


2016

Graduates' Perceptions of an Early Childhood Education Teacher Training Program in Jamaica

Patricia Jacobs
Walden University

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Walden University

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Patricia Jacobs

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2016

Abstract

Graduates' Perceptions of an Early Childhood Education Teacher Training Program in

Jamaica

by

Patricia A. Jacobs

MSc., Central Connecticut State University, 2003

B.A., University of the West Indies, 1988

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

August 2016

Abstract

Teacher training institutions in Jamaica have been introducing, developing, and revamping undergraduate degree programs. There is, however, little evaluation of these efforts. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine The Mico University College's early childhood education undergraduate degree program by exploring the lived experiences of its graduates. The research questions elicited from the participants their views about how changes were being implemented in the program, and how they impacted the institution's development and improvement, how major policy shifts related to changes in national educational policies, and how together these shifts may impact future processes at The Mico and at similar institutions in Jamaica. The study used theoretical frameworks of organization development and performance improvement. In-depth semi-structured interviews were the main source of data collection and were supported by thick description, memoing, reflexive journaling, and document review. Data analysis methods consisted of coding interview transcripts and identifying common themes. The results of the study indicated that the participants commended many of the program's underlying policies and operational practices, but they identified some challenges and areas of weakness. This study may be used as a backdrop to program development and policy initiation at The Mico and at other institutions in Jamaica and the Caribbean as it encapsulates a wide breadth of the lived experiences of the participants and examines key components such as curricula, pedagogy, and assessment. By strengthening their program offerings, The Mico and other teacher training institutions have the potential to improve performance and to contribute to sustainable national development.

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Dedication

Dedicated to the memory of my brother-friend and colleague, Robert Ricardo Pottinger, for his relentless and invaluable support, both professionally and personally, his practical and simply sensible advice, and for going the extra mile in aiding me to cope with the daily grind of life. It was he, for example, who videotaped the lesson I taught when I applied for permanent licensure as a New York City teacher. Then as I navigated my way through my Ph.D. program he was my 'go to person.' He was my unpaid tutor in statistics and my consultant and technician in all things technological.

Although he passed away before the completion of this program, he undoubtedly contributed to this achievement.

He remains in my heart and is always thought of fondly.

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Thanks to a large group of persons who provided tangible support on this project: To my friends and former colleagues, Barbara Cruickshank and Patricia Rochester for your diligent work as peer reviewers and unofficial advisors; to my daughter, Sharlayne, Ramon Rochester, Janett Ismay-Kerr, Francaine Barrett, and Shannica Johnson, for being always accessible to provide any kind of support and who, along with my former students whom I call my angels: Serena, Tiffany, Savannah, Danica, Miranda, and Beatrice assisted with editing, typing and other tasks requiring some depth of technological expertise.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Study

Today's society is characterized by globalization, technological advancements, and the attendant attributes of human diversity and pluralism. With these come challenges such as "high youth unemployment, including the unemployment of teachers, renewed racism clothed in sophisticated rhetoric, those who fear the future, and those who are discouraged by the odds for advancement" (Miller, 2013, p. 5). It is a *knowledge era* in which one of the fundamental determinants of economic growth and productivity is human capital (Van Tiem, Moseley, & Dessinger, 2012, p. 9). To be successful, businesses are finding it necessary to be current, responsive, proactive, and prepared. These developments have obviously impacted the education sector, which according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2013), has had to respond to macro processes such as an influx in the sociocultural diversity among pupils and the weakening of the role played by the family institution and the community fabric as promoters of socialization.

Within this context of fluidity, "the educational landscape is replete with challenges at every level" (James, 2012, p. 5). Educational institutions perforce have had to adapt to a market-driven, private-sector orientation. There is an ever-increasing need for them to develop fresh, innovative approaches to the learning and teaching process, and to the creation of knowledge. Thomas, Herring, Redmond, and Smaldino (2013) suggested that:

Local, regional, and national communities must be engaged in a dialog about how to better prepare teachers for a world of technology and innovation in learning and to set the challenge for preparing every teacher preparation student to be ready to work in a work force—a changing work force that has yet to be imagined. (p. 62)

According to Cheng (2010), there has been a policy shift from the full-public-funding model of education to privatization, increased emphasis on community involvement, and greater concentration on school quality and accountability. Some of the issues related to higher education are variations in the standards of pedagogy delivery, the relevance and practicality of courses, and the constraints in making tertiary education available to students who may be precluded by entry requirements, available space, and cost (The Vision 2030 Plan, 2009).

These developments have signaled a renewed focus on the aim of education and the policies that guide it. The UNESCO has been promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as the public-policy tool by which every human being can acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to arrive at solutions to societal problems and to forge paths to a better future. Referencing the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development's Report, *Our Common Future*, Van Tiem et al. (2012) suggested that sustainability evokes the idea that forms of progress meet the needs of the present while facilitating future generations in meeting theirs. Additionally, Tiem et al. referred to G. H. Brundtland, who presented the Commission's report to the United Nations in Kenya in 1987, by saying that sustainability means that there is fair access to and equitable distribution of knowledge and resources within and

among nations. Down (2011), when explaining the principles of ESD, suggested that “community” has a primary place in this concept. The four principles under the UNESCO banner are “learning to know, learning to live together, learning to do, and learning to be. With ESD another is added: ‘learning to transform oneself and society’” (p. 12). All these related ideas have ramifications for teacher training as the teacher candidate will need to be trained to incorporate them in his or classroom.

Kagoda and Ezati (2013) alluded to Talbert-Johnson (2006) in their argument that teacher education is the most important way of preparing change agents. According to them, educational reforms are realized as a result of the teachers’ awareness of the new changes, their response to them, and the extent to which the changes are incorporated into the teachers’ “daily conversation, professional values, and commitment and knowledge of content” (p. 35). Kagoda and Ezati (2013) further postulated that teacher preparation influences how teacher candidates will, in turn, prepare citizens who will be integral to the process of development within society. The Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean purported that it is generally recognized that teacher training aims to produce a professional who has depth of knowledge of subject material and teaching methods, and who is “autonomous, responsible, reflexive, critical, innovative, effective and socially committed” (p. 50).

The realization of this concept of education will require a special kind of classroom, somewhat like what Pratt (2011) has recommended. She regarded the classroom as a place of plurality with complex interactions evolving from conversations, research, and experiences. Seltzer-Kelly, Cinnamon, Cunningham, Gurland, Jones, and Toth (2011) echoed this sentiment when they intimated that the classroom is an “ecology

that is based upon continual co-creation and mutuality,” one in which there is “conjoint communicated experience,” with the teacher being reflective, complicit, and empathetic (p. 22). These descriptions both have implications for the early-childhood classroom.

According to Lawrence (2010):

Early childhood educators must be experts in child development, understand the role of the teacher in facilitating learning, have the ability to develop parent partnerships, understand the importance of child-initiated learning, and be able to scaffold experiences tailored to a child’s individual development. (p. 210)

This complex process requires sophisticated thinking, a deep understanding of developmental processes, and a commitment to using the teaching/learning situation meet the needs of each child holistically.

In Jamaica, The Ministry of Education has developed a robust plan for the education sector as part of a national development plan, and as a response to the demands of the 21st century and the need for continued and improved nation-building. Called “Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan” (shortened to “The Vision 2030 Plan” in conversation), this plan interprets the National Social Policy Programme (JASPEV) as implying that education is not only about equipping students with appropriate occupational and academic skills, but also about having an educational system that will “produce full literacy and numeracy, a globally competitive, quality workforce and a disciplined, culturally aware and ethical Jamaica citizenry” (The Vision 2030 Plan, 2009, p. 49). The National Development Plan is designed to put Jamaica in a position to achieve developed-country status by 2030, and the vision for the education sector is to have a “well-resourced, internationally recognized, values-based system that

develops critical thinking, life-long learners who are productive and successful and effectively contribute to an improved quality of life at the personal, national and global levels” (p.44).

Teacher training institutions in the country have an integral part to play in the attempt to achieve this specific goal, and in meeting the needs of the 21st century society. They have been initiating new programs and revising the not so new. While all of this is commendable, there must be some means of determining the extent to which the programs are working. This is where there has been a gap. There is not enough feedback on or review of the programs, and it is this gap that I have sought to fill in this study. Indeed, as Wiggins (2011) has contended, “Learning from experience in education has been the subject of little investigation” (p. 19).

Profile of The Mico University College

The changes in the educational landscape and the demands of a competitive global marketplace call for the evaluation of policies for teacher-training colleges in the Caribbean that are now offering degree programs rather than just teaching certificates and diplomas. The Mico University College, formerly The Mico Teachers’ College (The Mico), is the first teachers’ college in the English-speaking Caribbean to attain university college status and to offer degree programs. This metamorphosis is occurring as The Mico tries to maintain “its capacity to respond to the changing developmental needs of the Jamaican and Caribbean society” and to “attract able and ambitious students and to provide them with high quality education” (The Mico University College, 2012, p. 3).

The Mico is attempting to re-brand itself and earn bragging rights for best-practices in teacher education. It is seeking to develop a more strategy-based and

futuristic approach that, among other things, focuses on maintaining “the requisite standards, and quality assurance measures” (Packer, 2012, p. 6). The Mico wants to be the hallmark of “good governance” and wants to define what it calls the “new teacher” and “the new leader” (Packer, 2013, p. 8).

This ambition is borne out in the mission of the institution:

To support national and regional development through well-educated populations by equipping local, regional, and international students with the required Teacher Education knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. (The Mico University College, 2013, p. 10)

This mission is undergirded by the institution’s goal of having a “life-changing impact” on the professional and personal development of its graduates (a) by being the university of choice in the Caribbean for policy makers, employers, and for students pursuing degrees in Teacher Education; (b) by developing critical thinkers and problem solvers who embrace life-long learning; (c) by contributing effectively to an improved quality of life at the personal, national, and global levels; and (d) by being financially sustainable (The Mico University College, 2013, p. 10). The vision and mission of the institution are in turn predicated on a philosophy which includes the following premises:

- Learning is a lifelong process that promotes personal and professional development.
- Learning is a process for the construction of knowledge through multiple perspectives of reality and authentic assessment.
- The learner is the centre of the educational experience.
- Integration of theory and practice enhances curriculum development and leadership.

- The practitioner's personal philosophy of teaching emerges from reflective practice and is responsive to contextual demands.
- The ripple effect of personal benefits to the prospective teachers transcends beyond their immediate sphere of influence. (The Department of Education, 2008, p. 4)

At 175 years old, The Mico is the oldest teacher-training institution and the only university college whose *raison d'être* is teacher education in the English-speaking Caribbean. Its focus was initially training teachers for the elementary level, but by the end of the 1970s it had added a secondary program and was training the largest number of secondary-school teachers in the country. By the 1980s, in response to societal needs, the institution started preparing and graduating teachers in Special Education for the entire English-speaking Caribbean. Later, with assistance from the Government of the Netherlands, the College established a diagnostic and therapeutic center, now The Child Assessment and Research in Education Centre (CARE Centre), to diagnose the learning challenges of multiple-handicapped children, and to design individualized instructional programs for them. The CARE Centre, as the only such institution of its kind in the Commonwealth Caribbean, has gained international recognition.

In 1986 The Mico offered its first undergraduate degree in Special Education in partnership with the University of the West Indies, and eventually launched a major thrust toward developing and offering other degree programs up to the graduate level. Thanks to an Act of Parliament on July 2, 2006, the institution was granted permission to grant degrees. The institution now offers undergraduate degrees through the Faculty of Education, the faculty of Humanities and Liberal Arts, and the faculty of Science and Technology. The Bachelor of Education degree in Early Childhood Education is offered

by the Department of Early Childhood Education which is one of the departments in the Early Education Department in the Faculty of Education. Additionally, the institution has established some off-site campuses to make its offerings accessible to more students, and is contemplating developing a suite of courses for online delivery.

Attempts are being made to “forge academic partnerships with other institutions of excellence” (Packer, 2012, p. 6) locally, regionally, and internationally, and to engage and build a *virtual outreach* strategy that is technology-driven and capable of enhancing sustainability. As such, one of the University College’s central tasks is to build a research culture as shown by the establishment of the Institute of Technological and Educational Research (ITER), which serves as a medium through which the institution responds to the “broad education-related problems and needs of society beyond the constraints in which the academic departments function” (The Mico University College website, 2015, sec. ITER). ITER now publishes its peer-reviewed Journal of Education and hosts an annual “research day.”

A research culture is built on the division of intellectual labor among the teaching, research, and leadership functions of an institution. It is along this vein that The Mico is seeking to competently develop an interdisciplinary matrix by creating a potpourri of complementary assets and activities of the departments and faculties. As a research-led university, The Mico is therefore “primarily committed to generating radically different research products in theoretical and applied policy studies that help to solve educational problems and change the social landscape” (The Mico University College website, 2015, sec. ITER).

But to do all of this and to contribute to nation-building, The Mico must look outward. It must see itself as a community rooted in and building connections with the surrounding community. In the context of inter-connectedness, and in keeping with The Mico's founding principles, its work must be values-based, advocating for equality and justice, while re-invigorating the stock of talent and retaining its human capital in the country. The institution is embracing the concept of the *total university* predicated on the belief that it must be concerned with and interested in the socio-economic development of the societies from which its clientele is drawn. It is no wonder then that three of the premises that inform the institution's guiding philosophy are:

- Any approach to nation building must be pragmatic while being competitive on a global level.
- Teacher education must foster a culture of community, interdependency, self-knowledge, problem-solving, creativity and the proprietorship of learning.
- The provision of opportunities for scholastic pursuits in tandem with developing entrepreneurship is inevitable in the context of the challenges of globalization.

(The Department of Education, 2008, p. 4)

This means that the institution may have to create programs geared towards wealth creation and educational entrepreneurship. The Mico seems to be taking action in response to these realities by offering customized programs and services that are contextually relevant. For example, Science, Mathematics, and Technology are seen as agents that can change people's quality of life, and graduates are encouraged to engage the children they teach in thinking "scientifically and creatively" (Packer, 2013, p. 8).

Problem Statement

There has been very little evaluation (formal and informal) of the newly developed undergraduate degree programs in teacher training in Jamaica in particular and the Caribbean in general. That is, there is inadequate information on how these programs are being implemented, on the challenges involved, on the elements that are working versus those that are not, and on how the programs can be improved. A UNESCO report on the “Background and Criteria for Teacher-Policy Development in Latin America and the Caribbean,” published in 2013, claimed that until recently, many reformers, including international lending agencies, paid scant regard to institutional capacity and the problems of reform implementation. The report suggested that now the reformers have learned that the process of actually developing the reforms and the necessary human capital are critical to reform projects.

There is a plethora of published studies about contemporary education, including its impact on society and on the need to have an educational system at all levels that meets the needs of a fluid society that is technologically advanced and is situated in a highly competitive marketplace. Referencing Hanushek and Woessmann (2008), Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, and Ravina (2011) opined that there is a large amount of evidence that education increases workers’ productivity and consequently their incomes. In their study, these researchers examined the effectiveness of school and teacher characteristics on improving students’ years of completed schooling and learning, and they found that education increases the rate of economic growth. They examined 13 economic and educational studies, but started out with over 9,000 which they then narrowed down to a sample of 79, then 43, and finally 13. The starting number is

indicative of the extent of literature on subjects related to education, and specifically teacher quality.

The literature is replete with studies on such topics as curricula and professional development, and increasingly studies have been published on the programmatic changes at various educational levels. Lawrence (2010), for example, explored how teacher experience, education, and program characteristics contribute to classroom quality. Pantić (2012), on the other hand, examined reforms and developments in teacher education in southeastern Europe, while Newman (2013) reviewed the elevation of publicly-owned teacher training institutions offering certificate programs to prepare teachers for basic schools in Ghana to the tertiary status of colleges of education. Educational issues across various countries have come in for some attention. Martin & Bray (2011), for example, studied tertiary education in small states globally, while George and Lewis (2011) focused on Caribbean programs infusing curricula that are geared towards a global education agenda with local knowledge.

Nonetheless there are gaps in the literature. One is that many of the studies are presented through the eyes of educators and administrators. Hyson, Biggar, Tomlinson, and Morris (2009), who sought to better understand the relationship between the quality of early childhood education programs in tertiary institutions in the United States and children's development and learning, suggested that studies had been done on the benefits of having teachers who had an undergraduate degree or an associate's degree, but noted that these studies had not examined quality, and quality-improvement efforts, in teacher education programs. They further suggested that it might have been useful to examine what factors may contribute to and/or impede efforts being made to raise the

quality of these programs. The participants in their study were faculty and other program leaders. Kagoda and Ezati (2013) explored the relationship between primary teacher preparation and the quality of teachers produced in Uganda. They too used selected tutors as their participants.

Crossley (2011) purported that there has been “substantial” literature on educational research capacity within the last twenty years, but that there has been a concentration of the research within elite specialist organizations and university departments. He argued that in the United Kingdom and the United States, the interest in research has been due in part to criticism that much of the existing social and educational research is faulty. Two of the reasons suggested for this are that the research has not been particularly pertinent to the needs of policymakers and that it has not been accessible to stakeholders. Drawing on the works of Pantić (2008), Pantić et al. (2011), and Zgaga (2006), Pantić (2012) said that there is a “dearth of opportunity for student teachers’ reflection linking theory and practice” (p. 81), and that that is one of the most highly recognized deficiencies of teacher preparation in south eastern Europe.

Specifically, one does not find much research about how new and evolving degree programs in the Caribbean, and in Jamaica in particular, are working. Abdul-Hamid, Abu-Lebdeh, and Patrinos (2011) claimed that there is scarce literature on the effectiveness of education initiatives in developing countries. Steinbach (2013) noted that in the Caribbean island of Trinidad and Tobago, there is a lack of a scholarly culture of enquiry and research with respect to the public school system and other educational institutions there.

The literature seems to indicate that one factor contributing to the lack of reviews is a lack of uniformity in regulations. According to the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (2011), there is a relative lack of regulations with regard to the quality of teacher training, although there are accreditation systems, albeit insufficient ones. They further proffered the viewpoint that uniform quality cannot be assured in many countries because of the heterogeneity of the training provided by virtue of the multiplicity of autonomous teacher training institutions. The recognition that reviews are necessary is highlighted in the UNESCO report by the disclosure that the majority of the countries that were reviewed (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago) were taking action to draw up standards that would enable them to determine the thrust of initial training. The report further explained that some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean face similar challenges in teacher training, but to date there has been no comparative studies on curriculum guidelines and the content of training programs. Where regulations of training programs exist, the report claimed that some are not satisfactory because many regulatory policies and instruments are currently being reviewed.

While homogeneity in regulations does not exist and may not even be desirable, regulations do set some standards. With limitations to the establishment and adoption of such standards, there is an even greater need for educational institutions and systems to routinely review their programs to determine their efficacy. Such reviews require, among other things, the garnering of information on the experience of stakeholders within the teaching-learning context, and there is not enough of that. This means that there has to be critical reflection, which according to Wiggins (2011) is necessary if learning from

experience is to occur. This qualitative, phenomenological study offered just that as I sought to obtain feedback from recent graduates about their experiences as students as well as about whether or not the program changes at The Mico augur well for the institution and relate to the national goals of teacher education as reflected and outlined in The Ministry of Education Vision 2030 Plan.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to review The Mico's Early Childhood Education undergraduate degree program through the lived experiences of current elementary school teachers who had completed the program. I asked the teachers to reflect on their experiences as undergraduate students pursuing the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education at The Mico University College. They commented on how the degree program and the change process from a diploma-granting to a degree-granting institution reflected organizational development at The Mico and related to performance improvement. Additionally, I asked participants to opine on how the changes reflected public educational policy shifts in teacher education and to prognosticate how these policy shifts may increase the efficacy of future programs at The Mico and similar institutions regionally.

Having the graduates share their experiences and perspectives was important, as this established a groundwork for a review of the particular degree program and other programs at The Mico, and has implications for policy evaluation and policy implementation. The report of the Summit of the Americas Regional Education Indicators Project (2011) suggested that it is important to glean information from the greatest cross-section of views, and to have thorough program assessment along with in-depth expert

analysis when conducting research. These are regarded as necessary to prevent the avoidance of important questions or contradictions, and to avoid reaching conclusions and constructing explanations that are largely based on empirical data.

Reece (2013) examined the nature of teacher-student engagement in selected first-year study courses. The research question guiding Reece's study was: "What do students find most meaningful during their engagement with their teachers in the first-year studies courses?" Reece pointed out that the importance of student engagement to student success and retention is critical, but that in existing literature there is a focus on the teachers' perspectives. He suggested that what is lacking in the literature are studies of students' perspectives of teacher performance and course-related factors, and he suggested that such studies may contribute to the retention of undergraduate students. Roofe and Miller (2013), who conducted a study on the concerns about preparation of student teachers at a teacher training institution in Jamaica, postulated that if the concerns of student teachers are not addressed, then there may likely be negative implications for the student teachers' "self-efficacy, locus of control, the perceived habitus of their institution and the dispositions they form towards their chosen profession" (p. 10). They further advanced their position that an understanding of student concerns will help institutions better align their teacher preparation programs with the achievement of positive teacher efficacy, and that this alignment should translate to quality student outcomes. Failure to obtain student feedback via research may result in an institution experiencing difficulties in recruiting and retaining students.

The Mico needs to determine the efficacy of its programs because they are new and they have been developed in response to the country's economic and development

needs, and to national and global educational trends. Guzmán, Castillo, Lavarreda, and Mejía (2013), in making a case for the revamped and evolutionary programs in teacher education, posited the view that effective teacher training policies are needed for the creation of conditions and opportunities for the enhancement of school effectiveness and student learning. In describing the changes in teacher education in the Caribbean, Conrad and De Four-Babb (2013) explained that it evolved from being a “terminal post-secondary certificate for in-service primary teachers to a job entry-level requirement of a degree” (p. 70). Implicit in this statement is what these researchers claimed to be a need for teacher educators to assess and improve their programs, their practice, and their students’ learning. They encouraged educators to review their programs and to compare them with others.

The policy foci of the Ministry of Education in Jamaica, which gives priority to early education, are clearly delineated in the Ministry’s Vision 2030 Jamaica-National Development Plan. In this plan the Ministry says that the education sector should:

- Devise and support initiatives that are directed towards literacy for all, and in this way extend personal opportunities and contribute to national development;
- Secure teaching and learning opportunities that will optimize access, equity and relevance throughout the education system;
- Support student achievement and improve institutional performance in order to ensure that national targets are met;
- Maximize opportunities within the Ministry’s purview that promote cultural development, awareness and self-esteem for individuals, communities, and the nation as a whole;

- Devise and implement systems of accountability and performance management to improve performance and win public confidence and trust;
- Optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of staff in all aspects of the service to ensure continuous improvement in performance; and
- Enhance student learning by increasing the use of information and communication technology in preparation for life in the national and global communities. (p. 7)

These goals, of course, have implications for teacher education. Teachers will have the task of (a) focusing on literacy; (b) optimizing access, equity, and relevance in their programs; (c) developing systems to improve performance; and (d) preparing teachers to live in their national and global communities. The Ministry's mandate, which is in response to global and national trends in education, has led institutions of higher learning to revamp their programs. The Mico is no exception. While there is some literature on related policy issues and on the need for educational institutions to meet the needs of an ever-shrinking global marketplace, according to Wiseman (2012) there is still a lack of research-based policy. She claimed that the ideal of having newly established policies emerging from research results and finding does not currently happen, and that "policy is more likely to emerge from public perceptions based on isolated anecdotes or support for recent educational fads or initiatives" (p. 90). Even if Wiseman's conclusion that research-based policy does not currently exist is an exaggeration, there may still be some measure of validity to the general observation. My study was aimed at providing insight into how the new degree program was being conducted, but it should also prove instructive to The Mico and other teacher-training institutions within and outside the

country as they review and develop educational policies to align with their country's development goals and objectives.

