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Effective Educational Leadership Styles, Capabilities, Best Practices, Capacities, and Sustainable Strategies in Caribbean Countries

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Walden University
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Abstract

Effective Educational Leadership Styles, Capabilities, Best Practices, Capacities, and

Sustainable Strategies in Caribbean Countries

by

Finan Herbert Sabaroche

MPhil, Walden University

MA, University of London Institute of Education

B.Ed., University of the West Indies

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Education

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May 2022

Abstract

Secondary school leaders of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, a subgrouping of the Caribbean Community, were concerned with understanding and using effective leadership. The problem was that difficulties persisted in determining and applying the essential leadership features and related factors to influence and improve the learning outcomes. This generic qualitative study aimed to explore the features and leaders' perceptions to understand and apply effective leadership to influence learning, school climate, and societal development outcomes in three Caribbean countries. The conceptual and empirical evidence and leaders' perceptions of the features, factors, and archival data helped clarify the problem and guide the questions and methodology. The research questions focused on the leaders' perceptions of effective leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, strategies, and factors influencing the outcomes. Semistructured questions guided the virtual interviews and focus group sessions with nine purposefully selected qualified and professional leaders with over three years of experience. The manually analyzed data procedures showed patterns evolving from codes, categories, and themes. The main finding pointed to accommodating situational styles and operational initiatives. The subfindings represented leaders' need to utilize practical experience, learner-centered practices, joint operations, solutions to accommodate learner differences and interests, impacting factors, and inclusive and flexible policy operations. These findings may contribute to leadership decisions, leaders' professional development, future studies, individual learning success, conducive school climate, and societal development with social change implications.

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Dedication

I thank the Almighty for the companions guiding my path throughout this research journey. I am grateful to my family members, colleagues, friends, and advisors in the United States, Caribbean, Dominica, and elsewhere. Thanks to my pillars of continued strength - my wife Judith and the Pontiff and Sabaroche families. The encouragement and contributions to fulfill my dream epitomized a consistent reminder of love and support to help others succeed. Yes, all of you; thank you for remaining my dedicated counselors. You represented a progressive generation expressing the importance of education and training as a means to opportunities and well-being, emphasizing that excellence in such pursuits never stopped being an option.

I wish to express gratitude specifically to two deceased stalwart women in my life - Mother Brunette and Sister Maria. The intuition of these two extraordinary ladies during my formative years laid the foundation for nourishing and sustaining my ambition along the way. For such contributions, I am dedicating this entire work to the two of you among my most precious ladies, as there are not enough words of gratitude and appreciation to express my unconditional love for you, my past shining stars. Your thoughts on my direction in life and the support of others reflected happiness. Such contributions unearthed the deep, routed faith, patience, understanding, and application required during this journey to overcome the challenges. Thank you to all of you.

Acknowledgments

The completion of this study would not have been possible without the contributions and support of individuals. First, I want to thank the secondary school leaders and administrative personnel of the OECS Ministries of Education for their voluntary contributions to conducting this study. Thank you to my former and present advisors and chairpersons, Dr. David Bearden and the meticulous and profound scholar Dr. Ronald Paige. Your contributions and the appropriate inputs of Dr. John Flohr and Dr. Dimitrios Vlachopoulos as committee members pushed me beyond my comfort zone and vision. Yes, this knowledgeable team broadened my scope to utilize evidence and operational solutions to the challenges of effective leadership related to learning, the school communities, and societal benefits. Your international perspectives and expertise in educational leadership proved invaluable and contributed significantly to my academic and professional growth, and I am forever grateful.

Thank you to Dr. Cheryl Keen and Kevin Jenson. Your time and guidance proved critical to navigating the spaces of academia while curbing my oriented use of adjectives and adverbs and the opinions that restricted scholarly direction. Finally, thank you to the supportive faculty and staff of Walden University Riley College of Education with specific reference to the editor, Dr. Vania Bright. Advisor Joshua Bass, you served with distinction as my advocate in times of need. The collaborative and valuable contributions of all guided this satisfying journey. Thanks.

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Chapter1: Introduction to the Study

This study explored how secondary school leaders in the Caribbean understood and applied their perceptions of leadership features and factors to influence the outcomes. These features comprised leadership styles, capabilities, practices, capacities, and sustainable strategies (Northouse, 2018; Wagner et al., 2006). My motivation rested on the premise that a country's educational policies, improvements in operations, and results depended on effective leadership (Miller, 2016). Therefore, the determination to develop knowledgeable, skilled, and experienced personnel with appropriate behavioral characteristics assumed renewed importance with beneficial implications (Hutton, 2017).

The strategy of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM, 2015) to address educational challenges included details of teaching and learning, accountability, and timelines. Still, the suggested strategy did not emphasize adequate and effective leadership to facilitate these goals. However, the larger countries embraced regional and global education, employment opportunities, and societal benefits that emphasized educational leadership to address the challenges of human resource development. These initiatives included recommendations for Latin America, the Caribbean, and the UNESCO (2016b) education 2030 agenda. The Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) focuses on vocational qualifications (Gregory, 2003).

Countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) agreed to address localized concerns associated with the education sector leaders' ability to realize sustained social change (Jules, 2015; Julius, 2018; Miller et al., 1991). The OECS recommendations also recognized organizational leadership and management as essential

pillars among supportive policy and operational guidelines. The initiatives suggested by

the United Nations (2015) anticipated linkages geared towards the understanding and

usage to sustain global human resource development. This study aimed to contribute to

social change with evidence to guide decisions related to leadership at secondary schools

to influence learning, community, and societal opportunities. The study locations, the

independent Caribbean OECS countries (Dominica, St. Kitts & Nevis, and St. Lucia),

shared similar historical settings (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Map of OECS Countries Showing Dominica, St. Kitts & Nevis, and St. Lucia

Note. The OECS member countries are Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada,

Montserrat, St. Kitts Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & The Grenadines. The associate

member countries are Anguilla and The British Virgin Islands - British Territories, and

Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Martin - French Territories (Lancaster & St George,

2015).

Historical Context

The three countries' socioeconomic and political systems originated from the Westminster style of the self-governing structure grounded within Britain's historical colonization context (Jules, 2015). The countries' socioeconomic development thrust focuses on tourism, commercial and social services, and agriculture up to the impact of COVID-19. The development thrust rests on the standard OECS human resource development educational system's anticipated policy goals and operations (OECS, 2016).

The Ministries of Education in the countries have maintained responsibility for secondary schools' operations, funded by the governments with private stakeholders' historic assistance (UNESCO, 2015). The schools provide a mandated secondary education program geared towards internationally recognized Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) standards and further education, work, and societal development (Miller et al., 2000). The importance of leadership to sustain human and social development policies and operations focusing on the outcomes continues at the Caribbean secondary level learning institutions. The political authorities of the CARICOM countries, including the OECS, envisioned human and social development as the region's response to the challenges, demands, and opportunities of globalization (CARICOM, 2015; United Nations, 2015). Blom and Hobbs (2007) pointed to the eastern Caribbean education system's inadequacy in preparing learners for the global economy. The Caribbean countries embrace the focus of the United Nations (2015) on human resource development goals, emphasizing unemployment, poverty, the behavioral ills of societies, and socioeconomic development. For example, Larocque (2015), Secretary-General of

CARICOM, emphasized effective secondary-level learning institutions as necessary to address the unprecedented youth unemployment crisis.

Miller et al. (2000) and Griffith (2009) emphasized implementing strategies 32 to 35 as the foundation and direction to enhance secondary education in the Caribbean countries. Jules (2015) viewed the need for secondary-level learning institutions in the OECS to fulfill the increasing human resource demands necessary for the socioeconomic service sector and the global mandates. The political authorities also envisioned such claims for human and social development policies. The operations represent a CARICOM Single Market Economic (CSME) pillar for the free movement of personnel through legislation in each location (CARICOM, 2015). Thus, the success of education and training in the OECS countries required decisions based on evidence to shape nationalistic identity, build citizenship, and solidify the societal foundation.

Significant Sections of the Chapter

This chapter comprises the introduction, historical context, background, research problem, purpose, research questions, and conceptual framework. The chapter also focuses on the nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope, delimitation, and limitations. The study's significance, before the summary, represents contributions to policy, knowledge, and practice with implications for positive social change.

Background

Summary of the Literature

The research literature overview, expanded in Chapter 2, presents theoretical, conceptual, and empirical evidence linked to the leadership features to describe the scope

of the study to guide the foundation (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Hallinger, 2018; Santamaria, 2016). Meador (2020) described effective leadership as the foundation to shape school success to influence stakeholders' collaboration, interaction, and contributions to attain the outcomes utilizing quality characteristics. Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Nelson and Squires (2017), and Wright (2017) agreed that the appropriate direction, interactions, and support required effective leadership styles to influence and improve student learning outcomes. Leadership capabilities/competencies emerged from reviewing the evidence from studies done by Green (2017), Day et al. (2016), and Le Fevre and Robinson (2015) to guide effective leadership decisions. Hitt and Tucker (2016) and Northouse (2018) suggested progressive policies, operational practices, and appropriate evaluative measures with standards to guide contributions towards achieving the outcomes. Leadership capacities included necessary, timely, and conducive conditions (policy goals and operations, resources, and behaviors) to realize effective leadership to achieve the outcomes (Wagner et al., 2006). Northouse (2018) provided evidence to recognize the need for holistic, systematic, and dynamic approaches and operations related to the features to guide sustainable strategies to influence the outcomes.

Styles and Capabilities

Several researchers explored situational leadership styles and the required capabilities. Hersey and Blanchard (1979) and Wright (2017) showed that different effective leadership styles guided leaders' situations and support. Brathwaite (2014), O'Keefe (2013), and Green (2017) found that the appropriate leadership capabilities

encompassed the leaders' knowledge and understanding, skillsets, and behavioral experiences.

Practices

Leadership practices also represent a vital feature in understanding and using effective leadership to influence learning outcomes (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). The core practices include setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization, as noteworthy features of successful school leadership and teaching and student learning (Jacobson, 2011; Leithwood, 2012). The findings of Green (2017) and Hitt and Tucker (2016) also provided evidence associated with the forms of trusted practices (planning, delivery, and evaluation) required for effective leadership to enhance school climate. Green further concluded that professional practices related to leaders' competencies and capacities contributed to positive societal behaviors.

Capacities and Sustainable Strategies

The literature review associated with the capacities and strategies as components of the study's scope showed their continuing impact on attaining the outcomes. Hallinger and Heck (2011), Patton (2015), and Wagner et al. (2006) used the capacities to encompass authorized policies, resources, structures, operational processes, and actions planned within a timeframe. Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Patton (2015), and Ravitch (2016) clarified the long-term impact associated with the leadership features as strategies to influence and sustain the outcomes holistically. The envisioned results focused on effective teaching and learning, school climate, and societal benefits. Evidence emerging from the findings associated with the holistic leadership features gave direction to clarify,

differentiate, and contribute to the literature review and inform effective leadership decisions related to leaders' perceptions.

Outcomes

The scope of the evidence related to the Caribbean countries for the understanding and usefulness of the leadership features appeared challenging. Hutton (2017) noted that in today's secondary schools, the expectation of realizing the outcomes requires practical and sustainable leadership as an ingredient in driving change processes and strategic actions. Kouzes and Posner (2007) pointed to such a leadership perspective as being "at the hub of transforming values into actions; visions into realities; obstacles into innovations; separateness into solidarity, and risks into rewards" (p. 10). These insights show a human-centered integrated approach. Also, UNESCO (2016b) revealed that the universal education plan leading to 2030 as a challenge to the new vision represented the millennium's fourth Sustainable Development Goal. UNESCO (2016a, p. 6) stated the fourth goal is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." This goal provided the direction for Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Hutton (2017) and Jules (2015) helped to clarify the perspectives of the observed directions related to the Caribbean countries' rethinking school leadership approaches to:

- Agree on a shared philosophy of education in the Caribbean to develop a holistic and dynamic vision and purpose of secondary education (Jules, 2015).

- Promote a seamless education system recognizing the critical direction, interaction, and support required at the secondary level to enhance continued opportunities focusing on the outcomes (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Jules, 2015).

- Engage all stakeholders in the learning process to establish a favorable, enjoyable, and conducive teaching and learning environment (Jules, 2015).

- Assess and regulate learning competencies and evaluate policy and operations using local, regional, and global criteria and standards (Jules, 2015).

The research findings of Anderson (2017) and Hutton (2018), covering more than 30 years of studies, supported effective leadership in school settings. The researchers' interpretive findings described effective leadership as entering an era of outstanding teaching and learning performances and favorable climate outcomes. Gentry et al. (2014) provided reinforced evidence that the determined styles of leadership at learning institutions increasingly gained recognition as a necessary "key differentiator for success" (p. 83). However, Leithwood et al. (2020) specified strong claims that questioned the importance of leadership as second to teachers' competencies in attaining students' success. Leithwood et al. (2020) presented evidence to guide the thoughts of leaders' views to encompass "vision and setting direction, understanding the holistic development and supportive involvement of people, collaboratively redesigning the institution and managing the learning process" (p. 30).

Also, Wright (2017) showed that the perspectives related to school climate positive outcomes benefited from leaders' adaptability to situations through all stakeholders' involvement. Wright also noted that leaders created an enabling

environment with open communication to freely express concerns and thoughts with mutual understanding to use dialogue to succeed as the norm within an organization. Wright further recognized that the global vision to attain societal outcomes provided further insight into how situational leaders aided in assessing their followers' readiness and improving the dialogue between all parties. However, leaders' concerns about influencing and attaining outcomes pointed to a continuing knowledge gap requiring further exploration (Diamond & Spillane, 2016; Hutton, 2017; Jules, 2015).

Knowledge Gap

The knowledge gap points to limitations to understanding and using effective leadership at Caribbean secondary schools. The challenge draws attention to how well the reviewed conceptual and empirical findings influenced and improved the leadership features. Guskey (2009) defined the knowledge gap as the concerns of education scholars and practitioners in recognizing the deficiencies in the literature related to educational improvement efforts that jeopardize the chances of success. Thus, Hutton (2017) pointed to the existing limitations that amplified the gap within each leadership feature:

- The boundaries of the leadership styles exploration results raise the concern of an information disparity requiring incorporating credibility and rigor associated with contributing types (Wright, 2017). Wright also noted the unique and practical consequences of the situational leadership style approach to improve leadership effectiveness.

- The deficiencies emerging from the findings of the leadership capabilities and related characteristics point to the concern of different expertise (Green, 2017;

Le Fevre & Robinson, 2015). Le Fevre and Robinson emphasized that this concern requires a holistic diagnosis of the capabilities inclusive of the leaders' behavioral characteristics focusing on professionalism, commitment, and satisfaction for effective leadership.

- Research on best practices concerns new knowledge to address the limitations of student-oriented assessment and learning, stakeholders' involvement, and societal contributions to guide leadership effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 2020; Ravitch, 2016).

- The capacities' knowledge gap includes developing, distributing, and utilizing emergent technologies, among the other related characteristics (Patton, 2015). The linked policies and operational decision trends require ways to contribute to the understanding and using the capacity characteristics (Patton, 2015),

- Limitations associated with the sufficiency of knowledge to inform each leadership feature's strategic and sustainable decisions emerge for leadership effectiveness. Research findings have pointed to a holistic focus on the capability features' policy and operational decisions (Hutton, 2017; UNESCO, 2016b). The strategies required direction and support related to local and global acceptance of criteria with standards to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate to influence sustained leadership outcomes. (Jules, 2015).

The conceptual and empirical findings required an acceptable level of methodological rigor. This process comprises verifying the results, answering questions, and alleviating concerns to justify the need to understand and use each leadership feature

(Hallinger, 2018; Thorne, 2016). However, the holistic consideration of the features'

knowledge concerns led me to identify a literature gap. Addressing the gap involves

identifying the literature's theoretical and conceptual foundation and empirical

knowledge to justify policy decisions and operations impacting leadership features

(Patton, 2015).

Researchers over the last three decades examined models of leadership

perspectives, including styles (Amanchukwu et al., 2015), capabilities (Wagner et al.,

2006), practical experiences (Hitt & Tucker, 2016), and capacities (Hallinger, 2018) to

inform the process of identifying the knowledge gaps. Jules (2015) also provided

evidence to clarify the inadequate knowledge linked to practices but focused on outcomes

associated with the available quantitative data related to capacities. Caesar (2013)

emphasized the limited conceptual and empirical qualitative knowledge related to

consequences and applications. Hitt and Tucker (2016) supported the need to understand

and use qualitative evidence to verify successful leadership beliefs. Therefore, the need to

address the knowledge gap that emerged from the limitations aims to justify the direction,

collaboration, and support to realize the purpose of exploring the features.

Need for the Study

My qualitative research study's need emerged from the critical observation of

leaders' applied experiences and exploring evidence from the past using carefully

reviewed literature. The insights pointed to the lack of shared knowledge of the concept

concerning the leadership features associated with the policies and operations of OECS

secondary schools. Santamaria (2016), Ramraj-Sookdeo (2020), and Wagner et al. (2006)

provided support to show ways to explore perspectives to obtain evidence to understand

and apply the appropriate leadership components to inform decisions. Forde (1993) and

the World Bank (2016) report of evaluative strategies pointed to limitations of evidence

to understand and apply education data impacting educational leadership. Therefore,

there was the justification to obtain the leaders' perceptions of the features as credible

information to guide decisions to improve learning performances related to the authorized

CXC policy operations. The leaders' perceptions aim to prepare learners for further

education, training, and job opportunities to facilitate the CARICOM policy of free

movement of skilled and professional personnel.

The UNESCO (2015) study also proposed interventions to enhance school climate

and sustain societal development contributions through effective leadership at the

secondary schools in the OECS countries. Brathwaite (2014), De Lisle (2012), Levin et

al. (2019), and O'Keefe (2013) revealed the attrition and shortage of professionally

trained leaders to fulfill the demands associated with the study. Jules (2015) also

provided insights into the study's need to address the leaders' shortage of relevant work-

related competencies. Therefore, the evidence aims to provide support, disparities, and

insights to guide decisions and address the concerns to understand and use the knowledge

concepts, applications, and leaders' views to justify the need for the study.

The study's impact requires confirming credible evidence and leaders' applied

experiences. Thus, exploring the conceptual perspectives and results of empirical studies

of leadership characteristics represents an essential contribution to research knowledge.

More specifically, experienced leaders improved and sustained set standards related to

the secondary schools' outcomes despite challenges that appear not professionally

researched (UNESCO, 2015; World Bank, 2016). Therefore, the conceptual perspectives

and empirical evidence guide decisions to address those concerns.

The literature review contributed to the formulation of each research question and

guided the research methodology. The linked issues and procedural methods facilitated

obtaining the leaders' perceptions as responses to code and developing categories and

themes representing data analysis findings for interpretation (see Kahlke, 2014; Merriam

& Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015). The reviewed literature associated with the scope further

provides perspectives for each feature to support, differentiate, and point to insights

related to the conceptual and empirical evidence. Therefore, the results offer insights to

inform the leaders' contributions to addressing the problem.

Problem Statement

Apart from exploring the perspectives and applied concepts, the study focuses on

administrators' or leaders' perceptions. Specifically, I sought to identify perceptions on

features and factors of effective leadership that the leaders believe, based upon their

knowledge and experiences, lead to better student learning outcomes in their schools.

Understanding effective leadership is not something administrators can do solely by

utilizing quantitative means but requires shared qualitative evidence and experiences

(Patton, 2015). Effective leadership has essential and critical features; it is difficult to

decide how to attain positive outcomes for a given learning situation and environment.

Leaders' concerns related to teaching and learning required appropriate leadership

features, characteristics, and leaders' authentic views as contributions to influence and

improve Caribbean secondary schools' outcomes. The OECS education statistical digest indicated that the countries' secondary level graduating students for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certification (CSEC) showed poor results. The set criteria and standards for the secondary school learners required achievement levels (one to three) in five CSEC passes, including English and Mathematics, for college enrollment or most job placements. The digest's five reported years showed that the achievement rates remained below 50% for the selected countries and the OECS (Table 1).

Table 1

Achievement Trends (% of Students) of Selected Countries and the OECS

Years	Dominica	St Kitts & Nevis	St Lucia	OECS
2019	39.4	11.7	32.9	27.8
2018	42.1	22.0	33.0	30.9
2017	42.1	22,0	31.2	29.4
2016	48.5	25.9	31.2	29.8
2015	44.6	-----	35.5	37.5

Note. OECS (2021). Statistical Digest Chapter 5: Table 5.9. The trend shows students' performance for five CSEC passes, including English and Mathematics.

Table 1 shows the common achievement trends (under 50%) for 5 years for the three selected OECS countries and the average performance of all the OECS countries related to the authorized secondary-level education examination. Athill (2019) recommended an urgent necessity "for more and stronger student readiness supports" (p. 151) to enhance students' CXC performances. Meanwhile, a scarcity of credible qualitative empirical evidence hindered authentic decisions that educational leaders

classify as essential to improving students' poor academic performance in the Caribbean (De Lisle, 2012; Jules, 2015; Julius, 2018). Also, the OECS statistical digest data information about the professional status of the school leaders to guide the required decisions seems not surprising. Among the principals and deputy principals employed at the public (n=134) and private (n=46) secondary schools, only 79, or 44%, attained a degree in educational leadership and administration or management.

Brathwaite (2014), Caesar (2013), and Jules (2015) also noted that educational quality outcome strategies continued as a primary concern because of shortcomings of professional development and commitment, retirement, and prominent attractions and promotion without the required preparation. De Lisle (2012) and Jules (2015) further noted a shortage of Caribbean-related studies to provide empirical evidence to guide and support the strategies. Hutton (2018) and Ravitch and Carl (2016) emphasized that scholars and practitioners over the past three decades pointed to various supportive and contrasting models of effective leadership liable to address the problem and improve outcomes. Heck and Hallinger (2014) and Southworth (2002) also provided evidence showing positive longitudinal effects of effective leadership influencing learning outcomes. However, such leadership at the schools required addressing the leaders' understanding and using the appropriate styles, capabilities, practices, capacities, and strategies to address the problem. The problem is that essential features and factors influence effective leadership. Still, difficulties persisted in understanding and applying the appropriate components to achieve the outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore secondary school leaders' understanding and application of effective leadership features and related factors to influence and improve secondary school students' learning outcomes in selected Caribbean countries. I used the generic qualitative approach to explore effective leadership as the phenomenon of interest and examine the perspectives and empirical evidence related to the leadership features as the research paradigm (Patton, 2015). I also focused on describing, analyzing, and interpreting the secondary school leaders' perceptions and lived experiences to obtain credible direction, support, and insights to guide proactive decisions and strategies. Such operational choices to influence the secondary school leaders (deputy principals, principals, and education officers) in the OECS countries aimed to assure that the study rested on the consequences and application of leaders' identified solutions related to the problem (Patton, 2015). Such evidence fulfilled the purpose of focusing on contributions to influence and improve the targeted outcomes.

The results also required adding to the literature review to understand and use how the leaders' perceptions of the features influence positive outcomes. Patton (2015) contributed to the systemic and holistic qualitative approach to explore the phenomenon's features for consequences and applications. These results linked the problem and purpose to finalize the research questions and the methodology. Ravitch (2016) provided evidence from contributing factors to guide and support the identified critical components. Miller (2016) and the OECS (2016) also highlighted archival data insights impacting educational leadership outcomes (see Chapter 3).

Research Questions

The research questions inquired about the perceptions of education leaders of selected OECS secondary schools focusing on understanding and using insights related to the leadership features and factors. The leaders' perceptions represented responses to the primary research question (RQ) that focused on two subquestions. One subquestion examined the leaders' perceptions through interviews to understand and apply the features to influence the outcomes. Another subquestion to obtain leaders' views through the focus group deliberations concentrated on the identified factors related to the features. The main research question represents the following:

Research Question: What are the secondary school leaders' perceptions of understanding and using effective leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, strategies, and related factors influencing student learning outcomes?

Subquestion 1a: What are the leader's understanding and application of each leadership feature to influence the results?

Subquestion 1b: What are the leaders' views of the related factors influencing teaching and learning, school, and societal outcomes?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework represents effective leadership features with related characteristics. Defined as the phenomenon of interest, effective leadership grounded the study and linked the major theoretical propositions detailed in Chapter 2. The study showed how evidence emerging from the leadership features guided the research questions and the methodological approach. Wagner et al. (2006) noted the need for

leaders to differentiate and link the leadership features and related characteristics.
Wagner et al.' s perspectives also guided the plan to study effective leadership
comprising the essential features to influence the outcomes.

Operationalizing the framework perspectives required reviewing the conceptual
models to understand and use effective leadership as the study's phenomenon. Hersey
and Blanchard (1979) developed the situational leadership theory model that I applied to
ground the research study's primary conceptualization of leadership. Hersey and
Blanchard proposed the 360-degrees leadership theory model as a taxonomy of
situational leadership styles to assess how leaders are influential (Chapter 2). Thompson
and Glasø (2018) also proposed a leader-follower development model testing Hersey and
Blanchard's life circle theory model. Amanchukwu et al. (2015) noted that the model
required applying the styles, principles, and methods with development, delivery, and
evaluation criteria to achieve success.

The theoretical propositions underpinning the conceptual framework (detailed in
Chapter 2) described the critical features of each theoretical model linking the approach
to the problem, purpose, research questions, and methodology of the study. Kahlke
(2014) and Northouse (2016) proposed that the situational style model features showed
how leaders' direction, interaction, and support benefited stakeholders through a
combination of styles to enhance the outcomes. Green (2017) and Wagner et al. (2006)
emphasized how the capabilities model through professional development and training
used leadership knowledge, skills, and appropriate behaviors and experiences to enhance
a school climate conducive to students' learning. Green (2017) and Leithwood (2012)

indicated that using the global standard best practices model approach demonstrated how

leaders develop and apply policy operations, involve stakeholders, redesign the

organization, and manage evaluated programs. The capacities conceptual model

(Hallinger, 2018) provided leaders' contributing conditions to facilitate policies,

resources, and operations within timeframes to impact the outcomes. Patton (2015) and

Ravitch (2016) suggested a model that guides leaders' decisions to plan, deliver, monitor,

and evaluate policy operations of the leadership features and related characteristics.

Therefore, the determination to explore the phenomenon's features rested on

understanding each leader's perceptions of what insights to consider, advocate, and

utilize related to the endurance of appropriate policies and operations. The holistic

process aimed to realize mega (societal), macro (institutional), and micro (individual

stakeholder) outcomes. The decisions related to the framework models comprised

supportive, differentiated, and insightful evidence with the research design procedures to

facilitate responses to the questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015). The

6methodological approach and the research design utilized by Ravitch and Carl (2015)

also enabled the rigorous process using credible methods to avoid biases and enhance

trustworthy validation. Therefore, the foundation and conceptual framework models

provided the research study's mental picture and methodology.

Practical Framework Models

The concise description of the functional leadership features for this qualitative

study embodied the model theory that Hersey and Blanchard (1979) developed and

Amanchukwu et al. (2015) remodeled related to situational leadership. This theoretical

model guided the decision to ground the conceptual framework of effective leadership using the generic approach that Patton (2015) advocated supporting the consequences and application of the leaders' perceptions. Northouse (2018), Santamaria (2016), and Wagner et al. (2006) suggested appropriate models linked to the features for supportive, different, and insightful directions to understand and use effective leadership (Figure 2).

Figure 2

The Conceptual Features for Effective Education Leadership
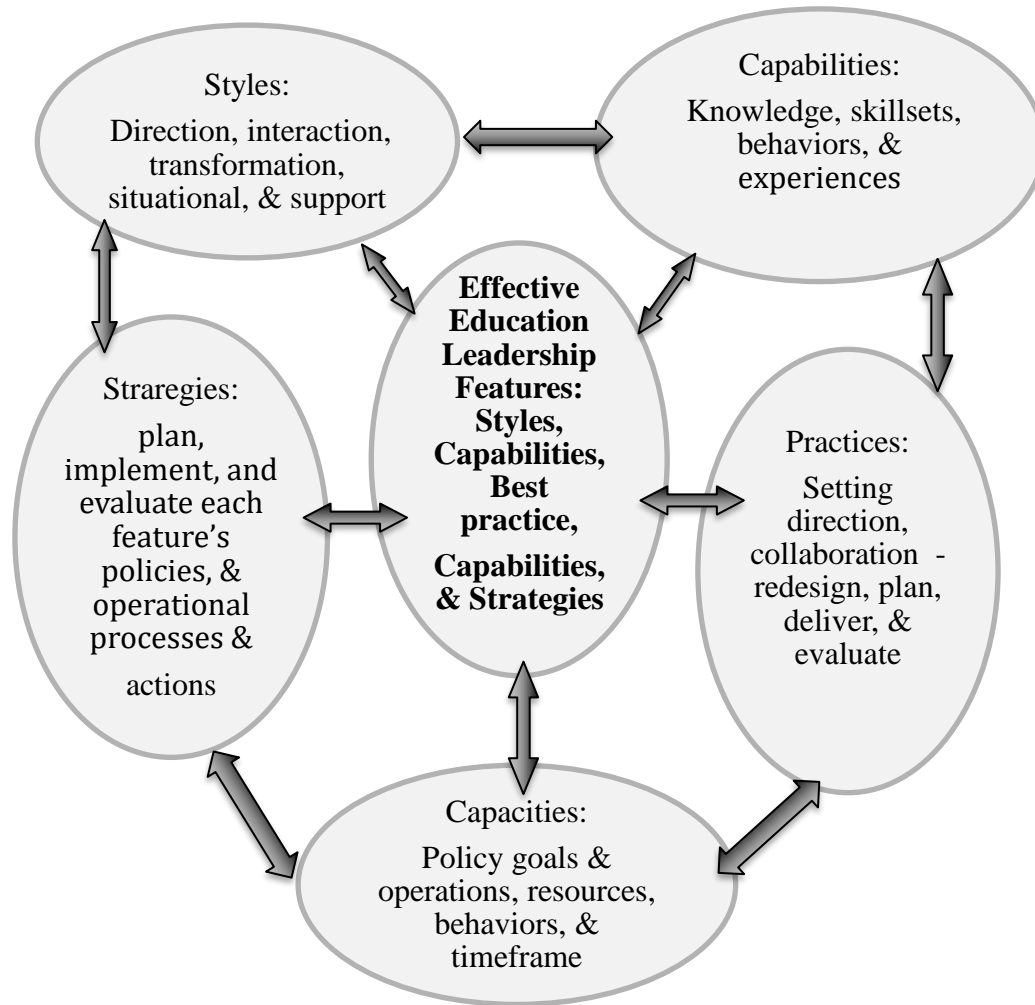
The identified features of the conceptual framework and perspectives in Figure 2 helped determine the study approach, research questions, and instruments and influenced the methodological data analysis. Amanchukwu et al. (2015) and Northouse (2016) delineated the situational leadership style models to embrace the supportive direction, interaction, and insights conducive to the situation to influence the outcomes. Green (2017) and Wagner et al. (2006) highlighted the capabilities model for use with featured ways to understand, develop, and use leaders' knowledge, skillsets, and behavioral experiences to influence others to improve the outcomes. Hitt and Tucker (2016) and Jacobson (2011) proposed practices as a complementary model to set the direction, develop and use resources, and redesign to plan, deliver, and evaluate learning programs and school climate to influence the outcomes. Green (2017) and Santamaria (2016) suggested policy goals and operations, resources, behaviors, and timeframe as capacities or conditions as a model viewed by the institutions' leaders further contributed to achieving the results. The sustainable strategies approach focuses on the continued cycle to plan, implement, and evaluate each feature's policies, operational processes, and actions to influence leaders' applied consequences and improve outcomes (OECS, 2016; Richardson-Rose, 2019).

Figure 2 illustrates, using arrows, the study's primary components' logical connections to depict the conceptual relationships, multiple linkages, and nature of effective leadership. Therefore, the diagram identifies the grounded leadership model's core concepts (Santamaria,2016; Wagner et al., 2006). Northouse (2018) and Wright (2017) emphasized the inclusive characterized styles of the leaders' directional,

supportive, and collaborative knowledge and commitment. The capabilities represented

the leaders' competencies, including essential expertise and understanding, skillsets, and

behavioral and practical experiences (Green, 2017; Wagner et al., 2006). Hitt and Tucker

(2016) specified the best practices to plan, deliver, and evaluate, indicating the leaders'

effective, trusted, and relevant understanding, using their perceptions of policies,

appropriate distribution of requirements, operational processes, and experienced

applications. The leaders utilized capacities and conditions noted by Hallinger (2018) as

policy goals and operations, resources, behaviors, and timeframe. Patton (2015) proposed

helpful perspectives to link sustainable strategies with leadership features and

characteristics.

Framework Related to the Study

The conceptual framework associated with the leadership features with

characteristics represented in Figure 2 showed the situational styles, capabilities, best

practices, capacities, and strategies as the envisioned needs of effective leadership.

Kahlke (2014) suggested the boundaries of the related features to help provide a clear

picture of the justification for further exploring the perspectives in Chapter 2. The

evidence related to these perspectives helped finalize the central and subquestions and

guide the design, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of the findings (see

Patton, 2015). The evidence linked to the formulated questions further verified the

leaders' views on the purpose and problem in understanding and using effective

leadership. Johnson et al. (2001) showed detailed evidence of how to justify assessing the

linkages among the features and characteristics requiring an audit trail. Merriam and

Tisdell (2015) and Tracy (2010) confirmed decisive measures to understanding the structure and procedures to set outcome criteria for rigor and credibility. Such actions solidified the qualitative approach through debated feedback from advisors, colleagues, and evidence from the research community.

The evidence to understand and apply the leadership features ascertained the research questions' foundation and the methodology related to the study's problem and purpose. Patton (2015) provided direction to guide the functional consequences and applications of the features and characteristics that supported my need to obtain the required information for the data analysis. Day et al. (2016) viewed leaders' perceptions of the components as linked features to inform the open-ended questions' responses. Burnard (2008), Patton (2015), and Gibbs (2018) suggested that the emerging data from the leaders' perceptions for the analysis may require a developed instrument like the NVivo or the manual process. However, I followed the advice provided by Caelli et al. (2003), Northouse (2018), and Percy et al. (2015) to utilize the manual method of analyzing the transcribed data. This method facilitated my coding process, generating the categorized patterns and developing the themes to interpret the results. Therefore, the conscious ways of how the features related to the study's qualitative approach and procedures required exploring the expected perceptions of school leaders. Exploring the conceptual framework and the literature review related to the leadership features formed part of a fuller discussion in Chapter 2.

The Nature of the Study

The Rationale for the Design

The study utilized a generic qualitative method (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015; Percy et al., 2015). Patton provided insights related to the generic qualitative design centered upon a pragmatic worldview, with the intent to explore the understanding and application of leadership features to influence and improve students' learning outcomes. The rationale for the design guided my examination of evidence from the researched perspectives to understand and use the approach's framework components. Percy et al. (2015) also stated, "the Generic qualitative inquiry investigated subjective opinions, attitudes, beliefs, or their experiences, of things in the outer world" (p. 78). Caelli et al. (2003), Kahlke (2014), and Sandelowski (2000) further advocated the evaluative use of the generic qualitative approach. The approach's appropriateness rested on the flexibility and descriptiveness to attain rigor for clarity and cohesion for all features of the research framework.

Caelli et al. (2003) provided findings explicitly recognizing that the proposition worked well by blending tools and techniques as features of established methodological approaches to create something new as a single methodology. Sandelowski (2000) viewed this methodology as maintaining the qualitative descriptive information to represent participants' perceptions. Percy et al. (2015) provided support by asking the questions, "what do they [the participants] think about the issue? What are the experiences?" (p.77). Maxwell (1992) purported that obtaining such views represents the

same agreeable and accurate leadership experiences widely accepted by scholars, professional leaders, and practitioners.

Percy et al. (2015) suggested the following guidelines that I utilized for this qualitative proposition:

- The research problem and questions relate to understanding and using the features of the phenomenon through school leaders' perceptions and experiences to focus on consequences and applications.

- The phenomenology, case study, ethnography, and grounded theory approaches proved inappropriate but necessary to blend relevant features to accommodate and enhance the phenomenon.

I determined the codes and formulated the categories and themes from the transcribed information related to participants' views of the leadership features and impacting factors. I then followed the guidance of Percy et al. (2015) to ask, "What do you think? How do you feel?" These questions aimed to expand the previous knowledge of the participants' perceived information.

Therefore, the participating leaders' perceptions provided information-rich insights into the natural setting of the secondary level institutions of the selected OECS countries. I followed the Patton (2015) procedures comprising interviewing the participants, conducting focus group deliberations, examining documents, and using inductive reasoning to build codes, categories, and themes. Therefore, my perspectives on Patton supported my views on obtaining the participating education leaders' actual life experiences and worldviews. The Caelli et al. (2003) and Denzin and Lincoln (2011)

propositions also guided the methodology's criteria to obtain credible data to determine

congruence between methodology and method (tools and techniques). The approach

further addressed the required rigor and the analytic lens for the developed themes and

descriptive interpretations. I utilized the study's methodology to understand how leaders

view the framework components to realize the consequences and applications aligned

with the qualitative approach. Therefore, the study's nature informed the framework

components' understanding, use, and sustainability to influence policy decisions,

operational processes, strategies, and applications.

Key Concepts

Studies provided conceptual research contributions to explore the relevant

perspectives on understanding and using effective leadership as the central phenomenon

of interest. Northouse (2018) and Santamaria (2016) advocated strategies that guided the

study's direction, contributing to the phenomenon's emergent, dynamic, and situational-

oriented foundation. Green (2017), Wagner et al. (2006), and Northouse (2018)

advocated features that influenced my development of the evaluative criteria to include

leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, and strategies as influential

beliefs and tested propositions. The OECS (2016) education sector strategy report

supported effective leadership by identifying appropriate policies and operational

intervention as concepts to influence, improve, and sustain the secondary level learning

institutions in the OECS. The Northouse (2018), Santamaria (2016), and Wagner et al.

(2006) conceptual perspectives and the OECS (2016) evaluative findings and suggestions

served to guide my decision to explore the understanding and using the leadership

features with characteristics as the main concepts for this study.

Methodology

The generic qualitative approach design provided the freedom to explore the

leadership features and characteristics depicted in Figure 2 to address effective leadership

as a phenomenon and obtain insights from at least nine qualified leaders' perceptions.

These purposefully selected leaders held leadership positions in Dominica, St. Kitts and

Nevis, and St. Lucia of the OECS secondary schools. I used the interview and focused

group investigative strategies to solicit the views of the qualified, professionally trained,

and experienced leaders of the three OECS countries. The data collection focused on

semistructured, open-ended questions during virtual phone/email interviews and focus

group deliberations on obtaining the selected participants' responses and relevant

documented information.

Also, the procedures Creswell (2016) and Percy et al. (2015) advocated guided

my adherence to following the inductive and deductive reasoning approaches to identify

codes, develop categorized patterns, and create themes. This cyclical process enabled my

merging of the transcribed views of the leaders' actual knowledge, life experiences, and

worldview. My analytic lens helped facilitate the qualitative data analysis process'

emerging findings for the interpretations. The study's research methodology criteria,

guided by the perspectives of Patton (2015), provided credible and trustworthy evidence

that considered congruence between methodology and the analyzing method (tools and

procedures) and the approach to maintaining rigor. Therefore, this research study

explored the features and interpreted the leaders' perceptions to understand and apply

effective leadership to influence learning outcomes.

Definition of Terms

The definitions provide a fuller knowledge, understanding, application, and

interpretation of the key terms used in the study.

Best practices refer to active, trusted, dynamic, adaptive, and creative planning,

implementing, and evaluative decisions. The decisions relate to policies, appropriate

distribution of capacities outcome- operational processes, and applied evaluative

experiences with criteria and standards (Green, 2017).

Capabilities or *competencies* include knowledge and understanding, skillsets,

behaviors (attributes and dispositions), and the leaders' practical experiences (Fullan,

2014; Wagner et al., 2006).

Capacities represent contributing conditions the leaders and others developed and

utilized to include policies, resources, operational structures, processes, actions, and

timeframes to impact the outcomes (Hallinger, 2018).

According to (Northouse, 2018, p. 5*), educational leadership* represents "a

process whereby individuals are influenced to achieve a common goal." Leithwood

(2012, p. 3) further referenced leadership as "exercised through relationships between

and among individuals."

Effective leadership represents the phenomenon of interest and the key

differentiator to successfully utilizing related features. The features included styles

(Amanchukwu et al., 2015), capabilities, practices, and capacities (Wagner et al., 2006)

to influence policies, goals, and sustained strategies to improve outcomes (Northouse, 2018).

Effective leadership styles represent situational styles to enhance the leaders' directional judgments linked to stakeholders' or followers' interactive and supportive contributions. (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Meier, 2016; Wright, 2017)

Education leadership represents the leaders' professional knowledge, behaviors, and practices in administrative or management and collaborative roles, guiding and influencing educators to improve learning and other educational processes (Santamaria, 2016).

Leaders' perceptions involve having a vision and setting direction, understanding the behavior and development of people, collaboratively redesigning the institution, and managing the teaching and learning processes (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Resources comprise appropriate human, capital, physical, material, technological, and other operational capacity needs (Patton, 2015).

