational challenges Glue that holds organization together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes collaboration and team leadership

Table 10*Outlier: Codes Arranged According to Emerging Themes*

Emergent themes	Sample codes from participant interview
Role of the management committee	Management takes decision on school operations; policies and programs impact the schools; protection of one's department; management coordinates activities; wrong policies impact the school; low capacity in budget process; little progress in achievement; quality assurance role
Allocation of resources	Arbitrary allocation of budget, "envelop system of budgeting"; insufficient resources; "it's like squeezing water out from stone"; low rate of funds release after budget allocations
Student performance in national and regional examinations	Management decisions impact schools; cannot readily mention average student scores; assumes performance is okay; problem of low performance not emphasized at meeting

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Establishing the quality of a research remains critical to the value of the research report. As a result of this, qualitative researchers identified rigor in the process of conducting and reporting qualitative research as a ready strategy for establishing trustworthiness (Patton, 2015; Creswell, 2013, Noble & Smith, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017). Recurrent criteria for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research in the available literature are (a) credibility (b) transferability (c) dependability and (d) conformability (Noble & Smith, 2015; Nowell et al., 2017). Authors of current literature still give credit to Lincoln and Guba (1985) with regards to the identified strategies for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research.

Credibility

According to Nowell et al. (2017), credibility in qualitative research is about ensuring a fit between the views of respondents and the researcher. In order to establish credibility for this research process, I undertook the entire process of this research without assistance from anyone, starting from the interview process, transcription of data to the reporting of findings. In this way, I was able to immerse myself in the data, do a verbatim transcription of participants' responses, which those of them that were interested in seeing the transcript read and recognized their views. I had proposed to use the NVivo software for coding data, but I changed the plan and did manual coding so as to ensure a clear process that my participants can connect with easily. I was aware of the assumptions I brought to the research regarding the Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' attitudes and activities, but I used the bracketing strategy (Wiling, 2017) to put them aside and opened my mind to the participants personal perspectives during the interview, and it could help to give credibility to this research report.

Transferability

Patton (2015) among other scholars acknowledged that qualitative research is not transferable as in quantitative research but that researchers may provide thick descriptions of the research experience that will enhance transferability of the experiences to another site. Report of this research described as much as possible the details of the entire research process. I also maintained a journal for the different thought processes I had and what informed the decisions I made during data collection, coding

and synthesis of themes. The personal effort I employed at verbatim transcription of participants' views would contribute also to the transferability process of this study.

Dependability

The use of Percy's et al. (2015) recommended step- by- step theoretical thematic analysis process made for clear presentation of the data analysis process of the current research. I also used an adapted Walker and Avant (2005) content analysis framework and this helped to establish a clear audit trail that would support dependability of the research. All manuscripts of participants' interview; the individual coding and processes of harmonizing the different participants' views into a presentable summary in the research report are available to support dependability of the research. Tobin & Begley (2004, as stated in Nowell et al., 2017), asserted that researchers could ensure dependability of research through maintaining a logical, traceable and well documented process of the research.

Confirmability

Most evidences in literature asserted that confirmability is related to researchers making sure that findings from research emerged from participants' data and not from researchers' imagination or biases (Nowell et al., 2017). In order to ensure that findings in this research evolved from the data, I presented reasons for the methodical choices made for this research and supported claims made in the findings with direct quotes from participants' interview manuscript. Additional themes emerging from the data analysis are taken care of and aligned with the framework for analysis while other important information that seemed not to align with the framework research questions provided rich

confirmation to the implicit assumptions that formed background information to the research proposal.

Results

This generic qualitative research was carried out to explore Faza Ministry of Education (pseudonym) management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and how it could be relevant in addressing persistent educational challenges in the region. Data generated from the interview of 15 members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee were meant to elicit responses that would indicate perceptions of these system's level education leaders about a shared organizational vision.

Responses from participants' interview addressed the one main research question and two sub questions used for the research. The main research question was as follows: What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared organizational vision? The sub questions were as follows:

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members' effort at addressing Faza Ministry of Education's persistent educational challenges?
2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

A set of 19 interview questions were administered on each of the 15 participants to obtain their responses. The questions were structured to address the one main research question and two sub questions. Among the 19 questions, there were key questions that targeted direct responses to the research questions, while other questions encouraged

participants to relate to their experiences in their jobs as a way of discussing the concept of a shared organizational vision in an exhaustive manner. The key questions were:

1. If you were to reflect on what organizational vision meant to you, how would you explain it?
2. How would you explain a shared organizational vision?
3. What specific characteristics in your opinion should be present in an organization to indicate that leaders of the organization shared in the common vision/goal of the organization?
4. If you are convinced the members of management do not yet share a common vision, what do you think the organization stands to gain if they were to share in a common vision/goal?
5. On the flip side, if your management team do not share in a common organizational vision, what would the organization stand to lose?
6. If you think that members of your organization share in a vision what factors do you think have promoted the practice?
7. What factors have tended to undermine the organization's move towards sharing in a common vision; what factors could discourage a shared vision among leaders of an organization (individual and system wide factors)?

This section of the research report deals with presentation of answers to the research questions according to the three broad categories in the analysis framework that represent different perspectives of a shared vision concept. The presentation also discusses the results within the relevant themes and sub themes grouped under the

categories in the framework. The broad categories are the attributes, antecedents and consequences of a shared vision. Table 9 shows the broad categories and themes with sub themes.

Main Research Question

What is the understanding of Faza Ministry of Education management committee members about a shared organizational vision?

All questions administered were meant to prompt participants to talk about shared organizational vision from the perspective of its attributes, antecedents and consequences. Apart from the key questions listed, other questions were meant to prompt participants to talk about a shared organizational vision by relating it to their current work environment. For example, “what is the relationship between your departmental duties and the main purpose of existence of the Faza Ministry of Education”? This question aimed to elicit responses about relationship and interconnected roles that mark a shared vision process.

Codes from participants’ interview that are linked to the themes indicated that participants were able to provide substantial information about shared organizational vision from its different perspectives, though they indicated better familiarity with some of the themes than others.

Attributes

Theme 1: Common Goal, Purpose, or Value. Members of Management of Faza Ministry of Education were able to talk about attributes of a shared vision in relation to its characteristic of “a common goal, purpose, or value” that is shared by all departments

in their ministry, and how the goals of departments under the Ministry aligned with that common goal. Participant “L” said

[The Faza Ministry of Education] was created to help the Faza region manage and coordinate all education activities within the region, which includes formulation of policies, policy implementation and coordination of all relevant agencies [boards] and departments that are entrusted with implementation of education policy within the Faza region. This theme has two sub themes (a)envisioned future, and (b) reflects individual vision/departmental vision. Most participants talked about alignment of their departmental visions with that of the Ministry and it emphasized the theme of common goal, purpose or value.

In talking about alignment of a department’s vision with that of the Faza Ministry’s vision, participant “D” explained, “If we provide and then try to sustain this qualitative education, we are aligning with the vision of the Ministry”.

