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Perceptions of Principal Leadership Skills and Knowledge Necessary to Impact Student Achievement

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Walden University

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Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Ezra Jonah Greene

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

Perceptions of Principal Leadership Skills and Knowledge Necessary to Impact Student

Achievement

by

Ezra Jonah Greene

MA, Walden University, 2013

BS, Skidmore College, 2004

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2024

Abstract

The problem is that secondary school students within an education system in a small island Caribbean state are not performing at the required academic standard. The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of the Ministry of Education and Public Service Commission regarding the recruitment and selection of prospective principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement within a local education system. The conceptual framework was guided by principles embedded in Dickinson's recruitment and selection model. The research question asked how the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission perceived the selection and recruitment of principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement. A basic qualitative study using semistructured, open-ended questions from 10 participants were thematically analyzed. Three emergent themes were derived: (a) a need to build a well-defined and rigorous recruitment and selection process, (b) candidate development as a precursor to selection, and (c) fair assessment of candidates seeking the principalship. Participants in the research suggested the need for continuous training for those who recruit and select principals. Therefore, a key recommendation was a 4-day transformative professional development with a one-day yearly professional development, to train principal supervisors to develop a prospective principal core. The study has the potential to effect positive social change by informing policy concerning the way prospective principals are recruited and selected. It fills a gap in practice and research on how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge to improve student achievement within the education system under review or similar school systems.

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Dedication

My journey has been a long yet fruitful endeavour. I dedicate my success to my mom who always demanded excellence. I dedicate my success to my mentor and husband, for his inspiration and for being an exceptional role model of what success should look like. I further dedicate my success to my children for their persistent encouragement. Finally, I dedicate this accomplishment to Dr. Austin MMM Josiah who even through his last days, was instrumental in supporting the completion of my thesis. I will forever miss you.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem is that little is understood about how the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission officials perceive how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement. The basic standards for assessing an acceptable academic performance within a small island Caribbean state under study is five General or Technical Proficiency Caribbean Examination Council (CXC), Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) subjects, including Mathematics and English Language Grades 1, 2 or 3 (CXC Local Registrar, Ministry of Education, Personal Communication, February 1, 2023). The performance of schools, using this basic standard, needs improvement (Assistant Director of Education, Measurement & Evaluation, personal communication, February 1, 2023). As indicated in Table 1, in the study site under review, from 2018 to 2022, student performance using the CXC/CSEC basic requirement did not surpass 34%. There was a 5% increase in performance from 2018 to 2019, and no available data was recorded in 2020 (COVID-19 year); however, the table reflects a decrease in performance between 2019 and 2021 (from 34% to 28.8%) and in 2022, 19.2% of the population earned the basic standard.

Table 1

School Performance – 5 or more CXC/CSEC subjects including Mathematics and English Grades 1, 2, and 3

Year	Percentage pass
2018	29
2019	34
2020	No available data/Covid year
2021	28.8
2022	19.2

Note. Extracted from Ministry of Education, Sports and Creative Industries Measurement and Evaluation Unit CXC/CSEC Preliminary Results (2018-2022).

The literature indicates principal selection as the most important task administrators face due to the link between students' achievement and the principal's role in influencing school success (Tingle et al., 2019). Principals are "key enablers" of school improvements (Cox & Mullen, 2022; Rangel, 2018; UNESCO, 2020; Yang et al., 2021, p. 1). Principals improve student achievement by developing positive school culture, which impacts student achievement (Wallin et al., 2019). School leadership directly influences a school's academic capacity (Thessin & Louis, 2019; Buckman et al., 2018; Weissblueth & Lindor, 2020). The instructional tasks assigned to principals impact classroom instruction and academic capacity and growth (Bauer & Silver, 2018). Principal instructional leadership and how closely it is aligned to classroom instruction influence student achievement but only when that leadership is positively applied (Cox & Mullen, 2022). Successful principals possess multiple skills and knowledge applicable to the principalship role, some of which are key fundamental skills (Bower et al., 2018; Brymer et al., 2019). Principals who do not possess the specific skills for that leadership

role can have a negative impact on school improvement and student achievement (Weiner & Holder, 2019). Globally low student achievement is symptomatic of ineffective principal leadership and management (Mestry, 2017).

The role of school districts in principal selection is critical to improving and sustaining academic performance (Doneley et al., 2018). When close attention is paid to the selective hiring of principals, students and schools benefit (Gates et al., 2019; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). But calls for principals from posted advertisements for vacancies have been oversubscribed, and the retention rate for school principals is above 95% (Director of Education, Personal Communication, February 6, 2023). The literature suggests that the major issues confronting administrators when filling vacant school principal positions include recruitment practices, leadership capacity, and applicants' lack of skillsets for the principalship (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Tingle et al., 2019). Considering the significance of student achievement and its link to principal leadership, a gap in practice suggests that filling principal positions is difficult, but this issue is not new, nor is it limited to small school systems (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Dicke et al., 2018).

Despite significant investments in emerging economies specifically developing countries, public school principal learner performance rates are low (Mestry, 2017). Candidate recruitment and selection within the larger educational situation is difficult (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Lee & Mao, 2023; Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Wallin et al., 2019). The authors of the Declaration of Education in highlighting the sustainable development goals (SDGs) for education indicated a need for effective principal recruitment (Želvys & Esenova, 2019). Education leaders must pay attention to the need to attract suitable

principal candidates through the recruitment practice of administrators (Thessin & Louis, 2019; Torrence & Connelly, 2019). The qualifications, experience, fit, ability, and cognitive, interpersonal, business, and strategic skills of prospective applicants to the principalship are critical to principal selection (Aravena, 2020; Grissom et al., 2019; Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Weiner & Holder, 2019).

Rationale

Students within an education system in a Caribbean state, which is the subject of this study, are not performing at the basic standard as set by the CXC. Principal leadership and performance are tied to student achievement (Çetin et al., 2021; Director of Education, personal communication, February 18, 2023). Yet the basic requirements for the principalship do not list leadership credentials as a prerequisite (Education Officer, personal communication, February 6, 2023). In education systems that do not require educational leadership certification, cluster managers list “fundamental academic understanding and leadership” as vital to student academic achievement and performance (Tingle et al., 2019, p. 8). The school system as a result has a large team of principals that are English majors, information technology specialists, and mathematicians with no educational leadership credentials (Education Officer, personal communication, January 8, 2023). Consequently, their leadership is based on trial and error and on-the-job experience (Education Officer, personal communication, January 8, 2023). In one education system in which no leadership prerequisites are required of principal candidates, a continuous decline in academic performance occurred due to principals’ lack of training from an appropriate Principal Preparation Programme (PPP) or another

certificate program (Naidoo, 2019). The research literature corroborates the views of educators in the local setting that principals' practices impact student achievement (Cox & Mullen, 2022; Tingle et al., 2019; Weissblueth & Linder, 2020), and the selection of effective principals reduces gaps in knowledge and improves student achievement (Buckman et al., 2018; Doneley et al., 2018). The purpose of this basic qualitative study was therefore to explore how the Ministry of Education and Public Service Commission perceives how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement within a local public school system within a small island Caribbean state.

Definition of Terms

Calling: A prospective principal's drive toward the career path of principalship as this form of work is idealized and intrinsically motivating (Swen, 2020).

Fit: A principal candidate's concurrence with the vision and goals of a school that they are employed within. A fit candidate has the most suitable standard and quality for the job of principalship (Buckman et al., 2018).

Principal pipeline: Talent management activities to include preparation programs, recruitment practices, induction, evaluation, support, and leadership development that a school district uses to prepare prospective candidates for the principalship (Gates et al., 2019; Harris, 2020; Harris & Jones, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020).

Self-efficacy: Estimation or assessment of an individual's self-perceived capacity to execute behavior by organizing and implementing actions to produce a desired outcome or influence change (Bandura, 1997; McBrayer et al., 2018; Skaalvik, 2020).

Succession planning: A deliberate effort to develop human capital for future advancement that could ensure leadership continuity in identified organizational positions (Abdellah, 2021).

Significance of the Study

Students within the education system under review are not performing at the required standard. Principal quality is perceived to improve student achievement (Grissom et al., 2018; Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Tingle et al., 2019). However, filling principal positions is difficult (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Buckman et al., 2018; James et al., 2019). The recruitment and hiring process is diverse and determined through an assessment of the best fit (Buckman et al., 2018). Extensive research has not been conducted on best practices specific to the principalship recruitment and selection process, but research has concentrated on the supply of applicants (James et al., 2019). An assessment of the knowledge of a candidate's leadership skills and abilities is needed, as little is known about how this goal is achieved through the hiring process (Buckman et al., 2018). Selection of principals is tied to the selection team's perception of principal effectiveness, the persona of each candidate, and how that aligns with the perceived characteristics of best fit (Bailey & Quall, 2018). That decision is guided by the expertise of the team or selecting an individual's understanding of the needs of the school and whether they can judge the true competency and skill of each candidate during the interview process or through candidate artifact assessment (Bailey & Quall, 2018). The competencies and expertise of the selection committee and their self-efficacy during the process can impact best-fit selection (James et al., 2019). Additionally, the selection

committee's ability to understand each learning environment specifically to determine fit could be problematic (James et al., 2019). But evaluation of fit is subjective (Buckman et al., 2018), and filling principal positions is always different for each vacancy as the fit must be contextualized to the school and each individual learning environment (James et al., 2019)

In this study, I addressed the gap in practice associated with the recruitment and selection of principals with the leadership skills and knowledge that could positively impact student achievement. The study is significant in that it may inform the MoE/PSC who may wish to put a system in place to recruit and select school principals with leadership skills and knowledge to improve student achievement. The study has the potential to effect social change by initiating policy changes in the way prospective principals are recruited and selected. Policymakers could use the data garnered from the research to inform their recruitment and selection of prospective principals. The study could also encourage further research on how to recruit and select principals with leadership skills and knowledge to improve student achievement within the education system under review or similar school systems.

Research Question

In a local public-school system within a small island Caribbean state, the problem is that little is understood about how the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission officials perceive how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement. The following research question guided the study: How does the Ministry of Education and the Public

Service Commission perceive the recruitment and selection of principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement?

Review of the Literature

In this section, I will explore the framework that guided the study. I will also explore the broader issues that impact the study.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on influences on recruitment, selection, and retention (Dickinson, 2007) and the learning organization theory (Senge, 2006). For the purposes of this basic qualitative study, I used the recruitment and selection components of Dickinson's conceptual framework. Hereafter, I will refer to the framework as Dickinson's recruitment and selection model.

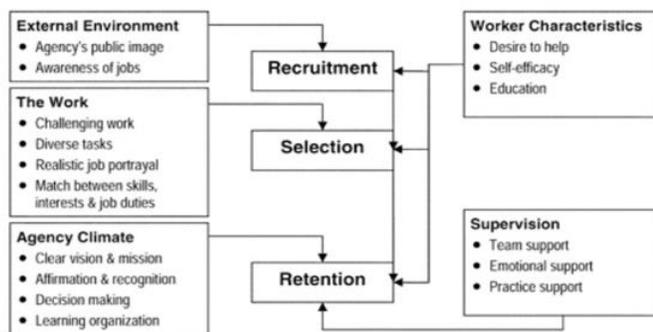
Recruitment, Selection, and Retention

Attention to an organization's recruitment, selection, and retention processes is important in helping agencies maintain a high caliber workforce (Dickinson, 2007). The framework indicates five pillars to successfully recruit, retain, and select prospective employees. The first, the external environment, includes public image and job awareness. This pillar is linked to recruitment. The second pillar is based on the work itself and is linked to selection. It includes challenges; diversity of tasks; job portrayal realistic expectations; and the match among skills, interests, and job duties. The third pillar is the agency's climate and is linked to retention. This climate includes the mission and vision of the agency, decision making, affirmations, and recognition, and the learning organization. The framework suggests that the fourth pillar is worker characteristics,

which includes the applicant's desire to help, self-efficacy, and education levels. This pillar is indicative of successful recruitment, selection, and retention. Finally, to ensure retention, the fifth pillar, supervision, includes team support, emotional support, and practice support. Figure 1 represents Dickinson's conceptual framework.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework of Influences on Recruitment, Selection, and Retention



Note. Extracted from the NC's recruitment and retention project Children's Services Practice Notes, 12(1).

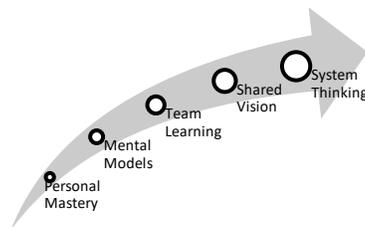
The Learning Organization Theory

Dickinson's conceptual framework aligns with Senge's learning organization theory and was a key to better understanding the practices of the MoE/PSC in its quest to recruit and select candidates to the principalship with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impacting student achievement. Peter Senge (2006) conceptualized the learning organization theory. He indicated that people within a learning organization could extend their ability to produce results by nurturing new thinking patterns that allow them to learn together. He posited that learners at all organizational levels must be committed and be able to learn.

Senge (2006) suggested five vital disciplines working collectively to ensure learning: system thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team learning (see Figure 2). Personal mastery is the cornerstone of a learning organization whereby personal and organizational learning are interconnected, as the level of organizational learning depends on the individuals within the organization. Mental models represent everyone within the organization's deeply entrenched assumptions and generalizations of the world and their influence on the decisions or actions taken. Senge further noted that important decisions are made because of the inherent conflict in how powerful tacit mental models are utilized. Senge recommended that for mental models to be effectively applied, learners within an organization should be able to look internally at themselves, examine their worldviews, and offer those views up for rigorous scrutiny. Building a shared vision represents how people can develop a common identity that moves toward genuine commitment rather than acquiescence. This discipline goes beyond sharing a vision statement or dictating goals, however sincere, through charismatic leaders. Team learning represents dialogue as team members remove their assumptions and genuinely think together to achieve cohesion.

Figure 2

Senge's (2006) Learning Organization Theory



Accordingly, system thinking represents utilizing a body of knowledge and tools to effect change. Senge indicated that because the five disciplines must develop collaboratively, the fifth discipline culminates into system thinking. Through system thinking, organizations discover and create new realities, thereby achieving shifts that can affect the type of change that will improve the organization's learning. Learning organizations are not static; they continually grow and transform (Parul & Pooja, 2020). Hence, the capacity for system thinking is paramount to effective learning, enabling the organization to learn faster (Hsu & Lamb, 2020; Senge, 1990). Senge reiterated the importance of the learning organization as an antidote to learning disabilities that can negatively impact learning (Senge, 2006).

Researchers continue to study the issue of circumventing the seeming difficulty faced by district leaders when identifying, selecting, and recruiting prospective principals within education systems (Doneley et al., 2018). Within the local school system under review, difficulty is present in recruiting and selecting principal candidates with the leadership skills and knowledge that could positively impact student achievement (Education Officer, personal communication, February 18, 2023). The local school system is concerned with building capacity to resolve systemic issues within the school system. A need exists to improve student achievement and system performance by instituting levels in the learning organizations, developing clearly defined goals, and ensuring that a shared vision is institutionalized with an appropriate end goal (Yeo, 2006). It is important that policymakers systemically learn to change to improve the school system by examining recruitment and selection practice with a view to improving

the organization.

How the Conceptual Framework Grounded the Research Question and Instrument

The framework formed the base for the development of the research questions and instrument used to respond to the research questions, purpose, and problem under review. The conceptual framework models indicate pillars necessary for successful recruitment and selection. I used the component pillars to develop the research question, which helped me determine the efficacy of the process in use. The research question sought to answer how the MoE/PSC, through the perspective of its officials, recruits and selects principal candidates with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement. The pillars within the framework served as the basis for answering this question.

The instrument used to respond to the research question is an interview protocol. I constructed the questions within the instrument to align with the key pillars of the conceptual framework. The interview protocol included questions to determine whether the recruitment process as indicated by the pillars is in use. The questions from the pillar that examined recruitment explored the external environment (job image and awareness). Two major pillars comprised the selection process. I developed questions to determine whether the first pillar, the work itself (diversity of tasks, job portrayal and match between skills, interest, and job duties otherwise indicated as fit), is used in the selection of principal candidates. I included questions incorporated from the second pillar, worker characteristics (desires for the job, self-efficacy, and educational background) in the interview protocol. I structured the pillars on the premise that an organization must

change to grow, so the pillars within the learning organization are embedded within the interview protocol.

Review of the Broader Problem

In the review of the broader problem, I explored a body of knowledge that could fill the gap in practice associated with difficulty in filling principal positions and the strategies from the literature for recruiting and selecting principals with leadership skills and knowledge that could positively impact student achievement. The literature search strategy I used was to search for peer-reviewed articles from Walden's library databases from EBSCO, ERIC, Sage, Google Scholar, ProQuest Central, and other search engines. I purchased published literature for the seminal work that guided the framework from Amazon. Key terms used in searches included *student achievement, recruitment, selection, principalship, self-efficacy, fit, hiring, recruitment and selection models, succession planning, calling, principal leadership, qualitative research, and succession planning.*

Recruitment of Principal Candidates

An issue in the recruitment process is not necessarily in finding candidates but in finding competent educational leaders who can successfully lead schools (Želvys & Esenova, 2019). Individuals worthy of principalship require considerable skills and knowledge to navigate complex challenges (Grissom et al., 2019; Islam, 2020; Weiner & Holder, 2019). They should be able to stimulate positive change by embracing and influencing staff, students, and other stakeholder groups while using critical thinking, problem-solving, and educational technology to effect such change (Al Shehhi &

Alzouebi, 2020; Gyang, 2020; Schleider, 2020; Schneider & Yitzhak-Monsonego, 2020; Swen, 2020). These leaders should be able to use macro and micro level data to analytically make decisions and provide a safety net for the most vulnerable within their community, including focusing on the psychosocial needs of both students and teachers, to adequately respond to crises, as is evident in the recent COVID-19 pandemic (Gyang, 2020; Harris, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020).

I included leadership, emotional literacy, pedagogical skills, and management skills as priority skills needed for the principalship (Schneider & Yitzhak-Monsonego, 2020; Schleider, 2020; Schneider & Yitzhak-Swen, 2020). An educational specialist noted three keys to a successful principalship: individuals who can lead learning, build district or system players by constructing internal and external partnerships and networks, and become change agents within the organization (Fullan, 2019). In the quest to identify principal candidates with the leadership skills and knowledge that could positively impact student achievement, districts and Ministries of Education should set clear, rigorous standards for the type of candidates they seek (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020). District leaders should provide specialized training for prospective and hired candidates, be selective during the hiring process, and provide the job evaluation and support to ensure availability of a cadre of highly skilled personnel for future principal vacancies (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020).

Motivation as an Element of Recruitment

Individuals interested in the principalship perceive it to be a highly influential job and hope to impact teachers, students, and overall learning outcomes positively (Blaum &

Tobin, 2019; Hancock et al., 2019). Issues associated with social justice and righting inequities in education serve as motivators for prospective candidates (Ford et al., 2020). Prospective principals interested in the principalship have also noted intrinsic motivators such as the ability to serve students, opportunities to influence the working environment, teachers, and the perceived autonomy the principalship allowed (Blaum & Tobin, 2019; Hancock et al., 2019). An extrinsic motivator is the apparent praise principals receive (Blaum & Tobin, 2019). Often, principals are encouraged to pursue the principalship, whereas others enter by self-efficacy (Bauer & Silver, 2018; Bower et al., 2018; Buckman et al., 2018; Buckman & Tran, 2018; Skaalvik, 2020). Some even view their entering the principalship as responding to their “calling” into the service (Swen, 2020, p. 15). Despite the reasons that principals enter the service, 25% leave (Swen, 2020). It is therefore imperative that the MoE/PSC and school districts make the principalship more attractive, ensuring that the candidate’s motivation to enter the service is nurtured and supported to mitigate burnout and diminishing returns from setting in.