School climate outcome refers to assurances of the appropriate and distributive conditions (policy decisions, resources, structures, operational procedures and actions, and period) contributing to achievements and decisive operations (Ross & Cozzens, 2016).

Secondary education represents one level of the holistic system following the primary level. The learners' expectations comprised attaining a foundation standard for further education and training, employment, and civic life opportunities (OECS, 2016). The criteria for achieving the mandated standards comprised learners successfully

achieving grades one, two, and three for five subjects, including Mathematics and English, authorized by CARICOM countries and administered by CXC (Jules, 2015)**.**

Situational leadership represents integrated and distinguished leadership styles. The leaders employ contextual behaviors to facilitate directional, collaborative, and supportive decisions and transform operational responsibilities to realize the outcomes (Hersey & Blanchard, 1979; Wright, 2017).

Societal development outcomes represent improving injustices and inequalities to impact unemployment, poverty, socioeconomic status, and inclusive deviant behaviors (Fullan, 2014; Santamaria, 2016).

Hargreaves (2007) noted that *sustainability is* educational leadership and improvement preserved and developed with deep learning to spread and last in no harmful ways. Contextually, sustainable strategies are associated with the principles that Hargreaves and Fink (2004) suggested as continued and dynamic endurance of processes and actions. Nannyonjo (2017), Patton (2015), and Ravitch (2016) also pointed out that these operations aim to realize mega (societal), macro (institutional), and micro (individual learning) outcomes.

Teaching and learning outcomes indicate the preparatory competencies (knowledge, skillsets, and behaviors) for students'- oriented achievements for further education, jobs, and behavioral and civic life (Gentry et al., 2014).

Assumptions

The assumptions underpinning the study represent factors out of my control during the research study but justify truths associated with the study. Thus, the premises

may describe aspects of my study believed to be correct and represent these specified expectations.

- This qualitative approach should ease studying school leadership in countries where research is scarce and relies on the views and experiences of the leaders.

- The participants should understand and experience the practical aspects of influencing and improving teaching and learning, institutional climate, and societal outcomes.

- The participants should understand and share the proper use of the essential leadership features and other factors to influence, improve, and sustain the results.

- The participants needed to be forthcoming and honest in expressing perceptions regarding the understanding and using the leadership features and related factors to influence the outcomes.

- The participants supplied credible, trustworthy, and conscious responses to the open-ended questions representing their understanding and use of professional knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, and experiences.

- The participants understood the need for the debriefing opportunity to verify and make thoughtful adjustments to find credible responses.

These assumptions may also guide the participants' understanding of their responsibilities and adherence to the protocol and procedures needed to provide credible perceptions. The

beliefs should further allow the researcher to use formative methods to check

participants' contributions to meaningful information-rich perceptions.

Scope and Delimitations

Scope

The identified scope of the study influenced the conceptual framework and

represented the leadership features, participants' perceptions of the features and related

factors, and the archival data. The leadership features incorporated the styles, capabilities,

best practices, capacities, and associated strategies. Understanding and using the

evidence-based data linked to the features helped lay the conceptual framework's

foundation. Also, the researched data findings guided the decision to finalize the

questions and methodology related to the interview and focus group interactions. That

aspect of the scope aimed to obtain information-rich responses from the study

participants for the qualitative data analysis and to determine the emerging themes. This

process related to the components facilitated the interview and focus group deliberations

for participants' contributions as verified, credible, and trustworthy information. The

evidence, participants' perceptions, and impacting policy and operational archival data

pointed to the findings to guide school leaders' decisions to influence learning, school,

and societal outcomes.

Delimitations

Delimitations represented those characteristics that limited the scope and defined

the boundaries. The study's delimitations described the features not indicating control

and thus required exclusion because of the research study's level of direct relevance or

feasibility to contribute to the findings (Creswell, 2015). Therefore, the identified population sample did not necessarily include all the leaders qualified with the required characteristics associated with the secondary level learning institutions in each OECS country. The leaders' attributes as criteria for selection as participants comprised degree qualifications, professional management training in education, and at least three years' leadership experience in secondary schools.

Also, participants' recruitment with the stipulated characteristics pointed to a limitation to only three of the eight OECS countries. Only the study participants and standby leaders selected to participate in the interview and focus group sessions represented the different institutional locations and populations in each chosen OECS country. Further, procedural care enhanced the participants' recruitment from the three countries, the sampling methods, and the qualitative data analysis to minimize trustworthiness threats. Investigation of the features pointed to conceptual perspectives related to other factors that influenced effective leadership. These critical aspects included corresponding outcomes, socioeconomic, cultural, behavioral, political, other factors, internal/external stakeholders' contributions, and insightful strategies (Santamaria, 2016; Wright, 2017). These vital variables often impact policy decision-making, operational process, and actions with implications for this and future research studies (see Fullan, 2014; Northouse, 2018; Patton, 2015).

Transferability

The fulfillment of generalizing and transferring the results to similar and contextual Caribbean countries and elsewhere remained an issue. Anney (2014)

referenced transferability as how the qualitative research study results might apply to other contextual locations, with participants having similar characteristics and perceptions. Anney (2014) pointed to the possibility of agreed judgment to represent a "thick [distinct] description and purposeful sampling of the participants" (p. 85). However, the study's focus on the scope of the research study targeting the specific OECS countries and related secondary school leaders restricted transferability. The collected data considered the leaders' responses to their respective judgments and setting. Therefore, a required second phase of research may consider using other locations and samples, exploring distinct aspects of the leadership components, and addressing the limitations.

Limitations

The limitations comprised the proposed study's design and methodological approach. The constraints applied to the proposed research study represented the researcher's use of the generic qualitative research inquiry methodology to guide the data collection in limited OECS countries. Therefore, what might be suitable for the selected areas may not suit other locations in CARICOM countries and globally. The limitations with measures and biases included the following:

- The small sample size of the generic qualitative research approach and the related design procedures may limit the aim to facilitate the leaders' accurate information-rich perceptions. The self-selected academically qualified participants with professional competencies and practical experiences may negate a small sample size (Patton, 2015).

- Limited perspectives of other stakeholders may affect the likelihood of facilitating understanding and using useful leadership features and other factors to influence and improve the outcomes (Wright, 2017).

- Evidence-based data and leadership competencies addressing such qualitative research engendering generalizability threats may mitigate the outcomes by having an acceptable sample size (Malterud et al., 2015).

- The study's population limited to a specific geographic location may increase selection bias as different conclusions are possible for education in a separate geographic area (Yin, 2017).

- There existed the possibility that the findings of this study may not generalize to other locations (Anney, 2014).

- Social desirability bias served as a limitation because participants may over-report the correct practices and underreport the adverse strategies related to establishing and sustaining effective leadership (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

- A participant's mood or current situation may introduce response bias (Anney, 2014). The encounter with an untruthful participant's response bias represented a limitation. There remained the assurance that all participants understood the rights to confidentiality and anonymity to reduce inaccuracies.

- The chosen experienced leaders' restricted views as data for analysis excluded followers' opinions. Northouse (2018) and Wright (2017) showed directive and supportive relationships between leaders and followers, necessitating holistic responses to develop effective leadership strategies.

- The researcher's personal bias may interfere with the trustworthiness of the

  study's data. Validating the procedures may require bracketing with conscious

  efforts to set aside beliefs, values, and knowledge. Also, the need existed to

  develop the habit of maintaining a field journal to document thoughts and

  required interventions to eliminate such bias.

Significance of the Study

The study aimed to advance knowledge, practices, and social change

contributions of the leadership features' perspectives and collect and analyze data from

the leaders as descriptive and interpretive findings. These contributions aimed to generate

valuable data representing the understanding and usefulness of the leaders' perceptions.

Such potential impact supported linkages to the conceptual framework perspectives.

Knowledge Contributions

The potential contributions of the study to advance or strengthen knowledge in the

discipline represented an elaborated concern to address the problem. The contributed

research findings showed how to understand the appropriate leadership components for a

given learning environment to influence and improve the expected outcomes. The study

findings of Wright (2017) pointed to the required knowledge of situational leadership

styles focusing on the challenging direction, support, and involvement of other

stakeholders in the given situation. Green (2017) acknowledged the necessity for

knowledge competencies of leaders related to self and others and the need for

relationships, valuable decisions, and operations. Brownbridge (2018) noted the links

between the best practices and the other features by showing the benefits leaders derived

from evaluative criteria and measuring standards. Klar et al. (2016) focused on the

limitations to developing and building leaders' knowledge capacities in self and others

using conditions through a development process, commitment, and tolerance while taking

risks. Nannyonjo (2017) and Ravitch (2016) showed the interrelationships and

contributions required to inform strategies to influence sustained outcomes.

The study's knowledge contributions unique to the OECS countries demonstrated

my need for credible research evidence and findings generated from the descriptive data

analysis and interpretation of the leaders' views and archival data (see Hutton, 2017;

Jules, 2015). CARICOM (2015), Marsh and Farrell (2015), and Ramraj-Sookdeo (2020)

have published propositions that pointed to the need to fill the knowledge and practice

gaps within the research evidence related to leadership features and the leaders'

perceptive findings for decision-making. The knowledge gap in the research required

obtaining data related to the explored leadership features and leaders' views through

results from the formulated questions and procedural designs. The summative insights

supported a literature gap regarding effective leadership as assessing the conceptual and

empirical knowledge beneficial to scholars, professionals, and practitioners, among other

stakeholders.

Practical and Policy Contributions.

There are justifications that the leaders' perceptions may provide insights into the

potential contributions of the study. The views may show actions to advance appropriate

policies, operational processes, practices, and strategies to influence and improve the

outcomes (see Cuban, 1984; Turner & Spain, 2016; Wagenaar, 2015). The study's

procedural design operations and processes to collect and analyze data themes may provide credible and trustworthy evidence-based knowledge and rigorous directions to more professionals and scholars to prompt evaluations and further research initiatives (Thorne, 2016). Insightful lessons from the interpreted qualitative data themes also strengthened the study's focus on solving the problem by utilizing the consequences and applying participants' views (Kahlke, 2014; Patton, 2015; Thorne, 2016). The findings may further support the success and future advancement of the OECS and global educational leaders. Understanding and using leadership features to improve and sustain the supervised students' learning outcomes also envisioned a long-term thrust to address educational injustices and inequities in line with a sustained mission for social change.

The study's practical contributions considered the scholarly, professional, and efficient utilization of effective leadership conceptual perspectives, empirical evidence, and applied leaders' experiences. Such contributions aimed to advance the applicable policy and operations to influence the leaders' impact on learning institutions in the Caribbean and elsewhere (UNESCO, 2016a, 2016b). The leaders' influences should demonstrate the thrust directed toward the attainment of the mega (societal), macro (institutional), and micro (learners and other stakeholders) expectations of the learning institutions (Patton, 2015). Patton noted that the mega-level interventions linked to continued socioeconomic and social change advancement might positively impact the transformation of the small and undeveloped human resource capacities through internationally accepted benchmarks of the framework components. Also, the macro-level contributions aimed at applying collaborative and adaptive leadership standards and

accountability based on effective leadership practices may develop model institutional climates (Ross & Cozzens, 2016). The school leaders' micro practical contributions based on their understanding and usage of strategies related to the leadership features further improved teaching and students' learning (Patton, 2015). Therefore, such achievements included a readiness to embrace jobs and education opportunities and contributed to individual and societal development championed by the stakeholders' envisioned policies and operations.

Social Change Contributions

The potential for a positive and consistent impact with and bound by the study's scope was to show the leadership features' effectiveness and the emergence of social change implications at various levels. The proposed outcomes (mega, macro, and micro) mirrored the global agender (UNESCO, 2015; Walden University, 2020). UNESCO (2015) focused on propositions of Latin America and the Caribbean countries, leading to 2030 as a new vision for education leaders, articulated within the millennium's fourth Sustainable Development Goal. UNESCO (2015) expressed the idea of aiming "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all with the commitment to effecting positive social change in societies (p.10)." Walden emphasized an ongoing leadership mission for diverse societies for empowering individuals, strengthening communities, bridging barriers, and promoting social change. In today's schools, sustaining effective leadership represents a critical ingredient in driving innovation and change at the mega, macro, and micro levels.

The mega focus of the study stemmed from the global technological trend that UNESCO (2016a, 2016b) articulated concerning the need to address the continuing challenge and initiate human resource development strategies. This global challenge required understanding and using the emerging evidence from the conceptual framework that guides the process employed to address the research questions through interactions with the participants. The leaders' perceptions necessitated attention to the unskilled and unemployed people, poverty and social ills, and lack of sustained socioeconomic advancement impacting social change. Therefore, the leaders' responses helped describe the process to attain the findings to guide policies and operational decisions to enhance mega positive social change.

Jules (2015) referenced the necessity to understand and use the leaders' responses to enhance the school climate (macro) and teaching and learning (micro) outcomes at secondary schools in the Caribbean countries. Strategies to positively impact social change at the macro and micro levels also emerged from the leaders' perceptions and analyzed documents. Such findings aimed to support social change direction to assure favorable school climate outcomes associated with the world and Caribbean views (UNESCO, 2016a, 2016b; Hutton, 2011; Jules, 2015). I focused on the leaders' original and creative responses to unique situations in their respective districts with model institutions (Hutton, 2017; Jules, 2015).

However, at the school (micro) level, Shields and Hesbol (2020) focused on transformative leadership approaches to demonstrate how leaders practiced inclusive, equitable, and socially just leadership. Shields and Hesbol showed how leaders "create a

welcoming, inclusive school where all students, including those who are minoritized or economically disadvantaged, feel affirmed, respected, and academically challenged" (p.3). A significant challenge that emerged pointed to the need for aligning district goals and practices with those of the school.

The leaders' views described, analyzed, and interpreted data findings influenced policies, operational processes, and actions relevant to the teaching and learning outcome. The conclusions of utilizing internationally approved secondary school measurement standards as leadership criteria also provided evaluative direction to current and future scholars, practitioners, and other stakeholders (Walden University, 2020). Therefore, the leaders' views of the systemic and holistic situational and progressive policies, operational processes, and applied experiences guided by the perspectives and evidence should have implications for sustained social change.

Summary

Chapter 1 of the study comprised different components. The introduction sought to describe the research study's topic, explained the reason for conducting the investigation, and deliberated on the potential social implications. The background contextualized the study locations, initiated the supportive, diverse, and insightful evidence, described the gap in the knowledge, and specified the needs of the study. The following section defined the problem and provided evidence to confirm that the situation was current, relevant, and significant. The problem also helped build on previous research findings conducted within the past five years and addressed the existing research literature gap. The purpose of the study represented a concise statement connecting the

problem to explore the phenomenon (effective leadership), focusing on the leaders'

perceptions of the leadership features. The research questions preceded the study's

framework to provide conceptual perspectives and empirical evidence (Chapter 2).

The study focused on selecting the qualitative design, concisely describing the

phenomenon and features explored, the methods, and the data collection and analysis

procedures. The chapter also included definitions of fundamental concepts or constructs

and the assumptions as aspects of the study's beliefs but not reflected as correct. The

chapter's scope, delimitations, and limitations specified the reasons for selecting elements

of the research problem to address biases requiring a control level in the study. The

study's significance represented the component before this summary.

Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review of the critical concepts related to the

leadership features contributing to the formulated questions and guiding the study's

methodology. The introduction comprises restating the problem and the purpose while

providing the rationale and a synopsis of the present literature review to establish

conceptual and practical leadership relevance. This overview also includes the planned

literature search and offers a preview of the two significant components of the chapter.

The first aspect refers to the theoretical foundation and the conceptual framework to

demonstrate a connected path of assumptions, theories, and models to identify, define,

and synthesize primary research culminating in the study's need. The second component

explores related and current empirical studies to demonstrate how the research study fits

into the existing literature with implications for the research question and the study's

methodology.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The identified problem pointed to so many essential features of effective

leadership that difficulties emerged in understanding and applying appropriate ones for a

given learning environment. The leaders' views of effective leadership's concerns

required essential interactions, support, and direction for informing effective decision-

making related to the learning outcomes at the OECS countries' schools. The study

explored leaders' understanding and application of effective leadership styles,

capabilities, practices, and sustainable strategies to influence and improve learning,

school, and societal outcomes. Therefore, the research focused on theoretical foundations

supporting the conceptual perspectives and empirical evidence associated with leadership

features and characteristics. Previous research also helped justify the foundation of the

research questions and guided the methodology linked to the study's problem and

purpose.

The reviewed studies provided evidence related to the scope of each leadership

feature, following the standards that Hallinger (2014) suggested guiding the processes

and actions. Day et al. (2016) embraced the aligned procedures proposed by Hallinger to

show the phrasing of the valued rules as questions: (a) What is the central topic or

description of the phenomenon of interest related to addressing the problem to influence

the outcomes? (b) What is the purpose of the leadership features of the selected studies to

support, differentiate, or provide insights for the research study? (c) What are the sources

and the types of data utilized for the reviewed studies? (d) What is the procedural nature

of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation? (e) What are the significant findings or

results with limitations and implications? These questions guided the literature review of the leadership features and related characteristics.

Therefore, the synopsis of the current literature established the relevance of the problem. The study's focus showed how administrators understood and used leadership features to influence outcomes exhibited at selected secondary schools in the Caribbean. The rationale for exploring the conceptual features rested with the premise that a country's educational improvements depended on effective leadership's appropriateness. Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Butin (2010), and Hersey and Blanchard (1979) provided evidence to support, differentiate, and gain insights related to the foundational perspectives of leadership features. The empirical propositions of Santamaria (2016), Thorne (2016), and Wagner et al. (2006) also focused on the practices to support, differentiate, and strengthen beneficial initiatives to guide the exploration of the applied leadership features. Burns (1978) initially recognized that effective leadership for the 21st century needed to display styles and suitable capabilities, among other leadership features, to stimulate and influence employees to fulfill personal and organizational purposes. Therefore, school leaders' renewed thrust to understand and use leadership perspectives and practices remained significant, with implications influencing learning outcomes.

Preview of Significant Sections

The introduction comprises restating the problem and the purpose while providing the rationale and a synopsis of the literature review to establish theoretical and practical leadership relevance. The introductory sections continue with the literature search

strategy to identify database search engines for listing and using key search terms and related descriptions. This overview also offers a preview of the two significant components of the chapter. The first aspect is the theoretical foundation supporting the conceptual framework to demonstrate a connected path of assumptions, theories, and models to identify, define, and synthesize primary research culminating in the study's need. The second component explores related and current empirical research studies to demonstrate the need for and fit into the existing literature.

The process requires reviewing and synthesizing the research studies related to the features and characteristics of effective leadership as a phenomenon. The review represents a description and explanation of supportive information, controversial situations, and insightful implications for addressing relevant gaps in areas related to this study's scope. The descriptive procedures also summarize the major themes in the literature with implications to guide the research questions and the methodological approaches utilized in Chapter 3.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search strategy followed a systematic and explicit process of identifying and analyzing relevant information. The search encompassed a review of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and other appropriate documentation at the Walden University Library and other sites. The database sources included ERIC, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Education Research Complete, Education Source, Sage, EBSCOhost, and Google Scholar. The search procedures utilized grouped words focusing on and related to secondary education. These essential phrases included *educational*

leadership; effective leadership theories/concepts in education; effective leadership styles in education; leadership capabilities (competencies); leadership best practices, leadership capacities, sustainable leadership strategies, teaching and learning, school climate, and *societal development outcomes*.

There were, however, cases where limitations existed for current related information. Therefore, the review also utilized available education systems and literature in the OECS and CARICOM jurisdictions and other international organizations and countries. Website content and current media accounts of newspapers, magazines, and blog articles provided relevant evidence of effective leadership and related features. The intention aimed to understand, use, and synthesize existing research, highlight the results of critical studies, and solidify the rationale to guide the study's review and future research areas.

Theoretical Foundation Supporting the Conceptual Framework

The supportive theoretical foundation supported the platform upon which the conceptual framework guided exploring effective leadership as the phenomenon of interest. This qualitative study's foundation specified the situational model that Hersey and Blanchard (1979) advocated, further developed by Amanchukwu et al. (2015). The approach of Hersey and Blanchard guided my decision to ground the conceptual framework towards the practical consequences and application of the school leaders' views following the generic qualitative approach (Patton, 2015). The findings of Northouse (2018), Santamaria (2016), and Wagner et al. (2006) described the supportive, diverse, and insightful evidence of the features to understand and use effective leadership

consistent with the scope of the research study. The rationale represented linking the situational model proposed by Hersey and Blanchard as the chosen proposition to the various plausible insights that emerge from the knowledge and application of the identified leadership features.

Framework Models

Building and establishing a coherent and historical research-based foundation necessitated applying appropriate models to construct the conceptual framework. Anderson (2017) and Northouse (2018) noted that research for more than 30 years identified the application and usefulness of models in school settings to attain outcomes. The leadership competencies, experiences, and social values and beliefs linked to the models continued to relate to leaders' and other stakeholders' selected priorities, decisions, and actions to impact learning and organizational outcomes (Northouse, 2018). Northouse noted that no one model fits all situations, necessitating multiple effective leadership models. Northouse (2016) and Santamaria (2016) also recognized the continued and significant increase in scholarly interest in the qualitative leadership models leading to the 21st century that required examining to represent valid perspectives and practical results of criteria-oriented evaluations. Hutton (2017) emphasized the proposition related to the Caribbean using evaluative indicators to determine the effective leadership model's quality levels.

Northouse (2018) also extended the concept-to-practice perspective of Beyer (2012) to develop propositions and models by specifying contemporary educational approaches. As a structure for this study, the Northouse models, including management,

distributed/shared, instructional, transformational, and situational strategies, supported

the leadership features' foundations to guide researchers, aspiring leaders, and

practitioners. These foundations emerged from the original big man (personality trait

characteristics) model (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). The criticism of this fundamental

practical application later influenced the behavioral model (Derue et al., 2011), showing

the task, relationship, change, and active/passive-oriented leadership. Gumus et al. (2018)

provided historical contributions to the identified models in reviewing studies related to

leadership models in education.

However, Patton (2015) indicated that scholarly academic research studies from

the mid-twentieth century focused on the understanding developed and applied

assumptions related to leadership features. Alkutich (2017) noted that studies that

followed primarily focused on leaders' behavioral issues encompassing their capabilities

in given situations. Amanchukwu et al. (2015) and Gumus et al. (2018) noted that

historical research analyses highlighted theoretical propositions before the nineteenth

century. These perspectives covered the best courses of action from various featured

models contributing to successful school leadership outcomes. Gumus et al. emphasized

that such schemes targeted changes related to school leaders' responsibilities to advance a

distinct break from the status quo's central and authoritative direction. The developed and

applied 21st-century theoretical models helped understand and use successful leadership

features to influence and sustain learning outcomes (Dinh et al., 2014).

The Management Model

Before the referenced period cited by Gumus et al. (2018), the management model facilitated the school's centralized educational functions, tasks, and behaviors through hierarchical directions (Boyatzis, 1982; Candoli et al., 1997). Boyatzis laid the foundation's management model, offering an empirical view of the total management system approach. Boyatzis' empirically tested method helped determine the managers' characteristics (styles, competencies, and organizational capacities) to enable capable engagement in managerial jobs. However, the management model propositions required other models' contribution to addressing the predominant void of social and human relations related to superior or subordinate views, satisfaction, commitment, and collaborative involvement as evaluative criteria. (Lara & Salas-Vallina, 2017) This model pointed to implications for this study since the management responsibilities and the applied knowledge emerging from the school leaders' views impacted the understanding and usage of practical leadership features.

The Distributive/Democratic Model

This model continued as an influential and resilient perspective contributing to the understanding and using effective leadership within educational policies and practices. Harris and DeFlaminis (2016) considered this democratic approach as shared abilities and the leadership team's commitment, emphasizing practices and interactive involvement in each situation. Bennett et al. (2003) guided the recognized distributive leadership model's uniqueness to involve a network of leaders and other stakeholders with competencies to formulate the policies and apply effective operations. However, Larsen and Rieckhoff

(2014) guided the suggestion to addressing limitations required by building the leaders'

confidence and trust or avoiding delegated policies and standardized practices. Klar et al.

(2016), Larsen and Rieckhoff', and Tian et al. (2016) also guided the perspectives of the

study to obtain supportive evidence. Other integrated contribution models enhanced and

influenced a positive impact on the outcomes.

The Instructional Leadership Model

This model represented another established perspective, strengthening successful

leadership to influence and improve teaching and learning. Cuban (1988) noted that

management and strategic distribution of leadership responsibilities continued, but

instructional leaders' image emerged simultaneously with the call to influence positive

school learning outcomes. Day et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of instructional

leaders' capabilities to focus on relevant policy goals, programs, delivery, and teaching

and learning operations evaluation. Ross and Cozzens (2016) and Terosky (2016)

recognized the need for instructional leaders to positively develop and utilize other

stakeholders' essential competencies to impact teaching and learning and school climate.

However, Day et al. (2016) provided broader perspectives to shape a vision of success for

the need to seek leaders' views on other styles that impacted teaching and learning, the

schools' climate, and societal outcomes.

The Transformational Leadership Model

The transformational leadership model emerged from researchers' foundational

theories and works such as Burns (1978) and Bass and Avolio (1994). Bass and Avolio

recognized the necessity to charismatically utilize initiatives to improve organizational

effectiveness with good role model leadership competencies and practices. Kouzes and

Posner (2007) supported such a model to address the leadership challenges of

transforming the learning operations to achieve extraordinary outcomes at the

institutions. Day et al. (2016) referred to transformational leadership as emphasizing and

establishing a vision to set the institution's structure and culture to inspire all

stakeholders to enhance learning outcomes. Anderson (2017) provided substantive

research evidence to emphasize the model's success through a realistic vision for an

organization, inspiring stakeholders to maintain high integrity, interaction, and

involvement. However, Anderson (2017) recognized the model's self-centered leadership

characteristics through directional strategies compared to integrated situational

contributions complementing other styles in an era of social change. Shields and Hesbol

(2020) focused on transformational study's examination of the leaders related to

diversity, equity, and social justice remained pivotal to the continuing challenges to

influence learning, school, and societal outcomes.

The Situational Model

The situational model proposed by Blank et al. (1990) and Amanchukwu et al.

(2015), chosen for this study, purported those leaders select the best course of action

based on the prevailing situation using competencies and circumstances for contributing

styles. Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Kahlke (2014), and Wright, 2017) emphasized that

different leadership approaches proved more appropriate and effective for different

decision-making scenarios to realize the outcomes. For example, the transformational

self-centered and directional leadership style appeared suitable when the leader

demonstrated knowledgeable and experienced characteristics as a group member while others possessed limited competencies (Allen et al., 2015; Anderson, 2017). However, Harris and DeFlaminis (2016) noted that skilled experts expected treatment as professionals and that the democratic style proved more effective. While considering the related contributions, a growing need to examine and use these varied models as an integrated situational framework model pointed to a viable contemporary approach.

The Wallace Foundation (2013) supported the proposition utilize utilizing an integrated situational model. The rationale was that the leaders experienced fewer effects on influencing the learning outcomes when considered separately. The Wallace Foundation (2013, p. 5) also indicated that "the real payoff comes when individual variables [approaches and conditions] combine to reach critical mass," representing the evaluative results occurring through the leader's initiatives. The situational model to guide the perspectives of this study opened the opportunity for a wide field of research considering the crucial role of the leaders' effectiveness in realizing outcomes at secondary schools (Amanchukwu et al., 2015).

Blanchard et al. (1993) emphasized that the model still needed conclusive investigation, although enough evidence pointed to the vast contributions. Blanchard et al. embarked on examining in-depth studies that shed light on this historical situational model and challenged other researchers to do the same. As a contribution to the source of the chosen model, Cherry (2019) classified eight theoretical leadership foundations, including the situational model. Cherry also noted that scholarly interest in effective leadership increased significantly during the twentieth century. Henkel et al. (2019)

reported that researchers published studies to determine whether leaders are task- or relationship-oriented.

Henkel et al. (2019) refrained from emphasizing any single set of best leadership propositions, supporting Hersey and Blanchard (1979) for creating the situational leadership model. Henkel et al. also provided the perspective to help the leaders' engagement in the task and relationship-oriented leadership directions to accommodate the situation. Therefore, Northouse (2016) ascertained that this realistic situational model emphasized that effective leadership comprised directive and supportive dimensions to collaborate developments within operational processes and actions to effect change. The chosen situational leadership paradigm application required distinguishing and considering each associated leadership feature's contextual propositions to contribute to the approach's success.

Being less than fully enthusiastic about the situational model, Northouse (2018) contended, "the recent concept appears to be more of a blending of ideas and concepts interrelated [between theory and practice] and building upon each other rather than singular theoretical frameworks" (p. 2). Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Beyer (2012), and Northouse (2016) showed that leaders needed to adjust and accommodate styles, develop competencies, and use practices, capacities, and sustained strategies related to effective leadership in contextual situations to achieve planned goals. Thus, Amanchukwu et al. (2015) shifted from traditional personality-based theories that depend on leadership traits to the chosen situational leadership theory that binds approaches as one (Hersey &

Blanchard, 1979). Hersey and Blanchard thus proposed leadership styles as a cyclical 360 degrees process representing the situational leadership theory.

The deliberate classification of leadership styles also emerged by engaging leaders' views (deputy principals, principals, and supervisors) who understood and used the situational model (Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Wallace Foundation, 2013). From the analysis of over 70 empirical studies, Wallace reported that influential leaders perform well by utilizing five essential strategic and evaluative practices. Wallace Foundation (2013, p. 5) suggested: "(1) Shaping a vision of academic success for all students. (2) Creating a climate hospitable to education. (3) Cultivating leadership in others. (4) Improving instructions. (5) Managing people, data, and processes." The knowledge and understanding of these leadership endeavors provided the opportunity to consider the implications for exploring the situational leadership styles to influence learning, school, and fostering societal improvements.

Amanchukwu et al. (2015) stressed that the situational leadership model relating to education pointed to leaders adopting identified leadership goals according to the situation and the team members' development level. Amanchukwu et al. viewed such features as appropriate because of the adaption to the stakeholders' needs to establish a balanced relationship for improved learning outcomes at institutions or organizations. Meier (2016) and Wright (2017) added that situational leadership involved adjusting to other stakeholders' maturity levels and assessing an issue's circumstances before determining the required actions. Northouse (2018), in recognition of this pragmatic approach, stressed that the situational model focused on directive and supportive

dimensions to develop employees and effect change. Exploring the chosen situational leadership paradigm necessitated distinguishing the composite leadership style's contextual propositions and factors to obtain sensitive information to guide decisions to influence success.

Hersey and Blanchard (1979) also viewed the situational leadership theory model requiring further development as a 360-degree in the life-cycle leadership concept (Hersey, 1985). The remodeled situational style propositions of Blanchard et al. (1993) focused on the four-dimensional components related to flexible behaviors. Blanchard et al. (1993, p. 26) provided tested behavioral styles representing "(1) high supportive and low directive; (2) high supportive and high directive; (3) low supportive and low directive; (4) high directive and low supportive." According to Wright (2017), the combinations of competence and commitment levels of followers or stakeholders clarified the four-leadership dimensions (D) linked to the leaders' styles that Blanchard et al. (1993) proposed as specified below:

- D1: Low capability with high commitment related to enthusiastic but inexperienced beginner leaders.

- D2: Low to average competence with low commitment equated with delegating leadership responsibilities because of a disillusioned position.

- D3: High supportive capability with little commitment represented a collaborative leadership style to motivate and influence others.

- D4: High competence with high commitment represented highly supportive behavior in conjunction with highly directive practice as a self-reliant leader.

Wright (2017) recognized the need to revise the situational leadership model related to the style that Blanchard and Hersey (1996) proposed but focused on the four readiness levels. Wright supported the views that Schermerhorn and Bachrach (2020) offered to represent leaders' delegated responsibilities when able and committed stakeholders or followers completed assigned tasks without supervision. Wright also emphasized the leaders' tendency to convince or coach others when members faced difficulties fulfilling assigned tasks but showed willingness and confidence to learn and engage in doing the work. Wright further contended that when the stakeholders provided tremendous support with limited guidance, the leaders played a participant's role compared to telling (coaching, instructions or directives), representing the possible inability and insecurity to perform the task. Lynch (2015) concluded that the changing situational leaders' styles depicted an identified level of the followers' development and readiness. The exclusion of the followers' views indicated a limitation to my study. Still, such dispositions remained critical as an evaluative criterion to help understand and use the leadership features as essential and integrated dimensions of the leadership styles.

The situational model's determination for an operating cycle required the influential leaders (deputy principal, principal, and education officer) to motivate stakeholders through varying development levels of direction, interaction, and readiness support (Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Wright, 2017). Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Northouse (2018), and Ruben and Gigliotti (2017) agreed that current leadership theories, like the situational model, encompassed critical dispositions associated with the necessary leadership styles. Rajeev (2018) noted that while the leadership styles addressed students'

needs from diverse backgrounds, educators' continuing concerns and societal situations also necessitated an understanding of the form of leadership that worked best. Rajeev thus stressed the imperative to understand and use the propositions of these types individually and collectively related to their methods and what they offered. Therefore, the informed perspectives to use the situational model's theoretical foundation and the considered flexible directive, interactive, and supportive style propositions guided the related question for evidence to impact the outcomes.

The Rationale for Model Selection

Like the foundation perspectives, reviewing and synthesizing the different studies for the situational leadership model guided the related questions and clarified the problem and purpose. Lynch (2015) concluded that evidence supporting, differentiating, and providing insights into the situational leader's changing leadership behavior triggered an improvement in all stakeholders' performances. Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Ireh and Bailey (1999), Northouse (2016), and Zigarmi and Roberts (2017) provided supportive empirical evidence to understand and use a broader leadership perspective to include followers as an effective situational leadership style. Day et al. (2016), focusing on the direct and indirect aspects, questioned the application, relevance, and influential levels of effective situational leadership styles.

However, the studies of Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Northouse (2018), and Wright (2017) provided further insights related to the overall credibility and trustworthiness of the chosen situational leadership model to inform the focus of my and future studies. The evidence emerging from these perspectives concentrated on similar,

different, and dynamic ways. Therefore, the selected theories applied to effective

leadership showed linkages to the conceptual framework (Figure 2). The chosen ideas

also guided the study's research questions and methodology for practical solutions and

supported, questioned, or strengthened existing concepts.

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework represented the integrated features of effective

leadership to understand and guide the research study's direction while considering

existing knowledge gaps (Magher, 2018). Magher noted that the framework represented

summarized, relevant, and authentic research perspectives and conceptual findings within

the contextual situation to inform the research questions and methodology. I considered

effective leadership the phenomenon and critical differentiator, focusing on the features

and related characteristics envisioned to influence learning, school, and societal

outcomes. The features included styles (Amanchukwu et al., 2015), capabilities, best

practices, and capacities (Green, 2017; Wagner et al., 2006) to influence policy goals and

operational strategies to improve the outcomes (Northouse, 2018; UNESCO, 2015).

Therefore, the study encompassed effective leadership as a phenomenon with key

conceptual features to investigate, considering supportive, different, and insightful results

from sources to guide the outcomes (Table 2).

Table 2

Leadership Features, Linked Goals, Outcomes, and Sources

Features	Linked Goals	Outcomes	Sources
Situational Style	Utilize the appropriate situation leadership techniques to: • Guide, support, transform and collaborate with stakeholders (teachers, learners, communities, and other internal and external individuals and groups) to influence shared outcomes. • Facilitate support to and from stakeholders to strengthen commitment and motivation. • Involve and interact with stakeholders for contributions	Teaching and Learning, School Climate, and Societal Benefits.	(Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Hersey & Blanchard, 1979; Wright, 2017).
Capabilities	Plan, develop, utilize, and evaluate the capabilities to include: • Professional knowledge. • Skillsets. • Behaviors - attributes and dispositions. • Practical experiences.	Teaching and Learning, School Climate, and Societal Benefits	(Day et al., 2016; Green, 2017; Le Fevre & Robinson, 2015; Wagner et al., 2006).
Best Practices	Oversee trusted, dynamic, adaptive, and creative practices to: • Set directions. • Develop people's characteristics. • Redesign organizational needs. • Plan, deliver, and evaluate policy goals and operations with set criteria and standards.	Teaching and Learning, School Climate, and Societal Benefits.	(Brownbridge, 2018; Green, 2017; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Hutton, 2011; Jacobson, 2011).
Capacities	Plan, deliver, and evaluate capacities with set criteria, standards, and timeframe to include: • Policy goals and operations. • Appropriate, adequate, and innovative resources. • Behavioral attributes and dispositions.	Teaching and Learning, School Climate, and Societal Benefits.	(Green, 2017; Hallinger, 2018; Santamaria, 2016). *(Table continues)*

Features	Linked Goals	Outcomes	Sources
Sustainable Strategies	Develop strategies to sustain equity, justice, and diversity to address linked challenges of the features so that: • Credible evidence facilitates policies and operations' planning, delivery, and evaluation. • Situational styles enhance leaders' decision-making linked to stakeholders' involvement, support, commitment, and contributions. • Leaders use professional knowledge, skills, behaviors, and experiences to guide decisions and stakeholders' contributions. • Best practices help plan, deliver and evaluate policy goals and operations. • Appropriate capacities support using policies and operations, resources, communication, technologies, and behaviors within time frames. • Contextual factors enhance initiatives.	Teaching and Learning, School Climate, and Societal Benefits.	(Fullan, 2014; Goertz, 2000; Matthew, 2016; Northouse, 2018; Richardson-Rose, 2019; Santamaria, 2016).

Literature Review of the Conceptual Leadership Features

The literature review provided an exhaustive exploration of the empirical studies consistent with the research study's scope. This scope represented the leadership features to explore and linked to the questions and chosen design and methodology. However, the need existed to discuss the justified ways researchers examined the identified leadership features' inherent strengths and weaknesses. Table 2 summarizes the goals linked to the leadership features related to varying researched perspectives to justify influencing the outcomes. The discussions focused on the justifications for the conceptual framework encompassing the identified leadership features and characteristics related to the propositions.

Situational Styles

The perspectives of the situational leadership style feature represented strengths, weaknesses, and insights into the formulated research question's foundation while guiding the methodology linked to the problem and purpose. Lynch (2015) concluded that the perspectives to support, differentiate, and provide insightful direction pointed to the changing leadership behaviors related to situational leadership styles. The operative styles triggered varying influence levels based on stakeholders' contributions while the leader progressed along a development and readiness path. Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Ireh and Bailey (1999), Northouse (2016), and Zigarmi and Roberts (2017) provided different views to understand and use a broader leadership perspective to include followers as essential contributors to the effectiveness of the situational leadership style. Day et al. (2016) also focused on direct and indirect personal interactive aspects to apply relevance and persuasive techniques. The perspectives emerging from Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Lynch (2015), Northouse (2018), and Wright (2017) provided further insights into the overall credibility and trustworthiness of the chosen situational leadership model. Therefore, the propositions emerging from the situational style concepts provided similar, different, and dynamic ways to direct, interact, and support the formulated research question to justify examining varied leadership styles.

Capabilities

The perspectives emerging from exploring the leadership capabilities as a framework element provided a base for the related question guiding the procedures to address the challenges and justify influencing the outcomes. Thus, Brathwaite (2014), De

Lisle (2012), O'Keefe (2013), and Green (2017) supported the need to examine the leadership capabilities with defined characteristics (professional knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, and experiences). Braithwaite acknowledged that leaders with these competencies in the Caribbean countries addressed the attrition and shortage of qualified, professionally trained, and experienced leaders and augmented learning outcomes. While Green (2017) and Wagner et al. (2006) highlighted leaders' capabilities, Fullan (2014) also noted the socioeconomic, cultural, political, and contextual factors as other critical features to impact the policies and operations related to the learning outcomes. Day et al. (2016) and Le Fevre and Robinson (2015) further pointed to the cultural, personal, and interpersonal behaviors other than the capabilities as critical leadership requisites to augment commitment and motivational contributions. While the limitations of not considering other situational factors emerged, justifying the leadership capabilities' perspectives served as a base for the related question and guided the methodological approach (see Collins et al., 2017).

Best Practices

Green (2017), Hitt and Tucker (2016), and Patton (2015), among other researchers, specified perspectives of essential leadership practices to solidify the related question with implications for the problem and purpose. Hitt and Tucker focused on decision-making methods and setting directions to guide policy goals and operations. Green and Hitt, and Tucker also noted the importance of human resource development as a different factor for collaborative professional development, training, and involvement to augment leaders' success. Hitt and Tucker further stated that redesigning the institution

demonstrated insightful and dynamic practices associated with each of the other features

to impact the school climate. Patton (2015) and Ravitch (2016) also viewed perceptive

ways for internal and global acceptance as planned initiatives with evaluative criteria-

oriented operational standards. These propositions provided the impetus to justify the best

practices as an essential element to address the problem and realize the study's purpose.

Capacities

Stoll (2009) noted that researchers advance institutional capacities' strengths and

weaknesses conceptually viewed as an essential framework component. The capacities

linked the internal (leaders and stakeholders) and external contextual factors to the related

question to consider critical aspects that address the problem to realize the purpose

(Hallinger, 2018). Hallinger and Heck (2011) and Patton (2015) perceived concepts of

the essential capacities associated with the institutions' vision, policy, and goals but

sanctioned by local, regional, and international authoritative bodies. Hallinger (2018) and

Wagner et al. (2006) also emphasized, as a significant perspective, the provision of

adequate and appropriately distributed resource capacities (human, communicative and

technological, structural, physical, and material). The conceptual views further justified

the operational processes and actions to ascertain the question's foundation and support

the related methodology.