Theme 2: People Connected in a Bond. Under this theme, the sub theme on “sense of trust” featured as a demonstration that trust is important for people to be open to discuss their ideas or contribute freely to initiatives for change at the Faza Ministry of Education Management committee. Participant “E” had this to say about need for trust and openness: “If this one goes there (if the member brings the idea to management), maybe they will hijack it (hording ideas for fear of losing ownership of the initiative); nobody has monopoly of knowledge”. Participant “E” explained that trust was an important attribute of a shared vision as well as an antecedent for shared vision to be sustained, but doubted if their management members exhibited such trust.

The remaining sub themes under people connected in a bond are (a) common caring and (b) connects groups, departments or units. These themes attracted most participants' interest and had many codes from data were linked to them more than to the sense of trust sub theme. Both sub themes permeated the entire interview and reflected beyond attributes to antecedents and consequences of a shared vision. Participant "A" said: "We have very good robust relationship with all these departments". Participant "G" recounted, "we relate together; we relate as friends". Others even claimed that they were family and already shared in the ministry's common vision. According to Participant "H," "Yes, we are already sharing in a vision so we have to be a family". In describing how shared vision connects people, Participant "F" said: "people identify themselves with that organization and vision".

Theme 3 Commitment to Goal. The theme on commitment to goal also attracted many codes from participants' interview data. It is a theme on its own without any sub theme because the characteristics stand out for all participants that mentioned it. Participants' mention of the term "commitment" demonstrated that they understood it as a concept on its own and as it related to their work environment. Participant "B" related how the departments in their ministry worked conscientiously towards achievement of the common goal - "these various departments are working tirelessly to ensure that they achieve the mission". Then Participant "I" said "We go to outside [on a retreat] and leave the office. It shows commitment of the members in trying to see what and what would drive the achievement of our vision". Participant "F" similarly pointed out that where there is a shared vision, "[people should be] ready to take risks for that organization".

Theme 4: Collaboration. Theme on collaboration has two interrelated sub themes (a) leadership is shared and (b) teamwork. The sub theme “leadership is shared” received a fair share of references in the participants’ discussion. For instance, Participant “L” observed “teamwork” and “shared leadership” as other key characteristics of such an organization that shared in a common vision, when he responded: “They [leaders in the organization] are working with understanding of where they are going and how they are going to get there, and which is reflected in the various meetings, discussions and general understanding of their individual roles”. Participant “D” emphasized the characteristic of team work in their regular management meetings: “One thing is we are having weekly meeting at the Ministry, and the concerted efforts all the members are making to increase possibilities in the mission they want to achieve”. All these responses from the target participants indicate that members are familiar with the theme on collaboration.

Antecedents

Getting a clear view of Faza Ministry of Education management members’ understanding of a shared organizational vision was also analyzed from the perspective of antecedents of a shared vision. Participants were able to mention antecedents of a shared vision after the specific question “what factors could promote sharing in a common vision?” Other responses outside this question were captured during participants’ discussion about what their department do and what role the Faza Ministry of Education management committee play in the Faza region.

Theme 1: Identification of Core Values and Purpose of Existence. This theme is related to that in the attributes, which was on having “a common goal purpose of

value”. Expectedly, participants were conversant with this and were able to identify having a common goal, purpose or value as one characteristic that would promote the practice of a shared vision. Members of the management committee of the Faza Ministry of Education leveraged on the written organizational vision of their ministry to explain the importance of having a focus on the organizational vision, though many of them could not recall wordings of that vision. Talking about the purpose of existence of the ministry under study, Participant “C” said “The existence of the Faza Ministry of Education is primarily to provide quality, affordable education to citizens of the region; to galvanize and synergize the various organs that are supposed to deliver on that particular general vision”. Participant “A” said “it is unconnected with the fact that learning starts at birth”. “Participants’ B and L” were most explicit in stating the necessity of defined vision and goal as antecedents of a shared vision. For Participant “B,” the organization wishing to share in a common vision needed to have “a clearly defined vision statement; a shared vision, therefore, must have well-articulated strategies that will lead to the achievement of the clearly defined vision statement”. Participant “L” explained it as follows:

Shared vision has some fundamental presuppositions, that is, the members of the organization ad initio have a general understanding of a vision, of goal of the objective of where the organization want to be, and how to get there.

Theme 2: The Commitment of Members. The theme on commitment features once more, in this case, as an antecedent of a shared vision from the perspective that members of the team need to be committed to their assignment for a shared vision to take

place and be sustained. Data gleaned from the interview scripts show that members of management of the Faza Ministry of Education understand this perspective. Participant “F” noted “Commitment on the part of the staff because of their shared vision in that organization” and “A work culture within the organization because you are working in the same direction ready to take risks for that organization”. Participant “I” said “one, there must be that commitment, but intoned further that, “lack of commitment might even be lack of capacity in some cases and things like that...” Some other participants made allusion to the critical need of commitment of members for a shared vision to take place.

Theme 3: Clear Communication of the Vision. The clear communication of vision is one theme that participants did not grasp the relevance in their responses to questions towards understanding the concept of a shared vision. Probing questions on how members of management communicated the ministry’s vision, did not still get the appropriate responses. Members mistook communication of vision for passing on decisions taken at the management meetings to their subordinates in their different departments. For instance, participant “H’s” response to question on how members communicated the vision, which they claimed that they shared in it, said “when we get to our departments, we have management meetings and also general staff meetings where we cascade whatever we discussed in the management to our staff”.

The closest responses on communication of the organizational vision were from “Participants F and E”. Participant “F” said “Definitely when we do have meetings, especially of principals and head teachers, we normally emphasize on this vision”. But

the participant was talking about the department's vision not the overall vision of the Ministry. Participant "E" contemplated:

It [Ministry's vision] is actually supposed to be shared by interacting with your staff, interacting with people that will also bring this vision to bear. We are supposed to be reminding ourselves. We are supposed to be even having a quarterly or, you know, maybe half a year evaluation of the vision of the Faza Ministry of Education.

Some participants however, mentioned "clearly defined vision," and "having a good understanding of the organizational vision or goal," but these were responses in respect to questions about attributes of a shared vision. Even with the recognition of those responses, this theme about clear communication of the vision did not get participant's responses enough to demonstrate their understanding of it as an antecedent of a shared vision.

Some data segments grouped under the outliers demonstrated this non communication of the organization's written vision of graduating students that would be comparable to the best in the world. For instance, the interview question that sought to identify what the Faza Ministry of Education's vision was could not get specific answers from participants. They acknowledged the organization had a written vision but many of them could not recall the wordings. Responding to the question on what the Ministry's vision was, Participant "A" said "Well, the vision of Faza Ministry of Education, if you go to the Ministry [you will see it], I don't have the exact words". Participant "G" responded "I have not read it". "Sorry, I cannot remember that". Participant "H" was able to recall the ministry's vision as follows: "the Faza Ministry (pseudonym) wants to be a

model of efficient delivery of sustainable qualitative and inclusive education that is comparable to the global standard”.

Theme 4: A Holistic View of a Problem in Focus. This theme has two sub themes (a) recognize interrelationship interconnectedness, and interdependencies and (b) differentiate symptoms of problems from root causes. A few participants noted the interconnected nature and interrelated nature of leaders and departments engaged in a shared vision. The few participants that were able to identify this interrelated and connectedness of relationship in a shared vision situation showed good understanding of it. Participant “A” said “our relationship is so intertwined... It is a relationship that has mutual benefit for the system”. Participant “H” noted that “the relationship is interlinked”. The few participants were able to identify interrelationship and connectedness in relation to their work environment and the departments within their Ministry. The second sub themes did not however receive any code linked to it as participants did not make reference to issues related to such insight into problem solving. Compared to other themes, in attributes of a shared vision and a few under antecedents, this theme on a holistic view of problem in focus did not fare well.