Barriers to the Principalship—A Recruitment Concern

Prospective candidates for the principalship often do not enter because the perceived challenges of the position outweigh the benefits (Action, 2021; Bauer & Silver, 2018; Bower et al., 2018). They see the principalship as being “characterized by long hours, numerous tasks, a frenzied pace, brevity, and fragmentation” and burnout (Blaum & Tobin, 2019; Yang et al., 2021, p. 1). Four factors that often deter persons from entering the principalship are stress, compensation compared to the extent of responsibilities, the complexity of the job, and the time-consuming nature of being a

principal (Hancock et al., 2019; Islam, 2020). The School Leaders Network noted that as early as 2014, one-quarter of school principals left the principalship every year (Blaum & Tobin, 2019). This attrition rate indicates that the job may not be as attractive as it appears.

Internal Versus External Recruitment

Hiring internally or externally can bring benefits or negative consequences for any school system (Sabina & Colwell, 2018). Hiring internally has been beneficial to school systems. As insider knowledge of selected candidates creates a greater fit, there is a reduced cost of external searches for qualified candidates; internal candidates usually have a greater vested interest in the position; and the transition to the principalship is easier (Buckman & Tran, 2018; Sabina & Colwell, 2018). However, the potential for growth and new insight may also be injected into the environment when a highly qualified external candidate enters the system, while at the same time, resentment and feelings of being unworthy may occur to those candidates who viewed themselves as having waited their turn and thought themselves deserving of the position (Buckman & Tran, 2018; Sabina & Colwell, 2018).

Hiring externally also has advantages (Sabina & Colwell, 2018). External hires bring new perspectives and ideas into school systems, primarily when used in collaboration with best practices in the existing schools (Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Wallin et al., 2019). Higher levels of “traditional human capital (years of experience and education) may be present more with external candidates than with internal candidates” (Buckman & Tran, 2018, p. 5). External hires allow for new connections and networking

opportunities that could encourage growth and further injection of new opportunities and ideas into the school system (Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Wallin et al., 2019), especially when those candidates emanate from higher-performing institutions to lower-performing ones (Buckman & Tran, 2018). Additionally, the opportunity exists for marginalized groups (students and teachers) within the school system to be viewed and seen differently as there is an impartial leader (Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Wallin et al., 2019).

Despite the apparent benefits of external hiring, once there are qualified internal candidates, the likelihood of hiring an external candidate usually reduces the risk of losing internal candidates' loyalty, which is often viewed as more detrimental to the success of schools than the potential success of unknown external candidates (Aravena, 2020; Buckman & Tran, 2018). However, disadvantages to hiring externally also exist. For instance, the period needed for the external leader to learn the school culture, procedures, and processes within their new learning environment could take away from the immediate change effect expected of the new leader (Sabina & Colwell, 2018). It takes 5 to 7 years to realize school improvement when a successful principal is onboarded (Rangel, 2018). External leaders can mitigate this issue by using their networking skills with other successful principals within the school system as a support mechanism that could increase the learning curve and reduce downtime in learning the system (Sabina & Colwell, 2018; Wallin et al., 2019). However, one of the most significant difficulties in hiring externally is discerning the correct fit for the specific school environment (Brymer et al., 2019; Yang et al., 2021).

Grow Your Own Prospective Principal as a Strategy for the Recruitment Process

Leading a school is complex, and a principal who can become a positive change agent requires specific skills and knowledge to achieve that goal (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020; Aravena, 2020; Arvidsson et al., 2021; Weiner & Holder, 2019). A highly selective and rigorous recruitment process is needed to ensure the right teachers are pulled into the principalship (Brymer et al., 2019). As a succession plan to potential shortages of effective leaders for the principalship, most school districts develop their candidates by initiating leadership development programs (Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Most principals are internal or within the ranks of teaching (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Hancock et al., 2019). Ninety-nine percent of school principals were teachers and received their first principal posting within their school district (Hancock et al., 2019). This matrix suggests that as much information as possible is necessary to determine how to recruit the best teachers for the principalship (Ford et al., 2020). As Ministries of Education and school districts develop their principals, emphasis must be on developing a talent pool or what some researchers call a “principal pipeline” of candidates with specific skills and knowledge (Gates et al., 2019; Hayes et al., 2019; Hayes & Burkett, 2020, p. 2). To achieve this outcome, there must be a deliberate effort to improve skills and experiences through leadership professional development geared toward stretching the capacity of prospective leaders in education (Berger & Berger, 2017; Levin & Bradley, 2019). Whereas each principal leader develops their path or unique way of performing their role as a principal, it is the responsibility of those who develop principals to determine a core knowledge base that applies to all leaders in education and

ensures that prospective principals receive the requisite training as part of their leadership development program (UNESCO, 2020). That toolkit of skillsets should include leadership, management, emotional literacy, and pedagogical skills (Schneider & Yitzhak-Monsonego, 2020).

A need exists to develop what researchers call a “principal pipeline,” specifically geared toward a sustainable leadership development program (Gates et al., 2019; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Recruitment into those leadership development programs should factor in tapping as a means for identifying prospective education leaders (Barton, 2019; Buckman et al., 2018; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Furthermore, a need exists to examine how tapping could influence the identification of talent to build a strong principal pipeline or pool inclusive of teachers and assistant principals that are trained and professionally developed for that task (Gordon, 2020; Hancock et al., 2019; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Professional development for those candidates, whether they were encouraged, nudged, showed inclination, or volunteered themselves into the principalship, is needed to ensure that the core skill set is developed within those who demonstrate an interest in principal leadership (Armagan et al., 2020; Creta & Gross, 2020; Kappler-Hewitt et al., 2020; Klar et al., 2020).

A successfully recruited principal core may help to improve the education system’s ability to build leadership capacity to cultivate potential principals (Bailey et al., 2019). An essential element in building that leadership capacity is developing leadership potential for assistant principals (AP) (Hayes & Burkett, 2020; Searby et al., 2017). Researchers continue to note the value of instructional leadership training and the

building of a knowledge base for assistant principals as value-added resources in developing a solid principal core (Fuller & Hollingworth, 2018; Gates et al., 2019; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Practicing principals may serve as an excellent pool of principal candidates when a position becomes available; however, an AP's knowledge base is often not developed through Professional Development (PD), coaching or other means (Barnett et al., 2017). APs generally have limited roles within the school system, and there is a need to develop them by stretching their potential and providing them with growth opportunities that could broaden their skills and knowledge base (Barnett et al., 2017; Barton, 2019; Levin & Bradley, 2019; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2021).

Principal Preparation Programs and its Influence on the Recruitment Process

Principals enter the principalship unprepared for the magnitude of the tasks inherent in the job and must rely on "common sense and experience" to acquire expertise (Blaum & Tobin, 2019, p.1). Principals require specific skills, knowledge, and experience to navigate the challenges of the principalship (Mestry, 2017). Despite the general lack of preparation of candidates for the principalship, more states are increasing accountability measures for schools through legislation and performance standard expectations that assess their effectiveness (Fuller et al., 2017; Fuller & Hollingworth, 2018; U. S. Department of Education, 2019). The development of quality school leaders should not be left to chance by the use of character and common sense, but should be part of a deliberate effort put into developing competent candidates for the principalship (Baker & Bloom, 2017; Barnett et al., 2017; Berger & Berger, 2017; Blaum & Tobin, 2019; &

National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2021). A need exists to develop partnerships between school districts and universities to ensure authentic learning experiences relevant to the district and learning environment where the candidates are to serve (Harris & Jones, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Novice principals face tremendous challenges, which could be reduced by developing PPPs (Tingle et al., 2019). PPPs are developed to expand the knowledge base of potential principals with the goal of developing positive change agents (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Tingle et al., 2019). The use of PPPs is key to building a principal's knowledge base and skills; and it is central to ensuring school effectiveness and improvement (Bailey & Qualls, 2018; Blaum & Tobin, 2019).

As most principals are hired on perceived fit, aside from building a sound knowledge base, PPPs should emphasize the development of soft skills, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills and the development of networking skills as an integral component of the curriculum (Bailey & Qualls, 2018). Three indicators of successful PPPs are improved student achievement, job placement rates, and retention once employed (Fuller & Hollingworth, 2018; Tingle et al., (2019). The foundation for PPPs should be based on the context used, which suggests that they should be developed specifically for the learning environment (Slater et al., 2018). District leaders and MoE/PSC should look toward principal candidates who went through a PPP as such programs are building blocks to successful principals.

Emotional and Leadership Intelligence as an Element in the Recruitment Process

A significant component of a principal's job is how well they can communicate or

connect with their audience (Bower et al., 2018; Nawaz, 2019). The principal's social and interpersonal skills (soft skills) are needed when dealing with simple and complex issues (Bower et al., 2018; Leonard & Maulding Green, 2019). It is incumbent on all education leaders to demonstrate leadership intelligence, which suggests their ability to inspire or demonstrate the disposition toward using their emotional intelligence (EI) to implement their vision (Debeş, 2021; Leonard & Maulding Green, 2019). Their use of emotional literacy or the ability to work with, lead, and manage individuals using inter and intra-intelligence is paramount in effective leadership (Schneider & Yitzhak-Monsonogo, 2020). As an indicator of success, emotional intelligence is considered one of the most fundamental skills of an effective leader (Thessin & Louis, 2019; Tingle et al., 2019; Torrence & Connelly, 2019). A total of five constructs comprise EI within the workplace: “self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills” (Goleman, 1998, p 3). A leader who can identify, understand, or manage the emotions of his subordinates can more effectively inspire or influence others into action (Debeş, 2021; Fianko et al., 2020; Goleman, 2004; Leonard & Maulding Green, 2019). Emotional intelligence is considered an entry-level requirement and the sine qua non, of leadership (Goleman, 2004). Goleman further intimated that EI is 90% more effective and twice as important for effective leadership than IQ and technical skills (Bower et al., 2018; Goleman, 2004). School leadership is not simply about making technical decisions; principals must use their social skills, abilities, empathy, and affection while formulating those decisions (Gomez-Leal et al., 2022; Oplatka, 2018). For instance, any principal who can self-regulate is more likely to create a healthy environment and a climate in which individuals

can coexist, thereby providing the best service to students (Oplatka, 2018). In the recruitment process, recruiters should be able to identify the EI of a prospective applicant as that element of their intelligence may be able to distinguish potentially outstanding performers compared to average ones as there appears to be a direct correlation between career success and intellectual and emotional aptitude (Abdellah, 2021; Al Shehhi et al., 2021; Debeş, 2021; Shutti, 2021).

Gender Bias and the Recruitment Process

Amid the conventions developed to ensure equity in acquiring leadership roles [The Dakar Framework for Action, The Convention against Discrimination in Education, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Education for All (EFA)], access for women in leadership roles appears to be lower than their male counterparts despite teaching being considered a female-dominated profession. Women are under-represented in the principalship (Martínez et al., 2021; Oyeniran & Lili, 2020;). Male teachers are more likely to be tapped for potential promotion than their female counterparts (Buckman et al., 2018). The latest available data on gender in the principalship within OECD countries suggested that whereas 68% of education professionals (teachers) in secondary schools are females, women represent only 45% of principals (OECD, 2016; Martínez et al., 2021). Within the local context, 62% of the principals in secondary schools are males among an overall population of 98% females within the teaching profession (Assistant Director of Education, Planning, Training and Technology, Personal Communication, February 14, 2021). Although male leadership is not overtly cited, the local population

often suggests the idea of needing a strong male presence, especially in areas where schools are struggling (Education Officer, School Administration, Personal Communication, February 14, 2020). Additionally, the underrepresentation and influence at the managerial level reduce women's power and influence over policy, which can impact change in that direction (Martínez et al., 2021). Unconscious bias is prevalent in all spheres of life and can create invisible barriers to women's advancement arising from unconscious actions; despite an open rejection of gender stereotypes, there is still a behavior that contradicts that narrative (Madsen & Andrade, 2018; Martínez et al., 2021). In the recruitment of principals, District leaders and the MoE/PSC should ensure the best fit, being conscious to remove bias in the recruitment process.

Recruitment and the Issue of Millennials in Education

School districts and Ministries of Education must plan for the future. However difficult it is to find suitably qualified principal candidates today, filling principal positions in the future will become more pronounced as millennials rise to the top (Hancock et al., 2019). Millennials comprise the largest population within the American workforce (Barnes & Gearin, 2022). They tend to be team-oriented, mentor-driven, and adaptive to innovation. They are more likely to adapt to technology, social change, and egalitarian disposition - all excellent leadership traits. (Barnes & Gearin, 2022). However, there appears to be a trend toward job-hopping rather than advancing on the career ladder, as the average millennial remains in any position for an average of one to two years (Pragnya et al., 2021; Sabina & Colwell, 2018;). Millennials focus on how meaningful work is, level of job satisfaction, autonomy within the workforce, and

ability to balance work with life as conditions for continuous employment, all of which are issues and potential barriers associated with the principalship (Islam, 2020; Pragnya et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2021). If these millennial characteristics project themselves into education leadership, the problem of finding suitably qualified candidates and the cost associated with onboarding new principals will be further compounded (Pragnya et al., 2021). Research on the impact of millennials on the principalship appears to be sparse; however, what is known, as per the trends associated with millennial attitudes and disposition toward work, suggests a need to fill that gap in research immediately. If the brightest in society change their philosophy and loyalty toward education or do not remain long enough to desire the principalship, and the ideology of individualism and career shifts for both salaries and benefits become the norm, finding the most qualified candidates, who will remain in the principalship, will be heightened. District leaders and MoE/PSC must shift their recruitment practices to reflect this potential reality.

Selection of Principal Candidates

School leadership recruitment should be intentional, as a school's effectiveness depends on the quality of its workforce and, more specifically, upon its leader (Ford et al., 2020; Islam, 2020; Shuti, 2021). A direct correlation exists between education and economic growth. Selecting a candidate with the wrong fit could result in poor learning outcomes and an enormous financial loss associated with onboarding the wrong candidate for the principalship (Gao, 2021; Kocourek & Nedomlelová, 2018; Yang et al., 2021). Selecting a candidate with the right fit is also paramount due to the difficulty of firing an incompetent principal or correcting the damage incurred by poor leadership

(Dicke et al., 2018; Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Hancock et al., 2019). This issue is not new; as far back as 1983, the National Institute of Education noted increasing concern about the selection of school principals, identifying gaps in their knowledge base (Bleich, 2019; Palmer, 2018). Top-level district leaders have had difficulty accessing candidates for the characteristics most relevant to improving student success as the hiring process primarily relies on interviews, often categorized as being subjective (Aravena, 2020; Palmer, 2018). To improve the quality of the principalship, Human Resource (HR) Directors must go beyond the traditional criteria for selecting principals when hiring new candidates, basing selection on a more scientific approach that supports a robust and organized method in selecting school principals (Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Palmer, 2018). Consideration should be given not only to the qualification or credentials and experience but the ability of the candidate to lead and manipulate emotional intelligence and advocacy (AlSheddi & Alzouebi, 2020; Bailey & Qualls, 2018). Six areas for recruiters to examine to improve hiring efforts include “job appeal, pay quality, recruiting, performance evaluations, clear descriptions of fit, and continuous hiring improvement efforts” (Buckman & Tran, 2018, p.4).

In the hiring process, the interview is the most used procedure for selecting new principals, but in many instances, this method is considered insufficient for allowing the full potential of the candidate to be seen as they cannot adequately assess job performance (AlSheddi & Alzouebi, 2020; Aravena, 2020). The interview is viewed as a reliable yet unpredictable means of the selection process and is often riddled with unresolved issues (Palmer, 2018). Research from across the globe has identified a long

list of issues such as a strong dependency on written application, the inability to capture real-life abilities compared to theoretical responses during interviews, not being able to decipher experience versus potential, panel incompetence, inconsistencies in decision making, issues with the evaluation process and procedure, inequity in providing the same opportunities to all candidates, other subjective processes such as a prevalence toward non-merit factors such as gender, nepotism, political influences, favoritism, race and who-you-know and a leaning toward playing it safe and "homosocioability," rather than taking the chance to select the best fit for the job (Aravena, 2020, p.10; Donoso-Diaz, 2019; Gurmu, 2019; Romanowski et al., 2019). These issues suggest that additional indicators and measures should be used to identify individuals for the principalship instead of the interview's being the primary indicator for selection. Therefore, various procedures should be employed to ensure the best fit for the principalship (Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, 2019). This approach requires selecting the best candidates and assigning their unique abilities to the most suitably associated institutions (Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, 2019).

Unpredictable Stressors That Could Influence Selection

The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized the need to rethink principal leadership (UNESCO, 2020). Whether the education environment returns to prepandemic conditions or continues to adapt and transform to post-pandemic norms is yet to be determined (Azorin, 2020). However, researchers hope for what some call a super-nova response to the pandemic and the much sought-after change in how education is led with the ideals of ensuring equity, harnessing humanity, embracing complexity, and engendering students'

well-being to provide the foundation for a better education system (Azorin, 2020; Fullan, 2019; Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Hargreaves, 2020). The reality is that the response to the COVID-19 pandemic will change how schools are led (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). That change in basic assumptions regarding roles and goals for education will eventually impact what educators view as best leadership practices within schools (UNESCO, 2020). The education system must respond to changes in education, and the need for principal leadership will go beyond academic qualifications (UNESCO, 2020). Schools must attract leaders who can spontaneously respond to change (Harris, 2020; Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic led to 1.723 billion learners out of school within eight months (UNICEF, 2020). It brought to the forefront the need for leaders who have the tenacity to lead in a "messy, trial and error, butterflies-in-stomach, unpredictable environment under exhausting conditions" (Harris, 2020, p. 4; Harris & Jones, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020).

Spending on education is expected to further contract due to slow economic growth and diversions into healthcare services (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). Principals will be required to build resiliency and learn to work within further reduced budgetary constraints. Whereas the underlining principles of sound leadership are needed and remain a constant feature in school leadership, school leaders must be able to deal with fluid conditions driven by carefully considered foresight which may result in unpredictable responses, as no guides or precedents that currently exist regarding sound educationally led pandemic decisions (Harris, 2020; Harris & Jones, 2020). The postpandemic leader must adapt and shift from the traditional leadership role to one of

distributed, collaborative, and networked leadership style within a crisis-type learning environment (Harris, 2020, p. 4; Reuge et al., 2021). These leaders must continue to build positive school cultures and nurture professional talent within a virtual environment; they maintain and sustain meaningful relationships, keep schools moving, and achieve the goal of educating all children (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). The postpandemic leaders in education will be individuals who, during crises, can decipher between caring for others or caring for themselves (Azorin, 2020; Harris, 2020). Those leaders should be able to adapt to a “no leadership standard” environment by creating new pathways toward success, weighing traditional norms with new shifts, post-pandemic (Harris, 2020 p 2).

The upsurge in violence in the school environment has changed how principals lead (King, 2020). Concerns over projected increases in violent crime among juveniles within the school environment need attention (King 2021; Suh et al., 2023). Research indicates a 35% prevalence of bullying including cyberbullying (Hughes, 2020). There is an increase in sexual harassment by 67% with an additional 29% of students experiencing unwanted sexual touching (Hughes, 2020). In a large metropolitan state, one-third of adolescents engaged in physical fights (Suh, et al., 2023). Group ostracism and suicide among youth have also seen increases (Hughes, 2020). Recent estimates indicate that 17% of principals have experienced verbal abuse (Hughes, 2020). As far back as 2011, almost 18,000 students were excluded from one school system for physically assaulting an adult (Hughes, 2020). In 2019, over 400 school shootings occurred (King, 2021). Current projections are that the future of violent crimes will worsen as more students “find refuge in a virtual world that makes them ‘heroic and extraordinarily powerful’”

(King, 2021, p 219). The increase in violence has implications for schools as policy makers have turned their attention to schools becoming change agents in the wake of increased violence; education as a force for good (Hughes, 2020; Davies, 2018, UNESCO, 2018). Principals are being called upon to assess threats as a means to reduce school-based violence, deal with crisis situations and apply instructional leadership practices to reducing school violence (Brown, 2018; Hunt, 2020; Jackson & Viljoen, 2022). How school leaders deal with such crises is relevant to their recruitment and selection. Policymakers and those responsible for effecting change at the top must jettison their idea of what the principalship should look like and reevaluate their practice for recruiting and selecting candidates. They must reorganize the way in which principal candidates are hired to further ensure their resilience and commitment to the principalship. The pandemic and new crises in education have shown that principals will endure many crises and unpredictable stressors during their tenure. District leaders and MoE/PSC must assess the capacity of prospective leaders' ability to mitigate crises in their recruitment and selection process. Ensuring the right fit amid changing conditions must be considered during the recruitment process if schools are to ensure a principalship with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement.

