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Stakeholder Perceptions on the Efficacy of the Cayman Islands School Inspections

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Abstract

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by

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Educators and community members in the Cayman Islands are subjected to school

inspections that are based on the United Kingdom model for inspecting schools.

This model has not been tested to determine its appropriateness for use in a Caribbean

education setting. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of educators

and community members on the efficacy of the Cayman Islands school inspections in

relation to perceptions of inspection procedures, demographic relevance, and student

progress and achievement. The conceptual framework was based on Ehren's school

inspection theory and Quintelier's model to analyze the perceptions and experiences of

educators during school inspections. Data from interviews with three educators and three

noneducators were collected, analyzed, and coded to identify themes and patterns. The

study revealed that educators in the Cayman Islands perceived school inspections to be

stressful and inconsistent. Educators reported that inspectors lacked the necessary

demographic knowledge that would allow them to contextualize their inspection findings.

Noneducators thought that the inspections were useful in providing information when

choosing schools. Stakeholders did not perceive a connection between the Cayman

Islands school inspections and improved student progress and achievement. Findings may

help to inform decisions on improving school inspection practices in the Cayman Islands.

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to the people of the Cayman Islands. To the educators who work tirelessly and assist our children to achieve their full potential, helping them to develop the skills necessary to compete globally. To the community members who recognize the importance of supporting the education system and preserving a culture of care for the individual and the environment.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to my phenomenal committee chair, Dr Leslie VanGelder, and my highly skilled methodologist, Dr. Nicolae Nistor, for patiently guiding me through to the completion of this research. Their assistance was invaluable.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In the Cayman Islands, the school inspection system has evolved during the past decade and as a result has created unique challenges within the Cayman Islands school systems that have so far not been addressed by independent research. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of the new protocols for inspections as a determinant of their relevance and usefulness to the local community. School inspections provide a means for evaluating the performance of all schools in the Cayman Islands. The Office of Education Standards (OES) was established in 2018 to measure the success of schools using several predetermined factors based on research, to drive education reform in the Cayman Islands. The aim was to establish a world-class education system that would allow students to develop the social and interpersonal skills required to become positive contributors to the local community and the world at large. Academic achievement and personal development of students were used as an indicator of school effectiveness and continue to form the basis of the seven standards outlined by the OES (Cayman Islands Government, 2018). The inspection framework is based on the system used in the United Kingdom (UK) with judgments organized using a 4-point scale ranging from *weak* to *outstanding* with full details of findings and final judgments posted in the local press and on the government website.

Although the definition of *school inspection* varies across different jurisdictions, the definition used in this study referred to the UK-style school inspections that are designed to measure the effectiveness of schools based on the quality of teaching and

learning, curriculum choice, student performance, safety, and provision for personal and social development (see Cayman Islands Government, 2018). According to Courtney (2016) and Dijkstra et al. (2017), the goal of school inspections is to improve the quality of education offered in schools by using inspectors to monitor the provisions for guaranteeing successful student academic and social advancement. School inspections are viewed as a useful device for examining schools and identifying areas for growth and development in many education systems.

Despite the lack of research on this topic in the Cayman Islands, there are several similar examples existing in the literature. In Belgium, Quintelier et al. (2019) focused on the perceptions of teachers during school inspections and noted that they experienced a range of differing emotions depending on how the inspections were conducted. Additionally, Jones et al. (2017) revealed that the nature of educator perceptions on the inspection process can lead to negative unintended consequences that undermine the process.

In the current study, the views of educators and community members were used to judge the efficacy of the local Cayman Islands school inspection system. The first chapter of this study presents the foundational aspects of the research and provides justification for the literature and research method used in the investigation. Each section is organized to provide relevant information to contextualize the study and address the research questions. The final section of this chapter explains the significance of the study by highlighting its impact on social change in the Cayman Islands.

Background

The Cayman Islands is a British Overseas Territory governed by the UK but has differences in its educational system in curriculum structure and cultural paradigms (Cayman Islands Government, 2018). During the past 15 years, Cayman Islands schools have been subjected to several occasional, informal school evaluation inspections that have been conducted by local teachers and education professionals. In 2015, a team of inspectors from the UK were invited to conduct an appraisal of the efficacy of the islands' high schools. In 2017, the Cayman Islands Ministry of Education (MOE) in conjunction with an inspector from the UK's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) joined forces to create the OES and was given the task of performing regular evaluations of all the schools in the Cayman Islands (see Cayman Islands Government, 2018). The islands' population has expanded over the past decade, and there has been greater accountability for student progress in all schools (Cayman Islands Government: OES Framework, 2020).

School evaluations, known as inspections in the Cayman Islands, are based on the UK system for evaluating the performance of schools in accordance with the Cayman Islands Education Law (2016). The inspector's role is to verify that an education institution is adequately catering to the care and education of all students. Information is collected and used to make judgments on the effectiveness of the practices in schools based on the creation of a safe, supportive learning environment; quality of teaching and learning; student achievement in specific areas of learning; breadth and depth of the

curriculum; and provision for students' personal and social development (Cayman Islands

Government, 2018).

Although not specifically focused on the Cayman Islands, Ehren and Visscher

(2006) reported on the negative impact of school inspections on the health and welfare of

teachers in other countries. More recently, Elton and Male (2015) investigated the effect

on a community of primary school teachers whose school was reported to have failed an

inspection. Many teachers report feeling stressed and overwhelmed by regular school

inspections, and there is evidence to suggest that this does not result in positive outcomes

for students (Hopkins et al., 2016). There is also the question of the appropriateness of

publishing negative inspection findings in the local media in a small, closely interlinked

community where perceptions are thought to be reality.

Problem Statement

The Cayman Islands teaching population consists mainly of expatriate teachers

who are recruited from other Caribbean islands. Unless the teachers have experience

working in the UK, they have not been exposed to UK-style school inspections. The fact

that the Cayman Islands has chosen to adopt the UK policy on school inspections creates

a situation that is very different from the application of such policies in large urban

school districts in the UK even though the protocols are the same. The cultural norms and

expectations in the small Cayman Islands community could mean that the perceptions of

teachers and community members on UK-style Ofsted inspections do not concur with the

current research available that was conducted in the UK and focused on their schools and

colleges. The problem the current study addressed was the lack of available information

on how the UK-style inspection system is perceived by Cayman Island educators and community members. Such information is essential in determining the relevance of adopting the UK-style inspection system in the Cayman Islands with a view toward determining whether it should remain in its current iteration or be amended to increase its significance to this demographic. No research was identified that addressed the subject of school inspections in the Cayman Islands.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of educators (teachers and administrators) and community members regarding the efficacy of the UK-style Ofsted school inspections in the Cayman Islands. The study focused on the experience and attitude of educators and community members in the Cayman Islands who have been involved in local school inspections. Data were gathered from post inspection interviews and were analyzed to determine how local school inspections are perceived by educators and community members as a tool to improve the quality of education as outlined by the MOE's OES (see Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

Research Questions

1. How do educators in the Cayman Islands perceive school inspections in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and student progress and achievement?

2. How do community members perceive school inspections in the Cayman Islands in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and student progress and achievement?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the research conducted by Ehren et al. (2013) and Ehren and Visscher (2006) on the impact of school inspections on school improvement. The framework describes the aspects of school inspections including the frequency, approaches, and handling of results. The school inspection theory states that school inspectors have an expectation that school inspection can be used as a tool for improving the quality of education in all schools (Ehren et al., 2013). The theoretical model was built using literature outlining a variety of school improvement interventions and inspection methods used to enhance education systems across Europe.

The framework developed by Ehren et al. (2013) emphasizes the need for more empirical research in this area. Ehren et al. noted that although school inspections were widely used as a tool to drive school improvement, the research available to judge the impact of the various approaches was lacking. Ehren et al.'s framework was refined with the use of reconstructed program theories to determine the assumptions of school inspectors on the causal mechanisms for improving teaching and learning within schools prior to beginning the inspection process. The research strategies also included interviews with inspectors and document analysis (Ehren et al., 2013). The framework offers three mechanisms whereby school inspections are expected to effect positive change within education systems. A series of summarized mechanisms provided the framework on which the current study was based, with the necessary adjustments to make the study specific to exploring the perceptions on efficacy of school inspections in the Cayman Islands.

Nature of the Study

I used a basic qualitative design that was consistent with the methods used for gathering data required to evaluate perceptions of individuals on the efficacy of school inspections in the Cayman Islands. Focusing on the experiences of community members and educators during the inspection process was consistent with the framework described by Ehren et al. (2013). The current study provided data on how educators and community members perceive the inspection processes and outcomes. Interviews were arranged via email and telephone and conducted face-to-face in person or virtually over a 2-week period with participants who had experienced at least one school inspection in the Cayman Islands. Because the school inspections take place at various times during the academic year, the participants were asked to confirm that they had inspection experience prior to being interviewed. The qualitative analysis provided adequate data for evaluating the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of the Cayman Islands school inspections.

Definitions

Department of Education Services (DES): Operational arm of the MOE that works directly with schools in the Cayman Islands (Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

Inspection report: A comprehensive statement produced by inspectors to provide an account of their findings (Ofsted, 2020).

Ministry of Education (MOE): The government entity responsible for all Cayman Islands schools (Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted): The government entity responsible for school inspections in the UK (Ofsted, 2020).

Office of Education Standards (OES): The government entity responsible for school inspections in the Cayman Islands (Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

School inspection: An evaluation system whereby schools are appraised with judgments based on the overall quality of education (Ehren et al., 2013).

School inspector: An individual, usually employed by a government agency, tasked with visiting education institutions to judge the quality of education (Ofsted, 2020).

Assumptions

1. Participants would be honest and unbiased when providing feedback in their interviews.

2. Exposure to only one inspection cycle would be adequate for participants to be considered as having comment-worthy experience of the process.

3. Research on the experience of European educators during school inspections could be used as a basis for comparing the perceptions of Cayman Island educators and community members.

Scope and Delimitations

This inquiry was designed to address the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of school inspections in the Cayman Islands with a view toward understanding the relevance of applying UK-style inspection practices to Cayman Islands schools. Because educators are directly impacted by the inspection process, their views

and experiences were an important starting point in the research process. The views of community members provided breadth to the study because they are privy to the reported findings and use the inspection reports to judge the performance of schools on the island. Community members' perceptions of the inspection process could help to inform future studies aimed at analyzing the school inspection process in the Cayman Islands.

This enquiry was based on the views of three secondary school educators and three community members who were not associated with the Cayman Islands MOE. Purposive sampling was used to select 10 teachers and 10 community members for interviews. The research sample of three from each stakeholder category was then randomly chosen from the group of 20 adults 18–65 years of age.

The findings from this research could be transferred to future studies by providing insight into the Cayman Islands school inspection process. This insight could serve as a first step toward gathering information on how the process is perceived in this jurisdiction compared to the UK. The regional specificity of the findings could provide new information to be used to improve the inspection process in the future.

<div align="center">**Limitations**</div>

The small participant pool meant that there was little variation in the sample size selected for interviews. Therefore, the study focused on depth rather than breath of information during data collection. Educators were selected from two government high schools and one private school. This limited the study in that views were not as varied as they might have been had the selection included a wider cross section of stakeholders. A second limitation was the lack of regionally specific research on school inspections. The

gap identified was determined from research in non-Caribbean jurisdictions and was applied to the small Cayman Islands community.

The fact that only educators and community members were included in this study limited the prospects for triangulation. The inclusion of data from interviews with students and inspectors could have offered the opportunity to compare the views of an additional set of individuals who are directly affected by or involved in the school inspections process. The opportunity to compare and contrast the views of two sets of stakeholders who were exposed to identical interview questions would have offered a form of environmental triangulation as described by Stahl and King (2020).

Although the results of this study could affect social change in the Cayman Islands, this is a small jurisdiction within the wider Caribbean setting. For greater clarity and cross-referencing, regional research should be conducted to provide clarity on the efficacy of school inspections across the wider Caribbean region. In addition, the study focused on a relatively recent phenomenon using participants with limited experience of the inspection process. Additional research could be conducted after the completion of several years of inspection cycles, allowing this study to form the basis for continued research.

Significance

This research filled a gap in understanding how the Cayman Islands education system is impacted by school inspections that use assessment criteria and policies that are borrowed from the UK. This research was unique because it addressed the cultural and social implications of using UK school inspection standards to measure the performance

of schools in the Cayman Islands. There was no prior research available that addressed

the perceptions of educators and community members on school inspections in this

jurisdiction. This study provided an understanding of how school inspections are

perceived by educators and community members and could have implications for other

colonial sites where the UK inspection system is applied. The data obtained provided an

indication of whether the individuals interviewed consider the new OES inspection

system to be relevant and effective when appraising schools in the Cayman Islands.

Insight from this study could aid the Cayman Islands MOE and OES in tailoring the

inspection process so that it is better suited to benefit schools and individuals in the local

context. The study may produce positive social change in the Cayman Islands by

providing information that assists with assessing the validity of the Cayman Island school

inspection protocols. The findings may assist the MOE in formulating policies that are

relevant and specific to this demographic and creating new rules governing the

frequency, nature, and reporting of school inspections in the Cayman Islands.

Summary

School inspections provide a means whereby the quality of education and

provision for students can be evaluated in all educational institutions within the Cayman

Islands. Prior to this study, no research had been identified to investigate the perceptions

of educators and community members on the local inspection system that is modeled on

the UK Ofsted inspection practices. To understand the impact of the inspection system

and its usefulness to the Cayman Islands, I interviewed educators and community

members and recorded their perceptions to determine whether the inspection system is

considered effective and appropriate for the local demographic and whether the system could be improved for the benefit of the community and local education institutions.