Sustainable Strategies

The perspectives associated with viable approaches as integrated leadership

components served to understand and use each element's planned policy goals and

operations. Green (2017) recognized the rationale for understanding and utilizing

integrated perspectives, while Hitt and Tucker (2016) suggested aspects of the features of unique and integrated practices. For example, situational perceptions of Amanchukwu et al. (2015) and Matthew (2016) provided directional, interactive, and supportive style operations to enhance learners', school, and human development outcomes. Patton (2015) also noted the sustainable strategy concept as linked leadership views through continued utilization of the identified competencies. The perspectives of Hitt and Tucker (2016) and Richardson-Rose (2019) related to leaders' insights of best practices focused on setting dynamic policy direction, involving stakeholders, redesigning operations, and applying criteria-oriented standards. Fullan (2014) and Nannyonjo (2017) pointed to perspectives associated with leaders' sustained utilization of capacities and other contributing factors. Brewer et al. (2018) further noted the need to focus on dimensions related to other justifiable factors (Subquestion 1b) liable to impact educational leadership's success with implications for learners, school communities, and global societies.

Review of the Empirical Studies Related to the Features

The empirical studies' review focused on exploring leadership features. The investigation described the data analysis for interpretations of the known supportive, different, and insightful findings to inform further studies. The studies' results guided the main research question, subquestions (1a and 1b), and the methodology to justify the selected qualitative research approach. The selected qualitative generic approach provided a meaningful understanding and usage of the features to address the research problem and realize the purpose.

Leadership Style

Supportive Views. The favorable evidence to address understanding and using leadership challenges related to the situational leadership style emerged from the synthesized theoretical foundations of Hersey and Blanchard (1979) and empirical studies. Walter (1980) contributed to the foundation advocated by Amanchukwu et al. (2015) to strengthen the situational style theoretical perspective. The proposition pointed to the flexible and balanced use of directional tasks, supportive relationship behaviors, organizational efficiency, and personal satisfaction. The Walter evidence also informed the leader-follower proposition used by Wright (2017) to show positive results from the Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability Description (LEAD) instrument with school leaders. Walter (1980) indicated that the LEAD device's educational version or tool to evaluate leaders' flexible operations proved valid and reliable over time. The positive results included the practical application of the leaders' situation related to the propositions associated with the leaders' and followers' flexible and linked responsibilities. However, Walter pointed to implications for further investigations concerning the qualitative application of the direction, interactions, and supportive experiences necessary for leaders to influence learning and school climate outcomes.

Bates (2016) also utilized the LEAD instrument to collect data for analysis based on the feedback using the Hersey and Blanchard (1979) 360-degree cyclical leadership style model. The study examined the participant leaders' composite profile and dimensional characteristics, including competencies, commitment, behavioral confidence, and motivation (Wright, 2017). Bates' data analysis related to the essential leadership

model of Blanchard et al. (1993) focused on the followers' contributions primarily through interactions in determining the appropriate tasks for directional and supportive leadership style behaviors. Like Lynch (2015), Bates emphasized the need for the followers' interactive contributions to increasingly change congruence with the number of leadership tasks and relationship behaviors manifested in follower performance and satisfaction with the leader. Bates further pointed to the successful application of the situational leadership model of diverse types and other organizational levels, including education. However, Bates only generally referred to the anticipated students' learning, school climate, and societal outcomes representing the selected situational leadership approach's focus.

Researchers contrastingly provided evidence evaluating the effectiveness of the characterized components of the situational leadership model that Blanchard et al. (1993) promoted to impact students' learning outcomes. Wright (2017) ascertained the collaborative effectiveness that Meier (2016) and Picciano et al. (2014) proposed to blend learning perspectives and styles as foundation leadership models to provide direction and support. Meier also applied the blended techniques to encompass the perceptive views of school leaders' strengths and weaknesses compared to using unique leadership styles. Menon (2014) showed that each demonstration's emerging forces and powers preferred to form a practical integrated leadership approach. Menon previously provided concurring evidence that a unified leadership direction positively affects teachers' commitment, job satisfaction, and overall student achievement. This integrated proposition associated with the situational model provided implications related to the

leadership direction and support to emanate from the leaders' responses to the formulated questions.

The foundation that Meier (2016) and Menon (2014) encompassed by integrating the blended styles of Beyer (2012) provided support for the findings that Northouse (2016) attained in evaluating the integrated and pertinent qualitative leadership styles. Comparatively, Northouse (2016), while considering the cyclical development perspective of Blanchard et al. (1993), supported the situational leadership style's adopted directive and supportive dimensions. Amanchukwu et al. (2015) utilized the leader-stakeholder perspective as a beneficial relationship to strengthen the situational leadership model by considering different leadership styles' characteristics. Northouse noted that school leaders applied an integrated model for supportive direction rather than a single model in any given context, depending on the situation.

Day et al. (2016), Gu and Johansson (2013), and Sammons et al. (2014) applied mixed-method impact studies to investigate further how successful leaders combined the transformation and instructional practices and strengths of these leadership styles. The focus of the reviews concentrated on the directive (transformational) and indirective (instructional) styles related to and promoted as the directing and telling aspects that Blanchard et al. (1993) announced as a theoretical perspective. The researchers explored how leaders shaped and layered the improvement structure, culture, and operations to advance student outcomes.

The in-depth case studies' components ascertain principals' and key staff's perceptions of school improvement strategies and actions promoting better teaching and

student-oriented learning. The findings also showed the schools' ability to improve and sustain effectiveness over the long term not primarily represented the results of specific leadership styles but showed the leaders' understanding and diagnosis of the school's needs. The results further pointed to the usage of clearly articulated, organizationally shared educational principles, values, and goals through combinations and accumulations of time and contextual strategies focusing on the school's outcomes. However, the integrated model leaders often failed to consider the weaknesses and others' expertise to indicate how Blanchard used the participating and delegating features that augmented this study's situational model.

Northouse (2016) also emphasized through the findings of qualitative data analysis the influence of leadership styles on operational success, depending on the situation and other contributing factors. In this sense, Meier (2016) and Picciano et al. (2014) revealed the strength of leadership styles while considering the task-oriented maturity levels of followers to guide the leaders. According to Meier, scholars and practitioners require appropriate leadership styles linked to knowledge and technological realities for specific contextual situations associated with instructions, testing, and evaluation to enhance teaching and learning. Meier and Picciano et al. maintained that the more leaders used the blended combination of styles for a context, the higher the success in achieving the outcomes. However, the researchers noted that such a model needed to facilitate four different teaching-learning style settings by blending the maturity levels of the followers. Meier pointed out that the followers' blended readiness levels linked to the

situational theory that Hersey et al. (2008) advocated with a focus on these leadership goals:

- Leaders instruct followers on knowledge acquisition.

- Leaders facilitate followers' interest and integrate knowledge development.

- Leaders facilitate followers' participative involvement in applying knowledge or know-how.

- Leaders promote followers' self-determination to enhance knowledge acquisition and understanding of collaborative relations.

Therefore, the identified study results provided direction, support, and interactions for more context-sensitive leadership styles to benefit leaders and followers in specified situations with implications for this research study.

Differentiated Views. Researchers' empirical studies also provided questions concerning applying the situational leadership style in educational jurisdictions (Day et al., 2016; Nelson & Squires, 2017; Zigarmi & Roberts, 2017). Nelson and Squires raised concerns while emphasizing that the directive and supportive features within the situational leadership model provided strong leadership in investigating the identified features within the context or situation. Nelson and Squires asserted that Blanchard et al. (2013) presented a very prescriptive situational model that provided limited theoretical underpinnings for the approach. Nelson and Squires also noted the absence of research regarding the application and the inadequate examination of the commonality between leadership approaches and the followers' development level. Nelson and Squires further supported the assumption of adaptive leadership involving multiple stakeholders. This

unique perspective pointed to a limitation of the study that aimed to focus only on qualified and experienced leaders' views.

Further contentions from studies on the situational leadership model stemmed from demonstrating an evaluative view of followers' readiness dispositions to suggest the possible leadership style by evaluating the theory's validity. For example, Thompson and Glasø (2018) opted to assess the leaders' and followers' self-rating of followers' competence and commitment (C&C) as a successful leadership style. Thompson and Glass applied this approach using data collected from leaders and employees in Norway business organizations to evaluate the predictions put forward for the situational model. The findings revealed that the C&C principles emphasized by Hersey et al. (2008) emerged as supportive when leader rating and follower self-rating proved harmonious compared to only leaders' success ratings. Zigarmi and Roberts (2017) also supported applying followers' situational self-ratings of the C&C principles. Therefore, the leader-follower situational leadership style perspective provided followers with appropriate educational leadership direction and support, indicating a limitation to my study's focus on the leaders' views due to logistical aspects. A leader-follower congruence approach, as viewed, constituted a future research avenue for situational model perspectives.

Day et al. (2016) pointed out that the concern with effective situational style emerged within the mixed methods research design that provided other significant circumstantial evidence related to single-lens quantitative analyses or purely qualitative approaches. Day et al. noted that at schools with highly challenging socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, the situational leadership styles faced a more excellent range

of requirements to influence success. Day et al. also stated that the level of the C&C

principles and other leadership factors (social behaviors, cultural norms, race, language,

and environment) dictated an effective leadership style. Day et al. further showed that

success depended not on situational but on the versatile style advocated by Nelson and

Squires (2017) relative to the prevailing and contributing situation and factors.

Insightful Views. Besides providing supportive and different reviews, empirical

evidence from research studies also provided intriguing insights to strengthen the

situational model choice rationale. Such insightful ideas facilitated collaborative

problem-solving strategies to influence the learning outcomes (see Lynch, 2015; Nelson

& Squires, 2017; Wright, 2017). Nelson and Squires used the adaptive leadership model

to show the practical leadership proposition suited to address current situational realities

within the schools' settings. Nelson and Squires supported the perspectives of

Amanchukwu et al. (2015) that leadership involved multiple stakeholders as an

interactive unit to establish strategies depending on the emerging problem.

Nelson and Squires (2017) further claimed that leaders exercise adaptive services

to allow the upfront examination of the school's operations. Such operations supporting

servant leadership style in schools encourage teachers and demonstrate a desire to build

school community. Schroeder also stated that teachers' effectiveness increased in

honoring and serving their principal, thus positively impacting learners, colleagues, and

parents. Schroeder further noted that servant leaders often put the institutional

requirements ahead of personal needs to involve and influence teachers for the ultimate

benefit of the learners.

The competing viewpoints and ideas require scrutinizing issues from innovative angles. Thus, the adaptive and servant leadership styles provided feasible approaches to involve all stakeholders. The focus on diagnosing the different perspectives and collaboratively exploring situational features offer insights to address concerns embedded in the problem. However, these leadership approaches required a collaborative process to provide a unique means of strategically complementing the effective situational leadership style.

Wright (2017) presented another related perspective showing the perceived use of an effective situational leadership style utilizing different dialogue communication responses to given problems or crises. Wright determined that using the interactive or *dialogic methods* that situational leaders employ as a concept to enact change helped develop followers' performances while promoting leadership competencies. Wright (2017) also viewed using dialogue to develop a creative strategy for an environment where "communication is open, concerns and thoughts expressed freely, and mutual understanding [became] the norm within any organization" (p. 29). Wright further explained how such dialogue aided situational leaders in assessing their readiness and contributions to other stakeholders.

The perspectives from the explored leadership styles and the empirical reviews provided credibly and accommodated information to support, challenge, or build upon existing theory linked to the question. The evidence critical to the formulated research question guided the understanding and leaders' responses to the situational styles to provide leadership direction and support to all stakeholders. The emerging evidence also

drove the methodology associated with the research study's problem and purpose. The evidence further substantiated the analyzed themes of the leaders' perceptions of the leadership styles necessary to provide direction, support, and insights to interact with secondary schools' stakeholders. However, there remained a real need to develop and use the appropriate styles to support, challenge, and build on existing concepts and evidence related to the other features. The approach to linking the research questions allowed the leaders to provide associated views about the different elements to influence and improve the outcomes.

Leadership Capabilities

Supportive Views. The supportive, diverse, and insightful evidence for understanding and applying leadership capabilities as a critical component featured the perspectives of Green (2017) related to successful leadership's conceptual characteristics. Green emphasized views that materialized from investigations supported by Bird and Mendenhall (2016), Finkelman (2017), and Wagner et al. (2006). The foundation perspective represented the key competencies (knowledge, skills, behavioral experiences) and the leaders' commitment, confidence, and motivation as personal attributes (Morley et al., 2010). Therefore, I explored studies associated with these characteristics to provide evidence related to the specific question and linked to the leaders' views to influence the learning outcomes.

For example, Collins et al. (2017) indicated that optimized leaders' competencies through quality development of professional knowledge and training influenced teaching and learning processes by identifying behaviors emerging from everyday practice.

Collins et al. used a four-point scale with a research sample of 93 leaders and deputy

leaders from secondary (and primary) schools to obtain qualitative data processed

through descriptive statistics. The researchers' evaluative standards included creating

strategic plans, teaching process administration, ensuring the school's development, and

managing human resources related to successful school leaders' competencies. The

results showed that the most critical capabilities linked to the identified standards

displayed the leaders' motivational strategies linked to confidence and commitment.

Collins et al. indicated that the motivational attributes represented shared values required

to create and develop a productive environment for students' learning, specify scope and

task responsibility, and direct and control colleagues' practices. However, the findings

pointed to the limited views of the leaders' professional knowledge competencies and

behavioral experiences to impact teaching and learning as an outcome of this study.

Oghu (2017) also pointed to the need for leaders' competencies using multiple

case studies to result in continuous success while addressing the failure of students to

qualify for college enrollment. Oghu focused on the ANOVA competencies of forty-eight

potential leaders and six high school principals in southern Nigeria to impact students'

outcomes. The study explored students' performance on the Senior School Certificate

Examination (SSCE), the influence on school climate, and teachers' expectations and

approaches. Oghu utilized the theories of reasoned action and leaders' planned behavior

to guide the study's conceptual framework (Ajzen, 1991). This case study involved

analyzing data obtained from documents and semistructured interviews that revealed

students' socioeconomic challenges and the need for principals' application of

professional development knowledge and skills. However, apart from providing these critical competencies, the study failed to consider other components that Tian et al. (2016) advocated as essential other contributing features with implications for this study.

Özdemir et al. (2015) also concentrated on the valuable contributions of personal attributes and dispositions for effective leadership. Özdemir et al. investigated behavioral leadership competencies as viewed and rated in part by 121 administrative school leaders, using the Leadership Competency Inventory (LCI) as applied by Yoon et al. (2010). The analyzed data generated statistics focusing on the school administrators' self-perceptions with proposals to improve school leadership competencies through descriptive ANOVA. Özdemir et al. showed that leaders' professional knowledge and skills competencies with characteristics included managerial, instructional, organizational, professional knowledge, and supervisory skills, in identified cases, differed from the teacher's perceptions. Özdemir et al. also provided evidence to decide on standard administrator requirements and characteristics inclusive of interpersonal competencies. Özdemir et al. further recognized the added possibility of individual biases as a limitation, pointing to this study's implications for further studies.

Day et al. (2016) and Le Fevre and Robinson (2015) identified appropriate interpersonal behaviors as contributions to complement the other competencies to influence and improve student-oriented outcomes. Through planned interactions, the Le Fevre and Robinson investigation used a theoretical framework related to reasoning, learning, and action to obtain the interpersonal views of 27 principals for analysis and decision-making. The evaluation of the principals' effectiveness, supported by Day et al.,

showed the interactions demonstrating limited levels of interpersonal behavioral skills. Le Fevre and Robinson also suggested utilizing more professional skills in advocating their position rather than inquiring about the views of other stakeholders' educational improvement demands. The implications pointed to the need for leaders to engage in productive interpersonal behaviors complementing the leaders' understanding and application of leadership competencies. Therefore, the behavioral capabilities with implications for this study necessitated identifying the leaders' and other stakeholders' patterns of reasoning and actions to address constraints and facilitate the learning outcomes.

Differentiated Views. Sammons et al. (2014) identified empirical studies that illustrated how successful leaders combine features to differentiate their capabilities to attain successful outcomes. For example, Day et al. (2016) showed how leaders' competencies related to transformational and instructional leadership models influenced and improved outcomes for students and schools. Day et al. examined the perspectives of these approaches by conducting a three-year mixed methods impact study in England, seeking the views of 20 principals and leadership staff from secondary (and primary) schools.

Day et al. (2016) showed how successful leaders' competencies help, directly and indirectly, to promote improvement over time, combining transformational (planned mission, policies, and operations) with instructional (teaching and learning) leadership strategies. The findings also showed mutual influence through the leaders' competencies, contributing to the schools' outcomes by shaping and transforming the school's mission

and operations, aligning with the school's teaching and learning outcomes. Day et al. further indicated that contextual competencies increase understanding through sustained practices. However, Day et al. agreed that the need for research remained for diagnosis to combine and synthesize evidence and results from different views and methodologies to provide insights to inform and support improved strategies.

Ross and Cozzens (2016) provided a different view using a quantitative study of the teachers' perceptions of practical leadership competencies. Their study investigated 314 teachers' perceptions of principals' effective leadership behaviors to influence the schools' climate utilizing the Green (2010) leadership dimensions. Ross and Cozzens used the model proposed by Green to represent the four dimensions (Understanding Self and Others; Understanding the Complexity of Organizational Life; Building Bridges through Relationships; Engaging in Leadership Best Practices). Ross and Cozzens identified the five most practical core competencies: professionalism, curriculum and instruction, diversity, collaboration, and assessment.

The findings showed that the teachers rated diversity (respecting ideas and eliminating biases), professional development, and professional professionalism as aspects impacting the school climate for effective leadership. Ross and Cozzens (2016) concluded that influential school leaders needed to support and use the stakeholders' contributions, restructure the organization, and share responsibility as data-driven leaders. There remained the need to recognize the views that Ross and Cozzens proposed as perceptions that may not represent reality. Therefore, understanding and using authentic and credible information required identifying positive and even the benefits of negative

thinking of leaders (Clarke, 2015). Clarke recognized school leadership's operation in turbulent times and valuable lessons from all stakeholders' negative and deficient capabilities. However, different stakeholders' varied competencies and views other than the leaders contributed to effective leadership in identified school situations.

Insightful Views. In addition to the supporting and differing perceptive evidence and implications for consideration, Day et al. (2016), among others, provided the rationale for empirical evidence to reveal intuitive ways leaders' understand and use leadership capabilities. The substantial knowledge and practical skill capabilities required the behaviors identified as soft skills to guide the school and community to achieve the outcomes. Ariratana et al. (2015) applied the mixed-method approach to measure and describe the development of these soft skills from 477 school administrators' views using questionnaires and interview protocol, a focus group deliberation of 15 chosen participants, and analyzed documents. Ariratana et al. indicated the need for a high conscious level of soft leadership skills among educational administrators. The qualitative findings revealed that educational administrators needed to improve their communication skills, use technology to monitor and evaluate teaching strategies, and promote team spirit and healthy interpersonal relationships. There is the implication that the administrators require strong leadership competencies representing adapted leadership characteristics to ensure positive consequences and applications to impact the teachers' attitudes and behaviors.

Yu and Prince (2016) also considered the merits of technology in general and educational technology individually as a welcomed vision associated with leaders'

competencies to influence students' and schools' outcomes. Yu and Prince noted the challenges to hinge the school administrators' technology leadership capabilities to improve teaching and learning and the school's overall quality. Yu and Prince pointed to the determined requirements for future professional development based on the investigation of the aspiring administrators' perceived ability to meet acceptable technology standards. Utilizing the ISTE Standards–A concept framework, Yu and Prince also determined how the administrators perceived their foundational technology leadership skills. The findings showed that aspiring leaders indicated a need for professional development in technology but lacked the related competencies to influence an integrated approach to student-oriented outcomes. This study's implications pointed to the increasing demand for credible evidence for planned development, delivery, and evaluative strategies involving other stakeholders to establish a sustained technological initiative to contribute to the outcomes.

The evidence from the functional leadership competencies emanating from the perspectives, propositions, and empirical studies added knowledge, guided the refinement of the associated research question, and developed the methodology. Such evidence should further verify the leaders' responses to the professional knowledge, skills, and behavioral experiences necessary to influence the outcomes. Together with the identified implications, the evidence required complementing the other leadership features to change and improve the results.

Leadership Practices

Supportive Views. With consideration of differing and innovative propositions, the favorable evidence contributed to the understanding and using effective leadership best practices as an element of the conceptual framework linked to the related question. Educational leaders' supportive practices proved vital to achieving learning outcomes, the schools' climate, and accepted societal behaviors (Cupidore, 2016; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Patton, 2015). Cupidore, for example, recognized that ineffective leadership practices appeared liable to decrease students' academic success and remain a constant concern for educational leaders. Cupidore explored techniques that leaders of three successful urban charter Midwestern middle schools implemented to advance priority and designated status. Cupidore identified and clarified the leadership practices through multiple case studies by utilizing semistructured interviews with three principals, three focus groups, 16 teachers, and a review of relevant documents.

Cupidore (2016) utilized coding and thematic data analysis procedures to obtain significant ideas and statements related to successful leadership practices. The emerging issues revealed leaders' professional development and trust, stakeholders' involvement, redesigned school, and evaluative techniques to meet state and national guidelines. The evidence also pointed to contributions to policy decision-making with a vision and goals to enhance learning and school climate. However, Cupidore provided limited evidence to show ways to engage students with preparatory opportunities to compete in a global society, thus pointing to implications for this study.

Hitt and Tucker (2016) also synthesized 56 peer-reviewed empirical research studies to provide supportive evidence as a practical contribution to the outcomes. Hitt and Tucker utilized the learning-centered, support, and Ontario leadership conceptual models. The unified models focused on scholars' support of rigorous empirical research to inform policy decisions and leadership practices for improved students' learning. Hitt and Tucker identified pivotal ways to formulate a planned and shared vision, mission, and goals; build professional capacities; create a supportive organization; develop an all-inclusive teaching and learning environment and establish a community-oriented relationship. Hitt and Tucker recognized bias due to the concept model practice's interpretations as a limitation addressed by synthesizing the results. The consequences related to Hitt and Tucker showed the need for flexible operational procedures to develop, deliver, and evaluate programs. However, utilizing such a conceptual design pointed to implications for this study to unify researchers, policymakers, and practitioners through empirical evidence contributing to the outcomes.

Cunningham (2017) explored leadership practice's density and examined how to conceive and implement the process at the middle management tier of selected secondary schools in Jamaica. Cunningham utilized the concept model for Hersey and Blanchard (1979) to predicate the increasing demand to acknowledge the school's layers of leadership practices. Additionally, Cunningham recognized a growing need to direct attention to building leadership capacities with the expectations of increased awareness in evaluating standards in the educational system. Cunningham utilized the qualitative research design and the data gathering procedures that included in-depth semistructured

interviews, observations, and documents essential for the triangulation process. The purposefully selected respondents (deputies, principals, department heads, and specialists) ranked the identified practices as middle managers.

Cunningham (2017) revealed that the middle managers saw their roles as especially important to the schools' organizational operation's effectiveness with support from the principals. These managers expressed understanding, involvement, and support of fundamental leadership practices (policies and goals, curriculum plans, delivery, assessment, evaluation, collaboration, supervision, and counseling). However, Cunningham noted the evidence of alignment in the leaders' interactive views about their practices showed gaps between their beliefs and the description of their ways. The implications pointed to further studies and the need for greater collaboration to share decisions to address evident variations in the conceptualization and implementation of leadership practices within and across schools. Cunningham also suggested redressing the absence of detected and precise identification of a sustained plan for leadership development. Not surprisingly, the managers recognized the need for professional training and exposure to a preparatory program to transition from classroom teaching to middle manager practices, with implications for this study's deputy principal's role.

Differentiated Views. Auld and Morris (2016) presented a differentiated and unconventional idea for understanding and using effective leadership best practices to address concerns and realize beneficial learning outcomes for all students or jurisdictions. Auld and Morris examined the perspective of global competitive performance through leadership best practices to create a significant demand to identify 'what works' in high-

performing schools. Auld and Morris noted that different think tanks, consultancies, and entrepreneurs proposed pragmatic and plausible forms of evidence-based policies and operations. However, the continued attempt to find straightforward solutions to what works led Auld and Morris to synthesize empirical evidence to explore the underlying challenges and realities.

Auld and Morris (2016) asserted that empirical knowledge claims often established policy trends to show scholars' evidence and influential leaders' professional experiences for best practices. The analytical claim also needed to dominate since the high-quality teaching and effective leadership related to students' outcomes. The results further stated that the authoritative declaration provided direction to support a straightforward policy decision. The implications point to the authoritarian dominance of best practices since the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA), for example, provided the operational curriculum for teaching linked to assessment (Lewis, 2017).

Nevertheless, Auld and Morris (2016) previously cautioned that PISA-type analyzed data for pragmatic and evidence-based education decisions became expedient and opportunistic to justify a preferred set of policy actions. Auld et al. (2019) examined the PISA development to show how the OECD and the World Bank (2016) proposed shaping education governance in the OECD countries. The PISA quantitative evaluation approach pointed to similar challenges to augment the CARICOM mandates to CXC related to linking curriculum operations to valuable assessments. Future research studies

require reexamining the educational policies and the continuing difficulties of standardized measurements to label performances.

Internationally accepted and dominant programs and assessment practices establish standardized tests to ascertain students learn and advance at institutions and other optional settings. Related examples are the United States Common Core State Standards (Morante-Brock, 2014; Strauss, 2015), CXC (Jules, 2015), and PISA (Lewis, 2017; Morris, 2015). However, principals' perceptive assumptions pointed out that standardized testing hinders students' performances. The principals' views on standardized testing also indicated the need to enhance curriculum content, delivery, and student achievement, not restricted to standardized test performance outcomes. Ravitch (2016) supported the idea that the established testing practices offered a limited diagnosis. Ravitch also emphasized that the results significantly labeled students' performances, schools, districts, and countries. The situation thus points to the significance of further studies with implications to influence effective decisions and positive initiatives.

Insightful Views. Researchers provided evidence to guide the direction, interactions, and support of insights to promote the best practices to achieve the outcomes. Marsh and Farrell (2015) emphasized data-driven decision-making to attain and sustain effective leadership outcomes. Beronich (2016) focused on an exploratory qualitative multiple-case study to examine the effective ways exhibited during the crisis through six school principals' conscious actions and behaviors with at least two years of experience in comprehensive high schools in Los Angeles and Southern California.

Beronich (2016) showed from the self-designed semistructured interview questions that participants recognized using information and experience as the most effective practices to guide decisions. Beronich also concluded that honest interactive communication through open dialogue, sincerity, transparency, and empathy as supportive practical actions and behaviors contribute to building trust before, during, and after the crisis. The implications point to replicating the study using multiple leadership samples in different jurisdictions. However, the evidence recognized the need for direction through professional competencies and interactions to provide effective leadership practices to achieve the outcomes.

Walker (2015) provided insightful information by exploring effective leadership practices focusing on leaders of low socioeconomic status high schools to close learners' achievement gap for sustained improvement. Walker utilized the Marzano et al. (2005) conceptual model of 25 categorized best practices and mixed methods approaches. The study, conducted over five years, investigated the effective leadership strategies used by four school leaders of African American and Latino students. The principals provided transcribed responses to a structured interview using 12 open-ended questions, while other stakeholders completed a 50-question online survey for more information. The findings showed that the transcribed codes' emergent themes exhibited the 25 essential categories that Marzano et al. specified as best practices. The analyzed data also revealed the best practices, the stakeholder's support, the central authority's high priority on the operational procedures, and the students' positive outcomes. However, despite the insightful evidence and optimism of the results, the limitations and implications pointed

to continued differentiation of educational and economic opportunities and status, and the contextual situation, thus requiring further studies.

The Caribbean studies examined provided related practical insights through quantitative analyses of effective leadership best practices (Hutton, 2017; Miller, 2016). For example, the Miller quantitative approach study utilized the experiential learning theory that Kolb (1984) promoted to understand what successful leaders know about their practices. Miller elicited data from 12 principals, three from Guyana and nine from Jamaica (primary and secondary) through snowballing (expanding) sampling and using two seven items survey questionnaires related to the two identified questions of interest. The ranked responses (scale of 1 highest to 5 lowest) based on the Kolb proposition, leaders' evolving experiential learning process represented the source of practical knowledge and skills development.

Miller (2016) showed that successful and effective leadership occurred even without fully understanding informed knowledge of the tested practices. Miller (2016) also noted, "when doing is met with more knowing; this created the potential for a much more effective practice driven by critical and reflexive actions" (p. 153). The most significant implication emerging from the study pointed to the need to improve tested practices through leaders' appropriate and continuing professional development. However, Miller perceived that successful and effective leadership practices required understanding and applying leaders' theoretical perspectives in contextual operations and jurisdictions in line with society's determined values and direction. Therefore, the Caribbean school leaders' functional consequences and practices implied further studies

to focus on professional training and development. Propositions also emerged as the need for the awareness of the school's vision, evaluated situation, and the practical skills and experiences required to move to the next stage.

The research evidence related to the perspectives, propositions, and empirical studies for understanding and using effective leadership best practices aims to close the knowledge gap identified in this study. Therefore, considering the leaders' directional, interactive, and supportive evidence related to best practices helped ascertain the question's foundation and guide the study's methodology.

Leadership Capacities

Supportive Views. As another element of the conceptual framework, the leadership capacities also helped establish the base for the linked question (Patton, 2015). Hallinger and Heck (2011), Patton (2015), and Wagner et al. (2006) showed that the leaders utilized the related mandated policies, resources, structures, operational processes and actions, and timeframe as supportive characteristics of the capacities. However, Patton (2015) cautioned that researchers focused on quantitative criteria evaluating capacities as things with a short-term relevance level. Gedik and Bellibas (2015), Guba (1978), and Patton (2015) provided practical and evaluative views to guide the leaders to independently evaluate, synthesize, and decide what to do and how to act in a democratic process to judge the relevant conditions to sustain the required impact. However, the evidence associated with the leaders' supportive views of the institutional capacities necessitated linking personal, interpersonal, and external dimensions to influence effective leadership to improve and sustain the outcomes (Stoll, 2009).

Supportive evidence for understanding and using leadership capacities served as another essential element in contributing to related knowledge and enhancing and improving the targeted learning, schools, and societal outcomes. For example, Theisen (2016) conducted a case study to examine an in-depth understanding of leadership capacity needs identified by current administrators at one of the United States Northeast Catholic school communities. Theisen utilized a framework concept focusing on succession planning and mentoring related specifically to administrators under five years of experience and requiring leadership development to understand and use at the school. Theisen utilized purposeful sampling to select ten (10) experienced administrators at the school to respond to standardized interview questions designed to elicit the required perceptions. The researcher also applied the inductive approach to analyze the data by identifying the coding ideas from participants' responses to help develop the categories and create the themes.

Theisen (2016) found that proper leadership planning and purposeful mentoring related to the instructional operations' vision, policy, and goals and prioritizing religious identity continuity provided the administrator's critical capacity needs. The implications of the codified leadership development process for such schools served as a model for developing preliminary plans with standard capacity requirements for the future. However, the critical limitations pointed to the leaders' prohibition of managing resources, structural systems, and operations related to authoritative policymakers' responsibilities, implying the need for future investigation.

Klar et al. (2016) utilized a qualitative study that provided supportive evidence to influence principals to embrace the distributive approach to increase leadership and schools' organizational capacities to enhance learning outcomes. Klar et al. explored how six high school principals from two states in the USA intentionally adopted 18 other leaders' leadership capacities to strengthen personal and school capacities using distributed leadership. Klar et al. utilized conceptual framework components to include the principal's role as a capacity builder, improved organizational conditions, and enhanced student learning outcomes. The study's research data, collected through a multi-site, qualitative design, consisted of analyzed documents and semistructured interviews. Klar et al. utilized the manual and technology-assisted coding processes to analyze the transcribed data to develop the categories and themes for interpretation.

Klar et al. (2016) noted the limitations of the researchers' and participants' biases and the nonsampling representation of the leaders' population, thus showing the transferability challenges. However, the findings illustrated critical steps that pointed to the motivation to foster leadership capacities to identify potential leaders with the attributes and dispositions. The results also indicated creating leadership opportunities, facilitating their role transitions, and providing continuous support. While the findings contributed to the body of knowledge, practices, and engagement in distributed leadership, a need remained for future research to set evaluative standards. Setting the standards also implied utilizing criteria to examine the sustained impact on leaders' and the schools' capacities and the targeted learning outcomes.

Differentiated views. Lai (2015) identified different leadership strategies of secondary school principals in Hong Kong to explore situational possibilities in and around the school contexts to develop school capacity for change. Lai (2015, pp. 6-7) specifies two categories of practices, "understanding and developing people" and "designing the organization," to guide the framework of the investigation. In addition to a general survey, Lai utilized semistructured interview questions to determine how the principal's leadership contributed to schools' capacities for improvement and increased learning achievements. The author obtained the views of 10 principals from 10 secondary schools that demonstrated varying levels of the new curriculum's implementation process. Lai utilized the conceptual framework that Miles et al. (2014) applied that comprised a similar qualitative data analysis method, condensation and display of data, and conclusion drawing through field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical information.

Lai (2015) highlighted the leaders' closely related capacity-building efforts that provided limitations focusing on knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with people development and organizational design. The study results prioritized fostering learning in communities with the capacity to participate in decision-making. The results also indicated the relevance of school and community connections to facilitate student learning through participation. A further representation noted promoting interactions between stakeholders to align external demands with the schools' internal circumstances. The implications pointed to future studies to substantiate teachers' capacities in school

leadership view, exploit school-community connections, and establish alignment between schools' resource capacity development and external demands.

Insightful Views. Demie (2019) conducted a mixed-method case study to provide intuitive views on leadership capacities and related workforce contributions to raising Black Caribbean students' achievements at inner London multicultural schools. Demie utilized factored criteria standards of the Cabinet Office (2017) ethnicity disparity audit. The research procedures comprised document analysis, observations, and individual and focus group interviews using structured questionnaires to obtain the analysis data. The sixty (60) white interview and focus group participants comprised 25 leaders, 15 teachers, and 20 other school stakeholders. Demie identified as successful capacity factors the strong leadership qualities and commitment, the practical and effective use of a diverse multi-ethnic workforce, the valued and celebrated cultural diversity, and an inclusive curriculum with students performing above national benchmarks. The implications pointed to further studies for evidence to tackle inequality and diversity issues. However, the limitations pointed to small numbers and schools' socioeconomic composition to curb contextual generalization and transferability.

Hutton (2017) conducted a conceptual model study of effective school leadership to reveal the level of knowledge and experience gained from research on the use of capacities related to high-performing principals in the Jamaican school system. Hutton's initial and underlying premise rested on an understanding of how leadership works and the capacity dimensions, components, and features shaping and informing the leaders' behavior. Hutton (2017, pp. 570 – 573) also used the conceptual framework (Hutton,

2011) for the model to elaborate on "the technical, relational, conceptual, systems management, analytical, communication, and interpretative dimensions." These features represented the basis for analyzing and synthesizing leadership capacities as skill competencies. Hutton indicated the study results as critical factors to explain the leadership performance of high-performing principals. The results also showed the model's usefulness as a diagnostic tool and a guide to recruiting principals with the required understanding, personal attributes, and relationship qualities and developing training programs. The qualitative results of these empirical studies and the practical application of the capacities show the benefits of leaders' professional development and effectiveness in achieving targeted outcomes.

Julius (2018) also provided insights on the conceptual model Townsend and MacBeath (2011) utilized, focusing on practical leadership capacities. Julius viewed the capacities as the cornerstone to contributing to school leadership and continuing professional development for learning and school improvement. Julius' mixed-method approach considered the perceptions of 60 purposefully selected teachers, principals, and ministry officials from schools in the OECS countries (Anguilla, Antigua, and Monserrat). The researcher utilized questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions for data collection and analysis using coding and thematic procedures.

The findings highlighted the critical need for continued professional leadership development to build and maintain human resource capacities and school and organizational practices. Julius (2018) also identified concerns regarding planning and implementation to focus on functional capacities and conditions. As insights that

Townsend and MacBeath (2011) supported, these principles represented learning through

student-oriented practices and the utilization of environmental conditions and resources.

The identified regulations also included stakeholders' constructive dialogue through

collaborative leadership and evaluative standards. The implications of the findings

pointed to future studies related to the adequate and appropriate behavioral and practical

resources of other stakeholders. The need also emerged to augment the contributions of

the leaders and the necessity to provide contextual policy and operational guidelines for

sustaining leadership capacities. The limitations comprised the applied level, restricted

locations, and sampling composition.

   Therefore, the research evidence related to the perspectives, propositions, and

empirical studies added to the required knowledge and operations to fully understand and

use adequate and appropriate leadership capacities. Such support, differentiated, and

insightful information emerging from the study findings enhanced the relationship

between research and policy and practice crucial to creating, building, and strengthening

leadership capacities for learning, school, and societal life improvements. The evidence

should further justify the related question's foundation and contribute to the study's

methodology.

Sustainable Leadership Strategies

   Supportive Views. The review of empirical studies associated with sustainable

strategies as summative leadership features provided supportive, differentiated, and

insightful directions linked to the research question. The intention is to examine credible

evidence to guide dynamic and endured policy decisions and contextual operations to

realize sustained mega (societal), macro (institutional), and micro (teaching and learning) outcomes (Patton, 2015; Ravitch, 2016). Amanchukwu et al. (2015), Matthew (2016), Patton (2015), and Ravitch (2016) provided information to lay the foundation and support the leadership features with a focus on influencing sustained outcome strategies.

The supportive views of the identified leadership features provided evidence for sustained leadership strategies and related practical initiatives. Matthew (2016) explored the progressive multicultural schools' leadership styles representing behavioral characteristics in given situations through a qualitative case study of a successful principal. The study's conceptual framework described Burns' (1978) transformational leadership theory as providing informed direction and innovative strategies while empowering and supporting stakeholders' decision-making process. Mathew collected data from analyzed documents, a survey, and 10 participants' conscious responses (the principal, an assistant principal, and eight lead teachers) using semistructured interview questions. The transcribed responses and triangulated data represent the emerging themes focused on the principal's flexible and successful style.

Matthew (2016) showed that the leaders' characteristic style embraced shared decision-making and interactive communication practices to utilize the school's vision, policies, and goals as essential factors. The results also noted the principal's profound situational influence on the school's culture, which helped shape how the experienced teachers created a safe, nurturing, and stimulating learning environment sensitive to multicultural behaviors. A pivotal implication emerging from the study pointed to the principals' challenge in similar settings to build trust and collaboration and improve the

school's climate for diverse, multicultural education learners on a sustainable basis. Evaluating the multicultural schools' existing leadership style also necessitated guiding all stakeholders to understand the operational environment. The implications further point to the way researchers, scholars, and practitioners are liable to benefit through a better understanding and usage of the style. However, the sample size limitations may inhibit the generalization of the results and the possible transferability to other jurisdictions, thus, necessitating further investigation.

Other empirical studies focused on leadership and social justice as critical factors impacting and sustaining students' learning, a conducive school environment, and societal development (Bertrand & Rodela, 2018; Chisolm, 2017). Chisolm used a qualitative case study to investigate school leaders' role in sustaining social justice through equity and access to secondary education in Belize, a Central American country. Bertrand and Rodela referenced social justice as a theory explaining a set of actions or behaviors to address and eliminate societal inequities, focusing on advancing human rights with equity and fairness. Chisolm noted that the school leaders provided opportunities to close the learning gap and prepare students to contribute to themselves, their school and community, and society by developing an innovative curriculum. Chisolm focused on core practices to set direction, influence people, redesign the organization and manage the instructional programs. The assumption of successful school leadership rested on applying these basic core practices extended to all settings.

The research study utilized semi-structured interviews to engage three school leaders, a counselor, three experienced teachers, ten students in a focus group session,

and field observations and notes. Chisolm (2017) obtained mixed results utilizing the descriptions using the coding and thematic procedures for the data analysis and interpretation. The findings indicated meeting the goals related to local standards defined as providing access and preparing and equipping students with the knowledge and employable skills to contribute to their economic development. However, the findings also showed that the criteria for success measured as students' competency levels to compete in a global market indicated a failure to achieve that goal.

      Differentiated Views. Goolamally and Ahmad (2014) conducted a study focusing on perceptions to identify and affirm the conceptual framework related to behavioral attributes of school leaders (principals). The study investigated leaders' requirements to influence sustainable leadership strategies and excellent practices at secondary (and primary) schools. Goolamally and Ahmad utilized the exploratory factor analysis method that Kouzes and Posner (2007) implemented as the structure for leadership behavioral attributes. Kouzes and Posner identified specific criteria for achieving sustainable leadership qualities. These quality characteristics comprised honesty, integrity, forward-looking, inspiration, knowledge, and skill competencies using emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995) and commitment or self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). The sample population comprised Secondary (and primary) schoolteachers, while leadership experts validated the self-developed questionnaire.