Self-Efficacy and the Selection Process

Significant pressure influences principals to implement new mandates to effect change, regardless of the context or circumstances under which they work (Acton, 2021; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019). This situation has resulted in negative physical and emotional

exhaustion and burnout (Bauer & Silver, 2018). Beliefs and expectations impact human behavior (Bandura, 1986). The power of expectations changed how researchers who conceptualized the impact of self-efficacy on the principalship viewed it (Hallinger et al., 2018). A direct correlation is present between leadership, self-efficacy, and successful or effective schools (McBrayer et al., 2020). Attention must be focused on leadership self-efficacy (Brymer et al., 2019). Self-efficacy is a necessary component of school leadership, as it impacts decision-making, coping abilities, and ability to influence change, communicate, and model higher performance expectations (Schrik & Wasonga, 2019; Skaalvik, 2020). In their quest to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge that could positively impact student achievement, ministries of education and school districts must pay closer attention to the self-efficacy of potential principals.

District Leaders' Influence on Recruitment and Selection

A need exists to ensure sustainability at all levels if principals are to be selected at the rate needed to ensure positive student outcomes (Moreno & Girard, 2019). If district leaders are to select effective principals, the capacity of officers conducting the selection must also be developed (Moreno & Girard, 2019). As the role of principal's changes, so does the role and responsibility of district supervisors or leaders (Thessin & Louis, 2019; Torrence & Connelly, 2019). It is also imperative to match district leaders' capacity to effect change with the new or changed role of principals within the school system (Thessin & Louis, 2019). District leaders are responsible for the recruitment and selection process and the effectiveness of a school district is dependent on the quality of its

workforce (Aravena, 2020; Khumalo, 2021; Sabrina & Colwell, 2018). District leaders, therefore, should also hold themselves responsible for student achievement (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020).

District leaders should carefully assess their selection criteria (qualifications) and selection procedure (formal collection of data that could influence selection decisions) (Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, 2019). The hiring process should include a screening of applicants with the skills, knowledge, and attributes for the job (Sabrina & Colwell, 2018). An evaluation of the applicant's human capital (knowledge, skills and abilities) and fit are paramount to that process (Islam, 2020; Sabrina & Colwell, 2018). Employability relies heavily on the interview and the interviewer's perception of the candidate's fit (Sabrina & Colwell 2018; Aravena, 2020). Interviews as a standardized selection procedure is flawed for a variety of reasons as there is often a reliance on written application; the assessment of experience versus potential is often misdiagnosed; interviewer bias exists; personality, race, gender, and perceptions of shared values are sometimes indiscriminately included in the process; and the panel's competency to include inconsistent decision making within the process is sometimes present (Yang, et al., 2021; Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, 2018). Lack of planning for potential principal turnover may cause district leaders in their rush to fill voids sometimes to hire APs using the informal tapping process without fully vetting fit (Buckman et al., 2018; Ford et al., 2020). Tapping, in lieu of formal recruitment and selection processes is often leveraged on teacher competence which may not seamlessly transfer into principal competence (Barton, 2019; Ford et al., 2020; National Association

of Secondary School Principals, 2021). District leaders as part of their recruitment and selection protocol should develop potential principals through a resilient leadership pipeline (Cox & Mullen, 2022; Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Gordon, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). This process should be systematic creating opportunities for high-capacity candidates through a transparent, respectable process (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2021).

Implications

After reviewing the literature, I concluded that an investigation into the recruitment and selection practice of the MoE/PSC might provide insight into the support needed to hire principal candidates with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement. The review of literature is clear. If principals are to be successful, they must have the requisite leadership skills and knowledge that allow them to positively impact student achievement. An implication may be that if they, MoE/PSC, are to effectively recruit and select candidates for the principalship, not only the process but the requirements for the principalship may require reexamination. This circumstance may require a shift in policy. The genre for the project could be a professional development program geared toward training personnel within the MOE who perform the initial shortlisting of candidates for selection by the PSC. It would include the core group of district leaders or education officers who recruit potential candidates to the principalship with the skills and knowledge that could positively influence student achievement. The project has the potential to influence social change at the institutional level, and impact system thinking and the learning organization itself.

Summary

I examined the local problem in Section 1. The problem is that students within the education system under review are not performing at the required standard. The study proposed the purpose of the study to explore the perceptions of the MOE and PCS regarding the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement within the recruitment and selection process. The research questions sought to address the perceptions of the MoE and PSC regarding the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement when recruiting and selecting potential candidates. The literature review utilized the Learning Organization Framework and Dickinson's Model for Recruitment and Selection to guide the research. The review of literature presented peer-reviewed articles on the best practices for recruiting and selecting candidates for the principalship with the knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement within the recruitment and selection process. Section 2 examined the proposed methodology used in the research and the proposed design and approach to the study. Section 3, of the study contains the project study, reflections, and conclusions of the research.

Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore how the Ministry of Education and Public Service Commission perceives how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement within a local public school system within a small island Caribbean state. Little is understood about how these officials perceive principal recruitment to positively impact student achievement. The research question that guided the study is, “How do the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission perceive the recruitment and selection of principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement?” This section provides a rationale for the way in which I designed the study. It proposes the methodological components of the study including the participants, data collection method, and data analysis. I also discuss the methods used to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

Research Design and Approach

Qualitative research stands on the principles of interpretivist assumptions or how the world is understood, context specific and flexible data collection methods that lead to contextualized findings, and a method of analysis of complex content (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Qualitative research has become a popular method where an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon is under review (Astroth & Chung, 2018; Danford, 2023; Jamali, 2018). The rigor associated with qualitative design allows for the analysis of subjective information resulting in the formulation of conclusions (Bhangu et al., 2023). I chose a basic qualitative research design for this study. The basic qualitative research

design follows an iterative approach that captures the participants' perspectives and provides a comprehensive analysis and response to the research questions under consideration (Danford, 2023; Jamali, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The basic qualitative research design provides a means to explore phenomena by bringing meaning to the perspectives of individuals (Danford, 2023). This exploration allowed me to better understand the perspective of participants in the research, aligning individual perspectives with others within the same context to draw meaningful conclusions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I explored the perspectives of the MoE/PSC on how to recruit and select principals with the knowledge and skills that can improve student achievement, drawing conclusions from the data I collected.

Justification of Research Design

The selected research design should match the study purpose and research questions under review (Novosel, 2022). I considered a wide range of designs when deciding which method would fit my study purpose and research question. I considered the quantitative research method. However, quantitative research follows a systematic process that describes variables and test relationships that examine cause and effect between those variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). Within the context of qualitative research, I needed a research design that relied on the analysis of nonstatistical and nonnumerical data (Bhangu et al., 2023; Danford, 2023). I also needed to use a research design that would allow participants to express the experiences, motivations, and constraints to the research (Bhangu et al., 2023). I selected a qualitative approach as opposed to the quantitative method as the research under review required entry into the

perspectives of knowledge-rich participants who recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement (Jamali, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, the research under review required the use of open-ended questions and prompted discovery that would allow for data saturation, and the use of a quantitative model of data collection would not allow for that type of discovery (Burkholder et al., 2016; Jamali, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Basic qualitative design allows researchers to gather rich data using interview questions (Viswambharam & Priya, 2016).

I considered the use of ethnography as a design method. But ethnography requires participant observations and an analysis of the culture of participants over time (Ravitch & Carl, 2016), with extensive field notes (Danford, 2023). The purpose of the study was to examine the perspectives of research participants on how they recruit and select principals who can positively impact student achievement. The use of ethnography would not allow me to collect that type of data. The time frame for the completion of the research would not allow for discovery through ethnography as ethnography requires researcher to be immersed into the lives or work of participants in the research. The nature of the participants in the research and their work would not allow me to make observations.

I also decided against phenomenology as a design method. Phenomenology is an investigation of a particular phenomenon that took place in the life of a person (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Willis et al., 2016). Phenomenology is an examination of the lived experiences of participants through research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The research

method needed to answer the research question did not require the investigation of a phenomenon in the participants' lives but required the perspectives of the MoE/PSC on how they recruit and select principal candidates with the knowledge and skills that positively impact student achievement to be examined.

Participants

The targeted population included all individuals who recruited and selected principals from the MoE/PSC. As a result of the small number of individuals who presently engage in the recruitment and selection process within the MoE/PSC (12 individuals), the targeted population included the perspectives of retired individuals from the MoE/PSC (10 individuals) who previously participated in the process. The targeted population thus consisted of 22 participants. The targeted retired population selected are considered current to the issue under consideration as the majority have continued into private schooling or presently serve on boards of directors within the wider school system.

Sampling

The sampling method I selected was purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling allows for the deliberate selection of participants who can provide content-rich data derived through a rigorous process (Jamali, 2018; Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Yin, 2017). One of the goals of a basic qualitative study is to rigorously answer the research question (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I selected purposeful sampling because it fulfilled the goal of finding individuals knowledgeable of the recruitment and selection of principals from the MoE/PSC.

Selection and Justification of Sample and Participants

Participant choice and the size of the sample were central to what I garnered from the research. I intended to interview 12 individuals; however, I reached saturation at 10. The sample included individuals responsible for the recruitment and selection of prospective principal candidates. The sample was selected first from individuals from the MoE and PSC. I also incorporated individuals who previously recruited and selected principal candidates, with the most current individuals included first. I considered access to the population and the size of the unit of analysis as an element in determining how I filled the sample (Mthuli, et al., 2022; Vuban & Eta, 2019; Wasihan & Fikire, 2022). There was a limited number of individuals who influenced the recruitment and selection process. I hoped for maximum participation from participants from the MoE and PSC; however, I was unable to achieve that goal due to the extremely busy schedules of those individuals. I used additional participants to fill the sample of 10 from the retired population.

Saturation is the “gold standard” for deciding sample size and was the guiding principle I used to determine adequacy (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Mthuli et al., 2022, p. 4; Sykes et al., 2018). The sample size is characterized by the adequacy of data, indicating that achieving the goal of the research is more about the ability of the researcher to rigorously extract meaningful data rather than a focus on the number of participants to the research (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Vasileion et al., 2018). Nonetheless, researchers have proposed a sample size ranging from nine to 17 participants with a mean of 12 or 13 (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022) to a proposal size of five

to 50 participants (Dworkin, 2012) as sufficient for saturation. One individual can provide many concepts and rich content to a study (Yin, 2016). Considering the population size, I paid attention to rigor and depth of inquiry while probing for rich content that allowed for the achievement of saturation, which involved probing questions in the interviews (Wasihan & Fikire, 2022; Yin, 2016). Due to difficulties in accessing participants, I employed snowballing techniques to access other personnel from the MoE/PSC who previously recruited and selected principal candidates as participants to the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Nonetheless, the selected sample size of 12 participants was not needed as the 10 participants interviewed provided rich data sufficient to reach saturation and answer the research questions under review.

Access to Participants

My employment brought me in contact with the participant pool while conducting my work duties. Although I work with some of the participants, my contact with them is limited to my professional work, and I do not supervise any of the participants. The participants from the MoE provided oversight of the education system and were responsible for shortlisting recruited candidates to the principalship. The PSC is an appointed board selected by the government instituted by the Constitution of the island state under review. The PSC makes the final selection for all civil servants, inclusive of shortlisted prospective principals, through the chief establishment officer (CEO). My colleagues and I support each other within and across ministries. This cordial relationship encouraged participants to participate in the research and engendered a spirit of willingness to recommend new participants when it became difficult to interview current

individuals due to their schedule.

Positionality influences the rate of acceptance to research and prior knowledge of participants can serve as a resource that can be used to build rapport and improve communication between researcher and participant (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Roiha & Likkanen, 2022; Vuban & Eta, 2019). Positionality is an important resource, especially for hard-to-reach participants in research. Job responsibilities and the schedules of participants made them a difficult community to reach. Positionality can be leveraged by locating oneself in relation to participants (Chin et al., 2022; Johnsen & Fitzpatrick, 2022; Reich, 2022). Insiders, who are not able to influence participants due to job supervisory roles, tend to have easier access to participants and ask more probing and meaningful questions with more accurate responses provided (Chin et al., 2022; Oz & Timur, 2023). Bearing in mind my position and relationship with all the participants in the research, I used this circumstance to enable and encourage participation in the research. However, positionality is fluid, so I leveraged perceived advantage carefully (Chin et al., 2022).

After receiving IRB approval, I sent emails to individuals requesting their participation in the research. Those who consented formed part of the sample for the research. I prompted participants to respond to the invitation email with the words “I will participate.” The email detailed the timeframe for the interview, approximately 45 to 60 minutes, and the purpose of the study. Emails were followed by telephone conversation either thanking them for their approval or requesting verbal approval where I did not receive a response. This follow-up telephone conversation worked toward increasing the probability of acceptance of the research. I used telephone conversations to determine an

agreeable time for the interview. When participants became difficult to schedule, telephone conversations of other participants helped. I found that people were more likely to agree to participating in my research after a telephone conversation than using emails.

Researcher-Participant Relationship

I worked to develop a relationship of trust where the participants felt free to express themselves in a safe environment. I ensured that participants in the research felt comfortable enough to share relevant data that allowed me to derive meaning from the information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As I developed the researcher-participant relationship, I remained aware of the ethical implications inherent to qualitative research, anonymity, and confidentiality (Babbie, 2016; Luciani et al., 2019; Nyström et al., 2018). I informed participants of the measures implemented to ensure anonymity and confidentiality (the use of pseudonyms, Zoom recordings with saved audio only and concealment of their identities). I emailed participants explaining the research purpose, the process to be followed, and the terms of confidentiality (Luciani et al., 2019; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I left the option open for me to clarify and answer any questions thereafter during telephone conversations that I had after emails were sent. I also left open the option for participants to email me any questions they may have had before the scheduled interview. I gave 1 week's lead time for response to invitation emails and then called participants.

To ensure that participants felt safe and protected, I obtained participants' informed consent (Babbie, 2016; Luciani et al., 2019). I asked each participant to inform their consent by responding to the invitation email with the words "I will participate." I

provided the option for them to withdraw at any point in the research process, guaranteeing voluntary participation and the option to check results before publishing.

During the interview, I also provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions. This approach built a relationship of trust. I listened and responded to questions respectfully. I reaffirmed confidentiality by informing participants that pseudonyms were being used to identify each participant. I informed participants that I would be the only person transcribing the recordings. I gave participants the option to member check the initial transcripts with a second opportunity to check the accuracy of my interpretation of their responses after themes were developed. I emailed both sets of transcripts to participants for them to verify the contents.

Protection of Participants

Research ethics dictated that I protect participants' identities and information (Luciani et al., 2019; Surmiak, 2018). Participants affirmed that they read and agreed to information in consent forms highlighting confidentiality issues, including the concealment of their identities (Babbie, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Luciani et al., 2019). I used pseudonyms as a measure to conceal their identities. Additionally, I included an opt-out option to ensure that each participant remained of their own volition. I provided the opt-out at the beginning of the process, and I gave participants the option to decide which questions they felt comfortable answering. I did not share interview transcripts with anyone except the participants themselves. I shared IRB and Walden research stipulations at the beginning of the process. These processes ensured participants' protection.

Data Collection

My goal was to derive a complex, rich, and detailed account from data that maintains the fidelity of participants' perspectives of the principal recruitment and selection process (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Interviews were the primary means of collecting data. I answered the research questions by drawing meaning from the perceptions of participants in the research (Jamali, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Data Collection Instrument and Source

I developed interview questions (Appendix B) to gather data for the research. I did not use previously published interview questions as the questions were specifically designed to align with the research question under review (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Specifically designed interview protocols are indicative of qualitative research (Novosel, 2022; Sim et al., 2018). I used open-ended questions to allow participants to inform the study more fully (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A three-member panel of my peers assisted in clarifying the interview questions ensuring that they align with the research questions: one retired MoE official, one individual from the education department at the local college, and a lecturer from the University of the West Indies. I designed the instrument; they checked it; and then they provided feedback. They also collaborated with each other to ensure that the instrument answered the research questions. The expert panel suggested that I more fully align the research questions to the models within the conceptual framework and include probe prompts within the instrument to prevent me from forgetting during the interview. They also suggested I place a column in the instrument aligning the components of the framework to specific

questions. That addition was intended to ensure that the entire model was addressed in the instrument. Additionally, they asked that I align the various questions to elements from the research question to ensure that the instrument addressed the question in totality. That was done outside of the instrument as there was only one research question. The changes appeared valuable in improving saturation at a faster rate.

Sufficiency of Data

My attention was not necessarily focused on the size of the unit of analysis but on ensuring that all pertinent information was garnered from the existing sample (Blaikie, 2018; Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). That approach ensured saturation and determined sufficiency. I developed an interview protocol that allowed for deep thinking and deep inquiry bearing the delimitation of the sample size (Blaikie, 2018; Danford, 2023; Yin, 2017). The interview protocol consists of 22 questions. They were built specifically for the study under review. I aligned the questions to the conceptual framework and ensured that they were focused on answering the research question. Interview questions are an important instrument in qualitative research that allows participants to provide an answer to research questions (Kekeya, 2021). I developed semistructured, open-ended questions to improve opportunities for pertinent information to be included in the inquiry for the maximization of saturation (Braaten, et al., 2020). I used open-ended questions. Open-ended questions encourage honest and free expression of ideas by participants (Wasihan & Fikire, 2022; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Open-ended questions also allowed greater saturation as new themes were developed and expounded upon (Alase, 2017; Sim et al., 2018; Tracy, 2019). I used follow-up questions to draw out participants and allowed for

clarification of the ideas mentioned (Tracy, 2019). Prompts were included in the interview protocol to allow seamless inclusion into the interview process. Snowballing was used to access retired MoE and PSC personnel who were previously responsible for the recruitment and selection of principal candidates as I had difficulty engaging sufficient current participants to the recruitment and selection process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Data Generation and Tracking

Data collection began after I received IRB approval. I prepared a schedule for the interviews to be conducted and allocated two months for collecting all data for the research. It took four months to gather data as participants in the research were busy and scheduling them became difficult. I recorded all interviews. I used the Zoom platform as it ensured easy recording and transcription of interviews while allowing for a safe space from which to conduct interviews. A secondary audio recording served as a backup to reduce technological glitches with the Zoom recordings and maintain the transcripts' accuracy. I used two audio recordings to record data and generate transcripts. I member-checked interview transcripts (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I shared the initial transcripts and the themes derived from the transcripts with participants to ensure that the correct interpretations were derived on the themes or the attributions to them within the themes in data analysis (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This member-checking procedure improved the rigor of the research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I used a research journal/log to help me keep track of data and any emerging ideas that unfold during the data collection process. The research journal/log served as a space to record observations, probing questions,

personal thoughts, ponderings, and actions taken during the research (Houghton & Houghton, 2018).