Theme 5: Take Actions to Change Situations. This fifth theme under antecedents of a shared vision also received a fair amount of recognition from participants, especially as regards their management meetings where the members meet to deliberate and take decisions. All references participants made about taking action was with reference to this management meeting. This brought the meeting into focus as one strong element for the participants as far as a shared vision is concerned. Participant “H”

said “when we get to our departments, we have management meetings and also general staff meetings where we cascade whatever we discussed in the management”. Participant “D” commented that the management meeting was important because they discussed issues “and if there is problem in a particular area, they can take necessary measures in order to solve the problem.” This substantiates the need for those involved in the sharing of a common vision to take action to solve a problem, as an antecedent of a shared vision. A few more participants said: “think of how to improve on situation” and “brain storm and find solution”. All these are within the context of their management meetings.

Theme 6: Responsive Leadership. This theme on responsive leadership was the additional theme that emerged from participants’ interview scripts. It was not identified originally in the proposal because it was not visible in the Western and American literature. From the coding of participants’ interview, two themes emerged as (a) need for a coordinating lead and (b) leadership traits/qualities. During the refining of themes, I reduced the two themes to sub themes under an overarching theme “Responsive leadership”. In the context of the findings of this research, Responsive leadership is similar to Bredeson et al.’s (2011) emerging theory of context responsive leadership. According to the authors, context responsive leadership is the application of wisdom in utilizing a mix of knowledge, skills and personal dispositions in engaging with varied and dynamic situations in the leaders’ work environment. Key variables in the education superintendents’ leadership context, which the authors identified, included size of the district, organizational culture, and political context. In the context of Faza Ministry of Education, the participants’ responses about need for a coordinating lead, and their

expectations of a typical leader that could share in the common vision of the organization reflect Bredeson et al.'s (2011) findings.

The expectations of members of the Faza Ministry management committee of their commissioner of education and the Faza Ministry of Education headquarter (Coordinating lead) is high. For instance, Participant "C" elaborated:

The Ministry headquarters is also supposed to defend the interest of the Ministry as a group and that of the individual departments ... and to demand for their cooperate entitlements either within or outside the particular systems. I expect the Ministry to be a supernatural organization that sees that every department is delivering its mandate the way it is supposed to do it.

Participants identified and deliberated with passion on the two sub themes under responsive leadership as they responded to a question meant to elicit their responses about possible things that could promote or mar a shared vision practice. Almost all the participants spent time talking about the need for all leaders involved in a shared vision to possess positive leadership qualities. Another substantial number of the respondents emphasized that without a coordinating lead, a shared vision may not be possible.

The leadership issues around the concept of discussion seemed to have resonated with participants' experiences at the time of the interview. In response to the two questions targeted at receiving responses on antecedents of a shared vision some of the management committee members had these to say: Participant "M":

You can imagine that since the beginning of this year, we have not had a management meeting, maybe because of goodwill. So, everybody's left to work

on his own ... So that central coordination at the Ministry level is not there. ...

Any time people seem not to be sharing common vision, it depended on the leader. Any time there is laxity in the general leadership of the Faza Ministry of Education, everyone would seem to be working on its own. It is the overall leadership that guides and coordinates the overall activities.

Participant "I" observed "It depends mostly on the leadership that is at the strategic level. Those steering, how willing we are to accomplish the vision to attain that vision?". Then, Participant "F" had this to say about the role of a coordinating lead "the Ministry's headquarters (pseudonym) coordinates the preparation of this budget and ensures that the implementation is adhered strictly to with what is provided for in this budget".

The importance of positive leadership qualities came out prominently in participants' responses as it received the highest number of codes linked to it from the interview data. Only the sub theme on common caring, under attributes of a shared vision was next to it in popularity among participants. The need for a leader to be selfless; open to colleagues and subordinates; communicate information adequately and have trust in people were common traits members needed to see in a leader to support a shared vision approach to leadership. Participant "N" in talking about leader characteristics that promote a shared vision emphasized "unless you respect other people's view, even if it does not agree with your own, you cannot share in the same vision." Participant "J" in answer to the question on what could promote a shared vision in an organization said "one of it is hard work and selfless service to the organization... Also, such leaders should be honest and loyal to the organization with dedication to duty." Almost all

participants had one thing or the other to say about personal positive traits a leader should have to support a shared vision. Most of the traits bothered on respect for others, selflessness, trust, commitment and a noncorrupt personality.

Consequences

The two themes under this category of the analysis framework are (a) team effectiveness, and (b) glue that holds organization together.

Theme 1: Team Effectiveness. This first theme has three sub themes (a) makes people to excel and learn, (b) facilitates achievement of general organizational goals, and (c) addresses complex organizational challenges. Of all the sub themes under this first theme, the second sub theme, “facilities achievement general organizational goals” appeared to be the most familiar concept for the respondents. Most comments received from the respondents were expressed in varied ways. - Participant “A” said:

You save energy and you save costs because once it is shared, everybody will be carrying everybody else’s burden and you will not be duplicating duties. You will be saving costs in terms of money, in terms of time, even in terms of use of facilities. You also get a seamless operational output.

Participant “A”. added “Enhanced teaching learning process; we stand to have ease of responsibilities; expeditious service delivery; result oriented education system in the territory; we stand to have ease of responsibilities”. Participant “J” expressed confidently that “the goal of the organization would be achieved.” Participant “G” exclaimed “achievement for the realization of the set target... success!” The achievement of organizational goal featured greatly in most participants’ first expression in response to

the question on gains of a shared vision to an organization. Most of the participants were also quick to respond that where there was no shared organizational vision, goals of the organization would not be achieved. For instance, Participant “K” insisted that “If they (leaders in an organization) shared the same vision, it would be difficult for you [them] to have any disadvantage because the organization would continue to progress, but where they do not share in a vision, the organization would have problem. However, Participant “G” intoned that in having a shared vision “there may not be room for individual recognition.” This gives a balanced view on the understanding of consequences of a shared vision.

About two participants made some few comments with respect to the first sub theme on making people excel. Participant “D” observed that having a shared vision energizing [energizes] people; also creates meaning in the workers life” and Participant “H” noted “our capacity will improve.” The third sub theme ”addresses complex organizational challenges” did not seem to resonate with participants despite their specific challenges at the time of the interviews shown in the data gleaned from the participants’ interview as Outliers in Table 8. Table 7 shows, clearly that no code was linked to this sub theme during the coding process, whereas the theme stood out clearly as one of the benefits of a shared vision. Data codes in the Outliers table indicates that the organization had two outstanding challenges, (a) low and arbitrary allocation of education resources and (b) unimpressive performance of students in national and regional examinations.