Nature of the Study

This research was a qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study. I interviewed 10 graduates of The Mico who completed the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. The group was representative of the cohorts that had graduated from the program between 2012 and 2015, and consisted of both male and female graduates of varying ages who had different pre-matriculation qualifications and different work experiences before and after pursuit of the degree program. This demographic information was garnered from the questionnaire that I asked the prospective participants to complete prior to the interviews (see pages 123 - 124).

A small sample size is quite apt for the qualitative model of data collection and analysis because, according to Sailor (2013), it serves as a platform for the unique experiences that are being studied. I determined that 10 participants were adequate for this study because data from 10 interviews would lead to saturation and what Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) called the "point of diminishing returns" (p. 23). Exceeding that number would very likely have resulted in a high level of repetitiveness without providing new insights. The efficacy of a small sample size is borne out by Hayes (2012), who in her dissertation used six participants. She argued that this sample size was adequate as it allowed for the collection of deep and rich information, and that the time was ample for the interviewing of the participants. In concurrence with Hayes' position, Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, and Hendry (2011) likewise argued that one benefit of having a reduced number of participants is a richer depth of analysis.

In addition to the interviews, I used thick (rich) description, memoing, and reflexive journaling to add depth to the content and promote trustworthiness.

Additionally, I reviewed the current policy documents of The Ministry of Education in Jamaica, the *Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan: Education Draft Sector Plan* (2009), the programme document of the Department of Early Childhood Education, The Mico University College website, and two graduation booklets. Before the interviews, I surveyed each participant to facilitate the procurement of some background information, and I conducted a pilot test with two graduates. Both of these strategies added validity and trustworthiness.

I used purposive snowball sampling, and recruited initial participants as contact information was available for them. They were able to provide contact for information for other members of their year group. Additionally, I asked members of staff within the Department of Early Education to provide contact information as well.

A qualitative, phenomenological approach is quite effective for this kind of study because it is flexible and adaptive. The researcher is able to explore the meaning the subjects ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2012). When searching for the meaning, structure, and essence of the “lived experience” (Sailor, 2013), phenomenology in particular has much utility. Referencing Van Manen (1990), Moustakas (1994), and Patton (2002), Sailor (2013) stated that phenomenological research must encompass people’s lived experiences as it seeks to provide deeper insight into the nature or meaning of everyday experiences. The focus is on how people make sense of their experiences and the world, how they develop a worldview, and how they transform their experience into consciousness. One important advantage of this type of research is that it may minimize

certain unethical consequences of situations where researchers who, having to display two “faces” when confronted by the requirements of “so called” scientific knowledge and objectivity in the research process, may consequently change their ontological and epistemological assumptions (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009).

The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to identify phenomena through how they are perceived, to get a disinterested elucidation of a phenomenon, and to illuminate specific features. In other words, in-depth information and perceptions must be garnered through inductive, qualitative methods like interviews, discussions, and participant observation. The insider’s perspective represents his or her average everyday normalcy, and it is this normalcy consisting of his or her motivations and actions that is being targeted.

In this study, I worked to present the participants’ descriptions of their cognitive (semantic and linguistic) meanings and of their non-cognitive experiences (feelings and intuition; Converse, 2012). There was, however, some interpretation as the participants reflected on their experiences and I attempted to discover and interpret themes and meaning. The participants’ descriptions and interpretations of their experiences and sharing of their perspectives were procured by way of semi-structured interviews which allowed me to tailor questions based on what the respondents had already said. The interviews included a set of 11 questions, followed by 15 probing questions (see pages 119 – 122). I engaged in follow-up conversations and correspondence by email for the purpose of elaboration and clarification.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided the research. They were:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in Early Childhood Education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?
2. What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflects organizational development and relates to performance improvement at The Mico?
3. What are the graduates' views about how the change is being implemented?
4. What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

Theoretical Framework

I chose organizational development (OD) and performance improvement (PI) as the theoretical frameworks for this research paper. The Mico is in the middle of a change process that has been planned, is long-range, system-wide, and top-down. This change is largely in response to the demands of the external environment including global economic and social trends, evolutionary changes in educational theory and practice, and current policy foci of The Ministry of Education in Jamaica. The changes in policies and subsequently in the academic programs and administrative and support services include elements of the behavioral sciences such as stakeholder participation, human performance, and human development. All these elements fit with the concept of OD. At

the same time PI also applies. The Mico is in fact trying to address a number of problems and issues. These include ensuring that teacher candidates are being adequately trained to meet the demands of the educational sector, and offering programs relevant to the wider society which are aligned to current educational theory and are at the cutting-edge of educational services and practice. In addressing these issues, The Mico cannot ignore the matter of human resources. It must include its workforce in the change process while at the same time endeavoring to strengthen its employees' capabilities and performance. At the heart of this process, therefore, is the institutional culture which must be developed to support the goals and objectives of The Mico.

OD, which embodies a planned, long-range, organization-wide change managed from the top, has been interpreted in various ways by theorists. In general, however, it is influenced by organizational constructs, ontology, and epistemology; all focused on change (Bushe & Marshak, 2009). From a platform of the behavioral sciences, it supports values of human potential, participation, development, and performance as well as the concept of competitive advantage (Cummings & Worley, 2009). It includes management's efforts to improve the organization's problem-solving capabilities and its ability to respond effectively to changes in its external environment. OD is meant to increase organizational effectiveness through planned interventions in the organization's processes through the application of the behavioral sciences. It is concerned with managing planned change, and is an adaptive process for planning and implementing change rather than a blueprint for how things should be done. It is concerned with the sequence of activities, processes, and leadership strategies that will propel organizational

improvements and the transfer of knowledge and skills so that the “system” becomes more equipped to manage change in the future (Cummings & Worley, 2009).

OD can be divided into two elements: process change and structural change (Lunenburg, 2010). Typical intervention activities of process change include gathering data about some organizational or group process, sharing this information with group members involved, and planning actions designed to improve the process. These intervention methods may include survey feedback, team building, process consultation, and quality-of-work-life discussions. Process consultation usually addresses such issues as communication, leadership, decision making and problem solving, group norms and roles, and conflict resolution. Quality-of-work-life interventions are concerned with improving both the value of employees’ psychological experiences at work as well as the workers’ productivity. Included are issues like compensation, working conditions, professional development, and participation in the decision-making process (Lunenburg, 2010). Structural-change techniques involve an adjustment in the organization’s structure to accomplish change goals. Included are such intervention methods as goal setting, job redesign, and strategic planning calling for a re-examination of the organization’s mission in both the internal and external environments (Lunenburg, 2010).

For the organization to develop, certain strategies have to be used. Chief among them is PI. PI is thus the second aspect of the theoretical framework for this study. Regarded as the science and art of improving people, process, performance, organizations, and ultimately society itself, PI is also known as performance technology (PT), human performance technology (HPT), or human performance improvement (HPI; Van Tiem et al., 2012). All four terms, although they each have particular nuances, are

often used interchangeably since they all allude to “a systemic process that links organizational and business goals and strategies with the workforce responsible for achieving the goals” (Van Tiem et al., p. 5). This approach is somewhat eclectic because analytical processes and methods are involved in the selection and implementation of solutions, while intuition and creativity are sometimes required in issues related to people who come to the situations with their values, emotions, idiosyncrasies, and variability. The performance potential of the organization rests on its ability to recruit the right people, build a high-performance culture, engage in strategic planning and coherent decision-making across the organization, implement performance-measurement routines that connect performance information to decision venues, and engender emotional commitment (Hope & Player, 2012; Nielsen, 2013).

Practitioners of PI are expected to “select, design, develop, implement, and maintain performance improvement interventions to alleviate problems or take advantage of opportunities” (Van Tiem et al., p. 5). An approach that is people-oriented, it is grounded in the position that “people drive the change that makes performance improvement happen,” and that teamwork and interdependency are important cornerstones (Van Tiem et al., p. 7). There are two approaches to intervention that may be used: the reactive/engineering-design approach, and the proactive/creation approach. The former is usually predicated on the idea that a problem exists and that gaps between the current situation and the required results should be closed. The latter seeks to arrive at more fundamental questions like determining the underlying values of the organization (Kaufman, 2011).

Operational Definitions

For the purposes of clarity and a grounded perspective, below I have provided a list of frequently-used terms, along with their meanings.

Deontic reasoning: This relates to issues about whether or not actions are allowed or forbidden within a given context, and whether people are obligated to do them or not (Beller, 2010).

Deontic rules: Established by organizations on premise that they have the right to do so, to reinforce them, and to take penal action if there are infractions (Beller, 2010).

Dialogic organizational development: Organizational development brings together the diverse people in an organization for focused and open interactions with the view of effecting lasting and probably unexpected shifts in perspective and behavior (Holman, 2013).

Empirical existential phenomenology: Using qualitative methods like interviews, discussions, and participant observation, the researcher sets out to provide concrete descriptions of lived situations (often first-person accounts). The emphasis is on an individual's own interpretation of his or her experiences, followed by a detailed examination by the researcher of what the participant has said and/or done. Then this description, presented in everyday language, is explored to reveal the essential meaning of the phenomenon. Researchers stay close to what is given to them in all its richness and complexity (Kalof, Dan, & Dietz, 2008).

Epistemology: This philosophical term refers to the theory of the method of knowing. "Knowing," in this context, is used by persons desirous of changing something in their environment to meet the needs of others and to support their aims. Ultimately, the

goal is to improve the situation in which people live (Dewey, 2008; Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009).

Hermeneutical phenomenology: This practice is really an analysis of the descriptions of lived experiences. It includes a synthesized account of the general themes emerging from a careful interpretation of the phenomenon. Useful for gaining insights into people's motivations and actions, this approach embraces subjectivity and emphasizes the importance of individual perspectives and interpretations (Finlay, 2009).

Life-long learning: This term refers to self-motivated learning throughout a lifetime. It requires the learner to engage in self-assessment, to formulate goals and identify learning resources, to participate in professional activities, and to master competencies applicable in the marketplace (Love, 2011).

Organizational development: This process consists of a set of behavioral-science techniques designed to plan and implement change in work settings. The major techniques of organizational development attempt to produce some kind of change in individual employees, work groups, and/or the entire organization. These change techniques, as outlined in the previous section, can be divided into two categories: process-oriented and structural (Lunenburg, 2010). OD comprises a complex system of interventions organized to impact other complex systems (Korten et al., 2010).

Organizational sustainable development: Organizational sustainable development is an attempt to redirect the current organization towards its future potential for the achievement of its strategic goals and the increase of stakeholder satisfaction. It aims for the harmonization of the constant process of change, the use of resources, investment,

scientific-technical development, innovation, and staff development (Zdanyte & Neverauskas, 2014).

Performance improvement: An attempt to set protocols and standards to increase organizational effectiveness. There is a primary focus on defining organizational goals, setting performance targets, and establishing and maintaining accountability targets (Nielsen, 2013; Ziskin, 2013).

Phenomenology: Phenomenology is regarded as both a movement in the history of philosophy as well as a discipline distinct from but related to other key disciplines in philosophy, among them ontology, epistemology, logic, and ethics. At its core is the concept that analysis does not begin with an objective world as in the natural sciences, but with a mental intention--that which the mental is about or directed to (Finlay, 2009; Aspers, 2009).

Social constructivism: The belief that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences via their interactions in a social and historical context (Creswell, 2014).

Sustainable education: Education for sustainable development means including key sustainable-development issues in teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption. It also requires participatory teaching-and learning-methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behavior and take action for sustainable development. Education for sustainable development consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios, and collaborative decision making (UNESCO: Education, 2014).

Sustainable performance improvement: The term *sustainable* refers to performance-improvement projects that successfully overcome challenges and criticisms from conceptualization through implementation to institutionalization and meet or exceed their predicted benefits (Swart & Duncan, 2013).

Assumptions

As in all phenomenological studies, my focus here was on the participants sharing their stories to which I then lent credence. One assumption of this study was that the participating graduates were independent thinkers, not easily swayed by the opinion of others, and not interested in presenting any particular ideology or viewpoint that was not theirs. I assumed that they were thoughtful and honest in their responses and that they relieved themselves as much as possible of biases, ill-feelings, and grudges. I also assumed that they would have had vivid recollections of their experiences including the emotions felt during particular experiences, and that they were familiar with policy issues at the institutional as well as at the national level. In an attempt to retrieve as much of this “archived” material as possible, I made all questions open-ended and requested clarification and supplementation when those were needed.

Another assumption was that all participants would interpret the questions accurately and would precisely and accurately express their opinions to the best of their knowledge. To facilitate this happening, the interview questions were framed in such a way that respondents could relate to them and could easily understand what was being asked. The participants were told that there were no right or wrong answers.

Limitations of the Study

This was a hermeneutic phenomenological study. I therefore asked the participants to describe memories of their lived experiences, but they also shared their opinions, views, and perspectives. This means that there was some interpretation which, of course, is a subjective process. This no doubt introduced various degrees of bias related to the belief systems and expectations participants had brought with them into the teaching and learning situation at The Mico. One may concede that this very likely will impact the transferability of the findings as different persons may interpret an experience differently. This is why I used research methods such as triangulation and thick description because they add depth to the data.

In terms of researcher subjectivity, there was the potential for bias. I worked at The Mico in the past, and have had ongoing relationships with members of staff as well as graduates whom I had taught. I therefore made an attempt to minimize bias by using bracketing and reflexivity, which aided in building credibility. I also had to make sure that I did not become preoccupied with my own emotions and experiences prior to and during the research with both the participants and other members of The Mico community. Focus had to be maintained on the research participants and the phenomenon as it appeared to them.

Of course, one may argue that some subjectivity is welcomed, and some theorists contend that the phenomenological process does not require researcher objectivity. Finlay (2009), for example, posited the view that the researcher should be fully involved, interested, and open to whatever may arise from the interviews and that researcher's subjectivity and intersubjectivity should be embraced. This is suggested in light of the

fact that the phenomenon is examined from people's perspectives. There is also a school of thought that minimizes the idea of subjectivity on the part of the subject by arguing that phenomenology is not just a case of the subject reflecting on the phenomenon, but that the phenomenon (the event) does effect change on the subject. The subject then is part of the experiential event that allows it to become the subject that it is (Mølbaek, 2012).

Delimitations of the Study

Phenomenology is about persons sharing their lived experiences. This study had graduates of The Mico's Early Childhood Education bachelor's degree program telling their "stories." There was some measure of interpretation, but that was not the focus of the study. It was therefore not my intent to measure the success of the degree program in preparing students for the classroom, or to quantitatively determine the impact of the degree program on the classroom practices of the graduates. Rather, I sought to (a) determine how graduates viewed the particular degree program in terms of teacher preparation, and in terms of how it reflected capacity building, organizational development, and performance improvement; and (b) elicit from the graduates their perceptions of how the policy shifts at The Mico mirrored and related to the larger policy framework of the Ministry of Education. It is in light of the evolution that is taking place at The Mico and the purposes for that change that I opted to use OD and PI as the theoretical frameworks. In fact, these are quite suitable because they embrace concepts in other theories such as change management, six sigma, and social constructivism.

I elected to focus on the Early Childhood Education program because of its seminal function in education as the foundation on which all the other levels are

grounded. Ho, Campbell-Barr, and Leeson (2010) opined that early childhood education aids in the physical, social, verbal, cognitive, and intellectual development of children and nurtures the human capital of a society, a function that has taken on increasing significance in today's knowledge-based society. Lawrence (2010) averred that institutions and organizations need to develop their human capital, and suggested that early childhood education is critical to this process. He further adumbrated that the experiences of the early years are indicative of how a person is able to contribute to social development in his or her lifetime.

I drew the participants from the cohorts that graduated since the inception of the program. This choice naturally precluded the perceptions of graduates from other programs, and participant perceptions may have been skewed as a result. There may, after all, have been variations in the perspectives of graduates from different programs based on such factors as the specific curricula, interactions with staff, and program-based resources.

That factor may also have led to biases since every graduating group has its own character and *modus operandi*. There was also the matter of individual differences. No program is static: staff and students bring their own personalities and idiosyncrasies to bear on relationships, lecturers have their own pedagogical styles, and departments tweak their programs to meet varying student needs.

Another delimitation was the fact that some of the interviews were conducted virtually. This means that some elements of non-verbal communication were not observable and others, though observable, were limited. Face to face interviews allow for the demonstration of all five elements of non-verbal communication: proxemics

(communication via how space is used), kinesics (use of posture, gestures facial expression), chronemics (use of time including periods of silence and pacing of articulation), and paralinguistics (tone, pitch, volume, rate of speaking; Mealer & Jones, 2014). Proxemics and kinesics are obviously lost in virtual interviews, but paralinguistics and chronemics are possible. Not having two is not necessarily bad, however. In fact, even the other two should not be judged by the researcher if the study is simply descriptive phenomenology. In the event that hermeneutic phenomenology is being used (as in this study), then care needs to be taken that misinterpretation does not occur and that transferability can be supported. It is the researcher's responsibility to remain engaged and not distracted (Mealer & Jones, 2014), despite all the limitations, and to get the essence of the "narratives."

The sample size was 10. This may be deemed to be inadequate, and therefore a disadvantage. The number of participants in phenomenological research, however, can be relatively small since the goal is not to create results that can be generalized, but to understand the meaning of an experience of participants who have experienced them (Converse, 2012). If the sample size is small, then the researcher may conduct in-depth research and provide thick description. Thick description and reflexivity were two strategies that I used in this study to achieve credibility and confirmability. Despite the lack of focus on generalizability, some transferability was still possible. This is because with thick description, much detail was given. Particular experiences were common among the participants, as was evidenced by points of saturation. What was different were feelings, ideas, and opinions, and even then some of those were still shared by more than one person (see Chapter 3 for a more expansive discussion of sample size).

Significance of the Study

This study has implications for the administration, faculty, and staff of The Mico, students who will pursue programs of study at the institution in the future, and other teacher-training institutions and educational institutions such as primary and secondary schools in the country and in the wider Caribbean region. Evaluating graduate feedback will help the institution review this particular degree program in light of its policies and those of The Ministry of Education. The policies include those aimed at providing teacher candidates with “authentic opportunities for personal development through research and inquiries, reflective practice, critical and creative thinking, self development and problem solving,” and challenging them to “become advocates for the total, holistic development of children and for those initiatives that promote children’s rights and responsibilities” (The Department of Education, 2008, p. 13). Feedback on the particular degree program will likely have an impact on other degree programs, since courses are taught across faculties. This impact of course will be felt in terms of educational practice and curricula, but one can realistically expect that it will extend to the adequacy and quality of the support services, since the latter came in for some attention.

All these results can potentially impact the recruitment and retention of students. If the institution is able to address and improve on weaknesses identified in course offerings and make up for any lack identified in resources, then one can expect that the institution will be able to market itself better to prospective students. Doing so is crucial to the economic viability, capacity building, and sustainability of the institution, especially in light of the increasing competition not only from other teacher-training

institutions who are also upgrading their programs, but also from the many offshore institutions that are now offering undergraduate and graduate degrees on the island.

What happens at The Mico will impact educational institutions across the country since the graduates' reflection on the kind of training they have had can be instructive to policymakers, leaders and administrators in other teacher-training institutions.

Additionally, The Mico is a leading teacher-training institution in the Caribbean, especially in special education. Its programs are not only for domestic consumption, but they have a regional impact as well. Prospective students in the area do leave their countries from time to time to receive training at The Mico, above all in special education. Some of the overseas graduates will be able to contribute to nation-building back home from the skills they have acquired at The Mico.

Even homegrown graduates have the opportunity to impact educational systems regionally and internationally, given increased globalization and the facility with which the global village interacts. In his message to the graduating class of 2013, Professor Emeritus, The Hon. Errol Miller, former Chancellor of The Mico, laid out what he saw as the contribution of Jamaican teachers overseas:

- Jamaica is now a net exporter of teachers. Graduates of Jamaican teachers' colleges have established the quality and validity of their education in the international market place.
- Teachers' college graduates have been recruited and have been successful in almost all occupations serving people in Jamaica, the Caribbean and internationally.

- The graduates of colleges and universities educating teachers in Jamaica have been high caliber and constructive citizens wherever in the world they have lived and worked. (p. 4)

He underscored The Mico's role in this phenomenon by asserting that it has been at the forefront of the transformation of teacher education over the last 60 years. It is such a transformation that has enabled all these developments.

The Mico's policies and programs are based on The Jamaican Ministry of Education's mandate to have educational institutions focus on literacy; improving access, equity, and relevance in their programs; developing systems to improve performance; and preparing teachers to live in national and global communities (The Vision 2030 Plan, 2009). This study's participants helped me determine how well these policies are actually working. In addition, since the institutional and national policies are responses to global and national trends, this study sheds some light on how the institution has fared in terms of program offerings as judged by perhaps the most important group of stakeholders, the direct consumers. From this feedback, The Mico will be able to take steps to strengthen the elements of its programs that are effective and administered smoothly, and to reassess and take corrective measures in areas that show signs of weakness.

Implications for Social Change

For many decades The Mico has prepared graduates to practice education at both the elementary and the secondary levels. In fact, the institution was the first to train teachers to offer secondary teacher education locally and regionally. Now, once again the institution is blazing a trail by being the first teacher-training university college in Jamaica and in the English-speaking Caribbean region. Undoubtedly, this achievement

has resulted from changes in national policies and practices. It is therefore likely that feedback from this study may inform further changes in policies and practices at the national level

A study that reveals a spectrum of opinions on how a particular policy change is implemented and the impact of that change will of course provide meaningful feedback for The Mico. The institution will gain insight into which policies and administrative practices the graduates have found effective and which they believe warrant change. Their views on the efficacy of The Mico's new Undergraduate Degree in Early Childhood Education in preparing teachers for the classroom against the background of The Ministry of Education's *Vision 2030 Jamaica - National Development Plan* should also prove useful.

The education field has become increasingly competitive. If The Mico is to remain relevant, it must meet the needs of its clients by offering services equal to and even better than what is being offered elsewhere in the marketplace. To do so, recent graduates' perceptions of the policies themselves and the administration of these policies must be evaluated. Feedback will help the institution to know what is working and what is not, what needs to be dispensed with, and what should be revamped and strengthened.

This study will also serve as a point of reference for other teacher-training institutions in the Caribbean, as they too introduce new programs in response to globalization and the development of informational/knowledge economies. There are some basic historic, geographic, demographic, and economic commonalities among countries in the diaspora. For example, many of the countries are either equally developing countries, or at the worst they are underdeveloped. And there is a need for

many of them, including those in the English-speaking Caribbean, to upgrade their offerings in teacher training if they are to have a competitive edge in the marketplace. Latin America currently has the edge, as according to the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2011), the major pedagogical universities are the National Pedagogical University of Mexico, the National Pedagogical University of Colombia, the Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University of Honduras, the Libertador Pedagogical Experimental University in Venezuela, and the Metropolitan University of Educational Sciences of Chile (p. 37).