Access to Participants

I received Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to recruit and interview participants, approval number 05-26-23-0298746. Once I received approval, I communicated with participants via email. I did not need permission from the Ministry of Education, the Establishment Division or the Public Service Commission for participants to be engaged as the interviews were conducted outside of work and did not interfere with the business of the MoE/PSC. I emailed the interview process to participants engaged in the research. Thereafter, I developed all interview schedules. I then scheduled Zoom meetings for the interviews.

Role of the Researcher

I am an educator of 33 years: one year in the capacity of deputy principal and nine years as a secondary school principal. I also served as a District Supervisor (Education Officer) for three years before assuming my current role as Deputy Director of Education. To maintain a successful researcher-participant relationship, the researcher must take a leading role in building trust (Nyström et al., 2018). The participants in the research are not my subordinates; however, I maintain a cordial and professional relationship with all. One of the participants works within my office but none are subordinates to me, and all are outside my line of authority. This participant was pivotal to determining the process the MoE uses to recruit and select principals. The ministry of education serves as one of the guardians to that process. All other participants in the research are not within my

organization.

My present position allowed me to interact with all participants in the research as colleagues. This prior relationship allowed for greater participant involvement and served to build rapport during the interview process (Babbie, 2016; Roiha & Likkanen, 2022). To further engender this professional relationship, I followed the ethical guidelines set out for participants meticulously (Surmiak, 2018). I maintained a high degree of professionalism and research ethic to reduce any bias or negative effect resulting from that researcher/participant relationship. I am aware of the bias I brought to the study as a former principal and district leader/education officer. However, I worked toward keeping those biases out of the research process. I shared transcripts and findings to ensure that my interpretations align with participants' thoughts and beliefs (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). My notes compared to transcripts and member checking process also helped to remove any bias I may have had.

Analysis of Data

Participants verified transcripts after each interview. I entered the transcribed interviews into a Microsoft Word document, using pseudonyms to protect the participants' identities (Surmiak, 2018). I saved all applications and recordings on my password-protected personal computer and backed up all data on an external hard drive. I password protected the drive. I saved interview files using pseudonyms and will keep transcripts for five years. I recorded field notes during the interview in my research journal/log. Pseudonyms were used in my research journal/log. I will keep the research log for five years. The log will be scanned and saved in the same manner as transcripts. I

will then destroy the written log. Thereafter, the data went through the coding process. Coding is a dynamic process that must be systematically organized to help me decipher what the data is telling me or not telling me while indicating how the codes are interrelated (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I used four layers in the process.

In the first layer, I cleaned, organized, and read transcripts and research logs and any other notes taken during the interview process. This approach allowed for familiarity with the data, as data should be explored before coding (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the second layer, I created broad topics, trends, and ideas or codes (Saldana, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). I used In Vivo and a priori coding methods to decipher the meaning from the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). It is recommended that one type of coding method should not be used where rigor and depth of inquiry is concerned (Babbie, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This is particularly true where the participant pool is small (Saldana, 2016). I developed a start list of codes derived from the framework and literature review in this first layer. I organized the initial codes in a spreadsheet application and color-coded to allow for easy analysis. This open coding system involved multiple rounds (Buckholder et al., 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I first determined what stood out and as I ran the second round in the coding process, I focused on the research questions for more specific ideas. Once the codes were established, I looked for patterns derived from the data (Babbie, 2016). In the third layer, I developed themes from the patterns. This thematic or axial coding level allowed me to see how the data revealed constructs that developed arguments. I then began collecting findings for the research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016; Saldana, 2016). I started broadly and slowly develop more

specific codes, patterns, and themes as I began to analyze the data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This approach allowed me to group, combine, and document ideas together. By so doing, I recognized patterns in the data, created categories from the patterns and highlighted interconnectedness among categories and patterns in the themes (Buckholder et al., 2016). Within the fourth layer, I used a thematic analysis approach to make for easier identification and explanation of ideas posited within the data to begin the findings process (Tracy, 2019). I organized my codes, categories, and patterns methodologically to allow me to use inductive reasoning to draw conclusions (Houghton & Houghton, 2018). Those were aligned to the framework, review of literature, and research questions. As this was an iterative process, I constantly revisited the data to make sense of the emerging understandings from the data and the underlying meaning derived (Babbie, 2016; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This approach improved validity, reduced researcher bias and possible misrepresentations, and identified discrepant data while synthesizing interconnected themes into “cohesive understanding of the unit of analysis” (Babbie, 2016; Buckholder et al., 2016, p 79; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Finally, I used Microsoft Word to record conclusions and generalizations.

Data Analysis Results

In this section, I present the research findings. I gathered data from interviews and constructed semi-structured questions to address the research questions. Consent forms were sent to all participants via email. All participants affirmed their consent to the interview conditions at the beginning of the interview. Participant’s affirmation of their consents formed part of the recorded transcript. I conducted interviews using the Zoom

Platform except for three participants who requested face-to-face interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcripts generated from the recordings. I developed themes from codes, patterns, and categories derived from the transcripts. Additionally, I derived conclusions from the data. The process for building the findings from the problem and research questions are presented below.

Data Familiarization

I immersed myself in the data by reading the transcripts several times. The participants were all part of the process of recruiting and selecting principals either from the Ministry of Education, the Establishment Department, or the Public Service Commission. The cross grouping allowed me to better understand the entire process from all different perspectives creating a complete picture of the process in action. Five participants (retired and active) participated in the process at the Ministry of Education level. Two of the participants contributed to the process at the Establishment Department with one of the participants having experienced the process at both the Ministry of Education and the Establishment Department. Three participants presently serve on the Public Service Commission with one participant having experienced the process at the Ministry of Education.

Table 2*Profile of Participants*

Participant	Role
Participant 1	Establishment Department
Participant 2	Ministry of Education
Participant 3	Public Service Commission and Ministry of Education
Participant 4	Public Service Commission
Participant 5	Public Service Commission
Participant 6	Ministry of Education
Participant 7	Establishment Depart and Ministry of Education
Participant 8	Ministry of Education
Participant 9	Ministry of Education
Participant 10	Ministry of Education

After rereading the transcripts at least three times, I listened to the audio again, comparing the transcribed data with that of the audio recording. I made minor transcription edits to the transcripts. This rigorous process confirmed the accuracy of the data (Smith & Gannon, 2018). I inserted the transcribed data into an excel sheet. I divided the data by interview question for each participant along parallel cells. That provided an easy format from which to develop initial codes and for me to compare those codes by interview question.

First and Second Cycle Coding

I generated a priori codes from the conceptual framework that grounded the research. This step provided an initial list of codes in the first layer of coding (Ravitch &

Carl, 2016). Open codes were then generated from transcribed transcripts. I organized the data and created small pieces of information from which meaning could be derived. The process culminated in a compiled list of codes for each participant. I searched for similarities, differences, and divergent thoughts. I made note of any ideas that emanated from the coding process.

Next, I developed a second layer of coding. I grouped the codes together to form categories. I incorporated In Vivo coding methods here as I wanted to capture the authentic ideas of participants in the research. I meticulously went through this second cycle of coding as I classified the data and decided on priority ideas while synthesizing and conceptualizing the data to build themes (Saldana, 2016).

Theme Development

To develop themes, I examined the codes for patterns. I then formed subthemes organized into broader themes. In developing the themes, I had to reconcile which pieces of data could provide significant insight and which should be deemed inconsequential (Saldana, 2016). An example is indicated in the coding sample provided in Table 3. I had to make a decision as to whether hindrances from the collective bargaining agreement when acting opportunities are given through the succession planning process was a significant insight or inconsequential to how the research participants perceived the recruitment and selection of principals with the leadership skills to positively influence student achievement. I surmised that it is not a priority idea and therefore deemed it inconsequential for this research study but a possible topic for further inquiry.

Table 3*Sample Coding Development Into Themes*

A priori code	Open code 1	Open code 2	Category	Theme
Recruitment education training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement • People don't recognize their own potential • Exposure • Experience • Demonstrations of skills • Opportunity • Propel their skills • Hindrance with collective bargaining agreement • Allows MoE to assess candidate competency before employment • Improve selection process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not guarantee promotion • Succession planning/pool of candidates • Acting is an asset when candidate is successful if unsuccessful can damage career path • Indicative of job awareness and an assessment of fit 	Acting provides opportunities	Candidate development

I kept assessing the relationship between the themes developed and the research question and the conceptual framework. I rechecked the themes to determine whether they were supported by the data or whether they answered the research question and purpose of the study. I then proceeded to document what the data was saying, realigning it to the research question to determine its response.

Patterns, Relationships, Themes

I derived three themes from the data. The themes were developed from answers from participants in response to the research question that informed the study. The first theme addressed how the MoE/PSC could build a well-defined and rigorous recruitment and selection process. Theme two addressed the candidate's development and theme

three addressed the development of a fair assessment of candidates applying for the principalship.

Theme 1: Building a Well-Defined and Rigorous Recruitment and Selection Process

If the MoE/PSC is to build a well-defined and rigorous recruitment and selection process, it must focus on the process of recruitment and selection. Interview protocol questions 1-3, 5-8, and 18-22 addressed this theme. In ensuring a robust recruitment process participants varied responses allowed me to chronicle the various layers in the recruitment process, including advertisement, application, background checking, shortlisting, two interviews, ranking, voting, and selection. A first degree in any discipline is the base requirement. Participant 5 noted that “It’s important to have a bachelors in some field that relates to empowerment or education. Whether it be management, business administration, the most important thing is that that person or the applicant must have the teacher training credential.” According to Participants 1 and 2 that includes at least 5 years of experience as a trained teacher. Participant 2 noted value in having the base qualification a master’s degree or qualifications in educational leadership but indicated challenges in doing so. He noted, “is a small country ... what we don't want to do is to narrow the pool so narrow that some of the good people that we have, that demonstrate that they can lead well ... we lock them out.” In the assessment of eligible candidates, Participant 2 also noted that “because leadership is more than simply management, when we’re looking for principals, we not looking just for managers, what we are looking for is instructional leaders, people that could inspire others.” Participant 3 added that they look for “senior teachers who would have been, um, very good at their

craft and also who would have been lending support to the principal.” Participant 9 indicated inclusivity as “education leadership cannot be for everybody.”

Attention was also drawn to the selection process. Participant 1 noted that “there is a committee that is set up to conduct the interviews and the applicants are interviewed and ranked.” Seven out of the 10 participants mentioned the use of an interview panel. Participant 2 indicated the composition of the panel. He noted “we ensure that the panel is comprised of those who can ... persons who are intimately involved in education and understand education and will be able to spot others who we think can do an excellent job managing a school.” In addressing the quality and expectation of the panel, participant 2 continued that their decisions are “not just purely up to guesswork and subjectivity.” Multiple participants referred to a scoring rubric that is used both at the MoE and the PSC. Participants 2, 5 and 6 noted a rubric comprising of various components inclusive of communication ability, knowledge and level of management, goal setting, goal-achievement, experience, leadership ability and interpersonal skills.

In addressing the conflict that may arise when there is a variance between the ranked shortlist from MoE and the final decision at the PSC, Participant 5 said that “We would have a discussion, the chairman would have a talk with the director, find out why that person was selected by the director in the first place.” Participant 2 said,

We do have an opportunity to challenge ... but if we send a short list, then we are sending a short list to suggest that all the people on the list, all the people are qualified to do the job ... as we are mindful that the public service could choose anybody. Another eye, an eye outside of the education sphere, would

have looked and done their own vetting and would have chosen, sometimes, the Public Service Commission might not be in sync with the choices that we make, but ultimately end up working out ... we live with what they come up with.

There appears to be a need for greater collaboration between the two entities. Participant 4 noted, "I don't know what scoring the Ministry of Education use. They never shared it with us." Participant 3 indicated that the MoE should "provide guidance as to what they're looking for and how we [PSC] should deal with it." Participants 1, 2, 5, and 6 agreed that there is no thorough knowledge of the interviews conducted by either group.

Theme 2: Candidate Development

All participants agreed that candidate development is the responsibility of all parties to the process. Interview protocol questions 2, 4, 5, 7, 9-15, and 21-22 addressed this theme. Participant 10 thought of acting to "propel" prospective applicants. Participant 3 noted that "acting is training" with Participant 4 encouraging exposure for capable persons. He noted that "You have to prepare those below you, as that's the only way they can have an idea about the position, is if you allow them a foot in by acting in the position." Aside from acting, Participant 6 inserted, "Whenever persons were being asked to act, I would always go to, go with them to the school, and sit down and have this little 'pallava' with them." That "pallava" is reminiscent of a form of coaching and support for prospective candidates.

Candidate development is assessed using a variety of methods. Participant 2 indicated that background checks and file checking to assess the true competence of

candidates are used. All participants agreed that the role of Education Officers in identifying and assessing talent was paramount to the process. Evaluations conducted by principals was recommended by the majority of participants to the research. Participant 1 spoke to an assessment of the lifelong learning journey of participants as an indicator of growth. Candidate development was viewed as more important than credentials for participant 5. She indicated her approach to the interview process:

Before I look at the credentials, because attitude first determines altitude, I focus on attitude aspect first then personal skills, and I look at the credentials and then I look at the reviews of the performance. Then I make my decision from you because my main concern is impact on firstly the students, parents, the team, and the community on a whole.

Participant 1 spoke to ensuring a succession plan for participants. She proposed the development of a concise plan as a means of enabling a principal core that can positively influence student achievement.

Theme 3: Fair Assessment of Candidates

All the participants highlighted the need for principal characteristics that could enable a successful principalship. The participants included the need for confidentiality (Participant 9), taking initiative, communication skills, interpersonal skills (Participant 2), time management, being a team player, department (Participant 6), goal setting, passion, committed, loyal, dedicated to service, strategic planning and self-care as valuable attributes to possess (Participant 5). However, assessments of the key characteristics necessary for the principal are

difficult to determine. Participant 5 identified assessing individual characteristics to be the “most difficult” part of the recruitment and selection of principals. Whereas participants agreed that the process would do better with clearer guidelines for assessing proficiency, they recommended ways to achieve this goal. Participant 2 recommended use of portfolios to chronicle the work of applicants, placing the selection panel “in a better place to make a judgment as to who is the best fit.” Participant 2 recollected an interview candidate who presented a portfolio to an interview panel.

When she was able to produce written document documentation of what she has been doing, how she has accomplished some things and you could see them in life and living color and you, we got hard copies of those things and we were able to go through those things then that placed us in a good position to determine who the persons are, who the persons are, and, in this case, who that particular person was. [pause] I guess the Ministry of Education needs to look again at what we do and begin to require that other people to keep a portfolio of their work so that it could and it could be submitted and that we could get a plainer insight as to, to who the person is and what the person is doing.

Six of the participants referred to the use of profiling or background checks and file checking to better assess candidates applying for principalship positions.

Participant 5 noted “...I don't want to say investigation, but we look into the results and the, the, the service and the work ethics before we interview persons, so we are

aware of your performance before you come for that interview.” Participant 2 said, “The best way to find out what people think and how people think is to have a chat with the people that share a staff with them.” The use of education officer’s evaluation of candidates was recommended by the majority of participants in the research. Participant 9 noted:

that is why I’m saying it's very important that education officers visit schools and know where people are and know people. Because if you don't visit them, I mean people can slip through your hands, you understand. You need to visit, you need to visit, and you need to know your officers and, there were some officers who could tell you, you see that teacher there, that teacher there, is a very good social studies teacher; that teacher is a very good Math teacher. They knew who you were.

Participant 9 also indicated the need for information from other people who know the candidates. She indicated it “...should not only just be people from the, yes, people from the ministry, but people who would know the different persons, would have been in a position to interface with them and know them, hear them speak, see their work, know what they are all about. Because it is unfair, if you don't know me, you interview, interview me.” Participant 10 posited that being “trained to the highest level, ... does not necessarily a leader make, so, we have to find, whether it is through the principal evaluation ... you build a profile on, on your human resources.” However, Participant 10 added that the evaluators, “... need to find the teeth and the strength and the tenacity to, you know, get these

things implemented without fear of victimization from one end or the other.”

Participant 1 recommended that an examination of applicant’s substantive post to determine whether the “gap between what they do and the expectation of the principalship is wide or small” could also be an indicator for best fit. Additionally, there was a lot of emphasis placed on the interview as a means of gathering information from participants and assessing their true capacity. All participants suggested that using rigorous probing questioning techniques was the answer to gathering authentic information about the candidates applying for the principalship.

Quality Assurance

I member checked verbatim transcripts to maintain the credibility and accuracy of data (Burkholder et al., 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). That process ensured that interpretations made represented the participant's response and removed researcher biases from the data (Burkholder et al., 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I explained the member-checking process prior to the interviews being conducted. The process included participants receiving draft transcripts, interpretations and initial conclusions derived from the data before making final conclusions (Babbie, 2016). I then checked the findings with participants to ensure accuracy (Cobin & Strauss, 2015). An option used to provide a different interpretation of what was chronicled was provided to participants. This approach allowed participants to indicate the correctness in the data (Candela, 2019). I gave them an opportunity to include omissions and strengthen the extent of the data. I used this process to protect the participants by giving them the power to approve their published thoughts. Specific instructions were given for member checking and an

explanation of what to expect from the process (Carlson, 2010). This step added credibility and the trustworthiness of the research (Candela, 2019; Birt et al., 2016). This robust process ensured that authentic results were gathered from willing participants.

Discrepant Data

I looked for data that proved contrary to the general trends from interviews. Three participants presented discrepant data. There were personal references made as some research participants used personal experiences to articulate their ideas. Additionally, the three participants were retired personnel, so the processes they indicated had changed since their retirement. Researchers should be open to discrepant cases to determine whether what is included by participants is the norm (Butin, 2009; Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Outcomes

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the perceptions of education officials within the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission regarding the recruitment and selection of prospective principals with the leadership skills necessary to positively influence student achievement. I engaged 15 participants, but 10 participated in the study. The research question guiding the study is how do officials in the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission perceive the recruitment and selection of principals with the leadership skills necessary to positively influence student achievement.

The problem was addressed in that the study provided insight on the perceptions of the MoE/PSC on how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills necessary to positively influence student achievement. The research question was framed

to respond to the local problem. The three themes derived from the analysis of data suggested that building a well-defined and rigorous recruitment and selection process could ensure the determination of the best fit. Candidate development was highlighted as a means of ensuring a cadre of potential candidates that could lead successful schools resulting in improved student achievement. Participants in the research also indicated that there is a need for fair assessment of candidates if the best fit is to be selected when presented with a vacancy.

The larger body of research chronicled similar responses to the outcomes of the research. As addressed in theme one, the literature noted that individuals worthy of the principalship should have considerable skills and knowledge for navigating complex challenges associated with leading schools (Islam, 2020). The data suggested a long list of skills required of prospective candidates for the principalship. The literature and research participants indicated interview subjectivity as a matter of concern. The literature pointed to the inability of selection panels to capture real-life abilities during interviews and decipher experience from potential during interviews (Aravena, 2020). Participants in the research expressed this same concern but recommended the use of portfolios as a means to chronicle experiences rather than simply relying on spoken examples of accomplishments during an interview. In making their recommendations, six participants in the research concluded that background checking and file profiling were a means to strengthen interviews.

Ideas generated from Theme 2 also aligned with the literature review. The literature noted the changing roles of district leaders in being more responsive to the

needs of our students (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020). The literature further suggested that as a succession plan to successful principal recruitment, a principal pipeline should be developed through a leadership development program (Cox & Mullen, 2022; Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Hayes & Burkett, 2020). It was recommended that capacity-stretched specific skills and experiences should emanate through this leadership professional development (Bradley, 2019; Gates et al., 2019). All participants in the research noted the need for education officers (district leaders) to be more included in the process of assessing and developing potential candidates for the research. Participants further recommended the use of professional developments, retreats, acting stints and one-on-one support from education officers to achieving that goal.

The literature noted that district leaders should set clear, rigorous standards as expectations of proposed candidates to the research (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020). The data not only agreed to this recommendation but added that candidates for the principalship should be assessed fairly using those standards before selection into the principalship. These ideas were expressed under Theme 3 of the research data, fair assessment of candidates.