      The findings confirmed the five identified qualities required by influential school leaders to achieve sustainable outcomes for successful schools. The results also verified related qualities of being conscientious and humble, with the catalyst to motivate self and

others, providing support, being influential, action-oriented, and displaying self-efficacy. The implications pointed to the need to embrace other stakeholders' attributes, dispositions, and contributions. These factors comprised the required impact as uniquely considered aspects of the leadership features linked to sustainable strategies as evaluative criteria.

Oghu (2017) considered a different conceptual framework for describing leaders' perceptions of students' performance and influence on the school climate as sustained outcomes compared to focusing on understanding and using the contributing leadership features. Oghu identified the concern that pointed to high school students' failure in southern Nigeria's Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), which hindered further education qualification and enrollment. Oghu utilized the theories of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), focusing on reasoned action that Ajzen (1991) specified, to determine planned behavioral operations for the multiple case study. The study focused on seeking the views of 48 lead teachers and six principals from six high schools. The qualitative data gathered emerged from textual transcripts of semistructured interviews, document reviews, and the categorized themes of a cross-case analysis. Culala and De Leon (2020) and Oghu considered the initial ideas of student-related issues, socioeconomic status, and the education system with implications for sustainable goals.

Oghu (2017) showed that the effects and knowledge of students' socioeconomic challenges and stakeholders' contributions helped determine strategies to improve and sustain performances. The results also indicated the need for a positive school climate to enhance expectations and practices linked to improved student performances. These

implications for supportive strategies pointed to a comprehensive approach to leaders'

professional development and socioeconomic experiences, students' needs, and

stakeholders' views of best practices to influence targeted outcomes. However, there

remained a need to understand and apply insights related to the leadership features to

sustain the envisioned results pointing to implications for my research study to involve

stakeholders.

Insightful Views. Mulford (2003), Patton (2015), and Ravitch (2016) highlighted

the questions and evaluative findings of sustainable leadership strategies with the belief

that the challenges often rested within the current situation. Therefore, Marsh and Farrell

(2015) emphasized that developing and sustaining practical leadership competencies for

data-driven decision-making (DDDM) requires an increased demand for evidence to

achieve targeted outcomes. Marsh and Farrell (2015) recognized that leaders in the

continuing technological era needed to support teachers in interpreting and responding to

situations using data-driven decision-making to drive teaching and learning strategies.

Drawing on sociocultural learning theory, empirical studies, and findings (Mandinach,

2012), Marsh and Farrell developed a framework for understanding and using data-driven

decision-making as a capacity-building intervention (CBI). Marsh and Farrell drew on the

sociocultural learning theory of action developed by Mandinach. Mandinach (2012), as

cited in Marsh and Farrell (2015, p. 6), specified, "data must be collected, organized, and

analyzed to become credible information for interpretation to guide decisions based on

knowledge and skilled experience."

Marsh and Farrell (2015) generated data from a similar year-long set of case studies involving six low-income secondary schools in four districts in the United States. During three visits to the schools, Marsh and Farrell conducted interviews with district leaders, school administrators, CBI leaders (*n*=13), and teachers (*n*=83); focus groups with noncase study teachers (*n*=30); observations (*n*=16); and analyzed documents. The findings represented the CBI framework direction and indicated the need to address the questions: What are the current data access, collection, and usage levels? What unit (individual or group) of interaction provided adequate support? To what extent does the support show practice of social and cultural aspects is effective for learning? To what level are conditions, including policies and funding, to foster such support? While considering the limitations of sampling and location, the implications pointed to finding ways to use scarce resources to support data and ensure that teachers gained and sustained the required capabilities and support from data-oriented decisions to achieve sustained outcomes.

For example, Hargreaves and Fink (2004) identified applicable principles reflecting evidence-based decisions for maintaining effective leadership. The study revealed insightful directional beliefs, styles, and competencies from leaders' perceptions. Hargreaves and Fink also emphasized sustainable leadership as representing a shared responsibility involving all stakeholders. However, Hargreaves and Goodson (2006) revealed that an unsustainable direction emerged during three decades of research in eight Unites States and Canadian high schools through evidence from over 200 administrators and teachers. The study findings identified a critical force in understanding

long-term change as leadership sustainability encompassed applied principles related to insightful strategies.

Hargreaves and Goodson (2006) also noted that leaders from the first day of their appointment thought of implementing deep, broad, and long-lasting reforms. In addition, the researchers stressed the need to utilize the identified principles (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004). The decisions and operations that Hargreaves and Fink anticipated to inspire others to leave a proud legacy required the application of these identified principles:

- Leaders facilitate students' learning related to competencies and social and emotional development.

- Leaders plan and prepare for succession focusing on students' learning.

- Leaders influence and ensure that others share and help develop their vision.

- Leaders avoid envy and preferential treatment.

- Leaders embrace timely and resourceful opportunities for leaders to network, learn from, and support, including mentoring successors.

- Leaders avoid the imposition of standardized templates on everyone and embrace diversity.

- Leaders engage activist dimensions of communities to contribute to addressing challenges.

These considered principles pointed to implications for the sustainability of successful leadership styles, capabilities, and practices related to the secondary schools' policies and operations.

Brownbridge (2018) focused on utilizing a case study qualitative approach and semistructured interviews to explore the required practices and characteristics to sustain effective leadership. Brownbridge sought the perceptions of five purposefully sampled principals at model high schools in Southern California. Brownbridge utilized peer reviews to develop the instrument and followed the data collection and interview protocol to ensure standardization among the interviews (Yin, 2017). The study findings pointed to successful leadership practices of the principals. These quality practices included passion and the commitment to empowering and supporting at-risk youths and using collaborative techniques to obtain credible evidence. The conclusion pointed to no preference for one leadership practice or style. Thus, principals needed flexibility and diversity related to the students, schools, and societal communities. The insightful implications indicate the need for all school, district, and external stakeholders' involvement and contributions and assessed practices implemented over time by knowledgeable, experienced, and committed leaders.

Gedik and Bellibas (2015) and Stoll (2009) viewed education leaders' functional capacities as providing these sustained conditions:

- Leaders create, build, and maintain the necessary cultural and structural systems.

- Leaders facilitate knowledge, skill, and behavior-oriented experiences and opportunities.

- Leaders ensure contributions through the interrelationships and interactions among all the stakeholders.

Hutton (2017), Knight (2014), and Marzano et al. (2005) supported the intuitive and sustainable strategies through directional, interactive, and credible evidence contributing to leadership capacities to influence learners, schools, and societal outcomes. Bennett et al. (2014) conducted a mixed-method study to examine Arizona principals' all-inclusive capacity-building competencies and practices in successful schools (Tier III) as a model to develop the potential for sustained improvement outcomes. The data sources from 45 schools included 62 survey participants (principals =35, other staff = 27) and semistructured interview responses of 16 principals and 13 other staff members (assistant principals, instructional coaches, and teachers). Bennett et al. utilized leadership categories and the Seashore-Louis et al. (2010) capacity-building model for sustainable improvement in high-capacity schools. The study employed an interpretative lens for the qualitative aspects to allow for an in-depth inquiry into capacity building for sustainable progress. Bennett et al. considered the evaluative criteria and other dimensions of Leithwood and Riehl's capacity development practices: setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing the instructional program.

Bennett et al. (2014) indicated that schools at low-capacity building levels also showed limited sustainable improvement to accommodate directional leadership. School development towards a high degree focused on micro-level processes also placed little attention and priority on leadership in the sociocultural dimension. The implications point to future research to evaluate a leadership development model for Tier III and other schools requiring linking capacity-building leadership with students' achievement. There further emerged consequences for future educational leaders armed with knowledge,

skills, dispositions, and resource capacities using analytical tools. The vision required

providing directional, interactive, and supportive strategies to inform leaders and sustain

school climate and other sociocultural dimensions.

Therefore, the review findings and applied framework concepts supported, raised

issues, provided strategic insights to the related question, and guided the methodology.

These sustainable strategies from the synthesized leadership features should contextually

strengthen the evidence base for the leaders' integrated and situational contributions with

stakeholders' collaboration. Therefore, understanding and using credible empirical

evidence related to leadership features in contextual situations pointed to implications for

this and future studies to impact social change.

Reviewed Outcomes

The outcomes related to the contextual framework perspectives and the

propositions linked to the leadership features guided the identification of critical studies

to provide credible empirical evidence as viable contributions. Such evidence helped

establish the foundation of the questions to suggest the methodology related to the

problem and the study's purpose. The evidence also required verifying the interpretation

of the leaders' responses to the subquestions about the leadership features. However,

implications and limitations emerged while reviewing the supportive, diverse, and

insightful evidence contributing to the body of knowledge in collaborative and unique

ways. The implied challenges may impact the study's generalization and transferability

level and apply to similar samples and locations. Therefore, the evidence, suggestive

implications, and recognized limitations contributed to decisions related to this study's problem and purpose.

Summary and Conclusions

The study explored the conceptual framework perspectives and the empirical evidence of studies related to effective leadership's features and characteristics to influence learning, school, and societal outcomes. The propositions, including the situational leadership foundation linked to the generic qualitative approach, provided evidence to clarify the problem and purpose. The resulting proof from the explored features and related characteristics also guided the framed questions and methodology.

Summary Themes in the Literature

The thematic issues I examined during the literature embodied the conceptual framework components influencing the study's scope. These features comprised varied leadership styles, capabilities, result-oriented practices, appropriate capacities, and sustained strategies. I focused on the features' related foundational models, perspectives, and recent empirical evidence of related studies. The evidence emerging from the thematic issues through supportive, different, and insightful findings justified the formula for guiding the associated questions and the study's methodology.

The evidence also led to the identified leadership situations linked to addressing the problem and realizing the purpose of the study. The exploration also required connecting the reviewed evidence with the qualified, professionally trained, and experienced leaders' perceptions as transcribed data for analysis and comparative

interpretation. The review of the features further considered the possible impact of other contextual factors and related archival data to close the practical knowledge gap.

Such factors and archival data comprised the demographic, cultural, socioeconomic, contextual background and policy operations, and stakeholders' contributions in the jurisdictions and elsewhere (Santamaria, 2016). Santamaria noted that these considerations, directly and indirectly, impacted local, regional, and global influences on the targeted leadership features. These considerations may contribute to the policy directions, resource provisions, behavioral and cultural attributes and dispositions, social justice, diversity, and equality as related perspectives. Therefore, the limitations of trustworthy information related to leaders' views of these issues pointed to implications for addressing the literature and practical knowledge gap for this and future studies.

Ways to Fill the Gap

Recognizing limitations in exploring and reviewing the conceptual leadership features' perspectives and empirical literature review requires finding strategic ways to fill the gaps. Guskey (2009) noted, "sound, trustworthy, and scientifically valid evidence on the professional development characteristics that help improve student learning remains scarce" (p.226). For example, deficiencies emerged from the explored findings to understand and use the essential leadership capabilities (professional knowledge, skills, behaviors, and experiences). The concerns seemed to continue between the leader's expert development knowledge and student-oriented learning outcomes. The rationale was that supportive, different, and insightful perspectives and empirical research evidence contributions seemed insufficient to address the challenges of closing the

knowledge and practical gaps. A suggestive way to address this concern requires seeking

perceptive responses from academically qualified, professionally trained, and

experienced leadership practitioners with conducive behaviors (Green, 2017; Le Fevre &

Robinson, 2015). These leaders may provide insightful deliberations linked to

contributing factors as follows:

- The targeted location's situation may relate to cultural, contextual, and

  environmental realities (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2015).

- A leader's personal and interpersonal behaviors (attributes and dispositions)

  may relate to professionalism, commitment, motivation, and satisfaction.

- Best practices may require unique contextual and practical situations.

- The contributions of other stakeholders may need a level of acceptance.

- Communication and technology strategies may require enabling initiatives.

 Patton (2015) noted that such leadership views pointed to contributing factors to

improve the study's rigor in examining credible evidence linked to applied policy and

operational decisions. Utilizing authentic information and practical knowledge remains

critical to understanding and using leadership features and related factors to influence

learning, schools, and societal outcomes in the Caribbean.

Transition to Chapter 3

Chapter 3 considers the theoretical and empirical evidence, applications, and

linkages to review the problem, the purpose, and the relevance and language of the

research questions. The literature review's synopsis also establishes the significance of

the leadership features and the implication to guide the research methodology's

components. The sections include the design and procedures, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and envisioned Chapters 4 and 5. However, a review of Chapter 2 as an evaluative process reveals a clear understanding and application of leadership features and factors. Understanding the foundation models, conceptual perspectives, and empirical evidence related to the features and factors guides the research while considering the supportive, different, and insightful views to influence policies and operations.

This review identifies, defines, and synthesizes the conceptual models' foundation and empirical evidence related to leadership features. The process also includes explaining the critical framework propositions associated with applying the themes as articulated in previous studies as beneficial to this research study. Another aspect represents the fundamental concepts as an exhaustive review of the contemporary literature using set criteria related to the phenomenon. Meanwhile, the chosen generic qualitative approach remains consistent with this study's scope. This procedure further includes ways researchers in the discipline outline the problem, purpose, scope, sources, collection, and analysis of data and the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the utilized approaches. The final component highlights the findings with implications of the known and unknown themes and practical knowledge connecting the literature's transition to the methodology and operational applications described in chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

This study aimed to explore individual leaders' understanding and application of effective leadership features and related factors to influence and improve secondary school students' learning outcomes in selected Caribbean countries. I utilized the generic qualitative approach to examine the leadership features and characteristics to obtain credible evidence to address the research questions. The literature-based evidence I described in Chapter 2 also guided the methodology, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation related to the leaders' perceptions and lived experiences. Therefore, the consequences and applications of the leaders' views guided the policy and operational decisions to influence the school leaders in the OECS countries to realize outcomes.

Significant Sections of the Chapter

The research method's critical components begin with the research design and rationale, including restating the research questions, defining effective leadership as the study's phenomenon of interest, and explaining the chosen research tradition. As a researcher, I then describe my role in facilitating data collection, analysis, and interpretation while stating personal and professional relationships, managing biases and power relationships, and addressing ethical issues. I further consider participant selection, data collection instruments and sources, recruitment, participation, data collection, and the planned analysis. The final aspects to address in this chapter are trustworthiness and ethical processes culminating with a summative insight for Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

The research study focused on the qualitative research approach to explore effective leadership as the central phenomenon. Clarke and Visser (2019) recognized the continued importance of pragmatic qualitative research approaches in education but with possibilities and pitfalls. I facilitated the practical process of collecting descriptive information related to the leaders' understanding and applying the leadership features and characteristics to represent their realistic views. The qualitative method that I chose provided the mechanism to gain insight into the knowledge and experiences of the targeted leaders. The process also helped develop an understanding and application to interpret the leaders' experiences. The method showed how to use the linked research questions and the procedural design to obtain secondary school leaders' perceptions as findings in specified locations.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the secondary school leaders' perceptions of understanding and using effective leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, sustainable strategies, and related factors to influence and improve learning outcomes?

Subquestion 1a: What are the leaders' understanding and application of each leadership feature to influence the targeted results?

Subquestion 1b: What are the leaders' views of the related factors (other than the leadership features) influencing teaching and learning, school, and societal outcomes?

The primary perspective represented effective leadership as the phenomenon of interest. This concept described the leadership features and characteristics to obtain data representing the leaders' views to analyze and interpret the findings to influence the targeted outcomes. Therefore, examining the phenomenon required understanding and successfully utilizing the leader's capabilities, best practices, capacities, and sustainable strategies as features to guide policy goals and operations to influence the outcomes (see Gentry et al., 2014; Northouse, 2018).

Research Tradition

I chose a qualitative approach for this study. The approach to exploring the conceptual perspectives of the leadership features and characteristics facilitated the procedural design operations (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Patton, 2015). Creswell (2016) and Yin (2017) agreed that the investigated perspectives provided a fuller understanding and usage of the approach in such a situation. The process involves inquiries about the study's phenomenon and its essential characteristics. Thus, the method features the researcher as the primary instrument focusing on the participant's views and using other data sources (Carminati, 2018; Patton, 2015).

My qualitative approach followed a nonrandom process and purposefully selected qualified, professional and experienced school leaders. These considerations also guided my understanding of the appropriate timeframe, descriptive data collection and analysis, and interpretative process. The design associated with this approach also directed my focus on interpretive techniques showing the leaders' perceptions of the leadership features. I followed the same design process that Patton (2015) proposed as a

requirement for coding and decoding the collected data into categorized patterns and themes for analysis and interpretation. Therefore, the preferred qualitative approach tradition enabled examining the central phenomenon's linked features and characteristics using the generic qualitative design.

The Rationale for the Tradition

The generic methodological design guided my decision to describe and interpret practical leadership features to show how the leaders' perceptions influence the targeted outcomes. Patton (2015) described the essential generic approach as "the practical side of qualitative methods that simply involved skillfully asking open-ended questions and observing matters of interest in real-world settings to solve problems, improve programs, and develop policies" (p. 154). My decision to utilize the generic qualitative approach signaled a focus on the tradition related to Patton's (2015) core, rationalized, and logical question: "What are the practical consequences and useful application of what we can learn about this issue or problem" (p. 99). The data collection process comprised interviewing the leaders, focus group deliberations, and documentation analysis to acquire credible and trustworthy information (Kahlke, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Therefore, the information generated from the study's identified data collection instruments provided the researcher with knowledge, understanding, and direction to transcribe, code, develop themes, analyze, and interpret the findings to guide decisions. Thus, I shared the defined knowledge and experience of the specific conceptual perspectives or ideas with the participants to facilitate appropriate responses to the formulated questions. I also referenced and explained the interview guide protocol's

relevant information as an official communication aspect seeking approval and engagement from the countries' educational authorities. Therefore, the generic approach enhanced the understanding of sharing, responding to inquiries, and reiterating essential ideas during the data collection process to guide the participants' objective and valid responses. The generic approach uniquely focused on "the practical consequences and useful application" of learning from the leaders' views and experiences about the framework components (Patton, 2015, p. 99).

Kahlke (2014) also noted that the approach addressed questions and similarities within strategies for researchers while considering rigor and congruence in crossing methodological boundaries. For example, Kahlke noted that researchers strived to examine the practical process like grounded theory expectations within the generic qualitative study without deriving a substantive theory (Lim, 2011). Like this study, Patton (2015) noted generic studies blended congruent tools (interviews, focus group interactions, and documentation). The generic study reviews also amalgamated similar qualitative research techniques (sampling technique, data collection, analysis, and interpretation) as established methodologies (Patton, 2015). Kahlke (2014) indicated the approaches risked the charge of blending congruent tools but worked well with enough care to ensure unity at all framework levels as an example of seeking academic credence. However, Sandelowski (2000) stated that mixing methods often had no distinct rationale, indicating incongruence between a study's aims, design, and data analysis.

The chosen qualitative approach represented unique, practical, and acceptable ways to understand and use different methodologies. The anticipated results rested on

evidence-based descriptive knowledge from the participants' views for analysis and interpretation (Caelli et al., 2003; Kahlke, 2014). Kahlke, like Crotty (1998), suggested that such studies sought to understand how people viewed, interpreted, and arrived at conclusions associated with their world of knowledge and experiences. Thus, the generic qualitative approach enhanced the study's credibility by describing participants' experiences accurately, staying close to the data, and ensuring that the interpretations represented the analyses (Sandelowski, 2000). However, blending and integrating other prominent qualitative studies also enhanced the generic approach.

Role of the Researcher

Role

As the sole researcher, I represented the primary instrument for the initial preparation, data collection, analysis, and interpretation with role and responsibilities, biases to address, and relationships to establish and maintain. During the data collection, I performed the required tasks of an interviewer, focus group facilitator, and document analyst. I shared with the participants and others (the country authorities) the intended use of my research study for purely academic purposes. I assured them of their identity's confidentiality and the safekeeping of the data. I also remained conscious of the participant's tendency to please and respect the researcher's position and essential beliefs. Consequently, I provided clarification, adhered to protocol, and performed my role in obtaining credible data from participants and archival information from other stakeholders. Signing my correspondences as a 'doctoral candidate' assured my role as a researcher.

Responsibilities

I, as the researcher, held the responsibility to conduct all interactions to obtain data related to the interview and focus group questions and archival information. My duties also included conducting virtual interviews and focus group interactions. I further followed the required preparation to transcribe the data and, using the coding phases, searched for the codes to formulate the categories and themes within participants' responses. However, my flexible plan of action with input from all involved in the data collection procedures required advanced confirmation of the formal protocol to obtain proper administration and participants' consent. Following IRB protocol, my preliminary communicated information apprised officials and the participants about the study's purpose. The communication also included information about the questions, the expected outcomes, the procedures, the promise of confidentiality, timeframe, and local coordination as critical to my responsibilities.

Biases

As the investigator, I needed to explain personal biases, dispositions, and assumptions associated with the research study. I followed the suggestions of Merriam and Tisdell (2015) to address these concerns to add credibility to the associated questions and answers. Adherence to the consent form provisions signified a sure way of avoiding biases. As pointed out in the planned sections on trustworthiness and ethical issues, I also addressed other potential preferences, including conflict of interest or power differentials. As the researcher, I avoided disposition bias towards my pragmatic and personal worldview related to my foundational knowledge and experience in education and

training with a bias towards justice, equity, and fair treatment. My consciousness helped

avoid such bias and thus considered and shared mutual respect accorded to personal

responsibilities. Journal notes helped increase transparency during the study through the

formal documentation of my opinions, thoughts, and feelings (Ortlipp, 2008). Therefore,

managing biases represents a critical role whereby I control personal preferences through

the scholarly and professional display of honesty, trust, and the highest level of integrity.

Relationships

I established a collaborative relationship with the participants representing mutual

trust, personal respect, warmth, and rapport requiring systematic dispositions and actions.

The absence of supervisory or instructional relationships within the educational settings

and power over the participants presented a favorable research situation. I adhered to and

exhibited protocol and due respect to strengthen the ties to conduct the interviews, focus

group deliberation, and engagements to obtain the archival data. Additionally, I listened

to and interacted with the participants during and after the interview and group

deliberations to strengthen my role as the researcher.

Methodology

The generic qualitative design utilized guided the procedures to link the

leadership features and related interview questions. The process examined the

perspectives, concepts, and empirical evidence and analyzed and interpreted the leaders'

perceptions to understand and use effective leadership. The methodology focused on

participant selection logic, including identifying the population, sampling strategy,

participant selection criteria and size, procedures related to the participants, and potential

data saturation. The plan also involved deliberating on the data collection instruments, recruitment, participation sample, and data collection. Finally, the methodology section described the data analysis plan, trustworthy issues, and ethical considerations.

Participant Selection Logic

Study Population and Sites

The population of secondary school leaders in the OECS represented deputy principals, principals, and education officers from Dominica ($n=36$), St. Kitts and Nevis ($n=21$), and St. Lucia ($n=47$) from the OECS secondary schools. The selected nine leaders comprised a subset of three participants from each country's grouping of school leaders. I selected the sample from the subpopulation, considering cost-effectiveness and the criteria of the participants for the interview and focus group interactions.

Sampling Strategy

For this generic research study, the purposeful sampling approach adopted required identifying participants with information-rich perceptions (Gall et al., 2007; Patton, 2015). Patton (2015) referred to purposeful sampling as a qualitative research strategy to identify and select information-rich cases associated with limited resources' effective use. Differing intentional approaches contributed to the strategic decision to select the study's participants. I utilized the suggestive criterion-1 approach that Palinkas et al. (2015) advocated to identify and choose participants meeting the predetermined criteria representing a holistic set of essential characteristics related to the phenomenon.

The sample size of nine leaders for the interview and focus group interactions represented three deputy principals, principals, and education officers selected from three

OECS countries. The leaders supported the study's purpose and rationale to determine the realistic and descriptive perceptions of the leadership features. Malterud et al. (2015) and Patton (2015) suggested that a purposive sample size of six to ten participants with homogenous characteristics provided enough credible evidence for the data analysis and interpretation. The selection of the nine participants as the sample size supported the decision to cover the recommended range for criterion and homogeneity sampling designs. This decision associated with the phenomenon to present relevant patterns related to participants' views fulfilled the study's purposeful aim. Table 3 represents the leaders' positions and criteria for selecting participants from three OECS countries.

Table 3

Leader's Positions and Criteria of Participants From Three OECS Countries

OECS Countries	Leadership Positions	Academic Qualification	Professional Qualification	Experience in Years
Dominica, St. Kitts /Nevis, St. Lucia	Principal, deputy principal, education officer	Bachelor's Degree (Minimum)	Certificate, Diploma, Others	Over three years

Table 3 indicates participants' required positions as principal, deputy principal, and education officer as leaders contributing to the operations of the secondary schools, confirmed by participants' responses to personal questions (Appendix D). The selection criteria specified the possession of a minimum academic bachelor's degree qualification. The benchmark also identified the need for at least a certificate in professional development training in education and management. The over three years of educational leadership experience exemplified leaders who faced challenges, enjoyed progress and

success, initiated strategies, and envisioned insights to realize targeted outcomes (see Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

Participants' Selection

The procedures to recruit the participants required written communication with each country's CEO. The request for official approval from the education authorities facilitated identifying and providing a list to contact and recruit the participants. This initial correspondence followed Walden University's IRB approval, number 05-06-20-0527201, as the study's informed consent protocol. My communication with each CEO also included a request to categorize the proposed leaders with the required criteria and ascertain their leadership association with secondary schools. The invitation letter to the interview and focus group participants for their selection also sought to verify meeting the specified information criteria (Appendix D). The IRB informed consent protocol that included the selection criteria as attachments informed the CEO of the approval and the other collaborative requests. I then communicated with the potential participants utilizing the provided list and contact information to affirm their initial agreement.

Sample Size

My stratified purposeful sample size was determined based on the following propositions specified by Malterud et al. (2015), Mason (2010), and Patton (2015):

- The qualitative study's purpose required a narrow focus to understand and use the leadership features and other situational sources.

- The sampling criteria to attain information power required a smaller sample of participants with adequate and appropriate characteristics to provide rich data.

- The persuasive dialogue between researcher and participants needed to realize rich information, conscious of the saturation point and the sample size.

- The data analysis and interpretation strategies needed to focus on the descriptive data related to the features, factors, and archival information.

Malterud et al. (2015) noted that related archival data provided relevant relationships and insights to strengthen the analysis and interpretation.

Instrumentation

The self-developed data collection instrumentations and other sources justified establishing strategies to answer the subquestions. The assurance of data triangulation and the necessity to build confidence in the collected data and strengthen the process involved in collecting data through interviews, focus group deliberations, and access to archival documents. The data collection procedures also required approved audio recordings supported by the field notes and an emailed response from participants to capture the perceptions. Therefore, the data from the three related sources provided the information to analyze and interpret for relationships, results, and insights (Table 4).

Table 4

Characteristics of Interview and Focus Group Questions and Archival Data

Interview Questions linked to Leadership Features.	Focus Group Questions linked to Contextual Factors	Archival Data Linked to situational insights
1. Different Styles	features linked to outcomes	Vision and Mission
2. Capabilities	Contextual factors	Policies and Goals
3. Best Practices	Internal Stakeholders	Operations
4. Capacities	External Stakeholders	Responsibilities
5. Sustainable Strategies	Relationship insights	Statistical Data

Table 4 specifies the characteristics of the leadership features (styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, and strategies) to formulate the subquestions for the interview interactions. The contextual factors relate to the subquestions for the focus group sessions. Table 4 also indicates the archival data components linked to the situational insights as to the third data source.

Interviews

The interview questions focused on understanding and using the leadership features of the first subquestion. The interview process required my adherence to the interview protocol to provide credible and trustworthy data. I considered the phases of the interview procedures suggested by Kallio et al. (2016, p. 11) to:

- identify the prerequisites for using semistructured interview sessions,

- review and utilize previous knowledge about the related leadership features,

- formulate and present the semistructured interview and focus group questions,

- seek feedback related to the evaluation of the guide and the questions, and

- present the aspects of the interview guide (Appendix A).

In this study, the nine participants (three principals, three deputy principals, and three education officers) responded to the semistructured interview questions. In a relaxed telephone conversation and email communication, the interactions focused on related inquiries and probes to obtain the participants' perceptions representing objective and trustworthy data. The interview process with participants lasted for an agreed timeframe. The original plan (before the COVID -19 pandemic) changed to a mutually agreed 60 to 75 minutes to accommodate the telephone conversations that restricted quick

note-taking but advanced the effective use of the emailing process adjusted by using the provided using the participants' response information template (Appendix D). I deliberated on the open-ended questions with the participants, focusing, where necessary, on related inquiries and probes (Appendix C), seeking to obtain different views in the process. I used audio tape to record the interactive aspects of the interviews with the participant's permission. The method also focused on deliberate collaboration guided by information specific to the referenced IRB protocol. The mandates addressed questions including the use of the audiotape, maintenance of privacy and confidentiality, the provision to share recordings and transcripts with participants' consent, and upon request and to destroy recordings and transcripts after five years. I particularly noted and highlighted any relevant circumstances occurring during the data collection procedures.

I also ensured the interviews included a comfortable and neutral location void of interruptions and safe for each participant. The selection of such a venue for the telephone and email interview sessions helped ascertain the participants' responses (Creswell, 2016). I focus on the task during the sessions to minimize distractions and interruptions. The recorded sessions and the emailed copy of reactions using the response template (Appendix C) represented a linked approach to ensure no data loss and distortion of transcription facts (see Cohen et al., 2007). Apart from reminding participants of the scheduled focus group deliberation, the message of appreciation at the end included thanking the participants for their cooperation, understanding, contributions, and time.

Focus Group

I linked the focus group questions to the contextual factors and stakeholders' contributions to the leadership features. I used an alternative to face-to-face focus group expectations, the virtual focus group technique, to adjust due to COVID-19. Itaman (2017), Kite and Phongsavan (2017), and Laverdière and Hayes (2020) promoted focus group deliberations as a qualitative research technique leading to a consensus of participants' responses as data to discover trends and opportunities. The focus group process facilitated participants' confirmed agreement to respond to the general focus group questions related to the question. The same three interview participants with technological and online competencies served as members of each focus group. The focus group process guided the decisions to:

- utilize the online focus group communication method to facilitate the interactions (Kite & Phongsavan, 2017; Vicsek, 2016);

- collaborate with the participants to set the date, time, and secure location with the required technology to accommodate the online focus group interactions (Kite & Phongsavan, 2017; Vicsek, 2016);

- reiterate the purpose of focus group interactions to provide a fuller understanding to obtain deep and rich quality data (Itaman, 2017; Kite & Phongsavan, 2017; Laverdière & Hayes, 2020);

- allow the participants to seek clarifications, add, modify, and share their views (Maxwell, 2013);

- provide in advance and allow the participants to utilize the simplified response template (Appendix C) with the questions and related prompts and probes to guide the interactive process; and,

- prompt participants to enrich and strengthen the consensus views (Kite & Phongsavan, 2017; Laverdière & Hayes, 2020).

The prompts and probes I utilized throughout the process helped tease out additional information during the session. Participants agreed to provide documented email responses and feedback as contributions to the transcription for each country's focus group deliberations.

I followed the guidance of Kite and Phongsavan (2017) to utilize about 60 to 75 minutes for the discussion to complement initial and follow-up phone and email communications. For example, with the participant's consent to record the proceedings, I provided each focus group member with the opportunity to withdraw before proceeding with the session. The explanations also included informing the participants about using the audiotape recordings to capture and avoid data loss and maintain their confidentiality by using pseudonyms for their identification. The focus group participants agreed to provide email feedback on the deliberations' consensus response to the questions. I followed up through telephone calls to obtain feedback to address further questions and accept additional views about their contributions to the research study (Yin, 2017). Again, I issued a message of appreciation, thanking the participants for their contributions as additional data for analysis and interpretation.

Archival Data

The archival information analysis relevant to the study served to verify the perspectives and complement participants' interview perceptions related to the identified leadership features and factors. Itaman (2017) and Yin (2017) indicated that documented information from national, regional, and international sources often proved relevant to every study to examine issues from different perspectives. I obtained related documents to help the data triangulation process and strengthen the findings' objectivity and trustworthiness (Cohen et al., 2007; Itaman, 2017). Most importantly, the historical archival information about the background, policy goals, and operations relied on criteria and standards to guide expected outcomes. Such data added to the understanding and usage of the leaders' perceptions aligned to the conceptual framework's components.

Additionally, the archival documents represented supportive, different, and thoughtful information linked to the secondary schools' leadership features and factors contributing to the anticipated outcomes. Ayres et al. (2003) and Itaman (2017) noted that documents providing accurate historical data showed how a situation evolved, developed, and realized changes. Therefore, these documents provided background data and insights for a deeper understanding of leadership aspects to guide consequences and applications to influence, improve, and sustain secondary school outcomes (Patton, 2015).

The process of facilitating access to the documents required adherence to the protocol by requesting official approval from each targeted OECS country's CEO. The researcher obtained from the CEOs and the OECS secretariat in St. Lucia copies and sources of information related to the vision, policy goals and outcomes, plans and

program operations, statistical data, and other related documents relevant to the study's focus on secondary level education. I started the initial document analysis by utilizing notes from the published and digital copies and downloaded data from related websites to augment the transcribed archival data (Appendix E) for analysis and interpretation.

The Researcher's Developed Instrument

I utilized the self-developed interview guide (Appendix A) to provide the participants with an understanding to respond to the five semistructured interview questions and five focus group questions (Appendix B), focusing on significant leadership features and related factors. Radhakrishna (2007) emphasized that the development of accurate and reliable research questions associated with the study's problem and purpose remained critical for reducing errors. Groves (1987) referred to measurement or descriptive mistakes as the "discrepancy between respondents' attributes and their responses" (p. 162). Radhakrishna also stated that establishing content validity utilized the experiences of a field of experts to evaluate the questions.

Content validity of the instrument represented the extent to which the questions measure or explore the phenomenon of interest (Brod et al., 2009). One method of ensuring content validity includes reviewing the instrument by subject matter experts (Brancato et al., 2006). Radhakrishna indicated the intent to measure or qualitatively describe and interpret what the study set out to describe and explain. Therefore, the emerging inquiry pointed to the type of validity (content, construct, or criterion) recognized as appropriate depending on the study's purpose.

Sauro (2014) distinguished the types of constructs and criterion validity using correlation measurements based on set standards. Sauro's reference to content validity related to the study's purpose specified that the administered interview or focus group questions came from a pool of descriptive content guided by this study. For example, in describing the leaders' perceptions, the evaluation included the descriptions of the leadership features and related characteristics. Therefore, the participants needed to show answers linked to the identified features or influenced by other factors.

I adhered to the sequential steps that Radhakrishna (2007) emphasized to ascertain the objectivity of the questions representing accurate and truthful perceptions and interpretations of the participants' initial responses. The recommendation of Radhakrishna to use evaluative questions guided my process and ascertained the adequacy of data collection instruments to obtain participants' responses:

1. Will the responses to the questions describe what they intended to convey?

2. Do the questions link to the leadership features and other discrepant aspects?

3. Are the questions appropriate for the leaders to provide in-depth information?

4. Are the questions comprehensive enough to collect the required information?

5. Will the questions solicit responses concerning the leaders' competencies?

The participants requested necessary clarification to assess the questions' content, structure, and reliability to ascertain the level of appropriateness. For example, the participants suggested providing guided examples for each research question. I used audiotaping, telephone and text messages associated with participants' consent, copious notes, and emailed responses utilizing the template (Appendix C) to obtain credible

answers to the research questions**.** Thus, the process required knowledge and experience to provide a valued judgment but with a liable level of subjectivity.

The recommendations related to clarifications guided my utilizing the vast knowledge, professional skills, and experiences of educators and participants to review the question's structure, language, and contextual suitability. Therefore, such evaluation confirmed the phase's essential process in developing the semistructured interview and focus group instruments. Kallio et al. (2016) and Turner and Spain (2016) showed the actual situation's guidance and provided crucial information to inform decisions to utilize the instruments. Kallio et al. also supported the process that removed ambiguity, assured clarity, and improved the question's relevance to elicit the participants' different perceptions and related experiences. Laverdière and Hayes 2020) proposed ways to ensure the practical nature of the initial and follow-up questions to obtain appropriate responses. Therefore, I followed these suggestions:

- sequence the order for asking the interview and focus group questions:

- highlight specific items that required rephrasing in more concrete terms:

- provide the average phone call time utilized to complement the sessions:

- guide practical techniques to pace, probe, and control emotions:

- recognize how and when to adjust voice tone, posture, and behavior:

- transmit a relaxed disposition and avoid showing personal bias: and,

- know how to address glitches related to operating technological devices.

Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

My recruitment procedures, participation, and data collection methods represented another critical research study component. The approach provided details of each data collection instrument and related features. Thus, my outlined plan identified the recruited participants, the venues, facilitators, the frequency and duration, consciousness of saturation point and sample size, and the data collection method for each instrument (Table 5). The detailed plan also included emailing the interview session's descriptive data report to the participants for an evaluative review and checking to ascertain content validity and consistency (Yin, 2017).

Table 5

Features Related to Data Collection Instruments

Features	Interview	Focus Group	Archival Data
Participants (1)	Participants: (n =9)	Participants: (n =9)	Others (2)
Venues	Dominica; St. Kitts /Nevis; St. Lucia	Dominica; St. Kitts /Nevis; St. Lucia	Dominica; St. Kitts /Nevis; St. Lucia; OECS
Facilitator	Researcher	Researcher	Researcher/Others (2)
Frequency	Once each participant (n=9)	Once each focus group (n=3)	Continuos - venues & sources
Duration	60 to 75 minutes	60 to 90 minutes	Continuous
Collection Methods	Audiotape, Notes, Email (3)	Audiotape, Notes, Email (3)	Data Template (4)

Notes. [1]Participant: Deputy principal, principal, and education officers.

[2]Others: Ministries, stakeholders, OECS, CARICOM, organizations, and countries.

[3]Use of participants' data as template responses (Appendix C)

[4]Use of archival data (Appendix E).

The same leaders serving as focus group participants followed similar procedures, information sharing, adherence to IRB protocol, and the videophone and email strategy to obtain responses. Reserved participants remained available in case of withdrawal or other circumstances. I maintained consistency in assigning pseudonyms to protect participants' identities, check their submissions, and express appreciation of their contributions.

Data Analysis Plan

Th**e** qualitative data analyses incorporated the transcribed data into coded components to then restructured as categorized units and groups to create suggested themes (Archer, 2018). Thus, my planned data analysis approach considered the study's purpose, the research questions, the contextual setting, and the participant's demographics. The data transcriptions comprised participants' responses to the questions, insights from the explored features, contributing contextual factors, and archival information.

Preliminary Steps

The preliminary steps following the data collection and before the data analysis cycles are to transcribe the content of each participant's responses exhibited on the template (Appendix C). I emailed a copy of the transcribed data to each participant for member checking to ascertain the accuracy of the responses. I also ensured proper filing to organize the data and assigned pseudonyms instead of names to confirm confidentiality (Seidman, 2019). The caution to store the data in a folder on my computer and the external disk drive served as the backup strategy to satisfy the IRB security mandates.

The planned data analysis connections first illuminated and presented the participants' understanding of the features of effective leadership to establish the personal context related to the first subquestion. The second constituted seeking participants' perceptions linked to the effective use of the leadership features and characteristics associated with the second subquestion. Thirdly, the analysis focused on the social context of seeking a more holistic view showing how their understanding combined with or differed from the effective use of the features. This multiple-cycle approach helped to verify, strengthen, and differentiate participants' views related to the explored features (Patton, 2015), social context factors (Fusch & Ness, 2015), and archival data (Itaman, 2017; Yin, 2017).

The Coding Process

Saldaña (2021) described the coding process that I utilized to see relationships within the transcribed data, identify the coded ideas, develop categories, and create themes that represented results to accommodate the data analysis. Saldaña, independently supported by Yin (2017), also specified the inductive coding procedures that I manually followed for the qualitative data analysis comprising the need to:

1. organize and prepare the transcribed data related to participants' interviews and focus group responses,

2. read through the transcribed data line by line to get a sense of the contents of the data to identify the initial codes as words and phrases,

3. scrutinize and review the initial coded ideas to determine similarities and uniqueness using the axial coding method to develop the categories,

4. utilize the thematic procedure to create the themes showing the linked and summative representations of the priority codes and categories,

5. present a report to represent the data analysis and discrepant cases.

Organization and Preparation. I followed the strategy that Malterud et al. (2015) and Patton (2015) proposed to organize the participants' responses to the initial and probing questions to prepare the transcribed data (e.g., Appendix G: 1 & 2). I utilized the compiled information from the recorded sessions, personal notes, and response templates (Appendix C) to formulate each transcribed case. The transcriptions from the nine interviews and the three focus group participants facilitated the planned coding process.

Initial Coding Procedure. The work of Saldaña (2021) related to coding methods guided my use of the initial coding method. The process involved scrutinizing the data transcripts to make sense of the content to identify the plausible words and phrases as characteristics of the specific features of leadership. The idea to examine answers given by the different participants also guided the merging or differentiating of other codes. I noted the results after rounds of coding, showing matching and unique formulations of significant coded units and groups of initial codes. Thus, examining the formulations associated with the ideas revealed evolving demarcated and linked words and phrases (Appendix H). These related coded ideas provided an understanding of the relationships, consequences, and applications of the participant's perceptions as the foundation for the categories.