In the Caribbean as in many other cultures and regions of the world, a premium is placed on education as a means of upward mobility, and for some persons and social classes, equity in educational opportunities is not easily accessible. For example, educational institutions are now being asked to prepare individuals for “stem-related opportunities” by placing greater emphasis on the “STEM” subjects: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (Joseph & Payne, 2013). With this and other demands, teacher-training institutions across the region have had to revamp their educational policies and programs. A review of the documented experiences of the participants in this research and their views on educational policy may lead to revised curricula and practices of other institutions in the region in the future.

Teacher-training institutions are vanguards of social change. As they refine their vision, they have to be mindful that the 21st century citizenry need to attain the knowledge, attitude, and skills that will enable them to function within and beyond their local and regional enclaves (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; OECD, 2013). They now must create programs that “look beyond the traditional

curricula, to promote understanding, values and skills in areas such as cooperation, respect for diversity and equality, social justice and sustainable development” (OECD, 2013, p. 7).

Summary

Institutions of higher learning have to respond to a pluralistic, market-driven world. With ever-fewer commercial, geographical, and political demarcations, and ever-increasing technological fluidity, the world has become a dynamic global marketplace which one can now enter with a few keystrokes. The teaching and learning environment is a microcosm of this emerging world. Since the educational challenge for coming generations will be to develop ways to manage in this miniaturized world of immediacy, those we educate will need to create pathways of comprehension across traditional divisions such as race, faith, and culture. To do so they will seek educating institutions that offer them opportunities for active, interdisciplinary thinking and innovative leadership; full engagement in the global community; and a passion for lifelong learning—attributes essential for global citizenship (Suarez-Orozco & Sattin-Bajaj, 2010, p. 47).

This is the context which requires teacher-training institutions to address issues related to the process and nature of learning. More and more these institutions need to create and enunciate a clear philosophy of education that addresses the continuities and discontinuities of knowledge within the educational system from pre-K through university, the reintegration of knowledge, the process and nature of lifelong learning, and education for sustainable development. As teacher-training institutions in Jamaica and in the Caribbean respond to these changes, The Mico is leading the charge. It is now

offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs and providing offerings for a wider clientele, and one of the educational sectors that it has targeted is early childhood education. It is therefore imperative that all educational programs be evaluated for efficiency and effectiveness. This study was meant to provide feedback on a particular degree program, the Early Childhood Education degree program, and as such should be instructive for future administrative discourse and planning. In turn, The Mico's experience can serve as a case study for other teacher-training institutions in the region and beyond, and particularly in other economically developing countries.

In Chapter 2 of this study, I review the literature relevant to changes in teacher training in a globally dynamic, market-driven context. Attention is paid to some of the particular concerns in teacher training in general, and training in early childhood education in particular. These concerns include the approaches to and delivery of pedagogy and andragogy. All the above, done within the parameters of policy and administration, embrace the following topics: educational sustainability, organizational development, performance improvement, organizational conflict and change, and educational leadership. Additionally, I pay some attention to the methodologies of qualitative and phenomenological research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In an age of globalization, technological adroitness, pluralism and multiculturalism, teacher education is now being seen as a “catalyst for change that contributes to preparing teachers to transform society into one that respects diversity, promotes social justice, democratic values and aesthetic principles and in so doing contributes to the shaping of policy on education” (Steinbach, 2012, p. 79). There is now a trend towards reforms in teacher education that according to Pantić (2012) have become necessary because teachers are increasingly recognized for the critical role they play in building competences for knowledge-based societies. Pantić noted that these reforms in teacher education address issues such as “teacher standards for entry, redesign of teacher education curricula, new systems of accreditation and certification of teachers and schools,” and that they “are gaining salience internationally as a policy tool to improve the quality of education” (p. 74). Bruns and Luque (2014) opined that in the Latin American countries virtually all aspects of teacher policy are being reviewed and undergoing reform.

The Mico no doubt has been seeking to improve its performance in preparing teachers for the society described above, and to aid in its sustainability. As a result, it has revamped and upgraded its offerings and is now a university college offering undergraduate and graduate degrees. As such, The Mico is engaged in organizational development, and as a matter of necessity has had to make some policy shifts. While these shifts are a direct result of the institution’s own needs, they have also taken place

against the background of the shifts and emphases of the Ministry of Education as indicated in its Vision 2030 Plan.

The purpose of this study was to glean from graduates their reflections on their experiences as undergraduate students pursuing the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education at The Mico in Jamaica. Elicited was feedback on elements such as program offerings, management of the program, and support services, as well as if and how the new degree program is suggestive of institutional development and performance improvement. In addition, the graduates opined on how the major policy shifts at the institution and those related to teacher education at the national level complement each other, and how the latter can impact the institution and other educational institutions in the country and in the region.

This study fills a gap which Pantić (2012) noted as extant despite the movement towards reforms in teacher education. She argued that there is a need for research to evaluate the implemented changes and inform the direction of future practices. The UNESCO 2013 report on the “Background and Criteria for Teacher-Policy Development in Latin America and the Caribbean” suggested that one difficulty in the region is the lack of long-term teacher-policy planning, and that because of this difficulty, programs which are expected to be great solutions are readily discontinued and replaced by others in the absence of rigorous evaluations, assessments, or studies to determine their feasibility.

To support my research and particularly to align it with the research questions, I conducted an extensive review of literature. My review covered topics related to the field of education, organizational performance and development, and management inclusive of

leadership and change. I also investigated topics related to research methodology, and specifically related to phenomenology. To establish the main theoretical framework, I reviewed literature about developing organizations, including strategies that may be used in effecting development and the challenges that may be encountered in the process.

Research Strategy

I identified textual materials through the EBSCO Information Services and ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (PQDT) database portals, Google Scholar, and the Brooklyn Public Library. From the EBSCO Information Service, I used the following electronic databases: Academic Search Premier, Education Research Complete, Business Source Complete, and ProQuest Central. The extensive searches revealed recent scholarly titles on change and the change management process including the *six sigma* approach, sustainability, leadership, qualitative research, and phenomenological research.

The iterative search process included a search in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses and Google Scholar for dissertations and articles on topics *such as educational policy in the Caribbean, reform of teacher education in the Caribbean, reviews of teacher training programs, teacher training in the Caribbean, teacher training in Jamaica, early childhood education in the Caribbean and in Jamaica, and phenomenological research methods*. I made additional searches focused on finding texts on *organization development, performance improvement, the origin and nature of phenomenology, and the change management process* at the Brooklyn Public Library. I used Business Source Complete, Education Research Complete, and Academic Search Premier available from EBSCO Information Services to find materials on specific issues such as current changes in education in general, and higher and early childhood

education, styles of leadership including transformational and servant leadership, and qualitative and phenomenological data collection and analytical methods.

Documents from The Mico and The Mico University College website were additional resources. I also used the Jamaican Government's *Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan: Education Draft Sector Plan* (2009) and two hard copy journals of the Department of Education, The University of the West Indies.

Structure of the Review

In this chapter, I provide a detailed discussion of academic and expert work relevant to this study's research questions. This includes discussion on current policy issues in teacher education and early childhood education, and on the task of effecting performance improvement and organizational development. Additionally, I give some focus to the nature of the study, and in particular to the efficacy of phenomenology as a methodological approach. Some of the sub-topics under these major areas include OD, PI, conflict and organizational change, leadership, issues in teacher education, and phenomenological methods and analysis.

Phenomenology as a method is highlighted as it provides validation to my use of the "stories" of participants and builds trustworthiness. Of significance as well is the nature of the classroom in today's society because this forms the backdrop to the changes in teacher education and the educational landscape in general, and is pertinent to policy issues at the institutional level as well as the national level.

Organizational Development

The term “organizational development” refers to planned development based on the systemic application of behavioral science knowledge and practice including concepts and approaches such as leadership, group dynamics, strategy, and organization design (Cummings & Worley, 2009). Ghorbanhosseini (2013) put it another way by saying that organizations place emphasis on strategies, structures, and organizational processes in order to improve their effectiveness. Some theorists see it as an adaptive process that embraces a hodgepodge of ideas, rather than a well-structured package of ideas. Korten, De Caluwé, and Geurts (2010) extrapolated that it is not a form of applied science based on empirical evidence, but rather relates to a loosely coupled community of professionals and scholars who share diverse ideas and practices. These scholars argued that today there is a juxtaposition of classical OD which is diagnostic against the more modern style of dialogic OD.

OD as it is today has evolved through at least five stages, starting with a *laboratory training* concept. This came about as a result of a small, unstructured group, under the guidance of Kurt Lewin, interacting and developing group processes within a company in 1946. Next was the *action research/survey feedback* movement once again pioneered by Lewin along with others, followed by the *normative* movement. The latter movement promulgated the idea that human relations are critical to managing organizations effectively. According to Cummings and Worley (2009), one of the best known models for this approach is Likert’s participative management program which outlines four types of management systems: the exploitative authoritative system, the benevolent authoritative system, the consultative system, and the participative group system. This

was later followed with the introduction of the *productivity and quality-of-life (QWL)* concept, which focuses on “features of the workplace that can affect employee productivity and satisfaction, such as reward systems, work flows, management styles and the physical work environment” (Cummings & Worley, p. 11).

The latest type of organizational development theory now includes the concept of strategic change which promotes an alignment between the “organization’s environment, strategy, and organization design” (Cummings & Worley, 2009, p. 12). Korten et al. (2010) asserted that today’s concept of organizational development is quite eclectic and has six partly-overlapping perspectives, which they described as the “fuzzy sets.” They presented these “sets” through the characteristics of the persons who pursue particular paths: the evidence seekers, moralists, professionals, sense-makers, people’s advocates, and pragmatists. Because dialogic practices support the people who make up a system to interact creatively around complex, important issues, they generate new ideas and connections and inspire agreements to pursue emerging shared aspirations. A common result of a dialogic approach is a shift in the cultural narrative that shapes the way people see their personal and collective identities (Holman, 2013). In adding their perspectives, Marshak and Bushe (2013) concurred with the view that organizations are dialogic systems in which “individual, group, and organizational actions result from socially constructed realities created and sustained by the prevailing narratives, stories, metaphors, and conversations through which people make meaning about their experiences” (p.2).

The organization is regarded as a complex system operating within a wider system. This concept is evocative of the symbolic interactionist theory. The way in which

an organization responds to global and social issues and developments affects the changes that are initiated as well as the way they are managed. Symbolic interactionism (SI) is a school of thought that examines interaction among people and in particular how such interactions impact the creation of personal identity (Smit & Fritz, 2008). With three core principles of meaning, language, and thought, premium is placed on the subjective experience of a person. Smit and Fritz (2008) explained that meaning is central to human behavior because the actions of human beings toward people and things are based on the meaning that they attribute to these people or things. These researchers further clarified their position by stating that language provides humans with a means by which they can communicate meaning through symbols. When language is used in conversations and discussions, thinking on the part of those involved often modifies how the symbols are understood.

Dave Ulrich and Norm Smallwood (2009) contended that organizations today must be futuristic. This concept is a departure from the traditional organization, which is based on structures or forms as outlined below:

- *Roles* define the hierarchy of who reports to whom and who has accountability for which work.
- *Rules* represent policies and prescriptions for how work is done.
- *Routines* reflect processes or cultures within the workplace. (p. 13)

Bailey (2009) presented this traditional structure in terms of domains of function, form, and funding. She stated that change is necessary if educational enterprises are going to be accessible and valuable to all (p. 231). Ulrich and Smallwood's organization of the future is one known for its capabilities and not its structure. "What the organization

is known for, what it is good at doing, and how it patterns its activities to deliver value” (p. 14) are the critical cornerstones. This organization of the future also has the challenge of facing new business realities, namely:

- Globalization – with new markets and global issues
- Technology – with increased accessibility, visibility, and connection
- Employees - with diverse demographic backgrounds, personal preferences, and orientations to work
- Customers – segmented, demanding, and selective
- Competitors – both global players and smaller innovators. (p. 15)

According to these authors, organizations must develop five capabilities to cope with these realities:

- *Talent* - the ability to attract, retain, and deploy human capital, to assure the competence and knowledge of the workforce;
- *Leadership* - the ability to build future leaders as an organizational capability, to turn customer expectations into employee actions, and to increase the leadership brand;
- *Agility* - the ability to respond quickly, change, be flexible, learn, and transform;
- *An outside-in connection* – the ability to turn outside expectations from customers, investors, and communities into internal organizational actions;
- *Strategic unity* – the ability to create a shared point of view and common behaviors in an increasingly diverse work setting. (p. 16)

If the organization is going to be productive and efficient there have to be common goals and objectives. Organizational capabilities obviously include considerations of organizational culture, which, according to Baer and Naslund (2011), pivot on shared values and communication. They suggested that the genesis of a healthy culture is the existence of invested individuals who share common values. Such a culture will embrace speed, nimbleness, decentralized decision making, optimism, and open dialogue. There is a sense of independence and a free flow of ideas, feedback, and input from all stakeholders both within and outside the entity. The importance of the human capital is further reinforced by Ghorbanhosseini (2014) who hypothesized that organizational development positively influences organizational commitment. He set out a layered relationship saying that organizational culture, teamwork, and organizational development directly and significantly impact human capital, and that human capital positively affects organizational commitment.

Thomas, Herring, Redmond, and Smaldino (2013) suggested that providing faculty and staff in educational institutions with more “autonomy and more opportunities to demonstrate mastery, along with a sense of greater purpose for their work” (p. 62) is a creative approach to motivation. They recommended that institutions initiate activities to develop their “collective capacities,” and to prepare them to revise and deliver programs. They further advised that institutions reorganize to support the members’ efforts to make its vision a reality and that this vision should entail the institution becoming a “learning organization” consisting of “professional communities” (p. 62).

The importance of commonality seemed to resonate with Crow (2010), but he highlighted “shared sacrifice” as the first step in his “seven-step challenge,” designed as a

road map to get businesses to where their leaders want them to be and to help the former “gain and maintain the competitive edge” (p. 94). He regarded “shared sacrifice” as a “mindset and way of living” (p. 141). He added that, “The important thing is this: to be able any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become” (p. 143). He encouraged business leaders to:

Encourage your colleagues to paint far outside the lines to discover more efficient methods of making business better today than it was yesterday. Lead with a sense of urgency. Time, not money, is your most precious resource. Be bold. Encourage everyone in your organization to share in the sacrifices, but make sure that you are at the front of the line leading the troops. (p. 144)

Crow’s other six steps are:

- Do whatever it takes to exceed expectations.
- Commit to daily measurable improvement.
- Develop an accountability matrix.
- Reinvigorate your organization through multidimensional thinking.
- Transform your business philosophy to a triple bottom line.
- Dedicate yourself to a lifetime of making a difference. (p. viii)

Crow’s prescription supports the viewpoint of Bailey (2009) and Ulrich and Smallwood (2009). For example, Crow suggested that organizations develop a triple bottom line and focus on “making a difference.” Rather than solely focusing on the financial bottom line, the “Triple bottom line is a business model of sustainability that balances economic success, social engagement, and environmental sustainability” (p. 151). Entrepreneurs therefore have to pay attention to the social and environmental

contexts of their businesses. In emphasizing the importance of doing so, Crow advised entrepreneurs that:

A triple bottom line philosophy recognizes the need for healthy, content people to staff a business, and thriving surroundings to sustain those people . . . If your business focuses on creating products as locally as possible and with fair labor while engaging in sustainable practices—then it has a far better chance to stand the test of time. (p. 152)

In expounding on the triple bottom line, Crow went a step further than Bailey (2009) and Ulrich and Smallwood (2009) by addressing the issue of organizations contributing to social development. He submitted that service is regarded as a virtue in every culture all over the world, and that a life of service has brought feelings of satisfaction and contentment to countless people. “In the process, people not only change the world but they change themselves as well” (p. 166). Crow gets some support from Moran (2009), who elucidated the role of service within an organization.

Philanthropy on the part of the corporation and its employees is another important aspect of ensuring that employees are given an opportunity to look beyond the walls of the organization in a manner that will excite them and make them proud of the organization for which they work. (p. 86)

Performance Improvement

PI ties in with organizational development since the expectation is that improvements in performance will be sustained over time. This sustainability is based on the practice of identifying the causes for the problems and solving them; and not just on conducting a gap analysis. Van Tiem et al. (2012) articulated that reducing performance

gaps before the determination of the causes often result in temporary relief, and proposed that eliminating causes can actually fix real problems. The authors propounded that sustainability brings with it improved brand image; cost savings; competitive advantage; employee satisfaction; product, service, or market innovation; new sources of revenue or cash flow; and enhanced stakeholder relations, among other advantages. They also suggested that performance improvement entails appreciative inquiry and positive psychology. The former, they claimed, provides opportunities for individuals and communities to develop their potential, motives, and capacities, and to thrive. They stated that this process involves the unearthing of the hub, the kernel of a system when it is most productive in economic, ecological, and human terms. They said that it revolves around the art and practice of asking questions that lead to the strengthening of a system's capacity to anticipate, apprehend, and add to positive potential.

PI complements the systems approach. Borawski and Brennan (2009) recommended the systems approach as a management process as opposed to what they called "spot management," or quick fixes. They argued that the systems approach takes into consideration the "whole," the "big picture," rather than focusing on functional aspects like "business unit analysis, profit and loss accountability, and resource allocation" (p.69).

OD, PI, and The Mico

The revamping and development of programs at The Mico relate to the theories of PI as well as OD. Organizations today have to be responsive to external environments, have to pay attention to their human capital and to the organizational culture, and need to have inspirational leaders. PI and OD are reflective of these elements and more. OD, for

example, is critical if The Mico is to broaden its view beyond good fiscal policies and corporate ethics, and to use a strategic approach to build organizational capabilities. This has to be done by having a cycle of assessment (audit) and investment (resources of time and money to improve; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2009). The Mico is attempting to rebrand itself, to develop its capabilities, to reduce performance gaps, and to achieve sustainability. All of this entail not just intangible elements such as curricula and courses, but also have much to do with developing the human capital which in turn builds commitment.

In relation to this study, the theories are represented in the research questions. The participants were asked to comment on the new degree programs, on the change management process, and on policy shifts, but they were also asked about their perceptions of how the new undergraduate degree program reflected OD and relate to PI at The Mico. In particular, they were asked to say to what extent the Degree adds value to the development of the institution and its role in teacher training in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean region as well as how the Degree impinges on the performance of The Mico in adequately preparing teachers for the Jamaican context.

Change

With policy shifts in education worldwide, it has become imperative for educational institutions to strive to develop their capacities and to improve their performance. This means that change has to be effected. The Mico is no exception. The success of The Mico's new degree program in Early Childhood Education in both the short and long term is dependent to some extent on how the change process is being managed. Feedback from the graduates on the matter of change will help The Mico to

assess how well the institution is managing this change and what can be done to improve the process. This will aid in the long-term to strengthen organizational culture.

The literature addresses issues related to change, for example, how change can be enhanced. Shaner (2010) had his own prescription for effective change management: *the seven arts*. These include preparation, compassion, responsibility, relaxation, conscious action, working naturally, and service. One of the most obvious things for an organization to do however, before implementing a program, is to identify the need for a change. This requires some form of analysis. There are of course various forms of change developed by theorists, one of which is the six sigma approach. This approach includes processes such as the determination of the causes for the problem, establishing the organizational capabilities to address the problem, and identifying the performance indicators (Campatelli, Citti, & Meneghin, 2011).

Change Management

Establishing organizational capabilities include tapping into skill sets and competencies of the workforce. In fact, the importance of doing so is reinforced by Blanchard, Britt, Hoekstra, and Zigarmi (2009), who postulated that change can be successful only when all the stakeholders within the organization combine their unique talents and consistently work towards initiating, implementing and sustaining the change. This obviously includes the subordinates and relates to something else that is of paramount importance in the change process – culture.

Culture is the predominant attitudes, beliefs, and pattern of shared basic assumptions and behavior that characterize the organization as it works towards internal integration and external adaptation (Blanchard et al., 2009; Katz & Flynn, 2013). New

members are expected to embrace them. Culture therefore “has the power to either enable and sustain the change or bury the change” (Blanchard et al., 2009, p 126), as it is very poignant in the creation of appropriate behavioral patterns as well as the commitment of employees to the organization (Ghorbanhosseini, 2013). Culture must be leveraged to support, enable, and sustain change and must be reinforced by sponsorship, accountability, and incentives. In other words, a premium must be placed on getting members of the organization to buy into the change process and to promote the change movement. Building an organizational culture takes time and must be maintained for a sustainable change strategy to be successful. Opportunities for sharing with, and garnering information from staff, must be created. While care must be taken that these opportunities, which will consist of large and small group meetings, do not become onerous, they must be engaged in as frequently as possible.

Latham (2013) identified two broad areas that contribute to change (which he called *transformation to performance excellence*) in organizations. The first one is the “forces and facilitators of change” combined with leadership approaches or system. This he called the “science” of leading transformation. The second he called the “art” of leading change, consisting of organizational culture, leadership behaviors, and individual leader characteristics. Included in Latham’s list of the “science” and in particular leadership behaviors are collaboration and communication.

He presented rhetoric as an integral part of communication. He proffered that rhetoric is not just simply a means of persuasion, but it is “a comprehensive spur to human action,” as it “entails facts and meaning with a passion that demands action” (p. 23). This rhetoric which may be likened to Argyris and Schön’s (1974) *espoused theory*

(Katz & Flynn, 2013) must be supported by action (*theory in use*.) The espoused theory is the worldview and values promulgated by persons, while *theory in use* is the worldview and values exhibited and observed by others (Katz & Flynn, 2013). Latham (2013) reiterated the view of many theorists that communication should be two-way between follower and leader, and should also involve multiple stakeholders. He also explained that communication not only informs the workforce about the direction of the organization, but it also facilitates access to feedback from the workforce.

For change to be effective there needs to be commitment. Ghorbanhosseini (2013) and Keskes (2014) proposed three types of commitment: affective (emotional commitment), continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Keskes described affective as a desire, continuance as a need, and normative as an obligation. In affective commitment, the subordinate strongly identifies with the leader's goals and values, and in normative commitment, the worker reciprocates employment because he or she may feel obligated to and operates from a position of morals, values and even socialization. In the continuance mode there is commitment because of the perception of personal investment in the organization perhaps based on an appraisal of opportunity cost (Ghorbanhosseini, 2013; Keskes, 2014).

One strategy that a leader may employ to aid in building commitment is the awarding of incentives. According to Blanchard et al. (2009), incentives reinforce the desired behaviors and results, that enable the change. For example, selected members of staff may be partially relieved of their regular duties for them to provide direction or to complete tasks related to the initiative. Members of staff could also be offered training pertinent to the effective implementation of change activities both inside and outside of

the organization. Other steps in the change initiative that the leaders may want to consider include bringing on board a change trainer. A change trainer provides learning experiences to develop the skills of those being asked to change in executing the change towards success in the future organization (Blanchard et al., 2009). Of course not every organization will be able to employ such a person, but in lieu of this position, the organization may consider asking a member of staff to fulfill this role. Equipping persons to serve in new and/or enhanced capacities is a critical step of the change process.