Theme 2: Glue that Holds Organization Together. Glue that holds organization together has one sub theme only as” promotes collaboration and team leadership”. Most of the participants showed understanding and were comfortable in making responses that align with this theme and the sub theme. The participants expressed the same sentiments as with their discussions on common caring and having a family-like relationship with one another in the organization. Most participants’ responses showed that the management team also appreciated the fact that shared vision would bring about better teamwork and collaboration. Participant “B” mentioned “there is [would be] a unison of purpose; there is [would be] cohesion in the discharge or in the implementation of the activities of the education sector. Also, Participant “I” observed “There will be that satisfaction; that fulfilment that they are all working together as a team.” Participant “M” also affirmed that “when people work as a team, everybody recognizes that his contribution and the contribution of others is [are] very important.”

Research Sub questions

Sub question 1

1. How would a shared organizational vision influence members’ effort at addressing Faza Ministry of Education’s persistent educational challenges?

Interview questions that targeted responses to this sub-question of the research were part of the questions asked to elicit responses to the main research question that has to do with members’ understanding of a shared vision. The questions were: (a) If you are convinced the members of management do not yet share a common vision, what do you think the organization stands to gain if they were to share in a common vision/goal? (b)

On the flip side, if your management team do not share in a common organizational vision, what would the organization stand to lose?

Responses from members of the Faza Ministry of Education management committee to these two questions and all other questions administered for this research showed that members are well disposed to the shared organizational vision strategy. Members acknowledged that the practice of a shared vision would have positive impact on their organization and many of them claimed that they already shared in the ministry's common vision. Participant "H" said "and our capacity will improve because what the other [leader] does not have the other person is there to give support...yes, we are already sharing in a vision, so we have to be [a family]." Then Participant "J" response to what an organization stands to gain if members shared in a common vision was "it would promote quality work; it would move the organization forward. The organization will grow and the organization would be able to achieve the set target and there would be a trickle down". On a further probe by the interviewer about what trickle down meant. Participant "J" continued "The value of the vision would be felt by all and sundry. It would make impact on the mass of people". "Mass of the people" according to the participant included schools and student performance.

Some members however disagreed that they were already sharing in a vision. Though that was not part of the scope of this research, but the responses are important as they still conveyed the level of participants' understanding of a shared vision; its attributes, antecedents and the consequences. Participant "E" doubted if members actually understood the Ministry's vision when the participant said "like the management

of the Faza Ministry of Education do not really, really understand the vision “Then, Participant “I” said: “at times there might be a need for an emergency meeting to discuss a specific issue, and some of the members will not be present. It shows that they are not really keying in [into the vision]”. Participant “I” s comment shows that he understood that shared vision required the cooperation of everyone and when that is lacking, it would weaken the bond.

Sub question 2

2. What factors would promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members?

The interview questions targeted at eliciting responses to this second sub-research question were: (a) If you think that members of your organization shared in a vision what factors do you think have promoted the practice? (b) What factors have tended to undermine the organization’s move towards sharing in a common vision; what factors could discourage a shared vision among leaders of an organization (individual and system wide factors)?

Participants’ responses to these questions were given effortlessly and were centered around leadership factors. The theme on “responsive leadership,” as one of the antecedents of a shared vision shown on Table 8, indicated participants’ sentiments towards factors that would promote a shared organizational vision. Participant “I” noted that the success or failure of a shared vision “depends mostly on the leadership that is at the strategic level. Those steering, how willing we are to accomplish the vision; to attain that vision?”. Participant “H” identified good relationship with colleagues, being truthful

and having respect for others as key factors that would promote a shared vision.

Participant “D” emphasized the importance of meeting “meeting is very, very important so that people would share understanding.” Data gleaned from participants’ responses but were grouped as outliers provided further information about some ongoing practices in the organization that could support a shared vision approach to management.

The Outliers

Outliers are those data segments that contain important information, which did not align with the framework for analysis and appeared not to fit within the research question, nevertheless provided rich information that supported implicit assumptions behind this research, as well as further insight into answers to the research questions. Analysis of the data segments yielded three additional themes (a) role of the Faza Ministry of Education Management committee, (b) allocation of resources in the organization and (c) student performance in national and regional examinations.

Theme 1: Role of the Faza Ministry of Education Management Committee

Participants’ responses to the interview questions confirmed that the ministry level education leaders who constituted the management team are in charge of policy issues and make critical decisions about what happened in the schools. In addition, the management also allocate educational resources to school and they understood that their policy choices impact on the schools. Participant “M” explained:

Once they [Management committee members] make wrong policies, it would impact on the schools immediately. They take a good policy stance on how lessons should be taught or how schools should be monitored, or how, you know,

school heads have to be appointed, or how teachers are to be recruited, or how to teach; how to be supervised or how, you know, education, you know, manager has to be handled on the system directly, okay.

Theme 2: Allocation of Resources in the Organization

The issue of resource allocation to the different departments within the Ministry posed a big challenge to members in the dispatch of their responsibilities. The normal procedure is that members should deliberate and decide on quantum of budget to be allocated each department, depending on their needs, but in practice, the funds are most often allocated arbitrarily. Table 10 shows sample codes from participants' responses that indicate the challenges faced in budgetary allocation. The budgetary allocation setback made it difficult for me to understand members' perceptions of a shared vision from the point of view of how they take care of departments that required more funds during their budget allocation sessions. Participant "J" recalled one occasion that made her feel there was no shared vision among the leaders "The instance I recall is the one of the budgets for 2020. I prepared my budget based on my needs and they [budget office] told me that "no, you cannot go beyond this amount [the allocated ceiling]. That for me is not sharing in a vision". Participant "E" said "I don't know what they base the allocation on, everybody gets an "envelope" and you go and do magic with your envelop". "Envelop" refers to the budget ceiling the coordinating leadership allocates to one's department for implementation of projects within a given year. There were some members who felt that the allocations were based on needs, but also acknowledged that limited resources made it difficult to base the allocation on needs alone. According to Participant "F," "What

people will be allocated is based on what you actually need in your agency and definitely that also depends on the availability of funds.”

Theme 3: Student Performance in National and Regional Examinations

This third theme emerged from some further interview question prompts to participants who claimed that they had a common purpose or goal, in which all the leaders already shared. The question sought to know the students’ performance in the previous three years. Responses from members indicated that no one could mention the student pass rate in any of the past years despite the fact that the Ministry’s written vision according to Participant “M” “is to serve as a model in the provision of educational services in Nigeria that is comparable to the best practices all over the world.” Participant “G” explained that a visitor to any organization would “want to know ... what efforts all the leaders made together to produce better performance; the performance of the students.”

Just as most members of the management of Faza Ministry of Education could not recall the Ministry’s vision, recalling the average performance of their students in national and regional standardized examinations for the last three years, as at the time of the interview, seemed more elusive. For instance, Participant “H” had this to say about the students’ average performance, expressed in percentage “Well, on the whole, the student performance is usually not a stable one. Sometimes we have it going up; sometimes it comes down. But for the past two years, I think we are on the average”. Participant “G” then said “We have a steady performance in the WAEC (West African Examination Council). Sorry, I don’t have it (the figures) here. They (the staff) will bring

it.” Participant “I” was not different as the response was “Some years ago performance went down, then it picked up again, and then it dropped.” Responses of participants indicated that their students’ pass rate in the regional examination was not impressive, but evidence from the interview data shows that members did not consider the student low performance a major challenge to be reckoned with as far as the goals of the organization were concerned.