The Axial Coding Procedure. The procedures that Saldaña (2021) advocated guided my scrutinizing the transcribed data and initial coded ideas to discern patterns and relationships to formulate categories accompanied by robust journaling. Accordingly, I followed the analytic logic to understand and use the coded ideas to strengthen my process of developing the categories. I also followed the procedures Yin (2017) used to determine the dominant and less essential codes to reorganize the initial ideas for each transcribed response set as the foundation for creating the linked categories (Appendix I). I followed Yin's steps to find connections and relationships among the codes and the summative linkages to finalize the classified groups. I further examined differences and similarities related to the formulated ideas to determine whether the developed patterns showed the participants' perceptions. These steps served to aggregate and condense the codes into related and extended categories. Reducing the linked codes as reorganized groups further displayed the classifications (Appendix I) to develop the themes.

Thematic Coding Procedure. I followed the thematic stage that Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested to guide my cyclical search across the transcribed data sets to identify, analyze, and document repeated patterns to create the themes. I also utilized the process that Saldaña (2021) suggested by examining the transcribed data's similarities, differences, and unique cases. I further embarked on similar scrutiny focusing on relationships and linkages among the initial codes and developed categories for each transcribed response to create the themes to inform the data analysis report.

My engagement with the dataset, application of my analytic skills and experiences, and approach to realizing the themes as extended phrases or sentences showed my understanding and utilization of the cyclical steps to:

1. continue familiarization with the transcribed data responses,

2. review the preliminary code identified during the initial coding process,

3. review the related linked categories created during the axial stage relevant to the leadership features,

4. summarize and group the categories with similar characteristics and linkages and identify patterns to create representative themes,

5. review the defined and named themes to show the different components of the transcribed data responses.

The created themes (Appendix J) represented the foundation for the descriptive analysis of the interpretative results.

The Analysis Method

The manual data analysis method I used to facilitate the evolving codes, categories, and themes from the descriptive data provided potential answers to the study questions. Burnard (2008) and Woods et al. (2016) emphasized that the manual process of computer software usage mostly remained the same. I, therefore, followed the suggested technique of Burnard (2008) for "discovering themes and attempting to verify, confirm and qualify them for use by searching through the data" (p. 430). I also repeated the process to identify any new codes, categories, or themes related to the leadership features and factors.

I also recognized the option that Patton (2015) provided to utilize, for example, the NVivo software process as a valuable tool to allow storage of "all the collected data and the codes in one place" (p. 532). Maher et al. (2018) also noted the NVivo software as a valuable means for data analysis robustness. However, Woods et al. (2016) emphasized that the manual use of the NVivo software strengthened the researcher's knowledge, understanding, and technological and practical usage. Therefore, the beneficial knowledge of the software's critical operations informed my manual process and visual representations of the data analysis and interpretation of the findings.

The manual process associated with the codes, categories, and themes contributed to insights and strategies for greater understanding and usage of the features and related characteristics to influence the outcomes. Maher et al. (2018) noted that this manual process strengthened the strategies to ascertain the credibility of the interpretive' trustworthiness. I recognized the contextual and other factors that surfaced during the literature review impacting the leadership features and characteristics. I also observed the frequent and different views contributing to the identified codes, categories, and themes from participants' responses to the open-ended interview and focus group questions (Appendix B). I thus focused on such analyzed data by scrutinizing the transcribed perceptions and summaries within and across the participants' data analysis transcriptions (DAT) through the manual use of these four strategic NVivo steps (Burnard, 2008; Maher et al., 2018):

- The participants' DAT guided my process of identifying and deciding on the initial set of evolving codes, categories, and themes.

- Within each country leaders' (*n*=3) DAT, I note consistencies and variations among the ideas and decide on categories.

- Within the DAT of the unit groups – deputy principals (*n*=3), principals (*n*=3), and education officers (*n*=3). I identify the frequency configurations of categories within each group and produce additional ideas based on similar and different views (Appendix K).

- Across each group, I compare the units in each country to note any relationship displayed for the responses and summarized data transcripts.

Therefore, the manual use supporting this qualitative analysis facilitated my strategic processes to identify familiar and different views (see Burnard, 2008; Maher et al., 2018). I further recognized the impact of the archival data. I identified inconsistencies and discrepant cases related to leadership features. The participants' responses support, differentiate, or provide insights for understanding and usage to influence the analytic results.

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Issues of Trustworthiness

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Trustworthiness

The descriptive interpretation method of inquiry related to the qualitative content analysis required measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the processes. The recognized, growing, and significant qualitative research data analysis features that I applied with data collection procedures to demonstrate and maintain the required trust. The inclination led to my continued awareness that such information evolved as credible,

transferable to other situations, dependable, and conforming to standards utilized as

criteria for trustworthiness.

Applying these specified principles for the preparation, procedures, and conduct

of the interviews and focus group sessions required effective interactions to:

- ask simplified questions and probes to allow fluent and substantial participant

  responses (Turner & Spain, 2016),

- use the interview guide (Appendix A) to familiarize the participants with

  knowledge and understanding of effective leadership features or factors linked

  to the interview or focus group questions (Patton, 2015),

- demonstrate dispositions as a keen listener while noting areas requiring

  clarifications (Rubin, H. & Rubin, I., 2012),

- ensure the framing of all the open-ended questions for the interview and focus

  group phone/email sessions represented a manner to elicit participants'

  independent views (Meho, 2006).

During the preliminary preparations, I demonstrated for the interviews and focus group

sessions trusted actions associated with the four identified criteria to ascertain the

trustworthiness of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the research findings.

Credibility

Anney (2014) and Shenton (2004) agreed that credibility represented the

confidence placed in the truth of the research findings. Thus, such credibility aimed to

establish whether the research findings represented accurate and truthful perceptions and

interpretations of the participant's initial responses. Shenton (2004) provided an

extensive list of actions to follow to demonstrate the level of credibility applicable to the study's procedural application of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation. These actions served to:

- provide an understanding and application that gave the participants a clear picture of the phenomenon of interest and the other influencing features;

- adopt appropriate and well-recognized research methods for qualitative studies;

- ascertain familiarity with the culture and background of the participants and institutions;

- select the participants based on specific criteria;

- triangulate using more than one method for the research data analysis;

- use member checking tactics to ensure the honesty of participants through prolonged probing and verification questioning;

- engage in peer review debriefing sessions with research committee members, colleagues, and feedback from participants to obtain additional views;

- obtain detailed descriptions of participants' perceptions of saturation point;

- explore supporting, differentiated, and insightful qualitative research as flexible perspectives, designs, procedures, and findings.

Transferability

Anney (2014) defined transferability related to my study as the degree to which the qualitative research results applied to other contextual locations with participants having similar characteristics. Anney (2014) noted the possibility of such judgment for

potential researchers through "thick description and purposeful sampling" (p. 85).

Therefore, the procedures I followed adhered to the recommendations of Shenton (2004)

with implications for the research study to provide the identified and relevant criteria:

- Background data established the research study's context and thick description of the phenomenon and the features to make comparisons.

- The participant's selection criteria and characteristics (qualification, professional training and experience (over three years) are similar.

- Three participating OECS countries and three leaders from each country facilitated the provision of the data.

- The researcher's data collection methods entailed interviews, focus group sessions, and archival data.

- The researcher required a specified period for the data collection and debriefing sessions to fulfill the objectives.

The expectations rested on providing transferable results from the study's

practical purpose or disregarding the context as an essential factor in qualitative research.

Therefore, this perspective points to implications for transferring the recommended

findings to other education environments and leaders of secondary learning institutions in

the Caribbean countries and elsewhere. However, the determination of transferability

remains the purview of the readers and other researchers. The accepted assertion of

Marshall and Rossman (2016) emphasized, "The burden of demonstrating a set of

findings apply to another context rests more with another researcher who would make

that transfer than the original researcher" (p. 261).

Dependability

For this research study, dependability referred to stability over time and participant's involvement in evaluating the data analysis findings, interpretation, and recommendations to ascertain the level of support associated with the data (Anney, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, Anney (2014) recognized guidelines led to the accepted suggestions focusing on triangulation to:

- develop information-rich descriptions to allow a repeat of the study,

- conduct an audit trail that involved examining the inquiry process and outcome to validate the data,

- use the code-recode strategy to triangulate the data from the different participants and sources and a second coding (Maher et al., 2018),

- ascertain peer review for reflexive analysis other than the researcher to identify any omitted categories or negative cases.

The recordings helped certify that the transcribed data represented accurate participants' perceptions during the interviews and focus group sessions. An opportunity for the participants to audit the responses facilitated checking the transcripts and interpretation (Yin, 2017). As a critical component of the data analysis procedures, the multiple coding-recoding also strengthened the evolving code's and categories' dependability. The IRB protocol further provided mandated data collection and analysis guidance to prepare the descriptive interpretations (Yin, 2017). The triangulated data process included interviews, focus group deliberation, and archival research as sources added to dependability (Itaman, 2017; Yin, 2017).

Confirmability

Anney (2014) defined confirmability as the degree to which the results attained

acceptance by other researchers as generated data. Thus, Anney (2014) and Shenton

(2004) suggested the need to:

- describe appropriate strategies to establish confirmability, such as reflexivity;

- describe strategies to allow data scrutiny for the integrity of the results;

- triangulate to reduce the effect of the researcher's bias to involve the sources;

- recognize the limitations and potential impact of the study's methods;

- prepare journal entries as an audit to examine progress, recognize challenges,
  and flexible plan interventions;

- generate information-rich methodological descriptions.

Bradley (1993) concluded, "the extent to which the data characteristics, as posited by the

researcher, can be confirmed by others who review the research results" (p. 437).

The Ethical Considerations

The apparent ethical concerns associated with the research study emerge as

privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, and the appreciation of the personal situations

of others. The incorporation of the mandates of the IRS protocol within the interview

guide (Appendix A), interview and focus group question sessions (Appendix B), the

letters to the country authorities, and the participants served to ensure that the procedures

exhibited national and international ethical research standards. The communications

requiring the approval and invitation and consent forms requests to the education

authorities and participants agreed with the procedural direction to adhere to the

mandated IRB protocol as Walden University's requirements. Therefore, I followed the required standards to protect vulnerable populations, maintain integrity, and safeguard participants' anonymous privacy and confidentiality.

As a doctoral candidate, there also remained the need to fulfill the requirements to present a scholarly rationale for the purposefully selected and consenting participants of the research study to meet specified IRB approval criteria. The IRB requirements also guided the choice of qualified, professionally trained, and experienced educators for the interview and focus group interactions and the use of related resource documents. Walden University's IRB further confirmed the planned methodology and associated procedures and actions to generate credible and information-rich data to analyze and interpret with the approval number: 05-06-20-0527201.

Summary

Chapter 3 helped determine the dissertation study's research design and methodology approach to fulfill critical goals. These primary challenges identified the data sources to answer the research questions, demonstrated the research design's alignment, and justified choices and decisions regarding other essential determinations. The research design and rationale for the research study focused on restating the purpose and questions, defining effective leadership as the study's phenomenon of interest, and explaining the chosen generic qualitative research study. The need to describe the researcher's role for the dissertation featured prominently to facilitate detailing the data collection, analysis, and interpretation procedures while revealing personal and professional relationships, ways to manage biases, and the related power to address

ethical issues. The study's methodology also provided details of the participants'

selection, data collection instruments, and accessible data sources, namely, interviews,

focus group deliberations, and archival data. The methodology also covered the

procedures used for the research study's recruitment, participation, data collection,

instruments and tools, and the planned data analysis procedures. Finally, the chapter

addressed trustworthiness, ethical practices, and summative insights for Chapter 4.

The introduction to Chapter 4 comprises restating the purpose and research

questions and a related synopsis. The procedures focus on the countries' settings and the

study's participant demographic characteristics. Other components comprise the study's

data collection, process reporting, and data analysis, moving from coded units to

categories and then themes. The research also examines the impacts of the literature

review, the contextual and other factors, and the archival data to strengthen the analysis.

The trustworthiness aspects of the research study and documenting the results represent

significant components. The chapter ends with a summary of answers to research

questions and a plan for Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

This study aimed to explore individual leaders' understanding and application of

leadership features and related factors to influence and improve secondary school

students' learning outcomes in selected Caribbean countries. The rationale for exploring

the conceptual features rested with the premise that a country's educational

improvements depended on the appropriateness of effective leadership to influence

outcomes. I utilized a primary research question and two subquestions. The research

question was: What are the secondary school leaders' perceptions of understanding and

using effective leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, sustainable

strategies, and related factors to influence and improve students' learning outcomes? The

subquestions were as follows:

- Subquestion 1a: What are the leaders' understanding and application of each
  leadership feature to influence the targeted results?

- Subquestion 1b: What are the leaders' views of the related factors influencing
  teaching and learning, school, and societal outcomes?

This chapter describes the setting, participants' demographic characteristics, the data

collection and analysis, and the trustworthiness that precedes the results and summary.

Setting

The emerging COVID-19 pandemic altered my plans and the participants'

operations. Of the potential participants initially contacted, six dropped out, indicating

various personal challenges from home due to COVID – 19. Political elections in one

country influenced the replacement of an education officer and a principal who cited

having new and added responsibilities in the education ministry and could not participate.

As a result, adhering to the OECS education sector response strategy to COVID-19 travel

and distancing restrictions, I changed the initially planned method for collecting data and

the period for interacting with participants. My phone and email procedures facilitated

obtaining each research participant's interview and focus group question responses. The

working offices of each participant exhibited minimal distractions and interruptions and

provided a relaxed and comfortable setting for the online communication sessions.

Demographics

The three OECS countries represented in the study depend on commercial

services, tourism, and agriculture. However, the countries' socioeconomic viability

continued to rely on their human capital development and sustainability (Hinds, 2007).

These contextual settings and circumstances influenced my study to explore the

leadership feature's theoretical, conceptual, and empirical perspectives and the

participants' related views. The demographics and characteristics related to the

participants focused on the nine selected deputy principals, principals, and education

officers functioning as secondary school leaders originating from three selected OECS

countries (see Table 3).

Palinkas et al.'s (2015) similar approaches describing the purposive sampling

strategy guided my selection of these nine leaders with similar characteristics for

individual personal interviews and the focus group questions. These participants

possessed appropriate academic and professional qualifications and behavioral and

practical experiences. Table 6 shows the nine participants' demographic profiles:

position, age range, degree and professional qualifications, and years of experience.

Table 6

Participant's Demographic Profile Showing Sample Size

Countries	Role	Age range	Academic	Professional	Experience
Dominica	Deputy principal	41 – 50	MA	Dip/ Ed	6 – 10
	Principal	Over 51	MA	B.Ed.	Over 10
	Education officer	Over 51	MA	MBA	Over 10
St. Kitts	Deputy principal	31 – 40	MA	MA	6 – 10
& Nevis	Principal	31 - 40	MA	Cert. Ed.	6 – 10
	Education officer	Over 51	PhD	MA	Over 10
St. Lucia	Deputy principal,	41 – 50	MA	MA	Over 10
	Principal	41 – 50	MA	MA	Over 10
	Education officer	41 – 50	MA	MA	Over 10

Table 6 indicates that three participants from each country with roles as deputy

principal, principal, and education officer served as participants and another three

potentials (in each country) consented as alternatives. Participants ranged from 31 to over

50 years, with two below 40 and three over 50 years representing a cadre of academic,

professional, and experienced leaders in the education system. One of the participants had

earned a doctorate, while the eight others had attained a Master of Arts degree as their

academic qualifications. The participants' professional qualifications at various levels

included understanding and using the leadership features, management, and operations

related to institutional policy goals, processes, and behavioral and practical experiences.

The participant's certificates, diplomas, and one bachelor's and master's degrees were

related to educational aspects distinct from one participant's master's in business

administration (MBA). Simultaneously, the leadership experiences ranged from six to ten

years (three participants) and 0ver ten years (six participants).

Data Collection

The data collection interview and focus group sessions with nine participants

spanned over seven weeks, adjusting to two sessions related to dates and time. The

archival data collection followed a continuous period. The working office of each

participant exhibited minimal distractions and interruptions for the virtual sessions. The

offices provided a relaxed and comfortable setting for the interview interactive

communications for 60 to 75 minutes for each participant. The same nine participants

utilized the agreed venue for the online focus group interactions.

Kite and Phongsavan (2017) and Stewart and Shamdasani (2017) conducted

studies that revealed similar social understanding using the phone and email interactions

as that of Kallio et al. (2016) utilizing face-to-face sessions. Similarly, the current study

participants displayed no adverse circumstances or uneasiness as phone and email

communication represented a routine initiative within their current setting since the

advent of COVID -19. Neither did I detect any apparent stress, communication

restrictions, discomfort, or insecurity of their professional characteristics and experiences.

Overall, the data collection venues fit the required technological amenities,

accommodated the virtual sessions, and facilitated the necessary recordings. However, I

followed the proposition of Sandelowski and Barroso (2002) to reassess and revise the

proposed guidance to accommodate variations due to the realities of the COVID-19

pandemic. Tables 7, 8, and 9 show the changes to the data collection procedures.

Data Collection Aspects of the Interview Interactions

Table 7

Data Collection Aspects of the Interviews for the Three Countries

Countries	Participants & Numbers	Location/ Medium	Duration/ Frequency	Recording Methods
Dominica	Education officer, principal (Pr.) deputy Pr. (n=3)	Private office Phone calls / Emails and Responses	About 60 minutes Three calls; two email messages	Recorder Save to file Notes Transcribed data
St. Kitts & Nevis	Education officer, principal (Pr.), deputy Pr. (n=3)	Private office Phone calls / Emails and Responses	About 60 minutes Three calls; two email messages	Recorder Save to file Notes Transcribed data
St. Lucia	Education officer principal (Pr.) deputy Pr. (n=3)	Private office Phone calls / Emails and Responses	About 60 minutes Three calls; two email messages	Recorder Save to file Notes Transcribed data

Table 7 presents the data collection aspects (number of participants, location, duration, and recording methods) of the interviews for the three countries. Table 7 also shows that the data collection interview process involved nine participants from three countries: a deputy principal, a principal, and an education officer. The first of the three phone calls to each participant served to deliberate and obtain an initial agreement followed by an invitation email with related attachments. The attachments included the Interview and Focus Group Guide (Appendix A) and the Interview and Focus Group Questions (Appendix B). The second call led to an agreement on the location, date, time, interview requirements, and procedures for responding to questions. For the audio-

recorded interview of about 60 minutes, the third call was at the agreed location, free

from distractions and noise, while we utilized technological needs.

I welcomed and reminded each participant of the agreed protocols. During the

session, I followed the guidelines of Kite and Phongsavan (2017), Laverdière and Hayes

(2020), and Vicsek (2016) to include being a keen listener, encouraging shy participants'

contributions, clarifying the questions, and noting and reaffirming the consensus views to

show each participant's responses. I solicited the participants to seek clarification, add,

modify, and share opinions for each interview question. I used prompts and probes

(Appendix B) to encourage the responses and interaction of the less vocal participants.

I thanked the participants and reminded them to utilize the Response Template

(Appendix C) to provide the agreed documentation as an original email copy of their

responses (see Appendix F:1&2). Seven participants fulfilled the agreement to submit

within 24 hours by emailing a copy of their answers on the provided template, with the

two others complying within 48 hours. The recording techniques included audio

recording of the meeting, personal notes, and an email or phone call response to the

transcription emailed to participants. I transcribed as one document the recorded

interview, the email responses of each participant, and my related field notes with a copy

emailed to each participant for members to check for the accuracy of the transcription.

Data Collection Aspects of the Focus Group Interactions

Table 8 represents the data collection aspects for the focus group sessions for the

three countries. The table also shows that the data collection process involved the same

nine participants previously consenting to respond to the different focus group questions.

Table 8 also shows the location and medium, duration and frequency, and the recording methods to collect the data in each of the three countries.

Table 8

Data Collection Aspects of the Focus Groups for the Three Countries

Countries	Participants & Numbers	Location/ Medium	Duration/ Frequency	Recording Method
Dominica	Education Officer Principal (Pr.) Deputy Pr. – 3	Single Office / Preparatory Email / Audio call session / Email or Phone response	Audio call: 60 - 75 minutes. Email or Phone call within 24 hours	Recorder Save to file Notes Transcribed data
St. Kitts & Nevis	Education Officer Principal (Pr.) Deputy Pr. – 3	Single Office / Preparatory Email / Video conference session / Email or Phone response	Call, Email, Video call: 60 - 75 minutes. Email or Phone call within 24 hours	Recorder Save to file Notes Transcribed data
St. Lucia	Education Officer Principal (Pr.) Deputy Pr. – 3	Single Office / Preparatory Email / Video conference session / Email or Phone response	Call, Email, Video call: 60 - 75 minutes. Email or Phone call within 24 hours	Recorder Save to file Notes Transcribed data

Instead of the planned face-to-face interactions, I facilitated the virtual country collaborative session using the conference phone call medium and the email data collection method. The process comprised an initial and clarification call followed by an email to provide additional information and confirm the location, date, time, and session duration (60 to 75 minutes). The changes accommodated the unusual circumstances for the data collection related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the recommendations of Laverdière and Hayes (2020), I utilized a similar protocol for conducting virtual focus group interactions like that for the individual interviews. The recorded focus group sessions for each country lasted about 60 to 75 minutes, representing an average of 10 to 15 minutes per question. I thanked the participants for their contributions and reminded them to utilize the response template (Appendix C) to provide the additionally agreed documentation as an email copy of their responses. Each participant's recorded interview, notes, and email responses offered the data to facilitate the transcriptions emailed to participants and obtained feedback. Participants responded via email or phone call within 24 hours to give feedback and confirm the emailed copy of the transcribed original responses (see Appendix F).

Data Collection Aspects of the Archival Data Sources for the OECS Countries

Table 9, representing the archival data, identified the titled documents that referenced the data types and sources, the enablers, collection duration, and methods facilitated by the Education Ministry personnel using the OECS website. The data included historical information, vision and mission, policies and goals related to CXC mandates provided through CARICOM decisions, operational processes and practices, and leaders' responsibilities. The table also referenced insights specific to the education sector's response to COVID-19. Table 9 further cited OECS educational statistics related to CXC secondary students' performances and information about the employed leaders for the three countries and the OECS.

Table 9

Data Collection Aspects of the Archival Data Sources for the OECS Countries

Documents (Title)	Type of Data	Sources	Duration	Methods
Foundation for the Future: OECS Education Reform Strategy. Pillars for Partnership and Progress of Secondary Education in the OECS.	OECS historical agreement, establishment, legislation, and regulations.	(Griffith, 2009; Hinds, 2007; Miller et al., 1991; 2000).	Before, during, and after July to August.	Documented Notes (Appendix E: Archival data Template) Researched documents
OECS Education Sector Strategy - Commission Report.	Vision and mission; Policies and strategies	(OECS, 2016; UNESCO, 2016b)		
Universal Secondary Education in the OECS Countries	Goals for CXC mandates and operational strategies-32-35	(Griffith, 2009; Miller et al., 2000; OECS, 2016)		
OECS Education Sector Strategy	Planning, delivery, and evaluation	(OECS, 2016).		
Education Legislation and Regulations and Leaders' Responsibilities.	Responsibilities	(Dominica Education Act, 1997).		
OECS Education Sector Response Strategy for COVID-19.	COVID – 19 insights	(OECS, 2020).		
OECS Education Statistical Digest.	Statistical data	(OECS, 2021).		

Table 9 represents a synopsis of the archival data (expanded in Appendix E) and

specifies the unified formal education policy decision as a strategic OECS initiative. This

historic legal agreement firmly entrenched OECS countries' socioeconomic and cultural

fabric and envisioned continuous human resource development through education and

training (Hinds, 2007). The OECS thus established a functioning education and training

unit as a foundation that experienced significant changes during the first decade (Miller et

al., 2000). The critical contributions of secondary education and training within the vision

specified "Every Learner Succeeds" to reach full potential and be successful at school, in

life, at work, and in society (OECS, 2016, p. 11). The OECS initiative also stated the

mission to contribute to the socioeconomic advancement of the OECS through a quality

education system.

An OECS (2016, p. 31) statement also pointed to the leadership and management

concerns of the OECS countries, stating: "The Impact Assessment of the Pillars for

Partnership and Progress revealed that much of the anticipated work associated with

school leadership and management remained as not achieved." The OECS (2016) report

further specified the operational policy mandates for CXC secondary level school

operations. The related operational processes and practices provided directions to plan,

deliver, and evaluate with set criteria and standards. The education ministries of the

OECS countries formalized the identified leadership responsibilities to influence the

targeted outcomes (Appendix E.5).

The OECS education sector response strategy to COVID-19 documentation

(OECS, 2020) evaluated the current situation and recommended inclusive education

policy goals to impact OECS education outcomes. These goals, supported by credible

evidence, focused on harmonizing leadership policy and response to the pandemic. The

suggestions also envisioned a planned secondary school transition model to accommodate

a supportive digital education strategy, including professional leadership development and training. The OECS education statistical digest document identified the challenging trends to represent statistical results for five academic years (Table 1). For example, less than 50% of the OECS countries' learners annually achieve five Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate subject passes, including English and mathematics. Therefore, the archival data contributed to a fuller understanding and the application of effective leadership to influence teaching and learning, school climate, and societal benefit outcomes related to secondary schools.

As previously indicated, the COVID -19 pandemic circumstances presented notable drawbacks during the data collection period before ascertaining the selected participants' consent. As noted, the education leaders drew to my attention various challenges related to the mandates of the virtual process to work from home, extended personal responsibilities, disrupted internet services, priority attention to annual and regional examinations, and preparation for the new academic year. These emerging factors caused the replacement of six potential participants to preserve the alternative group. The situation necessitated my mutually agreed extended time and resource adjustments for each country's three consenting participants, with no need to utilize the alternatives. The initial process comprised phone calls and extended email interactions to effect clarifications and obtain the interview and focus group questions' final responses.

Overall, the participants demonstrated the commitment to accommodate all calls and email communications for the interviews and focus group interactions. The recorded call process, noting relevant data, and a follow-up email from the participants showing

their initial responses (e.g., Appendix F: 1) completed the interview data collection. The focus group interactions with each country's participants also required recording and noting the summative views (e.g., Appendix F: 2). The interactive process allowed the vocal and shy participants to contribute to each question to develop a composite document. The procedure included making a verbatim text from the recording and considering my related notes. I also utilized the suggestion that Ravitch and Riggan (2017) proposed to transcribe the data into a precise, understandable, insightful, and trustworthy format. My follow-up process focused on preparing responses transcribed (e.g., Appendix G:1) for the interviews and composite transcriptions for focus group responses (Appendix G:2) emailed to participants for further insights and feedback to complete the collection procedures.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the raw data acquired from the transcribed perceptions and the archival information from which I discerned patterns within the data. My approach's analytical rationale was based on understanding, scrutinizing, and using the data to formulate coded units, categorized groups, and thematic representations (Thorne, 2016). For the coding process, I utilized manual open-coding phases. I identified the initial codes (see Saldaña, 2021), used those codes to formulate categories, evaluated those categories to uncover patterns, and studied those patterns to discern themes related to participants' responses and the archival data. Also, I used quotations from the transcribed and archival data to support the descriptions in the various analysis stages that helped determine appropriate responses to the research questions within the context of the studies.

My data analysis involved three cyclical processes (Bengtsson, 2016; Thorne, 2016). The first cycle represented participants' views as words and phrases identified as initial codes related to the leadership features and characteristics. The scrutinizing and summarizing of the initial coded ideas as classified categories represented the second cycle. Finally, a third cycle represented a more holistic perception of understanding the combined features or disaggregated from the applied second cycle process. This third cycle also considered deductive insights associated with the leadership features (Figure 2; Table 2) and aspects of the archival data (Appendix E). Therefore, the elements and the archival data augmented participants' views to contribute to the third cycle analysis.

The Coding Process

I found guidance from the coding propositions that Saldaña (2021) advocated. Thus, I utilized the identified procedures to organize and sort the coded words and phrases from the data to create the categories and themes. The procedures comprised the initial, axial, and thematic phases, each associated with one of the three identified data analysis cycles. I also embraced the approaches that Bengtsson (2016) proposed to organize and elicit meaning from the data collected and draw conclusions driven by the analytical logic cycles of my data analysis to maintain quality and trustworthiness. Therefore, I followed these identified procedures.

- Prepare and organize the transcribed data from participants' interviews, focus group responses, and the documents with the archival data.

- Engage in scrutinizing the data by going through the transcriptions line-by-line and then memoing helped me create the initial codes driven by the first cycle's logical understanding of the participants' views.

- Review the initial codes to determine the linked and summative ones to create categories through the axial coding method. This process, guided by the second logical cycle, involved applying the understanding of participant's perceptions as the summative coded ideas related categories.

- Utilize the thematic coding procedure to create the themes from the codes and categories. This third analytic logic driving the thematic coding phase represented the combined understanding and application of the holistic perception of participants' views of the features, factors, and archival data.

- Cohesively present the themes created from the summative categories and codes as my analytic logic driving the coding processes related to the cycles.

Preparation and Organization

The preliminary preparation and organization of the data facilitated my coding process during the initial, axial, and thematic phases. I prepared individual transcriptions from the nine interviews and a composite transcription of the three focus group participants' interactions. I utilized statements from participants' email responses and my memo notes to cross-check for accuracy, significant ideas, and verification. The nonverbal cues utilized included listening, signs to show interest and acknowledgment, eye contact, repetition to strengthen messages, laughter to ease tensions, and pauses to signal a move to the next question or item**.** Appendix F (1) represented an original

emailed interview sample of a participant's completed raw data submission transformed

into the related transcript (e.g., Appendix G:1). I ensured proper filing of the transcribed

data and the archival information, assigned pseudonyms to ascertain confidentiality, and

printed hard copies for usage. I stored the data in a folder on the computer's external disk

drive and secured audio recording on a marked flash drive as a backup strategy to satisfy

the five-year IRB mandate.

The First Cycle Initial Coding

I followed the first cycle initial coding method by breaking down the transcribed

data into discrete words and phrases and examining and comparing them for similarities

and differences (see Saldaña, 2021). I focused on reading through and scrutinizing the

data to understand the essential ideas to identify and describe the first codes (Appendix

H). For example, statements related to participants' views associated with a component of

the first interview question pointed to the coded ideas related to styles to apply the

mandated goals and operations. A participant noted, "I used democratic actions,

motivating, collaborating, distributing tasks, supporting stakeholders, encouraging

commitment, and contributions from others to influence others to help fulfill my goals."

For example, Appendix G:1 represented transcribed responses to the interview

questions that pointed to coded ideas from a selected participant's transcribed data. I

scrutinized the data from the statements specific to leadership strategies. The transcribed

ideas related to the leaders' perceptions of leadership capacities included: Teaching and

learning resources, government policies, goals, structures, processes, operations, actions,

teacher training, personal attributes, dispositions, and timeframe (Appendix G2:4.1).

Participants' original transcripts referred to leadership behaviors as personal and social and as attributes and tendencies. Appendix H identified the specific coded ideas representing the behavioral attributes and dispositions with implications for analyzing and interpreting the leadership features, factors, and archival data.

I proceeded with further rounds of initial coding to add, strengthen, and document any other coded words and phrases specific to the leaders' responses related to the features. For instance, a participant noted, "As leaders, our experience guided us to use a combination of actions (directing, supporting, collaborating) or a unique one to strengthen the incorporation of a particular style as instructing, used during the given operational situations." As another example, I used a participant's behavioral coded concepts (attributes and dispositions) to summarize groups of coded words representing leaders' identified behavioral characteristics with implications for the analysis and interpretation. The participants' views as coded ideas related to the behavioral characteristics represent skillsets, personal behaviors, social skills, role models, attributes, disposition, commitment and motivation, beliefs, values, policy goals, and operations.

The initial codes (Appendix H) as discrete units showed descriptive responses to the interview questions related to each leadership feature. I continued to employ the initial coding process to scrutinize the codes to determine similarities and differences that might suggest the beginning of a data category or a thematic path. I recognized the importance of conducting different rounds of coding and passing through the data to capture the essence of the coded ideas. For example, depending on the situation, the participants expressed different views representing styles, including instructional

direction, democratic involvement, transformational influence, and accommodating operations.

The Axial Second Cycle Coding

The Saldaña (2021) axial coding method guided category developed from the conceptual ideas of the initial coding method used in the first cycle. I also followed this coding process to determine the dominant and less essential codes, remove synonyms and redundant codes, and select representative codes to create the categories. I applied the two steps described initially by Corbin and Strauss (2008),

The first step involved scrutinizing the initial codes (Appendix H) to find connections and relationships. I considered the context, conditions, and consequences to identify the codes representing summative ideas related to leadership features. For example, the combined ideas identified from participants' initial codes helped classify categories liable to merge or change as dictated by the situation. The summarized coded ideas comprised situational realities, instructing, transforming, differentiating, integrating, collaborating, democratic actions, supporting and influencing, representations, and categorized leadership styles. I followed a similar practice to identify the connections between the participants' indicative summary codes related to different leadership styles. I recognized concise ideas to represent participants' views of the other leadership features.

The second axial coding step guided my aggregating and condensing of the codes into related categories. I identified recurring regularities among the codes revealing patterns, then sorted them into categories (Appendix I). During this process, I remained

aware that the development of the classifications required "more conceptual and integrative thinking to understand and differentiate one category from another" (Ray et al., 2006, p. 478). In practice, I determined and created the categories to represent the codes' connections as each leadership feature's characteristics. For instance, the initial codes (Appendix H) related to the behavioral concept of leaders' capabilities appeared critical, with consequences for other leadership features. Such codes associated with the leaders' and stakeholders' behaviors encompassed the attributes and dispositions to represent the category as the combined and summative behavioral codes (Figure. 3).

Figure 3

Behavioral Category from Initial Codes of the Capabilities' Features

Behavioral Attribute Codes - values, beliefs, knowledge, listening, flexibility, and adaptive skills

Behavioral Disposition Codes - commitment, motivation, attitudes, status, social, psychology, and emotions

Category leaders understanding and using behavioral attributes and dispositions
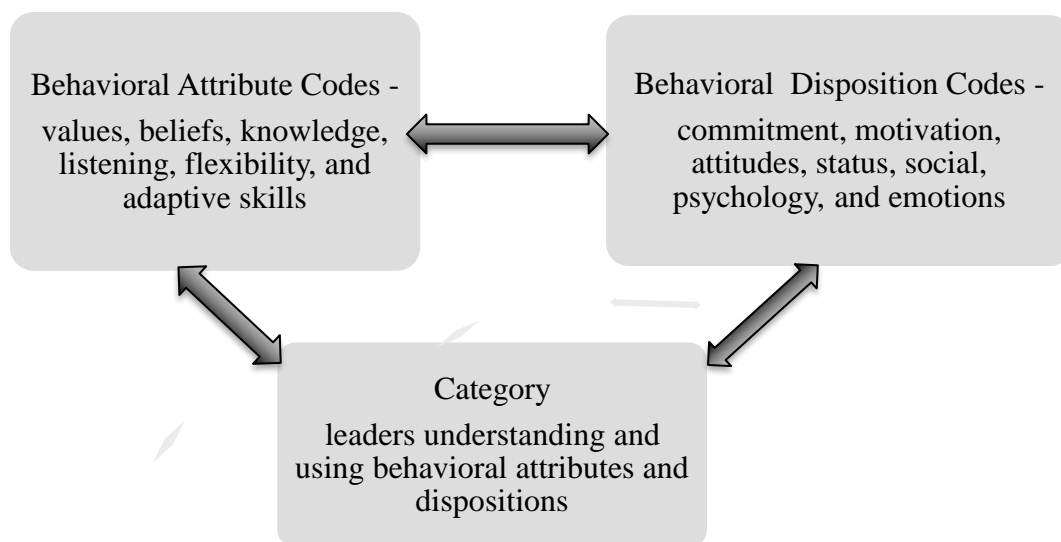
Applying the axial procedures provided direction to inductively formulate the categories from the deductively determined initial codes for each leadership feature related to the phenomenon. I repeated the technique to create categories of leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, and strategies (Appendix I). However, I also

linked distinct patterns with the extended coding concepts ranging from one practical

leadership feature to the dimensions of another component (see Charmaz, 2006). For

example, developing, planning, utilizing and evaluating participants' coded concepts

represented extended actions of professional knowledge as a characteristic of effective

leadership capabilities. Participants' communication and technological ideas also

represented linked codes related to the skillsets' component to influence the

consequences. The applied axial coding stage facilitated putting similar ideas into the

same categories. Analyzing and sorting the codes into categories (Appendix I) helped

detect consistent and related patterns to build the themes.

The Third Cycle Thematic Coding

I developed the themes (Appendix J) related to addressing the research questions

for this stage. I followed a thematic analysis process that included scrutinizing the

datasets, the codes, and categories focusing on analyzing effective leadership as the

phenomenon and the characteristics of the related features using extended phrases or

sentences. The approach required augmented insights by recognizing patterns to enhance

the results from the data (see Terry et al., 2017).

I reexamined the assigned preliminary codes and categorized data (Appendix H).

This process helped ascertain representation related to the descriptive data content (see

Terry et al., 2017). This action also required my reexamining the data from the beginning

of the collection process. The initial generation of the codes and applying the axial stage

techniques helped create and recreate the categories (Appendix I). I searched again for

conceptual ideas and patterns connecting the codes and groupings created to represent the

leadership features. This strategy required bringing together the related coded ideas and classifications as a summary to show the designed theme but flexibly open to changes utilizing the archival data in the process. For example, the capacities as a leadership feature and the outlined policies of the archival data guided the display of summative codes and categories while considering the timeframe. These categories included using: (a) policies, goals, and operational processes and actions; (b) adequate and appropriate resources; and (c) behavioral attributes and dispositions.

I constructed and reviewed the potential themes capturing the essence of the participants' views as recurring trends within the transcribed data. I also scrutinized the themes to determine supportive and different opinions to describe participants' responses. The coding processes associated with the descriptive data collected from the participants resulted in codes, categories, and themes (Appendices H, I, & J) representing the data analysis components. I also developed a frequency distribution table (Appendix K) that points to participants' categorized leadership features. I considered the archival data insights (Appendix E) to contribute to the analysis. The procedures I utilized to develop the frequency distribution table helped evaluate the consensus and different views and the archival data to compare with related qualitative evidence (see Manikandan, 2011).

Operationalizing the Codes, Categories, and Themes

I specified codes, categories, and themes and used quotations and related archival data to emphasize the themes' importance. I focused on participants' responses to each leadership feature and the factors related to the research questions. The initial, axial, and thematic coding procedures I followed facilitated the development of the coded units,

creating the categories from the summative and aggregated codes and the themes from

related categories (see Saldaña, 2021). The composites in Appendices H I detailed in

Tables 10 – 15 represented the results of the process I followed:

- deductively deconstruct the data into descriptive units of coded ideas,

- inductively reconstruct the data units to represent the categories, and

- combine the categories as renewed summaries to create the themes.

Coded Descriptions for Interview Question #1 Related to Styles

Table 10 shows the coded words and phrases aggregated and summarized to

create the categories and a related theme from the transcribed data for the first interview

question. Table 10 also specifies the coded units presenting autocratic actions, behaviors,

and operational contributions. The action words revealing the individual leaders'

directing action as a category indicated the participants' views of the goals and operations

to influence the outcomes. The participants also showed ways of providing collaborative

support for the competencies and contributions of different stakeholders depending on the

focus of attention and the situation. The participants further pointed to the strategies used

by leaders to transform initiatives guided by charismatic attributes and dispositions, with

another participant describing integrated and different actions. A contrasting leadership

style with dependency characteristics revealed actions and contributions identified by a

principal and deputy from different countries, pointing to the authoritative goals and

operations.

Compared to another, the choice of one style surfaced from my notes to the

probing question about the participants' preferential types. The transcribed responses

revealed that the deputy principals identified their characteristics and collaborative contributions to influence the outcomes like the principals. However, a deputy and a principal articulated that the prevailing choice rested on their dependency on the mandates of the policy goals and operations and other stakeholders' collaborative competencies and contributions. The three education officers cited the actions related to individual and collective choices and adhered to initiatives to transform educational authorities' mandated goals and operations to influence the outcomes.

The capitalized recurring coded units comprising INFLUENCING, USING THE SITUATION, SUPPORTING, DIRECTING, COLLABORATING, AND CONTRIBUTING CAPACITIES (Table 10) showed relationships among the distinctive styles encompassing these leaders' actions. This situation pointed to the participant's collective actions and leadership expectations related to the dominant system of administrative authority.