I used the conceptual framework to ground the research. The conceptual framework addressed the recruitment process, selection of candidates and the learning organization. The recruitment process included elements of image and job awareness. It also addressed worker characteristics to include education, self-efficacy, and personal desires of principals as elements to successful recruitment of prospective candidates. The framework included the selection process as an element to successful principalship. To

achieve successful selection, the worker characteristics and an evaluation of that of practicing principals had to be examined against prospective candidates to ensure best fit. The idea of the learning organization suggested that if an organization is to grow, it must learn and change. The participant's response to the research suggested thoughtful reflection and a desire to consider new things. Even as participants in the research reflected on the interview process, one could see them contemplating, reviewing, and evaluating the present process with a view to its improvement.

Project Deliverable

The outcome of the project suggests a professional development geared toward building capacity of education officers to better support and evaluate teachers who show ability for leadership. All participants to the research at some point during the interview, suggested that education officers are integral to the process of identifying, developing, selecting (by being part of interview panels at the MoE) and supporting principals who can positively influence student achievement. If that view is valid, then education officers should be duly trained on all levels of the process.

Section 3: The Project

The project was developed in response to research conducted on the perspectives of the MoE/PSC on the recruitment and selection of principals with the leadership skills necessary to positively influence student achievement. The data derived from this qualitative study suggested the need for a transformative professional development (TPD) project along with a yearly community of practice (CoP) checkup that could support the work of MoE officials or principal supervisors or district leaders or education officers (EOs) in developing potential principal candidates with the required skills and attributes to positively influence student achievement.

The objective for the TPD is to provide practical strategies to EOs by building their capacity to create a leadership core with the skills to improve student achievement. As this is a challenging and changing role for principal supervisors/EOs they should be trained to support this leadership core or principal pipeline (Ford et al., 2020; Goldring et al., 2018; Thessin, 2019). There is a need to develop and maintain a rigorous recruitment and selection process for the principalship. If this is to be a sustained effort, the individuals charged with the developmental component of the process should be aware of their expectations. The process should be standardized and transparent, and everyone in the process should work toward the same end.

The goals of the TPD are in line with the findings of the research. First, if the recruitment and selection process are to be well-defined and rigorous, principal supervisors/EOs should become familiar with it. There is a need to not only define the standards for recruitment and selection, but also for the principal supervisors/EOs to

understand the key elements in the process. Second, to remove guesswork and subjectivity in the interview process, principal supervisors/EOs would need to develop skills that would allow them to manipulate the interview process. Third, the research findings suggested a need to develop a principal development program (PDP) of potential candidates with specific skills. It is important for principal supervisors/EOs to not only supervise but to identify and support this leadership core of prospective candidates to the principalship. Fourth, the need for a fair assessment of candidates suggests that principal supervisors/EOs should be trained to not only understand the expectations of the assessment of candidates but be able to fairly assess candidates using a standardized expectation.

Rationale

An overarching theme from this research indicated the expectations for principal supervisors/EOs to support the development, recruitment, and selection of prospective candidates to the principalship. This expectation, although it aligns to the job description of principal supervisors/EOs, is not well-defined. Furthermore, it represents a shift of the principal supervisor/EOs role for compliance and performance evaluation to include growth, development, and capacity building (Ford et al., 2020). I developed a 4-day transformative professional development program with yearly CoP checkups to address the work done throughout the year. The yearly CoP check-up will safeguard sustainability and ensure that the process remains current while enabling greater support from all principal supervisors/EOs (curriculum and administration) for persons identified as having leadership ability (Thessin, 2019). This yearly CoP checkup is premised on the

concepts of shared responsibility, joint work, and the gains achieved by their use (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020; Thessin, 2021).

The TPD program will also address challenges encountered and provide an opportunity to review those challenges with the goal of providing solutions and community support for individual EOs (Meyers et al., 2023). The 4-day TPD will help examine the role of principal supervisors/EOs in the process with defined expectations. It will also address how principal supervisors/EOs should conduct their duties while receiving community support from other principal supervisors/EOs inclusive of curriculum leaders. In-service PD for leaders in education work to improve practice, self-efficacy, and competence (Meyers et al., 2023). The main focus of the TPD is to begin a shift from the traditional role of the principal supervisors/EO from one that is administrative, operational, and focused on compliance in which principal supervisors/EOs develop and support principals and principal candidates to improve instruction (Goldring et al., 2018).

Review of the Literature

The findings from the data analyzed from this research suggested the need for a PDP. The data further revealed that principal supervisors/EOs should take the lead in supporting and developing prospective candidates to the principalship. This shift in responsibility can be supported through a TPD program. In this second review of literature, research was conducted on PDs that could be leveraged to improve the skills of principal supervisors/EOs to develop a PDP.

I searched the Walden Library, ERIC database, Sage journals, ProQuest Central,

and Google Scholar to find literature to guide the development of my TPD. I used search terms such as *Transformational Professional Development, Principal Supervisors, Principal Development, Principal Succession Planning, Principal Pipeline, District Leader Support, Superintendent Professional Development, Joint-work, Learning-focused Supervision, Professional Learning Communities, and Professional Learning* to find peer-reviewed articles for my review of literature. I conducted an advanced search on transformational professional development using search terms such as *coaching, mentoring, reflective practice, and continuous professional development*. To reach saturation, I looked for related literature that cited the work of authors in articles I found appropriate for use. I also used search terms for actions within PDs that might stymie the development of a productive TPD such as *ineffective professional development and professional development that do not work* in Google Scholar. I recognized that the changing role of principal supervisors/EOs, although not a new idea, is a newly researched phenomenon, and there is not concentrated work on professional development geared to improving their new role. I therefore broadened my search to similar groups to include leaders in education, adult professional development, and professional learning for principals to accomplish their new and changing roles. I was able to gain insight from the literature on the purpose and function of PDs and how joint-work, superintendents' talk and learning-focused supervision within PDs could serve as catalysts for retooling principal supervisors/EOs with the skills needed to support the PDP. The TPD is geared toward supporting principal supervisors/EOs in achieving the goal of developing a PDP.

Support of Principal Candidates

Changes in principals' roles and responsibilities have influenced the need for support and the governance structure required for principalship (DeMatthews et al., 2021; Tingle et al., 2019; Tuma & Spillane, 2019; Wang et al., 2018). The complexity of their new roles has shifted from their primary focus of being effective managers to becoming instructional and transformational leaders (Connery & Frick, 2021; Davis et al., 2017; Wise & Cavazos, 2017). The expectation is that principals should focus more on teaching and learning rather than on management tasks (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020). Principals must now serve as coaches and modelers of innovative teaching practices and behavior and monitor progress using data-driven decisions (Psencik & Brown, 2018). They are encouraged to create professional learning communities (Oyeniran & Lili, 2020; Psencik & Brown, 2018). A variety of approaches may be used to professionally develop principals, such as school visits, PDs, CoPs, and the creation of "cluster managers" to support principals improve their performance (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020; Oyeniran & Lili, 2020, p. 5). With these new responsibilities taking a more prominent role and the variety of support mechanisms needed to ensure optimal principal performance, attention should be paid to how principal candidates are supported and trained to become experts at their jobs.

The Evolving Role of Principal Supervisors/EOs

The traditional role of principal supervisor/EO is one of principal evaluation and ensuring management compliance (Meyers et al., 2022). The new expectation is focused on leadership capacity building toward instruction with the goal of improving student

achievement through learning focused professional development and instruction, suggesting that principal supervisors/EOs should spend more time supporting schools (Goldring et al., 2018; Honig & Rainey, 2020; Meyers et al., 2022). This means that their focus should be on developing partnerships and encouraging joint-work initiatives (Thessin, 2022). This new expectation or shift in practice should include mentoring and coaching principals, modeling good practices, prioritizing feedback, and engaging in collaborative learning (Meyers et al., 2022). This shift in practice should also include a complete understanding of the nature of the work to be achieved (Meyers et al., 2023). This would involve a collective and strategic clarification of the goals and purposes for that shift and the building of “coherence,” which can only be achieved if leadership across levels share a common approach and commitment to system change (Meyers et al., 2023). The system change therefore shifts the role of principal supervisors/EOs from one of management of school systems to leadership developer within the school system. They must maintain their role as evaluator while initiating this collaborator, facilitator, and modeler for instructional leadership learning (Arar & Avidov-Ungar, 2020). The collective joint-work associated with this new role requires a partnership based on trust and each partner being vulnerable within the learning-teaching process. A gap also exists between the expectation of policymakers in the role they expect of principal supervisors/EOs and the new expectation they are to carry out (Arar & Avidov-Ungar, 2020; Rogers, 2022). The goal of this project is to address the existing comfortable identity of the principal supervisor/EO and their new expectation toward becoming a principal-teacher (Rogers, 2022; Thessin, 2019).

Project Genre—Transformative Professional Development

TDP will fill the gap in practice presented by the research. There is a need to prepare prospective principal candidates for a principalship focused on improved student achievement. To ensure that happens, prospective principals need specialized training in school leadership and management (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020; Oyeniran & Lili, 2020). This training can be supplemented and strengthened using PDs (Psencik & Brown, 2018). In-service PDs serve as a support mechanism for principal supervisors/EOs to understand and function amidst changing roles and the ability to cope with job demands (Connery & Frick, 2021; Vogel, 2018). PDs that support prospective principals should factor in the context under which principals operate and provide networking opportunities inclusive of a mentoring and coaching program (Vogel, 2018). A need also exists for more practical skills, follow-up monitoring, and support in implementing programs, communication skills, leadership management, and change management (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020). PDs could encourage the use and development of soft skills, interpersonal skills, communication, and networking as part of the support mechanism for prospective principals (Davis et al., 2017). Included in PPP and PDs should be authentic learning experiences like those they are likely to confront during the principalship, which should focus on ensuring basic standards are obtained and should have specifically laid out indicators as practicing principals work closely with incoming principals (Vogel, 2018). Additionally, to see best practices, prospective principals should visit successful schools (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020; Oyeniran & Lili, 2020). Other authentic learning experiences could be developed by creating opportunities for simulations and discussions

during PDs or PPPs (Vogel, 2018). The extent to which that support is provided depends on how emersed principal supervisors/EOs are in their own training and their understanding of the expectations of their new role (Connery & Frick, 2021; Moreno & Girard, 2019; Westberry & Horner, 2022). There is limited research on principal supervisor/EO PD but bearing the expectations of the work, existing research on principal PD can be applied here.

Coaching and Mentorship

Approximately 10% of PDs have resulted in transference of learning into workplace practice (Westberry & Horner, 2022). But the use of coaching has allowed for 80-90% of the transference of knowledge (Kappler-Hewitt et al., 2020). Coaching is a deliberate effort to achieve specific competencies (Moreno & Girard, 2019). It is described as a means of building school leaders' capacity and administrative competence (Kappler-Hewitt et al., 2020). Consideration should be given to the value-added component of coaching (Hayes & Burkett, 2020). Coaching within the context of principal development should be concerned more with learning rather than someone teaching them (Van Nieuwerburgh et al., 2020). Coaching allows leaders to internalize their learning (Kappler-Hewitt et al., 2020). It encourages the person being coached to reflect on what they are learning and think and act in such a way that change is inevitable (Lackritz et al., 2019). Change is more likely to happen when feedback is tied to coaching, especially for inexperienced individuals interested in the principals (Van Nieuwerburgh et al., 2020). Leadership coaching is time and context-specific, with focused collaboration between an experienced coach and a willing participant (Kappler-

Hewitt et al., 2020). Coaching yields the best results when served in real-time (CSSO, 2015). Leadership coaching allows the coach to personalize observations, feedback, and suggestions so the person being coached can improve their practice (Kappler-Hewitt et al., 2020). Leadership coaches should focus on identifying problems and setting goals to address those problems (Slater et al., 2018). The scaffolding provided within a coaching exercise is intended to take the person being coached out of their zone of proximal development to a place where their engagement would allow them to “stretched capacity” (Vygotsky, 1978; Wise & Cavazos, 2017, p. 4).

Mentorship is a nurturing process that provides targeted support through the development of informal long-term relationships (Moreno & Girard, 2019; Morris et al., 2020; Oplatka, 2018). Half of the school districts in the United States have instituted some form of mentoring program for principals geared toward retention, work efficacy and improved student achievement (Connery & Frick, 2021; Gates et al., 2019). Newly appointed principals have garnered great benefit as they transition from teacher to administrator roles (Oplatka, 2018). Mentoring should be focused on identifying and overcoming weaknesses through some evaluation system (Oplatka, 2018). Through mentoring, novice and prospective principals can gain practical support, understand the expectations of the principalship, develop communication skills, and understand the norms, values and problem-solving skills required for the principalship (Oplatka, 2018). Thus, mentoring supports growth (Parfitt & Rose, 2020).

Mentoring and coaching engender positive dividends (Lackritz et al., 2019; Moreno & Girard, 2019; Oplatka, 2018). However, the actions of coach and mentor must

be carefully considered (Hayes & Burkett, 2020; Kappler-Hewitt et al., 2020). When the mentor or coach serves in the supervisor's capacity, there may be issues associated with distrust (Parfitt & Rose, 2020). Their ability to traverse supervisors, supporters and confidants could be challenging (Parfitt & Rose, 2020). Principal supervisors/EOs or superintendents who serve this dual role should avoid power hierarchy and build trust between themselves and the recipient (McKim et al., 2022). Despite the difficulties, there are positive dividends associated with mentoring and coaching (Hayes & Burkett, 2020; Moreno & Girard, 2019). Principal supervisors/EOs should be taught how to mentor and coach prospective candidates to the principalship. This task could be done using the TPD project herein presented.

Principal Supervisor/EO Support

Sustainability must be ensured at all levels if prospective principals are to grow at the rate needed to ensure quick productivity turnaround that would yield positive student outcomes (Moreno & Girard, 2019). If principal supervisors/EO are to support or coach prospective principals in real-time, the officers' capacity must also be developed (Moreno & Girard, 2019). It is the role of principal supervisors/EOs to provide job-embedded support (coaching, mentorship, PD) for prospective principals to develop and strengthen instructional leadership capacity (Slater et al., 2018). Leadership PD and professional learning communities should focus on job embedded participant centered collaboration (Slater et al., 2018). While principal supervisors/EOs understand the need to support prospective principals to meet their needs, most districts/MoE still focus on teacher development rather than leadership development (McKim et al., 2022; Slater et al.,

2018).

It is a challenge for the district/MoE to provide quality PDs and other support specifically developed to ensure learning transference (Slater et al., 2018; Westberry & Horner, 2022). Despite that difficulty, district-led leadership coaching and support provide much-needed "direction or disruption" for transformational learning (Slater et al., 2018, p. 6). As the role of principal's change, so does the role and responsibility of principal supervisors/EOs (Thessin & Louis, 2019; Torrence & Connelly, 2019). Rather than focus on individual schools, districts now focus on systemwide improvement efforts (Thessin & Louis, 2019). These efforts are centered on developing relationships and serving as a collaborative partner, facilitators, and network builder (Thessin & Louis, 2019). Principal supervisors/EOs now focus on learning shifts from supervision to one "focused on coaching, mentoring and collaboration" (Thessin & Louis, 2019, p. 2). A need exists to match prospective school leaders with their new or changed role (Thessin & Louis, 2019).

Supervision—Appraisal and Evaluation

There is a need to further support prospective principals considering the higher stakes accountability expectations (Slater et al., 2018). Additionally, the realization that principal leadership impacts student outcomes has changed principal supervisors' and EOs' focus on instructional leadership capacity building (Thessin & Louis, 2019). The myriad of change policies and laws intended to improve student outcomes are evidenced in Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), OECD, or the Race to the Top (RTTT) (Hvidston & McKim, 2019; Thessin & Louis, 2019). NCLB

ensures instructional improvements to ensure student achievement, and ESSA redirected authority to states and districts to improve accountability measures (Thessin & Louis, 2019). As the role of principal's changes, so should the evaluation system used to assess their competencies and performances (McKim et al., 2022; Moreno & Girard, 2019). The shift in policy to change principals' expectations that focus evaluations on both management ability and instructional leadership has become a challenge (Thessin & Louis, 2019).

The goal of conducting performance evaluations for prospective principal candidates is to allow candidates to overcome weaknesses identified in evaluations (Nelson et al., 2021). Greater emphasis should be placed on the need for evaluations as a “tool for growth” (McKim et al., 2022, p. 3; Nielsen & Lavigne, 2020). Evaluation of prospective principal candidates is geared toward supporting long-term growth rather than a yearly compilation of state evaluation instruments (McKim et al., 2022, p. 3; Nielsen & Lavigne, 2020). The evaluation should be an iterative process allowing the principal supervisor/EO to develop improvement strategies from formative data (McKim et al., 2022). The effectiveness of the evaluation exercise depends on the interpretation and judgment of the individual conducting the evaluation (Rinehart, 2019). Therefore, focus must be placed on building principal supervisors/EOs' capacity as they are expected to provide added support to prospective principals as they transition into instructional leaders (Hvidston & McKim, 2019; Thessin & Louis, 2019). Research on the practice of principal supervisors/EOs is sparse (Hvidston & McKim, 2019). What is known is that those who help develop principals generally hold them accountable for

improving student outcomes (Hvidston & McKim, 2019). Principal supervisors/EOs therefore need to train a cadre of prospective candidates with that same high level of accountability in mind.

Project Description

A four-day transformative professional development was developed as the deliverable for my study. The sustainability component of the project will include a once per year CoP PD. This once-per year CoP PD will highlight the strides made and challenges faced. It will provide an opportunity for networking and support for principal supervisors/EOs throughout the year.

Resources and Support

Financial and intellectual resources will be needed to ensure successful implementation of the workshop. In the form of financial resources, I will need to rent a comfortable conference room and the requisite technological resources that would allow for the smooth execution of the TPD. Material resources (folders, paper, pen) to include peer reviewed articles would also be needed. Additionally, I will need financial resources to cover meals, water, and a tea station. I will also need to include qualified resource people to facilitate some of the sessions. I will also need the support of policy makers and decision makers within the Ministry of Education. That support will allow me to access funding for the TPD. The support of leaders in education will also place relevance on the TPD, thus improving its value. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the needed resources for the project.

Table 4*Resource Needs*

Resource type	Materials needed
Convention room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airconditioned room to accommodate 40 people • Must have breakout rooms with audio-visual facilities for Day 2 • Five tables that seats eight • One head table • One tea station in conference area
Technological resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet access • Public address system • Two roving cordless microphones • Projector and/or two large television sets • Five extension cords (leading to each table) • Five surge protectors (one per table)
Instructional material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forty folders and pens • Five flip charts and five packets of markers • Paper (handouts, exit slips, evaluation forms, table headers) • Peer-reviewed articles and other academic resources • Name tags
Meals/refreshments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals for 45 people for 4 days (includes facilitators, secretarial, and other support staff) • Water • Tea station materials (electric kettle, milk, assorted teas, sugar, coffee, paper napkins, disposable cups and spoons)
Ice breaker resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1: paper cups and rubber bands (working together/community of practice activity) • Day 2: post-it slips (strength affirmation activity) • Day 3: skittles, small paper plate (networking activity) • Day 4: paper, scissors (problem solving activity)

Potential Barriers and Solutions to Barriers

The three major barriers to the successful implementation of the TPD are ensuring acceptance from stakeholders to the TPD, funding for the sessions and finding an appropriate time at which all TPD participants will be able to attend without unnecessary distraction. Stakeholder buy-in will be needed by the policy and decisions makers within the MoE. Their buy-in would ensure that all principal supervisors/EOs place relevance on the training program. Additionally, stakeholder buy-in would also ensure that adequate funding would be provided for the implementation of the training session. To resolve

these issues, I will request a meeting with high level officials within the MoE. Those high-level officials formed part of the participant group for my research. They all demonstrated an interest in the results of the research and pledged their support bearing the perceived need to improve the recruitment and hiring process for principals. I will present the findings of my research and highlight the training for principal supervisors/EOs as the guiding element for the successful development of a competent principal core. Assistant Directors of Education (ADE) could ensure the sustainability of the project as they supervise other EOs who can support principal supervisors/EOs in the conduct of their duties. Any other barriers to the project may be mitigated once all stakeholders are apprised of its relevance and value to the education system as a whole. I will then highlight the need for funding if the project were to earn dividends. At that meeting we can also discuss the most appropriate time for the TPD, but I will suggest during the summer vacation for schools where there is some down time for the participants to the TPD. I will further discuss the sustainability for the project. I will recommend a review CoP check-up once per year thereafter. The necessary budgetary allocations can then be planned for in advance for that CoP check-up. This approach will enlist their support for the TPD and ensure its continued success.