Summary

In this Chapter, I presented details of data collection and analysis with findings from participants’ responses as they related to the research questions. Data analysis was based on the adapted Walker and Avant’s (2005) concept analysis framework. The framework helped me to synthesize answers to the research questions according to attributes, antecedents and consequences of a shared vision, which is the concept of study. Participants’ responses indicated that they had substantial knowledge about a shared vision but were more conversant with some themes than others. This provided insight into participants’ perceptions about the concept. Such themes as (a) common goal, purpose or value, (c) people connected in a bond, (c) commitment to goal, (d) collaboration, (e) team effectiveness, and (f) responsive leadership resonated well with experiences of the Faza Ministry of Education management team members. Other themes such as (a) a holistic view of a problem in focus, and (b) clear communication of an organizational vision were not as familiar as the others. The sub themes under consequences of a shared vision that had to do with addressing complex organizational goals as one advantage of a shared vision did not reflect in the participants’ responses.

Interpretation of the findings in relation to existing literature and the conceptual framework of study are presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this generic qualitative research was to explore Faza Ministry of Education management committee members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and how it could be relevant in addressing their persistent challenges in the Faza region educational sector. I interviewed 15 members of the Faza Ministry of Education management to understand their perceptions of a shared organizational vision concept and elicit their dispositions toward a possible application of a shared vision approach in the management of education in the Faza Ministry of Education. There was no literature on the understanding of these systems-level education leaders in Nigeria about the concept of a shared organizational vision. A shared vision is a popular leadership concept in the Western world and the United States, but few studies exist about it in this research environment.

The key findings from this research were that members of the Faza Ministry of Education had a substantial understanding of shared vision characteristics and some possible benefits their organization could gain from applying the concept. However, the interview data showed that the members were not familiar with some important themes that link to antecedents of a shared vision. Despite these apparent gaps in their understanding of the shared vision concept, they have high potentials and the disposition to adopt the concept and develop it fully in their organization. The participants were quick to mention attributes of a shared vision, especially as it concerned “common caring,” “people connected in a bond,” “collaboration,” “commitment of members,” and “common goal, purpose, or value.” Concerning antecedents of a shared vision,

participants were conversant with the theme “identification of core values and purpose of existence,” “commitment of members,” “responsive leadership,” and “take action to change things.” However, their non-references to the sub theme “addresses complex organizational challenges” apparently indicated that they did not conceptualize the extent to which a shared vision could support them in solving their persistent problems. The theme “a holistic view of the problem in focus” was alluded to by two participants, but the sub theme “differentiating symptoms of problems from root causes” was not referenced by participants. Similarly, the theme “clear communication of vision” did not seem familiar to them. Nevertheless, the organization was disposed to adopting and developing a shared vision in their organization.

Interpretation of Findings

The peer-reviewed literature for this study included extensive coverage of articles on the conceptual framework, which consisted of (a) shared vision, (b) systems thinking, and (c) shared leadership, from which I identified the themes that guided the analysis of the research. Other related literature helped provide insight into the study concept and situated it within organizational management, educational leadership, collaboration, and change management.

I provide an interpretation of findings from this research within the context of answers to the research questions presented around the three categories of the analysis framework: attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared vision. O’Sullivan and Jefferson (2020) advised that interpretation of findings should reflect answers to the research questions, lessons readers could learn from the themes and categories in the

study, surprising information that emerged, recurrent interpretations in the literature, and alternatives available from the study in focus. I also reflect on the interpretations in the context of the conceptual framework of the study.

Interpretation Concerning Literature

Main Research Question

Through the main research question, I sought to understand the Faza Ministry of Education management members' perceptions about a shared organizational vision. Interpretation of their answers to this research question requires the presentation of meanings made of findings from this research for the attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared vision.

Attributes of a Shared Vision. Main findings after analysis of data segments related to the themes from the literature showed that the research participants demonstrated a good understanding of a shared vision's attributes. This right level of understanding occurred even though people rarely used the concept of a shared vision in the research environment, and there were few or no studies on it within contexts similar to participants' work environment. The themes from the literature that are related to attributes of a shared vision within an organization include (a) common goal, purpose, or value; (b) people connected in a bond; (c) commitment to goal; and (d) collaboration. I identified these themes in the work of Senge (2006) and in other studies on shared vision related to the United States, Europe, and the Pacific region (Chai et al., 2017; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018). The 'participants' references to these themes linked to a shared vision's attributes confirmed their uses in the existing literature in organizational leadership and

management. Senge (2006) explained that when people genuinely share a vision, they have the feeling of being connected and bound together by a shared future aspiration. Smutkupt (2018) talked about common caring, and Senge et al. (2015) pointed out that a shared vision reflects the personal vision, and in the context of the current research, participants indicated that their ministry-level vision reflected their departmental visions. Wong et al. (2009) posited that shared vision “could help departments overcome out-group feelings common to organizations” (p. 2897), and this could be achieved with the Faza Ministry of Education if they applied a shared vision approach.

Generally, members of the Faza Ministry of Education demonstrated substantial understanding of a shared 'vision's attributes or characteristics, but some of the themes resonated better with them than others. Members were also able to connect the familiar themes to their work environment at the time. Most of the members were able to identify having a common goal as a fundamental characteristic that marks an organization where the leaders shared a vision. Many of them could not recall the exact words of the organization's written vision, but they understood its importance. This non recalling of the common organizational vision aligns with Lattuch and Dankert's (2018) findings with a top management team on developing an organizational vision. The fact that the Faza Ministry of Education had a written vision may have contributed to 'participants' quick identification with the theme of having a “common vision or purpose of existence” as an attribute of a shared vision.

Regarding the theme “people connected in a bond,” participants related most with the sub theme “common caring” as it concerns social activities and family-like

relationships. Being a family is an African way of expressing good relationships and sharing in a common cause. Family ties are significant in African culture, and they presuppose trust, confidence, and disposition to share a common ideology. With this feeling of family-like ties, members of management of the organization kept emphasizing that they already shared the 'organization's vision. In any case, the research was not out to ascertain whether they shared or did not share in a vision, but the finding was significant in indicating that 'participants' understanding of a shared vision had some limitations in terms of their familiarity with some other themes. Participants also showed much enthusiasm about the sub theme "connects groups, departments, or units," and their views around the sub theme aligned well with the literature as they resonated with the strong messages from Wong et al. (2009) and Chai et al. (2017) about a shared vision. The authors observed that a shared vision could help connect units and departments that ordinarily engage in competition and enable them to work together to achieve a common organizational goal. During the interview, participants mentioned that the Ministry held management meetings to discuss issues that impacted education in the region.

In the sub theme "sense of trust," participants did not make many references to "trust." When a few participants alluded to a "sense of trust," it was as a significant attitude that made it difficult for the study participants to work together in their organization. Although participants presented absence of "trust," as one of their members' negative behavior pattern, "trust" featured as a vital attribute of a shared vision. This finding casts doubt on participants claim that they were like a family and already shared a common vision. The mention of trust issues in these circumstances

underscored that there could be implicit competition among participants, which Wong et al. (2009) suggested a shared organizational vision could reduce.