The literature review in Chapter 2 provides a synthesis of recent research on school inspections, including information on how school inspections are perceived by educators. No prior research was identified that focused on the perceptions of community members, and this appeared to be an underexplored area. The literature search strategy is described to provide the opportunity for contextual replication of the study in the future. Articles were chosen based on their reference to modern school inspection systems that are comparable to the Cayman Islands model. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the research gap that helped to justify the need for this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this enquiry was to examine the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of school inspections in the Cayman Islands. The problem this research addressed was the lack of credible research-based information on the efficacy of the Cayman Islands school inspection system. The current inspection framework affects the lives of educators, students, and community members because inspection reports determine how schools are perceived and compared in both the government and the private sector. No research was discovered that focused on the perceptions of educators and community members in this geographic region. The purpose of this study was to collect, collate, and analyze data on the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of the school inspection model used in the Cayman Islands. In this literature review, several areas are addressed to present information that was used to justify the need for this study.

Using the search terms *school inspections* and *educator perceptions of school inspections* in the primary literature search yielded a wide range of articles that served as a baseline. The broad category search indicated that several researchers realized the lack of empirical information available regarding educators' perceptions of school inspections. The search also revealed the lack of research on school inspection in the Caribbean region and specifically the Cayman Islands. Few studies focused on the views of educators and community stakeholders on the efficacy of school inspection systems, and none focused on schools in the Cayman Islands. On discovering this gap in research, I extended the search to include information on inspection policies and frameworks that

governed the inspection process in different jurisdictions and the impact on educators and communities.

Literature Search Strategy

Several library databases and search engines were accessed for this study. Walden University's library portal was used to identify recent peer-reviewed articles on school inspections. In addition, SAGE, ERIC, Education Resources Complete, and Google Scholar were used to provide additional and regionally specific articles. The key search term combinations were as follows: *school inspections*, *European school inspection models*, *UK school inspections*, *Cayman Islands school inspections*, *Office of Education Standards (OES)*, *Caribbean school inspections*, *educator's views on school inspections*, *community perceptions on school inspections*, *stakeholder views on school inspections*, *impact of school inspections*, *views on the efficacy of school inspections*, *how do school inspections affect teachers*, and *school inspections and global education systems*.

The search terms were constantly evolving and revised based on the literature that was discovered. The searches focused on general school inspections initially and then specifically on the Caribbean region to discover existing culturally significant research. The search parameters were defined to ensure that articles were published within the 5-year limit.

Conceptual Framework

This research addressed the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of school inspections in the Cayman Islands. The basis of the conceptual framework was derived from the model created by Ehren et al. (2013) that focuses on the

expected outcomes of school inspectors during a school inspection. The theory states that school inspectors anticipate that schools will improve because of inspections. The model gives a framework for the intended effects of school inspections. The outline of the conceptual framework created by Ehren et al. and adapted for this study is shown in Figure 1. The model conceptualizes the inspection process as it relates to the perceptions of stakeholders linked to demographic relevance, quality of the inspection process, and impact on student progress and achievement.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model for Perceptions on the Efficacy of the Cayman Islands School Inspection System
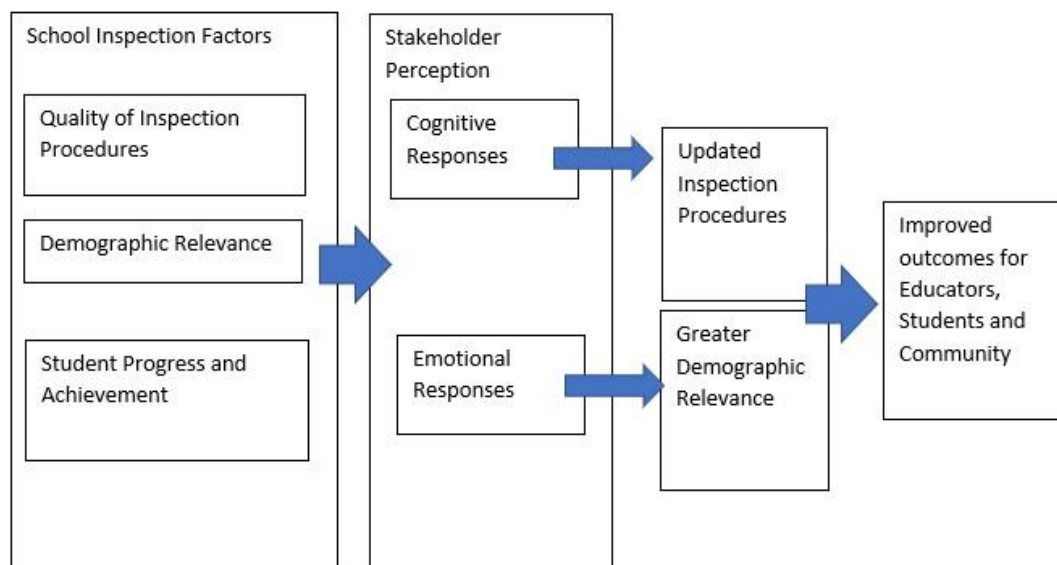
Note. Adapted from the models used by Ehren et al. (2013) and Quintelier et al. (2019).

School inspections are widely used in European education systems to control the quality of their education product, and teacher evaluations are common across all European countries (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2019).

Regular school inspections provide a way of measuring the effectiveness of schools (Ehren et al., 2013). The framework used by inspectors as a guide for inspecting schools serves as a tool for holding schools accountable in a "transparent and comparable manner" (Ehren & Shackleton, 2016, p. 13).

Despite the lack of research available on the efficacy and most effective approaches of school inspections, Ehren et al. (2013) were able to use the available literature to provide a framework of how inspections are conducted in several European countries. In addition, Ehren et al. used data from interviews to construct program theories designed to link school inspections to their intended outcomes. Because Ehren et al.'s studies were conducted on European countries, the information does not specifically relate to the Cayman Islands demographic. No research was discovered that focused on the perceptions of stakeholders on school inspections, and therefore research on this phenomenon was unique to the Cayman Islands.

Because the current study addressed a gap in the research, using the framework developed by Ehren et al. (2013) provided the basis for a model to conceptualize how school inspections in the Cayman Islands would be perceived by the target participants in the study. Additionally, the approach used by Quintelier et al. (2019) provided a framework for analyzing the perceptions of educators on school inspections by focusing on their emotional and cognitive responses. Quintelier et al. categorized the negative consequences of school inspections using a conceptual model for feedback during an inspection cycle. Each theory played a role in guiding the literature review by providing a platform and focus for further research.

In the sections in the literature review, I explore studies related to the efficacy of school inspections and provide insight on how other researchers in the discipline of education have approached the problem, with specific focus on the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches. Factors influencing school inspections are discussed, and the Cayman Islands school inspection model is outlined. The literature was used to justify the rationale for the selection of participants and for using the perceptions of educators and community members as a foundation for the study in the Cayman Islands.

Efficacy of School Inspections

School inspections are used across the world to ensure the maintenance of high standards within education systems. Although the term "school inspections" is commonly used in Commonwealth countries, in the United States they are referred to as "school evaluations." However, the concept is the same where inspectors or evaluators monitor the provisions for student success and social development and give advice to educators for improving schools (Courtney, 2016; Dijkstra et al., 2017). The introduction of mass public schooling in the 19th century led to the requirement for schools and other governmental agencies to comply with mandated programs and rules that were used to highlight deficiencies that needed to be addressed (Brown et al., 2016). With the increased perception of education as a measure of economic success, countries across the world have introduced school inspections in recent decades (Fahey et al., 2019).

School reform and interventions have been fueled by reports from international bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the publication of comparative analyses of global education systems by the Programme for

International Student Assessment. The goal is to improve student performance leading to enhanced educational outcomes in educational institutions. The Ofsted school inspection system was developed in the UK in 1992 replacing Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools and was designed to regulate all UK education and training centers. The government mandated that all UK schools would be inspected every 4 years and reports would be published for all stakeholders. The reports included league tables that were developed and published to compare schools based on inspections outcomes (Waterman, 2014).

In Europe, the changing social and economic climate has resulted in changes in school inspection systems. Two major approaches to school inspections now exist. The first is a high-stakes sanctions-oriented approach, and the second is a low-stakes advisor style. The rigor of the inspections is dictated by the form and frequency of the inspection visits, powers of sanctions imposed, the governance arrangements and the action planning required for improvement, and the level of emphasis on self-evaluation and the availability of support services for schools (Simeonova et al., 2020). Research has revealed that careful analysis of these systems to determine where schools fall on the continuum reveals a way forward in finding a best-fit model for schools in Europe (Simeonova et al., 2020).

The introduction of Ofsted in the UK changed the way that schools operated as school leaders used inspection reports to drive school improvement. However, UK educators are now becoming more aware of the need for alternative approaches to school assessment and improvement, and have suggested that schools use internal self-evaluation as part of the inspection process. This model replicates modern school

inspections processes in progressive European countries where there is a greater emphasis on internal self-evaluation and educators are actively involved in the school inspection process (Ferguson et al., 2000).

The benefits of self-evaluation were reported in research conducted by Kurum and Cinkir (2019) who developed a school self-evaluation model to support the development of public secondary schools. Kurum and Cinkir noted that for the model to be successfully implemented, teachers and administrators would need additional training on statistical analysis, research, and report writing. The model is designed with six stages; four are dedicated to self-evaluation and two to development and maintenance. Each stage has a specific focus to assist schools with preparation, planning, implementation, evaluation, monitoring, and reviewing. Also, consideration is given to "administration and leadership, education-training process, school-family-community cooperation, school health and safety, relations and communication at school and professional development" (Kurum & Cinkir, 2019, p.254). This self-evaluation model serves as a beneficial tool for use in schools where an improved self-evaluation instrument is needed as part of the school inspection process.

Badri et al. (2016) developed a school inspection system using an analytic hierarchy process (AHP) model to generate weighted inspection criteria. Badri et al. selected a sample of schools to compare outputs and validate their model. Their framework enabled school leaders to address recognized challenges within their institution in comparison to other schools and to establish a performance ranking while recognizing the factors for improvement that need to be addressed immediately. The

AHP model was thought to be successful because it enabled some degree of self-evaluation and allowed inspectors to base their decisions on both subjective and objective factors as a measure of school quality. The AHP was also found to reduce bias in making decisions during school inspections and provide more systematic evaluations of the school's performance (Badri et al., 2017). Badri et al. concluded that the AHP model was a sustainable plan that could be used to improve the school inspection process in other jurisdictions because the model is transferrable to other education systems.

Several researchers investigated the impact of school inspections to determine their efficacy. Cunningham (2019) investigated school inspections in Western Australia with a view toward revealing additional information on the Expert Review Group (ERG), which is a team of bureaucrats tasked with inspecting the quality and standards of local government schools. Cunningham's research provided an example of how policies can be developed by agencies and used to target schools on a risk-based model. The ERG only targets schools that are operating below the expected standards of what is considered adequate performance. The data collected by Cunningham were unique because this phenomenon had not been previously researched. Similarly, the current study on the Cayman Islands inspection system aimed to provide new information on the work and influence of the OES in the Cayman Islands.

Cunningham (2019) discovered that in the first decade of operation, there was no evidence identified to indicate that the ERG inspections led to an improvement in school performance. However, Cunningham did not provide the relevant information to indicate possible reasons for the lack of efficacy of the ERG. Further studies that included the

views of educators, students, and other stakeholders could prove useful in determining

why the efforts of the ERG did not have the desired impact.

Kemethofer et al. (2017) compared the effects of school inspections in Austria

and Sweden. Kemethofer et al. reported on the lack of empirical evidence and

inconsistent results obtained by researchers on the impact of school inspection and

gathered evidence on the newly adapted evidence-based national inspection model in

both countries. The cross-sectional data revealed that the low-stakes approach in Austria,

which did not link consequences to inspection outcomes, was given more positive

feedback from educators than the high-stakes system in Sweden where results were

linked to sanctions and even financial penalties. Data from both countries revealed that

school inspections had a small to medium positive impact on school effectiveness.

Hofer et al. (2020) released research on evaluating the effectiveness of school

inspections. Their systematic approach spanned a 30-year period of international

research. Hofer et al. highlighted the importance of school inspections in enforcing

policy-related functions within school but found no strong evidence of the positive effects

of the inspections in long-term school improvement. There is evidence to suggest that

factors such as the geographical location of schools, access to financing, and inspector

workload have a greater impact on long-term outcomes for schools being evaluated by

school inspectors (Busingye, 2020).

These Eurocentric articles, although providing useful information on school

inspection, are not specific to the Caribbean and do not address school inspection issues

in the Cayman Islands. Leo-Rhynie, (2018) documented the urgent need to "reimagine"

the Caribbean education system by using education policies that are specific to the local demographic and will encourage sustainable development and inclusiveness. Leo-Rhynie's vision is to have a self-governing system where local schools are judged using criteria that are developed by local educators and policy makers.

Perceptions on School Inspections

Inspections are important for determining the quality of education and areas for improvement for schools and education systems (Şahin, 2017). Modern school inspections are intended to aid educators in a collaborative approach to evaluating schools. Educators play a pivotal role in school improvement and their collective efficacy beliefs can influence the power of school inspections to achieve positive change in education institutions (Schweinberger et al., 2017). Studies have revealed significant correlation but, in some instances, overlapping and even contradictory views on the perceptions of educators and inspectors on school inspections (Sahin, 2017).