Conflict and Organizational Change

Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* epitomizes the abuse of power and authority. In general, the play raises issues about the various types and sources of power. These issues, relevant in Shakespeare's time, remain so today. Conflict is a term used to "describe antecedent conditions (e.g., scarcity of resources and policy differences), affective states (e.g., stress, tension, hostility, anxiety), cognitive states (i.e., their perception of awareness of conflictful situations) and conflictful behavior" (Mukhtar & Siengthai, 2010).

Conflicts occur because of many reasons and from various sources. These include incompatible feelings, disagreement on tasks, and differences in values and ideologies. Kayz & Flynn (2013) described today's work environment as having high levels of conflict resulting from confusing organizational structures, competition among members and units for scarce resources, budget cuts, and job expansion, among other things. They also concluded that where work assignments are more complex, there is more networking and partnerships, and increased interdependence between stakeholders. Some of the stakeholders are customers and clients who actually may share in the decision-making

process, and this too can lead to more tension at the workplace. Mukhtar (2011) delineated three frames of conflict. There is the resource frame which in which conflict is thought of as a struggle over values and claims to scarce resources, resulting in the harm or neutralizing of the opponent. The identity frame emanates from people's needs, desires, concerns and fears, and the interest frame is used to describe compromise between parties as they seek to "achieve mutually acceptable outcomes efficiency and good relationships" (p. 46).

Conflict can take an ugly turn in an organization. Katz and Flynn (2013) stated that research has shown that strained relationships, rather than shortcomings in skills or motivation, lead to more performance problems. But they do not need to. Sometimes conflict can be beneficial - something essential for growth and change - by which an organization can ward off entropy, stagnation, and dissolution. If there are no conflicts, then there is the potential for stagnation, since conflict sometimes fosters new ideas and inventions. Todorova, Bear, and Weingart (2014) contested that task conflict in a learning environment and across functional work areas can have a positive affective outcome and can be a source of energy that leads to greater job satisfaction, while Mukhtar (2011) purported that conflict is important to an organization's effectiveness and productivity. Examined at the personal level, an individual may experience personal growth, may decide on a particular course of action, and may make certain resolutions as a result of having internal conflict. The point is, if everybody thought the same way or were afraid to voice differing views, then nothing would change. So conflict is a necessary function of the organization's environment.

Inevitably, there are challenges to change. In fact, change comes about as a result of a conflict (conflict here being used in the widest sense of the word). Latham (2013) referred to conditions causing the change as the “drivers.” These drivers, according to him, result in “tension in the organizations to overcome the inertia of status quo” (p. 18). The drivers include a crisis or dissatisfaction, but Latham (2013) proposed that sometimes leaders may create tension by using performance results to create dissatisfaction with the status quo and to evoke a newer, more compelling vision.

Tension, nonetheless, does not dissipate with the initial action in a change process. Furthermore, not everyone in an organization will immediately embrace the change, and a number of persons may never do so. Some persons may quietly disagree with the entire initiative or aspects of it, while others may actively articulate their opposition. According to Stockdale and Steeper (2012), there is a change curve consisting of four stages. These are denial, resistance, acceptance, and commitment.

Stockdale and Steeper (2012) intimated that denial can be positive because it stops people from being overwhelmed by multiple changes at a given time. The researchers, however, went on further to state that being in denial for too long can have deleterious effects. They also reasoned that resistance can be the most turbulent response. Both denial and resistance can be regarded as what Latham (2013) dubbed “defensive routines,” and he supported the view of Stockdale and Steeper by saying that these routines can adversely impact the organization’s ability to implement the changes being sought after. The focus here tends to be on what used to be rather than what could be.

With acceptance on the other hand, there may be enthusiasm, but not at all times. Stockdale and Steeper (2012) submitted that a decision may be accepted, although the

change may not totally suit an individual's values or beliefs. With regard to commitment, they offered the opinion that it "brings a sense of empowerment to individuals, adding that "when annual surveys like the *Sunday Times* '100 Best Companies to Work For' are published, there is a high correlation between the commitment and engagement of employees and retention levels within the companies" (p. 25). The bottom-line is that an action plan should be designed to build confidence and commitment. It should help people believe in themselves and focus their attention on what they can do rather than on what they cannot do. People want to feel as if they are being thought about and that their opinions matter. They do not want to hear of the change through the grapevine or in a bombshell.

Latham (2013) alleged that building trust, showing empathy to those who have to implement the change, and improving communication. are ways of mitigating resistance to change. But he also suggested that what he referred to as "alignment" is a useful tool. Alignment is the "consistency and congruence of individual effort and activities with the overall direction, mission, vision, and values of the organization" (p. 20). For this to happen, there needs to be consistency and congruence of the behaviors of the leader, strategies, policies, processes, communications, culture, and incentives provided to the workforce. Mukhtar and Siengthai (2010) also commented on the role of leaders in dealing with conflicts. They said that administrators should be sure to examine the level of conflict in order to determine the potential measures to control the particular conflicts. They also suggested that the type of leadership is critical to the eroding of conflict, and warned that weak leaders tend to perpetuate organizational conflict.

How the change is implemented has much to do with the response. When change is imposed from the top, people sometimes feel powerless and victimized. As a result, they often become angry and resentful. Any imposed change creates resistance. Chen and Reigeluth (2010) made the case that stakeholder participation through the introduction of diverse decision-making teams can revolutionize the way organizations function and produce. Concurring with them, Ghorbanhosseini (2013) regarded teamwork and team conditions as having a direct and significant impact on human capital. This is shown by how the employees mobilize their action, knowledge, skills and expertise in the form of team activities. The end result of all of this is organizational commitment.

Issues in Teacher Education

One of the subject matters addressed by the literature is the challenges of teacher education in the 21st century. One of these is the need for education to remain relevant to a very dynamic workforce. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (2013) outlines some of the challenges in teacher training in the region as (a) getting skills and attitudes to be in sync with professional practice and to target meeting the needs of the globalized world, and (b) assimilating and using information and communication technology (ICT) in teaching. The Office identified one general shortcoming as being the “relative lack of links to curricular reforms” (p. 42).

Today’s classroom now must no longer promote the “anaesthetizing effect of boring formal school” (Down and Newman, 2011, p. X). Curricula must contain sustainability content and skills, and pedagogies must engender student-centered learning applicable to real-life experiences and issues (McKeown & Hopkins, 2011). Kinash and Hoffman (2009) conducted a study that entailed students taking the lead in a learning

situation and actually engaging in a research project. Their article, “Children’s Wonder-initiated Phenomenological Research: A Rural Primary School Case Study” explored children’s involvement in innovative learning. The two teachers spent time visiting a small, rural primary school in Queensland, Australia. They were impressed by the children’s wonder about their own history and cultural context, as they engaged the children in a phenomenological research study which the children themselves planned, carried out, and presented collectively.

In the project the students involved the community, and after garnering new knowledge, they shared it via such media as musical theatre, brochures and posters, plaster models, web pages, digital movies, pod casts, and digital slideshows. The study focused on the wonder and curiosity children showed. Sharing their philosophical perspective, the researchers indicated that they believed children are inspired and motivated by wonder, and that teachers need to use their imagination to encourage their students to ask questions and rigorously enquire about issues. The researchers presented four principles that may be practiced by schools. Among them are (a) teachers should be open to a fluid relationship of inquiry with children, and (b) children should be trusted and respected.

Seltzer-Kelly et al. (2011) in their article “(Re)Imagining Teacher Preparation for Conjoint Democratic Inquiry in Complex Classroom Ecologies” explored the idea of dispensing with “sameness” in the classroom and instead preparing teachers for the complexities they will find there. They presented the classroom as one that ought to reflect “reflexivity, complexity and complicity.” The teacher is therefore not a bystander. He or she is complicit and sees teaching as not just an activity that needs to be done, but

as one that allows for a time of “being with others.” This perspective, they argued, will lead to the development of a classroom that is caring and empathetic. Some key questions they discussed included:

- How might we actually prepare our pre-service and in-service teachers to move past the deficit-thinking model and instead create environments and relationships that will facilitate learning and the preparation of students to enter into democratic life?
- How can teachers help their students survive the maze of conflicting educational demands that may or may not have immediate personal or cultural relevance for them? (p. 8)

The study examined four issues. One is teacher-student interactions and the expectancy effect. The researchers stipulated that the relationship between teacher and student, the motivation of students, and their academic outcomes are all influenced by not only the teachers’ expectations but also by the students’ expectations of their teachers. They asserted that the legacy of the factory model of education (the idea that education prepares workers for the factory) is having a teaching approach that is robotized and controlling, when what is required is a supportive one.

Teacher education, based on a combination of research, practice, and reflection, must be supported by scientific knowledge and solid research. Referencing the teacher-preparation curriculum in Finland, Sahlberg (2011) posited the view that a broad-based teacher-preparation curriculum ensures that newly prepared teachers will have great professional insight into education via educational psychology, sociology, curriculum theories, and student assessment, and that these teachers will be better able to balance

knowledge and skills in both theory and practice. With a growing emphasis on research and intellectual curiosity, there has been an overt attempt to explore innovative approaches to high-quality training. As Bailey (2009) stated, “Our college of the future must embrace an appreciation, encouragement, and enactment of *research* and *teaching* and deeply engaged service in our local, state, national, and global contexts that transcend disciplines in construction and delivery” (p. 232).

Ibrahim Yaşar-Kazu and Mehmet Eroğlu (2013) explored the matter of improving the quality of teacher-preparation courses. They concluded that most of the recommendations of the teacher candidates whom they studied mainly focused on the improvement of instructors’ personal and professional qualifications followed by suggestions related to the arrangement of the teaching environment. These scholars recommended that in the selection of instructors, priority should be given to instructors who are specialists in the field of educational sciences, and that communication skills should be given special attention.

Pratt (2011) joined the fray by sharing her perspective on the paper “(Re) Imagining Teacher Preparation for Conjoint Democratic Inquiry in Complex Classroom Ecologies” by Seltzer-Kelly et al. (2011). In discussing some of the issues in teacher training, she focused on what she considered the problem of teacher trainers expecting their students to engage in practice differently from how they had observed it being conducted. Averting that there is a disconnection between theory and practice, she advocated that communities of learners should engage in “complex conversations” about issues in teaching.

In her article, Pratt (2011) posited the view that teacher training institutions need to address the preparation of pre-service teachers by in-service teachers. She suggested that if in-service teachers engage in mentoring (and very often they do not, she opined), more than likely they are not helping teacher candidates to find new, creative ways of delivering instruction. Pratt may really have hit the nail on its head when she asked, “How, then, are teacher educators expected to encourage PSTs to consider a different option, an alternative to what they have lived and experienced as students, or even what they might observe in their field experiences?” (p. 44).

Bailey (2009) echoed similar sentiments about the existence of “sameness” in pedagogy. She avouched that “within academia, students and professors tend to be directed toward working alone (or with those who think like them) in siloed, clearly circumscribed areas, largely separated from the outside world” (p. 231). She supported this viewpoint by suggesting, for example, that students in higher education are rewarded for their attainment of knowledge based on their professors’ assessment. The professors, who share similar areas of expertise, are then rewarded for the number of students they attract and retain and by the students’ appraisal of their abilities to teach materials deemed important by the professors. It was her viewpoint that professors, who spend most of their time actually working with students, or serving on committees in the college, or with groups from the outside communities, or on writing their ideas, are usually not rewarded by job promotion through the professoriate. She further contested that these persons are sometimes actually asked to leave the academy thereby not being eligible for tenure - a form of lifelong employment.

It was Pratt's (2011) recommendation that in teacher training the mentor/mentee roles should be revamped. One can perhaps see some value in this suggestion as at even the highest level of the educational system, there seems to be a tendency for teachers/lecturers to deliver their pedagogy according to approaches they have practiced rather than by what the learners need by way of knowledge and skills. The idea of having complex conversations about teaching and learning between pre-service and in-service teachers and between teacher trainers and teacher candidates is something that teacher training institutions need to pay attention to. Pantić (2012) argued that there is a need for greater partnerships between pre-service education providers in higher education institutions and schools. She posited the view that these higher education institutions can improve their own programs via activities such as working with practicing teachers.

In addition to the issue of teacher preparation, consideration must be given to the induction of teachers, and the literature also addresses this. According to the National Center for Education and Regional Assistance Institute of Education Sciences (2009) there is not enough intensive, comprehensive, responsive, structured, and sequentially delivered teacher induction. The Institute had conducted research to determine whether comprehensive teacher-induction programs lead to positive teacher and student outcomes including higher retention rates among new teachers. That study addressed five questions:

- What is the effect of comprehensive teacher induction on the types and intensity of induction services teachers receive compared to the services they receive from the districts' current induction programs?
- What are the impacts on teachers' classroom practices?

- What are the impacts on student achievement?
- What are the impacts on teacher retention?
- What is the impact on the composition of the district's teaching workforce?

(p. XXII)

Within one-year districts during Year 1 - the year in which comprehensive teacher induction was implemented within some districts - the study found that comprehensive teacher induction programs provided more support (in terms of the amount, type, and content of the induction program). The study also concluded that after two years, comprehensive teacher induction did not factor much in teachers' decisions to continue teaching in their originally assigned school or their district or to remain in the teaching profession. Additionally, induction measures were not significantly related to math test scores or reading scores. The association, however, between the years the beginning teacher had a mentor and math test scores was statistically significant.

Sahlberg (2011) also weighed in on the issue of induction. In his paper "The Professional Educator: Lessons from Finland," he explained that the induction of new teachers into their first teaching position was not as uniformed as their initial preparation. Pointing out that it was the school and municipality that took care of the new teachers' induction to their teaching assignments, Sahlberg elucidated the point that there were variations in the procedures and support systems, with some schools having advanced protocols and some having very little. That situation, he felt, Finland needed to address.

Teacher training programs require collaboration between faculties and departments within an institution, and the literature addresses issues such as the maintenance of a multidisciplinary as well as an interdisciplinary approach. Bailey (2009)

endorsed a multi-disciplinary approach to college education in general across schools of thought.

Multi-disciplinarity requires increased contact and connection—a coming together of scholars from multiple schools of thought and practice to collectively tear down the barriers that keep us apart. . . . In so doing, we take the risk of being mindful and really seeing. . . . We are able to move from “seeing our seeing” (our own assumptions), to really “seeing with the heart”— being and doing from a state of intense compassion, openness, and, yes, connection.” (p. 233)

The importance of an interdisciplinary approach to education is not lost on The Institute of Technological and Educational Research at The Mico which sees itself as a “team-centred, problem solving vehicle to encourage and drive interdisciplinary interactions and research” (The Mico University College website, 2015, sec. ITER).

Patterns of Change in Higher Education

No one can disagree that there are patterns of change in higher education institutions. For example, many programs are now paying attention to sustainability by infusing sustainability content and skills into courses. And even if the term itself is not used, administrators are becoming increasingly cognizant of the need to manage campuses more sustainably (McKeown & Hopkins, 2011). There seems to be a general revamping of policies and programs in colleges and universities to include accountability standards. This trend translates into a renewed focus on the delivery of pedagogy, andragogy, and professional learning, and on creating and transferring knowledge through cutting-edge technology.

In examining current reforms and developments in higher education in south-eastern Europe, Pantić (2012) commented on the reforms of initial teacher education programs. These she said have included changes in program structures and in curricula, with an emphasis on outcomes-based education. She posited the view however that researchers have suggested that initial teacher education in eastern Europe has been slow in responding effectively to the changing needs of 21st century teachers, and contended that the state of teacher preparation in the region leaves much to be desired. She recommended, among other things, that approaches to theory and practice and specifically research evaluating the implemented changes, should be changed.

One issue that resurfaces time and time again and which the literature on teacher education highlights is accountability. Pantić (2012) thought that with the new wave of reforms in higher education in south-eastern Europe there are new ways of thinking about accountability. In a study entitled “The Patterns of Change in Higher Education Institutions: The Context of the Changing Quality Assurance Mechanisms in England, Japan, and New York,” Keiko Yokoyama (2010) sought to determine if there were patterns of change in higher education institutions by examining “the contexts of the changing quality assurance mechanisms used by the different types of higher education institutions in England, Japan, and New York State between 2001 and 2007” (p. 61). Nine institutions representing three types of institutions were studied. The types were research-intensive institutions, small research-intensive institutions, and teaching-intensive institutions. The institutions were both centralized and decentralized, public and private. Six characteristics were examined in Yokoyama’s study:

- The original form before change was initiated;

- The intensiveness and extensiveness of the institutional changes;
- The direction of change, whether top-down or bottom-up;
- The rapidity with which the change happened;
- The level(s) at which the change occurred (i.e., institutional, unit, group-of-individuals, or combined levels); and
- The outcome of the change initiative. (p. X)

The study did not find any substantial evidence to support the argument that decentralized post-secondary institutions that embrace private-sector values are more responsive to changing social demands and the market niche than centralized institutions. In fact, the paper postulated that there were no clear patterns of change between centralized and decentralized institutions or between public and private institutions in England, Japan, and the U.S.A. (New York State) between 2001 and 2007, and purported that the types of institutions do not determine the particular patterns of changes in terms of the six variables listed above.

The study also reinforced the viewpoint that change can be initiated by various agents and be conducted at different levels. There was the bottom-up approach as well as the top-down approach. There was institutional-wide change as well as change at the unit level. The analysis further concluded that central authorities are more critical to the particular patterns of change than to institutional change. This impact is particularly evident when the central authority has direct power over the institution and can support its policy changes with financial support.

Issues in Early Education

As new holders of teaching credentials go to teach, they take along with them the skills and content learnt. But they also take with them their perceptions and beliefs about teaching, and these perceptions and beliefs will undoubtedly influence how they conduct their practice. Aldemir and Sezer (2009) examined early childhood education pre-service teachers' images of an early childhood education (ECE) teacher and their beliefs about teaching. The researchers used a bounded case-study format with fourteen pre-service teachers at a northeastern state university in the United States. The conclusion was that the teachers' beliefs about teaching were impacted by the images they had of what an early childhood education teacher should be.

The authors proffered the view that existing research on pre-service teachers' images and beliefs have a proclivity for focusing mainly on elementary and upper-level teacher education, with little attention paid to ECE pre-service teachers. From their research they deduced that the participants' early memories of their teachers, their work experience (formal and informal) with young children, and their mentor teachers were the factors that affected their images of an ECE teacher and beliefs about teaching. They used some interesting metaphors/images to represent the concepts of teachers. These included a gardener, a sponge, a sail, a guide, a bridge, sunshine, water, and a watering can. The researchers found that some of the most prevailing images of the teacher were a guide, a watering can, a sponge, and a gardener, and they therefore inferred that in general, teachers are regarded as "active deliverers of knowledge" and the students, "passive receivers."

Lee (2010) also examined the impact of an ECE teacher's beliefs and perspectives on teaching, and particularly how cultural beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes can affect his or her teaching practice. The issues examined covered the history of school segregation and desegregation as well as phobias towards Muslims after 9/11. The importance administration placed on diversity was found to be significant. In one case a subject believed that the goals and the religious tenets of the school as well as religious education as a pedagogical subject, influenced attitudes towards diversity. That subject felt that the school's culture respected individual differences and fostered tolerance towards others, as evidenced by staff development sessions on multi-cultural education.

The literature related to early education also addresses the issue of professional development. Mevawalla and Hadley (2012) tried to understand the views of early childhood education teachers on raising the status of their profession in a study titled "The advocacy of Educators: Perspectives from Early Childhood." The research questions were:

- What are educators' understandings of advocacy in multiple contexts with diverse stakeholders?
- What are educators' perceptions of power in various contexts with diverse stakeholders?
- What are educators' self-perceptions of their professional status and how do they perceive themselves to be viewed by internal and external stakeholders in various contexts? (p. 75)

Priority was given to the first question. The researchers found that the educators thought of themselves as being influential within the workplace but felt that the senior

stakeholders in the wider socio-political setting were responsible for raising their professional status. They also discovered a difference in the perspectives of the directors and degree and diploma trained educators. The latter group thought the directors should be the advocates for the profession, while the directors in general thought the organizations and the government held the power as advocates.

Professional development of course is not just about reading texts and sitting at the feet of others to garner information and new ideas. It is also about self-reflection, a subject addressed in “A Tale of Two Talents: How Two Early Childhood Teacher Educators Use Peer-reflection to Examine Their Practices” by Thompson and Stryker (2010). In this article, Thompson and Stryker, who were members of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Texas A&M University, related their experience of using peer-reflection in evaluating their methods of lesson preparation. As they conferred, they looked at their strengths, differences in their views about lesson planning, and their professional growth occasioned by the sharing of their stories. They discussed the six learning principles of effective andragogy which they claimed were developed by Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2005). These are: the why, what, and how the learner needs to know; the self-concept of the learner; his/her prior experience; the learner’s readiness to learn; his/her orientation to learning; and the learner’s motivation to learn.

What is particularly thought provoking about this article is the discussion about changes in education, especially higher education. Citing the *Report of the Commission on the Future of U.S. Higher Education* (2006), the researchers indicated that one of the changes addressed was the need for postsecondary institutions to provide high-quality instruction while improving their efficiency. “According to the report, improving

educational quality and promoting innovation includes developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies, which would improve teaching and learning” (p. 188). Johnson and Stryker concluded that teacher quality impacts teacher effectiveness, and ultimately student achievement.

The article claims that the researchers, while having differences in their perspective on lesson planning, each maintained quality and effectiveness in their lesson plans. One major reason for their effectiveness was that they collaborated with each other in developing curriculum and instruction and in reviewing each other’s work. They both recognized that each approached teaching differently. The study affirmed that while some teachers may use different approaches and materials, they can still achieve similar results. Johnson and Stryker showed that classroom experience may be joined with subject matter in such a way that high-quality objectives are accomplished in individually relevant ways.

Leadership

There is a need for education in general and teacher education in particular to engage in manpower development and capacity building for sustainable development. Administrators must become adept at managing the operations of educational institutions and must be prepared to effect change. The literature deals with an extensive gamut of issues related to leadership including transformational leadership, highly regarded as one of the most admirable leadership styles. Warrick (2011) however asserted that although there is much literature on the characteristics of the transformational leader there is not enough on the skills this type of leader should develop and nurture.

Leadership theories have seen many changes, from the traits theory to situational leadership to the contingency and goal-path theories to the contemporary theories of transformational, transactional, and servant-leadership. Traditionally, leadership was viewed in terms of the traits theory, which asserted that endogenous basic tendencies from birth determine what a person may become (Caprara, Vecchione, Barbaranelli, & Alessandri, 2013). In other words, “leaders are born.” The transactional theory, which is more contemporary, portrays leadership as participatory with the leaders functioning as “negotiating agents who conciliate and sometimes compromise to obtain greater decision-making power within the group” (Ruggieri & Abbate, 2013, p. 1172).

In contrast to the Machiavellian thought of a leader being driven by a desire for power and personal gain, a leader embracing a transactional approach seeks not only his interest but shows care for others, both within and outside the immediate environment. The transactional theory rests on a contingent approach; one person takes the initiative in having collaboration for the purpose of an exchange of valued things. There is an acceptance of the power relationships and the parties pursue their respective purposes (Keskes, 2014). The idea is that there is an unwritten contract between management and workers in getting the work done and in achieving objectives. There are established structures and a system of rewards. Disciplinary measures address issues of non-compliance (Warrick, 2011). This, Warrick claimed, is *management*, but he admitted that management is absolutely needed. This points to the debate among theorists as to whether there are clear lines of demarcation between leadership and management. Krieg, Smith and Davis (2014) alluded to the fact that some theorists regard management as being “present oriented” and leadership as being “future oriented” (p. 76 – 77). Warrick (2011)

in expounding on the characteristics and skills of the transformational leader, argued that an organization cannot be managed to “greatness” and that “Greatness comes from leadership” (p. 12).