Table 10

Archival Data, Codes, Categories, and Theme Related to Interview Question #1

Archival Data	Coded Words or Phrases	Categories	Theme
Focus on strengthening education leadership to influence management, instructions, collaboration, and evaluation for student success and accountability (Miller et al., 2000). Facilitate policy goals and operations through CXC as mandated by the authorities (OECS, 2016)	Instructing, leading, GIVING DIRECTIONS, managing, CONTRIBUTING. Guiding, telling, coaching, INFLUENCING. Using competencies, behavioral attributes, and dispositions.	Giving directions using attributes and dispositions	Accommodating a dependent situational style operation
	DISTRIBUTING TASKS and CONTRIBUTING to INFLUENCING and supporting stakeholders. Encouraging collaboration, commitment, and motivation. Using behavioral competencies.	Collaborating to use competencies and contributions	
	Using goals and operations. DIRECTING, leading, transforming, SUPPORTING, and INFLUENCING OTHERS. Using charisma, motivation, and commitment to initiate strategies.	Transforming competencies and contributions	
	Instructing, contributing, transforming, directing, differentiating, and integrating as leaders' actions. ADAPTING TO SITUATIONS. Collaborating, distributing, supporting, and INFLUENCING others.	Integrating competencies and contributions	
	Response to serving others, sharing duties, and specifying the need to accept the mandated policy goals and contributions. Joint use of attributes and dispositions. INFLUENCING, INVOLVING, AND ACCOMMODATING OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.	Dependency on mandated goals, operations, and contributions	

The archival data (Table 10) also presented the authorities' strategy to strengthen the region's education leadership to influence management, instructions, collaboration, and successful student evaluation (Miller et al., 2000). The leadership actions represented participants' perceptions of the need to adjust the leadership styles influenced by the authorities' mandated goals and operations in conformity with CXC. The connections also pointed to the strengths of accommodating and integrating the techniques to control the targeted outcome depending on the situation. For example, influencing the teaching and learning outcome requires the leaders' instructions, collaboration, and charismatic direction depending on the other stakeholder's unique or varied contributing characteristics. A principal stressed: "It is pivotal that leaders focus on influencing others using several styles to achieve the outcomes." An education office supported this view: "Great school leaders know that they are not running a one-person show; they cannot use one style or do it all alone, but they have to depend on the policy mandates for guidance." The archival information strengthened the need for the involvement and contributions of other stakeholders (World Bank, 2016).

The codes utilized in formulating the developed categories also showed leaders' mandated actions related to using their own and others' dominant competencies, such as attributes, dispositions, and contributions. These characteristics relate to the policy goals and operations to influence the outcomes. The categorized groupings emerging through the procedures using the second cycle axial process included leadership styles that resulted in the five categories shown in Table 10. These categories showed participants' attempts to utilize the mandated policy goals and operations to influence their respective

targeted outcomes. The theme created to represent the first interview question pointed to participants "accommodating a dependent situational style operation." An education officer strongly emphasized: "The leadership styles will depend on the leader's situation, different strokes for different folks. With this situational style, I must adjust, especially if the individual has or the group possesses leadership knowledge and experience."

The rationale for exploring the concepts of leadership features rested on the premise that a country's educational improvements depended on effective leadership's appropriateness. Therefore, while most leaders specified preferential and integrated leadership styles, two participants revealed unique coded words and phrases indicating a nondominant servant leadership operation. The interview question #1 theme showed participants' indirect and direct dependency to accommodate operational actions dictated by the mandates of CARICOM and the OECS countries. One deputy principal claimed, "I operate as a servant and a conduit. I have to follow the biddings of the educational authorities." When prompted, the participant continued: "The ministry sets the policy goals, provides the resources, and outlines the operations. I must add that our OECS countries and CARICOM secondary school programs and assessment mandated directions come from CXC." The mandates of the OECS (2016) policy goals and operations corroborated the participant's statement. This mandate provided CXC with authority over the curriculum programs, assessment criteria, and standards.

The insights related to the accommodating leadership style represented not the dominant but the functional leadership disposition. The leaders' views focused on purposeful direction and applied experiences to guide decisions while carefully

considering other stakeholders' competencies, collaborations, and contributions. The individual leader's unique leadership styles encompassed using the government authorities' policy goals and operations. The participants adjusted their functional leadership styles to the mandated and directional responsibilities. Therefore, the leaders' views represented an accommodating dependency style to represent the situation with adjustments such as school feeding and remedial programs for diversified learners.

Coded Descriptions for Interview Question #2 Related to Capabilities

Table 11 shows the categories determined from the codes representing participants' views and ideas from the archival data for the second interview question. The categories represent the (a) usage of stakeholders' knowledge competencies; (b) the application of stakeholders' skillset intelligence; (c) applying collaborators' behavioral attributes and dispositions; and (d) application of evidence, competencies, and contributions. Common coded ideas (stakeholders, evidence, technology, behaviors, and influencing) related to the categories represent relationships as contributing concepts.

For instance, a principal emphasized: "I firmly believe we need to demonstrate our unique and varied competencies and worthwhile personal behaviors as role models." When asked to expand upon that comment, the participant added, "We must show our commitment, embrace differences, be flexible, adaptable, and be good listeners." An education officer also commented, "Other stakeholders may possess similar or different professional knowledge, skills, and experiences that require our collaboration, support, and even to assess and embrace unique experiences."

Table 11

Archival Data, Codes, Categories, and Theme Related to Interview Question #2

Archival Data	Coded Words or Phrases	Categories	Theme
The mission "Every Learner Succeeds" (OECS, 2016) Leaders are to facilitate the development of qualified, professional, and experienced leaders. Behavioral guidance and counseling (Documented responsibilities; Appendix E: 5) collaborate with, support, and involve others.	Using professional knowledge competencies. Recognizing strengths and weaknesses to guide and augment training and development. Contributing stakeholders. Using evidence to influence decisions, behaviors, and initiatives – communications and technologies.	usage of professional knowledge competencies	Use of knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, and experiences.
	Skillsets applications guide decisions to plan, manage, implement, evaluate, negotiate, communicate, listen, coach, and teach. Use evidence and behavioral skills for collaboration and contributions.	Using stakeholders' skillset intelligence	
	Using behavioral attributes and dispositions of leaders and other stakeholders' values, beliefs, commitment, and motivation. Listening and being flexible and adaptable to others' contributions.	Applying behavioral attributes and dispositions	
	Professional experiences: Using competencies, operations, behaviors, and contributions. Using evidence to plan, deliver, and evaluate processes and actions. Using criteria, indicators, and standards.	Applying evidence, competencies, and contributions	

A deputy principal's supportive statement concluded: "We need to influence learners to obtain practical societal benefits. They will develop other competencies, skills, and behaviors from experienced and committed stakeholders critical for their development." A principal also emphasized: "I firmly believe we need to demonstrate our unique and varied competencies and worthwhile personal behaviors as role models." When asked to expand upon that comment, the participant added, "We must show our commitment, embrace differences, be flexible, adaptable, and be good listeners." An education officer also commented, "Other stakeholders may possess similar or differentiated professional knowledge, skills, and experiences that require our collaboration, support, and even assess and embrace unique experiences."

The participants' statements supported the authorities' vision of the archival data on utilizing initiatives to influence the success of every learner (OECS, 2016). The formal concept also included the mission related to every stage to help students reach their full potential and be successful at school, in life, at work, and in society. The participants identified leadership capabilities with characteristics aligned with the related vision and mission. The countries' ministry of education statements related to the archival data pointed to leaders' associated responsibilities. The specified leader's responsibilities linked to the vision and mission indicated strategies and initiatives related to the knowledge, skillsets, and behavioral attributes and dispositions of leaders with contributions of other stakeholders to:

- develop qualified, professionally trained, and experienced leaders to augment contributions to the outcomes;

- collaborate, support, and involve others to contribute to strategies and initiatives;

- provide behavioral guidance and counseling for learners to seek and embrace opportunities;

- facilitate learner's success to qualify for further education and training, access jobs and other opportunities within communities and societies;

- introduce virtual communication and innovative technologies and maintain a viable cadre of practitioners.

Therefore, the pivotal and common threads and categories presented in Table 11 pointed to the need for current and potential leaders to utilize behavioral competencies and embrace stakeholders' contributions to influence the outcomes. A principal noted, "We must bridge the school, community, and society gap by involving other stakeholders to contribute to programs and other school activities. As the saying goes, knowledge does not stay in one head." Also, the archival data that outlined leaders' responsibilities, specified by the OECS ministries of education, point to the need to solicit local and external sector contributions from organizations and entities. The justification related to the leader's required efforts to involve and embrace all stakeholder's initiatives points to the learner's low achievement realities (Table 1). Such contributions to augment effective leadership capabilities' characteristics also pointed to the rationale for exploring the challenges of limited leadership capability training and development. Participants' quotations and aspects of the related archival data further supported the inducement for leaders to prioritize and facilitate competencies and other stakeholders' contributions to

influence the outcomes. Therefore, the theme represented "using evidence of knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, and experiences" to affect the results.

Coded Descriptions for Interview Question #3 Related to Practices

With related archival data, the operational best practices presented in Table 12 pointed to planning, delivery, and evaluation facilitated and monitored through participants' and other stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions as categorized actions. A principal provided a corresponding note, "our success depends on how we implement and assess our planned goals and operations. All processes and actions require monitoring to determine the level of success and adjustments." The archival data reinforced the participant's perception with the strategy to facilitate (a) policies and operations as mandated by the authorities, (b) the development of related plans, and (c) delivery of curriculum programs with strategies for assessments and evaluation to inform current and future decisions, processes, and practices.

The Table 12 categories show leaders, other stakeholders, and archival data contributions to indicate (a) using evidence of practices to plan the operations, (b) delivering and monitoring the operational processes and actions, (c) evaluating the planned and implemented operations, and (d) applying all stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions to the operations. The integrated utilization of the behaviors within all the operations and the cyclical process and common understanding to plan, implement and evaluate the operations. The theme for interview question #3 emerged as the leaders' need for "utilizing planned, implemented, and evaluated operations" with set criteria and standards within a timeframe.

Table 12

Archival Data, Codes, Categories, and Theme Related to Interview Question #3

Archival Data	Coded Words and Phrases	Categories	Theme
Facilitate planning, delivery, and evaluation of policy goals, operational decisions, processes, and practices mandated by the authorities. OECS education sector response strategies to COVID-19 (Appendix E-7).	Plan operational processes and actions. Use evidence and technologies. The behaviors and contributions of participants and other stakeholders. Setting criteria, standards, and timeframe.	Using evidence of tested practices to plan operations	Utilizing planned, implemented, and evaluated operations
	Implement goals, programs, operational methods, and tasks. Using tested practices and resources – physical, material, stakeholders. Monitoring targets using criteria and standards	Delivering and monitoring operations	
	Evaluating goals, programs, operations, resources, processes, and tasks. Assessing activities, applications, results, benefits, stakeholders' contributions, challenges, insights, and classifications. Considering criteria, standards, and timeframe.	Evaluating planned and implemented operations	
	Applying behavioral attributes – knowledge, skills, experiences, and dispositions -attitudes, beliefs, motivation, commitment, and the contributions of others. Listening, adapting, and using flexible strategies.	Applying all stakeholders' attributes and dispositions to operations	

Specific to the theme related to the application of best practices, a participant's contribution (Appendix J) linked to leaders' application of best practices stated:

>The planning, delivery, and evaluation of program activities at the school these days are particularly challenging. We, including the leaders, teachers, students, and staff members, had to learn and adjust to virtual practices. The travel and distancing restrictions due to COVID – 19 influenced our behavior to adjust to achieve our goals. Apart from the related challenges, this virtual initiative represents a behavioral strategy with practical and long-term positive outcomes.

The participants' views pointed to challenges in effectively utilizing the authorized policies and strategies to meet the needs of disadvantaged learners. Such mandated direction justified leaders and stakeholders to explore other tested practices to influence the outcomes. The focus on strategy related to learners' varied abilities and interests to influence learning achievement seldom aligned with the authority's mandated operational processes and applications. A deputy principal also noted, "We must use our behavioral skills and values and that of others to help learners think for themselves and even be creative when faced with a problem." The archival data theme aligned with the participant's view revealing the need for inclusive and flexible policy goals to guide the principal's operational practices. The OECS (2016) report also referred to the need for guidance to promote problem-solving, creativity and imagination, independent judgment, and technical and people skills.

Coded Descriptions for Interview Question 4 Related to Capacities

Table 13

Archival Data, Codes, Categories, and Theme Related to Interview Question #4

Archival Data	Coded Words and Phrases	Categories	Theme
Over five years, graduation statistics for the countries and OECS show achievement trends in at least 5 CSEC subjects, including English and Mathematics (Table 1, p. 15; OECS, 2021).	Use policy goals with operational methods, procedures, and programs to deliver and evaluate. Use criteria and standards, milestones, and timeframe.	Using policy goals and operational processes and actions	Facilitating adequate and appropriate goal operations, resources, and behaviors
	Use appropriate and adequate resources, goals, operations, and programs. Use stakeholders' competencies, physical structures, facilities, materials, technologies, and communication strategies.	using adequate and appropriate resources	
	Use behavioral attributes and dispositions, attitudes, beliefs, motivation, commitment, and stakeholders' contributions. Listen, adapt, and be flexible.	Using leaders and others' behavioral attributes and dispositions	

Table 13 shows the coded ideas, developed categories ideas, developed categories, and the created theme representing the fourth interview question related to the leaders' required capacities. The coded ideas reflected the capacities representing policy goals and operations with set criteria, standards, and timeframe. The appropriate and adequate resources (facilities, curriculum, materials, communication, and technologies) and stakeholders' attributes, dispositions, and contributions characterized the coded words. The themes represented the participants' expressed need to facilitate

appropriate goal operations, resources, and behaviors within the setting and timeframes.

The participants supported utilizing the policy goals, operations, and other adequate and appropriate capacities. Also, the participants recognized that the utilization of the capabilities rested on the cyclical applications to plan, make available, and assess sufficient and functional capacities while considering set standards and timeframes. These actions required using the behavioral attributes and dispositions of the contributing stakeholders. A principal provided related advice, "We must, for example, influence others by utilizing our positive and varied behavioral attributes and dispositions." When prompted, the participant added, "The benefit is to put worthwhile persuasion into practice, think for oneself, and even be creative to access required resources."

The participants provided varied perceptions of leadership capacities. For example, participants' views represented a total acceptance of utilizing appropriate and adequate resources and the required behavioral attributes and dispositions to improve outcomes. However, four of the nine participants' responses expressed the inappropriateness of the authoritative policy goals and operations related to achieving positive results. When asked to explain further, a principal raised the concern: "Students are not all academically inclined. Therefore, a revised curriculum requires adequate, appropriate and supportive resources and astute leaders to cater to students' different abilities and interests." Another participant pointed out the need to "facilitate guidance and counseling related to learners' behaviors, social health, and welfare."

Yet another participant lamented, "There are so many drop-outs while others fall short of CXC performance expectations from the initial group entering our high schools."

The participants' comments supported the archival data's evidence representing their

concerns about learners' low-performance realities as indicated by the graduation

statistics for the countries and the OECS. Such information represented the justification

for leaders and stakeholders to suggest, based on evidence, the appropriate operational

directions, resources, and behavioral actions to support the attainment of targeted results.

Coded Descriptions for Interview Question #5

Table 14 describes the summative coding ideas, formulated categories, and a

theme reflecting participants' strategies and initiatives related to the leadership features

and characteristics. Participants' ideas in understanding and applying the leadership

features pointed to practices and experiences as operational strategies and initiatives in

utilizing leadership styles, competencies, practices, and capacities linked to all

stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions. The categories comprised specific

initiatives representing the summative coded ideas of the leadership features. These

categorized strategies and initiatives and the theme in Table 14 represented leadership

features and related archival data to influence and sustain targeted outcomes.

Table 14

Archival data, Codes, Categories, and Theme Related to Interview Question #5

Archival Data	Coded Words and Phrases	Categories	Theme
Achievement trends rated below 50% for the selected countries and the OECS in at least 5 CSEC subjects over five years (Table 1, p. 15; OECS, 2021). Leaders' responsibility to collaborate with and support others' initiatives (Countries' documented responsibilities, Appendix E. 5)	Utilizing accommodating styles in given situations. Using supportive evidence to guide decisions to choose styles. Using differentiated styles related to strategies and results.	Accommodating styles related to the situation	Using evidence and strategies related to features to sustain initiatives
	Utilize professional knowledge, skills, and practical experiences. Use behavioral attributes and dispositions. Use technologies and communication. Insights and strategies.	Using integrated competency initiatives	
	Use evidence to determine tested practices, insights, and strategies. Use results of planned operations delivered and evaluated for decisions to formulate and implement strategies. Use criteria and standards for the evaluation.	Using strategies to plan, deliver, and evaluate operations	
	Considering policy goals and operational processes, tasks, and resources. Assessing applications of programs, communication, initiatives, and technologies. Using evidence, insights, initiatives, and timeframe.	Providing adequate and appropriate capacities	
	Attributes, commitment, dispositions, skills, social, knowledge, attitudes, motivation, stakeholders, values, beliefs, stakeholders, listening, flexibility, adapting, influencing,	Applying behavioral attributes and dispositions	

Table 14 indicates the coded units formulated as categories to represent participants' descriptive responses. These categories related to the features encompassed strategies to (a) accommodate situational styles; (b) integrated knowledge, skills, and behavioral competencies; (c) plan, deliver, and evaluate operations and (d) apply adequate and appropriate capacities. The created theme represented using evidence and tested strategies of the features to sustain the initiatives. Table 14 further identified the linked application of behavioral attributes and dispositions, communication, and technological initiatives to facilitate the strategic operations to influence and sustain the targeted outcomes.

Specific to the operations of the leadership features, an education officer emphasized: "As leaders, we need to follow new ways to plan, deliver, and assess our programs guided by sound evidence and standards to move from one level of success or failure; to another level." A principal shared another experience, "I believe we the school leaders must use our positive dispositions and attributes and those of the school family." The responses (Appendix F 1: 2.5e) to the why and how follow-up inquiry revealed:

We need to learn from and share with other stakeholders. For example, one of our teachers specializes in math and has a passion for sharing this expertise. Evidence from his initiative shows that all our math teachers and students benefited, revealing improved results.

This example demonstrates a sustained way to enhance other stakeholders' involvement and contributions as a proposition that strengthens strategies related to leadership features. This initiative also supports aspects of the archival data, advocating a leader's

responsibilities and specifying the required collaboration and contributions of other

stakeholders' initiatives to realize positive results (Dominica Education Act, 1997).

Coding Descriptions for the Related Factors

Table 15 shows the features and outcomes as linked units related to effective

leadership as the phenomenon. The table also described the linked contextual and

behavioral factors impacting the leadership features and outcomes. These factors also

included the internal and external collaborator's contributions indicating insights and

strategies influencing the features and outcomes linked to the study's third cycle analysis.

The table further comprised coded units showing strategies associated with differentiation

issues impacting teaching and learning, school, and societal outcomes. The identified

groups of coded ideas in Table 15 helped to formulate the categories with participants

considering (a) linking the features to the outcomes; (b) contextual and behavioral factors

impacting the features; (c) usage of internal collaborator's contributions; (d) usage of

external collaborators contributions, and (e) initiatives to impact diversity, equity, and

justice issues. The theme represented the participants' need to use contextual, behavioral,

collaborative, and stakeholders' contributions as differentiated initiatives.

A participant lamented, "Some of us as leaders experience challenges to initiate

insights due to mandated policy decisions." The participant followed up with:

> We do not have the latitude to deviate from the policy operations of the CXC
>
> regional program. As a result, less than 50% of our graduating students over the
>
> years fail to obtain the mandated five subject passes to proceed to higher
>
> education or to get a decent job.

Table 15

Archival Data, Codes, Categories, and Theme Related to the Factors

Archival Data	Coded Words and Phrases	Categories	Theme
The provision of policy goals and operations mandated by CARICOM (2015) countries guided secondary education and training administered by CXC. Facilitate leadership styles that promote monitoring and evaluation with set criteria and standards to help adjust operations (OECS, 2016).	Link the styles, capabilities, practices, and strategies to learning, school, and societal outcomes.	linking features with outcomes	Utilizing contextual, behavioral, collaborative, and stakeholder contributions as differentiated initiatives.
	Impact of contextual factors - economic status, cultural habits, environment. Use behavioral attributes and dispositions - commitment, motivation, values, beliefs, ethics, and integrity.	Impact of contextual and behavioral factors	
	Internal stakeholders - administrative and learning and teaching personnel, and parents and community groups needed to provide collaboration and contributions.	Usage of internal collaborator's contributions	
	External collaborator - public and private sectors, OECS, CARICOM, USAID, CIDA, UNESCO, World Bank, and specific countries. The collaborators needed to contribute to policy goals and operations - processes and applications.	Usage of External collaborators' contributions	
	Providing strategies to impact diversity, equity, and social justice issues. Providing strategies related to policy goals and operations. Using behaviors, technologies, and communication as initiatives and contributions requiring monitoring and evaluation.	Strategies and initiatives to impact diversity, equity, and justice issues	

The inquiry continued with a response to a request for a solution:

I would change the policy goals and revise the curriculum and assessment. The initiative must suit learners' differences and interests and align with present and future economic and service demands. But again, we must make adequate and appropriate resources available given these challenging economic and social periods.

The participant's statements were contrary to the operational direction of the archival data strategies. The strategies represented the promotion and implementation of the CARICOM mandate as the CXC administered operational programs, standards, and assessments (OECS, 2016). PISA's education governance to accommodate international programs and standards followed the same trend (Auld et al., 2019). The participants suggested strategies and applications focused on diversity and equal and fair treatment considering learners' differentiated achievements and access to opportunities. The participants' views suggested strategies and initiatives comprised inclusive policy goals and operations and competency-based programs to enhance plans, delivery, and assessment adjustments.

Tables 10 to 15 presented six themes created from the sorted and identified codes and categories to display participants' responses while considering the archival data. The examination of the themes revealed the unique realities, strategies, and insights the participants engaged with as they individually stated their perceptions of what it meant to

demonstrate leadership. The participants perceived the understanding and application of the leadership features and factors as relevant to attaining targeted outcomes. However, the participants also revealed unique and different insights and initiatives to address challenges hindering learning, school, and societal benefits.

Differentiated Views of Participants

The distinct perceptions of participants pointed to differentiated or discrepant insights from the analyzed data (Tables 10 to 15). The participants' views pointed to specific concerns and applications related to accommodating leadership styles, centralized policy goals and operations, and learners' diversity, equity, and just treatment issues (Appendix K: 1.5, 4.1, 4.2, & 6.5). Although only one deputy and one principal revealed a distinctive servant leadership style, all the participants raised concerns about their experiences related to the essential need to accommodate varied operational styles. Contrary to their practical intentions, the leader's self-interest came second to the good of the authorized ways to influence the outcomes.

All the participant's views pointed to the centralized dominance of the CXC policy goals and operations for the OECS secondary schools. These legislative directives followed the CARICOM and OECS mandates focusing on program planning, delivery, and assessment procedures with implications for leaders' limited flexibility for adjustments. The participants indicated the need for progressive multicultural schools' operational practices. This application to accommodate the characteristics of learners in

given situations supported the findings of Matthew (2016) related to students' cultural differences. Participants' insights also pointed to the perspectives of Chisolm (2017) to apply learning goals to local standards to equip learners with employable competencies to contribute to their well-being. However, participants also recognized that the continued preparation of learners to embrace local and global opportunities requires credible evidence and tested applications to effect policy and operational adjustments.

Participants' views further revealed the need to address diversity, social justice, and equity to enhance learning outcomes. This perception contradicted the expectation for learners to excel at examinations envisioned by the authorities in the various countries. The participants highlighted learners' diversified learning competencies and the lack of equal and just treatment as challenges hindering students' learning achievements. The leaders' views supported the need to consider enabling factors to facilitate collaboration, contributions, commitment, and motivation to plan and deliver relevant goals and operations aligned with learners' diversified abilities and interests. The participants' data also supported leaders' applied experiences to utilize learners' evolving and distinct culture, school community, and society to implement contributing strategies regardless of background or origin. The identified discrepancies pointed to participants' common rationale for dealing with the leadership mindset, overcoming biases, and disrupting cultural preferences to transform adverse situations.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The evidence of trustworthiness presented in Chapter 3 depicted the proposed

criteria Lincoln and Guba (1985) used to evaluate interpretive research work. These

standards guided the implementation and adjustments, including credibility,

transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria apply to the study as

follows:

Credibility

The study's credibility as a process ensures the accurate representation of

effective leadership as the investigated phenomenon (Anney, 2014). The implementation

and adjustments represented methods to ensure credibility. I proceeded to:

- assess the interview questions compared to previous studies and participants'
  feedback for clarity to provide accurate responses;

- choose the participants with specific qualities and willingness to adjust to and
  accommodate the virtual instead of face-to-face sessions due to COVID-19;

- present a guide to participants to help them understand the features and
  language with examples related to their feedback;

- use probing questions accepted by participants for added and truthful
  responses and noted summary statements to cross-check response consistency;

- verify the interview questions' usefulness as an adjustment during focus group
  sessions since the participants remained unchanged;

- triangulate the data through more than one collection method, including

  interviews, focus group sessions, and documented archival data.

Transferability

Transferability represented the provision of sufficient details in describing the

study to enable others to determine the application of the methods and results to other

settings (Patton, 2015). While I focus on obtaining rich data descriptions, I maintain the

consciousness to ascertain the confidentiality of participants and follow the process to:

- provide background data to establish the study's context to describe effective

  leadership as a phenomenon with related features to make comparisons;

- provide specific and relevant information about the target population, sample

  size, and data analysis procedures to enable others to infer the applicability;

- choose homogeneous participants with characteristics (qualification,

  professional knowledge, skillsets, and experiences) to provide rich data;

- identify similar OECS countries as the study's locations and adhere to the

  chosen participants to provide the data;

- utilize the adjusted virtual phone/email data collection methods to obtain the

  interview and focus group responses and the archival data.

Dependability

Anney (2014) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that increasing the

dependability of research studies occurred through descriptions of the study methods and

data analysis. The provision of rich details influenced researchers to replicate the study

with the potential of obtaining comparable results, thus my need to:

- utilize the phone/email/notes/ as the approved IRB methodology to check the

  targeted participants' data responses and double-check all other data sources;

- document the planned changes made during the data collection to facilitate a

  transparent accommodation of the COVID-19 situation;

- follow an inquiry process to record the changes, challenges, decisions, and

  conclusions from conception to findings to validate the data;

- use the code-recode strategy to ascertain a second coding;

- rationalize the reviewed suggestions by colleagues and advisors other than my

  analysis to identify any categorized omissions.

Confirmability

The assurance of confirmability ascertained the study results accurately

represented the data collected and not my biased views (Anney, 2014; Shenton, 2004).

Therefore, I demonstrated my trust to:

- provide detailed guidelines to avoid bias related to the interview and focus

  group questions and archival data sources,

- state the limitations and potential impact adjustments to the data collection

  method from face-to-face to virtual communication,

- note the nonneutral answers related to the protocol during each interview and focus group sessions specific to the questions,

- document journal notes to ensure the conclusions represented the presented data and not preconceived notions,

- develop information-rich descriptions to facilitate scrutiny and maintain the results' integrity,

- research with an open mind to avoid overlooking data inconsistencies and different views, and

- conduct an audit trail by following the research protocol to avoid researcher bias and compare and accept participants' perceptions to guide decisions.

Results

To achieve the study results, I applied an analytical logic focusing on the formulated categories and created themes from the participants' transcribed interviews and selected archival data. The logic represented a cyclical process in determining the appropriateness of school administrators' effective leadership to influence student learning outcomes. I followed the rationale to scrutinize and analyze the data to indicate themes and categories from the coding processes (Tables 10 to 15).

Operationalizing the Codes, Categories, and Themes

The conceptual and empirical evidence related to the leadership features, the participants' perceptions, and the archival information contributed to operationalizing the

codes, categories, and themes to guide the data analysis and interpretation (Appendices

H, I, & J). The justification represented the need to understand and apply the findings

emerging from participants' perceptions of the features and factors and the archival data

related to effective school leadership. I organized and presented the data analysis theme

by theme for the interpretation of the findings. This process allowed a fuller examination

of the specific relationship of each theme to the primary research question. The results

pointed to an overarching finding developed from the interpretation of the first theme.

The results also represented secondary findings emerging from the six other themes

supporting the central finding. These supportive findings represented the interpretations

of the analyzed data linked to the features, factors, and archival data.

Theme #1: Accommodating a Dependent Style and Initiatives for Situations

The theme represented the participants' perceptions of accommodating a

dependent purposeful leadership style and initiatives related to their respective local

situations. The theme underpinned an overarching interpretive finding representing the

need for influential leaders to apply accommodating styles contextually appropriate to

determine and obtain locally situated outcomes related to CARICOM's secondary school

mandates. The context included using the appropriate or integrated leadership styles and

initiatives of the impacting features, factors, and archival mandates as the supportive

findings. The relationship between the theme and the finding indicated that participants

utilized different leadership styles of multiple leadership initiatives to address a given

situation. The relationship between the research question about participants' views of the understanding and application of effective leadership styles and the main finding pointed to the justification for accommodating different and integrated styles and initiatives to influence the required results. I used probes to seek clarifications and noted the responses to ensure the reactions did not result in improper conclusions during the data analysis process. Understanding the varied leadership challenges to influence the learning, school, and societal outcomes depends on each leader's attributes, dispositions, and the collaboration, commitment, and contributions of other stakeholders. However, the evidence and application depended on the situation to accommodate the mandated and set criteria and standards of the OECS and CARICOM countries.

This overarching finding represented the direct and indirect relationship between the accommodating styles and other features, factors, and archival initiatives with the thrust to maximize effective leadership's mandated goals and operations to achieve success. The results also included participants' identified need to use competencies and facilitate operational processes and applications, capacities, and strategies as significant contributions to given leadership situations. A principal noted, "The leadership styles will depend on the leader's situation; different strokes for different folks." Thus, the participants emphasized accommodating leadership styles and other initiatives to avoid merely giving directions related to CARICOM mandates to influence others to achieve the standard and valued results. The participants' views also revealed the significance of

utilizing attributes and dispositions to identify a leader's knowledge and charisma to transform policies and operations to influence the CXC results.

However, the different views of one participant revealed, "Any style used is only an umbrella process representing a situation and enforcing a particular direction that may or may not always be suitable." Another principal concluded, "Concerning the types of leadership I used in my daily administration, the situational model forms the bedrock for implementing the appropriate method. But I utilize an accommodated style to match the specific purpose." The archival data limited the need to facilitate accommodating behavioral leadership styles that pointed to implications for monitoring and evaluation with set criteria and standards to help adjust operations.

Theme #2: Utilizing Knowledge, Skillsets, Behaviors, and Experiences

The theme underpinned a subfinding that participants used their knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, and experiences as applied leadership capability characteristics. This result, supportive of the main finding, pointed to participants' need to utilize practical experience to benefit from the capabilities. The relationship between the theme and this finding indicated the need to utilize the identified characteristics as practical applications to fulfill the authorized CXC goals and operations. However, the archival data provided limited information on the practical day-to-day operations of the CXC mandates (OECS, 2016). The relationship between the research question seeking participants' views to understand and apply adequate leadership capacities and the related finding justified the

knowledge and application to influence the required results. However, the rationale for this finding rested on the participants' understanding and application of the operations related to the capabilities as a feature of effective leadership.

A deputy principal emphasized: "Such expertise allowed me and others to evaluate successes and failures, strengths, and weaknesses as useful results to inform our decisions. These engagements also provided insights to adjust our operations and guide teaching and experiences." In short, the participants recognized the benefits derived from their years of practical experience in operationalizing the tasks. The relationship between the practical leadership experience and the professional knowledge, skillsets, and behaviors as required competencies within an enabling situation proved critical to influencing effective decisions and operations.

The archival data statistics revealed that only 44% of the secondary school leaders in the OECS attained the required certified professional development (OECS, 2021). Holsted (2016) noted that such an adverse situation pointed to the need to enable policy decisions to facilitate potential and current school leaders to embrace professional certification opportunities enhanced by meaningful, practical experience. Nguyen (2019) also referenced such professional opportunities as necessary to augment the professional capabilities of leaders to influence personal and institutional decisions and operations. The justification for practical experience as subfinding indicated the direct and indirect impacts on students' learning, educational institutions, and the educational system.

All the participants provided strong and supportive views highlighting the need to embrace communication and technological initiatives and other stakeholders' contributions. A principal noted: "We must bridge the school, community, and society gap by involving other stakeholders to contribute to programs and other school activities. As the saying goes, knowledge does not stay in one head." Therefore, this finding supported the main finding and represented the justification for utilizing participants' practical experience to influence positive CXC secondary school results.

Theme #3: Utilizing Planned, Implemented, and Evaluated Operations

The theme indicated that participants planned, implemented, and evaluated operations relating to leadership best practices. The related subfinding, supporting the main finding, represented participants' views on utilizing tested applications to strengthen learner-centered operations. The theme and this subfinding relationship required understanding and applying the mandated CXC operational practices guided by evaluative criteria and standards. The relationship between the question, seeking participants' views to understand and utilize best practices, confirmed the need to guide decisions and justify practical directions to influence learner-centered outcomes. Participants viewed best practices as contributing to adjusting the curriculum program planning, delivery, and assessments for improved results.

The participants perceived that the planned delivery required direction from evaluated operational methods related to learners' differences and interests and the local

situation. The participants also noted that the operational applications required monitoring and evaluation before, during, and after program operations guided by CXC's established criteria and standards. An education officer provided a supportive note: "I believe the practices remain closely interwoven in the operational processes and actions." The officer also revealed that the monitoring and evaluation of the operations remained pivotal as supportive provisions to influence and improve the targeted CXC results.

The participants recognized the importance of utilizing stakeholders' contributions to accommodate innovative practices to address challenging situations to influence the outcomes. A deputy principal concluded, "The planning, delivery, monitoring, and assessment processes during this challenging period required our collaborative adjustment to virtual practices due to the emerging travel and distancing restrictions of COVID – 19." Such knowledge and technological contributions helped leaders facilitate teaching and learning strategies and options to augment CXC operational processes and applications.

A principal noted, "We must use our behavioral skills and values to help learners think for themselves and be creative when facing a problem. An education officer cited another example: "We need to influence learners to obtain practical societal benefits through engagement in other youth and community and district empowerment activities. They will develop other relevant competencies, skills, social and behavioral attributes and attitudes." The knowledge and application of these learner-centered operational

initiatives related to this supportive finding strengthened participants' need to utilize

collaborative and practical experience to improve the mandated results.

Theme #4: Utilizing Appropriate and Adequate Operations, Resources, and Behaviors

The theme underpinning the related subfinding represented participants'

perceptions of utilizing appropriate and adequate operations, resources, and behaviors to

contribute to effective leadership. The finding, supportive of the main finding,

representing participants' expressed views, identified confronting challenges beyond their

ability to utilize the required capacities within enabling conditions and timeframes. The

relationship between the theme and this subfinding required confirmation related to

operational capacities to fulfill the authorized CXC secondary school mandates.

However, participants noted that the centralized decisions to provide the required

operational capacities to fulfill the mandates continued to affect the application of

successful initiatives. The relationship between the question, seeking participants' views

related to the capacities, and the finding disclosed the leaders' need to apply joint

operations to influence the outcomes.

The OECS (2016) report revealed the mandated policy goals and operations

without specifying the required capacities. Participants expressed concerns about the

continued authoritative decisions hindering the flexibility and adjustments to the CXC-

mandated operations to influence local teaching and learning outcomes. The participants

also recognized the importance of resource capacities and enabling conditions as

requirements to address local learners' diversified characteristics and interests. A concerned deputy principal lamented, "Some students are not academically inclined and thus require attention to their displayed strengths and weaknesses." The leader continued, "That's why I believe there are so many drop-outs from the original cohort of students entering the first year of high school." When probed, the leader emphasized, "I see the need to introduce relevant adjustments with a revised curriculum, adequate resources, and appropriate assessments. I also see the need to cater to all learners, provide equal treatment, and address their differences."

An education officer recognized that challenge and suggested: "We must focus on improved social and economic conditions such as counseling and feeding programs, students' behavioral and self-directed knowledge and skills to develop creative and innovative thinkers." Another education officer supported: "I am not afraid to address the capacities related to knowledge and experiences, socioeconomic status, and cultural differences, but the challenges are often beyond our ability." As an interrelated capacity aspect, the participants also stated the need to prioritize setting time frames to apply and evaluate the effects of the capacities impacting the outcomes.

Theme #5: Using Evidence and Strategies Related to the Features to Sustain Initiatives

As the foundation for this supportive finding, the theme represented participants using evidence and strategies related to leadership to sustain their respective initiatives. This finding, supportive of the main and the other secondary findings, revealed

participants' views on the need to prioritize strategies to accommodate the challenges of learners' differentiations and interests. The relationship between the theme and this integrated supportive finding indicated justification to determine the results of the authorized CARICOM mandates. The relationship between the question-seeking participants' views specific to initiatives of the features and the accommodation of this supportive finding pointed to leadership challenges requiring tested applications for sustained operations to influence the outcomes. The justification for this secondary finding depended on credible information and the application of initiatives to accommodate learner-oriented adjustments to the CARICOM mandates.

Participants agreed that the details of the mandated OECS policy goals and operations presented challenging directions. The leaders viewed the directions as not flexible enough to consider learners' strengths and limitations to facilitate learner-friendly operational strategies to improve the achievements of disadvantaged learners. An education officer noted the prevailing concern:

> We used the teaching and learning processes and applications guided by the mandated and standardized CXC programs and assessments that CARICOM and our OECS member countries authorized. We have limited scope to focus on the different interests and abilities of the learners. Thus, more than 50% of the students fail to attain the set standards, especially in English and Mathematics.

Participants' views also suggested utilizing collaborators' contributions to enhance learners' achievements through situational operations. The innovative, adequate, and appropriate contributions that the participants promoted included the school's community input to the mandates of the policy goals and operations. "The idea is to make the learning operations more student-friendly," in the words of a participant. Participants stressed the importance of using communication and technology initiatives, relevant and sufficient resources, and applied experiences within set timeframes guided by criteria and standards to sustain the initiatives. The participants' "what else comments" highlighted recommendations applicable to the school leaders' operations. An education officer's observation indicated the participants' consensus views, "We should be information seekers." A summary of the participant's selective comments revealed the need to:

- use credible information to guide the policy goals and operational decisions;

- adjust the school's policy goals, resources, and operations to cater to learner differences and interests in improving their achievements;

- use knowledge, values, beliefs, listening, flexible skills, and experiences to influence students' learning;

- adhere to positive dispositions such as motivation, commitment, trust, honesty, truthfulness, and other practices to enhance learners' social needs;

- collaborate with all stakeholders to influence involvement and contributions;

- understand and facilitate using technology and virtual means to communicate and facilitate tasks considering the COVID-19 crisis and other situations;

- involve parents and community members to enhance learners' and staffs' knowledge and well-being;

- collaborate with internal and external public and private sectors to harness the contributions required to influence the outcomes.

The participants pointed out that these strategies and initiatives may help address equal treatment and differences in students' abilities and interests.

Theme #6: Using Contextual, Behavioral, Collaborative, and Contributing Factors

The theme represented participants' views on using contextual, behavioral, collaborative, and contributing factors to enhance effective leadership. The subfinding, supportive of the main finding, indicated participants' views on utilizing enabling solutions to address adverse learning and situational circumstances. The relationship between the theme and the subfinding pointed to collaborative contributions to fulfill the authorized CARICOM mandates for the operation of the secondary schools. The relationship between the question related to participants' views on enabling solutions as the finding revealed the need to utilize adequate and appropriate capacities to influence and improve the targeted outcomes. The justification for this supportive finding pointed to the need to accommodate stakeholders' contributions to address learners' differentiations and interests within the mandates of the OECS secondary schools.

The participants indicated their experiences with these differentiations that heightened their awareness of the challenging situations at the secondary schools. The participants also believed that the strategy to focus on the situation required the involvement and contributions of internal and external collaborators and fair treatment related to learners' unique differences, interests, and opportunities. For example, a principal noted, "We need to utilize our attributes and dispositions and that of others as a collaborated effort to meet the unique needs of the teachers and learners, the school and the communities." Another principal observed, "The positive or lack of parental and community involvement and contributions impact one way or the other on the students' performance and, hence, determine the leader's level of effectiveness."

The participants expressed awareness that the OECS authorities recognized the need to address the learning differences and equal and justified treatment concerns. A principal noted, "the annual CXC students' achievement represents a clear indication of the continuing challenges." However, while the participants voiced their frustration, the strategies and actions to address these concerns continued. An education officer thus remarked:

> The primary focus of all of us as stakeholders should be on supportive
>
> involvement and contributions towards result-oriented policies and operations to
>
> address these concerns. From my experience, the strict focus on centralized

policies can hardly play a pivotal role. There is a need to provide students with an

enabling and supportive environment to make positive changes in their lives.

Participants, as a group, expressed support for sentiments conveyed in the statement,

adding to views on the challenging factors to adjust and improve the schools' operations.

The archival data highlighted the low performances of the students after five years at the

secondary schools in the OECS countries. Therefore, the learners' performances

disclosed the need for leaders to apply enabling solutions related to appropriate goals and

operations, resources, and behaviors to influence the outcomes.

Theme #7: Utilizing Policy Goals and Operational Strategies and Initiatives

The developed theme related to the analyzed archival data represented the

application of the policy goals, operational strategies, and initiatives to contribute to the

third cycle analysis to influence the results. The finding, supportive of the main finding,

pointed to contributions to the accommodating situation emphasizing the leaders' need to

utilize inclusive and flexible initiatives to impact CARICOM operations. The theme and

the subfinding relationship promoted the established and functioning OECS education

and training entity envisioning "Every Learner Succeeds" (OECS, 2016, p. 11). The

relationship between the archival data and the subfinding required unified education and

human resource development (Hinds, 2007). However, the rationale for the finding

represented the challenge of accommodating inclusive and flexible policy goals and

operations as an initiative. The justification also pointed to CXC's operations to plan and

deliver learner-centered curriculum and assessments requiring evidence for decisions on any adjustment.