Implementation and Timeline

I developed an implementation timeline for the TPD. That timeline includes all the preparatory work to allow for successful implementation of the TPDs. Tables 4 and 5 indicate the planning timeline for the TPDs for the project. Table 5 highlights the planning timeline for the 4-day TPD and Table 6 highlights the timeline for the

Communities of Practice TPD to be held the following year.

Table 5

Professional Development Implementation Timeline (4-Day Plan)

Activity	Start date	End date	No. of days
Decide on all participants to include support staff	5-21-24	5-21-24	1
Review MoE calendar of events for possible dates	5-21-24	5-21-24	1
Plan proposal for policy maker meeting to include proposed budget and training dates	5-22-24	5-28-24	5
Policy maker meeting	5-29-24	5-29-24	1
Prepare and distribute invitation letters to participants	5-30-24	5-31-24	2
Plan topics for training	6-3-24	6-14-24	10
Decide on catering, investigate best options	6-17-24	6-18-24	2
Speak to facilitators (confirm attendance)	6-17-24	6-18-24	2
Plan workshop execution material (seating plan, folders, name tags, flip charts, sign-in sheets)	6-16-24	6-17-24	2
Develop training resources (instructional material and evaluation sheets for each session)	6-17-24	6-21-24	5
Send out tentative agenda to participants and facilitators	6-19-24	6-19-24	1
Finalize budget for workshop	6-24-24	6-25-24	2
Order workshop execution material	7-1-24	7-1-24	1
Confirm PA system/technology needs with education broadcasting unit; explain expectations	7-1-24	7-1-24	1
Finalize catering and place order. Send Day 2 video with instructions: https://youtube.com/watch?v=kIpexNZD7XI	7-1-24	7-1-24	1
Print all instructional and executional material	7-2-24	7-4-24	3
Gather supplies and presentation items (including presentations from facilitators, bios of facilitators, and all other material needed for the PD, printed and otherwise)	7-5-24	7-9-24	3
Send out reminder emails to participants to the PD to include finalized agenda	7-9-24	7-9-24	1
Prepare instructional material folders. Send email to remind participants to watch video for Day 2 session	7-10-24	7-11-24	2
Pack supply boxes for PD	7-12-24	7-12-24	1
Day before PD: set up room, tables, reception tables. Ensure room has all requirements needed for a successful PD and ambience is appropriate for event	7-15-24	7-15-24	1
Arrive at conference center 2 hours before start time Conduct audio-visual check, double-check that all materials are in place	7-16-24	7-19-24	4
Send out thank you notes to participants, policy decision makers, and facilitators	7-22-24	7-22-24	1
Analyze evaluation results and prepare PD report for policy decision makers	7-22-24	7-26-24	5
Distribute PD report (electronic copies)	7-29-24	7-29-24	1
Develop brief manual for practice for participants	8-5-24	8-23-24	15
Distribute manual to participants and policy decision makers	8-26-24	8-26-24	1

Table 6*Professional Development Implementation Timeline*

Activity	No. of days
Decide on all participants to include support staff	1
Review MoE calendar of events for possible dates	1
Prepare and distribute invitation letters to participants	1
Plan topics for training	5
Decide on catering, investigate best options	1
Plan workshop execution material (seating plan, folders, name tags, flip charts, sign-in sheets)	1
Develop training resources (instructional material and evaluation sheets for each session)	3
Send out tentative agenda to participants and facilitators	1
Finalize budget for workshop (funding approved)	1
Order workshop execution material	1
Confirm PA system/technology needs with education broadcasting unit; explain expectations	1
Finalize catering and place order	1
Print all instructional and executional material	2
Gather supplies and presentation items	1
Send out reminder emails to participants to the PD to include finalized agenda	1
Prepare instructional material folders	1
Pack supply boxes for PD	1
Set up room, tables, reception tables. Ensure room has all requirements needed for a successful PD and ambience is appropriate for event	1
Arrive at conference center 2 hours before start time Conduct audio-visual check, double-check that all materials are in place	1
Send out thank you notes to participants	1
Analyze evaluation results and prepare PD report for policy decision makers	5
Distribute PD report (electronic copies)	1
Update manual for practice for participants	10
Distribute manual to participants and policy decision makers	1

Project Evaluation Plan

As part of the goal-based assessment, I will conduct a self-assessment of the timelines used in the development of the project. Through reflection, I will assess how the project was delivered. I will also consider the views of participants as to the successful delivery of the project. This assessment will help me to determine any changes that will be required for the CoP PD at the end of the academic year. Exit slips will be given at the beginning of each day. Participants will be expected to write at the end of every session any highlights, lowlights and any questions that remain on to the topic. The exit slips will be submitted at the end of the day. The information from those slips will be reviewed and discussed at the beginning of the next day's session as part of the Day in Review. The discussion component at the end of each session will also serve as a formative assessment of the session. At the end of the workshop a summative evaluation will be conducted on the entire PD to include the impact of the PD on participant's practice. The summative assessment will include an overall satisfaction survey to cover organization of workshop, meals, venue, suggestions for improvement, ideas for the CoP PD scheduled for the end of year and any other pertinent perspectives on the implementation of the PD. The overall evaluation will be done using Google Forms. A summary of the summative evaluation is presented in Appendix A.

The use of those forms of evaluation is appropriate for the type of data required to assess the project. The end of session discussion formative assessment will not only provide immediate feedback but would provide response to any questions participants

may have. The exit slips will provide additional opportunities for reflection on the day's activities but will also enable me to respond to the needs of participants the following day through the Day in Review session. The summative evaluation will provide overall data on the execution of the PD and will provide feedback that will allow me to improve future PDs inclusive of the yearly CoP PD.

Purpose and Goals of the Project

The purpose of the project is to provide principal supervisors/EOs with the rationale for the refocusing of their job description. The project will also provide the requisite skills needed to achieve their objectives. A major goal from the TPD is to reassess the changing role of a principal with the skills to improve student achievement versus the changing role of the principal supervisor/EO. Another goal is to identify the key elements of recruitment and selection and the role of principal supervisors/EOs in facilitating this process. Additionally, principal supervisors/EOs will be expected to understand the work of developing a principal pipeline and align that expectation with their work. Principal supervisors/EOs will also be expected to conduct a fair assessment of principal candidates and provide the needed support to help them improve on their weaknesses. The project is intended to provide strategies that principal supervisors/EOs may utilize in the field.

Description of Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders to the project include the MoE decision and policy makers and targeted participants to the PD. Their decision of the relevance of the project will determine its immediate success and future sustainability. The target audience for the PD

will be principal supervisors/EOs. I intend to include support personnel like ADEs responsible for planning, professional development, technology, curriculum, technical and vocational training, and measurement and evaluation to the training. In order for the project to succeed, stakeholders and policy makers buy in is needed. ADEs supervise other EOs whose support and expertise might be needed in the field and within schools. The training is designed to be interactive and relevant to principal supervisors/EOs practice. This PD will provide active learning experiences for principal supervisors/EOs, and the information presented in the sessions can be implemented immediately, making the training immersive.

Project Implications

Principals are second only to classroom teachers as an indicator of student achievement (Baxter, 2019). As instructional leaders, they must be specially selected and fit for purpose in a selection process that is deliberate and precise. A project to develop a cadre of principals who can positively improve student achievement is integral to the social change needed in our school system. Many times, small developing states within the third world are usually the last to implement best practice in education. Research underscores the need for changes in the role of principal supervisors/EOs as an expectation for whole system growth and change (Honig & Rainey, 2020; Arar, 2022). The success of this project is poised to allow social change parallel to developed countries. Additionally, by strengthening the principal core, educational leaders will be improving the quality of student learning within the education system. This outcome has implications for economic growth as the development of a country's human capital

assures the growth of a highly developed and qualified workforce (Becker, 1994; Schultz, 1961).

Importance to the Local Context

There is a need to provide research that reflects the local context and that is designed to resolve issues at the local level. This project not only provides a deliverable for research conducted at the local level but also provides strategies to resolve the issue associated within the local problem. The project may improve the self-efficacy of principal supervisors/EOs as they work to develop prospective principal core with the leadership skills that could positively influence student achievement. The project may also yield the improved recruitment and selection practices of the MoE resulting in better prepared candidates for the principalship.

Importance to the Larger Context

The project is modelled around work commissioned by the Wallace Foundation and other leading researchers in the field of education specifically that of the changing role of principals and the impact on the changing role of principal supervisors/EOs (Goldring et al., 2018; Brown, 2019). The project is also modelled around the use of PDs and CoPs to support the development of a principal core capable of maneuvering the complexities of accountability measures and the principal being an instructional leader rather than a manager of the plant (Thessin et al., 2019; Thessin & Louis, 2020; Goldring et al., 2018). Furthermore, research on principal improvement also points to ensuring that principal supervisors/EO's need for robust PDs with appropriate mentoring and coaching skills developed that would ensure the development of skills and growth for their support

of instructional leaders (Meyers et al., 2023; Rigby et al., 2019; Rogers, 2022). Research has also indicated a succession plan should follow a systemic approach that identifies, assesses, and develops leadership talent (Fussarelli, et al., 2018; Zelvys et al., 2019). The project is grounded in the aforementioned research. The success of this project will provide greater credence to their work indicating its importance not only to large school systems, but it may be contextualized in small developing states within the third world. Considering that our education systems are global, the result of producing students for the world is aptly relevant.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

The project was designed to address the gap in practice from research conducted to explore the perceptions of education officials within the Ministry of Education and the Public Service Commission regarding the recruitment and selection of prospective principals with the leadership skills necessary to influence student achievement. The major finding of the research was the need to develop a principal core with the necessary skills to positively influence student achievement. The research participants indicated a need for principal supervisors/EOs to take an active role in achieving that goal.

Strengths of the Project

The project provides a response to the research problem by specifically addressing the needs of principal supervisors/EOs. This project addresses the need to support practitioners within the education system through the individuals who support schools. Training for principal supervisor/EOs is generally sparse (Hvidston & McKim, 2019). A problem the education system faces is that training to ensure functionality is often not adequately considered (personal communication, December 15, 2023). The project addresses this issue by providing training to principal supervisors/EOs that would allow them to fill the gap in practice to develop a principal core with the leadership skills needed to improve student achievement. A 4-day professional development was designed to allow principal supervisors/EOs to develop that principal core. Another strength of the project is that it addresses the issue of sustainability. A vital part of the project is a community of practice yearly PD checkup intended to provide support for principal

supervisors/EOs as they continue to develop that principal core. The yearly PD checkup will provide suggestions to tackle any challenges they may face along the way while developing greater collaboration among principal supervisors/EOs. Another strength of the research emanates from the fact that the participants in the research included policy makers and decision makers within the PSC and MoE, who are responsible for change. The project deliverable was as a direct response to suggestions made by them. During the interview process they demonstrated a vested interest in the results of the project and the strategies that would be implemented to improve the principal core. Additionally, to ensure acceptance of the project discussions with the decision makers and stakeholders in education is necessary. This approach will expose decision makers to the needs of the system increasing the value of the project as they were personally involved in its conception and hopefully delivery. This direct participation will strengthen buy-in and support to the project thereby increasing its sustainability.

Limitations of the Project

Although measures were implemented to mitigate against this limitation, there is the possibility of researcher biases. I am an educator of over 30 years and a decision maker within the Ministry of Education. My personal experiences and biases could have impacted the project deliverable. Additionally, the revised role of the principal supervisor/EO is a relatively new phenomenon and there is a “call for further research” on the various components needed to support this new role as “we do not yet know” how to provide the needed support for principal supervisors/EOs (Arar, 2022; Thessin, 2021 p. 2). Theoretical research indicated the need for training and life-long learning

opportunities for principal supervisors/Eos; however, the path to achieving this has not yet been formalized (Arar & Avidov-Ungar, 2020). Research on ways to address the impending challenges of this new role is sparse (McKim et al., 2022; Havidson et al., 2022). A small body of research suggested that instructional leadership should be thought of in terms of groups rather than on an individual basis. (Thessin, 2021) Hence, I conceptualized the ideas for the sustainability component of the project. Despite that the project is premised on limited data. Finally, the investment needed to undertake the project and ensure its sustainability is significant. The budgetary allocations for PD for the calendar year have already been created, so finding the funds for the PD would require some maneuvering.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

I could have addressed the local problem in a variety of different ways. An alternative approach to the problem could have been to use mixed methods for the research. I could have focused on principal hiring and selection quantitative data in addition to the interviews to determine the leadership skills required to improve student achievement. A comparative study of principals with high student achievement compared to those with low student achievement could have been used to determine the leadership skills needed for student achievement.

Alternatively, I could have defined the problem differently. For instance, I could have conducted a study examining the perceptions of principals on the leadership skills needed to improve students' achievement. I could have examined the perceptions of deputy principals to determine what leadership skills they think are required for improved

student achievement. I could have also examined this issue from a parental perspective. I could have examined what parents view as the necessary leadership skills needed of principals to positively influence student performance. All those approaches would have provided data from varying perspectives that could increase the body of knowledge on principal leadership skills required for student achievement.

Alternative solutions to the local problem could have included developing a policy paper. That policy paper could have explored the need for preparatory qualifications in education leadership as a mandatory requirement from a principal preparation program (Meyers et al., 2023). The policy could have also addressed the need for mandatory life-long learning for all principals to include an hour requirement and the nature of training needed to support student achievement. Mandatory PD is not a requirement for educators within the education system under study. Additionally, rather than conduct a yearly PD-checkup, I could have recommended a 6-month PD-checkup. That way attention would be drawn to any challenges earlier in the process rather than waiting an entire year to address any challenges encountered. I could have also included principals in the principal supervisor/EO PD. There is a need to reemphasize the role of the principal as instructional leader, coach, and mentor as a conduit to influencing teacher performance and student achievement (Gordon, 2020; Pscencik & Brown, 2018; Westberry & Hornor, 2022). The dual focus of principal supervisor/EOs and principals could have strengthened the outcomes of the training where both principal and principal supervisor/EO could be working together to support prospective candidates for the principalship.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change Scholarship

The practitioner that I am now is far removed from the practitioner I was at the beginning of my doctoral studies. I appreciate the multifaceted nature of the research process and learned how to collect, analyze, and utilize data to develop conclusions and solutions that could lead to positive change. Through this process, I was able to understand how one problem could be tackled and resolved in different ways. I saw the value in ensuring complete alignment of the various components of the research, including the problem, purpose, and research questions. Achieving complete alignment posed an initial challenge for me, however, once I was able to achieve alignment, the process of completing the research became easier. I achieved a level of fulfillment peering through the literature to discover new ideas and philosophies from researchers in the field. In some instances, I was drawn to their conclusions and other times I found myself thinking of different conclusions. The process drew me into deep thinking, opening my scope of knowledge and understanding of the subject under study. Throughout the coding process, I found myself looking forward to new ideas and conclusions derived from the themes developed. I could see myself growing and becoming more open to new ideas and thoughts. I developed an open mind, not allowing my personal biases to influence my actions throughout the research process.

Project Development and Evaluation

Where I thought my research would have taken me was far removed from the project I developed as a deliverable and solution to the local problem. The process of

project development into implementation plan and the iterative process of project development allowed me to build patience and develop an eye for detail. In my line of work my output level is high as I address many issues and am expected to quickly solve those issues on a daily basis.

Leadership and Change

My growth as a practitioner has caused me to increase my perspectives on how solutions can be garnered where challenges present themselves. I now understand that there is no simple or single answer or approach to challenges faced within the education system. I find myself asking what are practitioners and researchers in the field saying on this issue? Where else can I look for a solution to this problem? What have others tried previously? What worked? What did not work? I also find myself talking through issues with colleagues at the local site to gain perspective on the issue under review. The iterative process of the research with its many feedback returns caused me to look at solution finding in a more scholarly way. I have learned to review, revise and reflect on processes and actions. I have been able to see greater quality work being produced at the organizational level. I am better able to evaluate systems and processes to achieve the goals of the education system that I supervise.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

The body of work produced will not only impact my practice but that of the entire education system that I am part of. My project provides training for principal supervisors/EOs. Those practitioners influence change within schools making for positive social change within the entire system. Before my work with Walden, positive social

change was not part of my vocabulary, nor did I think of social change as part of my practice. The project is premised on positive social change. The iterative process of this research has taught me the value of enlisting feedback, patiently listening with a view to effecting change. I have made it part of my routine to engage in scholarly research once there is an issue to unravel while being reflective of decisions made. As I reflect on the body of research conducted for my study, I realized that I have added valuable information relevant to small island developing states like mine. The information posited can be used as a basis for other research work in the field within small island developing states. Considering the scarcity of research available on the new role of superintendents/principal supervisors/EOs, my project will not only provide scholarly data but may become the catalyst for additional research in the field of study. Overall, this work has not only impacted me as an educator and practitioner, but it has also influenced the work I do with my peers and the principles of social change has become a work in action not only for me, but for my office.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Implications

I intend to present my research as part of the national research symposium. This has national reach. I also intend to present my findings to our policy makers and decision makers as I make the proposal for the implementation of my project. As part of the PD, I will present the findings of my research to all principal supervisors/EOs and other stakeholders present. The work of principal supervisor/EO will have far reach into schools as they work with principals and prospective principals to develop a principal

core capable of positively influencing students' achievement. My research has the potential to touch the entire education system. I foresee social change being affected in the way we mentor, coach and support educators. I also see the principles of joint work, CoP and how the evaluation and assessment of our prospective principals is conducted being improved resulting in systemic social change. That social change is within the context and boundaries of my project. I have benefited from conducting this research. The impact on my practice has been far reaching. The participants in my project will also benefit at the individual level as they grow as educators and as they improve their work in the field.

Theoretically, my research was premised on Dickenson's recruitment and selection model. My project was premised on the professional development model for training and supporting prospective principals to the principalship. Methodologically the PD was developed to ensure that each principal supervisor/EO develops the skills needed to improve a principal core by coaching, mentoring and fairly evaluating prospective candidates for the principalship. Empirically, PDs guide participants by providing practical experiences for them to implement in their practice.

Application

An important application can be applied to ensuring that PD is not just for teachers or principals but the individuals who support principals and teachers, principal supervisors/EOs. Educational leaders must ensure that all within the education system receive the necessary PD to support them in their practice especially principal supervisors/EOs. The PD that was developed can change how new candidates for the

principalship are considered. The impending growth to prospective principal candidates is expected to positively impact the quality of future principals and by extension improved student achievement. The principal supervisor/EO manual for practice will standardize the practice of principal supervisors/EOs. Additionally, the CoP yearly checkup will ensure sustainability and support for principal supervisors/EOs. That has implications for how PDs are conducted throughout the system.