The transformational leader, according to Warrick (2011) has vision and the acumen to inspire and motivate followers to transcend their self-interest for the greater good. Under his or her leadership, organizational commitment may increase (Keskes, 2014), significant positive changes can occur, and organizations can become transformed. He utilizes intellectual consideration in problem-solving activities and promotes learning and innovation (Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013). According to Keskes (2014), there are five key elements of transformational leadership: vision, inspirational communication, supportive leadership, intellectual stimulation, and personal recognition.

In general, the literature suggests that this type of leadership caters to higher-order needs like self-esteem, self-fulfillment and self-actualization, all of which focus on values such as liberty, equality, and justice. Schuh, Zhang, and Tian (2013) sounded a note of caution however, as they warned that transformational leadership does not automatically engender “followship.” They said that sometimes the leader is so self-centered that subordinates are propelled to be resistant to compliance. They referred to this type of leadership as “pseudo-transformational leadership” (p. 637), and explained that when the leader engenders altruism in the organization, focuses on high morals, and discourages authoritarianism, it is then that authentic transformational leadership can be realized.

Servant leadership goes a step further by presenting the leader as a servant. This sort of leader is therefore expected to embody qualities of empathy and understanding, and is a good listener. He or she seeks to advance the welfare of others, is altruistic, and

sees the role of the organization as being to nurture people who can improve and develop human society (Choudhary et al., 2013; Parris & Peachey, 2013; Latham, 2013).

If leaders do the right thing, it means that values-based morality is at the heart of leadership. “All leadership, whether good or bad, is moral leadership at the descriptive if not the normative level” (Alvarez, 2013, p. 1), and is based on values. Values help define character and it is by character that these leaders are judged. While there are other factors that contribute to the attainment of organizational goals, the character of the leader, according to the theory of moral leadership, has an integral role to play. But a leader does not exist in isolation. Leaders cannot be separated from followers. In fact, Latham (2013) asserted that, “Causality is not unidirectional in leadership processes, and leader behavior can be a dependent variable as well as an independent variable” (p. 21). But it is the leader’s role to mobilize, orchestrate, direct and guide. The extent to which he or she will do this effectively depends to a large extent on his or her character and effectiveness in modeling values and mentoring subordinates. Put another way, for the leader to be successful in his or her role, he or she must be a moral exemplar, or as Toor and Ofori (2009) put it, a “moral person” (p. 535). It is the leader’s role to help to create a moral environment. By using his or her position to benefit others, a moral leader tends to win the trust of followers as they view the leader’s selflessness as evidence of his or her “group-oriented and altruistic intentions” (Schuh et al., 2013, p. 632).

A leader can learn to do any and all of these practices, including how to motivate and reward subordinates. He or she can learn the values of an organization and may have to deal with situations in which there is a difference between the stated values and the operational ones. How the leader leads will be a result of the individual’s character: a

character that has evolved from the values learnt. Toor & Ofori (2009) in their article “Ethical Leadership: Examining the Relationships with Full Range Leadership Model,” proposed that employee outcomes and organizational culture are matters that affect ethical leadership. They concluded that ethical leadership:

- Positively and significantly impacts transformational leadership, the transformational culture of an organization, and the contingent reward dimension of transactional leadership;
- Relates negatively to laissez-faire leadership and transactional culture; and
- Mediates in the relationship between employee outcomes and organizational culture.

Thomas, Herring, Redmond, and Smaldino (2013) in their paper “Leading Change and Innovation in Teacher Preparation: A Blueprint for Developing TPACK Ready Teacher Candidates” highlighted the role of leadership. They presented a framework for transformational leadership containing three key leadership functions: (a) building vision and setting direction, (b) developing people through understanding people, and (c) developing the organization through redesigning it (p. 56). They added that for meaningful transformation in teacher preparation to take place, transformational education leaders must understand and negotiate the relationships among the three components of knowledge (content, pedagogy, technology) and that they must go beyond a business-style organizational model. They also promulgated a theory of action which is a map that sets out what the initiators of the change need to consider as they embark on the process. This theory holds that when leaders are setting institutional direction they must identify the things they can make happen and the things that are outside their

control but which need to happen. This process includes garnering national support, planning professional development, and identifying the resources and institutional-level content and processes needed (p. 58). Additionally, they were explicit in their suggestion that leadership teams be formed to develop a rationale for change and to set shared objectives, and that before all of this is done a formative review of the landscape of the institution ought to be conducted.

Quong and Walker (2010) presented their views on transformational leadership through the lens of strategic leadership in the context of the school setting. They developed a seven-principle model based on strategic approaches and strategic processes. They purported that:

Today's world calls for post-heroic leaders whose work involves collaborating with multiple stakeholders and putting in place strategies to respond rapidly to solve complex problems that often require new ways of thinking and understanding of rapidly changing knowledge. (p. 23)

Their seven principles encompass a leader's vision, philosophy, approach to getting the job done, and personal attributes. According to them the strategic leader, among other things, is oriented towards the future, is evidence based and research led, opens new horizons, gets things done, makes good partners, and is fit to lead.

In discussing the strategic leader as a future-oriented person with a futures strategy, the researchers described the strategic leader as a driver. He has an image of where he wants to go but does not have a GPS to aid him. He is willing to try different routes and make several turns, checks the dashboard for indicators as to the condition of the car, and looks outside for visible signs of problems on the journey.

The writers' definition of strategic leadership is quite insightful. They claimed that it is not just about innovation but may also mean not engaging in something new, and simply consolidating existing initiatives. To explain their point of view, they asserted that "adopting 'low-tech' solutions may open new horizons as effectively as innovative high-tech packages, in the situation where the older technology is better suited to enhance learning outcomes" (p. 28).

The literature seems to suggest that transformational and servant leadership are commendable styles of leadership. But as Quong and Walker (2010), Toor & Ofori (2009), and Schuh, et al. (2013) all suggested, they need to be combined with other styles of leadership to be the most effective. Latham (2013) even related systems thinking to transformational and servant leadership. He said that while transformational, servant and spiritual leadership are not directly related to systems thinking, there are aspects of transformational leadership such as intellectual stimulation (from transformational leadership) and the concept of conceptualization (from servant leadership) that support systems thinking.

Leaders must help shape the vision and quality of their institutions/organizations. They must be involved in mobilizing commitment, diagnosing resistance to change, and inspiring others to offer support. But the leader must be moral, ethical, and strategic. In the context of an educational institution, the leader needs to be a visionary yet pragmatic; responsive to the school's clientele yet proactive; transformational yet transactional. And in being transactional, he or she must provide both staff and students with opportunities to exercise their own responsibility, encouraging them not to refrain from skepticism in critical thinking and competition among differing views. It is the responsibility of leaders

to administer thought and praxis that socially reproduce ideologies and politics within their respective jurisdiction (Alvarez, 2013), and as Latham (2013) in evoking Gandhi says, to become the change they want to see in the organization.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is presented in the literature as a philosophical theory as well as an approach to qualitative methodology. It is regarded as both a movement in the history of philosophy as well as a discipline distinct from but related to other key disciplines in philosophy, like ontology, and in several social-science research disciplines including psychology, sociology, and social work. It rose to prominence in the early 20th century in the works of the philosophers Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Alfred Schütz (Alpers, 2009). Husserl framed it primarily in philosophical terms as a study of “essences,” of transcendental, ideal structures of consciousness. Since Husserl’s time, it has been developed in myriad ways, moving away from the idealist or “transcendental” realm of essences into the “immanent” world of everyday objects and concerns (Finlay, 2008; Kakkori, 2009).

According to Price (2008), Husserl regarded it as “a descriptive analysis of subjective processes, or consciousness, based on intuition” (p. 105). Regardless of the slant, however, phenomenology is a school of thought that emphasizes a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world. That is, the phenomenologist wants to understand how the world appears to others. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) pointed to the fact that researchers in phenomenology do not assume they know what things mean to the participants as there is the recognition that

people may interpret the same experience differently. Finlay (2009) presented phenomenology as a creative process. She called it art in the form of poetry:

Phenomenology, not unlike poetry . . . is a “poetizing project; it tries an incantative, evocative speaking, a primal telling, wherein we aim to involve the voice in an original singing of the world . . . Not unlike the poet, the phenomenologist directs the gaze toward the regions where meaning originates, wells up, percolates through the porous membranes of past sedimentations—and then infuses us, permeates us, infects us, touches us, stirs us, exercises a formative affect. (p. 14)

Language shapes the world and is shaped by the world. “Hermeneutic phenomenology writes and talks in a language” (Henriksson & Friesen, 2012, p. 9), and it is this language that makes experience what it is. McInnes (2013) concurred with Henriksson and Friesen, pontificating that it is through the medium of language that people’s experience of the world inclusive of their hermeneutical experience, develops. He also espoused the view that language facilitates the possibility of multiple interpretations, metaphor, analogy and a range of meaning.

Henriksson & Friesen (2012) further delineated particular qualities of language that they claimed aid experience. These are the figurative, rhythmic, alliterative, and related qualities of a language that connect the language with sounds, rhythms, and figures as they are (or can be) experienced. In highlighting the importance of this kind of language in reflecting experience they offered the explanation that this is why phenomenology encourages “aesthetically sensitized writing” both in the research process as well as in the research product. But language also provides for a social

deontology, “a public recognized obligation.” It is through language that deontic powers and status functions within an organization are expressed and are conformed to (Seale, 2010). In a nutshell, it is through language that the social organization is sustained.

As phenomenology has evolved over the years, several concepts like intentionality, consciousness, and hermeneutics have been explored. Phenomenologists are concerned about the “life-world” of people and the meaning things have in people’s experiences. “Experience” in this context does not refer so much to accumulated evidence or knowledge, but is used instead to refer to something that people “undergo;” something that happens to them. Pure phenomenological research basically seeks to describe rather than explain and to start from a perspective free from hypotheses or preconceptions. Natural, everyday assumptions are set aside to get back to the “pre-reflective state to describe the phenomenon in its purest form as it occurred, before being corrupted by attitudes, prejudices and other influencing factors” (Tuohy, Cooney, Dowling, Murphy, & Sixmith, 2013).

In order to be able to do so, persons telling their “stories” are expected to engage in what Husserl called “reduction” (bracketing; Finlay, 2009; Kakkori, 2009). This bracketing is used to set aside all “fore-structure” otherwise called “prior awareness,” “fore-conception,” “pre-awareness,” or “pre-understanding,” which is what is known or understood before any interpretation is done (Tuohy et al., 2013). Kumar (2012) explained that bracketing is used as a means of achieving transcendental subjectivity (neutrality) by not taking in account any prior understanding or preconceptions about the phenomenon being investigated. The researcher may start out by documenting any observation, assumption, or points of ambiguity, and then makes a conscious effort to not

let these impact how the phenomenon is interpreted. Interpretation may also be engaged in by the participants, who obviously are sharing their perspectives about an experience (phenomenon). This perspective however is influenced by the “lived space,” (the physical environment), the “lived time,” (including calendar time), “lived body,” (who the person is, character traits, and idiosyncrasies), and “lived human relations” (relationships and interactions with other people) (Tuohy et al., 2013). All of these elements affect how a person interprets an experience and of course accounts for differences in viewpoints among persons in a group.

Intentionality, Consciousness, Experience, and Time

Intentionality and *consciousness* are two concepts that are intertwined with phenomenological thought. Intentionality is the “directedness or aboutness of mental states” (Searle, 2010, p. 26), although one must add that not all mental states are intentional. Intentionality is distinct from an intention since the former embraces the latter. Intentional states can be two types: the type it is, or its content. The content is usually propositional, for example, a belief, fear, or desire. Most intentional states, however, are directed at objects and states of affairs. The object will appear in “perception” (noema) and the perception may vary by virtue of things such as the background of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). The actual act of perceiving, feeling, thinking, judging is known as noesis (Moustakas, 1994).

Intentional states do not come isolated; they are accompanied by a network (of beliefs and desires) and background (abilities, dispositions, capacities) (Searle, 2010). Searle saw belief and desire as derivatives and less recognized forms of the more biologically basic form of intentionality in action and perception. He claimed that the

various forms of intentionality are perception, intentional action, prior intention, perceptual memories, beliefs, desires, and imagination. Memories, he argued, represent the past; prior intentions represent the future. Beliefs, desire, and imagination unlike the others have no causal relationships.

Intentionality is aligned to consciousness. According to Husserl, when bracketing is done what is left is the essential nature of pure consciousness. This pure consciousness is what Husserl called the *transcendental ego*. Otherwise referred to as the *phenomenological ego*, it is a stream of consciousness always present in experience even when everything else is bracketed. It is because of consciousness that Husserl considered that knowledge of the world cannot be reached via objective science. The creation of knowledge, he felt, required that scientific facts be bracketed. Only then can the world be seen intuitively and reality be experienced (Price, 2008).

This experience is more of an act of consciousness than a matter of content. Experience is constantly changing and can only be understood “in the horizon of the past and the future” (Kakkori, 2009, p.X). Kakkori (2009) explained that Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002), a student of Heidegger’s, referred to this kind of experience as *hermeneutic* or *dialectic*. It is the kind that enables people to obtain a view that deviates from that held previously. “Our ‘world’ undergoes a change, and we become changed as people along with it” (Kakkori, 2009, p. 25). She also stated that an experience cannot be had twice; that experience is either new or confirmative. In commenting on Gadamer’s philosophy, Kakkori hypothesized that after a person has had a series of genuine experiences (those that broadens one’s horizons), he or she becomes acutely aware of his

or her ability to attain genuine experiences. She called this person in an educational context a “reflective learner.”

Critical to the concept of phenomenology is the concept of time. Aspers (2009) mentioned Heidegger’s ontological approach in which the latter focused on the nature of “being” and “time.” Mølbak (2012) also echoed Heidegger on time as he too wrote about experience in the context of space and time. Mølbak actually presented his concept about “the phenomenology of the event” by proposing that the event is important since it happens to the subject and transforms it.

I do therefore not receive the event in a completely passive way. It does not simply happen to me, I am involved in it, it calls me into action—through it, I become myself, able to think new thoughts and do new things. (p. 212)

In his paper, Mølbak (2012) discussed issues previously addressed by other thinkers—issues like the role of ‘intentionality’ in finding meaning and purpose in experiences including remembering, reasoning, and perceiving (p. 190). He highlighted the importance of the *event*, by pointing to the temporality of space and time, concluding that, “It is therefore the event that is primary and not the elements that can be abstracted from the event as independently existing identities only after the fact” (p. 205).

Challenges to Phenomenological Thought

Not surprisingly there are several challenges that researchers have had to struggle with. Giorgi (2008) cited a major challenge as finding a way to mediate between the fundamental concepts of philosophical phenomenology and the practices of sound scientific research. He seemed a little pessimistic that this balance can be found in the present generation because, “The habits of thought and practices are so solidly empirical

among today's social scientists that it may simply require a new generation with a new frame of mind to bring about the required transformations" (p. 7).

The variants of phenomenology explicitly typify its duplicitous nature. There are for example the "open lifeworld," the "lived experience" approach, and the "dialogical approach" (Finlay, 2009, p. 7). Aspers (2009) theorized that it is futile to identify one single doctrine in phenomenology and that it should be seen as a movement with a common core. He proposed that the core is that analysis does not begin with an "objective" world as in the natural sciences but with mental directness—that which the mental is about or directed to (p. 2). He further added that rather than starting with assumptions, phenomenology establishes a foothold. Concurring with Heidegger that phenomenology is a fore-science, he offered the view that, "It does not aim to be a science, but rather—as a philosophy—questions the ground of science, the taken-for-grantedness of the sciences. The aim, of course, is to reach a better understanding of the conditions of science" (p. 2).

Finlay (2008; 2009) explicated that phenomenology in being both science and art requires the rigor of science by facilitating "free imaginative variation" which ultimately results in the distinguishing of the essential from the particular or incidental. She explained that this Husserlian term involves deliberately changing aspects of the phenomenon in order to distinguish essential features from those that are particular, accidental or incidental. This means for example leaving out elements of a phenomenon to see if there is any change in the phenomenon. On the other hand, Finlay suggested that some researchers "seek methods that retain their concrete, mooded, sensed, imaginative, and embodied nature" (p. 14). These methods embrace literary prose and poetry as well

as communication. Finlay (2009) made the claim that van Manen (1990; 2007), a renowned researcher and theorist in phenomenology, advocated for phenomenological research being regarded as an artistic dimension that stirs people pedagogical, psychological and professional sensibilities.

Finlay (2009) further broadened the lens through which phenomenology is examined as she raised the issue of modernism and whether or not phenomenology is modernist or post-modernist. She opined that in the modernism there is belief in a knowable world with universal properties, and the aim of research in this mold is to examine the “real world.” Postmodernism has more than one paradigm which implies that no one method is the best for capturing human experiences. She recommended that post-phenomenology be embraced in today’s post-postmodern world, and declared that phenomenologists today are challenged to recognize that any knowledge produced is contingent on and subject to alternative interpretations. She added that while phenomenologists may embrace more playful and creative presentations, they must also ensure they do not lose the essence of what is being spoken and what was experienced.

Kakkori (2009) stated that phenomenology may be understood as a discipline that has its own sphere, which is consciousness or experience. She regarded phenomenology as “a human science approach rooted in philosophy” (p. 20). In providing an overview of the philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger, she made reference to the evolution of Husserlian thought from descriptive phenomenology to transcendental phenomenology and the concepts of the “natural attitude” versus reduction, as well as the concept of the “lifeworld.” Kakkori then went on to present the main theme of Heidegger’s thought, which according to her embraced phenomenology as a means of having the core question

of philosophy, that of “being” clarified. Heidegger is cited as stating that, “Phenomenology is the name for the method of ontology” (p. 22). Kakkori seemed to support this view by saying that, “When we understand phenomenology in the context of the question of being, it is the science of the being of entities, ontology” (p. 22). Kinash and Hoffman (2009) contended however, that phenomenology is not about “abstractions, norms, generalizations, statistical probabilities nor theory,” and is really concerned with the “literal and figurative ‘substance and colour’ of what individuals and groups experience in their real, tangible, minute-to-minute existence” (p. 4).

In light of the various prism through which one may view phenomenology, Finlay (2009) attempted to summarize it as a, “low-hovering, in-dwelling, meditative philosophy that glories in the concreteness of person/world relations and accords lived experience, with all its indeterminacy and ambiguity, primacy over the known” (p. 6). Similarly, Applebaum (2011) concisely and artfully captured its essence by saying that phenomenologists are neither advocates nor adversaries. According to him their goal is not to propose a pet theory, or a hypothesis; not to validate or invalidate any implicit truth-claims in the subject’s account of the facts of what they have lived. Phenomenologists, he said are, “the empathic witnesses of the other’s account of their experience, seeking to unfold its essential, intersubjective meanings for the field of psychology as a human science” (p. 524).

Phenomenological Approaches and the Phenomenological Attitude

One of the contentious issues in phenomenology has to do with approaches employed in its use. Aspers (2009) for example developed his theory of empirical phenomenology by building on the social phenomenology of Alfred Schütz who saw

phenomenology as considering the first-order constructs of the subjects and the second-order constructs of the researcher /the observer). He attempted to merge phenomenological traditions like giving credence to the subjective experiences of real people with concepts such as unintended consequences of the social sciences. Giorgi (2008) in contrast made a distinction between phenomenology and empiricism. For this thinker, phenomenology is wider than empirical philosophy as it includes imaginative variation.

The debate surfaced from the outset with Husserl's ideologies. His philosophy, refined and reconceptualized, evolved through a purely descriptive, eidetic approach to becoming transcendental phenomenology (pure consciousness) including the transcendental reduction. In other words, from its genesis of a natural attitude and from the everyday world, the experience moves towards the intersubjective level of the transcendental ego. Some theorists say that it can eventually evolve into genetic phenomenology (concerned with the genesis of meaning within particular experiences) (Kakkori, 2009; Kumar, 2012). Two major approaches to phenomenology are the "empirical existential-phenomenological" and the "hermeneutical phenomenological." Hermeneutic phenomenology uses concrete examples and descriptive, reflective writing to make scholarly discourse less explicit and less theoretical, and results in greater closeness to the "particularities of engaged practice."

Kakkori (2009) presented an in-depth exposition on Husserl's philosophy including the latter's concept of reduction. A synopsis of this exposition is as follows. The first reduction, the phenomenological reduction, depicts movement from an orientation toward objects to consciousness. Everything taken for granted becomes a

phenomenon known in and by consciousness. The second reduction, the eidetic reduction, has to do with the intuition of essences and essential structures. This process results in a multiplicity of variations of what is given, but the essential remains unchanged. In the third reduction, the transcendental reduction, whatever is in the world exists only as an object of pure consciousness (Kakkori, 2009).

Finlay (2008) went a step further to express her feelings about moving between the types of reduction. She said that, “Dancing between bracketing pre-understandings and exploiting them as a source of insight, the researcher experiences contradictory and paradoxical pulls” (p. 29). She described the dance as a dialectical dance portraying both “naïve openness and self-aware criticality” (p. 29). Providing further insight on this notion she postulated that the researcher’s challenge is to remain focused on the phenomenon being studied while minimizing and reflexively interrogating his or her own understandings. “The aim, always, is to see through fresh eyes, to understand through embracing new modes of being” (p. 29).

Finlay (2009) claimed that all phenomenology is descriptive because its purpose is to describe rather than explain, but pointed out that some researchers make a distinction between descriptive phenomenology versus interpretive, or hermeneutic, phenomenology. She spoke on the behalf of researchers when she said that, “Phenomenological researchers generally agree that our central concern is to return to embodied, experiential meanings” (p. 6). She quite adeptly captured the essence of debate about phenomenological research by making mention of Giorgi’s (2008b) critique of “students’ illogical tendency to lay claim to ideas stemming from philosophers/methodologists who have irreconcilable differences” (p. 8), and argued that

a phenomenological method is sound if it fits in well with some phenomenological philosophy or theory, and if its claims about methodology are justified and consistent. In providing additional elucidation on the nature of descriptive phenomenology, Kalof et al. (2008) explained that emphasis is placed on an individual's own interpretation of his or her experiences, and that there is a detailed examination of what is said and done. Then, using everyday language, this description is relayed to reveal the essential meaning of the phenomenon. Researchers stay close to what is given to them in all its richness and complexity.

The researcher however may go a step further and reflectively analyze the descriptions, perhaps ideographically first, and then by offering a synthesized account. For example, he or she may identify general themes about the essence of the phenomenon (Finlay, 2009). Useful for gaining insights into people's motivations and actions, the latter approach embraces subjectivity and emphasizes the importance of personal perspective and interpretation. Some of the literature examines the role of interpretation (hermeneutics) in phenomenology. According to Heidegger, "The meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in interpretation" (Finlay, 2009, p. 11). Finlay added that interpretation is not an appendage but an inevitable and basic structure of our *being-in -the world*. "We experience a thing as something that has already been interpreted" (Finlay, p. 11).