The OECS education sector strategy report pointed to the secondary school challenges to attain targeted achievements (OECS, 2016). In addition, data from the OECS statistical digest confirmed the trend showing learners' CXC results (Figure 1) and the professional training status of the school leaders (OECS, 2021). Moreover, the OECS COVID-19 evaluation report recommended flexible policy and operational adjustments to impact OECS educational outcomes (OECS, 2020). The suggestions also included a planned secondary school transition model to accommodate a digital education strategy inclusive of professional leadership development and training. The decision for inclusive and flexible goals and operations required consideration to influence learners' differences and interests. These analyzed data helped determine the primary and supportive findings to answer the research questions and examine recommendations for further research.

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

Chapter 4 represented a critical component of the research study, beginning with restating the purpose and research questions. Other vital sections described the settings, participants' demographics, and characteristics. The components also comprised the data collection and analysis, confirmation of trustworthiness, and the results. The summary identified the main finding related to the first theme, and the other six themes described the supportive findings. The participants' perceptions provided an understanding and the

application of practical leadership features and factors to influence and improve students'

learning outcomes related to the selected Caribbean countries. The leaders' views and the

archival data also pointed to initiatives related to CARICOM's mandates as the main

subfindings to influence and improve learning outcomes.

The main finding represented the need for influential leaders to utilize

accommodated styles and initiatives to determine situational outcomes related to OECS

countries and CARICOM's operational mandates. The initiatives as subfindings

supporting the main finding pointed to the need to understand and apply leadership

strategies related to the features, enabling solutions linked to the factors, and inclusive

and flexible operations. The analysis and interpretation of the participants' perceptions

and the archival data guided the formulation of the main and the supfindings. The

participants' views and the archival data to understand and apply effective leadership

pointed to the primary and supportive findings as responses to the research questions.

Table 16 provides a synopsis of these findings with implications to guide the

interpretative deliberations and other components in Chapter 5.

Table 16

Primary and Supporting Representations of the Findings

Findings	Representations of the Findings	Themes
Main finding	Influential leaders use accommodating styles and initiatives to determine CARICOM's mandated outcomes.	1
Supportive findings: .	In support of the main finding, the supportive findings represented participants' views on the need to:	
	1. Utilize practical experience to benefit from the operational characteristics of the capabilities.	2
	2. Utilize learner-centered practical and tested initiatives to strengthen cyclical operations.	3
	3. Accommodate collaborative operations beyond the leaders' ability to provide, apply and evaluate the requirements.	4
	4. Prioritize strategies to accommodate the challenges of Learner's differentiations and interests.	5
	5. Utilize enabling solutions to impact adverse learning and situational circumstances of the factors.	6
	6. Utilize inclusive and flexible initiatives to address low performances related to mandated policies and operations.	7

Chapter 5 focuses on the study's purpose and nature and briefly summarizes the findings. The analytical discussion and interpretation of the study's results represent ways to confirm, disconfirm, or extend knowledge in the discipline. These considerations focus on the conceptual perspectives and the literature review presented in Chapter 2. The emphasis then centers on recommendations for future research and applications after stating the limitations. The chapter considers the methodological and social change implications and a summary that includes the study's take-home message.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This study explores individual local school leaders' understanding and application of leadership features to influence and improve secondary school students' learning outcomes in selected Caribbean countries. I focus on the research question: What are the secondary school leaders' perceptions of understanding and using effective leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, capacities, sustained strategies, and factors to influence and improve students learning outcomes? The outcomes include teaching and learning, the school's climate, and societal benefits contributing to further education, training, and other opportunities. My data analysis from the nine transcribed interviews and focus group sessions provided insights about leadership features and factors and the archival data to inform the principal and supportive findings described in Chapter 4.

The overarching finding related to the first thematic feature of effective leadership points to linkages with the subfindings to influence the targeted outcomes. This main finding reveals the need for influential leaders to utilize accommodated styles and initiatives to determine local and situational outcomes of the CARICOM mandates. The secondary findings, in support of the main finding, point to the need to:

- utilize practical experience to benefit from the capabilities,

- utilize learner-centered initiatives to strengthen operations,

- accommodate joint operations beyond the leaders' ability,

- prioritize strategies for learning differences and interests,

- utilize enabling solutions for adverse factors, and

- utilize inclusive and flexible initiatives for mandated policy operations.

Interpretation of the Findings

This section focuses on my interpretation of the primary and supportive findings within the context of, first, the literature review and, second, the conceptual framework. The categories and themes from the data analysis in Chapter 4 guide the interpretation of the findings and related implications. I describe how the primary and supportive findings confirmed, disconfirmed, and strengthened various aspects of the literature review and the conceptual framework with limited reference to applying the leaders' required behavioral attributes and dispositions. I interpreted the primary and secondary findings to draw conclusions and make recommendations. I followed Sandelowski and Barroso's (2002) analytical and interpretive procedures to conclude with implications to guide researchers, practitioners, leaders, and other audiences.

Interpreting the Findings Considering the Literature Review

I interpreted the findings by considering the empirical evidence from the literature review of the explored features. Support for the applied behavioral approach to the leadership features, factors, and archival data remained insufficiently recognized in the literature to guide the understanding and application of effective leadership strategies and initiatives. The primary and supportive findings of the current study justified the participants' perceptive actions and the archival data representations to contribute to the

leaders' understanding and application of effective leadership. The leaders described their individual needs to accommodate situational styles, utilize the other leadership features, and consider the factors and archival data initiatives to influence equity and excellence.

The participants' initiatives represented the subfindings and pointed to the leaders' need to utilize practical experience, learner-centered processes and practices, collaborators' collective capacity contributions, and the related evidence-based and tested operations. The initiatives also included enabling solutions related to the impacting factors, flexible and inclusive policy goals, applied operational programs, and competency-based assessments. These initiatives further pointed to applying the primary and supportive findings with the policies and operations of the OECS mandates to influence and improve the outcomes. Despite the initiatives, the need remained for the leaders to investigate how to apply the leadership features, factors, and archival data. The leaders' collaborative contributions seemed vital to influencing learner-centered practices o benefit local, regional, and global outcomes.

Main Finding: Accommodate Styles and Initiatives for Local and OECS Outcomes

The main finding pointed to the leaders' need to accommodate situational leadership styles and the related operational initiatives to influence the local and the OECS-mandated outcomes. This overarching finding corroborated with Amanchukwu et al. (2015), who found that leaders needed to accommodate different situational leadership styles for decision-making and operational scenarios. Also, the main finding supported

the recommendation of Meier (2016) and Nelson and Squires (2017 to adjust leadership

styles to accommodate policy operations as supportive findings related to the other

leadership features, factors, and archival data. The main finding, citing differences among

leaders and stakeholders, supported the reluctance of Day et al. (2016) to apply the

situational style in every location.

However, leaders' determination to accommodate the situational leadership styles

may corroborate with the results provided by Thompson and Glasø (2018) and Zigarmi

and Roberts (2017). The researchers pointed to the need to apply collaborative leadership

competence during the decision-making process with a commitment to guide the planned

delivery and evaluation of the policy goals and operations. Similarly, in the current study,

I recognize the need for leaders to accommodate stakeholders' varied capacity

contributions in harmony with the thrust to influence and improve learning performances.

The main finding aligns with the leaders' understanding of accommodating collaborative

contributions to adverse situations with the commitment to enhance appropriate

leadership direction and support.

The main finding also supported the focus of Richardson-Rose (2019) for leaders

to consider the socioeconomic, cultural, and behavioral situations as factors requiring

joint actions to influence the learning outcomes. However, Day et al. (2016) specified

reluctance to apply the situational style in every location; applying the main finding to

guide leadership decisions aligns with the additional proposition for the leaders to

consider the stakeholder's contributions and the impact of the other enabling factors. For example, in support of the leaders' views, Lynch (2015) emphasized the need for contributions from trained and experienced stakeholders with an identified level of related professional development and readiness.

The main finding aligned with the recommendations of Nelson and Squires (2017) and Wright (2017) to focus on stakeholders' views, emphasizing collaborative strategies and initiatives. The leaders' situational style thus accommodated stakeholders' motivation, commitment, and open dialogue to solicit contributions to address iniquities and improve the level of successful operations. The main finding agrees with Northouse (2018) to accommodate the required strategies and initiatives and the impact of the other features, factors, and archival policies and operations.

Therefore, the main finding supported the flexibility and inclusiveness required by the leaders to utilize the knowledge and experience of other stakeholders. However, the literature review appeared limited concerning the leaders' and stakeholders' collective experiences applying behavioral attributes and dispositions. This concern revealed the need for empirical evidence to support the behavioral application of the features, factors, and stakeholders' contributions, pointing to implications for further studies.

Supportive Finding #1: Utilize the Benefits from Leaders' Practical Experience

This secondary finding, in support of the main finding, represented a leader's capabilities as a feature of effective leadership, agreeing with the research results of

Green (2017), Le Fevre and Robinson (2015), and Wagner et al. (2006) to promote and utilize leaders' practical experience. This supportive finding pointed to participants' multiple years of practical experience, accepting the application of the leader's capability characteristics promoted by Green and Wagner et al. These supportive characteristics encompassed the leaders' professional knowledge, skill-sets, behavioral attributes, and dispositions as practical experience requirements to influence learning, school, and societal outcomes.

Also, in support of the main finding, the practical experience related to the leaders' behavioral attributes and dispositions within the accommodated styles agreed with the study results of Ross and Cozzens' (2016) as being a significant contributor to influencing learning outcomes. The leaders' behaviors as capability characteristics complemented school and community contributions as practical experience. For example, the study's subfinding to utilize practical experience highlighted effective communication and technologies among leaders and other stakeholders to complement leaders' competencies and contributions. As an important practical aspect of openness to change, the participants' views supported the need to accommodate the contribution of other stakeholders, especially the experienced teachers. This perception aligned with the evidence Leithwood et al. (2020) provided that leaders' professional influence on students' learning remained second to the teachers' contributions. Therefore, the rationale for leaders to utilize the practical experience of other stakeholders justified the need to

investigate the leaders' capabilities to contribute to leadership decisions and operations impacting learning and the school climate.

Supportive Finding #2: Utilize Learner-Centered Initiatives to Strengthen Operations

This finding representing the need for practical and tested initiatives to strengthen learner-centered cyclical operations supported the central finding. This subfinding agreed with Brownbridge (2018) and Hitt and Tucker (2016) for emphasizing that leaders need to utilize planned, implemented and evaluated operational practices to influence learning. This finding also supported the directional way Hitt and Tucker emphasized the need to promote practical support for the organization, all-inclusive teaching and learning environment, and a sustained community-oriented relationship. This subfinding further aligned with the trend that Auld and Morris (2016) promoted to engage others in action-oriented decisions and practices. My interpreted conclusions agreed with aspects of the study conducted by Beronich (2016), proposing the need for communication and collaboration to build trust before, during, and after applied situations.

However, the archival data of the OECS education sector strategy report confirmed CARICOM's dominant challenges and the OECS mandated policies linked to the operational curriculum and standardized learning assessments. Therefore, the subfinding need for learner-centered initiatives corroborated the research of Hutton (2017) and Miller (2016) to call for an inclusive curriculum guided by student-oriented policy goals and assessment procedures and standards. The subfinding also agreed with

Patton (2015) and Ravitch (2016) for the learners to engage with preparatory practices and self-interests to access future opportunities. The supportive finding further reinforced the propositions that Ravitch advocated to promote internal and global acceptance of initiatives to use evaluative criteria-oriented standards to guide the schools' operations.

The archival data also revealed the challenges of standardized testing resulting in the varied performances of learners. The current subfinding supporting Cupidore (2016) emphasized applying learner-centered preparatory opportunities beneficial to the learners, communities, and societies. Therefore, the justification for learner-centered initiatives to strengthen operational practices required leaders' applied attributes and dispositions as evidence of the practical knowledge gap aligned to the main finding.

Supportive Finding #3: Utilize Joint Capacities Beyond Leaders' Ability

This subfinding, contributing to the main finding, pointed to the need to address challenges often beyond the leaders' ability to provide, apply and evaluate the requirements. This finding agreed with Green (2017), Hallinger (2018), and Santamaria (2016) to encourage utilizing appropriate and adequate policy operations, resources, and behavioral capacities within conditions. This subfinding confirmed the need to harmonize the sourcing, application, and evaluation of the capacities as contributions to influence the outcomes. The subfinding also supported capacity-building efforts as promoted by Lai (2015). This finding focused on providing leadership direction by advocating the collaborative involvement of the school, community, and broader societal connections

and contributions to people development and organizational design. The finding also

agreed with Lai to prioritize fostering learning in communities with the capacity to

participate in decision-making. The results further indicated school and community

connections' relevance to facilitating students' learning through participation.

This secondary finding promoted other stakeholders' development, involvement,

and contributions. This collaborative determination pointed to the stakeholders'

behavioral attributes, dispositions, and relationships aligned with the main finding's

situational thrust. The deductions from this subfinding supported the views of Julius

(2018) and Townsend and MacBeath (2011), emphasizing the continued need for

professional development competencies to enhance leaders' functional behaviors and

application of the other operational resources and features. This finding also agreed with

Klar et al. and Theisen (2016) that leaders apply other stakeholders' behavioral attributes

and dispositions to fulfill targeted outcomes. Therefore, utilizing capacities beyond the

leaders' ability to provide, apply and evaluate the necessities may require further

evidence of the collaborator's contributions to guide decisions and joint operations.

Supportive Finding #4: Utilize Strategies for Learning Differences and Interests

In support of the main finding, this finding indicated the need for leaders to utilize

strategies related to the leadership features to accommodate initiatives to address the

challenges of learners' differences and interests. This subfinding agreed with a key

finding by Amanchukwu et al. (2015) related to accommodating situational leadership

style determinations. The finding specifically supported Matthew (2016), pointing to the successful use of the situational style to provide directional, interactive, and supportive operations to enhance learners', school, and human development outcomes. The leaders needed to embrace and demonstrate shared decision-making and interactive practices to utilize the school's vision, policies, and goals. Such adjusted program operations required accommodating and influencing positive collaboration and trust. The leaders' operations focused on creating a safe, nurturing, and stimulating learning environment sensitive to multicultural behaviors and other challenges of disadvantaged learners.

This subfinding also reinforced the continued learner-centered policy goals and operations that Ravitch (2016) and Richardson-Rose (2019) promoted, using criteria and standards to evaluate the learning competencies. The suggested initiatives, supported by Shields and Hesbol (2020), addressed the leaders' specified challenges of social justice, diversity, and equity, impacting the required level of sustained outcomes. Chisolm (2017) similarly stressed the need to provide opportunities to succeed and that school leaders needed to prepare learners to contribute to their learning. The rationale conveyed the importance of an innovative curriculum to accommodate school, community, and societal contributions for the initiative to cater to learning differences and interests. The leaders required collaboration to facilitate relevant instructional and assessment programs and redesign the schools to involve internal and external stakeholders. This initiative needed to meet the learner's short- and long-term behaviors to access opportunities.

The subfinding agreed with Demie (2019) and Oghu (2017) to utilize leaders'

profound situational impact on teaching and learning and their respective school climates.

The leaders' guidance remained essential to influencing how teachers, for example,

supported the creation of a safe, nurturing, and stimulating learning environment

sensitive to multicultural and socioeconomic situations. Such decisions required

leadership preparation since leaders needed to operationalize positive behavioral

attributes and dispositions to influence targeted outcomes. However, Wilson et al. (2020)

noted a significant concern in principals' retention across the United States and

elsewhere, citing leaders' behavioral decisions resulting in unsettled leadership

employment at the schools. This situation indicated credible evidence to guide decisions

for sustained leadership operations to influence the learning outcomes.

Supportive Finding #5: Utilize Enabling Solutions for Adverse Factors

In support of the main finding, this finding pointed to the need for leaders to

utilize enabling solutions to address the adverse learning and situational circumstances of

contributing factors related to the leadership features. This subfinding agreed with the

research results of Brewer et al. (2018), identifying and describing cultural, social,

economic, and behavioral inequalities that influenced learning outcomes. The researchers

also revealed the contextual and collaborative challenges and contributions impacting

diversity, equity, and justified treatment issues. My interpretation considered diverse

learner-oriented initiatives guided by policy goals, delivery, and evaluative operations.

This subfinding also confirmed the results that Nasreen (2019) and Wright (2017) utilized to contribute to the policy operations, resources, and behavioral capacities. The leadership initiatives related to the factors suggest an inclusive curriculum to guide the contributions even beyond the respective leader's school location. The supportive finding further pointed to the different strategies agreeing with the perspectives of Bertrand and Rodela (2018) and Shields and Hesbol (2020) to address diversity, equity, and social justice issues. The preparation of learners to embrace the opportunities supported the perceptions of Ravitch (2016) and Hutton (2017) to utilize credible evidence and tested behaviors to guide the required decisions and operational strategies and initiatives to accommodate utilizing enabling solutions of factors impacting the learning situations.

Supportive Finding #6: Utilize Inclusive and Flexible Initiatives

This analyzed archival data finding, supporting the main finding, indicated the leaders' need to utilize inclusive and flexible initiatives to influence improved performances related to the authorized policies and operations. The OECS countries established centralized education policy goals, operations, practical applications, and evaluation processes (Miller et al., 1991; OECS, 2016). The countries' decision reinforced the CARICOM political authorities' mandates given to CXC as the regional administrative, management, and coordinating body. The procedures also pointed to implications for teaching and learning and standardized assessments (OECS, 2016).

Lewis (2017) indicated a similar trend followed by the Program for International

Students Assessment (PISA) and the United States Common Core State Standards. The

analysis of the archival data from the OECS (2021) statistical digest showed secondary

school students' lowly performance revealing standardized testing using authoritative

mandates that hindered learners' potential. The research by Auld et al. (2019) highlighted

comparable results using PISA-type analyzed data for evidence-based education

decisions linked to specified policy goals. This subfinding points to the need for

empirical evidence and practical results related to the challenges of the authorized

mandates and the successes in applying inclusive and flexible policies and operations.

The primary and supportive findings provided the rationale for further empirical evidence

and applied knowledge of future studies to guide leaders' decisions and operations.

Interpreting the Findings Considering the Updated Conceptual Features

The data findings revealed possibilities to confirm, differentiate, and add evidence

related to the updated conceptual features (Figure 4). The consideration given to the

interpretations of the main and supportive findings provided an understanding and

application of the restructured components. The relationship between the findings and the

revised leadership components justified collaborative leadership decisions and operations

beneficial to all stakeholders while influencing learning, school, and societal outcomes.

Figure 4 provides a synopsis of the main and supportive findings of the updated

leadership components augmenting the original structural features presented in Figure 2.

Figure 4

Leadership Components and Findings: Features, Factors, and Archival Data

Effective Leadership represents the phenomenon with features and related characteristics.
Effective leadership with updated components represents the main & subfindings as features, factors, and archival data initiatives.

Leadership styles:
 Direction, interaction, transformation, situational, & support.
Main finding: Leaders accomodating situational leadership styles and initiatives.

Capabilities: Knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, & experiences.
Subfinding (1): Leaders utilizing practical experience related to each feature

Practices: Setting direction to collaborate, and plan, deliver, and evaluate operations.
Subfinding (2): Leaders facilitating learner-centered operations.

Capacities: Policy goals & operations, Resources, and Behaviors within timeframes.
Subfinding (3): Leaders enabling joint operations beyond their ability.

Strategies: Influencing Teaching and learning, School climate, Societal benefits**.
Subfinding (4).
 Leaders facilitating initiatives for equal, just and fair treatment.**

Factors: (An updated aspect of effective Leadership).
Subfinding (5). Leaders enabling situational solutions for impacting circumstances of factors.

Archival data (An updated aspect of effective leadership).
Subfinding (6). Leaders facilitating Inclusive and flexible policies and operational initiatives.
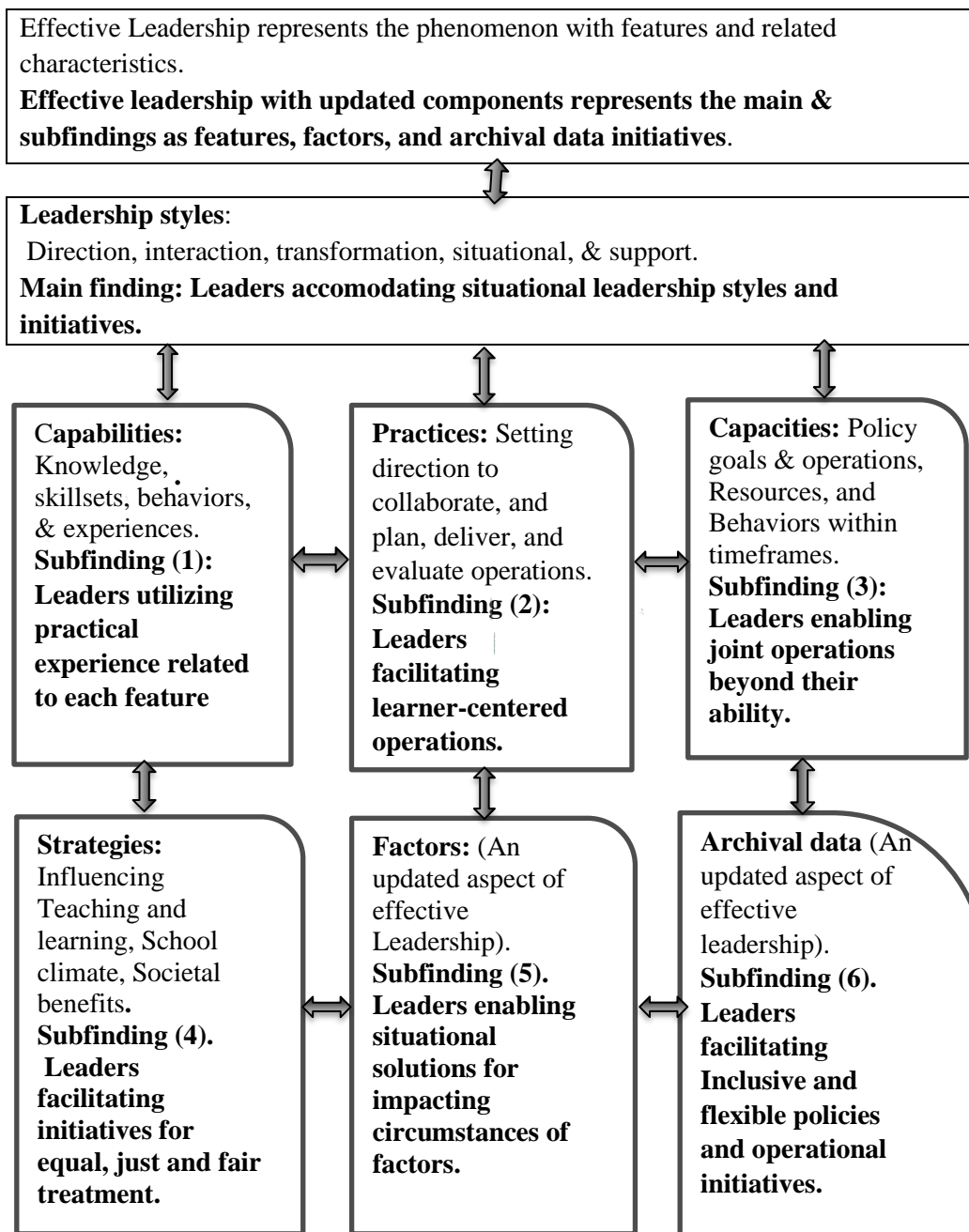
Figure 4 represents the original leadership features indicating the related characteristics and the updated components highlighted in a bold script. Figure 4 also specified in the bold script the main and subfindings that evolved from the participants' views representing linkages to the features, with the enabling factors and the considered archival data as impacting components. The perspectives of the original conceptual framework provided credible evidence to guide decisions related to the understanding and application of the leadership features, helped finalize the research questions and influenced the methodological design. The evidence from the original framework further pointed to the need to investigate the practical impact and contributions of the related factors and the archival data. Consequently, the updated leadership components represented the analyzed and interpreted results of the transcribed data linked to the features, enabling factors, and archival data. The findings related to the identified components may guide effective leadership decisions and operational directions to influence the targeted learning outcomes.

Figure 4 identified the main finding, supporting the perspectives of Hersey and Blanchard (1979) and Wright (2017) for accommodating situational leadership styles and related initiatives. In collaboration with stakeholders, leaders needed to accommodate this leadership style to improve relationships and enhance the other contributing initiatives as subfindings to influence beneficial outcomes. As interpreted in Figure 4, the identified initiatives highlighted in bold script represented supportive findings to the main finding.

The linked secondary findings pointed to leaders' thrust for collaborative contributions to

the updated components supporting the central finding. These subfindings also

contributed to the understanding and applying leaders' effectiveness in influencing

decisions and achievements related to the policy goals and operations. The subfinding

pointed to leaders' need to utilize practical experience to apply the varied leadership

capabilities supported by evidence that Green (2017) and Wagner et al. (2006) provided

to influence adequate leadership corroboration. The learner-centered initiatives as a

subfinding related to best practices reinforced the proposition of Hitt and Tucker (2016)

to set critical criteria and standards to evaluate plans and operations to guide decisions to

influence sustained results.

A third secondary finding in Figure 4 also advocated the need for joint operations

beyond the leaders' ability to provide, apply and evaluate the requirements. As Green

(2017) and Santamaria (2016) lamented, the appropriate and adequate capacities

remained a challenge, requiring leadership initiatives to harness contributions to

influence targeted achievements. The capacities as policy goals and operations, resources,

and behavioral characteristics relied on the continuous contributions from learners, the

school authorities, communities, and external stakeholders. Utilizing school-community

connections and establishing relationships to access the required capacities from local

and external sources remained critical to sustaining positive outcomes. Green (2017)

classified leaders' and other stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions as

critical to comply with capability and capacity adjustments to enhance strategies and initiatives for challenges and anticipated outcomes.

The linked subfindings supported the main finding as evidence-based and tested strategies and initiatives for effective leadership styles, competencies, practices, and capacities. For example, initiatives to address cultural language, technological, socioeconomic, and welfare challenges require credible information and strategies linked to the identified features to attain success. The initiatives from these features to address learners' differences and interests pointed to the need for equal, justified, and fair treatment policies and operations to influence targeted results. Sustained policy operations aligned with the proposition of Richardson-Rose (2019) required a focus on the applications of operational initiatives to benefit learning, school, and societal outcomes. The justification for applying dynamic policy operations required stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions based on monitoring and evaluation results. The critical need for credible information supported the rationale Ravitch (2016) advocated to guide decisions and operations, requirements for teaching and learning related to individual needs, and positive beliefs and expectations.

Enabling situational solutions to address adverse circumstances and inequalities pointing to specific factors represented a subfinding. This subfinding indicated that factors impacting the level of effective leadership comprised cultural, social, economic, behavioral, and learners' differentiation concerns. Such solutions reinforced the

proposition that Nasreen (2019) advocated for leaders to facilitate appropriate collaboration and contributions from stakeholders. The leaders also needed to seek ways to address the challenges of diversity, equity, and justice issues associated with teaching and learning outcomes.

The supportive finding related to the archival data emphasized the need for inclusive and flexible initiatives to augment authorized policy operations to influence positive results. The OECS centralized and standardized CXC conceptual model envisioned supportive and beneficial country and regional achievements. However, the subfinding revealed the continuous low performance of learners utilizing this OECS and CARICOM criteria-oriented model. The statistical information also pointed to limited provisions to augment professional leadership development and training. This subfinding suggested the need for further conceptual evidence and practical knowledge to inform decisions. The policy and operational decision-makers, leaders, and teachers needed to initiate inclusive and flexible adjustments to the policy goals and operations to augment teaching and learning successes beneficial to all stakeholders. Consideration for sustained training and development programs and incentives appeared appropriate to address the concerns of high turnover rates among leaders. This subfinding pointed to the need for further conceptual evidence and practical knowledge to inform the proposed decisions.

The main and supportive findings represented my interpretation of the empirical evidence related to conceptual perspectives and leaders' perceptions to understand and

apply the leadership features, related factors, and archival information. These findings

pointed to the challenging operational policies and applications to maintain equity, social

justice, and diversity to influence the targeted outcomes. However, the primary and

supportive findings emphasized the need for further empirical evidence and practical

knowledge and experiences to guide decisions, policies, and operations to influence and

sustain effective leadership outcomes.

Limitations

As I focused on understanding and utilizing secondary school leaders' perceptions

of practical leadership features to include the capabilities and experiences to ensure

trustworthiness, I encountered limitations while conducting this study. I utilized a

purposeful sampling strategy to identify and invite a representative group of participants

based on their academic and professional qualifications and practical experiences. The

selected leaders comprised consented volunteers as the study participants associated with

secondary school operations of the three chosen OECS countries. While the selection

proved adequate, the resulting sample was not necessarily a representative group, evenly

distributed, or considered ideal. Further, by the nature of this qualitative design

methodology, generalizability, limitations, and the results may not apply to any

population beyond the sample and the contextual OECS countries.

The scheduling of the interviews and focus group discussions with the

participants represented another encountered limitation. I planned to conduct face-to-face

interviews with nine participants and focus group sessions with the same participants as three groups representing each selected country. However, the advent of COVID-19 required a changed plan to virtual means and to accommodate the interactions on days, times, and locations approved for the individual and group sessions by the participants. I accommodated the participants to conduct the sessions based on their availability. Alternate volunteers replaced the two dropping out from the original nine participants.

A limitation of the study represented a potential bias resulting from leaders attempting to create a positive image of their school or themselves and misrepresenting experiences in their responses. The desire to present their best experiences could have overemphasized positive or negative experiences. I accepted participants' contributions as authentic since the cross-checking of their recorded verbatim responses matched their email submissions. I detected no social bias from their views or reference to their school operations. The triangulation of data from my documented notes and the archival information helped validate their descriptive data for a balanced perception. These statements represent a summary of the limitations:

- The nine self-selected participants limited the level of generalization.

- The use of only three OECS countries increased the selection bias.

- The time and resource constraints influenced the study's scope.

- Among all stakeholders, only the participants provided their views.

- The COVID -19 restrictions affected the data collection means and period.

- Personal bias may interfere with the trustworthiness of the data.

Recommendations Related to Limitations

In the recommendations, I recognized a need to address persistent and emerging leadership concerns requiring credible evidence and applying knowledge and practical experiences related to secondary school leadership in the Caribbean. Such evidence and experiences indicated the need for future conceptual and empirical confirmation of the features, contributing factors, and archival data. However, benefiting from the understanding and application of strategies and initiatives related to the current study findings required the perceptions and contributions of informed and experienced stakeholders from various locations.

Further research to extend the understanding and application of effective leadership remained essential to this study's findings. Leaders needed evidence to guide decisions to accommodate situational leadership related to inclusive and flexible policies and operations. Such an investigation may guide decisions to apply learner-centered and tested practices as initiatives for school leaders to facilitate addressing learners' differentiations and interests. The impact of secondary school leaders' behaviors, collaborations, and solicited contributions may require, as another recommendation, practical leadership experience evidence through professional training and development for current and potential secondary school leaders.

Social Change Implications

The potential impact for positive social change within the study's scope indicated the emergence of implications at the micro, macro, and mega levels. These levels emphasized the process of understanding and applying leadership features, enabling factors, and archival information at secondary schools in selected OECS countries. Therefore, the anticipated social change envisioned a micro-level potential to influence the individual school leader's means of addressing local teaching and learning, a macro (political entity) level potential to influence school community climate, and a mega-level potential to influence societal benefits across the Caribbean region and other countries.

Micro-level

The current study findings may empower the school leader to contribute to individual learners' success in preparation for available opportunities at a micro or individual level of activity and influence. However, the apparent realities described by the study participants pointed to unequal student results amidst the leaders' and other individual stakeholders' efforts in the OECS countries. I interpreted the study findings as suggesting the need for leaders to utilize participants' perceptions to understand and apply tested initiatives representing the analyzed and interpretive results related to the leadership features and factors. The findings pointed to the need for leaders to utilize accommodating situational leadership and initiatives to facilitate and influence the students' teaching and learning outcomes. The findings also indicated the leaders'

requirement to plan, apply and evaluate learner-centered operations and assessment procedures. Further identification of a leader's need requires facilitated capacity operations, resources, behaviors, and impacting factors beyond their ability to address learning differences and interests. The study's results stressed a need for further investigation to guide a micro-level influence on students' preparation for the mandated CXC operations.

Macro-level

The study may also provide the potential for a macro-level social change. Such change enhanced community collaboration and commitment, facilitated policy operations, and developed an enabling school climate and environment. The involvement of students, teachers, and parents, community development, social, health, and welfare groups may generate an essential level of pooled trust to achieve positive results. While genuine teaching and learning outcomes may result through formal school curriculum experiences, not all the knowledge and experiences expected to enhance students' learning appeared sufficiently educative and functional.

The study's main finding pointed to the leaders' need to facilitate democracy within the situational leadership styles to solicit internal and external stakeholders' engagement, collaboration, and contributions. The subfindings also pointed to a commendation for further investigation to guide the involvement and contributions of appropriate community groups. These community initiatives included joint operations

beyond the leaders' ability, enabling solutions to address adverse factors, and utilizing inclusive and flexible initiatives for the mandated policies and operations. Therefore, the leaders' thrust to facilitate learner-centered policies and operations to influence model schools with community involvement may enhance a positive macro social change. However, a macro-level success only pointed to the graduation of more learners and the anticipation to continue their education or find employment.

Mega-level

A mega-level social change aimed to achieve value-added results beneficial to individual learners, the school and community, the country and broader Caribbean society, and other countries. A mega-level social change leadership direction required focusing on development contributions to society (UNESCO, 2015). The secondary education system's overall planning and decision-making level specified the vision and targeted results with criteria and standards for the macro and micro levels (OECS, 2016). A mega-level change also requires that leaders focus individually and jointly on the meaningful purpose of the planned operational processes, applications, and evaluation at the micro and macro levels, completing the cyclical process to improve and influence learners' societal thrust. The OECS planned vision stated that every learner succeeds related to the anticipated mega level results and the associated macro and micro achievements experienced challenges. The concerns associated with the policies and

operational directions, applications, and evaluations hindered the envisioned mega-level

results and the associated macro and micro achievements.

The participants' perceptions and the archival data revealed constraints to

influence micro and macro strategies and initiatives to realize the targeted achievements

and thus the mega results. For example, the micro-level initiatives needed to focus on the

mandated OECS (2016) policies and operational processes, activities, and interventions

with appropriate and adequate resources. The study findings showed that learners'

average achievement rates for the OECS fluctuated below 40 % over five years (Table 1).

The findings also identified challenges such as the need for inclusive and flexible policies

and operations at the macro level impacting the Mega level of societal expectations. The

findings related to the required impact for social change at the Mega level pointed to the

need for solutions to address the differentiation and interests of learners. Another

subfinding emphasized cultural, social, economic, and environmental contributions to

augment mega-level results for social change. Such contributions and influence at the

micro, macro and mega levels may improve individual learning performances and

opportunities, sustain community relationships and resources within the schools' climate,

and the development and well-being of societies. The implications for positive social

change indicated that leaders and other stakeholders needed to facilitate informed

decisions and operations at the micro, macro, and mega levels to influence and sustain the

targeted outcomes.

Methodological, conceptual, and empirical implications

The methodological, conceptual, and empirical implications of the generic qualitative research to understand and apply effective leadership pointed to no specific philosophical perspective related to the context of the OECS countries. Also, the conceptual nature of effective leadership required a research design to capture descriptive information-rich evidence and insights unique to effective leadership as the phenomenon. However, while exploring the features and characteristics of effective leadership, the design facilitated using the generic approach and qualitative methodologies. This research endorsed the perspective that Wright (2017) advocated focusing on the dynamic, contextual, and unique nature of the phenomenon and capturing evidence from other factors, archival data situations, and realistic settings. The study's generic base may increase the epistemological, ontological, and valued (axiological) contributions to understanding and applying effective leadership. The research may also substantiate the effective leadership trend from the generic approach to other context-specific studies.

Recommendations for Practice

My understanding and interpretation of the study participants' perceptions, interactions, and reactions as practicing educational leaders to the policies contained in the archival data provided the foundation for the following recommendations. The recommended need to examine stakeholders' collaborative contributions and other related factors may provide practical guidance to potential initiatives for enhancing

school leadership success. The study participants' views on the policies and operations they worked with may also emerge as crucial for national and international standards for sustained acceptance and application. The recommendations further incorporate participants' selective comments about the consequences of their applied experiences:

- Leaders should utilize credible evidence from studies of the functional aspects of the OECS mandates. The results may guide inclusive and flexible policies and operational decisions to influence learning to impact equity, diversity, and justified treatments.

- Leaders should view the results of an investigation of supportive cultural and other contextual factors conducive to teaching, learning, and societal well-being as guidance for decisions and actions to impact the school environment.

- Leaders should promote and facilitate training and development of current and potential leaders to accommodate approaches to situational leadership to encompass stakeholders' collaboration, support, and contributions.

- Leaders should help develop and sustain current and potential leaders' capabilities to plan, deliver, monitor, and evaluate insightful learner-centered policy goals and operations.

- Leaders should maximize and adjust the use of policy goals and operations, resources, and behaviors as capacities within specified timeframes.

- Leaders should strengthen relationships, trust, and commitment to promoting stakeholders' involvement, contributions, and benefits at the school, community, national, and external levels.

- Leaders should advocate for sustained professional leadership training and development for potential leaders, viewed as critical to consolidating all aspects of effective leadership to influence and improve targeted outcomes.

- Leaders should utilize appropriate criteria, standards, and incentives to promote, monitor, and evaluate school policy decisions and applied operations.

- Leaders need to utilize behavioral attributes and dispositions for operations and learning outcomes as critical to understanding and applying leadership features.

Conclusion

The evidence from the explored leadership features, leaders' perceptions, and archival data revealed challenges, strategies, and potential operational initiatives. The analysis and interpretation of the participants' perceptions to understand and apply the leadership features and impacting factors revealed characteristics of leaders to influence accommodating, collaborative, analytical, and creative decisions and contributions of other stakeholders. The conceptual and empirical evidence, leaders' perceptions, and archival data insights may also influence current and aspiring secondary school

leadership decisions. I believe that successful leaders' competencies, practices, and experiences for implementing change require sustained professional leadership to influence differentiated students' learning outcomes (see Holsted, 2016).

The continued challenges of learners' performances and depleting leadership situations, as Levin et al. (2019) lamented, pointed to the need to develop and engage qualified, professional, and committed educational leaders to influence learning, school, and societal outcomes. This strategic need for professional leaders appeared increasingly crucial to plan, implement, and evaluate flexible and inclusive learner-centered policy goals and operations (Hutton, 2017; Ravitch, 2016). The implications revealed strategies and initiatives to address learners' different, unequal, and unfair treatment challenges. Therefore, my study's critical essence emphasized the need for training and development of professional leaders. This initiative envisioned fulfilling the need for influential leaders with attributes, dispositions, and practical experience to accommodate situations and utilize the contributions of others. This initiative to understand and apply effective leadership seemed viable to influence sustained benefits to learners, schools, and societies with the potential to contribute to positive social change.

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Appendix A: Interview and Focus Group Guide

The guide should provide free and interactive conversations to obtain responses to the interview or the focus group deliberations for the research study. However, leaders' participation in the individual interview session does not obligate them to participate in the focus group interactions.

Introduction

Let me welcome you (Name) and thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview (*or focus group discussion*). My official name is Finan Herbert Sabaroche, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership, Policy, and Change Ph.D. program at Walden University. As previously indicated in the invitation, I am in the process of accessing information as an essential component of my dissertation study.

Purpose and Study Details

The study focuses on the consequences and application of your views as solutions to understand and use effective leadership to improve secondary school operations and outcomes. Therefore, this interview (or focus group discussion) aims to help me follow the necessary procedures to collect essential data related to your views. This information from the interactions will describe your perceptions of effective leadership styles, competencies, best practices, capacities, and sustainable leadership strategies. In addition, the information evolving from the free interactive dialogue during the focus group session will relate to the questions associated with the expected outcomes, factors (other

than the identified leadership features), other internal and external stakeholder

contributors, and suggestive strategies.

The interview will take about the mutually accepted 60 to 75 minutes (or the focus

group discussion will take about the agreed 60 to 90 minutes) while using semistructured,

open-ended questions to help obtain your views. For this study and to maintain your

privacy and keep the responses confidential, I will assign a code to protect your identity.

Although I will take notes during the sessions, I would like your permission to

audiotape the interactions to document your views accurately. Also, if you wish to

explain a record point you are making during the exchanges, please feel free to let me

know.

At this point, you can reaffirm or object to your consent to participate in this

study. Since your participation in this interview (or focus group discussion) is entirely

voluntary, you may, at any time, request a break or withdraw your assistance without any

consequence. Do you have any questions before we begin? We can proceed with the

planned interactions using the appropriate section (Interview or Focus Group) of the

Participant's Response Template.