Future Research

As I reflect on alternative approaches to my research, I contemplate future research that could improve the body of work in the development of a principal core and the support provided for principal supervisors/EOs. It would be of interest to examine the correlation between successful principals and the success of new principals who previously served at their schools or the influence of practicing principals on the type of future leaders in education. I also see relevance in researching whether there is a need to develop a principal supervisors/EOs pipeline. Additionally, it would be worthwhile to find out how the changing role of the principal supervisor/EO is influencing the administrative practices of principals and the impact of that change on student achievement or the perception of principals on the benefits derived from the changing role of the principal supervisor/EO or the perceptions of principals on the impact of the support provided by principal supervisors and whether it is sufficient to alleviate the stress associated with the new demands placed on them as a consequence of their changing roles. I would also like to find out the extent to which Principal Preparation Programs have changed to reflect the changing role of principals.

Conclusion

Through this study, I intended to examine the perceptions of education officials within the ministry of education and the public service commission regarding the recruitment and selection of prospective principals with the leadership skills necessary to positively influence student achievement. The research process was followed resulting in participants in the research being interviewed, responses coded, and findings achieved. The major finding of the research suggested the need to develop a principal core that would lead to a principalship with the leadership skills that could positively influence student achievement. The project developed to support that finding targeted principal supervisors/EO. The project's goal was to provide principal supervisors/EOs with the skills needed to adequately develop that principal core. The PD highlighted the need for the changed role of the principal supervisor/EO to transition from that of manager to that of facilitator, instructional leader, and modeler of good practice.

The research project and project study has provided the means to fill the gap in practice on how we could develop a principal core with the leadership skills needed to positively influence student achievement in the education system under review. If we are going to improve the performance of our students the necessary systemic changes are needed to ensure that those who should enable such performance change must put the necessary structures in place to enable it. If principals remain second only to teachers in influencing student achievement, the education system must ensure that the support needed by principals to achieve that goal is provided. My research provides the gateway to achieving that goal.

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Appendix A: The Project

The project's outcome suggests professional development geared toward building the capacity of education officers to support and evaluate teachers who show ability for leadership. All participants in the research at some point during the interview, suggested that Education Officers (EOs) are integral to the process of identifying, developing, selecting (by being part of interview panels at the MoE) and supporting principals who can positively influence student achievement.

The major findings of the research suggest a need for a well-defined and rigorous recruitment and selection process. Participants included background checking and candidate profiling as a component of the process. This requires specific skills to extract relevant information from data provided on prospective principals. Education officers also form part of interview panels. A major criticism of interviews in the selection process is the inability of interviewers to decipher real-life abilities from the ability of an individual to articulate well (Aravena, 2020). Participant 2 to the research noted that selecting suitable candidates should not be based on “guesswork or subjectivity”. Education officers would need the requisite skills to be able to manipulate the interview process. Theme 2 addressed the need to develop a competent cadre of prospective candidates when there are vacancies. All participants identified EOs as key to that process. They would need training if they are to competently develop a principal pipeline with the specific skills to improve student achievement. Theme 3 highlighted the need for a fair assessment of candidates applying for the principalship. Education Officers as part of their job description are responsible for supervising, supporting, and providing training

for teachers including prospective principals. Education officers would therefore need training to achieve that goal.

Bearing the changing roles of education officers (Al Shehhi & Alzouebi, 2020), I think it prudent to better prepare them for that change. If as part of the changing role, education officers will be expected to develop a leadership core with the skills to improve student achievement, we should train them to achieve that goal competently. Conducting professional development geared toward capacity building for EOs would better enable the MoE/PSC to develop a cadre of prospective principal candidates with the leadership skills to improve student achievement. A 4-day transformative professional development was developed with a yearly CoP PD review.

Agenda

DAY ONE

- | | | |
|--------------|--|--------------|
| 8:30 – 8:50 | Registration/Mingling | |
| 8:50 – 9: 30 | Opening Ceremony | |
| | Opening Prayer and National Anthem | (5 minutes) |
| | Remarks – Minister of Education | (10 minutes) |
| | Song | (3 minutes) |
| | Remarks – Director of Education | (7 minutes) |
| | Workshop Logistics | (5 minutes) |
| | Break /Departure of Minister (Optional) | (10 minutes) |
| | Call to order | |
| 9:30 – 9:45 | Ice Breaker (Working Together-Team Building Exercise) | |
| | <i>Each table will be given 10 paper cups stacked in one pile and two strings attached to opposite ends of a rubber band. They are expected to create a pyramid with the cups without touching them. All members of the team must participate in the exercise. The first team to complete the pyramid gets a prize. They will explain briefly to the PD their strategy for completion.</i> | |

- 9:45 – 11:00 Session 1
 One Day in the Life of a Successful Principal Dr. Colin Greene
 Question & Answer - Moderated by Ezra Greene (25 minutes)
Goal: Provide a context for the changing role of school principals
- 11:00 – 12:00 Session 2
 Group Discussion Ezra Greene
 Case: From the indicators presented in the previous address and your expectations from the field, develop the job description of the new-aged principal
Goal: Development of changed job description of a school principal
- 12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH
- 1:00 – 2:00 Session 3 Ezra Greene
 Group Presentations: Job Description of the new-aged principal
Goal: Develop the base (principal job description) for the next session
- 2:00 – 3:00 Session 4 Ezra Greene
 Group Discussion
 Case: From the job description developed align the role of the principal with that of the principal supervisor/EO
Goal: Develop the expectations of the new aged principal supervisor/EO
- 3:00 – 4:15 Session 5 Ezra Greene
 Group Presentations: Job Expectations of the Principal Supervisor/EO
Goal: Develop the base (principal supervisor/EO) job expectations
- 4:15 – 4:30 Exit Slip
- 4:30 End of Session

DAY TWO

- 8:30 – 8:45 Registration/Call to Order
- 8:45 – 9:00 Ice Breaker (Strengths Affirmation Activity)
Post-It notes will be placed on the table. Participants should write something they admire about various participants and stick it to their back as a “talk to my back” activity. The persons could volunteer to say what was written about them.
- 9:00 – 9:30 The Day in Review Ezra Greene

Goal – Discussion on exit slips from yesterday’s session to include reflection of the day’s activities

Session 1

Goal: Discussion and improvement of our practice for recruiting and selecting principals

9:30 – 10:00 The Recruitment and Selection Process Director of Education

10:00 – 10:30 Presentation of major findings to my Research Ezra Greene

10:30 – 10:40 BREAK

10:40 – 12:00 Group Discussion/Presentations Ezra Greene
Discussions: process versus presentation of findings (40 minutes)
Presentations: suggestions for improvement (60 minutes)

12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH

Session 2

Goal: Critical thinking activity of the Interview Process

1:00 – 1:30 The Interview PSC Member

1:30 – 3:00 Video Viewing/Discussions
Participants will be divided into three groups. Each person will be asked to call a number between 1 to 3. They will be assigned to break out rooms based on the number called. Each group will dissect the interview. They will identify an excellent observation/action during the interview and one observation/action that could be improved. They will make suggestions on how it could have been improved.

Group Presentation

Each group will make presentations to the entire PD on their dissected video. An opportunity will be provided for all participants to have an input in the discussion.

At the end of the discussion, each participant will enter the of the candidate they think should get the job in a Word Grow App. The candidate with the largest name on the Word Grow App will be considered successful.

3:00 – 3:15 BREAK

Session 3

Goal: Practical Skill building activity

3:15 – 4:00 Background checking/Candidate Profiling

Quality Assurance/Security Unit, VC Bird International Airport

- 4:00 – 4:30 Group Discussion
Case: Review of the MoE Background Check Instrument versus Candidate Profiling
Ezra Greene
- 4:30 – 5:00 Group Presentations (highlight two changes you would make to the instrument. There should be no duplications of responses given previously)
- 5:00 – 5:15 Exit Slips
- 5:15 End of Session

DAY THREE

- 8:30 – 8:45 Registration/Call to Order
- 8:45 – 9:00 Ice Breaker – Networking
Each group will be given some skittles in a bowl. They must share the skittles equally among the team. Depending on the colour they will be asked to speak about their practice. A colour question list will be placed on table.
- 9:00 – 9:45 The Day in Review
Goal – Discussion on exit slips from yesterday’s session to include reflection of the day’s activities
Ezra Greene
- Session 1
Goal: Create the context for the expectations for Principal Supervisors/EOs
- 9:45 – 10:00 The Principal’s Pipeline – A view from the Research
Ezra Greene
- 10:00 – 10:10 BREAK
- Session 2
Goal: Skill building exercise
- 10:10 – 12:00 Coaching and Mentoring?
Mrs. Paula Spencer (UWI)
- 12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH
- 1:00 – 2:00 Coaching and Mentoring in Practice
Mrs. Paula Spencer (UWI)

Case: Each group will be given a scenario. They will be expected to explain how they would coach that prospective principal.

- 2:00 – 3:00 Presentations/Discussion
- Session 3
Goal: Highlight the importance for support within the principal supervisor/EO core
- 3:00 – 4:15 CoPs – Effective Use to Build Practitioners Discussion/Question & Answer (20 minutes) Dr. Cynthia Crump
- 4:15 – 4:30 Exit Slip

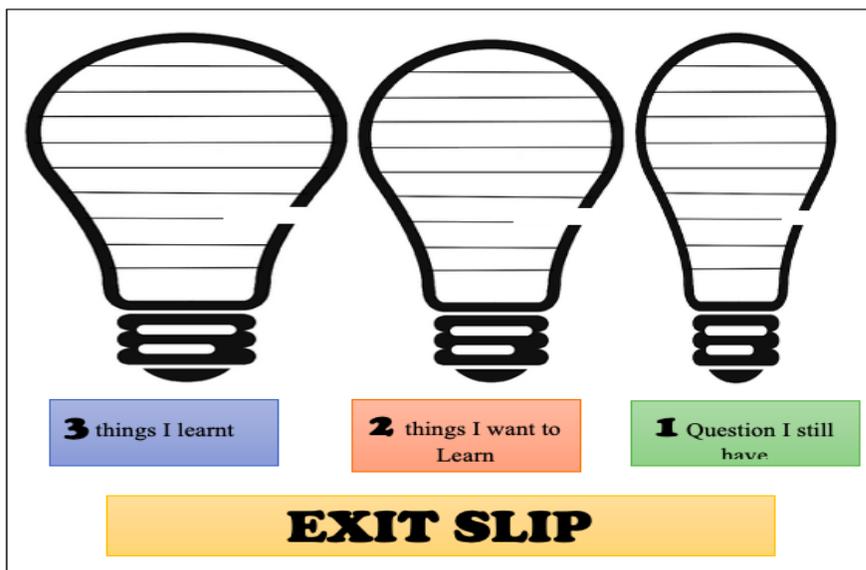
DAY FOUR

- 8:30 – 8:45 Registration/Call to Order
- 8:45 – 9:00 Ice Breaker – Problem Solving Activity
Prompt will be placed in an envelope under one chair for each table. Once it is collected group should complete a word growth (QR Code will be provided for word grow app). They will decide on 5 words that aptly fit the prompt. The word grow will be presented on the screen. The word clusters on the screen (from all the groups) will be used as an introductory visual for Session 1.
- 9:00 – 9:45 The Day in Review Ezra Greene
Goal – Discussion on exit slips from yesterday’s session to include reflection of the day’s activities
- Session 1
Goal: Knowledge building exercise
- 9:45 – 10:50 Joint Work, Superintendent’s Talk and the Power of Communication Dr. Na’eje Buffonge
Principal
Antigua State College
- 10:50 – 11:00 BREAK
- Session 2 (parts 1-3)
Goal: build standardized practical skills (parts 1-3) Dr. Andrew Hunte
UWI

- 11:00 – 12:00 Appraisal and Evaluation – Part 1
Standardizing the Instrument
- 12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH
- 1:00 – 2:00 Appraisal and Evaluation – Part 2
Group Discussion
Case: A 15-minute lesson will be shown. Included in the package will be a completed appraisal of the lesson show. Groups will be expected to assess the completed instrument indicating what they would have done differently.
- 2:00 – 3:00 Appraisal and Evaluation – Part 3
Group Presentations/Discussion – each group will be expected to identify two things they agreed to on the instrument and two things they disagreed with. Groups should not duplicate responses. Once all groups are present, we will accept free responses.
- Session 3
Goal: Develop a manual for practice
- 3:00 – 4:00 PD in Review Ezra Greene
Opportunity for review, implications to practice and the need to develop a manual for practice
- 4:00 – 4:15 Overall Session Evaluation
- CoP CHECK UP**
Facilitator: Dr. Ezra Greene
- 8:00 – 8:15 Call to Order
- 8:15 – 8:30 Welcome
Goals of CoP/PD
- 8:30 – 8:45 Remarks Director of Education
- Session 1
Six Principal supervisors/EOs will present their work with the principal development program for the year under review. A scribe will be assigned to chronicle report and list challenges.
- 8:45 – 9:00 Zone 1
- 9:00 – 9:15 Zone 2

- 9:15 – 9:30 Zone 3
 9:30 – 9:45 Zone 4
 9:45 – 10:00 Early Childhood Development Unit
 10:00 – 10:15 Secondary
 10:15 – 10:45 Panel Discussion (Questions and Answers)
- 10:45 – 11:00 BREAK
- Session 2
CoP Solution Finding
- 11:00 – 12:30 Group Discussion
 Challenges will be divided equally among groups. They should discuss challenges with the view to finding solutions or suggestions for change.
- 12:30 – 1:30 LUNCH
- 1:30 – 3:00 Group Presentations/Suggestions
 Each group will present their suggestions with rationale. The entire team will ask questions and make alternate suggestions/additions.
- 3:00 – 4:00 Next Steps
 Entire group discuss any next steps to keep the principal development program progressive.
- 4:00 – 4:15 Closing Remarks Director of Education
- 4:15 – 4:30 Session Evaluation
- 4:30 Closure

EXIT SLIP



SESSION EVALUATION FORM

Date:

Please respond to the following statements by using the 4-point rating scale to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. Please circle the number that applies.

4 – Strongly Agree 3 – Agree 2 – Disagree 1 – Strongly Disagree

Individual Session Evaluation				
Assess each session at the end of each day				
Rate the extent to which each PD topic will positively impact your practice				
Day 1				
Ice Breaker	4	3	2	1
Day in Review	4	3	2	1
Session 1 – One Day in the life of a successful principal	4	3	2	1
Session 2 – Group Discussion: Job description of new-age principal	4	3	2	1
Session 3 – Presentation: Job description of new-age principal	4	3	2	1
Session 4 – Group Discussion: Job alignment principal with principal supervisor/EO	4	3	2	1
Session 5 – Presentations: Job expectations of principal	4	3	2	1

supervisor/EO				
Day 2				
Ice Breaker	4	3	2	1
Day in Review	4	3	2	1
Session 1 – The recruitment and selection process	4	3	2	1
Presentation of major Findings to my Research	4	3	2	1
Group Discussion/Presentation: Process vz Findings	4	3	2	1
Session 2 – The interview	4	3	2	1
Case Study: Interview in Practice	4	3	2	1
Group Discussion/Presentation	4	3	2	1
Session 3 – Background checking/Candidate Profiling	4	3	2	1
Case Study: MoE instrument Candidate Background	4	3	2	1
Group Presentation: Background Checking Instrument	4	3	2	1
Day 3				
Ice Breaker	4	3	2	1
Day in Review	4	3	2	1
Session 1 – A Principal Pipeline: A View of the Research	4	3	2	1
Session 2 – Coaching and Mentoring	4	3	2	1
Case Study: Coaching and Mentoring Practice	4	3	2	1
Discussion/Presentations of Case	4	3	2	1
Session 3 – CoPs – Effective Use of Building Practitioners	4	3	2	1
Discussion: Questions and Answers	4	3	2	1
Day 4				
Ice Breaker	4	3	2	1
Day in Review	4	3	2	1
Session 1 – Joint Work, Superintendent’s Talk and the Power of Communication	4	3	2	1
Session 2 – Appraisal & Evaluation: Standardizing the Instrument	4	3	2	1
Appraisal & Evaluation: Group Discussion (Case)	4	3	2	1
Appraisal & Evaluation: Presentations & Discussion	4	3	2	1
Session 3 – The PD in Review	4	3	2	1
Overall Learning: Assess at the end of PD				
1. The objectives were clearly stated and they met the learning outcomes	4	3	2	1
2. The information presented were relevant to the learning outcomes	4	3	2	1
3. The skills presented were useful for application to my practice	4	3	2	1

4. Adequate time for questions was provided	4	3	2	1
5. The answers to questions presented were satisfactory	4	3	2	1
6. My knowledge and skills were improved.	4	3	2	1
7. The session will help me improve my practice and how I support the prospective principal candidates	4	3	2	1
8. The presenters provided strategies and techniques that I can use in my practice	4	3	2	1
Overall Workshop Evaluation: Assess at the end of PD				
1. Ice-Breakers were appropriate and helped to build cohesiveness within my team.	4	3	2	1
2. Workshop objectives were stated clearly and met.	4	3	2	1
3. The workshop was well organized.	4	3	2	1
4. The venue was appropriate and supported learning.	4	3	2	1
5. The lunch was appropriate and adequately met my needs.	4	3	2	1
6. The snack was appropriate and adequately met my needs.	4	3	2	1
7. Do you desire more Professional Development training like this one?	4	3	2	1
Future Capacity Building: Could be completed daily or at the end of PD Kindly indicate any area(s) you wish to be considered for additional training and/or support				
Areas for Improvement: Could be completed daily or at the end of PD Kindly indicate below any other area(s) for improvement that you may wish to recommend				
				



Registration Mingling

Opening Prayer

Mrs. Denise Mills, Principal Supervisor/ EO

National Anthem

Winner: National Panorama Competition

Remarks

Hon. Daryll Matthew, Minister of Education

Song

Winner: National School Teenage Pageant

Remarks

Mr. Clare Browne, Esq, Director of Education

Workshop Logistics

Ezra Jonah Greene, Doctoral Candidate

Opening Ceremony

Break

Departure of Minister (Optional)



Call to Order

Ice Breaker Working Together

Each table has 10 paper cups stacked in one pile and two strings attached to opposite ends of a rubber band.

You are expected to create a pyramid with the cups without touching them. All members of the team must participate in the exercise. The first team to complete the pyramid gets a prize. The winning team will explain briefly to the PD their strategy for completion.


SESSION ONE (1)

One Day in the Life of a Successful Principal

Presented by
Dr. Colin Greene


**SESSION TWO (2)
GROUP DISCUSSION**

CASE STUDY

From the indicators presented in the address by Dr. Greene compare his work at the school level with your expectations from the field, develop the job description of the new-aged principal

The information gathered will be used to develop an ideal job description of the new-aged principal

Presented by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate



GROUP PRESENTATIONS

SESSION THREE (3)

Each group should present their Job Description of the new-aged principal

Group Facilitator will use the information presented by the groups to develop ONE job description

facilitated by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate

CASE STUDY

SESSION FOUR (4)
GROUP DISCUSSION

From the ideal job description developed, align the role of the principal with that of the principal supervisor/EO

Presented by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate

GROUP PRESENTATIONS

SESSION FIVE (5)

Each group will use the Ideal Job Description of the Principal developed by the PD to list the job expectations of the Principal/ Supervisor

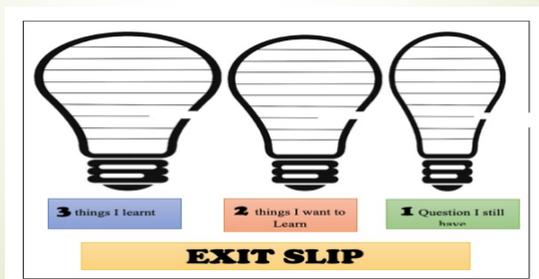
Group Facilitator will use the information presented by the groups to develop a list of expectations for the Principal Supervisor/ EO

facilitated by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate

Each participant should complete Day One (1) of the Evaluation Sheet found in their PD Folder.

The Exit Slip should be submitted to officer at the Registration Desk on departure.