Kakkori (2009) explored the nature and history of hermeneutics quite comprehensively, and regarded hermeneutics as being "concerned with the understanding and interpretation of our being in the world and how our different ways of being in the world are connected to our understanding of things" (p. 26). She made a clear distinction

between hermeneutics and phenomenology; a distinction some researchers disagree with however. She also considered some of the problems encountered in the application of the hermeneutic phenomenological method. In explaining the work of theorists like Husserl, Heidegger, van Manen, and Gadamer, she offered an explanation that, “The hermeneutic experience broadens our horizon and enables us to see something differently than we had in the past . . . In this hermeneutic sense, we cannot have the same experience twice” (p. 24 – 25). She paid particular attention to Wilhelm Dilthey, whom she credited with introducing the term *Erlebnis*, which is translated as “lived experience” (p. 23) and with ultimately triggering the development of the hermeneutic-phenomenological research method. Because van Manen saw a symbiotic relationship between hermeneutics and phenomenology, Kakkori was of course critical of him. As stated before, Kakkori argued that there is an inherent contradiction between Husserlian and Gadamerian hermeneutics, and was of the view that, “Phenomenology is concerned with finding the essence of the things, whereas hermeneutics sees that everything has its being in language and interpretation” (p. 20).

Rennie, who presented a form of hermeneutics which he called *methodical hermeneutics*, argued that it should be a part of qualitative research. He too set his theory against a historical background by proposing that methodical hermeneutics includes abduction, theorematic education (a type of inductive inference based on a theorem(s), and induction. He intimated that it involves demonstrative rhetoric and disclosed reflexivity. Roberts (2013) on the other hand, however, looked at interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as a qualitative dynamic-research process that allows for a subjective exploration of an experience from a participant’s perspective.

Finlay (2009) attempted to merge descriptive phenomenology with hermeneutic phenomenology as she saw interpretation as being on a continuum starting with description and reaching towards interpretation. She believed that the phenomenological process does not involve a researcher striving to be objectivistic, distanced, or detached. She maintained instead that the researcher is fully involved, interested, and open to whatever may appear, and that contrary to what some people may think, “Researcher subjectivity is prized and intersubjectivity is embraced” (p. 3). This is the context in which Finlay used the metaphor of dance. The researcher, she thought, has to dance, gliding:

Through a series of improvised steps with their participant, involving sharp shifts of focus and rhythm, more reminiscent of a tango than a graceful waltz. There is tension as the researcher moves between striving for reductive focus and being reflexively self-aware; between bracketing pre-understandings and exploiting them as a source of insight; between naïve openness and sophisticated criticality. (p. 3)

The idea is that the researcher moves back and forth, gathering information, reflecting, identifying themes, and categorizing data. The researcher’s attitude is therefore one of wonder and reflexivity since while he or she is scientifically as distanced as possible from the subject and the experience, there is an openness to the research participants in the midst of their experiencing, and the researcher is aware of all the nuances of the experience (Finlay, 2009). While Finlay referred to this phenomenological attitude as a dance, Aspens (2009) deemed it a zigzagging hermeneutical circle, or circle of understanding, since understanding is achieved by connecting what is becoming

known to something already known. He noted that, “What is implied is a holistic rather than atomistic approach; meaning is understood in context, and understanding can only emerge in a process. This process is characterized by movement, back and forth, or in a circle, overtime” (p. 2).

Whatever the theoretical perspective in the end the hope is that phenomenology engenders novelty in ideas. Finlay (2008) used the imagery of “fresh eyes” while Applebaum (2011) yearned for a “fresh” investigation. Writing about Husserlian phenomenological research, the latter suggested that this type of phenomenological research proposed setting aside the researcher’s theorizing or the theorizing of others to “freshly” investigate a phenomenon. He concluded that the result is not a naïve attitude, but rather, it is a phenomenological attitude which is an achievement, not a given outcome.

Subjectivity in Phenomenology

As a qualitative research method, phenomenology relies on methods that impinge on reflexivity and researcher subjectivity. One question that must be continually pondered is the extent to which subjectivity and by extension interpretation should be applied to the philosophy. Aldemir and Sezer (2009) concluded that interpretation of data in a qualitative study can be affected by the researcher’s own subjective experiences. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler (2010) went a step further in saying that subjectivity is in all qualitative research. Finlay (2008) added that Husserl did try to get beyond his own subjective experiences and ego. Referencing Husserl (1936/1970), she wrote about the phenomenological attitude as a new way of experiencing, thinking, and theorizing about the world which correlates to subjectivity, and results in real meaning.

Mølbak (2012) dealt with the issue of subjectivity by suggesting that phenomenology has intersubjectivity. He rendered the view that there is a temporality and spatiality to both subjects and objects which rob them of their primacy as self-identical beings. Part of their identity then is attributed to the “elusive event that keeps bringing them into being in new ways and ultimately always deprives them of becoming stabilized things in themselves” (p. 209). In seeing an unavoidable interrelatedness between objectivity and subjectivity, Mølbak (2012) laid out his position that it is impossible to make a clear-cut separation between what is objective and what is subjective. He determined that the reality of the experience seems to reside in a “middle realm” where subject and object have not yet emerged as separate; where both subject and object contribute to the individuation of a “thirdness” which sustains them both.

It is because of consciousness that Husserl decided that knowledge of the world cannot be reached via objective science. The creation of knowledge, he felt, required that scientific facts be bracketed. Only then can the world be seen intuitively and reality be experienced (Price, 2008). Giorgi (2008) asserted that bracketing is a two part-process, saying that the researcher needs to bracket his or her past knowledge as well as all other theoretical knowledge not based on direct intuition. But he also encouraged the researcher to take the object or event to be something that is appearing or presenting itself to him or her, and not that it really exists in the way that it is. In other words, there must be the withholding of an experiential claim and the analysis must be kept within the phenomenal realm. This action Giorgi deemed to be necessary so that full attention can be given to the instance of the phenomenon that is currently appearing to the researcher’s consciousness.

Whether bias is totally avoidable or not, integrity of a piece of work must be striven for. An attempt must be made to attain trustworthiness and to avoid misrepresentation and the distortion or deletion of findings which the researcher may regard as being unnecessary or disadvantageous. The depth of the data will enable the researcher to make interpretations and linkages and then relate the findings to other research, commentary, or personal experience to develop tentative theories. All of this is possible once it becomes clear what the theories and findings are, and what assertions and assumptions are being made. Aldemir & Sezer (2009) claimed that in their study they attempted to minimize researcher subjectivity in the decision process about the phenomenon to be studied. This, they said resulted from the fact that the phenomenon emerged from their past experiences in which they were able to observe the pre-service teachers bringing their prior beliefs to teacher-education classrooms and building their professional identity based on their existing images and beliefs.

Silverman (2010) proposed some strategies for reducing interviewer-related variance. These relate to interacting with the respondent in a way that is professional, and task-oriented. Additionally, it should minimize the potential of respondents to adhere to or infer preferences for the kind of answers that are obtained, and include:

- Reading questions exactly as worded;
- Explaining the survey procedures and question-and-answer process to the respondent;
- Probing nondirectively; that is, in a way that does not increase the likelihood of one answer over others;

- Recording answers that respondents give without interpreting, paraphrasing, or inferring what respondents themselves have not said. (p.303)

In exploring the issue of questioning, he observed that sometimes the interviewer has to do some probing to get at deep-seated feelings and ideas. He advised however, that questions answered in narrative form are at times more prone to attract interviewer bias since there may be recording challenges, for example. Using a minimizing strategy when asking questions that need some specificity may result in a better question being framed.

Phenomenological Methods and Analysis

Regardless of one's stance where the philosophy of phenomenological research is concerned, one general principle in gathering data is that depth must be sought. The literature suggests that triangulation using methods like memoing, participant observation, and interviewing, is useful in facilitating this. Lee (2010) described the methods of data collection and analysis that he used in his phenomenological research. For example, he explained that he read and reread the transcripts and by using selective coding sorted the data into themes and categories. As additional data were analyzed, new themes emerged. He also said that he continually attempted to keep his emotions, assumptions, and interpretations bracketed as much as possible. He discussed the findings of the data analysis and his interpretation with the participants in search of accuracy and understanding, and said he always thought about the role of interpretation and meaning-making within the larger research context.

Qualitative study in general makes use of triangulation, a method used by Kinash and Hoffman (2009). In fact, they completed a study within a study. Their study used three frameworks: action research, a case study, and field work. These entailed the

following methods: (a) field notes, (b) collection of artifacts, (c) one-on-one and small-group interviews, (d) the filming and observation of the professional filming of the project, (e) analysis of students' documentation of their experience including photographs, audio and video tapes, and (f) collection of media documentation about the project. The last method particularly afforded the researchers the opportunity to gain insight into the feedback of stakeholders' external to the immediate environment. But the children themselves were engaged in a phenomenological study. They used triangulation as well including methods like interviews, field notes, and artifacts.

Non-structured and/or semi structured interviews seem to be favored by some phenomenologists. Aspens (2009) introduced what he called the *A-Scheme*, which he developed for empirical phenomenological research. He mentioned that the non-structured interview enables the researcher to pose questions during the interview and to explore the meaning structures of the participants based on what they are saying and not on the researcher's perspective. The questions, he explicated, are guided by the underlying theory, and the questions can be changed if and when the interview takes a different direction. Aspens expounded further by saying that the researcher may not even have formulated questions. He or she may just enter the interviewing process with a set of themes for discussion.

Roberts (2013) in her study used semi-structured interviews. Alluding to Smith (2007), she intimated that this method is meaningful in that it facilitates the researcher and participant engaging in a dialogue. Like Aspens, she submitted that it allows for additional and modified questions in light of the participants' responses. Additionally, referencing Pringle (2011), she advised researchers to be flexible and balanced by not

asking too many questions and not having too much structure. Doing so, the article states, could lead to participants being disingenuous. Roberts also made a case for what she called second-stage interviews to provide clarification and greater insight into an original interview.

Mevawalla and Hadley (2012) in their study “The Advocacy of Educators: Perspectives from Early Childhood” used two in-depth, semi-structured interviews. They explained that the first interview was used to lay the groundwork with information, demography, occupation, and definitions of advocacy and power among others, while the second interview “investigated educators' perceptions of advocacy within macro-contexts while subsequently exploring capacities for utilizing power and leadership to advocate for professional status” (p. 75). In general, the literature revealed interviews being complemented by other research methods resulting in data triangulation. Lee (2010) for example used both the interview method and journal writing (by him).

One question that may arise as one thinks about phenomenological research methods is whether or not only so-called qualitative data may be used. Mevawalla and Hadley (2012) presented a mosaic embracing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Interviews were conducted and artifacts were examined. There were also maps showing the educators' advocacy actions and interactions amongst the educators themselves and with the children, families, colleagues, and the community, and from them the researchers were able to determine commonalities and differences. The software OSR NVivo was then used to analyze the maps. NVivo is a software that is used for analysis in qualitative and mixed-method studies. On the other hand, however,

quantitative methods were used to determine the frequency, range, and type of advocacy actions participants had completed over a week.

Muskat, Blackman, and Muskat (2012) also used both qualitative and quantitative methods in their study. There were expert interviews for data collection, a quantitative analysis of the interviews, and then a qualitative method of final scenario development for analyzing and presenting the results. The purpose of their study was to prove that the combination of the three methods is advantageous, so it was used in the context of a case study. One could argue however that the concept of phenomenology was interwoven as the case was an in-depth description of the specific context and it presented the phenomenon of a mixed methodology. Scenario development was one of the tools used to analyze the data. The researchers proposed that scenario techniques provide for the description of possible complex situations in the future. Alluding to Fink (2001) the researchers observed that scenario development consists of three steps:

- Analysis – of the scenario field to find descriptors and their cross linking;
- Prognostic – of several basic alternatives which are described;
- Scenario development – of the consistency between the several projections (p. 16)

In general, the literature emphasizes a thematic approach to the analysis of data in phenomenological research. Kinash and Hoffman (2009) in commenting on the "naturalistic, eclectic data" they felt were used in their study noted that analysis cannot be conducted in a "linear, positivist manner" (p. 4). This viewpoint seems to leave the door open for consideration of subjectivity, hermeneutics, or even post-positivism perspectives.

A Phenomenological Approach in Teaching

The phenomenological framework fits in well with the qualitative approach, because while there are some aspects of empiricism (one of the foundational elements of quantitative research), the qualitative approach resists the “naturalization” of the social world. Now since it is people who are the primary focus of qualitative research, there has to be an understanding of the essential and the existential. “The former is *common* to all human beings, is the foundation of their dignity, and constitutes what makes them equal. The latter constitutes the *differential* aspect, distinguishing each human being from the others and making each individual unique” (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009, para. 20). The knowledge then is both objective and subjective, is rational and spiritual, and is attainable because of the receipt of impressions via the sense organs (Dewey, 2008). It is also gained in a historical context. “Without integrating historical context into the way we use and draw upon knowledge in our lives we may be subject to what some have called “self-inflicted amnesia” (Suárez -Orozco & Sattin-Bajaj, 2010, p.39). The historical context is so important, especially since knowledge has become so ephemeral. This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as “half-life of knowledge” because of the little time it takes for half of one’s professional life to become obsolete, estimated at just a few years. Such losses take even less time in technical fields.

Phenomenology offers a kind of science that contemporary society must have if knowledge is to be attained and maximized. De Munck (2009) declared that what is needed is a new science of situated actions that links the actions to thought and feeling; that endeavors to connect what happens in the head (the *mental*) to what is physically done (the *phenomenal*); and that connects the individual to the collective. This science

will tap into the actions, thoughts, and feelings of people who tell their narratives. And these narratives while being applicable to the many contexts of the human experience must also be applied to the field of education. This is imperative if education is to become an effective tool in creating a society in which there is:

A paradigm of education privileging disciplined curiosity, the beauty of discovery, a ludic engagement with the world, and an ethic care and solidarity will be less a luxury and a rarity than an essential requirement for the next generation of children to thrive. (Dewey, 2008, p. 198)

The diverse narratives capturing a global, pluralistic world must be told so that phenomena may be understood, lessons may be learnt, pitfalls may be avoided, and the human condition may be improved. Phenomenology is needed to tell these narratives to help build a social construct that enables the testing of ideas. It is needed to reflect the kind of wonder and engagement intimated in the above quotation. And while the educator's role will be to develop in his or her student this kind of ethos, the educator himself or herself must first of all reflect and communicate it. Sharing such an ethos will then certainly portend to the perpetuation of an education framework that is sustainable, and enhances human development.

An argument for a phenomenological approach to teaching in a post-modernism context was made by Seltzer-Kelly et al. (2011). They argued that this approach is suitable to a teaching/learning situation that is engaging to both students and teacher. The teacher, for example, is able to recognize the existence of another's otherness and the student (who is an 'other') has a unique potential (daimon). He or she comes to the teaching/learning situation with expectations of a teacher and these expectations are

mediated by models of teachers in his or her past experiences and impacted by such factors as gender, ethnicity, and culture. One may therefore conclude that this kind of interaction in such a nurturing environment can only result in a classroom that meets the needs of students and helps them to create their own meaning of their world.

Summary

Researchers have posited their views on the need for change in education in a world that has become a global village driven by technology. Institutions of higher learning have to try to become less dependent on government and must seek to become more sustainable. The word “sustainable,” has to be applied to education in more than one context, since institutions have to help their communities reach for sustainability.

In effect, we need to change the present attitude that treats education as a commodity and not as a lifelong process. In other words, as Baker (2011) further elaborates, we need to attend to the present disconnect between our hope for education and our collective action which subverts such hope. And tied up with our hope for education is our hope for the future – a common stable future being shaped by how we all think and act, in large measure, how we educate and are educated. (Down, 2011, p. 57)

The changes in education - from early education to higher education inclusive of teacher training - are far-reaching. And as paradigms shift, leaders, administrators, staff, and students must also move a bit.

Change is not easy, but it is inevitable. The quality of the change experience, of course, will depend on the type of leadership provided and the framework used for OD. While there is room for variations in styles of leadership and strategies for managing

change, there are certain elements that seem to be extremely effective. These include transformational and servant leadership, with a premium being placed on communication and worker participation in the decision-making process. Leadership is both an art and a skill requiring strategic planning. It has to be adaptable since the environment in which it operates is always fluid and dynamic. A leader must therefore be willing to keep growing and changing if he or she wants to create a successful organization. This process requires a focus on personal and corporate productivity. The leader must become more than a producer. He or she has to be a developer, and that entails helping others grow.

According to Maxwell (2011), effective leaders:

Transfer ownership for work to those who execute the work ... create the environment for ownership where each person wants to be responsible ... coach the development of personal capabilities and...learn fast themselves and encourage others also to learn quickly. (p. 187)

When these things are done, the leader can think, envision, and strategize.

The Caribbean region, consisting of developing and under-developed countries, has its fair share of challenges. In this context, teacher-training institutions must be part of the vanguard for change. The Mico University College has undergone and continues to experience an evolution in its attempts to enhance Jamaica's human capital. This institution has revamped some programs and curricula and introduced others. One by one its degree programs are being accredited. Feedback about its offerings can be a valuable mechanism, and having graduates share from their lived experience is certainly one way of doing so. Phenomenology, whether a science or an art, whether hermeneutical or descriptive, and whether objective or not, is surely a tool that enabled the participants in

this study to peel the layers and get to the core of their feelings, perspectives, and opinions. These feelings, perspectives, and opinions, shared, will provide insights which The Mico can then use to support the tweaking of current policies and to introduce others, portending towards human and social development.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Introduction

This phenomenological research was meant to capture the views and opinions of graduates of The Mico who had obtained a degree in early education. In particular, they tendered their views about the program itself commented on things such as curricula, pedagogy and resources. They were also asked to provide feedback on how they saw the changes at the institution impacting its organizational development and performance improvement, and how policy at the institutional level related to educational policy at the national level as well as at the regional level. Getting the feedback of the graduates on the new degree program was important, because according to UNESCO there still exists a need for detailed information in education-related areas despite “major advances in the availability of information relating to educational objectives” of the member countries of the Summit of the Americas (UNESCO, 2010, p. 84). Alluding to the challenges of getting information on educational reforms, Pantić (2012) cited the work of some researchers who intimated that there are various “forces” in the educational change process, and that educational reforms must consider the complex interactions between them. The participants for my study should certainly be regarded as one of the “forces” whose interactions with other “forces” were worth capturing.

This chapter includes discussion of the methodology I used and an explanation for my use of the qualitative phenomenological method. I offer a description of the sample, how the sample was chosen, the procedures that I followed, and the data-collection and analytical methods that I used. The questions that the participants were expected to respond to are also included. In the final section of Chapter 3, I discuss how ethical

guidelines and considerations were ensured for all research participants involved in this study, and how validity and trustworthiness were attained.

I used the qualitative phenomenological approach to address the research questions for this study, and I used interview responses to answer the study's research questions. The focus of this study was on answering the following research questions through the lived experiences of graduates of The Mico who completed the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided the research. They are:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?
2. What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflects organizational development and relates to performance improvement at The Mico?
3. What are the graduates' views about how the change is being implemented?
4. What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

Research Design and Approach

For this study I used a qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological design. This design was predicated on two main philosophical paradigms: descriptive as well as hermeneutic phenomenology. These paradigms of course did not simply determine the methods I used for the collection and analysis of the data, but they were instructive to my approach to the study. I asked the participants to describe their experiences, but I also asked them to go a step further and to engage in the interpretive mode in order to share their impressions, feelings, and ideas about the experiences. Of course, I recognized that reflections about experiences would have been impacted by the physical environment, time, who the person is, and his or her character traits, idiosyncrasies, relationships, and interactions with other people (Tuohy, et al., 2013).

I used semi-structured interviews comprised of open-ended questions and “thick descriptions.” The thick description presented a holistic picture of the experiences as the graduates’ perceptions about the degree program were presented against the contextual and experiential background (Moustakas, 1994). Additionally, I was able to use thick description because the graduates’ in their reflection evoked social structures and social relationships at The Mico. Forms of thick description include quotations from individual participants that may be used to illustrate overarching themes, thereby providing the reader with an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon from those who lived it on a daily basis (Pedersen, 2010).

Qualitative Approaches

The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because it is an effective method that researchers use to understand the world as presented by people through their lives, behavior, and interactions. I used it to investigate the processes, changes, and social context dynamics, and people's perspectives on their own worlds and their attempts to try to appreciate and adapt to these worlds. Qualitative research enabled me to explore the senses and the meanings in personal narratives, life stories, and life experiences in the participants' "language," and in their forms of social interactions (Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009). Generally, qualitative research focuses on how people make sense of their environment and experiences through symbols, social roles, identities, and other elements of culture, and works to explain why they think and act as they do. The emphasis is therefore on the individuals' own interpretation of their experiences and these experiences are examined in detail via what they say and do within a given context or setting. Qualitative research tends to focus on a single concept or phenomenon, and the researcher is able to validate the accuracy of the findings, to make interpretations of the data, and create an agenda for change or reform (Moustakas, 1994).

In qualitative research, analysis may begin early while documents are being observed and interviews are being conducted. For example, common themes or ideas may be identified across setting, groups, or documents even before all data collection has been completed. This may help to shape the rest of the data collection process. Usually an inductive approach, phenomenological research affords the researcher the ability to move from particular to general themes and to make interpretations of the meaning of the data

(Moustakas, 1994). This is done by coding, and in this study I used open, axial, and selective coding supported by integrative diagrams in the form of graphic organizers.

Tracy (2013) used several metaphors to describe qualitative research. She said that the researcher uses a gestalt (essence of form or shape) approach to studying cultures. This approach which researchers use to integrate distinct parts is similar to bricolage, Tracy's other metaphor. She compared bricolages to quilters "borrowing and interweaving viewpoints and multiple perspectives. They make do with a variety of data – all of which are partial and mismatched in order to construct a meaningful, aesthetically pleasing and useful research synthesis" (p. 26). A third metaphor employed by Tracy is a funnel. She suggested that the inquiry begins with broad research questions, but gradually narrows down in focus.

Additionally, researchers have a multiplicity of methods of data collection to choose from. They may do in-depth interviews with follow-up questions, but as the interview progresses, the questions are tailored to what the respondent has already said. Researchers may also be afforded the opportunity to engage in participant observations to access first-hand information, and to peruse various kinds of texts including photographs and sound recordings. To achieve these goals, researchers use one of five main qualitative approaches: narrative research, ethnography, grounded theory, case study, and phenomenology.

According to Creswell (2012), "Narrative research designs are qualitative procedures in which researchers describe the lives of individuals, collect and tell stories about these individuals' lives, and write narratives about their experiences" (p. 22). Using narrative design, researchers collect data as stories with individuals reporting on their

experiences and chronologically explaining the meaning of these experiences. This kind of research demands that there be an active collaboration between researcher and participant, and this process sometimes results in the narratives being shaped by the reflections of the researcher.

Ethnography, on the other hand, emphasizes how a culture “works” and is used by researchers to describe, analyze, and interpret the shared patterns of behavior, belief, and language of a cultural group which were developed over time. The group is described within its setting, and themes and issues are identified and examined as the group interacts (Creswell, 2012). Traditionally, culture has been viewed in terms of ethnicity and geography, but it can be used to refer to virtually any group or organization. The word is used widely to refer to “the way a particular group of people from the same background think and act” (Storti, 2011, p. 10). A social construct, it is shown via the systems, artifacts, and procedures of an organization and reflected in the human capital through their skills, attributes and knowledge. In short “it is the balance between the strategic focus and the values ethos” (Mann, 2010, p. 51). The ethnographer usually becomes immersed in the subjects’ life experiences, including their shared ritual and emotional experiences outside of a controlled environment. The research is therefore interactive, and the ethnographer has to take extensive field notes (Murchison, 2010). This process poses one of the limitations to this kind of research since it often requires prolonged periods in the field, an aspect which could ultimately lead to diminished objectivity.