Jones, et al. (2017) reported on the unintended consequences of school inspections. Many researchers have focused on the impact of accountability systems such as school inspections and noted unintended (often negative) side effects of such activities. In the case of school inspections, the negative effects can often offset the intended positive effects. Jones et al. (2017) conducted a European comparative study and collected empirical evidence from surveys to measure the unintended consequences of school inspections. Jones et al. found that the main cause of unintended consequences was linked to accountability pressures and the demands to do well and receive a positive inspection report. A key factor for increased pressure was correlated to the refocusing and

narrowing of instructional strategies in delivering the curriculum. Another key reported factor leading to educator anxieties was the misrepresentation of school in data submitted to the inspectors and the subsequent requirement for justification. Educators perceive the inspection process as judgmental and designed to highlight deficiencies in preference to successes (Jones et al., 2017). The necessity for educators to understand and effectively manage data that is required during the school inspection process was highlighted by O'Brien et al. (2019). Their research revealed that teachers did not acknowledge that the use of data to drive school improvement was their responsibility. It was revealed that effective training led to improved attitudes towards capacity and data use. Penninckx (2017) reasoned that many of the unintended consequences of school inspections can be alleviated when inspectors adopt a guided development-oriented approach allowing schools to self-assess and self-evaluate.

The research of Hofer et al. (2020) revealed that when educators had an optimistic perception of the quality of inspections, the inspectors were well received and the inspection process more effective. Other influences on the efficacy of inspections came from attitudes towards its effectiveness and pressures around accountability. Hofer et al. used a systematic literature search and coded many inferential statistical studies on school inspections. A systematic review was also used to analyze the findings. Their most significant effect was the perceived accountability pressures and lack of confidence in inspection protocols, especially when the inspection report focused on deficiencies caused by inadequate resourcing due to a lack of funding (Severs, 2019).

These findings could be used to compare the perceptions of educators in the Cayman Islands, specifically those in leadership positions where accountability is often greater. Also, when educators perceive that external evaluations are recommending reforms to the education system as a matter of formality rather than necessity, it has a negative effect on their willingness to engage with the inspection process (Röbken et al., 2019). Allowing educators to become members of inspection teams was shown to improve perceptions of the process and increase a sense of ownership while reducing stresses related to accountability pressures (Sahlén et al., 2020).

As with the studies conducted by Hofer et al. (2020), the concept of educator perceptions of accountability resulting from school inspections was explored by Behnke and Steins (2017) who focused on the reactions of school principals on receiving feedback from school inspectors. Their longitudinal study presented the results on the attitudes of fifty principals before and after a school inspection to assess their perceptions and explore the underlying reasons for changes in attitude pre-and post-inspection. This mixed-methods research emphasized the implications for using school inspection feedback as an instrument to drive school improvement. Diversity in the socio-economic status of schools can result in disparities in the potential for post-inspection development and consequently affect how educators in disadvantaged schools perceive the inspection process and outcomes (Courtney, 2016).

Ehren et al. (2017) found that many school inspection frameworks were based on examples from countries with high income and that the studies on their success and approaches implemented were based on wealthy countries. As with the case in the

Cayman Islands, the inspection model is based on the UK inspection system that does not reflect the cultural paradigms of the local population and therefore not easily transferred to the Cayman Islands setting. The difference in governance, policies and accountability systems can affect the mechanism of impact of inspections and school outcomes (Ehren et al., 2017). However, Forestier et al. (2016) demonstrated that adopting education policies from other regions can be successful when consideration is given to their amalgamation with local cultural norms and expectations.

The impact of inspections on teacher's emotional wellbeing is explored in the mixed methods study by Quintelier et al. (2019). They noted that emotions of surprise and joy were frequently reported amongst educators and that joy was reported when inspectors offered constructive communication and demonstrated a positive attitude during the inspection process. When inspectors were unfriendly and critical, feelings of sadness and anger were reported by educators. In some instances, teachers exhibited an indifference to the inspection process when they felt they had no control over the outcome (Houseman, 2018).

A note-worthy discovery from the research by Quintelier et al. (2019), is that perceptions of transparency about the inspection process was reported to foster greater trust and understanding between participants. Although the study resulted in an incomplete view of educator emotions, it was significant in that it focused on the perceptions of educators during an inspection process and found there was a lack of evidence for positive emotions amongst the educators. Additionally, the researchers studied the cognitive responses of educators by conducting surveys that were analyzed

using a multi-level analysis, revealing that a transparent, constructive, and friendly approach, generally resulted in positive perceptions of school inspections. However, teachers in inspected schools are sometimes resistant to accepting feedback from inspectors on strategies to improve teaching and learning processes. The resistance is often associated with negative perceptions of the inspector's credibility (Quintelier et al., 2018). This resistance is often futile as some teachers regard themselves as powerless to change the school inspection procedures. They mostly perceive school inspections as an instrument of control, even though their perceptions are regarded as essential to achieving change and improving the inspection process (Steins et al., 2020).

The phenomenological study conducted by Ceylan and Can (2019) revealed that teachers felt more at ease when classroom inspections were conducted by their school principal. The researchers studied a small group of teachers and used semi-structured interviews to gather data on their experiences during evaluative classroom observation conducted by school principals. Teachers appreciated the process and felt motivated to embrace the responsibility of planning and preparing effective lessons. In contrast to the perceptions of teachers to external inspectors, teachers felt that the internal evaluations had an element of unfairness due to favoritism expressed by the perceived bias of the evaluator (Ceylan and Can, 2019).

In similar research performed by Sahan (2018), the skills of school principals were evaluated. The data indicated that school principals were able to fairly judge the teaching ability of their staff. The opinions of the principals were obtained using a behavior scale. The principals reported feeling some ambiguity regarding the inspection

process and were of the opinion the process should include external inspectors and allow input from all stakeholders. They also felt that the inspection process should be fair and objective while focusing on positives with agreed sanctions to ensure improvement (Sahan, 2018).

Hopkins et al. (2016) reported similar findings to Ceylan and Can (2019). They used interview data to evaluate the perceptions of teachers on how their teaching is assessed by inspectors. They compared and contrasted school internal self-evaluation with external evaluations conducted by inspectors. Their findings agreed with previous research indicating that educators generally had negative experiences with external evaluations from school inspections. In this study, the use of drawings in addition to semi-structured interviews, provided an effective tool for extracting valuable data on how teachers were thinking and feeling (Hopkins et al., 2016). Despite the negative perceptions of teachers in some instances, there is tangible evidence to indicate that when teachers and inspectors work together towards improving specific students' outputs, they can achieve success. Mampane (2020) reported that school inspections can succeed and provide opportunities for lasting growth and development in learners when there is government and stakeholder involvement to ensure regulation of the inspection process.

Bitan et al. (2015) assessed the attitudes of high school principals by examining the contents of statements obtained from interview data in their qualitative study. They found that less than fifty percent of participants had positive attitudes towards the school inspections and that the most negative criticisms were based on the perceptions of an increased workload resulting from the inspection process. Bitan et al. also reported

increased stress levels and a host of practical problems from a social psychological perspective. Gaertner et al. (2014) performed a school-level longitudinal control-group study that revealed school inspections had a comparatively low impact on the aspects of school quality measured in the study. They reported that educator perceptions of the school quality were unchanged irrespective of the school inspection process.

Conversely, research conducted by Hall (2017) suggests that inspectors can function as change agents and that when schools cooperate and embrace the process, school inspections can lead to school improvement. However, negative inspection findings can have a detrimental effect on psychological wellbeing of educators involved in the process. Elton & Male (2015) found that when schools are placed on Special Measures due to an unsatisfactory inspection result, educators felt more pressure to meet the demands for improvement.

In a Chinese analysis conducted by Zheng (2020), the perceptions of stakeholders on school inspections were examined. His mixed methods design included educators form rural and urban areas. He found that educators and other stakeholders perceived the inspection process to be heavily centered on academic standards at the expense of focusing on the rounded development of students. Stakeholders wanted the inspection process to be improved with reduced attention on examination results and increased focus on personal and social student development factors to judge school quality. The Cayman Islands school inspection framework uses a combination of academic and non-academic factors to judge the quality of education (Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

Factors Influencing School Inspections

In the Cayman Islands, school inspection reports are published on the government website for the use of a variety of stakeholders. Parents use the inspection reports as a guide when choosing schools for their children. This places increased pressures on educators to put strategies in place for areas of school improvement emphasized by the report. Altrichter and Kemethofer (2015) presented research findings on the relationship between educator accountability and inspection outcomes. Their research was based on the premise that European school inspections provide a foundation for "evidence-based governance" and can lead to improvement in education systems. Altrichter and Kemethofer focused on the perceived accountability pressures of educators relating to school inspections to better understand the inspection system. Analysis of the online data survey findings revealed that school leaders who reported feelings of "accountability pressure" were more receptive to the quality indicators for school improvement shared by the inspectors. Also, they were found to be more proactive at meeting the demands and expectations for school improvement and demonstrated greater sensitivity to the reactions of stakeholders towards the inspection report. Some school leaders are unable to tolerate the pressures associated with school inspection accountability and choose not to cooperate with the process, some feeling strongly enough to step down from leadership positions (Dorrell, 2019)

Behnke and Steins (2017) reported similar findings to those described by Altrichter and Kemethofer (2015) with a study based on the attitudes of German principals on receiving feedback from school inspectors. They found that school

principals who initially had a positive attitude towards the inspection process, tended to maintain a positive opinion if the process was perceived to be fair and equitable and interactions with inspectors were reported as positive. The research revealed that none of the principals in the sample reported a neutral attitude, all had attitudes that were either positive or negative. Their findings support the argument for a shift in the role of school inspections where inspectors are viewed as a "critical friend" offering guidance while educators are empowered to self-assess and determine the way forward for school improvement (Bonnisseau, 2020).

Several researchers have reported on the importance of the involvement of educators in the school inspection process so that the task of developing a targeted school improvement plan is school led. Brady (2016) reported on the process of school self-evaluation that is now a part of inspection models across the globe. The requirement for schools to self-evaluate prior to a formal inspection helps to increase the level of educator and school autonomy resulting in a greater perception of ownership and accountability (Bonnisseau, 2020; Brady, 2016). The process of self-evaluation has been shown to assist educators with identifying the strengths and weaknesses in their schools but the associated demands on time and the effort required to produce the evaluation in preparation for external inspections has been shown to have detrimental effects. Brady (2016) argued that using externally imposed criteria for self-evaluation had a detrimental effect on the way educators assessed their performance and school.

Current research has highlighted successes in approaches to school inspections that combine internal self-evaluation with elements of the external inspection criteria

(Brown et al. 2020). This study also focuses on the role of students and parents in the inspection process. Brown et al. explored literature concentrating on school inspections from a range of countries on the involvement of stakeholders in the inspection process. They determined that the evolution of stakeholder involvement in the school inspection process has been positively received by schools and there was no of evidence teacher apprehension or resistance.

By way of contrast, it was determined that a lack of involvement of stakeholders and placing additional stresses on educators can have a detrimental effect on school inspection outcomes (Fahey et al., 2019). The rigorous nature of some school inspections that focus on externally determined criteria for quality and accountability for improvement, can lead to increased levels of stress and reduce educator motivation and willingness to engage with the process (Fahey et al., 2019). Also, the procedures used by inspectors to form the final judgement was shown to be inconsistent in some instances. Dedering and Sowada (2017) conducted research on how teams of school inspectors reach their final judgement on schools. They focused on the evaluation framework used by the inspectors, choice of team members, the approach during evaluation and the procedures for giving feedback to schools. Their research revealed that inspectors working as a team to reach a consensus might not be the most effective approach to arriving at a final judgement on schools.

When educators are involved in the inspection process using self-evaluation as a basis for inspection findings, the results are more meaningful and more likely to lead to school improvement (Bonnisseau, 2020; Brown et al., 2020)). Ehren and Visscher (2006)

described two types of inspection strategies that can be used to inspect schools. They found that schools with low innovation capacity and few external impulses benefited from a direct approach where inspectors clearly defined the weaknesses and areas for improvement. Schools with high innovation capacity and strong external impulses were better served by a more reserved approach from inspectors which allowed for more open discussions and dialogue between educators and inspectors.

Cayman Islands School Inspection Model

In the Caribbean, evaluations and classroom observations have been the norm for many years, forming a part of education policies for continual development of educators (Engel et al., 2014). Teachers in all Cayman Islands schools are subjected to regular classroom observations to judge the quality of teaching and learning. These observations are usually conducted by senior educators and school leaders. Judgements are made using a four-point scoring system that is recorded and forms part of the teacher's Performance Management overall score. In 2017, the government decided to formalize the process of regular school inspections to assist all schools on the Islands to improve in line with international standards (Price et al., 2020). The Office of Education Standards (OES) was established "to promote the raising of standards of achievement in schools and early childhood care and education centers in the Cayman Islands" (see Cayman Islands Government, 2018). The OES in consultation with the Education Council created a framework of standards used to measure the quality of educational institutions within the Cayman Islands. In 2018, the Ministry of Education (MOE) and OES mandated that all educational institutions would be inspected every two years with the advice that all

inspectors were charged with ensuring high standards of education are achieved and maintained by all Cayman Islands schools.