Participants related robustly with the sub theme “leadership is shared” and “teamwork” under the theme “collaboration.” “Collaboration” was one of the most recurrent themes in the literature that indicated attributes as well as antecedents of a shared vision (Ashkenas, 2015; Berteamwork, 2016; Gajda, 2004; Slantcheva-Durst, 2014). Ashkenas (2015) cautioned that collaboration is not the same thing as cooperation, and Gajda (2004) identified collaboration as an organizational competence that does not happen abruptly but instead develops over time. Members of the Faza Ministry were able to make explicit and implicit references to collaboration and the two sub themes under it in their responses on attributes of a shared vision. They were familiar with the sub themes “leadership is shared” and “teamwork.” The management meeting that members participate in is one clear indication of team leadership practice. Northouse (2013) talked of leadership in work teams as a widespread practice in modern teamwork in which members’ roles are interdependent and members share common goals.

Overall, ‘participants’ responses to attributes of a shared vision covered many of the themes and sub themes that I identified in the literature, and their perspectives on them aligned with existing literature. Some existing practices in the participants’ work environment and some familiar cultural attitudes helped enhance their understanding of a shared vision.

Antecedents of a Shared Vision. Participants’ responses about themes on antecedents of a shared vision were not as robust as in the attributes because they did not

reference all of the themes and sub themes that I identified from the literature under antecedents. Findings from this research showed that participants indicated better understanding about the themes “identification of core values and purpose of existence,” “the commitment of members,” and “take actions to change things.” Participants’ responses did not refer mainly to the other themes under antecedents of a shared vision. These themes were “clear communication of the vision” and “a holistic view of a problem in focus.” The responses to these two later themes ranged from little references to no reference. The themes “a holistic view of a problem in focus” and “clear communication of the vision” are on the same scale in terms of participants’ scanty allusion to them. A few participants made allusions to the first sub theme under “a holistic view of a problem in focus,” which is “recognize interrelationship; interconnectedness and interdependencies.” Only a few participants recognized the interconnections and interdependencies that should go with departments or units that share a vision. However, the few participants who recognized these interconnections and interdependencies understood and emphasized the sub theme in their discussions. The second sub theme, “differentiate symptoms of problems from root causes,” did not attract any explicit or implicit reference from participants, whereas existing literature identified it along with the theme on interdependencies and interconnectedness as core systems thinking competencies (Manuele, 2019). Senge (2006) identified systems thinking as a necessary foundation for an organization to build a shared vision practice. Manuele (2019) described recognition of “interconnections and interdependencies” and differentiating “symptoms of problems from root causes” competencies along with others

as macrolevel thinking competencies. Participants' apparent nonreference to these sub themes indicated some limited understanding of the concept of a shared vision with regards to its antecedents. Responses to "the holistic view of problems in focus" did not also reflect knowledge of the theme. Participants did not also have a significant understanding of the theme "clear communication of the vision" as an antecedent of a shared vision. Despite my further prompts to elicit participants' responses regarding their understanding of the theme "clear communication of an organizational vision," they did not connect with it. Participants mistook communication of vision for passing on decisions at the Faza Ministry of Education management meetings to subordinates in the different departments. The available literature on organizational vision noted that organizational vision communication is critical in getting employees to share in the vision and improve organizational productivity (Berson et al., 2016; Jantz, 2017; Mayfield et al., 2015). Even the participants' scanty reference to the identified themes "a holistic view of a problem in focus" and "clear communication of the vision" indicates that participants could grasp some substantial and critical segments regarding understanding the shared vision concept.

A new theme, "responsive leadership," with two sub themes "need for a coordinating lead" and "positive leadership traits," emerged as issues of great importance to participants for a shared vision to take place and be sustained in their work environment. Data that I grouped as outliers had much information on participants' working environment. Information from data indicated that participants had a practice of meeting fortnightly or monthly under the commissioner's leadership. However, since the

coming of a new administration in the region, the administration had not appointed a commissioner of education, which caused much disillusionment among management members. The same goes for the sub theme “personal leadership traits” of leaders involved in a shared vision. Participants emphasized the need for transparency, accountability, selflessness, and respect for others in a leader who would share a common vision with others. These were recurrent qualities that members mentioned, and the characteristics seemed to resonate with the prevailing situation in the participants’ country at the time of the research. Anecdotal evidence indicated constant complaints from citizens about the high level of corruption, greed, and acts of impunity that made people lose confidence in the constituted authority during the research period. The positive leadership traits that participants alluded to in their responses also aligned with the literature as critical traits for responsive and effective leadership. The available literature, which focused on Western countries and the United States, with some research in Pacific countries, did not emphasize the “need for a coordinating lead” and “positive leadership traits” of individual leaders in a team. However, these sub themes are critical success factors for the participants’ environment.

Consequences of a Shared Vision. “Consequences of a shared vision” is the last category in the Walker and Avant (2005) framework for grouping themes from literature. There are two themes under this category: “team effectiveness” and “glue that holds an organization together.” The first theme had three sub themes, out of which participants related more readily with two—“makes people excel and learn” and “facilitates achievement of general organizational goal” than with the third one, “addresses complex

organizational challenges.” These findings have implications for members’ understanding of the concept of a shared vision and reinforce earlier interpretations about the gap in the management members’ understanding of some essential aspects of the shared vision concept. For an organization that had experienced some persistent challenges, as seen in the background information and confirmed by participants’ interview data, it seemed unusual that the participants did not reference overcoming complex or persistent challenges as a possible advantage of adopting a shared vision approach. Instead, they related better with the fact that a shared vision would help them achieve general organizational goals and excel in performance, without a specific mention about daunting challenges of low budgetary allocation and low student performance, over the years. These two significant and persistent challenges emerged from the data grouped as outliers.

Fillion et al. (2015) recognized the ever-changing nature of the current world with its complex nature of interdependencies and suggested that it demanded a change in the way that organizations handled things. A shared organizational vision appeared as one plausible strategy organizational leaders could apply. On the flip side, two participants in this research noted that a shared vision approach could result in nonrecognition of personal efforts while promoting teamwork. Their observations were noted as among the consequences of a shared vision and aligned with Luo et al. (2014). These observations provided balance to the findings of this research concerning the consequences of a shared vision. Participants’ recognition of a shared vision’s negative consequences is significant, though only two participants noted it.

Sub question 1

The first sub-research question sought to understand how a shared organizational vision could influence members' efforts at addressing Faza Ministry of Education's persistent educational challenges. Discussion of findings in the main research question answered this sub-question, especially the consequences of a shared vision. Information gleaned from data and findings from the research indicated that a shared vision approach would positively impact the Faza Ministry of Education in addressing its persistent educational challenges. The members of the management are well disposed to adopting a shared vision approach. Although they do not as yet have a full understanding of all dimensions of the shared vision concept, members of the management have a reasonably good understanding of the attributes of a shared vision, and some themes related to the antecedents and consequences of a shared vision. The enthusiasm participants demonstrated in claiming that they already shared in their organization's vision indicated that members would apply the approach for possible positive change. Findings from Van der Voet (2014) confirmed the vital role of a management team, in a bureaucratic and hierarchical organizational position, in bringing about a change to challenges experienced even at the school level.