Case-study research is the exploration of an issue examined through a bounded system (a case) or multiple-bounded systems (cases) over time. Multiple sources may be

used for the collection of data including interviews, observations, and documents.

Sometimes there is a particularly unique feature or quality being studied, and when this approach is followed, the knowledge gained may then be used to apply to other cases or contexts.

Lastly, scholars use grounded theory in attempts to develop theories about phenomena of interest. The theory needs to be grounded or rooted in observation. Grounded theory is a complex iterative process. Tracy (2013) intimated that it entails the usage of a systematic, inductive analysis of data. The researcher collects data, analyzes it line by line, creates themes, and then links them. The research begins with the raising of generative questions which help to guide the research to systematically develop a theory that explains processes, actions, or interactions on a topic. The researcher then seeks to verify the data and to summarize the findings towards one core category. This process can be quite consuming because new observations may lead to new linkages which may in turn lead to revisions in the theory and more data collection. Grounded theory tends to use mainly interviews, many of them collected in the field. It is thus difficult to have a clearly demarcated point for ending a study.

The Phenomenological Approach

This approach can be applied to single cases or to samples deliberately selected or not. In multiple-participant research, once there is a reoccurrence of factors, certain inferences can be drawn. There is a caveat however. Phenomenological research can be robust in indicating the presence of factors and their effects in individual cases, but care must be exercised in relating them to the population from which the participants or cases were drawn. This is because the research findings are so intensely based on personal

experiences. One must make sure that any transferability that is applied is verifiable by the data and conclusions drawn are reasonable.

The phenomenological approach is particularly insightful as it allows for detailed comments and thick descriptions about individual situations (descriptive phenomenology.) This process draws out key issues that were discussed by the participants. This study will however include the additional element of ‘interpretation’ (hermeneutics). One of the aims of the researcher was to be faithful to the participants and to remain aware (as much as possible) of researcher biases. Every attempt to strike a balance between keeping a focus on the research issues and avoiding undue influence on the participants was made.

In analyzing the data, I used the process of horizontalization (the identification of significant statements, sentences, or quotations. Then, I looked for, and eliminated overlapping, repetitive, and vague expressions before clustering meaning to thematize the invariant constituents (the meaning units or horizons; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Once this was done, I wrote textual descriptions of the participants’ experiences as well as structural descriptions (imaginative variation). Imaginative variation, which describes the context or setting of the phenomenon, allows the researcher to systematically vary several possible structural meanings underlying the narratives of experiences; to identify the underlying themes and contexts that contribute to the phenomenon; to consider the universal structural properties and attributes of the phenomenon, such as temporality, spatiality, materiality, causality; and to look for examples of the invariant structural themes (Lin, 2013). The insights identified were then

synthesized and integrated leading ultimately to the composite description of the essential, invariant structure or essence (Hathorn et al., 2009; Moustakas, 1994).

This study required careful and systematic analysis. Findings were reported robustly and were grounded in the direct quotes and metaphors of the participants, thereby adding trustworthiness. This was done according to themes and topics. The specialized vocabulary and idioms reflecting the vernacular and ethos of the subjects were presented as closely as possible. Vignettes of individual experiences and narratives were relayed and care was taken to preserve confidentiality, while guarding against tedium from too much detail and superfluity. I was able to engage in a greater depth of analysis by relating the findings to previous research and commentary, or even commonsense opinions. Informed theorizing was included based on the findings being discussed and the assertions and assumptions being made, and disingenuity was avoided by not presenting interpretations and theories as being more concrete than they were.

Research Sample

Purposive snowball sampling was primarily used in this study. The population consisted of graduates who had completed the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education at The Mico. A sample of 10 was drawn from three cohorts who had graduated since the inception of the degree program and it comprised eight females and two males. Eight participants had studied part-time while two had studied full time. Verification of the fact that the participants graduated from The Mico was attained by an examination of the respective graduation booklets.

I had access to contact information for some of the graduates in cohort one and that provided for some ease in the recruitment of participants and the planning processes.

Two persons in this cohort were therefore purposefully selected and recruited for participation in the pilot test. Selection was based on my knowledge of the particular graduates' willingness to be open, their frankness, and their ability to articulate their opinions and feelings. There was only one male in cohort one so he was invited to participate in the main study to ensure representation by both sexes. The snowball strategy was then used as those recruited for the pilot were asked to suggest other persons within the cohort for the main study. I asked the heads of the Departments of Early Education and Early Childhood Education as well as the Director of The Mico Early Childhood Education Centre to provide contact information for graduates from the other cohorts: two, three and four. There was some degree of probability sampling as everyone in those cohorts had the opportunity of being selected. That probability portended towards some level of transferability (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena & Nigam, 2013). The members of staff who helped to recruit participants were granted permission to do so by the Acting Vice-President, Academic Affairs and the Dean of the Faculty of Education. The Acting Vice-President signed a letter of cooperation (see Appendix A).

My decision to use a population of graduates in the early childhood education degree program was significant. The early childhood level in the educational system is foundational to the other educational levels and to human development. Ho, Campbell-Barr, and Leeson (2010) argued that early childhood education lays the foundation for the individual development and well-being of young children, and cited the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Network in adding that it positively affects children's later school success and minimizes the occurrence of learning disabilities. Additionally, effective early childhood education affords children

with opportunities for social interactions, and teaches them how to manage their emotions (Lawrence, 2010; UNESCO, 2010). Lawrence (2010) suggested that early childhood education is a “predictor of adult productivity” (p. 1), adding that intervention at an early stage is more helpful in raising the economic status of persons from disadvantaged families.

I flirted with the idea of using a sample size of 10 after careful thought and research. Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, and Fontenot (2013) made the point that there is no established test of sample size adequacy, and revealed that in general, theorists suggest that six – 10 is a good enough sample size for phenomenological research. Pedersen (2010) in her phenomenological dissertation, made contact with nine persons and ultimately conducted the research with five. She even claimed that Giorgi (2008) suggested that a sample size of three may even be good for more in-depth interviews. Mason (2010) in making a case for small samples in qualitative research said that “one occurrence of the data is potentially as useful as many in understanding the process behind a topic. This is because qualitative research is concerned with meaning and not making generalised hypothesis” (sec. Introduction). After all, according to Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot (2013) the best justification for the sample size of interviews does not rest with the steps a researcher takes in collecting the data. They purported that it is predicated on the statistical demonstration of redundancy in codes and is therefore results-driven. The sample size must be large enough to address important perceptions and themes, but it must be small enough that repetitiveness and superfluity are averted (Mason, 2010).

It is partially for the purpose of determining if the sample size is adequate that a pilot test with two graduates was conducted. The result actually indicated to some degree the level of concurrence in the responses of the participants and was indicative of the possible point of saturation. The nature of the study itself, the research methodology, and the sample characteristics all support the conclusion that the point of saturation can be reached with a sample size of 10. For example, the study population was relatively narrow as it consisted only of the graduates of the Early Childhood Education Degree program and the research methodology consisted of triangulation and rich description. Additionally, the interview questions were complemented by probing questions, and follow-up discussions and email were used to procure clarification to responses. All of these provided depth to the data and aided in building trustworthiness.

Although the group was heterogeneous there was some degree of homogeneity. According to Pringle et al. (2011) too narrow and homogenous a sample may lead to questions and cause people to make judgments about the transferability of the data to other areas and/or groups. This may be a valid concern, but since the goal of the study as a phenomenological study was to have students share their lived experiences in an open and frank manner, there is value in the study being done. Even then there is still some potential of transferability as there are enough common variables between the graduates of the Early Childhood Education program and other graduates. These include the fact that all the degree programs are new and evolving, and the situational and environmental contexts including classroom and other physical resources are common across disciplines.

Instrumentation

Purposive sampling coupled with snowballing, as described above, was used. The main method of data collection were semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. There was a total of 11 questions with 15 follow-up probing questions (see Appendices B and C).

Pringle et al. (2011) in supporting the use of the semi-structured interview argued that a rigid set of questions or a more structured interviewing technique may result in participants being less willing to be expansive, honest and reflective in their accounts. They offered that semi-structured interviews facilitate flexibility in the ordering of questions and afford the interviewer the opportunity of following-up any unanticipated idea or issue raised by the participants. Madill (2011) highlighted the interactive nature of semi-structured interviews suggesting that the interaction also reveals the institutional nature of this interview method. According to her it is important for the researcher, while analyzing the interviews, to be reflectively aware of the distinct interactional form, and to be also able to use the analysis to apply to other interactional contexts within which the information gleaned from the interviewees could have currency.

The interviews were conducted primarily with Livescribe Echo complemented by Skype in four cases and regular telephone in two cases. The Livescribe software has features to record and store the interviews in written and electronic form. A MP3 application was installed on Skype and that facilitated the recording and storing of the interviews. Four interviews were face to face so Livescribe was the only method used in those instances. The original plan was to conduct all interviews electronically as the

participants are in Jamaica and I live in New York. On a visit to Jamaica, however, I was able to conduct four interviews face-to face.

The Interview Questions

These open-ended questions cover the range of research questions as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Relationship Between Research Questions and Interview Questions

Interview question number	Interview question number
	Kingston, Jamaica
1, 2, 3, 4,	1
5	2
6	3
7 – 11	4

The participants were asked to describe their experiences as students at The Mico, to comment on how the transition to degree-granting status was being implemented and was impacting the institution, and to state their views of policy shifts at the institution and nationally.

1. What are your views about the quality of the new degree program?

Probing Question A: How would you describe the quality of the early childhood degree program in terms of training the teacher candidate how to teach?

Probing Question B: To what extent did the courses in the Degree program cover subject matters pertinent to early childhood education and

prepare the teacher candidate to meet the needs of the students in his or her classroom?

2. How would you describe your classroom experience at The Mico?

Probing Question C: Describe your classroom experience in terms of the physical environment, timetabling, etcetera.

Probing Question D: In general, how would you describe the delivery of pedagogy?

3. How would you describe the delivery of support services at The Mico?

Probing Question E: Describe your experience with the orientation and registration protocols.

Probing Question F: Describe your experience with the examination protocols.

4. Describe your experience in accessing support resources at The Mico.

Probing Question G: How adequate and accessible were services like the library and technology?

5. How does the new undergraduate degree program reflect organizational development and relate to performance improvement at The Mico?

Probing Question H: Does the new degree in early childhood education add value to the development of the institution and its role in teacher training in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean region? If so, how?

Probing Question I: How does the new degree in early childhood education impinge on the performance of The Mico in adequately preparing teachers for the Jamaican context?

6. What are your views about how The Mico is transitioning to university status?

Probing Question J: What are some of the major challenges for administration in leading the change?

Probing Question K: What are some of the challenges for faculty and staff in implementing the changes?

7. (a) What are some of the major policy shifts in teacher training education in general, and early childhood education in particular, undertaken by The Mico University College administration?

(b) What are your views about these policy shifts?

Probing Question L: How are these policy shifts impacting the quality of training in early childhood education that is being offered?

Probing Question M: What are some of the potential advantages of these policy shifts to teacher education at the national as well as the regional level?

8. What other policy shifts, if any, would you like to see?

9. (a) What are some of the major policy shifts in education undertaken by the government of Jamaica with regards to early childhood education?

(b) What are your views about these policy shifts?

Probing Question N: How are these policy shifts impacting the quality of early childhood education in Jamaica?

Probing Question O: How do educational policies at the Mico reflect the shifts in early childhood education at the Ministry of Education?

10. To what extent do educational policies at the early childhood education level inform educational policy at the higher levels?
11. How does educational policy make a difference in people's lives and in the development of a country?

The Pre-interview Survey

Before the interviews were held, a questionnaire was administered via email to solicit background information from the participants and to add thick description (see Appendix D). The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions and were based on the determination of the basic information that needed to be garnered. The questions ranged from the grade level at which the participants may have previously taught and were then teaching, to their qualification before beginning the degree program, to when they started and completed the program, and whether or not there had been mobility, promotion, or salary differential since the attainment of the degree.

From this data, a better understanding of the participants' academic and professional experience before and after the completion of the degree program and their professional mobility was gained (see Appendix E). Some basic information on the participants was deemed necessary as that would help to set a context for their interpretation of, and responses to the interview questions and would also help to facilitate thick description. This also aided me in identifying information that should be bracketed to avoid undue bias. A promotion or increase in salary after the completion of the Degree for example, could possibly have resulted in participants speaking a bit more favorably about the degree program. Here are the questions categorized according to whether they were nominal or ordinal data.

Nominal data.

1. Are you currently teaching?
2. At which grade level do you currently teach?
3. When did you enroll in the undergraduate program at The Mico?
4. When did you graduate from the undergraduate program at The Mico?

Ordinal data.

5. How long have you been teaching?
6. At what level do you currently teach?
7. How long have you been teaching at this level?
8. How long have you been teaching at this grade level?
9. What was your highest level of education before you entered The Mico?
10. What was your highest level of qualification before entering The Mico?
11. Has the completion of the undergraduate degree resulted in any of the following at your place of work:
 - i) a promotion,
 - ii) more responsibilities/duties, and/or
 - iii) an increase in salary?

Both nominal and ordinal data.

12. Were you teacher trained before you entered The Mico? If so, where were you trained, and when did you graduate?
13. a) Since the completion of your degree, have you changed jobs or place of work?
 - b) If you answered yes to the immediate question above, say why.

- i) Professional mobility
- ii) Opportunity for better salary
- iii) Job dissatisfaction
- iv) Other

Other Data Collection Methods

The interviews were complemented by thick description, memoing, reflexive journaling, clarification of researcher bias (bracketing), member check, peer review, and examination of artifacts. These additional methods were used to add textual details as well as to aid in the analytical process, but they also helped in providing validation and trustworthiness. Referred to as *triangulation or methodological pluralism*, this mishmash of methods is an example of a practice in research to use multiple strategies and/or multiple sources for collecting data or to use different approaches in the analysis of data or even to consider a topic from a variety of theoretical orientation (Kalof et al., 2008).

I used journaling and memoing to bracket my preconceptions, opinions, and feelings before and during the research process. The notes in memoing were *observational, theoretical, and methodological*. Observational notes were unstructured comments on what happened, theoretical notes represented reflections on various experiences throughout the entire data collection, analysis, and validation processes, methodological notes were reminders, self-critiques, and comments on what could have been done differently or better, or not at all (Pedersen, 2010). Memoing is a validation procedure used to record a researcher's actions, feelings, and thoughts thereby preserving his or her ideas. It is a means by which a researcher's theoretical sensitivity is enhanced as the researcher for example may gain insights about him or herself as a researcher and

into the research process, and may also note nuances in the data (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills, & Usher, 2013).

Other supporting secondary methods that I used were member check, the perusal of artifacts, and peer review. For peer review two faculty members were asked to check the interpretation of the data as presented in Chapter five for evidence of bias, possible cases of generalization, and unsupported conclusions. They were also provided with the results of the data as the meaning units and thematic index for them to corroborate accuracy and consistency. In addition, informational sources of The Mico providing insight into the institution's policies and operational guidelines were perused. These were The Mico University College's graduation booklets for 2012 and 2013, the Programme Document for the Department of Early Childhood Education, and the University College's website. Additionally, the *Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan: Education Draft Sector Plan* (2009) developed by the Education Task Force of the Ministry of Education, the Government of Jamaica was consulted.

The Pilot Test

Using purposive sampling, I selected two graduates and engaged them in completing a pilot test. These two graduates are critical thinkers, articulate, and frank, and contact information for them was available. The same questions and probing questions that had been designed were used and the same methods and procedures that were established for the main study, were followed. The pilot test was conducted with each individual and was not a form of 'focus group.' This was important as given the nature of the study, it was necessary to minimize any undue influence on each person's response.

A post-pilot test debriefing session was held with each participant once the interview was conducted. The questions were not about their responses, but instead, were about the nature of the interview questions. They were as follows:

1. Was there any question that was not clear enough?
2. Was there any question that you did not know enough about?
3. Is there any question that you would have asked and it was not included?
4. Was the time allotted adequate?

From the responses, points of similarities and differences were identified and it was determined that the sample size was adequate and that there was no need to add any more participants (see Appendix F).

Methods of Analysis

Coding, a process for labeling, categorizing and comparing qualitative data (Metzler, 2014) was the main analytical method that was used. From this process relationships were identified and themes were established. Initially, *open coding* which is the identification of concepts and categories was done by the segmentation of the data (interview transcriptions) into significant statements (Kumar, 2012) and the labeling and description of their conceptual properties. That facilitated the generation of concepts from the data rather than from the researchers' preconceptions. "A concept is a label for a discrete happening, event, or the other instance; a category is the grouping of related concepts pertinent to a certain aspect of the phenomenon under study" (Lin, 2013, p. 473). Concepts may be classified as a phenomenon for the category, as the context or condition for another category, or as a consequence.

Both axial coding and selective coding were used in this study. In the former, a category was treated as an axis and from it relationships and dimensions were demarcated (Lin, 2013). Using inductive and deductive thinking, the data was then clustered according to themes that were common among participants. Notation about details and implications of these categories were also made. Cross-checking of these clusters against the original transcriptions was then done for validation and for confirmation of consistency between emerging conclusions and the participants' original stories (Kumar, 2012). Then, in selective coding, additional examples and evidence were used to provide elaboration and development of core categories (Metzler, 2014). All the findings were then integrated into an exhaustive description of the phenomenon being studied. The description includes "comparing topics for consistent themes, and bridging themes for their conceptual meanings" (Kumar, 2012).

In addition to coding, integrative diagrams were used to pull all the details together, and to help make sense of the data with respect to the emerging categories or theories. Tables and graphs were used to achieve and maintain a commendable level of validity and trustworthiness. The material was organized according to the research questions as well as subject matters such as concepts and themes. Additionally, the level of frequency of the themes across participants was graphically represented on tables and graphs.

One major tool of data analysis that was borrowed from quantitative research is descriptive statistics. Providing simple summaries about the sample, these captured the central tendencies in the nominal and ordinal data contained in the pre-interview survey. (A breakdown of the questions according to the ordinal and nominal categories are on

pages 123 – 124, and a summary table of the survey results can be found in Appendix E.) The questions were designed to establish a profile of the graduates and included questions about the graduates' educational level and work experience before they pursued the bachelor's degree. A profile may aid in the development of themes and help in the identification of biases.

Research Procedures

The following sequential procedures outline the steps that were taken to recruit participants, obtain informed consent, and to collect, analyze, and validate data.

1. The Vice- President in charge of Academic Affairs (acting) at The Mico was written to by email for approval to conduct the study. As a follow-up she was asked to sign a formal letter of cooperation which specifically granted permission for the procurement of background information and artifacts.
2. The Dean of the Faculty of Education (acting) was also written to and his cooperation was solicited. Subsequent to the approval of both the Acting Vice President and the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Education I held discussions with the head of the Department of Early Education as well as the Director of The Mico Early Childhood Education Centre.
3. An IRB application was submitted to Walden University. Approval to conduct the research was sought before any further contact with anyone associated with this research study was made.
4. After approval, I contacted two graduates to request their participation in doing the pilot test. The graduates were each asked to sign a consent form.

5. The pilot test consisted of them being interviewed. The questions and protocol developed for the main study were used.
6. Once the interviews were conducted the participants were asked to complete a debriefing questionnaire which I then analysed.
7. I contacted three graduates of the first graduating cohort by email and telephone calls and asked them to participate in the project. Once they agreed, they were asked to sign the Informed Consent Form. (See appendices G, H, and I, for samples of the invitation email written to the prospective participants, their responses confirming their agreement to participate, and the signed consent form.)
8. The heads of the departments of Early Education and Early Childhood Education as well as the Director of The Mico Early Childhood Education Centre were asked to suggest the names of potential participants from the other three cohorts.
9. These participants were then asked to assist in recruiting other participants by contacting them or by providing contact information for them. This snowballing method successfully yielded ten participants, even after some persons originally contacted ended up not participating,
10. Initial conversations via Skype or telephone were held with all the participants to facilitate the establishment of rapport, and for me to further explain the nature of the phenomenological research and the research process. For example, I explained to each participant that his or her participation was voluntary, and he or she was free to withdraw participation at any time.
11. Participants were asked to suggest pseudonyms which have been used as identifiers. Only the particular participant and I know the pseudonym for each person. The

pseudonyms are contained in Table 2, but in the analysis and discussion on the data the participants are referred to as ‘numbers.’ The study does not include any information that makes it easy for any participant to be easily recognized.

12. Two faculty members not yet involved with the project were approached and asked to serve as peer reviewers. They agreed and were provided with letters of cooperation to affix their signatures. (See Appendix J for copy of signed confidentiality agreement letter.)
13. Before the series of interviews began I made entries in a reflexive journal, for the purpose of bracketing my opinions and feelings.
14. The participants were interviewed electronically, and in four cases, face-to-face, for one hour. Due to the unstructured nature of the interviews, a number of probing questions were used. There was the need in some cases to have additional follow-up questions.
15. On the completion of the interview I would raise any observation worthy of a discussion or ask for clarification on matters related to either the pre-interview survey or the interview.
16. Immediately after the interviews were conducted, I made notes about the process including observations about how the participants responded to the questions or about how I managed the process in my reflexive journal.
17. The interviews were stored in Livescribe and on MP3 and then later uploaded to a secure and encrypted repository for digital audio files. The interviews were transcribed from the Livescribe software.

18. The transcriptions were then uploaded to a secure password-protected server for the purposes of review of the material.
19. Each participant was provided with a copy of the transcription for verification of accuracy (member check). Participants had the opportunity to recommend revisions and/or changes.
20. Clarification was sought for any ambiguity or obscurity in the transcription.
21. Participants were asked to verify the transcriptions in writing (see Appendix K).
22. The coding process was then conducted to the point where the themes were delineated.
23. The analysis and explication processes then began with Chapters 4 and 5 being written.
24. Two faculty members of The Mico staff were asked to do a peer review to look for any evidence of obvious bias, and to ascertain if the conclusions that are drawn are supported by the data. (Appendix L contains a summary of the peer reviewers' report.)
25. A letter of appreciation for participation and a copy of the approved dissertation (if desired) will be emailed to each participant at the successful completion of the dissertation process.
26. An electronic copy of the dissertation will be given to the President of The Mico, the Dean of the Faculty of Education, and the head of the Department of Early Education. Hard copies of the dissertation will be made available to The Institute of Technological and Educational Research (ITER) and the library at The Mico.

27. The records of this study will be kept in a confidential location. The interview tapes and all data collected will be kept confidential and stored in a locked cabinet for five years, at which time they will be destroyed.

Self Bracketing

I was trained to be a teacher at The Mico (then The Mico Teachers' College). Then during 1998-2003 I worked there as a full time lecturer with the Department of Language, Literacy and Literature and later (after it had achieved university college status) for nine months in 2010, and four months in 2011, I worked on a number of projects and lectured several courses. I therefore have had an ongoing, cordial professional relationship as well as a friendship with several members of the faculty. As a result, I am aware of some of the challenges that the institution has faced in transitioning from a teachers' college to a university college, as well as what some people may call weaknesses. To minimize any bias on my part, I will intentionally ignore the fact that I have had an insider's advantage of knowledge of the administrative and operational procedures, support services, academic programs, as well as the opinions and views of several members of the faculty across departments and programs.