The shift in the regularity of school inspections represented an addendum to the 2016 Education Law mandating the inspection of all educational institutions at least once every four years (Cayman Islands Government, 2018). Although not aligned with the UK Ofsted inspection framework, the increase in the regularity of inspections was accepted by educators and community members and welcomed as a vehicle for improving the quality of education in public and private schools within the Cayman Islands. The introduction of regular school inspections is now used in conjunction with the established system of classroom observations. Research indicates that follow-up classroom observations in the wake of school inspections have no significant effect on teacher performance (Wagner, 2020). The Education Council believed that increasing the frequency and rigor of the school inspection process would raise achievement levels across the board by ensuring access to quality academic and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) that would better prepare students to secure employment or move on to tertiary education (Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

The Cayman Islands School Inspection Framework created by the OES was designed to evaluate school performance in the areas of students' achievement; personal and social development; the quality of teaching; the curriculum; leadership; health and safety, and support (Cayman Islands Government, OES Framework, 2018). The team of inspectors are tasked with visiting educational institutions to observe, evaluate, and make a judgement on school performance and give guidance for improvement. They are

expected to hold educators accountable for school improvement but also to offer guidance based on actions deemed necessary for the institutions to meet the Office of Education school inspection standards.

Educational institutions are given notice three weeks prior to the visit of the inspection team. School leaders are required to submit a self-evaluation pre-inspection form that details the strengths of the schools and recognized areas for development. School data is requested on student performance, behavior management, staffing and any established support mechanisms. On receiving this information, the inspectors send surveys to teachers, parents, and students to gather data on their perceptions of how the school is performing. The data from the pre-inspection surveys are included in the final inspection which publishes the final judgement using a four-point scale. The OES Framework outlines the criteria for judging schools using a rubric. A score of "excellent" represents a school with exceptionally high quality of performance and practice; "good" indicates that the expected minimum level of performance has been achieved which is expected of every Cayman Island private and public school; a "satisfactory" score means that the minimum level of quality required for the Cayman Islands has been achieved with key aspects of performance and practice met; and a judgement of "weak" is passed on any school that fails to meet the basic standard of performance. Weak schools are required to take urgent measure to improve areas of concern in performance and practice and are inspected with greater frequency (usually twice per year).

School Inspectors in the Cayman Islands use seven Quality Indicators to judge the performance of schools:

- The first is attainment in the core subjects of English, Mathematics, and Science in relation to international standards, and includes a measure of progress over time.

- The second is positive behavior for good learning and civic and environmental understanding.

- Third is teaching, learning and assessment.

- Fourth is curriculum quality.

- Fifth looks at the provision for health and safety, support, and guidance.

- The sixth focuses on leadership and links with parents and the community.

- The seventh on self-evaluation and improvement planning

(Cayman Islands Government, 2018).

The Cayman Island school inspection framework shares many similarities with models used in the UK and across Europe as instruments for quality assurance and school development (Dedering and Sowada, 2017). The design aims to measure the school's academic performance while judging its ability to facilitate positive social outcomes with a focus on community attitudes, health and safety and the school's ability to produce a well-rounded citizen (Dijkstra et al., 2017). As a UK Oversees Territory, the Cayman Islands government chose to adopt policies on school inspection that have been established for many years. The need for Cayman Islands schools to improve and innovate has been a driving force for education policymakers in the region. School inspections are expected to encourage continuous school improvement by alerting educators to the need for change and progress. Ehren and Shackleton (2016) used random

effects models and a longitudinal path model to better understand the impact of school

inspection on school improvement. They discovered that inspection systems using similar

frameworks revealed that school inspections had an impact on principals but less so on

teachers.

Additionally, they found that the impact on school improvement and student

achievement was limited. Their study reported a lack of correlation between setting

expectations, accepting feedback, and actions to improve the school. They concluded that

the impact of school inspections was not linear but operated through cyclical change

processes (Ehren & Shackleton, 2016). Hall (2018) provided an example of an inspection

policy framework in Norway showing its evolution from a system of control and support

with forced compliance, to one of self-assessment and evaluation with optional support.

The recommendation is that school inspections focus on dynamic relations and policy

enactment processes when considering reformations. When educators are the driving

force behind the creation of school inspection policies and frameworks, the collective

efficacy beliefs and the perceived acquisition of knowledge gained can lead to them

being more supportive of the process (Schweinberger et al., 2017). Comparable research

conducted by Segerholm & Hult (2018) revealed that it is possible for educators to learn

compliance. This was discovered from interview data revealing diverse emotions

provoked by the inspection processes in European schools.

The Cayman Islands inspection system could potentially benefit from a

decentralized model which allows schools to network and collaborate for improved

education quality. Janssens and Ehren (2016) propose that allowing schools to form

networks and viewing them as a social system can result in a shift in the relationship between Education Inspectorates and schools. They advise inspectorates to improve their performance by providing feedback to all network members beginning with an evaluation of the network and feedback strategy. This represents a move towards self-evaluation and educators having greater control of the school inspection process.

Gap in the Literature

These research findings highlighted the need for additional studies on school inspection practices, particularly in the Caribbean region, including the Cayman Islands. Based on a review of current literature, there was limited information to indicate how educators in the Cayman Islands perceived the current school inspection system. Information on the perceptions of community members had not been explored in any of the available research. No prior research studies were identified that examined the area of educator or community perceptions on school inspections in the Cayman Islands. Although research on the perceptions of educators existed for other jurisdictions, none was identified that focused on the perceptions of community members who were noneducators.

Summary and Conclusions

The literature review revealed the impact of school inspections on the functioning of educators within educational settings. The frequency and nature of the inspections in conjunction with the expectations of the inspectors determines their efficacy. When educators were involved in the process and given the opportunity to self-assess and regulate the procedures, the inspection process was better received. Accountability

pressures coupled with a lack of resources within education settings, creates a negative

view of inspections that stagnates progress within schools. The impact of school

inspections on local communities was not known as no previously existing literature was

discovered that focused on this aspect of inspections. This study obtained information on

the perceptions of community members in addition to educators, thus filling a gap in the

literature and extending knowledge on how school inspections are viewed by both groups

of stakeholders in the Cayman Islands. In Chapter 3, the research design and rationale are

outlined and approaches to methodology and instrumentation described.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this enquiry was to determine how school inspections are perceived by educators and community members in the Cayman Islands. In this chapter, the rationale for the research and its design is outlined with definitions of the central concepts of the study. The role of the researcher is provided to explain the underlying personal and professional relationships that could have resulted in bias and conflicts of interest. The research methodology is also included to identify and justify the population and sampling strategy. The criteria parameters and rationale for participant selection are explained with an outline of specific procedures for identifying, contacting, and recruiting participants. Also, the relationship between data saturation and sample size is defined.

The data collection instrument and source are identified in this section with an explanation to justify their use for this study. Also explored is the sufficiency of data collection to answer the research questions in this study. The data analysis plan is defined to justify the connection of the data to the research questions, and the procedure used for coding data is outlined with strategies for dealing with anomalies and discrepancies. The treatment of data is described with reference to anonymous, confidential, and protected data, as well as ethical issues related to data storage and study dissemination.

In the final section of this chapter, the issue of trustworthiness is explored with a description of appropriate strategies to establish credibility of the research. The transferability, dependability, and confirmability of this research are explained to concretize its relevance and potential to effect positive social change in the Cayman

Islands education system. In addition to trustworthiness, consideration is given to the importance of receiving ethical approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB approval # 04-15-21-0293158). The treatment of educators and community members is described with specific reference to institutional permissions and ethical concerns related to recruitment materials, data collection activities, and use of incentives to encourage participant engagement.

Research Design and Rationale

The research questions that established a foundation for this study were based on my observations as a Islands educator and existing research that revealed issues with modern school inspection systems. The similarities within these education systems meant that they could be compared in terms of their day-to-day operation, provision for students, and inspection protocols. The research design was developed to answer questions regarding the perceptions of stakeholders on school inspections in the Cayman Islands in relation to student progress and achievement, quality of the inspection protocols, and demographic relevance.

The perceptions of educators and community members in the Cayman Islands were integral to understanding how the UK-style school inspection has impacted the small island community. A basic qualitative approach was selected to examine this phenomenon through interviews with educators and community members. The views and experiences of the participants expressed in interviews provided a basis for determining how school inspections have affected the target groups in terms of their perceptions on

the quality and demographic relevance, and whether inspections are perceived to have a positive effect on student progress and achievement.

Creswell and Creswell (2017) noted that investigative research that focused on lived experiences in context while honoring the participants local meanings could be used for understanding perceptions and views. Also, the analysis of data from interviews allows the researcher to delve deeper into the phenomenon leading to the discovery of new thoughts and ideas expressed by individuals. As the researcher, I was responsible for using my knowledge and experience in an unbiased manner to facilitate semi structured interviews that allowed the participants to share their opinions and experiences with the confidence that their views would be fairly represented. I was also responsible for ensuring that the selected theory was used to inform the study and explain the experiences of the participants.

In this study, theory was used as a foundation for understanding the purpose of school inspections in the UK and Europe and to understand how the inspection policies have been adapted for use in the Cayman Islands. The conceptual framework based on the research of Ehren et al. (2013) was used to assist in obtaining the research goals, to avoid contradictory feedback, and to preserve the integrity of the findings in the Cayman Islands context. The research design and review were guided by examples described by Levitt et al. (2017). The model created by Ehren et al. was used to investigate the impact of school inspections on school improvement. The framework describes the varied aspects of school inspections including the frequency, approaches, and handling of results. The theory states that school inspectors have an expectation that school

inspection can be used as a tool for improving the quality of education in all schools. Ehren et al.'s framework was used in conjunction with the conceptual model described by Quintelier et al. (2019) to investigate the emotional and cognitive responses of teachers during the school inspection process.

Role of the Researcher

My role as the researcher was to interview educators and community members, provide prompts and probes with follow-up questions, and record the information given for analysis. As an educator who works in the local education setting, I was aware of the potential for bias and conflicts and tried to remain neutral and objective so that my experiences did not adversely affect my interactions with participants. My assumptions about school inspections in the Cayman Islands and the lack of credible research available led me to conduct this study. As a member of the community, I have a vested interest in the outcome of this study. My search revealed no secondary sources of information with data that could be analyzed on this subject, and I did not want to use surveys as the basis for my research because I did not think that the quality of answers or level of participation would be as effective in answering the research questions. Meeting face-to-face with the participants provided the opportunity for a more holistic approach to understanding their experiences because this allowed for the recording of facial expressions and other subliminal cues.

As a line manager of 32 teachers and over 300 students in an academy within a government high school, I have developed personal relationships with many teachers and parents over the past 4 years. Additionally, my participation in community service as a

Key Club advisor meant that I regularly communicate with numerous community

stakeholders. Although these contacts were beneficial to my research in terms of securing

participation, I was aware of the potential disadvantage of familiarity affecting the

honesty of participants during interviews. To alleviate this potential for bias in this study,

I chose participants from a pool of individuals who were not under my supervision and

with whom I did not have regular interactions. Participants were chosen based on their

experience and ability to articulate their opinions on school inspections. Each interview

began with open-ended questions to obtain general information on the participant's

experiences. Additional guidance was avoided to prevent influencing the participant's

answers with my viewpoint. The participants were encouraged to speak freely, and more

focused questions were used later in the interview (see Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Face-to-face in person or virtual interviews were arranged and conducted in a

private space to avoid distractions and encourage free and honest exchange. Educators

and community members were encouraged to participate and give willingly of their time

for the good of the local education system and community. As an added incentive to

secure suitable participants, refreshments were offered during the in-person interviews

and participants were presented with a $25 gift voucher as a token of gratitude.

Methodology

This section is divided into five subsections and provides the rationale for the

selection of participants, instrumentation, and procedures for recruiting participants for

the study. I discuss issues of trustworthiness and data handling techniques. The sections

provide sufficient details of the procedure to allow replication of the study or as a basis for conducting additional research.

Participant Selection Logic

The population for this study consisted of a mixture of local Caymanians and expatriate families mainly from other Caribbean islands such as Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad. These groups were concentrated in the high school system where most educators originate from the Caribbean region. In addition to the Caribbean, the local community is made up of expatriates from across the world with the largest groups from the United Kingdom, United States, and Canada.

Purposeful sampling was used to select participants based on their exposure to school inspections in the Cayman Islands. Participants who had been through at least one inspection cycle were recruited for participation. To qualify, educators were required to be employed in a secondary school in the Cayman Islands for at least one academic year. Community members who qualified for selection as participants needed to be a parent or guardian of a child whose school had been through at least one inspection cycle. This ensured that the community member had some experience with local school inspections. All participants were required to have participated in the inspection process through the completion of surveys or been present in the school during an inspection and accessed the final inspection reports. All participants were questioned prior to the final selection to ensure they met the criteria for participating in the study.

Following the recommendation of Creswell and Creswell (2017), three participants were selected for interviews from each group being studied, resulting in a

total of six participants: three educators and three community members. This sample size

was based on the availability of the participants, their willingness to cooperate, and

available resources. Emergent sampling was reserved as a tool for recruiting additional

suitable participants but was not necessary because data saturation was obtained with the

six candidates interviewed. Once IRB approval was granted, participants were alerted

using a global email and a message was posted on the WhatsApp group chat of the Parent

Teacher Association inviting all interested individuals to participate in the research.

Seven days were given for participants to respond to the invitation. Responses were

carefully vetted, suitable candidates were contacted by telephone to affirm their interest,

and arrangements were made for the interview meeting.

Following Creswell and Creswell's (2017) recommendation, I determined that no

more than six and not fewer than four participants would be used in this qualitative study.

Data saturation was reached after five interviews when maximum information was

obtained, and no new information or patterns emerged (see Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Having three participants from each category was sufficient for the purposes of this

study. To ensure confidentiality, I removed all identifiable participant characteristics, and

each participant's identity was protected with the use of pseudonyms.