Reminder to watch video for tomorrow's session



The image shows a graphic of three lightbulbs, each with a small colored box below it. The first lightbulb is on the left, with a blue box containing the text '3 things I learnt'. The second lightbulb is in the middle, with an orange box containing the text '2 things I want to Learn'. The third lightbulb is on the right, with a green box containing the text '1 Question I still have'. Below these three boxes is a yellow box with the text 'EXIT SLIP' in bold black letters.



DAY TWO

Registration Mingling



Call to Order

Ice Breaker Strengths Affirmation

Post-It-Notes have been placed on your table. Participants should write something they admire about various participants and stick it to their back as a “talk to my back” activity. Persons could volunteer to say what was written about them.



Day
One

In Review

In this session we will review any questions indicated in the Exit Slip, concerns and AhAh moments resulting from yesterday's PD

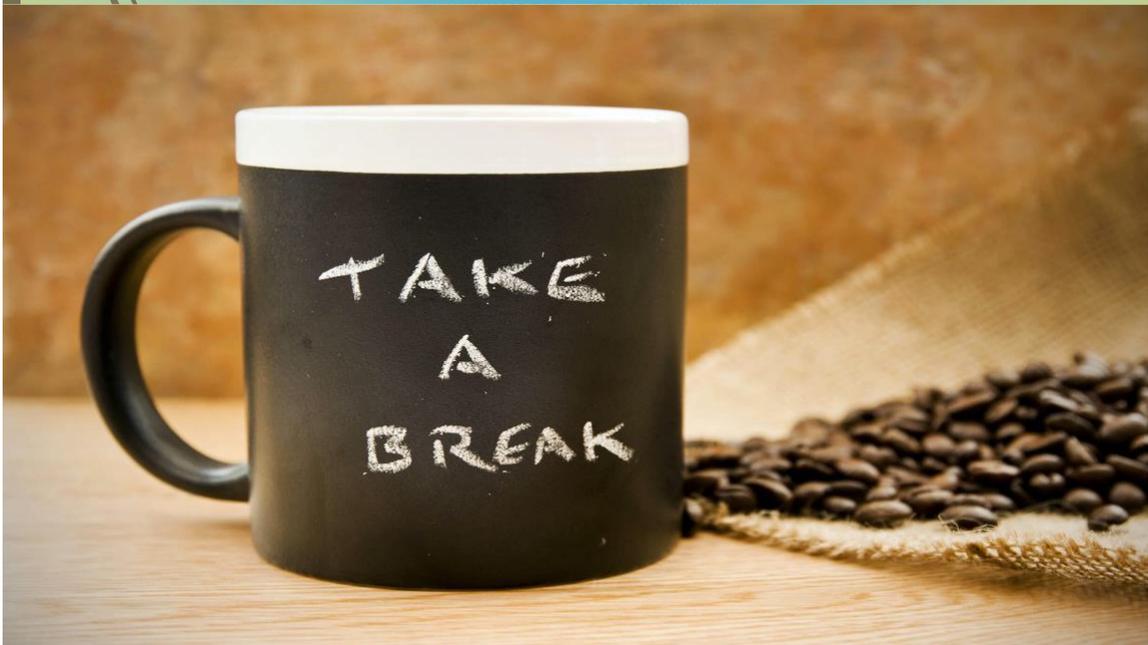
SESSION ONE (1)

The Recruitment and Selection Process

Presented by
Director of Education

Presentation of major findings to my Research

Presented by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate



Discussions: process versus
presentation of findings

(40 minutes)

Presentations: suggestions for
improvement

(60 minutes)

facilitated by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate

**LUNCH
TIME**



THE INTERVIEW

Presented by
Mrs. Eusalyn Lewis
Retired Chief Establishment Officer
& Permanent Secretary

Video Presentation

of a

Principal Candidate

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klpexNZD7XI>

Breakout room one— 0:30 minutes— 28:43 minutes

Breakout room two— 29:05 minutes— 56:30 minutes

Breakout room three— 56:30 minutes— end of video

(All participants should have previously watched all three videos)

Participants will be divided into three groups. Each person will be asked to call a number between 1 to 3. They will be assigned to breakout rooms based on the number called. Each group will dissect the interview. They will identify an excellent observation/action during the interview and one observation/action that could be improved. They will make suggestions on how it could have been improved.

facilitated by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate



Group Presentation

Each group will make presentations to the entire PD on their dissected video. An opportunity will be provided for all participants to have an input in the discussion.

At the end of the discussion, each participant will enter the candidate they think should get the job in a Word Grow App. The candidate with the largest name on the Word Grow App will be considered successful.

The issue of interview subjectivity will be discussed briefly

facilitated by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate



SESSION THREE (3)

Background checking/ Candidate Profiling

Presented by
Mr. Neville Parker
Coordinator
Quality Assurance/ Security Unit
VC Bird International Airport

Review of the MoE Background Check Instrument versus information from Candidate Profiling Address

**Ministry of Education
Background Checks/New Applicants**

The goal of this confidential report is to provide additional information concerning the suitability of new applicants for leadership positions within schools. The data can be gathered via telephone or face to face conversations or in writing. Please be assured of your anonymity as the information will not be shared directly with applicants or placed on their file, however, candidates will be informed that background checks were conducted. We may use the data provided during the interview process. The discretion is yours to share this information with the candidate.

Instructions
Kindly return form as a PDF to ejonahgreene@ab.gov.sg or in a sealed envelope to the office of the Deputy Director of Education.

Personal Information
Name of Applicant: Post applied for:
No. of years at school: No. of years in the service: Click for options

Performance of Candidate
Have assessments been done on applicant? Yes No Informative/ anecdotal

Performance rating:
Distinguished (90-100%) Very Good (89-80%) Competent/Good (65-79%)
Submarginal (45-54%) Unacceptable (44% and below)

Planning and Organization: Distinguished Very Good Competent Submarginal Unacceptable

Instructional Process: Distinguished Very Good Competent Submarginal Unacceptable

Classroom Management: Distinguished Very Good Competent Submarginal Unacceptable

Assessment: Distinguished Very Good Competent Submarginal Unacceptable

Interpersonal Relations: Distinguished Very Good Competent Submarginal Unacceptable

Professionalism: Distinguished Very Good Competent Submarginal Unacceptable

Punctuality: Distinguished Very Good Good Submarginal Unacceptable

Regularity: Distinguished Very Good Good Submarginal Unacceptable

Are there any extenuating circumstances that may influence punctuality/regularity?

School Life

How involved is the candidate in school life?

Committees involved in/capacity: Chair Member Other List committees or describe involvement

How did the candidate perform on those committees?

Does the candidate demonstrate willingness to participate in school led activities? Always Sometimes Seldom

How does the candidate demonstrate initiative?

Leadership Capacity:

Will a principal leave that person in charge if they must be off campus or have them serve in the role of supervising staff? Yes No (why not?) N/A (explain?)

Has that candidate served in a leadership/unofficial acting principal/deputy/head of department role?

What is the level of competence when given the opportunity to lead?

If not thought of in that manner, why not?

If the candidate is presently serving in a leadership capacity, has their leadership ability demonstrated that they can take on added responsibility?

Does the candidate demonstrate Team Spirit? Always Sometimes Seldom
Additional comments

Does the candidate get along well with others? Always Sometimes Seldom
Additional comments

Does the candidate resolve conflicts amicably? Always Sometimes Seldom
Additional comments

Is the candidate an Instructional Leader? Yes No Sometimes

How has the candidate demonstrated instructional leadership qualities in the conduct of his/her duties?

Does the candidate demonstrate attributes that could build instructional leadership capabilities? (Planning for instruction, observation of teachers, classroom management, positive role model, positive behaviour management in action etc.) Explain

What is the leadership capacity of the candidate in his/her present role?

Does the candidate encourage colleagues into positive action and behaviour, or is there a tendency to undermine actions (words, deeds). Is he/she a vocal advocate for positive change? Explain

In your view, does the candidate have the capacity to provide the needed social change and capacity to lead the education system (within the scope of the job applied for) in the best interest of the education system?
 Excellent Capacity Some capacity In time Support and training will get him/her there
Explain

Any other comments that might help us to be make the best decision for the education system as per candidate fit for the position applied for:

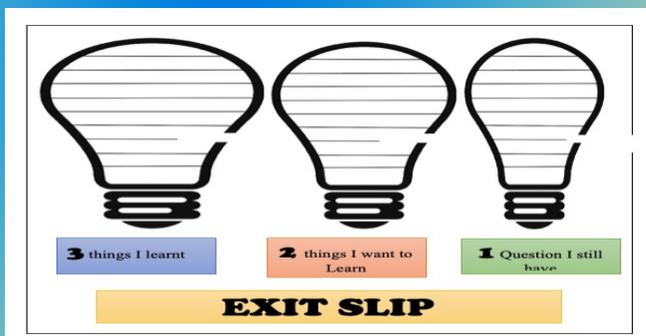
Group Presentation

Each group should highlight two changes you would make to the instrument. There should be no duplications of responses given previously

facilitated by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate

Each participant should complete Day Two (2) of the Evaluation Sheet found in their PD Folder.

The Exit Slip should be submitted to officer at the Registration Desk on departure.



The Exit Slip form features three lightbulb icons, each with horizontal lines for writing. Below the first lightbulb is a blue box with the text "3 things I learnt". Below the second lightbulb is an orange box with the text "2 things I want to Learn". Below the third lightbulb is a green box with the text "1 Question I still have". At the bottom of the form is a yellow box with the text "EXIT SLIP".

PD EVALUATION



DAY THREE

Registration Mingling



Call to Order

Ice Breaker Networking

Each group will be given some skittles in a bowl. They must share the skittles equally among the team. Depending on the colour they will be asked to speak about their practice. A colour question list will be placed on table

Day 2 In Review

In this session we will review any questions indicated in the Exit Slip, concerns and AhAh moments resulting from yesterday's PD

The Principal's Pipeline A view from the Research

SESSION ONE (1)

Presented by
Ezra Jonah Greene
Doctoral Candidate



Coaching & Mentoring in Practice

Case Study

Each group will be given a scenario. They will be expected to explain how they would coach that prospective principal

SESSION TWO (2) Discussion

SCENARIOS				
I'm overwhelmed	I am not sure what I am doing but I am ready to give it a try. I know I can do it	I have been doing this for so many years. I no longer think I can reach those students. I think its time to give up.	Supporting the teachers in my department is getting tougher and tougher. Am I cut out for this? Can I achieve the goal of the principalship? If I am having a tough time working with this small group can I actually become a principal?	I have been doing this for over 20 years. I am a deputy principal and I think I am doing all the right things. Why am I being overlooked for the principalship? Am I good enough?

facilitated by
Mrs. Paula Francis-Spen
UWI



Coaching & Mentoring in Practice

Case Study

Each group will be given a scenario. They will be expected to explain how they would coach that prospective principal

SESSION TWO (2) Presentation

SCENARIOS				
I'm overwhelmed	I am not sure what I am doing but I am ready to give it a try. I know I can do it	I have been doing this for so many years. I no longer think I can reach those students. I think its time to give up.	Supporting the teachers in my department is getting tougher and tougher. Am I cut out for this? Can I achieve the goal of the principalship? If I am having a tough time working with this small group can I actually become a principal?	I have been doing this for over 20 years. I am a deputy principal and I think I am doing all the right things. Why am I being overlooked for the principalship? Am I good enough?

facilitated by
Mrs. Paula Francis-Spen
UWI

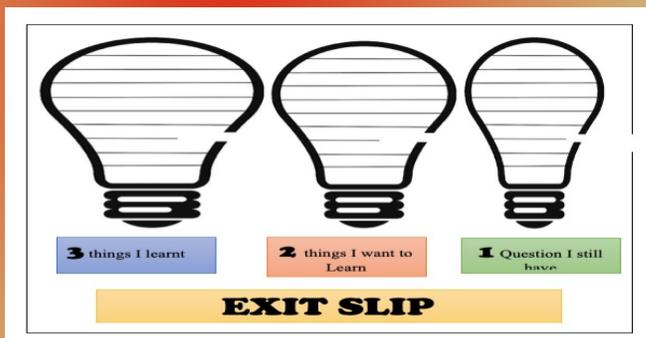
CoP

Effective Use to Build Practitioners

Presented by
Dr. Cynthia Crump

Each participant should complete Day Three (3) of the Evaluation Sheet found in their PD Folder.

The Exit Slip should be submitted to officer at the Registration Desk on departure.



3 things I learnt

2 things I want to Learn

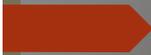
1 Question I still have

EXIT SLIP



DAY FOUR

Registration Mingling



Call to Order

Ice Breaker Problem Solving Activity

Prompt will be placed in an envelope under one chair for each table. Once it is collected group should complete a word growth (QR Code will be provided for word grow app). They will decide on 5 words that aptly fit the prompt. The word grow will be presented on the screen. The word clusters on the screen (from all the groups) will be used as an introductory visual for Session 1

DAY 3

In Review

In this session we will review any questions indicated in the Exit Slip, concerns and AhAh moments resulting from yesterday's PD

Joint Work, Superintendent's Talk and the Power of Communication

Presented by
Dr. Na'eje Buffonge
Principal, ASC

BREAK TIME



Appraisal & Evaluation Standardizing the Instrument

Presented by
Dr. Andrew Hunte
UWI/fIC





SESSION TWO (2)
Case Study

Appraisal & Evaluation Case Study

A 15-minute lesson will be shown. Included in the package will be a completed appraisal of the lesson show. Groups will be expected to assess the completed instrument indicating what they would have done differently.

Facilitated by
Dr. Andrew Hunte & Ezra Greene



SESSION TWO (2)
Presentations

Appraisal & Evaluation

Each group will be expected to identify two things they agreed to on the instrument and two things they disagreed with. Groups should not duplicate responses. Once all groups present, we will accept free responses.

Facilitated by
Dr. Andrew Hunte & Ezra Greene



Opportunity for review, implications to practice and the need to develop a manual for practice

Each participant should complete the Evaluation Sheet found in their PD Folder and submit it to the Registration Desk

PD EVALUATION





CoP CHECK-UP Registration Mingling



Call to Order

Ice Breaker

Team Building Marshmallow Challenge

Each group has 20 sticks of dry spaghetti, a long piece of string, some tape and a marshmallow.

The goal is to see which team can build the tallest structure with the marshmallow on top of the finished product.

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Ezra Jonah Greene



Remarks

Director of Education



One Year's Work in Brief

- ▶ Principal Supervisor/ EO – Zone 1
- ▶ Principal Supervisor/ EO – Zone 2
- ▶ Principal Supervisor/ EO – Zone 3
- ▶ Principal Supervisor/ EO – Zone 4
- ▶ Principal Supervisor/ EO – Secondary
- ▶ Principal Supervisor/ EO – Early Childhood Development

CoP Solution Finding

Challenges indicated in previous session will be divided equally among groups. They should discuss challenges with the view to finding solutions or suggestions for change.



CoP Solution Finding

Each group will present their suggestions with rationale. The entire team will ask questions and make alternate suggestions/ additions



NEXT STEPS

Entire group discuss any next steps to keep the principal development program progressive

Closing Remarks

Director of Education



Appendix B: The Interview Protocol

Interview date: Interviewee Code: Interview Start Time:

Conceptual Framework	Interview Questions	Note: Observations and Reflection
Recruitment:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the stages in the recruitment process? 2. Describe how new recruits are made interested in the principalship. <p>(Probe: what methods are used to demonstrate interest? Is tapping or nudging into the principalship practiced? How does acting positions work to encourage interest into the principalship? Do you use acting as a method of nudging or tapping prospective candidates into the principalship?)</p>	
Recruitment: Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What are the basic requirements expected of potential candidates to the principalship? <p>Probe: In your opinion, what other basic requirements are needed of principals whose primary goal is to improve student achievement? How do you suggest they present those to a panel of interviewers?</p>	
Recruitment: Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Although not indicated in your advertisements, how do you assess the leadership and management ability of prospective applicants to the principalship? <p>Probe: How will you assess the application of the leadership and management ability the prospective candidate purports to possess?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. In addition to the basic requirements indicated earlier, what competencies do 	

	you expect potential principal candidates to possess?	
Recruitment: External Environment	6. How does public image of a school influence interest of prospective candidates when vacancies arise?	
Recruitment: External Environment	7. How does job awareness impact best fit for positions advertised? Probe – how do you think job awareness could be improved? 8. What is included in your recruitment toolkit? Probe – what else do you think should be included in the tool kit, e.g., advertisements, flyers, etc.,)	
Recruitment & Selection Worker Characteristics	9. Describe how worker characteristics are assessed when determining best fit. (probe – what characteristics do you look for in candidates; how do you assess whether candidates have those characteristics? What types of artifacts do you require as proof that candidates possess those characteristics?)	
Recruitment & Selection Worker Characteristics	10. Describe how an assessment of the self-efficacy of the applicant in relation to determining best fit is/could be done. (probe – how do you value or assess self-efficacy? What methods do you use to assess self-efficacy)	
Selection: The Work	11. Describe how the assessment of an applicant's ability to do challenging work and diverse tasks important to assessing best fit? (probe – how do you assess the possession of those abilities?)	
Retention: The Work	12. In your assessment of applicants, how do you examine the candidate's	

	realistic portrayal of the expectations for the job when determining best fit?	
Selection: The Work	13. Describe how you match skills, interest and knowledge for the job when assessing best fit? (probe – what tangible methods of assessment are required? What is included in your Selection toolkit – interview, fact-finding interview, written exercise, portfolios, etc.,)	
Selection: Job portrayal	14. How do you assess the school’s climate against the applicant’s characteristics when determining best fit? (probe – what methods/criterion is used to do that?)	
Selection: The work	15. How does the applicant’s decision-making ability help to determine best fit? (probe – how do you assess that ability)	
Learning Organization	16. How do you assess the applicant’s ability to lead a learning organization when selecting the best applicant for the job? (i.e., ability of candidates to adapt and create change within the organization and their influence in initiating such change)	
Selection: The work	17. Describe how you assess the applicant’s ability to provide support to their learning environment if selected? (Team support, emotional support, practice support)	
Selection Process	18. When selecting final candidates for the principalship, what guidelines or criterion are followed? 19. What is the most difficult part	

	<p>of the recruitment and selection process?</p> <p>20. What would you change if you were able to?</p>	
Learning Organization	<p>21. What would you recommend to improve the recruitment and selection process to achieve the goal of hiring principals with the ability to improve student achievement?</p>	
The learning Organization	<p>22. As you reflect on our discussion, do you have any comments or recommendations to improve how principals are recruited and selected?</p>	
<p>CONCLUSION</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time out to participate in my research. Your vast experience as a leader in education will be instructive to my research. As part of the member checking process, I would like to send you, via email, a draft copy of the transcripts and findings. Once received, if you would like to add additional information or correct any understanding I would have gathered, please indicate. If needed, we could set up an appointment to discuss those understandings. Do you have any questions for me?</p>		
<p>Turn Off Recording</p>		
<p>Interview End Time:</p>		

Appendix C: Recruitment Email

Dear

I am seeking your support in serving as a participant to research I am conducting in partial fulfillment of a Doctor of Education Degree from Walden University. The purpose of the study is to explore how the Ministry of Education and Public Service Commission perceives how to recruit and select principals with the leadership skills and knowledge necessary to positively impact student achievement in a local public school system within a small island Caribbean state.

Your perspectives on the issue will be gathered using an interview. Your identity will be protected and the information gathered will only be used for the purpose of this research. The interview will take place at your convenience and should last between 45 – 60 minutes. Your participation is integral to my successfully completing my final project for my doctoral degree. If you wish to participate in the research, please reply to this email indicating the words “I will participate” in the body of the email.

This research has the potential to effect positive social change within the education system and could influence how principals are recruited and selected. I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to you in the hope that you will serve as a participant in my research. I look forward to collaborating with you through this very exciting journey.

Thank you.

Ezra Greene

Doctoral Student, Walden University