One of the underlying assumptions of this research was that if members of Faza Ministry of Education employed a shared vision in the management of education, it would engender positive change in their organization. Responses from the Faza Ministry of Education members suggested that a shared vision approach could help the members tackle their educational challenges.

Sub question 2

The second sub-research question focused on identifying possible factors that could promote or impede a shared organizational vision among the management committee members. Answers to the main research question addressed this sub- as well. Some key findings emerged from the analysis of data and codes that I grouped under antecedents of a shared vision. Participants' responses were to provide answers to one or more of the research questions at any point during the interview. Nevertheless, one specific interview question targeted responses from participants towards answering this second sub-research question.

For members of the Faza Ministry of Education management, having a coordinating lead is key to the participants' success factor in the application of a shared vision approach. In the case of leadership traits, members expected that all team members should possess trustworthiness, transparency in all their dealings, selflessness, and respect for other persons and their opinion. Participants mentioned other positive leadership traits they expected from a responsive leader, but the ones listed here were recurrent.

There were other ongoing practices among Faza Ministry of Education members that could support a shared vision strategy in their education management in the region. The first was the management meeting, which members held forth nightly or monthly when they had a commissioner of education but had ceased at the time of the interview. The second practice is that the regional government sent budgetary allocation to the education sector in bulk. So, the Ministry has the leverage to distribute the resources to

areas of need. Participants complained that allocating resources to various departments in the education sector was not done according to each department. If members adopted a shared vision appropriately, the Ministry could leverage on the joint resource base for fair distribution of resources that would help them sustain collaborative efforts in managing the education sector. McNamara's et al. (2019) affirmed that having a shared goal is not enough to bring about collaboration, but mutual resource allocation and understanding of shared risks would promote the trust that could make way for collaboration.

Interpretation With the Conceptual Framework

Situating interpretation of the findings from this research within the context of the conceptual framework made up of "shared vision," "systems thinking," and "shared leadership" confirms the literature on the interrelated nature of the concepts. It further enunciates the conceptual framework's importance in understanding a shared vision approach to leadership and management. The findings of this research indicated that members of Faza Ministry of Education showed some understanding of the concept of a shared vision from the perspective of moving beyond the confines of one's department to interact with other leaders, share information, and undertake some tasks as a team. The interaction confirms Expósito-Langa's et al. (2015) that shared vision is a relational resource that helped members participate in organizational matters. However, the Faza Ministry management members could not clearly understand some themes in a shared vision's antecedents. One such themes is the systems thinking competence of taking "a holistic view of a problem in focus" by "recognizing the interrelationship, interconnectedness, and interdependencies" of that problem. This unclear understanding

probably explains why there was no allusion to “differentiating root causes of problems from the symptoms” as a critical antecedent of a shared vision. The findings also showed members’ little understanding of “clear communication of the vision” as an essential antecedent for a shared vision to take place and be sustained in an organization. Only two participants mentioned the need for receiving feedback from actions members had taken to solve problems. Patti et al. (2015) opined that leaders who think systematically could identify gaps in the school system and institute a work culture that connects different units and persons within the school and beyond. Some other literature on shared vision and systems thinking identified common purpose, collaboration, interrelationships, and communication of core values as attitudes and behaviors that promote a shared vision in an organization.

Members of management in the target organization have a substantial understanding of shared leadership. The existing practice of working as a group of education leaders who met periodically to discuss education problems supported members’ recognition of team or shared leadership as an essential attribute and antecedent of a shared vision. They were quick to identify “team effectiveness” as one of the consequences of a shared vision. Despite recognizing the collaborative efforts and need for a team leader’s effectiveness, the limited understanding of the systems thinking competencies may have resulted in not linking the team’s need to “addressing complex and persistent organizational challenges”. In summary, members of Faza Ministry of Education demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of shared leadership in the context of the relevant themes within attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a

shared vision. The participants view about the team or shared leadership aligns with the literature as Barnett and Weidenfeller (2016), for example, described shared leadership as a process of dynamic and interactive influence among a group of persons with a common purpose and a view of leading one another to the achievement of some common goals. Findings of this research demonstrated the effectiveness of the conceptual framework in focusing and supporting the study's analysis and findings.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations to the conduct of this study stemmed from its design as a generic qualitative study. Proponents of the quantitative approach to research still contend with the reasonableness of qualitative study, and the choice of a generic qualitative approach compounds the doubt. Pieces of evidence from literature confirmed that the generic qualitative study captures specific qualitative study segments seeking to answer questions about human experiences, perceptions, etcetera. This study's generic qualitative study design provided an appropriate base for achieving this study's purpose. The provision of an appropriate design for achieving this study's purpose does not mean there were no other limitations to the study.

The next limitation is that of researcher bias that is characteristic of most qualitative studies. There could be possible researcher biases in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of findings, especially as I had previous contact with the research participants. I employed the bracketing technique and focused on participants' information to reduce interference from my previously held assumptions. This bracketing may contribute to reducing the level of bias. There was the limitation of subjectivity in

the coding of data, as was familiar with qualitative research. Given the interrelated nature of the concepts that formed the framework for focusing this research, making a choice of themes to assign codes from the interviews was challenging, but since the themes belonged to the same category in the analysis framework, errors in assigning the codes may not be significant. Another researcher might want to assign specific codes to different themes in the categories that make up the analysis framework.

Data analysis in qualitative research might be a source of challenge to people used to quantitative research, but the analysis is part and parcel of the quantitative inquiry process. As I did in this research, researchers need to present the process they used and make clear the decisions that informed their choices of approaches to data analysis (O'Sullivan & Jefferson, 2020.) Interpretation of findings was another source of limitation to the study. Some qualitative scholars observed that data interpretation depends on the researchers' viewpoints and perceptions (O'Sullivan & Jefferson, 2020), and this is true. In this study, I made efforts to ensure interpretations flowed from participants' interview data sessions and did not include previous biases I held about participants' experiences and attitudes. The efforts I made might reduce the impact of this limitation in the interpretation of findings.

Transparency in reporting this research's findings and the audit trail established may reduce the potential limitation of transferability associated with qualitative studies. Other researchers could attempt to replicate this research in some other locations within the Nigeran education context. Also, using a pseudonym for the organization's name and referents to participants without any mention of their names, departments, or roles in the

organization in this research report mitigated the potential limitation of confidentiality of research participants.

Finally, one more limitation to this study is the insufficient literature that dealt explicitly with attributes, antecedents, and consequences of a shared vision. If they were available, subjectivity in my task of identifying and grouping the themes from literature would have reduced, as well.

Recommendations

Findings from this study have, to some extent, provided a glimpse into the level of understanding of members of the management committee of Faza Ministry of Education about a shared organizational vision. Based on these findings, I recommend that further research be conducted in other regions in the country, with education leaders at the Ministry level as target participants. The research would provide more comprehensive information about the systems-level education leaders' understanding of a shared organizational vision. Every effort made at the different levels of governance of the educational system geared towards improving learning outcomes, and scholars have conducted many studies on different variables that could impact students' learning performance and other outcomes. There is a need for empirical research to be conducted within the Nigerian education environment to ascertain the impact of education leaders' actions, inaction, and attitudes on student performance.