Instrumentation

Six semistructured interview questions were used as an interview guide to gather

information on the perceptions of each participant (see Appendix). Participants were

initially questioned on their personal experiences with school inspections in the Cayman

Islands and were asked to provide examples to support their views. Both sets of

stakeholders were questioned on whether they thought the inspection process was

relevant to their demographic in terms of cultural significance, and how they thought the

inspection process had impacted the local community. The final question was designed to

solicit the views of participants regarding the impact of school inspections on student

progress and achievement. Probes and prompts were used, and the questions were

differentiated because I anticipated that the knowledge and experiences of educators and

community members would differ in the area of student progress and achievement. In

addition to the six main questions outlined in the Appendix, participants were given

prompts and probes that allowed for expansion of answers so that enough data could be

collected during the interview sessions to answer the research questions. Some examples

of prompts and probes were added to the interview guide in the Appendix, but these were

not exhaustive and were extended during the course of the semistructured interviews to

obtain rich, thick descriptions from participants (Patton, 2015). Also, video and audio

recordings were made of each participant using a smartphone or online meeting software

to record additional information and ensure reliability and accuracy of the data collected.

As the researcher, I created the interview guide used as the instrument for this study and

directed participants to answer interview questions as fully as possible (see King et al.,

2019).

　　　According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), it is important for qualitative

researchers to focus on the context in which participants live and work and to recognize

the extent to which their own backgrounds influence the way they think and interpret

information. In the current study, the interview guide was developed using the Cayman

Islands school inspection framework as a foundation for questions based on the expected

inspection outcomes as outlined in the framework. This provided context to the questions

formulated because it outlined the standards of expectations for the procedures and

outcome of school inspections in the Cayman Islands (see Cayman Islands Government,

2018). Although the framework provided the foundational questions, the open-ended

nature of the questioning and the addition of prompts and probes assisted in establishing

sufficiency of the interview guide as the data collection instruments to answer the

research questions (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The collection of data was performed via interviews that took place in a private

office or virtually using Zoom. To standardize the interview process, I asked all

participants identical questions and conducted the interviews under controlled conditions.

Interviews were conducted at the same time of day whenever possible with the same post

inspection time period To ensure standardization of the data collection process, I used

face-to face interactions to facilitate the accurate logging of facial expressions and body

language during the interview sessions. Interviews were conducted over a period of 14

days. Each candidate was interviewed for a maximum of 1 hour with follow-up questions

used throughout the interview to prompt and probe the participant to expand on answers

and give examples from their personal experience. I used a journal during each interview

to take additional notes as each interview progressed. The notes from the journal were

logged and used as additional information during data analysis. The interview questions

were designed to answer the research questions as fully as possible.

To ensure content validity, I transcribed recordings immediately after each interview to increase reliability of data and ensure that the process remained iterative with emerging patterns highlighted to enrich the findings of the research. The participants were asked to verify that the information transcribed from their interview accurately reflected their views. Information evolving from initial interview data was used as a guide for decisions on further sampling. All participants were thanked at the conclusion of each interview and reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they were no longer willing to participate.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Data were collected from six participants: three educators and three community members. I collected the data using semistructured interviews over a 2-week period. Interviews lasted for 30 to 60 minutes and were recorded using a video application on my personal smartphone or on a laptop. I also recorded written notes using a personal journal.

As an exit strategy, participants were given the opportunity to review and verify the transcribed notes from their interview. They received a $25 gift card as a token of gratitude for their participation. Finally, they were invited via email, to complete a short online survey of their experiences of participating in the research process. I used the data from the exit survey as a personal guide to improve my interview skills in preparation for future research.

Data Analysis Plan

There are many different approaches for analyzing qualitative data. In this research, the data I collected from interviews were examined for themes and patterns to provide a reliable reflection of the views presented by the participants (Mishra & Alok, 2017). All interview transcripts were carefully checked including notes taken related to nonverbal cues, specific phrases, pauses and punctuation, to ensure they accurately reflect the interviews. I searched the transcripts for essential patterns and meanings that highlighted legitimate and useful trends. All transcripts were read several times for data familiarization and deeper understanding. Notes and mini analyses were written throughout the analysis process to reflect on patterns, concepts, codes, and categories as they emerged in the data. Once transcription was completed I shared the information with the participants to verify accuracy and increase credibility.

The data was systematically read and objectively analyzed using the process of qualitative content analysis described by Krippendorff, (2004). This research tool was used to identify key words, concepts, and themes, to assist with answering the research questions. I studied the interview data to identify trends in the responses of both groups of participants. Attitudinal and behavioral responses were described, and the emotional and psychological state of participants noted. The information provided by this data assisted me in answering questions on the perceptions of stakeholders on school inspections in the Cayman Islands.

First, I summarized the interview text by condensing the paragraphs to short meaningful statements. This conceptualization process gave the opportunity to familiarize

myself with the data as I re-read the transcripts to obtain an overview (Mishra & Alok, 2017). A label was added in the form of a descriptive code that exactly matched the condensed statement. Each code was no more than two words in length. I then checked to ensure all the content had been covered and assigned codes aligned to the research questions. When all interview transcripts had been condensed and coded, I categorized the labels by grouping related codes according to their context or content. In the process of recontextualization, I linked the data to the specific questions to satisfy the objective of my research by verifying the data on school inspections for each stakeholder group. The resultant themes emerging from the categories were then used to identify underlying meanings that are dormant in the interview data. The themes revealed patters in the interview responses and disclosed how the inspection process is perceived by the participants. It also shows the perceptions of stakeholders on the way in which the inspections affect student progress and achievement, and by what means the process can be improved to have greater relevance for the Cayman Islands.

The themes and categories that were identified were checked to ensure that no data fell between two different groups or did not correspond with one of the groups identified. Sub-categories with exact coding were used to ensure all data could be identified in one category only. The compiled data was then used to draw meaningful conclusions that was recorded in an objective manner from a neutral perspective. I used latent data analysis to identify hidden patterns and meanings in the participants responses (Mishra & Alok, 2017).

In addition to the analysis procedures described above, it was also necessary to use an appropriate computer software package to assist with data analysis (Punch, 2005). Using Microsoft Excel software assisted me with the storage, annotation, and retrieval of data. It was also useful for helping to quickly find and extract quotes and to retrieve words and phrases. The technology proved useful when making decisions on identifying categories and assigning codes.

I identified discrepancies in the data that needed to be further explored with the cooperation of the participants, without them having knowledge of the fact that the data was being treated as anomalous. The aim was to ascertain a background or specific reason for the experience shared by the participant and thus determine a rationale for the discrepancy. This was done in cases where a single participant's response was very different to all others. This method of verification was essential for confirming the findings of the study and obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perceptions on school inspections in the Cayman Islands.

Issues of Trustworthiness

This section consists of factors related to the trustworthiness of this research. The section on credibility describes appropriate strategies to ensure internal validity. The attainment of external validity is outlined in the section on transferability. The sections on dependability and confirmability outline the strategies used to ensure the research is reliable and objective. Finally, the procedures to address ethical concerns and the moral protection of participants are explored.

Credibility

To ensure the credibility of this research, I carefully vetted the participants to confirm they have personal experience of the Cayman Islands school inspections. The participant numbers chosen for interview were adequate to achieve data saturation. Also, testing the perceptions of community members in conjunction with educators to answer the research questions offered a form of "environmental triangulation" by providing views on the same phenomenon from a different group of individuals (Stahl & King, 2020). The use of original data from the exploration of the participants' perceptions to fully understand their experience of school inspections, increased the validity of the data guaranteeing the plausibility of the findings.

Having participants check and verify the data, helped to validate the interpretation of answers to interview questions, thereby enhancing the credibility of the findings. Also, the offer of multiple interview methods for data collection such as telephone, face-to-face online and in person, provided participants with several ways to interact and share their views. This resulted in a more relaxed approach to interviews and although all participants opted for face-to-face interactions, the offer of alternative interview options helped them to feel more at ease in sharing their honest opinions and experiences.

Transferability

According to Maxwell (2020), the concept of transferability is aligned to analytic generalization and is central to external generalization. To achieve external validity in this research, I used thick descriptions and variation in participant selection. Also,

discrepancies in the data were identified for further investigation to enhance

understanding.

Thick descriptions were used in this study to provide a rich portrayal for the

comparative studies on perceptions on school inspections in other countries. The

contextual information provided on the Cayman Islands school inspections in this study

could be useful to other island nations and the findings of this research used as a basis for

further exploration. The detailed description of the methods, timeframe, demographic,

inspection system and participants in this study added to its transferability and improved

trustworthiness.

Dependability

To ensure the dependability of this study, I kept detailed records of all interactions

with participants. Transcriptions of recordings were literal, and the data collected

carefully stored in a secure database for availability should the need arise to replicate the

study in the future. To ensure integrity and secure data handling, I used a computer with

Microsoft Excel to assist with coding. The findings of this research were also reviewed

by fellow researchers in the field of education, this instilled a sense of personal

responsibility that helped to further guarantee dependability of the research findings.

Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described confirmability as a way for researchers to

contextualize and eliminate bias in their research. In this study, confirmability was

assured by soliciting the assistance of fellow researchers to oversee the precision and

accuracy of the research practices used in this study. Also, a research journal was kept for

critical self-reflection and to log personal views that could potentially contaminate the research findings. All notes and annotations were regularly reviewed, and the data analysis process was iterative.

Ethical Procedures

Potential candidates were selected from the education global email list and their interest in participating noted. All approved participants were given the interview questions prior to the interview to ensure they were comfortable with the questions and informed of the option to withdraw at any stage in the process. I prepared a reserve list of suitable candidates to take the place of participants who decided to withdraw. Candidates who were unable to participate in interviews due to unforeseen circumstances were offered a new date and time that was mutually convenient.

The fact that all participants were chosen from a small close-knit community posed several ethical challenges. My position as an educator within the community meant that some of the participants were known to me. Special care was taken to inform participants of their rights and assure them of my objectivity. In addition to obtaining IRB approval prior to collecting data for the study, participants were provided with a consent form once selected for the study. Each participant was given a copy of their signed consent form containing the pertinent information to contact my research team and procedure for withdrawal from the research. They were also provided with a note to reassure them of my professional and legal obligation to protect their identity and to act in a discrete and confidential manner.

I treated all data collected in the strictest confidence with personal information such as names, schools and location hidden. Data was stored in an encrypted file on an external hard drive and password protected. All written notes were shredded after transcription. Participants were offered the opportunity to view their data by sending an emailed request. However, they were not allowed to view the data of other research participants. Data will be stored for five years and then manually deleted.

Summary

The role of the researcher is essential to ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of a qualitative research. In this chapter, the research design and rationale for investigating the perceptions of educators and noneducator community members on the school inspections in the Cayman Islands was outlined. The qualitative research methodology was explained with justification given for the sampling strategy and size. The data collection choice and analysis tools were validated, and the treatment of data and participants discussed. Issues of trustworthiness were highlighted and strategies for coping with ethical challenges that might arise with the selection of participants from the small Cayman Islands community outlined.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the perceptions of educators and community members on the efficacy of the Cayman Island school inspections. The research questions were designed to find out how the research participants perceived the school inspection system in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and student progress and achievement. In this chapter, I describe the setting by outlining the personal and organizational conditions that influenced the participants' experiences at the time of the study and had a bearing on their perceptions. The demographics and characteristics of participants that related to this study are also outlined with details of the data collection and analysis process. Finally, evidence of trustworthiness is presented prior to the reporting of the results of the study.

Settings

At the time of the study, two participants had experienced a school inspection the week prior to their interview. Consequently, their experience was current and possibly more reliable than those who did not have a recent experience. This had some bearing on the results because participants with more recent involvement provided richer descriptions and more examples when describing their experience of school inspections. Two participants were interviewed in person, whereas all others were interviewed virtually using Zoom. No changes in personal circumstances were reported by the participants that could influence the interpretation of the results in this study.

Demographics

The participants all resided in the Cayman Islands and were exposed to the local

media that report on school inspection dates and publish the final inspection reports. All

participants were expatriates of mixed Caribbean, European, or African descent and had

experienced at least one school inspection in the Cayman Islands. All educators

interviewed had experience working in other jurisdictions, and two had experience of the

UK-style school inspection system. One participant was a teacher from a local private

school, two were educators from local government secondary schools, and three were

community members who are parents or guardians of children attending local schools

(see Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Summary of Interview Participants Showing Number of Inspections Experienced

Participant	Gender	Category	Number of school inspections experienced in the Cayman Islands
1	Female	Educator	3
2	Female	Educator	2
3	Male	Educator	3
4	Female	Noneducator	2
5	Female	Noneducator	1
6	Female	Noneducator	2

Data Collection

After obtaining a signed consent from each participant, I used a printed copy of

the interview guide (see Appendix) to question the six stakeholders. Two interviews were

conducted face-to-face in a private office, and four were conducted via video conference

over a period of 2 weeks. All interviews took fewer than 60 minutes to complete, and participants were asked six main questions with additional prompts and probes to encourage the use of examples and extract additional details. An online recording device was used to record the virtual interviews, and a cell phone voice recorder was used for in-person interviews. Additional notes were taken using a personal notepad to annotate my thoughts and feelings as they came to mind during each interview.