Appendix B: Interview and Focus Group Questions

As a reminder, the interview (or focus group discussion) questions emerged from the issue of interest - effective leadership with features and factors to improve the operational outcomes. Therefore, the leadership features related to the interview questions for the first sub research question included:

- The styles related to giving direction, interacting with, and supporting others.

- Capabilities (competencies) related to professional knowledge, skillsets, and behaviors.

- Practices (actions) associated with decisions related to your leadership style, policies, distribution of capacities and conditions, operational processes, and experiences.

- Capacities and conditions related to the legally mandated policies, resources, structures, operational procedures and actions, and timeframe.

5. Sustainable strategies are related to the styles, competencies, practices, and capacities to realize the mega (societal), macro (school), and micro (teaching and learning) outcomes.

The leadership factors related to the focus group questions included:

1. Teaching and learning, school climate, and societal benefit linked to the leadership features. The other possible factors may influence effective leadership to improve the outcomes.

2. The internal stakeholders - individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations may support and contribute to effective leadership to influence and improve outcomes.

3. The external stakeholders - individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations may contribute to effective leadership to improve results.

4. Other factors, contributors, concerns, and strategies to understand and use as other features may change and improve the outcomes.

The interview questions (IQs: 1-5) and focus group questions (FGQs: 1-5) were open-ended to enable free views. I also used related inquiries and other probing questions to represent views as experienced leaders associated with secondary school outcomes (Attachment Table).

Attachment Table

Interview (1- 5), Focus Group (1- 5), Probing and Supporting Questions, and References.

Semistructured Open-ended Questions:	Related Questions - IQ: 1-5; FGQ: 1-5	Probes (IQ = 1-5; FGQ=1-5): Why?	Supporting References
1. Interview Questions			
IQ 1: What are your views of the effective leadership styles and practices required to provide direction and support to influence and improve the outcomes -Teaching and learning, school	What styles (Administrative, Servant, Instructional, Transformational, Distributive, Situational leadership, among others and practices will you use to help achieve the outcomes?	Why do you use such chosen leadership styles and practices? How do you manage such choices? What else?	(Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Bass, 2006; Northouse, 2018; Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017). *(Table continues)*

Semistructured Open-ended Questions:	Related Questions - IQ: 1-5; FGQ: 1-5	Probes (IQ = 1-5; FGQ=1-5): Why?	Supporting References
climate, and societal benefits?			
IQ 2: What leadership competencies will you call upon to understand and influence effective leadership to improve the outcomes?	What professional knowledge, skillset, and behaviors will you have to understand, influence, and achieve the outcomes?	Why use the competencies you chose? How do you manage such choices? What else?	(Green, 2017; Le Fevre & Robinson, 2015; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Wagner et al., 2006).
IQ 3: What are the practices that you will need to understand and use for effective leadership styles, competencies, capacities, and sustained strategies to enhance and improve the targeted outcomes?	What are the practices associated with each feature related to policies and goals, operations (processes & actions) linked to planning, delivery, and assessment to improve the outcomes?	Why and how do you use these tested practices to influence and improve the outcomes? What else)?	(Green, 2017; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Jacobson, 2011; Santamaria, 2016).
IQ 4: How will you describe the leader's use of capacities required for effective leadership to influence and improve the targeted outcomes?	What are the legal policies and goals, resources, structures, systems, processes, actions, and timeframe needed to influence the outcomes?	Why and how will you use these capacities and or conditions you need to achieve the outcomes? What else?	(Green, 2017; Hallinger & Heck, 2011; Santamaria, 2016). *(Table continues)*
IQ 5: Please, can you describe the strategies to sustain effective leadership styles, capabilities, best practices, and capacities that you think will influence	What is the medium to long-term initiatives related to planning, delivering, and evaluating the features you think will influence, improve, and sustain the outcomes?	Why will you use these strategies? How will you use these strategies? What else?	(CARICOM, 2015; OECS, 2016; Miller, 2018; UNESCO, 2015).

Semistructured Open-ended Questions:	Related Questions - IQ: 1-5; FGQ: 1-5	Probes (IQ = 1-5; FGQ=1-5): Why?	Supporting References
and improve the outcomes?			
2. Focus Group Questions			
FGQ 1: What are your thoughts? Will the stated outcomes (teaching and learning, school climate, and societal contribution) you experience help understand and apply effective leadership features?	Do you agree that your views will show your understanding and application of effective leadership styles, competencies, practices, capacities, and sustained strategies related to the outcomes?	Why do you agree or not? Give a reason for each of the outcomes? How will each result help you to understand and use the leadership features? What else?	(Gentry et al., 2014; Green, 2017; Ross and Cozzen, 2016; Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015).
FGQ 2: What other factors will you think will influence the leadership features to improve and influence the outcomes?	What are other factors (culture, gender, socioeconomic status, politics, location, timeframe, and abilities) likely to improve the outcomes?	Why and how will the factors contribute to effective leadership to improve the outcomes? What else?	(Fullan, 2014; Hallinger, 2018; Patton, 2015).
FGQ 3: Can you identify the internal stakeholders - individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations, among others liable to support and contribute towards effective leadership to influence and improve targeted outcomes?	Apart from the leader, can you please specify the internal school stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, community individuals, groups, and organizations) to influence and improve the outcomes?	Why and how are the identified internal contributors influence effective leadership outcomes? What else?	(Northouse, 2018; Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017; UNESCO, 2015; Wright, 2017). *(Table continues)*

Semistructured Open-ended Questions:	Related Questions - IQ: 1-5; FGQ: 1-5	Probes (IQ = 1-5; FGQ=1-5): Why?	Supporting References
FGQ 4: Please identify the external stakeholders - individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations, among others liable for contributing to effective leadership to influence the outcomes	Who are the present external stakeholders willing to collaborate and support leaders to understand and use effective leadership to influence and improve targeted outcomes?	Why and how do external stakeholders willing to contribute to effective leadership? What else?	(Miller & Hutton, 2014; Millar, 2018; Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017; Wright, 2017).
FGQ 5: What other insightful strategies related to the outcomes, other factors, internal and external contributors, and concerns and initiatives can influence and sustain effective leadership outcomes?	What are your views concerning the need to understand and use other factors to obtain positive results from good leadership? What other comments can you give on any aspect of school leadership?	How are your views influenced or restricted by these focus group questions? What else do you finally want to share?	(Ruben & Gigliotti, 2017; Wright, 2017).

There is the need to note that leaders participating in the individual interview session do not obligate them to participate in the focus group. I expect you to share other views through email and telephone communication. A report guided by the transcribed data from the Participant's Response Template (Appendix C) of your input should facilitate your further adjustments and ideas. The results of the specific contributions will be available but will remain secured for at least five years. Thank you for your timely and vital contributions.

Appendix C: Participants' Response Template (Interviews and Focus Group)

The sample template will first serve to obtain the study participants' conscious responses to the interview sessions with the three (3) leaders as the individual participants in each country (DOM, SLU, and SKN). The template will also help obtain the focus group participants' interactive and collaborative responses from the deliberations for each related question.

Semistructured Open-ended Questions (IQ = 1-5; FGQ = 1-5). Descriptive Responses (DR), Related Responses (RR), and Probing Responses (PR), of each leader.	Characteristics of Leadership Features
IQ 1: How will you describe your view of the styles and practices of effective leadership you will require to provide direction, collaboration, and support to influence and improve the teaching and learning, school climate, and societal development outcomes (with related and probing questions)? IQ 1.1: DR: RR 1.2: PR 1.3: Why? PR 1.4: How? PR 1.5: What else?	Leadership - Kind/ Styles *(Table continues)*

Semistructured Open-ended Questions (IQ = 1-5; FGQ = 1-5). Descriptive Responses (DR), Related Responses (RR), and Probing Responses (PR), of each leader.	Characteristics of Leadership Features
IQ 2: What valuable leadership competencies will you need to understand and use to influence and improve the outcomes? (with related and probing questions)?	Capabilities / Competencies
IQ 2.1: DR:	
RR 2.2:	
PR 2.3: Why?	
PR 2.4: How?	
PR 2.5: What else?	
IQ 3: What evaluated practices will you need to understand and use for effective leadership to enhance and improve the outcomes (related and probing questions)?	Practices
IQ 3.1: DR:	
RR 3.2:	
PR 3.3: Why?	
PR 3.4: How?	
PR 3.5: What else?	
IQ 4: How will you describe the leader's use of capacities (conditions) required to influence and improve effective leadership outcomes (with related and probing questions)?	Capacities - *(Table continues)*
IQ 4.1: DR:	
RR 4.2:	
PR 4.3: Why?	
PR 4.4: How?	

Semistructured Open-ended Questions (IQ = 1-5; FGQ = 1-5). Descriptive Responses (DR), Related Responses (RR), and Probing Responses (PR), of each leader.	Characteristics of Leadership Features

IQ 5: Please, can you describe the sustainable strategies related to the effective leadership (a) styles, (b) capabilities, (c) best practices, and (d)capacities that you think will influence and improve the outcomes (with related and probing questions)?

Sustainable Strategies -

PR 4.5: What else?

IQ 5.1: DR: (a)

　　　DR: (b)

　　DR: (c)

　　DR: (d)

RR 5.2:

PR 5.3: Why?

PR 5.4: How?

PR 5.5: What else?

B. Focus Group Questions (FGQs)

FGQ 1: What are your thoughts about effective leadership outcomes (teaching and learning, school climate, and societal contributions) you have experienced to understand and use effective leadership features?

Outcomes

FGQ 1.1: DR:

 RR 1.2:

PR 1.3: Why?

PR 1.4: How?

PR 1.5: What else?

(Table continues)

Semistructured Open-ended Questions (IQ = 1-5; FGQ = 1-5). Descriptive Responses (DR), Related Responses (RR), and Probing Responses (PR), of each leader.	Characteristics of Leadership Features
FGQ 2: What other factors or issues will you think will influence effective leadership to improve students' learning, school climate, and societal development outcomes (with related and probing questions)? FGQ 2.1: DR: RR 2.2: PR 2.3: Why? PR 2.4: How? PR 2.5: What else?	Other Factors
FGQ 3: Can you identify the internal stakeholder individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations, among others, liable to support and contribute towards effective leadership to influence and improve the outcomes to effect social change (with related and probing questions)? DR 3.1: Internal: RR 3.2: PR 3.3: Why? PR 3.4: How? PR 3.5: What else?	Support of other internal Stakeholders
FGQ 4: Please, can you identify the external stakeholders - individuals, groups, institutions, and organizations, among others liable to contribute to effective leadership to influence and improve the outcomes? DR 4.1:	*Support of other external Stakeholders (Table continues)*

Semistructured Open-ended Questions (IQ = 1-5; FGQ = 1-5). Descriptive Responses (DR), Related Responses (RR), and Probing Responses (PR), of each leader.	Characteristics of Leadership Features
RR 4.2:	
PR 4.3: Why?	
PR 4.4: How?	
PR 4.5: What else?	
FGQ 5: What other insights related to the outcomes, factors, contributors, concerns, and strategies can influence and sustain effective leadership outcomes?	Concerns and Future Strategies
DR 5.1:	
RR 5.2:	
PR 5.3: Why?	
PR 5.4: How?	
PR 5.5: What else?	

Note: The sign {…………} represented quotations.

Appendix D: Participants' Information Template

Section A. Personal Information

- Name / Surname: ....

- Country: ……………………….

- Age Range: (a) 21 – 30+ …; (b) 31 – 40+ …; (c) 41 – 50+ … (d) Over 51 ….

- Contact: Phone #: ……………… Email: ……………………………........

- Position: (a) Deputy Principal --- (b) Principal --- (c) Education Officer

Section B. Criteria for Selection

- Academic Degree Qualification: Bachelor …; Master ....; Ph.D. ……

- Professional leadership Qualification: (a) Certificate …………………………

  (b) Diploma ………………………….

  (c) Other(s) ……………………………

- Years Leadership Experience: (a) 3 – 5+…; (b) 6 – 9+…; (c) 10 + ….

Appendix E: Transcribed Archival Data

Areas of Focus	Notes of Document's Analysis and Sources
Length of Time	Continuous – before, during (May to July 2020), and after the data collection phase of the research study
Countries	Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and the OECS
Purpose of Documents' Analysis	The Archival Data served as the third explored component contributing to a fuller understanding and use of effective leadership to influence teaching and learning, school climate, and societal benefit outcomes at secondary schools.
1. Historical Background	Formal education to include the secondary level entrenched in OECS and Caribbean countries' sociocultural fabric as a strategy of the 1981 OECS agreement to develop human resources (Hinds, 2007). The establishment functioned as an Education Unit in 1991 (Miller et al., 1991). A reformed strategic approach comprised strengthening the region's education leadership to influence management, instructions, collaboration, and evaluation for student success and school accountability (Hinds, 2007; Miller et al., 2000).
2. Vision and Mission	"Every Learner Succeeds" at every stage to reach their full potential and be successful at school, in life, at work, and in society contributing to human resource development. Education within the OECS contributes to the socioeconomic advancement of the OECS through a quality education system that enables learners of all ages to reach their true potential (OECS, 2016). *(Table continues)*
3. Policy goals and operations mandated by CARICOM countries related to secondary education and training administered by CXC.	Restructure the school system to provide secondary education to all primary students. Provide five years of secondary schooling after the primary level. Reconceptualize secondary education's nature, form, and content showing CXC's mandates from the CARICOM countries specific to Strategies 32 and 33. Promote problem-solving, creativity and imagination, independent judgment, and generic technical and interpersonal skills. (Griffith, 2009; Miller et al., 2000). *(Table Continues)*

4. Mandated CARICOM goals and operations related to secondary school outcomes	Improve quality accountability and management.
	Improve the quality of teaching and learning operations
	Facilitate policy goals, operational decisions, processes, and practices through CXC as the authorities mandate.
	Facilitate the development of a plan with goals and operations.
	Deliver curriculum programs for assessments and evaluation to inform current and future decisions and practices (OECS, 2016). *s)*
5. Responsibilities of Secondary Schools Leaders	Facilitate the development of qualified, professional, and experienced leaders
	Collaborate with, support, and involve others for contributions to augment strategies and initiatives
	Facilitate policy goals and operational decisions based on credible evidence.
	Facilitate the development of a plan with goals and operations for implementation and evaluation.
	Manage and initiate the adequate and appropriate resource capacities (human, finance, physical, material).
	Facilitate learners' success for further education and training and to access jobs and opportunities
	Facilitate leadership styles that promote monitoring and evaluation with set criteria and standards to adjust operations.
	Facilitate behavioral guidance and counseling, social health, and learners' welfare.
	Recommend and facilitate recruitment, incentives, and dismissal decisions following the documented Ministry of Education Legislation (Dominica Education Act, 1997).
6. CXC Achievement	*Note*. Chapter 5: Systems Output Table 5.9: Achievement Trends in at least 5 CSEC Subjects, 2015-2019 (OECS, 2021).
7. OECS COVID – 19 Variant strategies	Harmonize leadership policy and operation responses to COVID – 19. Accommodate a supportive digital education strategy to include professional leadership development and training, plans, operations, monitoring, and evaluation.

Appendix F: Sample of a Participant's Original and Transcribed Responses

F (1). Participant's Data Related to Interview Question Responses

This email aims to simplify the process to solicit **your leadership views** as a critical component of my Research Study approved by your Chief Education Officer (CEO). The attached information should also guide your responses related to **effective leadership to influence teaching and learning (T&L), school climate (SC), and societal benefit (SB) outcomes in Secondary Schools**. **Would you please fill in the Responses** related to **the Participant's Data (1.0) and Interview Questions (2.0) and return them urgently through email by Friday, July 31, 2020.**

1.0 Data relating to the Research Participant's Information. What is your:
1.1 Age Range: (a) 21 to 30 ---- (b) 31 to 40 ---- (c) 41 to 50 ---- (d) Over 51 -√---
1.2 Academic Qualification (s): (a) Bachelor ---- (b) Masters ---- (c) Ph.D. -√---
1.3 Professional Training: (a) Certificate -√--- (b) Diploma ---- (c) Other –Teacher Training-and Master's Degree in Educational Leadership-
1.4 Years of Leadership and or Supervisory Experience: (a) 3 to 5---- (b) 6 to 10 ----
    (c) Over 10 --√--.
2.0 Your Responses related to the five interview Questions (IQs)
2.1 What Leadership Style (s) do you prefer or practice to provide direction, collaboration, and support to influence the outcomes?
(a) Integrate, different related to the situations, collaborative, distributive, directing, supporting, integrated, influencing. Situational
 (b) Instructing, directing, telling, coaching, influencing…Instructional*.*
 (c) Collaborating, distributive leadership, involving and contributing to others, democratic actions. Distributive leadership,
(d) Transforming: initiating, charisma, directing, leading, and influencing others
(f) Other Comments (Why / How/What else?) The styles of the leaders will depend on the situation that the leader is encountering. Different strokes for different folks to meet set goals, especially to enhance students' learning.
 2.2 What Leadership Capabilities / Competencies do you need to influence and improve the outcomes?
 (a)Teaching / Learning (Professional knowledge, skillsets, Personal behaviors, Teacher Preparedness, Data management, and Decision making and negotiation skills
 (b)School Climate**…**Social skills Student motivation, Personal and social behaviors, Skillsets.
 (c)Societal Benefit - Skillsets, personal behaviors, social skills, role models, attributes, disposition, commitment and motivation, beliefs, values, policy goals, and operations.

(d) Others –The leader's ability to bridge the school and the community gap. Invitation for persons in the community to volunteer to assist in pertinent programs within the school. Volunteerism has not taken root in educational institutions.
(e) Other Comments (Why / How/ What else) Showing and expressing appreciation to community members at the schools' graduation ceremonies. We must, for example, influence others by demonstrating our good behaviors to help with their attitudes. We must develop and benefit from soft personal skills and values, think for ourselves, and be creative when faced with a problem.

2.3 What are the tested practices used to enhance and improve the outcomes?

(a)Teaching and Learning **–** Goal setting, operational methods, planning, delivery, assessment, and professional development**.**
 (b) School Climate - Operational methods, competencies, styles of leadership, school spirit, or morale.
(c) Societal benefits – Youth group groups, clubs, and empowerment …become more competitive and improve workforce, competencies, and leadership styles.
*(d) Other Comments (Why / How/What else?) I believe having certain clubs within society can help benefit society. These clubs encourage the development of skills, discipline, and loyalty in the persons' lives. We must use our behavioral skills and values to help learners think for themselves and even be creative when faced with a problem***.**

2.4 What are the capacities/conditions required to influence and improve the outcomes?

(a) Teaching/learning: Resources, government policies, goals, structures, processes, operations, actions, period, teacher training, personal attributes, dispositions.

(b) School climate: Interpersonal relationships, structures and processes, behaviors

c) Societal benefits: Improved socioeconomic condition, developed soft skills in students, developed critical thinkers, creative and innovative thinkers, and developed entrepreneurial skills.

(d) *Others ………………………………………………………..*

(d) Other Comments (Why / How) Students are not all academically inclined. Therefore, there must be a revised curriculum that will cater to the needs of all students. That's why there are so many drop-outs from the original cohort of students that entered the first year of high school.

2.5 What strategies are related to the leadership styles, capabilities, practices, and capacities necessary to sustain effective leadership outcomes?

(a) Revise policies and goals, standards, criteria, attention to diversity, equity, justice
(b) Plan operations, structures, processes, resources, and curriculum programs

(c) Help teachers to deliver monitor programs for learners, school, and community

(d) Evaluate all aspects of the leadership using evidence with set criteria and standards to plan goals, operations, processes, programs, behaviors, resources, and outcomes.

(e) Other Comments (Why / How /What else?) I have a vision for the organization and turn innovative ideas into reality. Leaders must communicate the concept to "buy-in" from key individuals. The leader must possess the ability to get the team members' attention to accomplish the assigned tasks. The leaders must focus on all stakeholders' behavioral attributes and attitudes/ dispositions. Why? The leader needs to know how the stakeholders can contribute toward meeting the outcomes. "I believe we, the school leaders, must consider using all contributing stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions." 'Why? "We need to learn from and share with other stakeholders. For example, one of our teachers specializes in math and has a passion for sharing this expertise. Evidence from his initiative shows that all our math teachers and students benefited, revealing improved results."

I will respond to any required clarification or concerns that may surface. Thanks for your contribution.

Finan H. Sabaroche – finan.sabaroche@waldenu.edu (17676154345/12816914089)

F (2). Participants' Data Related to Focus Group Question Responses

This email aims to simplify the process to solicit ***your leadership views*** as a critical component of my Research Study approved by your Chief Education Officer (CEO). Information provided should guide your responses related to effective leadership to influence teaching and learning (T&L), school climate (SC), and societal benefit (SB) outcomes for Secondary Schools. Please confirm your consensus views for the Focus Group Questions to return urgently by email within 24 hours.
Your consensus Responses are related to the five Focus Group Questions (FGQs)

1.0 Do the Outcomes (Teaching and learning-T&L; School Climate -SC; Societal Benefits SB) influenced by the useful leadership features (Styles, Competencies, Practices, Capacities, and Strategies)?

(a) All the outcomes influence T&L**… (except: ……………………**

(b) all the outcomes influence SC **(except………………….**

(c) All the outcomes influence SB **(except…………………**

(d) Exceptions: The features and other factors like credible evidence for

decisions, technology, stakeholders, and available resources will influence the outcomes.

(e) *Other Comments (Why / How/What else)? There is a need for these other factors to address the challenges of inequalities, diversity, fair treatment, and environmental conditions by involving and soliciting all stakeholders' contributions.*

2.0 **What other factors or issues (other than the features) can influence effective leadership to improve the outcomes?**

(a) Government policies and goals.

(b) Technology and communication resources

(c) Economic and social status
(d) Culture and behaviors
(e) Stakeholders' involvement and contributions

(f) **Others:** Political Interference, commitment, motivation

(g) **Other Comments (Why / How/What else)**? "Some leaders experience victimization due to government decisions without giving ample time to make a lasting impact on their leadership position."

"The age and health status of the leader can affect how he or she provides effective leadership." "A novice or an aged leader (even if experienced) can result in what is termed "a generational gap, and that may affect the expected results."

3.0 Can you identify the Internal Stakeholders contributing to effective leadership to influence the outcomes?

*(a)*Ministry of Education personnel
(b) Teaching and administration staff
(c) Education Officers and supervisors
(d) Colleagues from other schools, districts, and countries.
(e) Others: Chief Education Officer
(f) Other Comments (Why / How/ What else?) The Minister of Education can also play a vital role in supporting the leader's work regardless of party politics.
4.0 Can you identify the External Stakeholders contributing to effective leadership to influence the outcomes?
(a) Individual involvement
(b Parental and community involvement
(c) … NGO
(d) Private Businesses

(e)Others: Countries, Regional Bodies (OECS, CARICOM, CXC, CANTA, Caribbean Development Bank), international agencies (UNESCO, World Bank, OAS).
(f) Other Comments (Why / How/ What else?) The lack of parental involvement has affected the students' performance and the leader's effectiveness. It can also result in gang culture as parental figures are absent, especially the "father figure."

5.0 What insightful views related to strategies are necessary to sustain the outcomes?
(a) Different insights, credible information, and tested practices for decisions.
(b) Technological knowledge, skills, and experiences

(c) Behaviors, management, motivation, commitment, attitudes, dispositions
(d) Cooperation to plan, deliver, and evaluate using criteria and standards
(e) Other Comments (Why / How /What Else?) ...Differentiated Instruction. Students have different learning styles. Plans required development to cater to the different learning styles of students. This action requires first-hand knowledge of one's students and catering to their individual needs.
We do not have the latitude to deviate from the mandated CXC regional program. Over the years, less than 50% of our graduating students failed to obtain the mandated five subject passes to higher education or get a decent job. **What do you suggest?** *I would change the policy goals and revise the curriculum program and assessment. The initiative must suit learners' interests and align with present and future economic and service demands. But again, we must make adequate and appropriate resources available given these economic and social periods.*

I will respond to any clarification or concerns that may surface. Thanks for your contribution.

Finan H. Sabaroche: finan.sabaroche@waldenu.edu Ph. 17676154345/12816914089

Appendix G: Transcribed Sample Responses

G (1). Responses Related to Interview Questions and Transcribed Ideas

1.0 What leadership style (s) and actions do you prefer or practice to provide direction, collaboration, and support to influence the outcomes?

1.1 leading related to situations, collaborative, distributive, directing, supporting, integrating, differentiating, influencing.

1.2 Instructing, directing, telling, coaching. influencing

1.3 Collaborating, distributive leadership, involving others, stakeholders' contributions, and democratic actions.

1.4 Transforming, using initiative, charisma, directing, leading, and influencing others

1.5 Servant style: Pleasing others. allowing others to lead

1.6 Other comments (Why / How/What else?) "The leadership styles and actions will depend on the leader's situation. Different strokes for different folks to meet set goals, especially to enhance students' learning."

2.0 What leadership capabilities/competencies do you need to influence and improve the outcomes?

2.1 Teaching & learning, professional knowledge, skillsets, personal behaviors, teacher preparedness, data management, decision making, negotiation skills

2.2 School climate, social skills, student motivation, personal behaviors, skillsets

2.3 Societal benefit, personal behaviors, social skills, knowledge, role model, attributes, disposition, commitment and motivation, beliefs, values, policy goals, and operations.

2.4 Others: We must bridge the school, community, and society gap by involving others to contribute to programs and other school activities. Volunteerism requires propagating at educational institutions.

2.5 Other comments (Why / How? /What else) 1. Showing and expressing appreciation to community members at the schools' graduation ceremonies. 2. We must, for example, influence others by sharing our attributes to relate and help with their dispositions. When prompted, the participant added, "We must develop and benefit from soft personal skills and values, think for ourselves, and even be creative when faced with a problem."

3.0 What are the tested practices needed for use to improve the outcomes?

3.1 Teaching and learning, goal setting, operational methods, planning, delivery, assessment, monitoring, professional development.

3.2 School climate, operational methods, competencies, styles of leadership, school spirit, and morale.

3.3 Societal benefits, youth groups, other groups, clubs, and empowerment become more competitive and improve workforce, competencies, and leadership styles.

3.4 Other comments (Why / How/ What else)? I believe having individual clubs within society can significantly benefit communities. These clubs encourage the development of skills, discipline, and loyalty in the persons' lives. We must use our behavioral skills and values to help learners think for themselves and even be creative when faced with a problem.

4.0 What are the capacities and conditions required to influence and improve the outcomes?

4.1 Teaching and learning, resources, government policies, goals, structures, processes, operations, actions, timeframe, teacher training, personal attributes, dispositions.

4.2 School climate: Interpersonal relationships, structures, processes, behaviors.

 4.3 Societal benefits: Improved socioeconomic condition, soft skills development, critical thinking, creative and innovative thinking, and entrepreneurial skills.

4.4 Other comments (Why / How/What else)? Students are not all academically inclined. Therefore, a revised curriculum needs support with resources and astute leaders to cater to all students' needs. Why? Students drop out, and others fall short of CXC performance expectations from the initial cohort of students entering our high schools' first year."

5.0 What are the strategies related to the leadership styles, capabilities, practices, and capacities necessary to sustain effective leadership outcomes?

5.1 Revising policies and goals, standards, criteria, attention to diversity, equity, justice
5.2 Planning of operational structures, processes, resources, and curriculum programs

5.3 Facilitating delivery, monitoring, and program activities for learning, school, and societal benefits
5.4 Evaluation of all aspects of the leadership features (as a strategy) utilizing evidence with set criteria and standards for plans, goals, operations, processes, programs, behaviors, resources, and outcomes.
5.5 Other comments (Why / How /What else?). I have a vision for the organization and turn innovative ideas into reality. Leaders must communicate the concept to "buy-in" from key individuals. The leader must possess the ability to get the team members' attention to accomplish the assigned tasks. The leaders must focus on all stakeholders' behavioral attributes and attitudes/ dispositions. Why? The leader needs to know how the stakeholders can contribute toward meeting the outcomes. "I believe we, the school leaders, must consider using all contributing stakeholders' behavioral attributes and

dispositions." 'Why? "We need to know how to maximize the contributions of others. For example, my colleague specialized in setting CXC learning standards and has a passion (a disposition) for sharing this expertise (an attribute) with other educators."

G (2). Responses Related to Focus Group Questions and Transcribed Ideas

1.0 Do the outcomes (Teaching & Learning (T&L), School Climate (SC), and Societal Benefits (SB) influenced by the identified leadership features (styles, competencies, practices, capacities, and strategies)?

1.1 T&L influenced by all the features

1.2 SC influenced by all the features

1.3 SB influenced by all the features

1.4 Exceptions: The features, related factors, and credible evidence for decisions, technology, stakeholders, and available resources will also impact the outcomes.

1.5 Other comments (Why / How/What else)? There is a need for these other factors to address the challenges of inequalities, diversity, fair treatment, and environmental conditions by involving and soliciting all stakeholders' contributions.

2.0 What other factors or issues (other than the features) can influence effective leadership to improve the outcomes?

2.1 Government policies and goals.

2.2 Technological and communication resources

2.3 Economic and social status

2.4 Cultural attributes and attitudinal behaviors

2.5 Stakeholders' involvement and contributions

2.6 Others: Political interference, commitment, motivation

2.7 Other comments (Why / How/What else)? "Some leaders experience victimization due to government decisions affecting transfers that limited time to make an impact."

"The age and health status of the leader can affect how he or she provides effective leadership." "A novice or an aged leader (even if experienced) can result in "a generational gap, and that may affect the expected results."

 3.0 Can you identify the internal stakeholders other than the leaders contributing to effective leadership to influence the outcomes?

3.1 Ministry of education personnel3.2 The Teaching and administrative Staff

3.3 Education officers and supervisors

3.4 Colleagues from other schools, districts, and countries.

3.5 Others: Chief education officer

3.6 Other comments (Why / How/What else)? The Minister of Education can also play a vital role since such persons support the leader's work regardless of party politics.

4.0 Can you identify the external stakeholders contributing to effective leadership to influence the outcomes?4.1 Individual stakeholders.

4.2 Parental and community involvement.

4.3 Other government ministries, nongovernment organizations, and agencies.

4.4 Private businesses and organizations.

4.5 Others: Countries, regional bodies (OECS, CARICOM, CXC, CANTA, Caribbean Development Bank), and international agencies (UNESCO, World Bank, OAS).

4.6 Other comments (Why / How /what else?). The lack of parental involvement has affected the students' performance and, hence, the leader's effectiveness. It can also result in gang culture as parental neglect and absenteeism, especially the "father figure."

5.0 What insightful views related to strategies are necessary to sustain the outcomes?

5.1 Differentiated insights, credible information, and tested practices to guide decisions.

5.2 Technological knowledge, skills, and required experiences to improve outcomes

5.3 Behaviors associated with motivation, commitment, satisfaction, and attributes. dispositions

5.4 Cooperation to plan, deliver, and evaluate using set criteria and standards.

5.5 Other comments (Why / How /What else?) There is a constant need to facilitate different student-centered learning instructions. Students have different learning styles. Set as a priority for the development of plans to cater to the different learning styles of students. These strategies require first-hand knowledge of one's students and cater to their individual needs. We do not have the latitude to deviate from the mandated CXC regional program. Over the years, less than 50% of our graduating students failed to obtain the mandated five subject passes to higher education or get a decent job. 'What do you suggest?' I would change the policy goals and revise the curriculum program and assessment. The initiative must suit learners' interests and align with present and future economic and service demands. But again, we require adequate and appropriate resources urgently, given these challenging economic and social periods.

Appendix H: Initial Codes from Data Transcripts

Perceptions to:	Groups of Initial Codes from Data Transcripts
Understand and use leadership styles to influence the outcomes	Instructing, contributing, situational style, transforming, directing, displaying charisma, differentiating, adapting to situations, collaborating, distributing, responsibilities, directing, supporting, stakeholders, influencing, and integrating.
	Democratic actions motivate, collaborate, distribute tasks, support stakeholders, encourage commitment, contribute, and influence others.
	Transforming, supportive, leading, using charisma, directing, motivating, influencing, innovative.
	Instructing, leading, giving directions, managing, autocratic actions, guiding, telling, coaching, integrating, and influencing.
	Serving others, sharing responsibilities, accepting competencies and contributions, tolerating others, accommodating stakeholders, and allowing others to lead.
Understand and use Leadership capabilities to influence the outcomes	Professional knowledge, strengths and weakness, development, training needs, stakeholders, influencing.
	Skillset, decisions, planning, negotiating, communicating, listening, managing, coaching, teaching, technology delivery, listening, evaluating, influencing, evidence.
	Behaviors, attributes, stakeholders, values, beliefs, commitment, motivation, adaptability, dispositions, communication, and evidence.
	Experiences, operations, methods, actions, monitoring, planning, delivery, evaluation, criteria, standards, indicators, evidence, skills, and processes *(Table continues)*

Perceptions to:	Groups of Initial Codes from Data Transcripts
Understand and use leadership best practices to influence the outcomes	Planning, policies, goals, operations, actions, processes, technologies, timeframe, stakeholders, development, milestones, criteria, evidence, standards, and indicators.
	Implementing and setting goals, program preparations, operational methods and tasks, monitoring, timeframe, targets, criteria and standards, indicators, and technologies.
	Assess, and evaluate goals, programs, operations, resources, processes, tasks, activities, applications, learning, benefits, challenges, criteria and standards, insights, behaviors, listening, adapting, motivating, commitment, flexibility, attributes, attitudes, beliefs, dispositions, stakeholders, and contributions.
Understand and use leadership capacities and conditions to influence the outcomes	Policy goals, operations, methods, and procedures. Programs, applications, plan, deliver, evaluate, assess, tasks, objectives, criteria and standards, milestones, timeframe.
	Resources, appropriate and adequate, programs, stakeholders, functioning, structures, physical, facilities, material needs, technologies, and communication.
	Behaviors, influencing, stakeholders, attributes, dispositions, collaborations, knowledge, beliefs, values, social, cultural, economic status, dispositions, listening, adapting, flexibility, motivation, commitment, and contributions.
Understand and use sustained leadership strategies related to the features to influence the outcomes	Evidence, styles, situational, distributive, transforming, directing, integrated, differentiating.
	Capabilities, professional knowledge, competencies, critical thinking skills, experiences, behaviors, attributes, and dispositions.
	Practices, planning, goals, operations, processes, delivering, monitoring, and evaluating.
	Capacities, goals, operations, resources, behaviors, initiatives, technologies, innovations, virtual communication, and evidence.

Notes. Linked coded words and phrases.

Appendix I: Features, Codes (Axial Stage) and *Linked Categories*

Features	Groups of Codes of Leadership Features	Linked Categories
Understanding and utilizing leadership styles	Instructing, transforming, differentiating, integrating for situations, collaborating, democratic actions, supporting, influencing.	Understand and utilize appropriate leadership styles
	Democratic actions, collaborating, distributing tasks, supporting stakeholders, encouraging, contributing, and influencing.	Understand and use democratic style
	Transforming supportive, leading, charisma, directing, motivating, influencing, innovative processes and actions.	Understand and use transformational style
	Instructing, leading, directing, managing, telling autocratic actions, guiding, coaching, influencing.	Understand and use instructional style
Understanding utilizing leadership capabilities	Professional knowledge, strengths and weaknesses, development, training needs, stakeholders, understanding and utilizing, influencing.	Understand, develop, and use professional knowledge
	Skillset, decisions, planning, negotiating, communicating, listening, managing, coaching, teaching, technologies, delivery, evaluating, influencing.	Understand and utilize skillset intelligence
	Behaviors, attributes, stakeholders, values, beliefs, social, commitment, motivation, listening, competencies, flexibility, adaptability, dispositions, psychological, status, communication, and emotional.	Understand and apply behavioral attributes and dispositions
	Experiences, operations, methods, actions, monitoring, planning, delivery, evaluating, criteria, standards, indicators, evidence, skills, and processes.	Understand and utilize operational experiences
Understanding utilizing best practices	Planning, policies, goals, operations, actions, processes, technologies, timeframe, stakeholders, development, milestones, criteria, and standards.	Planning the use of goals and operations *(Table continues)*

	Setting and implementing goals, preparations, operational methods and tasks, monitoring, timeframe, targets, criteria, and standards.	Using operational processes and practices
	Evaluating goals, programs, operations, monitoring, resources, processes, tasks, applications, benefits, challenges, criteria, standards, and insights.	Monitoring / evaluating goals and operations.
	Behaviors, listening, adapting, motivating, commitment, flexibility, attributes, beliefs, dispositions, stakeholders, and contributions.	Using attribute and disposition behaviors
Understanding utilizing capacities	Policy goals, operations, methods, programs, applications, plan, deliver, evaluate, tasks, criteria and standards, milestones, and timeframe.	Using policy goals and operations
	Resources, appropriate and adequate programs, stakeholders, functional structures, physical facilities, material needs, technologies, and communication.	Using adequate and appropriate resources
	Behaviors, stakeholders, attributes, dispositions, attributes, knowledge, beliefs, values, social, cultural, and economic status, listening, flexibility, motivation, benefits, commitment, listening, and contributions.	Using behavioral attributes and dispositions
Understanding utilizing strategies	Styles, situational, distributive, transforming, directing, integrated, differentiating, evidence. Professional knowledge competencies, experiences, skills, behaviors, attributes, dispositions, and evidence. Practices, planning, goals, operations, processes, delivering, monitoring, evaluating, and evidence. Utilizing capacities, goals, operations, resources, behaviors, evidence, timeframe behaviors, attributes, stakeholders, values, beliefs, social, commitment, motivation, listening, competencies, flexibility, adaptability, dispositions, psychological, status, communication, and emotion.	Utilizing varied styles Utilizing capability characteristics Using evidence-based practices Using adequate and appropriate capacities Using behavioral attributes and dispositions

Appendix J: Categories and Themes of Leadership Features with Quotations

Features of Leadership	Categories Linked to Leadership Features	Themes linked to Categories	*Related Quotations*
Styles	*Understanding and using:* Appropriate styles Democratic style Transformational style Instructional style	Understanding and utilizing integrated and differentiated situational leadership styles	*I believe the leadership style will depend on the situation that I encounter. Different strokes for different folks to meet the set goals and operations.*
Capabilities	Developing and using Professional knowledge Using skillset intelligence Using behavioral attributes & dispositions. Using experiences of stakeholders.	Develop and utilize professional knowledge, skillsets, behaviors, and operational experiences	*We must use our behavioral skills and values to help learners think for themselves and be creative when facing a problem.* *We must bridge the school, community, and society gap by involving other stakeholders to contribute to programs and other school activities. As the saying goes, knowledge does not stay in one head.*
Best Practices	Planning goals/operations Utilizing the operational processes and practices Monitoring / evaluating goals and operations. Using attributes and dispositions.	Utilize tested and best practices to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate goals and operations	*The planning, delivery, and evaluation of program activities at the school these days are particularly challenging. We, including the leaders, teachers, students, and staff members, had to learn and adjust to virtual practices. The travel and distancing restrictions due to COVID – 19 influenced our behavior to adjust to achieve our goals. Apart from the related challenges, this virtual initiative represents a behavioral strategy with practical and long-term positive outcomes.*
Capacities	Using policy goals and operations Using adequate and appropriate resources	Utilizing adequate and appropriate capacities with a set timeframe to	*We must revise the curriculum with supportive resources and guidance based on sound evidence. Students continued to fail CXC exams and often dropped out of school.* *(Table continues)*

Features of Leadership	Categories Linked to Leadership Features	Themes linked to Categories	*Related Quotations*
	Using behavioral attributes and dispositions	help influence the outcomes	*I believe we, the school leaders, must consider using all contributing stakeholders' behavioral attributes and dispositions.*
Strategies	Utilizing varied styles Utilizing capabilities Using tested practices Using adequate and appropriate capacities Using behavioral attributes and dispositions	Understanding and using evidence-based strategies to strengthen and sustain the leadership features	

Appendix K: Participant's Frequency Counts Related to Categories

No	Categories - Features 1-5; Factors – 6: P1-P9 (1)	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	Total
1.1	*Styles*: Using integrated and differentiated situational style	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
1.2	Distributive / democratic style	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	8
1.3	Transformational style	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
1.4	Instructional style	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
1.5	*Servant leadership style (2)*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*2*
2.1	*Capabilities*: Using knowledge	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
2.2	Behaviors: Attribute/disposition	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
2.3	Skillset competencies	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
2.4	Practical experiences	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
3.1	*Best Practices:* Planning	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
3.2	Delivery	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
3.3	Monitoring & evaluation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
4.1	*Capacities: Policy goals (2)*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*1*	*4*
4.2	*Operations: Processes/Actions (2)*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*0*	*1*	*4*
4.3	Appropriate resources	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
4.4	Behavioral characteristics	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
5.1	*Strategies:* Use of evidence	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
5.2	Insights linked to features	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
5.3	Technology & Communication	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
6.1	*Factors:* Features to outcomes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
6.2	Socioeconomic, cultural status	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
6.3	Internal stakeholders	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
6.4	External stakeholders	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
6.5	**Social justice, diversity, equity (2)**	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	4

Notes. (1) P1 – P9: Deputy principals; Principals; Education officers

P1 - P3: Deputy principals; P4 – P6: Principals; P7 – P9: Education officers.

(2) Discrepant cases (1.5; 4.1; 4.2; 6.5).