As a follow up action to this research's findings, I recommend that the focus ministry of education in this research should seek out some capacity development support sessions for management members on systems leadership and a shared organizational

vision. The capacity building could enhance their readiness to adopt a shared vision approach and other relevant leadership skills to improve their performance. Findings from the study indicated that despite members not understanding a shared organizational vision concept from all its different perspective entirely, they had understanding enough to demonstrate that adopting a shared organizational vision would help them to manage their educational challenges.

Implications

Reale et al. (2018) argued that the social impact of research findings would occur after the research was published, disseminated, reflected in policies, and produced positive changes regarding the stated goals. The authors' views could apply to the long term social change impact of a research project, but social change could trigger at the primary source of data in research. The potential social change of this research could occur at three levels: (a) Level of the immediate research location, (a) national level in the country of research concerning implications for policy and practice, and (c) universal level of the educational leadership community, and other social dimensions.

At the research location, the interview process could engender positive change in the participant's thought processes as they engaged in the interviews on the shared vision concept. I observed the Faza Ministry of Education management members ' excitement towards the challenge the interview questions posed to them about a shared organizational vision. Some respondents started reflecting on the concept and voicing their thoughts about how important the shared vision strategy was and how rarely people practiced the concept in their educational environment. One could regard these reactions

as part of the interview's output, but it goes beyond that to engender some change processed that could change the members future actions.

Hall and Hord (2015) identified 12 principles of change that still impact studies about change in the current literature. Out of these 12, I identify four principles that seem critical to this study's context: (a) change is a process and not a onetime off activity, (b) change is learning because learning is at the heart of improvement, (c) the school is the primary unit of change in the education system, and (d) organizations adopt the model of change they want, but individuals implement the change. The implication of these principles for the context of this research is that members of management of the Faza Ministry of Education would eventually come to understand the concept of a shared vision entirely through a sustained learning process and eventually adopt it for practice. I anticipate that the change will cascade to the school level and produce the desired change in students' performance.

This study could bring the concept of a shared vision to the limelight at the national level of the Nigerian educational policy and practice. Other regions of the country could engage in the same change process as the faza Ministry of Education, ever before the Federal Ministry of Education includes it the Nigeria's educational leadership policy in Nigeria. Educational leadership and management scholars could consider scaling up the research to other regions of the country to see if it would produce similar results or not.

The current research could contribute to existing knowledge on systems level educational leadership in Nigeria and the African sub-region. It could engender more

research on educational leadership at the school level and other levels of governance of the educational system. This research shows that systems level educational leadership is still relevant in certain countries, and more research on it would create a balance in the literature regarding educational leadership.

Conclusion

This generic qualitative research sought to explore the Faza Ministry of Education members' understanding of a shared organizational vision and how it could help this management team address persistent educational challenges. Evidence from the literature indicates that a shared vision is about a collective understanding of an organization's vision, mission, goals, core values, and purpose of existence (Chai et al., 2017). If the vision is shared truly, it connects people in a bond and creates a sense of common caring that makes people committed, not by force, but because they are convinced that they should do so. Review of literature also brings to the limelight that systems thinking competencies form the foundation on which a shared vision can thrive (Senge, 2006) with shared leadership practices in place in the organization (Berson et al., 2016). Shared vision has helped organizations in varied fields, including education, to address complex and persistent organizational challenges (Jing & Avery, 2016; Lattuch & Dankert, 2018).

A key finding in this study is that members of the Faza Ministry of Education have a substantial understanding of the attributes or characteristics of a shared vision and the possible consequences of putting it into practice in their organization. Nevertheless, they do not show the same level of understanding with the systems thinking segments that form a critical part of a shared vision's antecedents. Scholars rate system thinking

competencies as higher order skills that are necessary for leadership's success.

Nevertheless, ongoing practices in the organization make the members disposed to adopting a shared vision practice in the future. Adopting a new management process is a change process, and members of the management require series of engagement with proficient consultants for systems leadership development (Close et al., 2018) and a planned change process of developing a shared vision for their organization (Hall & Hord, 2015).

The study contributes to filling a gap in the literature by ascertaining, to some extent, the level of understanding of systems level educational leaders at the Faza Ministry of Education about a shared vision. This awareness about their understanding of a shared vision provided information not readily available in the literature. The study will engender social change at three levels of the social strata, namely (a) the organization of study, (b) the national level in the country of study, and (c) the universal level in the body of knowledge on educational leadership and management.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol for Faza Ministry of Education Management Members'

Perceptions of a Shared Organizational Vision

Opening Script

1. Hi..... (smile), I am happy you accepted to participate in this interview, and have also kept to the appointment, promptly.
2. As we discussed already, this interview is part of the process of my PhD dissertation for specialization in Leadership, Policy and Change in Education. The study aims at exploring the FCT Education Secretariat Management members understanding about a shared vision (smile).
3. I hope you will not mind, the interview will last for 45 minutes, and I shall be recording the session to enable me capture correctly your views. I shall also interview other members of the management team.
4. Result of the research will contribute to emerging studies on educational leadership in Nigeria and also bring the concept of a shared vision to limelight as a possible strategy for effective educational management.
5. If I ask you a question that you do not wish to answer, kindly let me know, and you are also free to indicate whenever you wish to discontinue with the interview (smile to seek acceptance).
6. Finally, your opinions or responses at this interview shall be confidential and will not be disclosed to a third party.
7. If that's okay, I would be glad if you could fill out the consent form I had provided to you with the invitation letter.

8. So we can now start (Smile..)

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself sir/madam in terms of your role as a chairman/director and member of FCT Education Secretariat management committee.
2. If you were to reflect on what organizational vision means to you, how would you explain it?
3. What in your opinion is the core value/ purpose of existence of the FCT Education Secretariat?
4. How will you explain this core value or purpose of existence to what you would want to see as the common goal/vision of the FCT education sector?
5. How does your departmental activities relate to the core value or purpose of the Secretariat overall purpose of existence?
6. How do the activities you carry out in your department relate to what other departments do, if applicable?
7. What specific characteristics in your opinion should be present in an organization to indicate that leaders of the organization share in the common vision/goal of the organization?
8. How would you justify to a visitor to FCT Education sector that the leaders in the education management team share in a common vision/goal?
9. What advantages have you and your organization (FCT Education Sector) gained if you are convinced the management share in a common vision?

10. If you are convinced the members of management do not yet share a common vision, what do you think the organization stands to gain if they were to share in a common vision/goal?
11. On the flip side, if your management team were to have a shared organizational vision, what would the organization stand to lose?
12. How will you explain the main functions of the FCT Education Secretariat Management Committee?
13. As a member of the management committee, what personal experiences will you recall that demonstrate members focus and work together as a team towards the Secretariat main purpose/ vision of the Education Secretariat?
14. What other experiences show that members do not commit themselves to this common purpose?
15. If this common purpose exists, how do you communicate it among your selves and to other members of staff in your board/ department?
16. How does the management committee members allocate funds and other resources to different levels and types of education?
17. How would you describe interpersonal relationship and collaboration among the management committee members during official and other social activities?

Closing script

1. Thanks very much sir/madam for giving me your time. I assure you that I will make available to you the transcript of this interview, if you wish.
2. If you have need to contact me, call me on 8037876544

3. I hope you would not mind if I contact you on any issues I need to clarify?
4. Bye for now and have a nice day.