The execution of the study followed the outline in Chapter 3 except for the timeline for review of transcripts for participant approval. Due to time constraints, the transcript approval process took 3 weeks to complete because some participants took up to 14 days to review and verify the draft of their transcript. This led to a delay in the processing and analysis of the data.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interviews were initially presented in Microsoft Word and carefully read and annotated to highlight relevant words, phrases, and sentences to establish codes using an open-minded approach. Precoding and initial coding were used to determine a starting point to extract information from the interview data (see Saldaña, 2015). Manual coding processes were employed that included the use of highlighting and adding color to sections of text. The Find feature in Microsoft Word was used to find keywords that indicated recurring concepts in the interview transcripts. Coded units were identified from repeated phrases, unexpected opinions, specific points that were emphasized by the interviewees, and statements that were aligned with current research on school inspections from my literature review. The codes were then categorized and

uploaded to Microsoft Excel for thematic analysis in the form of a chart. Tabulating the

data helped me to identify the connection between the categories and emerging themes

that became apparent, such as inspection relevance and reliability, impact of inspections,

and inspections sustainability. This approach revealed the connection between the views

and experiences of the participants in the study.

<div align="center">**Evidence of Trustworthiness**</div>

In this study, trustworthiness was ensured by outlining issues related to

credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Participants were chosen

based on their knowledge and experience of the Cayman Islands school inspection

system. This helped to guarantee the credibility of the data collected. Also, each

interview candidate was given the opportunity to review and approve their transcript prior

to final data analysis. Although this process took longer than expected, it was an essential

step to ensure the information was accurate and reliable. In addition, the views of two

sets of stakeholders on the same phenomenon were recorded, serving as a form of

environmental triangulation as described by Stahl and King (2020).

Transferability was ensured by following the plan outlined in Chapter 3 to obtain

rich, detailed descriptions of the interviewee's experiences of the inspection process.

Various participants were used, and I reserved the option to interview additional

candidates if data saturation was not achieved with the number of participants chosen. No

additional participants were required for this study.

Dependability of this research was ensured by conforming to the plan that was

designed with input from my committee members and the IRB committee who evaluated

and approved the research design. I reviewed the suggestions and recommendations and sought regular feedback at each stage of the process. With their collaboration, I was able to produce a "logical, traceable and documented" (Patton, 2015, p. 685) guide to direct the study and ensure its authenticity.

In addition to soliciting the guidance of my peers and research committee, I adhered to the confirmability strategies outlined in Chapter 3. My research journal proved to be an essential tool for self-reflection and to evaluate my research practices at each stage of the process. This helped to mitigate bias in my research and to gather additional data and thoughts that arose during data collection and analysis.

Research Findings

The six participants used in this study were identified as Participant 1 to 6 (P1 to P6) to secure their identities and ensure confidentiality. P1, P2, and P3 were educators, and P4, P5, and P6 were other stakeholders. The results were organized according to the three main themes based on the research questions. Research Question 1 asked how educators in the Cayman Islands perceive school inspections in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and student progress and achievement. Research Question 2 asked how community members (other than educators) perceive school inspections in the Cayman Islands in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and impact on student progress and achievement. Three broad themes with subcategories emerged from the data analysis. The main themes were relevance and reliability of Cayman Islands school inspections, impact of inspections, and sustainability of inspections in the Cayman Islands.

Theme 1: Relevance and Reliability of the Cayman Islands School Inspections

Cultural Relevance

All participants commented on the cultural and demographic relevance of the Cayman Islands school inspection protocol. All six participants felt that its relevance could be improved if inspectors were selected from local educators who were familiar with the local demographic. P3 stated that his most recent inspection consisted of six inspectors, five of whom travelled from the UK for the sole purpose of inspecting local schools. P3 reported feeling that the inspectors did not understand the Caribbean culture and therefore used their experience of UK schools to judge the Cayman Islands schools.

P3 stated that "something gets lost in translation with the UK exam boards and our children generally do not perform as well, so I don't know why we have a UK curriculum and UK inspectors." P3 gave examples from his personal experience to demonstrate why he felt the curriculum and inspection processes were not culturally appropriate. P3 described feeling that culture should be a major factor when choosing inspectors for schools. P3 also revealed knowledge of local associate inspectors but had no experience of them performing inspections in schools. P3 wished for a greater focus on a cultural framework that is relevant and specific to the Cayman Islands context.

All educators reported that their experience of school inspections in the Cayman Islands was generally inconsistent. P2 stated that "standards and processes compare us with schools that are culturally different and have a different set up. The majority of inspectors are from the UK, and we are being compared with the UK schools that have a

different system." P2 did not feel that the school inspection system was appropriate for a multicultural demographic such as the Cayman Islands. P2 stated that

> when you come from a background where the standards are different, it's difficult to compare systems. We had to explain the culture of the school and the island to the inspectors, but I think if you are coming to inspect schools, you should already be very much aware of the culture and how the system runs. I do not think that the framework is suitable for every school in Cayman.

P2 and P3 commented on the sociodemographic challenges that lead to some students not eating breakfast before school. P3 noted that this is not necessarily something that would be considered by inspectors who do not know the area well and cautioned that there should be a greater emphasis on value added, considering the broader context and unique challenges in government schools compared with the private sector.

The participants generally reported a perception that the inspectors' lack of cultural and demographic awareness negatively impacted the outcome of inspections. Participants felt this could potentially lead to biased results in inspection reports. P3 stated that "most inspectors are UK trained and visit UK schools, so they come with some biases that affect their judgement."

Timing and Procedures

Stakeholders generally shared the view that inspectors should spend more time in schools to get a more accurate indication of how the school operates. Also, educators felt the 6-month timeline given for follow-through inspections was too short, and one participant asked why the Cayman Islands did not use the same timeline model as the

UK. P3 stated that he did not think the current system was appropriate and that internationally, when a school is deemed to be weak, more time is given to improve. The participants felt that the timing for turnaround was too short, and P1 added that schools needed time and resources to fulfill the inspection recommendations. P1 completed her statement by sharing that the short inspection turnaround time caused her to experience fatigue.

P3 believed that instead of inspections every 2 years, a 3-year cycle would be better. P3 justified this timeline by asserting that it would be very difficult to move from a satisfactory to a good rating in only 2 years. P3 stated that "six months is not enough time to turn a school around. I think a failing UK school is given a year or more before a follow-through."

Two educators felt that inspections would be more impactful if the inspection team visited the school over a longer period and performed regular drop-ins. These educators' experience of the OES is that it is too separate and removed from the schools. The educators felt the OES inspectors should be locally based and visit schools more often with a partnership approach to inspections. P1 stated that "instead of a full-blown inspection every two years, we need to have inspectors coming into schools to do more walkthroughs and giving regular feedback and guidelines."

Accountability

Both groups of stakeholders reported that they felt the inspections resulted in increased accountability for educators. Noneducators felt this was a positive aspect of inspections, but educators reported experiencing increased levels of stress because of

accountability pressures. All noneducators reported that they generally found the school inspections positive because they used the results to determine which schools were the best. P4 stated that it helped her to feel secure in the knowledge that her child was attending a good school. Noneducators joined the educators in reporting no noticeable improvement in student progress and achievement that could be attributed to the inspections.

Four participants felt that schools were not provided with the resources they need to be successful and that in the Cayman Islands, the inspections seem to be more politically motivated. P1 stated:

> We tick a box to say we are checking on our school, but it's not making an impact because there needs to be a further step. If a school is failing, we look at reasons such as lack of resources or incompetence on behalf of staff. We need to have a tiered level approach to accountability.

P1 suggested using an audit team that would visit schools prior to the start of an inspection cycle. That team would then tell the schools and education services what was lacking in terms of resources and what needed to be provided to ensure the schools perform and do well. The idea is that if schools are provided with all the necessary resources and there are no barriers to student progress and achievement, it would be fair to hold the educators accountable for the inspection outcomes because an inspection would reveal how well the school is performing under ideal conditions.

P6 discussed her experience of sitting on a parent interview panel for an inspectorate team. P6 commented that the questions she was asked in relation to the

school were not fair in her opinion. P6 did not know how to answer to ensure that the

school was shown in a positive light. P6 felt that some questions were biased toward

creating a negative perception of the school. P6 stated that "they specifically asked

certain things and left out others that were very important."

P5 and P6 felt that parents should have a greater level of accountability for school

inspection outcomes. P5 and P6 desired a more transparent process for the selection of

parents for interviews and felt that the results of the interviews should be shared with

schools in conjunction with the survey data. P4 noted that parents who pay school fees

play a more active role in ensuring that schools perform well and value high levels of

accountability for educators. Five participants noted that in addition to educators,

government also needs to be held accountable for school improvement. P1 noted that an

inspection system independent of government would be a preferred option because some

of the inspection recommendations are beyond the school's control.

P3 posited that despite accountability factors, "inspections do not improve the

quality of education." P3 went on to share his experience stating that school inspections

are designed to provide policy decision-makers with information about the current state

of education in the schools. Therefore, he believed it is the government's responsibility to

implement changes suggested by school inspectors.

P5 discussed the importance of accountability and shared her view that

inspections are useful for providing the Cayman Islands community with national and

international comparisons of school performance. In P5's opinion, "a school that

performs well will be motivated and encouraged when comparing themselves with other

schools in the Cayman Islands". P5 emphasized her view that greater accountability and competition between schools can help to bring about improvement.

Theme 2: Impact of the Cayman Islands School Inspections

Student Progress and Achievement

The consensus from all participants is that they were not convinced of a correlation between school inspections in the Cayman Islands and improved student outcomes. No participant reported experiencing an improvement in student progress and achievement because of inspections. P2 stated that one reason for this might be the fact that the improvement in student behavior after the inspection in her school, lasted for only one week. P2 commented that the inspections might show improvement for students if teachers were provided with much needed resources identified from inspection outcomes.

P1 mentioned that she was aware of students who struggled to access the curriculum because they had learning differences that had not yet been identified. She advised that an inspection judgement based on a value-added approach would be more meaningful. P3 commented that the limited access to targeted resources acted as a hinderance to student progress and achievement.

Educator Experience

P1,2 and 3 commented on the increased accountability pressures associated with ensuring they provide adequately for all students, especially those with special educational needs (SEN). P1 and P2 shared that the inadequate resources often means that the energy required to prepare for the inspections leaves them depleted and unable to

meet the needs of their students. Consequently, they reported feeling less effective as teachers immediately before and after an inspection because they focused more on preparing resources to "put on a good show" than on the needs of the students. In addition, they noted that the stress caused by inspections had a "trickle down" effect to their students whose opinion of their school is framed by inspection outcomes.

P1 explained that as a Caribbean teacher, she experienced a different type of training in SEN and behavior management and when she arrived to work in the Cayman Islands, she noticed that the education system was an amalgamation of the UK, Canadian, US and Caribbean education systems. She did not think this was considered during an inspection where the expectation of inspectors is primarily from the UK perspective. She stated that "for example, when inspectors report that the method of teaching is too didactic, this was from a UK perspective. There have been proven successes of Caribbean teachers who deliver the CSEC curriculum using this style of teaching". She went on to note that the pedagogy of Caribbean trained teachers needs to be understood within the context of their training and the outcomes measured by inspectors so that their judgement can be balanced.

P2 described her experience of working in a United States school where UK-style school inspections were not required. She explained how standardized tests were used to monitor student progress and achievement. She described her experiences with school inspections in the Cayman Islands as generally "stressful and unhelpful". However, her most recent experience was described as the most positive because the inspectors were more approachable and interacted with her personally. In her own words:

It was the first time I had an inspection where the inspectors introduced

themselves and said they were there to observe and not to criticize, so they

wanted us to feel at ease. I have never had that kind of interaction with inspectors

before. Before we were just told that inspectors would be here, and we would just

have to carry on as normal having as little interaction as possible. There was an us

and them feeling. This time I saw the human face of the inspectors. This might be

due to the fact that they were coming out of quarantine and the fact that we are

going through a pandemic, so they possibly took this into consideration when

making their judgements.

P2 shared the general educator view that the amount of time, energy and

paperwork that goes into preparing for a school inspection, for the school to be deemed

successful can be overwhelming because there are several criteria to meet. P2 went on to

describe how an inspector appeared in her classroom to observe her teaching for only

twenty minutes. P2 did not feel that he could have formed a reliable judgement in that

time. She described feeling disappointed, and the paperwork that took her many hours to

prepare seemed to be a waste of her time as the inspector did not read them.

P3 described his experience as mostly positive but shared that the most recent has

been less favorable due to variation in inspection quality and the interpretation of the

framework. P3 stated that the reports generated by the inspection team do not seem to

correlate with his personal experience of the schools in the Cayman Islands and

corroborated the general educator view that the inspection reports were inconsistent and

somewhat unreliable. P3 surmised that discrepancies in the reports "might be due to the inspectors' lack of cultural and demographic appreciation and understanding".

Community Dynamics

P4, 5 and 6 shared the view that school inspections benefited the Cayman Islands community because they believe it results in increased levels of accountability. P4 surmised that in government schools the accountability was not as significant because "there is no enforcement of the existing accountability measures". She noted that parents with children in private schools had higher expectations so were more likely to hold educators accountable for school inspection outcomes.

P4 and P5 commented on the importance of the inspection reports in helping them to choose schools for their children. They believed the inspection results gave an idea of how well a school was performing. P4 stated that in her experience, there is a strong sense of community and culture that is not reflected in the inspection reports.

All participants shared the view that school inspections have a significant impact on the Cayman Islands community. P3 suggested that "when the school fails or does not do well, there is a strong stigma attached which affects pupils that attend that school and adults and children within the school and the wider community". P3 went on to share an experience of attending a social gathering where he was approached and told "Oh, you work at that school that has a weak inspection rating" and the school becomes the topic of discussion as the community members asked questions and wanted to know more about the school and why it did not at least receive a "satisfactory" rating. P3 continued to share his experience of students' perceptions:

I noticed that students particularly, get the feeling that they are not very good because they are in a "weak' school. They assume that the inspectors don't think it's a good school, so they feel that maybe the school really is not good. There are some people who are aware of the reality and are appreciative but the average person in the street will go on what they see in the news and on social media which can be quite variable.

P4 commented on her experience and shared the view of the educators that negative inspection reports can alter community perceptions of schools. She speculated that families from low socioeconomic communities might see a school as failing because of a negative inspection report, "but they have no choice but to send their children to that school". P4 corroborated the view shared by P3 and stated that "the community might think the school is not good and that feeds to the children who accept this as a fact and make it a reality, and their behavior and attitude deteriorates due to their perceptions".

P3 described the inspection process as hectic and stated that the final reported results did not always reflect what is happening on the ground in schools. He went on to share his opinion that the published reports sometimes show the school in a negative light in the community and do not always reflect the positive aspects of the school. P6 also shared this view on the implications of the published reports for the Cayman Islands community.

Theme 3: Sustainability of the Cayman Islands School Inspections

Stakeholder Expectations

The participants reported a desire for the purpose of the inspections to be made clearer to the entire community. P2, 3 and 4 commented that they were not always clear on the expectations of the inspectors and educators reported that they found that expectations differ with each inspection. P2 shared that "from a teacher's point of view, its often difficult to determine what they are looking for and what they are using as a comparison". P2 went on to add that due to sociodemographic differences, she did not consider it fair for inspectors to compare government schools with private institutions in the Cayman Islands. She remarked that:

As a simple example, I don't think you have many children in private schools coming to school hungry. That single factor can change the dynamics of how the day will go. Because a hungry child will not be a productive child. To compare that with a well-fed child in a private school who turns up at school mentally ready to learn, is unfair.

Educators believe that the socioeconomic considerations and student profiles should be an integral part of the inspection process. P1 shared her thoughts and experience making mention of the UK Ofsted school inspection system on which the OES Cayman Islands model is based:

According to the Ofsted website the idea is we are all supposed to have this common goal where we want to see schools where students are being catered for in their entirety. They should be making progress in academics and in their

personal and social development. We need to be clear on what that looks like. My

expectations of what good progress looks like might not be the same as everyone

else. We have to meet students where they are. Our students come from diverse

backgrounds and some people do not realize that there is a great socioeconomic

divide in Cayman and some families have to choose between Wi-Fi and feeding

their families.

P1 went on to explain that having inspectors with greater awareness of the

demographic would mean they are cognizant of the fact that "some students are not

failing because of the school or teaching or anything else, sometimes it's because their

basic needs are not being met". P1 shared her experience of her most recent inspection

where she felt surprised that the inspectors rating did not seem to correlate with the

progress made by her students over the short time frame between inspections. Her views

correlated with the other educators interviewed who noted that they expected the OES

standards to be less subjective, and that there should be a greater emphasis on value

added.

Inspections in the Future

Stakeholders shared a desire for greater involvement in the Cayman Islands

school inspection process. Educators expressed a desire for more opportunities to interact

with inspectors and all stakeholders expressed the desire to receive personalized guidance

from the inspection team. They also wanted the opportunity to provide their personal

view on how the school is performing so that inspectors could take this into

consideration. P6 noted that as a parent, she would like details on the role she needs to

play in school improvement. Five of the six stakeholders interviewed shared the view that developing an OES inspection team comprising of trained local individuals would be more beneficial.

P3 felt that having a local inspection team would help to ensure "consistency in interpreting the OES standards". He commented that he found the interpretation to be subjective and changed with each imported inspection team. He further reinforced the importance of culture in school inspections:

> Ever since I became a teacher, I felt that culture plays a big role in education. If you don't understand the culture of what you are inspecting/analyzing, you are going to get a lot of things that are off based on your perceptions.

Educators shared the belief that the OES standards would benefit from greater local input. P4 stated that "input from persons here could help tweaked the standards to make them more relevant and appropriate for use locally and ensure they are culturally relevant. We have experts here who could give their opinion".

Educators agreed that altering the inspection system would require training for the inspectorate team but also for school leaders and staff regarding expectations. They encouraged the establishment of a "balanced" team of inspectors with "culturally relevant expertise" that can guide and influence the decisions being made based on the Cayman Islands context. P2 suggested that the inspection team could contain a majority from the Caribbean and that training should be provided for school leaders to meet the OES standards.

P1 suggested that only local educators should be recruited and trained to form an inspection team that would provide the regular monitoring for schools over a long period. She noted that "on the UK Ofsted website, they have plans for inspectors to go into schools and be helpful [while] creating a non-confrontational experience". P1 felt that this approach would be ideal to achieve progress in local schools and reinforced that local inspectors understand the culture and would have a more realistic frame of reference, thus creating a more appropriate inspection experience.
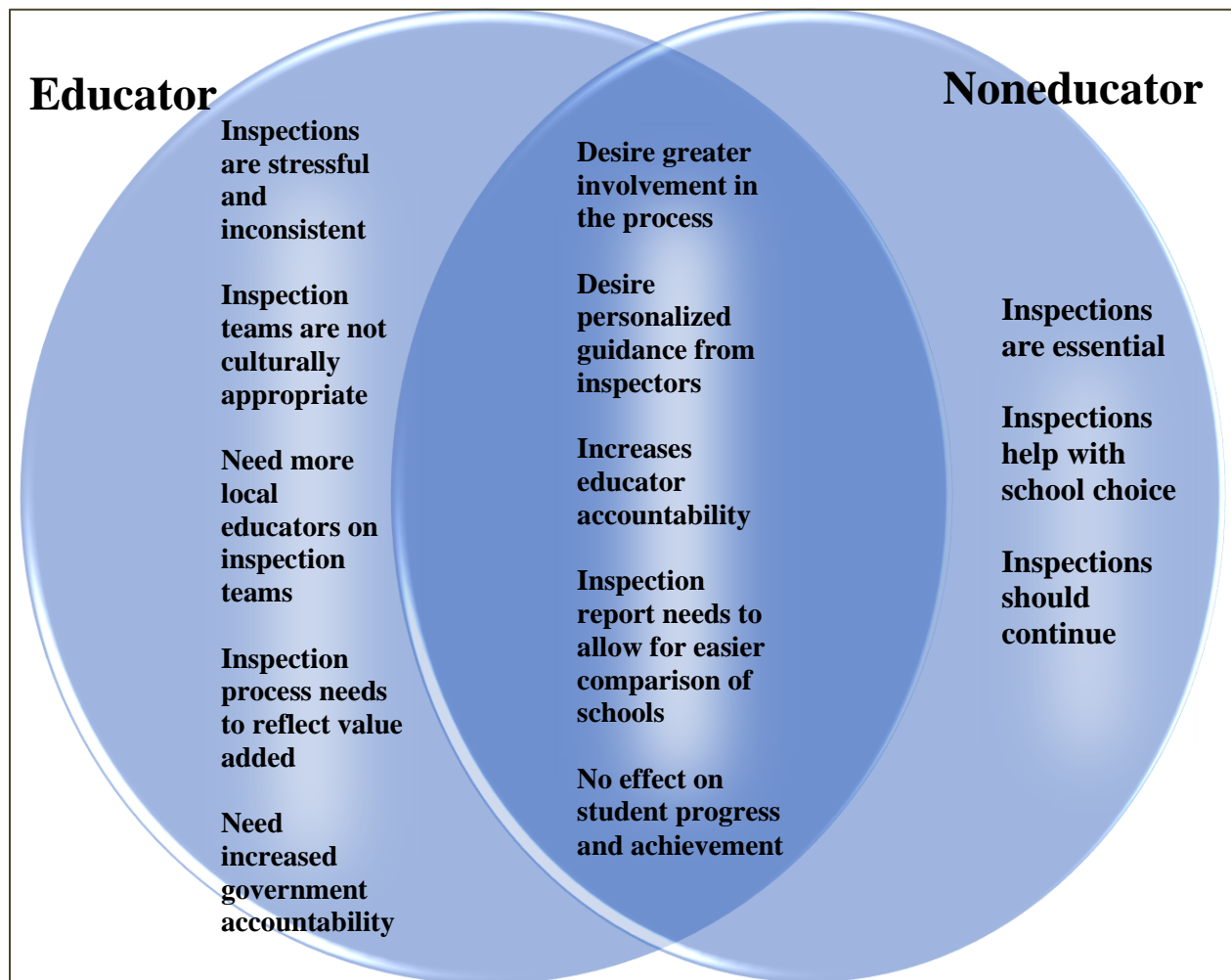
P2 also agreed with the concept of additional training for educators so that school improvement would be a continual process. She stated that "inspections should not just be about sporadic monitoring and writing a report". P2 recommended that the Ministry of Education direct resources and put support in place to achieve specific education goals. She went on to agree with other stakeholders and stated that "there should be more clarity in inspection outcomes to show the powers and responsibilities of parents so that parents know how they can partner with schools for better results."

P4 advised that school inspections needed to be more consistent in their execution. She believed that a local inspection team would better understand the culture of the local education system. P3 commented that a local inspectorate would understand the concept of value added, in the local context, thus making the process more robust and clearer for all stakeholders. P1 suggested that instead of inspections, all schools should have predetermined standards that are internally monitored and that the Office of Education Standards (OES) should work more closely with schools and perform regular walkthroughs.

Four of the six participants commented that the inspection report was too wordy, and the noneducators added that the inspectors need to use a simple template that is easy to understand and can be used to quickly compare schools in the Cayman Islands. P3 reported that he did not find the inspection report accessible and as an educator, was still unsure of what he needed to do to improve, post-inspection. P3 stated that in the future, he would appreciate direct feedback from the inspectors with specific guidelines on how he could improve his teaching. Figure 2 shows a summary of the views of educators and other community members indicating opinions that were discrete and those that were common to both sets of stakeholders.

Figure 2

Summary of Stakeholder Views and Experiences on the Cayman Islands School Inspection System Based on the Interview Questions

Educator

Inspections are stressful and inconsistent

Inspection teams are not culturally appropriate

Need more local educators on inspection teams

Inspection process needs to reflect value added

Need increased government accountability

Desire greater involvement in the process

Desire personalized guidance from inspectors

Increases educator accountability

Inspection report needs to allow for easier comparison of schools

No effect on student progress and achievement

Noneducator

Inspections are essential

Inspections help with school choice

Inspections should continue

Summary

Educators generally have a negative perception on the efficacy of school inspection in the Cayman Islands. They perceived the process to be stressful and inconsistent and felt that it did not lead to improved student progress and achievement. They do not feel that the process is demographically and culturally relevant and think the

system should be reviewed to include the input of local educators. The data revealed that educators felt a greater involvement from the local government was needed to ensure resources and facilities are adequate prior to the onset of inspections. Noneducators felt that the Cayman Islands school inspections are essential and were useful for assisting when choosing schools. However, they did not feel the inspections led to improved outcomes for students or that it was culturally appropriate. Both sets of stakeholders reported a desire to be more actively involved in the process and to receive direct guidance from inspectors on how they could contribute to school improvement. In chapter 5, the interpretation of the results will be presented with associated implications for positive social change and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine how the Cayman Islands school inspection system is perceived by key stakeholders in the community. The study was conducted to assess the efficacy of the framework developed for use when inspecting schools in the jurisdiction by gathering data on the views of stakeholders. The data from interviews were evaluated to ascertain the participants' experiences of school inspections in the Cayman Islands as an indicator of the appropriateness of its use in local schools.

The key findings of this study revealed that educators in the Cayman Islands perceive school inspections as culturally insensitive, stressful, and inconsistent. Educators felt that the inspection process needed to be reviewed with greater accountability placed on the local government ministry and department responsible for education. Noneducators felt that school inspections in the Cayman Islands are essential and important for assisting parents to choose the best school for their children. Both sets of stakeholders felt that school inspections increased the level of accountability for educators but did not feel they led to improved student progress and achievement. All stakeholders felt they would benefit from greater involvement in the inspection process and personalized guidance from inspectors.

This chapter provides the interpretation and analysis of the research findings in the context of the conceptual framework and the peer-reviewed literature described in Chapter 2. The limitations as outlined in Chapter 1 are reiterated, and recommendations for further research based on the strength and limitations of this study are provided. Prior

to concluding the study, I discuss implications for positive social change related to the efficacy of school inspections.

Interpretation of the Findings

Stakeholder Experience

The findings of this study indicated that educators often feel stressed and overwhelmed by school inspections in the Cayman Islands. This was consistent with findings from other jurisdictions. Jones et al. (2017) found that the unintended consequences of school inspections were largely linked to the demands associated with educator responsibility and accountability for inspection outcomes. The participants in the current study revealed that they were overwhelmed by the heightened expectations and accountability and felt excluded from the processes and decisions governing the school inspections. This may have resulted in the negative perceptions reported. Hofer et al. (2020) noted that positive educator perceptions make the inspection process more effective, and Schweinberger et al. (2017) reported that educator support is essential for effective school inspections that aid school improvement.

Both stakeholder groups in the current study acknowledged the increased accountability for educators aligned with school inspections. Educators reported feeling that the inspection processes were unpredictable and that the OES framework was not consistently interpreted and applied. Educators also felt that the inspections were political and something they had to endure rather than embrace. This aligned with the findings of Röbken et al. (2019) who reported on the unwillingness of educators to engage with

inspection processes they deemed to be merely a formality. This perception leads to a lack of confidence in the inspection process (Severs, 2019).

Cayman Island educators also commented on the impact of inadequate resourcing. Educators revealed that a lack of resources in some schools creates bias and affects student progress and achievement, thereby leading to unreliable school inspection outcomes. This is exacerbated by the labelling of schools as "failing" in a small island community where educators are often judged based on the inspection outcomes for their school. Data from the current study revealed that this can have a detrimental effect on educator morale. Severs (2019) reported that accountability pressures placed on educators were deepened by a lack of funding that resulted in inadequate resources in schools and led to increased stress for educators.

Noneducators felt strongly that the school inspections in the Cayman Islands are useful and should continue. Şahin (2017) reinforced the importance of school inspections to determine the comparative quality of schools and education systems while highlighting areas for improvement. Educators in the current study reported a desire to have greater input in the school inspection process. This view was corroborated by Sahlén et al. (2020) who revealed that educator perceptions on school inspections could be improved by allowing them to join inspection teams. The ability to participate as inspection team members instilled a sense of ownership of the process and reduced stress and accountability pressures (Sahlén et al., 2020).

Demographic Relevance

Educators perceived that the inspection teams were not culturally appropriate, and educators felt that there should be greater representation from the local population. Choosing to base an inspection system on one founded in a different jurisdiction is not unique. Ehren et al. (2017) reported that many inspection frameworks are adapted from models used in other countries. However, most studies of the efficacy of inspection frameworks have been focused on large, developed countries with well-established systems.

Cayman Island educators' perception that school inspectors do not have an adequate understanding of the demographic is based on the short time inspectors spend on the islands. The fact that school inspectors are imported from other countries, provided with the local OES framework, and sent into schools to inspect has lessened educator confidence in their ability to contextualize their findings. Courtney (2016) reported on the disparities caused by diversity in the socioeconomic status of schools and noted their potential for affecting how educators perceive inspection processes and outcomes. Educators must feel that the system is fair and unbiased and that there is equity in the potential for post inspection development. An amalgamation of local cultural practices and expectations must be considered to achieve success when adopting practices from other regions (Forestier et al., 2016).

The current study revealed that the perceived lack of cultural and demographic awareness of inspectors also affected how they judged the curriculum delivery. Using UK inspectors to judge the delivery of a Caribbean curriculum was perceived as problematic

by educators in this study. In the Cayman Islands, school inspections have led to reforms in curriculum delivery that educators perceived to be unnecessary. Jones et al. (2017) chronicled curriculum reform as a significant factor for amplified pressure among educators.

The increased accountability reported by stakeholders was seen as positive by noneducators. Educators believed there should be increased government accountability for school inspection outcomes. In addition to inconsistencies in interpretation of the inspection framework, educators reported disparities in accountability between schools and felt that the local education ministry needed to play a greater role in ensuring consistency and equity of resources. Differences in governance and accountability have been shown to cause inconsistencies and have a detrimental effect on school inspection and student outcomes (Ehren et al., 2017).

Impact on Student Progress and Achievement

Stakeholders did not believe there was an improvement in student progress and achievement resulting from the Cayman Islands school inspections. This perception was corroborated by Ehren and Shackleton (2016) who reported the limited impact on school improvement and student achievement resulting from school inspections. However, some evidence suggested that success can be achieved when teachers and inspectors work together with a focus on specific student outcomes (Hopkins et al., 2016).

Educators in the current study reported that having greater government and stakeholder involvement could result in more meaningful inspections. Both sets of stakeholders reported the desire for greater direct involvement and personalized guidance

from inspectors. This notion was corroborated by Mampane (2020) who noted that school inspections have a greater chance of success and can offer substantial growth and development for students when they are carefully regulated and there is greater government and stakeholder support and involvement.

The conceptual model created by Ehren et al. (2013) provided a foundation for understanding assumptions about the impact of school inspections on school improvement in the current study. In the Cayman Islands context, the assumption of school inspections resulting in improved schools was not reflected in the perceptions shared by the Cayman Islands community members. Additionally, the cognitive and emotional responses of educators gave a clear indication of their dissatisfaction with the school inspection process as described in the investigative model created by Quintelier et al. (2019). The fact that educators described feeling stressed by the process and perceived it to be inconsistent indicated a level of detachment that demonstrated a lack of commitment to the inspection process. Houseman (2018) described this phenomenon as leading to a feeling of helplessness with educators believing that they have no control over inspection outcomes.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study outlined in Chapter 1 included the small participant pool selected for interview. To alleviate this limitation, I focused on depth of questioning to obtain reliable data. Second, the lack of research specific to the Cayman Islands school inspection system meant that the research gap was based on literature that was not culturally applicable. The exclusion of students' and inspectors' perceptions from this

research created another limitation because their views would have been helpful in obtaining additional categories of stakeholder viewpoints for this research. Cross-referencing the views of several individuals from two different stakeholder groups within the same community using identical interview questions provided a form of environmental triangulation (see Stahl & King, 2020).

The credibility of this study was ensured as described in Chapter 1, and participants were given the opportunity to confirm that their answers to the interview questions accurately reflected their views and experiences. To promote transferability, I used thick descriptions to contextualize the Cayman Islands experience that can be used in further studies to compare other jurisdictions. The detailed records created and used in this study and the regular review and input of fellow researchers ensured its dependability and confirmability.

Recommendations

The literature review provided information on the perception of educators on school inspections in jurisdictions other than the Cayman Islands. The recommendations for further research are grounded in the strengths and limitations of the current study as well as the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Although the studies outlined in the literature review were not demographically relevant and did not focus on the views of noneducators, the education context provided a basis for their use.

The first recommendation is that research should be expanded to include the views of students. Focusing on the perceptions of students in the school inspection process would provide a third layer of data that could be used to judge the efficacy of the

Cayman Islands school inspections. Also, a longitudinal study that included student

progress and attainment data over several years would provide reliable information on the

impact of school inspections on student progress and achievement.

The second recommendation is to include the information on the views and

expectations of the Cayman Islands school inspectors. This would allow triangulation as

described by Ehren et al. (2013) who reported on the perceptions and expectation of

school inspectors. Additional research in this area could be useful because the inspectors

were viewed by stakeholders in the current study as having limited knowledge and

experience of the Cayman Islands demographic and culture.

A third area of recommended research is to explore the views and perceptions of a

wider cross section of community stakeholders. The research addressed in the literature

review was limited in that it focused on the experiences of educators. No available

research was located that reflected the views of the general community on school

inspections. Further research in this area would provide information for cross-referencing

and comparison with the current study. Additionally, a regional investigation

encompassing the wider Caribbean could shed light on how school inspections are

perceived regionally by stakeholders of a similar culture to that of the Cayman Islands.

Implications

The current study has implications for positive social change at the level of

individual educators, community members, educational organizations, local government

education departments, and the general society. The potential for positive social change

highlighted by this study is based on the interconnecting views of stakeholders regarding

school inspection processes and outcomes in the Cayman Islands. The findings of this study could be used to influence decisions on policies related to how school inspections are conducted locally and beyond.

Implications for Stakeholders

The desire for greater direct involvement in the inspection process was stated by stakeholders in this study. Educators felt the need for more personalized feedback from inspectors, and noneducators wanted explicit instructions regarding their role in improving local schools. Schweinberger et al. (2017) found that greater involvement of educators in the planning and execution of school inspections results in educators who are more supportive and accepting of inspection protocols. The use of educators to design school inspection policies and review the OES framework for school inspections may have a positive effect on the Cayman Islands. The negative emotions toward the inspection system expressed by educators in the Cayman Islands could be alleviated by allowing them more opportunities for direct involvement in the process (see Segerholm & Hult, 2018). Trust and understanding between inspectors and stakeholders can be achieved when stakeholders view the inspection systems as fair and transparent (Quintelier et al., 2019). In the current study, educators expressed appreciation when school inspectors engaged them in conversation and communicated with them directly.

Implications for Choosing Inspectors

The perceived suitability of inspectors emerged as a concern for the Cayman Islands stakeholders. Training local educators to be used as inspectors was a common suggestion from educators who believed this could serve to improve the perceptions of

educators toward school inspection teams. Having inspectors who are immersed in the local culture and understand the sociodemographic challenges that exist in the Cayman Islands may help to foster greater trust and support from the local community.

Hopkins et al. (2016) provided evidence to support the notion that stakeholder perceptions are improved when inspectors and educators work together to achieve a common goal. Also, inspector expectations could be altered to use an approach that is focused on guided development in an effort to build trust (Penninckx, 2017). This approach may allow schools to self-assess and self-evaluate but would require additional training for educators by way of professional development. Using this approach may give the Cayman Islands educators greater autonomy to drive school improvement (see Segerholm & Hult, 2018).

Implications for Government Agencies

Educators sought greater accountability for government agencies responsible for education in the Cayman Islands. There was a perception of inequalities between schools in the Cayman Islands and belief that the local government and Department of Education should ensure that all schools are provided with the resources needed for sustained improvement. The feedback provided by inspectors could have a component for government agencies to give direct recommendations on the needs of the school requiring their action. Additionally, establishing a network of schools using a version of the decentralized model described by Janssens and Ehren (2016), could benefit the Cayman Islands education community. Such a model could create an avenue for more

collaboration between schools on the islands and potentially greater accountability for the OES school inspectors and local government.

The framework used for school inspection could also be altered to allow greater focus on value added when determining the impact of classroom teachers. Stakeholders often perceive school inspections as having an excessive focus on student attainment from standardized tests and examinations while, for the most part, ignoring the personal and social development of children (see Zheng, 2020). Cayman Island educators believe that the lack of inspector awareness of the local demographic has caused inspectors to accept data on student progress in schools at face value, with little or no understanding of the starting points and challenges associated with achieving good student progress. The notion of using more internal self- evaluation by schools combined with reviewed OES inspection framework criteria, could be of benefit for clearer judgements on student progress and achievement (see Brown et al., 2020). It would therefore be recommended that the Cayman Islands government OES, revise its inspection framework to allow more in-depth self-evaluation as part of the school inspection process. The revised model should include input from the school-family-community cooperative in addition to education administrators and leadership (see Kurum & Cinkir, 2019).

Conclusions

This research revealed that the Cayman Islands school inspections have had a significant impact on the local community. Parents use the published results when choosing schools based on the OES ratings, but the reality of increased accountability for educators has received mixed reviews amongst stakeholders. Additionally, the research

found that stakeholders do not believe that local school inspections lead to improved outcomes for students, and there are concerns regarding the cultural awareness of inspectors and the inspection processes.

There is a general perception that school inspections will result in more effective schools (see Ehren et al., 2013). This research found no evidence to corroborate this perception. However, the data was gathered based on the Cayman Islands OES inspection model that has been in force for less than four years. Further research is required to fairly judge its validity. A closer alliance between inspectors and stakeholders could benefit the system and help to refine the OES inspection framework. To achieve this alliance, there needs to be increased collaboration and participation from educators to instill a sense of ownership of inspection processes (see Sahlén et al., 2020). In addition, increased governmental support for school and greater transparency and involvement of the local population, could create a more sustainable approach and ensure long term viability of the Cayman Islands inspection system. Evidence from this current research suggests that using inspectors with a better understanding of the local demographic and increased focus on the value added provided by schools, could help to build trust and increase confidence in inspection findings.

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Appendix: Interview Questions and Probes

Research Question 1.

- How do educators in the Cayman Islands perceive school inspections in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and student progress and achievement?

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. How many school inspections have you experienced in the Cayman Islands? Probe: Have these been positive experiences? Why or why not?
2. What are your views on your most recent school inspection experience? Give examples to illustrate these views?
3. Do you think the school inspection system is appropriate for use in the Cayman Islands? Prompt: Give reasons to justify your answer.
4. How could the inspection system be altered to improve your experience? Explain using examples.
5. How do you think the school inspection process affects the community? Explain. Probe: Can you provide an example from your experience? Do you think school inspections benefit the community?
6. Do you feel there is an improvement in the quality of education and student progress and achievement because of the school inspections? Explain?

Additional Prompts:
Please describe some of the successes and challenges you have had with school inspections. Was the process as you expected? What was your experience with the inspectors? Did you feel that the judgement was fair and a true reflection of your school?

Additional Probes:
How did you view the future of inspections in the Cayman Islands?
Do you think the school inspection process needs to be changed in any way?
What changes would you make to the process if you could?
Please explain a little more about your views on the school inspection process.
Do you have any additional areas of thought or concern that you would like to share?

Research Question 2

• How do community members perceive school inspections in the Cayman Islands in relation to demographic relevance, the quality of the inspection process, and student progress and achievement?

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. How many school inspections have you experienced in the Cayman Islands? In what capacity have you been involved in school inspections? Probe: Have these been positive experiences? Why or why not?
2. What are your views on your most recent school inspection experience? Give examples to illustrate these views?
3. Do you think the school inspection system is appropriate for use in the Cayman Islands? Prompt: Give reasons to justify your answer.
4. How could the inspection system be altered to improve your experience? Explain using examples.
5. How do you think the school inspection process affects the community? Explain. Probe: Can you provide an example from your experience? Do you think school inspections benefit the community?
6. Do you feel there is an improvement in the quality of education and student progress and achievement because of the school inspections? Explain?

Additional Prompts:
Please describe some of the successes and challenges you have had with school inspections. Was the process as you expected? Were you given an opportunity to speak with the inspectors? Did you feel that the judgement was fair and a true reflection of your school?

Additional Probes:
How did you view the future of inspections in the Cayman Islands?
Do you think the school inspection process needs to be changed in any way?
What changes would you make to the process if you could?
Please explain a little more about your views on the school inspection process.
Do you have any additional areas of thought or concern that you would like to share?