Among the courses I taught at The Mico is a course in Children's Literature and I taught it to the first cohort pursuing the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. Some of the graduates from this cohort will be selected by purposive sampling for the purposes of this study. I will need to set aside any knowledge I have about their experiences and their feelings about any issue at the time. I will have to make the graduates tell their own stories, and one way in which I will do this is to make sure that I do not engage in "begging the question."

To some extent I can be regarded as an insider, but this is not necessarily a disadvantage. Pedersen (2010) suggests that inside knowledge enables the researcher to develop a rapport with participants and may allow the latter to feel comfortable during the interview. This may affect the extent to which they freely share, and may result in them not feeling a need to 'save face.' Knowledge of the setting may also save time as participants do not have to spend time explaining certain things.

Ethical Considerations

A major ethical consideration is the trustworthiness of the work. The hallmark of this trustworthiness are the work's credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability. These have to do with whether the research methods and participants add credibility to the findings, whether the data and analysis support the findings, whether the research process was made explicit with a chronicle of the procedures and processes, and whether the findings are meaningful to the reader (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). Pereira (2012) delineated some 'renamed' and 'redefined' criteria which she said may be used to achieve rigor. These include a balanced integration of philosophic principles, *concreteness* in terms of how the issues relate to the context, *actualization* which has to do with the future effects of the findings of the study, resonance with the readers, and the study's potential to raise consciousness about issues. Another researcher, Roberts (2013), in commenting on how one may achieve rigor and trustworthiness in a phenomenological study, drew on the work of several researchers, namely Smith et al. (2009), Morgan (2004), and Kingdon (2005). She postulated that rigor and trustworthiness can be achieved in a phenomenological research, but researchers must demonstrate transparency

in the process, be open to external audit, and engage in reflexivity which entails being conscious of any potential biases that might influence the data analysis.

Trustworthiness in this research paper was achieved with the use of triangulation, inclusive of clarifying researcher bias (bracketing), member checking, thick descriptions, peer review, memoing and reflexive journaling (Pedersen, 2010). Some of these of course overlap. In clarifying “researcher bias,” I tried to set aside my opinions about The Mico’s degree programs and its operations and performance, thereby reaching for consistency. This was of particular importance given my association with the institution. Not only was I trained there as a teacher, but I was also a member of staff. I actually worked there for a while during the transition from a diploma-granting institution to a degree-granting institution, and lectured a course to cohort one of the bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education.

One method I used to assure trustworthiness and in particular credibility and dependability, was reflexivity aimed at identifying areas of potential bias, at the initial stage of the process as well as at every stage of the research process. I kept a reflexive diary during the research process for this purpose. ‘Investigator’s insights’ were also obtained from faculty members who obviously are familiar with the phenomenon (Kumar, 2012), and who were asked to peer review Chapter 5. This has aided in achieving confirmability and dependability. There is particular advice that was heeded and that is the one offered by Chan, Fung and Chien (2013). They suggested that thorough research planning be conducted before data is collected and that the researcher adopts a “not-knowing” stand to maintain the curiosity of the participants.

During the interview process, I engaged in memoing. This is the process by which I made notes about the participants, and the process itself, etcetera. In addition, the participants were allowed time to ask questions and raise concerns. On the completion of each interview, any obscurity about elements of the responses was discussed. After the collection of the data the participants were provided with the transcription and asked to corroborate what was written. This was done to validate rather than verify my findings as according to Pedersen (2010) citing Creswell, “Qualitative research typically seeks to validate findings as opposed to verifying findings” (p. 61). In addition, the help of two faculty members to informally audit the study was procured. Specifically, they were asked to check if conclusions drawn and any generalization made, are reasonable and defensible.

In terms of the actual work of analysing the data, several methods were used to maintain the integrity of the work. One simple but very important method was reading and re-reading the transcriptions and artifacts to ensure understanding. This process may seem to be of little value, but the literature says otherwise. Referencing Smith and Osborn (2003), Roberts (2013) suggested that a researcher should be able to return to the data to focus on meanings throughout the process of analysis. This view was echoed by Kinash and Hoffman (2009), who disclosed that they re-read their notes and reviewed the artifacts in their study multiple times and at multiple points throughout the research and considered the data through multiple perspectives and frameworks. Applebaum (2011) added a novel perspective by suggesting that rereading notes may reveal thoughts, feelings and ideas that ought to have been bracketed, to come to the fore.

The quality of the notes was quite important. The notes had to be detailed, comprehensive and accurate. An extended version of this viewpoint was offered by Aspers (2009), who asserted that field notes should be so clear and “objective” that any other researcher could read and analyze them. In addition, writing and reviewing of the transcriptions and notes detailing the steps used in the analysis process, are also important. Roberts (2013) argued that doing so provides evidence that the researcher is not just simply offering his or her personal opinion. This includes coding the data and categorizing the emerging themes.

Sharing the transcriptions with the participants helped to maintain openness and to promote confirmability. This of course was done rather than comparing the findings with the participants’ experiences, as some researchers such as Kumar (2012) suggest. Not doing the latter is supported in the literature by researchers such as Giorgi (2008) who do not think highly of this practice. Giorgi claimed that analysis of phenomenological data is done from a phenomenological and disciplinary (such as psychological) perspective and therefore certain professional standards must be used. He further argued that the participants share their experiences from their everyday life and it is the researcher who does the analysis.

Ethical Protection of Research Participants

In this study the participants were not asked any question or to do anything that they would have been uncomfortable with. The following precautions were taken to achieve this goal. Written consent was procured from all the participants, and approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board as well as The Mico (the Faculty of Education and the Department of Early Education in particular) was obtained. A

signed letter of cooperation was received from the Acting Vice-President, Academic Affairs, and cooperation was promised by the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Education and the heads of the relevant departments including the Department of Early Education. The two faculty members who did the peer review were asked to sign letters of cooperation and all the graduates who participated in the pilot test as well as the main study were required to sign consent forms.

It was imperative that I established adherence to the ethical principle of beneficence. There had to be a high degree of professionalism as strict boundaries that protected the rights of the research participants were maintained. The ethics principle of respect for persons was not breached in this study because the purpose of the study and the procedures used were explained to every participant. A general strategy I used to ensure trustworthiness was to maintain open communication – a policy of full disclosure. I explained the project to the participants before procuring their agreement to be interviewed. They were advised that their names would not be used in the study and that even in storage of the data pseudonyms and numbers would be used. There was limited identifying contextual material in the study as particular demographical information such as the participants' places of work was not used. All of this helped to create what Kaiser (2009) described as 'clean' data (as cited in McDermid et al., 2014).

Individuals were advised of the voluntary nature of their participation and of their right and option to choose whether they wanted to remain in the study until the end or to opt out. They were provided with information packages outlining the risks and benefits of being a part of the study. This information packet included notation on the right of the

participants to withdraw at any stage of the process without explanation, consequence or repercussions.

In addition, the ethics principle of beneficence was not an issue in this study because no harm was anticipated and the potential for any risk occurring was very low. Participants were not rewarded for their time and information by way of an incentive payment or a gift. No pain was involved, and there was minimal inconvenience. The inconvenience may have accrued from the fact that the participants had to carve out blocks of time to engage in the interviews and to complete the questionnaire. Three of the participants had to be spoken with afterwards to clarify a few minor points. In general, there was very little loss of privacy, since the interviews were conducted one-on-one. Six participants facilitated the interviews from the confines of their homes, and although members of their families were at home the interview sessions were uninterrupted. One interview was conducted in the participant's car at a park and three interviews were done in a private office at their places of work.

The ethics principle of justice was adhered to because all participants were treated equally and equitably. They were all administered the questionnaire prior to the interviews being conducted. All participants were asked to engage in the interview electronically but with the possibility of a face-to-face interview in some cases, four chose that medium. As mentioned earlier, all were interviewed by combinations of Livescribe, Skype and the telephone. All were notified of the projected length of time of the interview which was an hour. Of course being an interview with open-ended questions, and with unforeseen follow-up questions being asked necessary, the actual length of the interviews varied from participant to participant. Most interviews lasted

around the hour or a little over that time. Two interviews were a bit longer mainly due to the fact that those two participants were great “storytellers.”

Confidentiality of research interview information is integral to trustworthiness. This entails the secure storage of research data on paper or electronically, which in turn includes anonymising the data. For this study, the interviews were recorded with the Livescribe platform of paper and electronic media as well as Skype and MP3. They were then later uploaded to a secure and encrypted repository for digital audio files so they could be transcribed. The transcriptions were then uploaded to a secure password-protected server for review. Notes regarding the conversations were also taken at the time, and afterwards during follow-up activity. All the paper documents were carefully stored. No identifiers for the participants have been attached to the stored files. A pen name along with a number was used for each participant. The files will be kept for a period of five years and will then be destroyed.

Summary

The research method and design used for this study were qualitative and phenomenological. The components of the study included selecting a sample of a population to study, collecting data through in-depth semi-structured interviews, and ensuring the trustworthiness of the data-collection-and-analysis processes. These elements were discussed in this chapter. Additionally, there was a brief description of how the results were analyzed as well as how the ethical protection of all research participants was ensured.

Chapter 4 now details the results of the research. It delineates how the data were collected and analyzed. The latter was done according to the research questions and

included the identification of variables and the extrapolation of themes. The actual comments of the participants are quoted and discussed.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Research Findings

Introduction

In Chapter 4, I present the findings of this study. The purpose of this study was to review The Mico's Early Childhood Education undergraduate degree program through the lived experiences of trained early childhood education teachers who have completed the program. Using individual interviews and examination of the program documents and graduation booklets of The Mico University College, I sought answers to the following four research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?
2. What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflects organizational development and relates to performance improvement at The Mico?
3. What are the graduates' views about how the change is being implemented?
4. What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

In this chapter I also cover the context for this study, provide background information, and present the procedures and analysis of a pilot test that I conducted. Next, I detail data generation, collection, and recording processes, and provide insight into how I derived themes and meanings from the data, and determined the results of the study.

Lastly, I address repetitive themes and patterns to ascertain how the graduates viewed their ‘lived experiences’ as teacher candidates in the early childhood education degree program.

Context of the Study

This section details the context of the study. Pre-data collection processes included a pilot test, reflexive journaling, and memoing. I explain data collection procedures, including the sample and interviews.

Pre-Data Collection Processes

The pilot test. On November 7, 2014 approval was granted by the Walden University’s Institutional Review Board (approval number 11-07-14-363643) for data collection to begin. I used a pilot test to test the validity of the interview questions, and recruited two participants via email. After signing the consent agreements, the participants were asked to complete a pre-interview questionnaire that collected information on their demographic and personal backgrounds. This questionnaire was followed by the interviews. I conducted the first pilot test interview on June 6, 2015 and the second one on June 9, 2015. After the interviews were completed, I debriefed both participants. The results indicated that they both understood the questions, and that the questions elicited the desired information. They felt the interview length, number of questions, and question content were adequate. Based on these findings, I made no changes to the interview questions or the process.

Reflexive journaling. I did not conduct debriefing immediately after the interviews. For example, the second interview was conducted on Tuesday, June 9, 2015 via telephone. The participant answered the debriefing questions via email on Friday,

June 12, 2015. There were no problems with participants responding to any particular questions, and all questions were answered fully. I therefore concluded that the saturation point would be quickly reached in the main study, and that the 10 participants should be adequate.

The number of main and follow-up questions seemed to be adequate. However, I sometimes needed to ask additional follow-up questions as a result of particular responses given by the participants. For example, a participant may have provided an answer for which greater clarification was needed. The opposite was also true. Sometimes follow-up questions I had deemed as necessary as a result of the participants' responses to the previously-determined main questions sometimes reflected redundancy, tautology, and circumlocution. The protocol nonetheless remained unchanged. The entire pilot experience reinforced the need for objectivity to be maintained and for the script for the stated questions to be followed.

Data Collection

The Sample

Data collection and analysis occurred between August 2015 and January 2016. The 10 participants met the predetermined inclusion criterion of having completed the Bachelors' Degree in Early Childhood Education. I used snowball purposive sampling based on the year of graduation and cohort. Three participants from cohort one were purposefully selected because contact information for them was readily accessible. Additionally, there was only one male in that cohort so I thought it prudent to invite him to participate to have both sexes represented. I also asked the heads of departments and sections in the Faculty of Education to make available contact information for suggested

participants from the other cohorts. I then used the snowball strategy to request that participants who I had recruited assist in contacting other people in their cohort. A total of 12 persons were contacted, but one did not follow through with appointments that were made and another was not available again because her father had fallen ill.

There were three participants from cohort one, two from cohort three, and five from cohort four. Nine participants were part-time students (evening), and one was full-time (day). There were two participants who had previously completed the Diploma in Early Childhood Education. One participant was a principal of a pre-primary school. All 10 participants had a high school education, and five had completed a certificate course in early childhood education at The Human Employment and Resource Training Trust, National Training Agency (HEART/NTA). Six participants had experience in teaching while the only experience four had was teaching practice which was part of their training. These details were gleaned from the pre-interview questionnaire (see Appendix E).

Having participants with varying demographic characteristics and from across cohorts results in imaginative variation, one of the definitive elements of phenomenological research. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) have noted, “There is an interweaving of person, conscious experience, and phenomenon” (p. 27). Various perspectives are presented from different angles, providing for more depth to the narratives. This variation was advantageous to this study because it aided in building greater trustworthiness. In sharing their perspectives, the participants of course engaged in some degree of interpretation, and this contributed to the hermeneutic element of this study.

The Interviews

In order to maintain anonymity, I assigned research participants a number and a pseudonym. There were 11 open-ended questions with 15 follow-up probing questions. The most challenging aspect of data collection was the scheduling process because the participants were in Jamaica and I was initially in New York. Emailing potential participants was easy enough, but following up via telephone for the interview itself became challenging. The process proved more facile once I was able to travel to Jamaica and schedule eight of the 10 interviews. The final two interviews were scheduled and conducted upon my return to the United States.

Another challenge was actually conducting the interviews because some participants did not have access to working Skype. In Jamaica, if the regular telephone were to have been used, it would have been very costly. In situations in which Skype to Skype was not accessible, Skype to phone was used. I conducted six interviews using Skype. Some participants did express a preference for a face-to-face interview, so their requests were granted. Four such interviews were conducted at places convenient to and approved by the participants. Three were conducted at the participants' places of work, and one was conducted at a public park. Table 2 delineates the date on which the interview was conducted with each participant, the location where the interview was held, and the method used for recording the data.

Before the interviews, I briefed all of the participants on the background of the dissertation and the protocol involved. This included instructions for the informed consent and the completion of the pre-interview questionnaire, consensus on the interview methods, and approval of the transcriptions. Before each interview, I

administered a pre-interview survey to procure background information on the participants.

During all 10 interviews, I used Livescribe Echo Desktop (which is comprised of both written and audio components) as the primary data recording method. Additionally, for the Skype interviews, I used a MPS Skype recorder as a secondary means of recording because it automatically recorded the interviews. Once the interviews were completed, Livescribe was used to replay them. This facilitated transcription. In some cases, I replayed an interview on the MP3 recording and then transcribed it.

Each interview lasted for approximately one hour. I sent a follow-up email containing the transcription to each participant to thank him or her for participating in the study and to solicit approval of the transcription. I sought clarification of information concerning the interview and the questionnaire in a few instances via telephone and email.

Once transcribed and verified, all data collected from the interviews were transferred to a secure, password-protected laptop. Written documentation was kept in a locked file cabinet until completion of the study and then destroyed. Electronic data will be retained for a period of five years as per IRB regulations and then destroyed. All agreements made with the participants in respect of their privacy and confidentiality in this study was strictly followed, and there were no significant occurrences during the period of the study that changed the context of the study.

Table 2

Interview Schedule

Participant		Date	Interview method	Location
Participant 1	Stone	August 5, 2015	Skype video/MP3/Livescribe	Kingston, Jamaica
Participant 2	Nells	August 10, 2015	Face - to - face/Livescribe	Participant's place of work, Kingston, Jamaica
Participant 3	Timmy	August 10, 2015	Face - to - face Livescribe	Participant's place of work, Kingston, Jamaica
Participant 4	Madge	August 11, 2015	Face - to - face/Livescribe	Participant's place of work, Kingston, Jamaica
Participant 5	Dream	August 14, 2015	Skype video/MP3/Livescribe	Kingston, Jamaica
Participant 6	Kei'kei	August 14, 2015	Face - to - face/Livescribe	Public Park, Kingston, JA
Participant 7	Joy	August 15, 2015	Skype video/MP3/Livescribe	Kingston, Jamaica
Participant 8	Grace	August 27, 2015	Skype audio/Livescribe	Kingston, JA/ Georgia, USA
Participant 9	Petal	September 4, 2015	Skype audio/Livescribe	Kingston/ New York, USA
Participant 10	Cherry	September 14, 2015	Skype audio/Livescribe	Kingston/New York, USA

Data Analysis

Coding was the main analytical method. To begin the process, I used 'horizontalization' to lay out the data for examination and to treat the data as having equal weight (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Topics of significance were then determined *a priori* and were generally based on the research questions, and more specifically on the interview questions. The topics, called concepts, are in Table 3.

Table 3

Concepts

Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Research Question 3	Research Question 4
Courses Pedagogy Physical environment Timetabling Orientation Registration Examination Library Technology	Value of the Program	Challenges for Administration Challenges for Staff	Policy Foci at The Mico Policy Foci at The Ministry of Education Importance of Early Childhood Education Importance of Educational Policy to Nation- building Policy Focus Needed at The Mico Policy Focus needed at The Ministry of Education

The concepts were then initially coded. Other sections, including memo and properties were added to aid in the development of rich description. These are outlined as follows:

- a) Concepts – big ideas generated from the research questions and specifically the interview questions,
- b) Comments - what each participant had to say (in note form),

- c) Memo – researcher’s comments while interviews were being conducted, and
- d) Properties – additional details from interviews that elucidated the participants’ main comments.

(See data analysis summary in Tables M1 – M4 in Appendix M.) Once I delineated the concepts, I used selective coding to identify codes, and axial coding to determine relationships between the codes. I then ascribed variable names and labels to the codes, after which I reviewed once again the hardcopy of the transcripts to solidify and refine the previously determined codes, to remove unneeded codes, and to add any other code deemed to be important. One hundred and fifty-one codes were identified. They, along with the variable labels and their definitions are contained in the codebook in Tables N1 – N4 in Appendix N. I then proceeded to carefully examine the codes to determine the frequency of each variable label. The frequency data are presented according to the research questions, in Tables 4 – 7 and Figures 1 - 4 (see pages 150 – 156).

Table 4

Code Frequency for Research Question 1

Codes	# of Occurrences	Codes	# of Occurrences
Relevance		2 Orientation activity	3
Adequacy	4	Wait time	5
Practicality	7	Protocol	3
Schedule	5	Emotional experience	5
Redundancy	2	Electronic system	3
Quality	6	Record-keeping	1
Effort	2	Results	5
Pedagogical skills	4	Record of results	9
Knowledge of content	5	Electronic system	2
Student engagement	3	Sitting of exams.	2
Rooming	5	Adequacy and quality of reading/research materials	9
Assignment of lecturers	2	Journals and Studies	4
Schedule	5	Internet	2
Start of classes	3	Library hours	3
Size	4	Utilization	5
Temperature in classrooms	10	Accessibility to technology	3
Structure	2	Technology hardware	2
Furniture	2	Maintenance	4

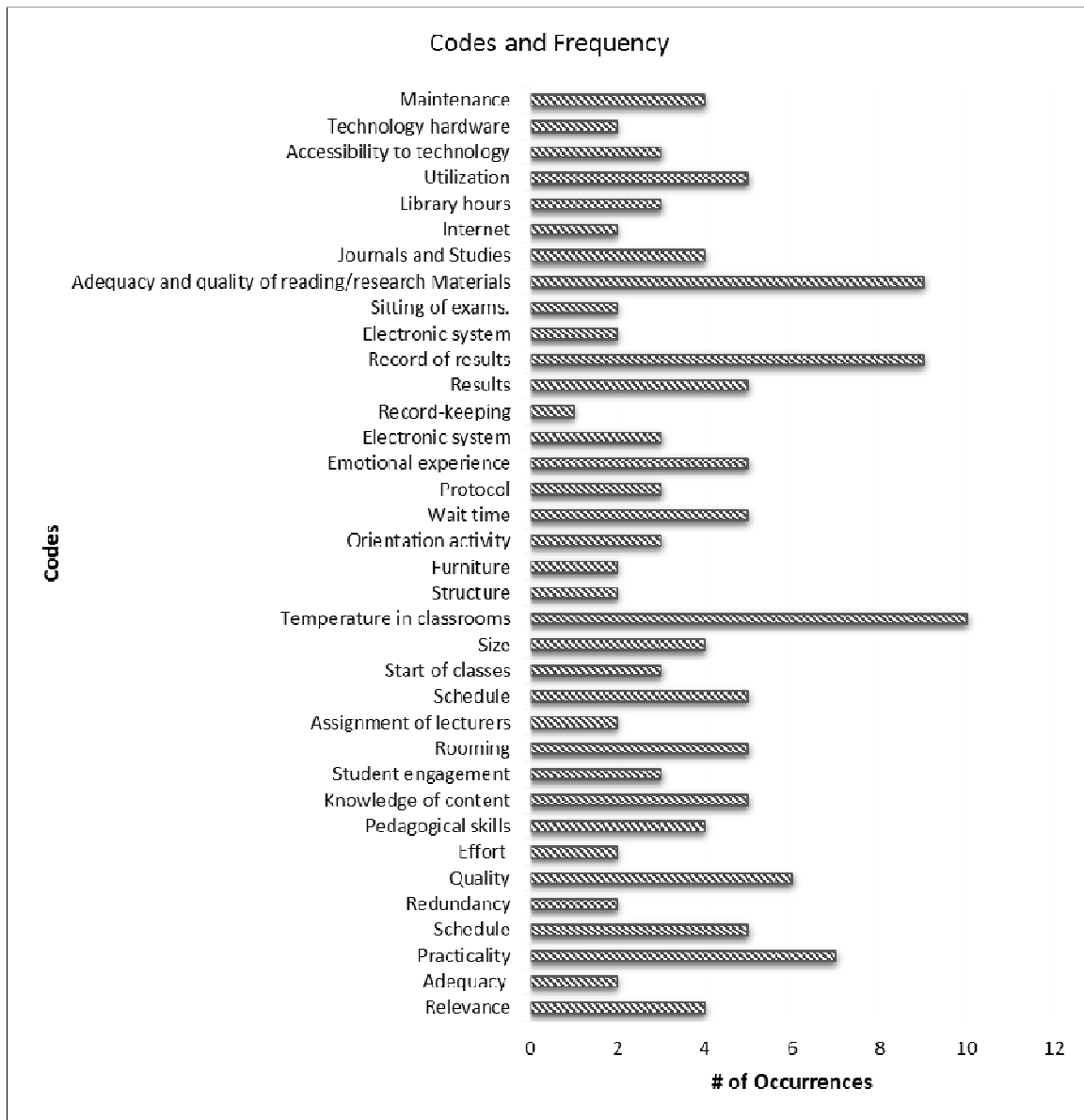


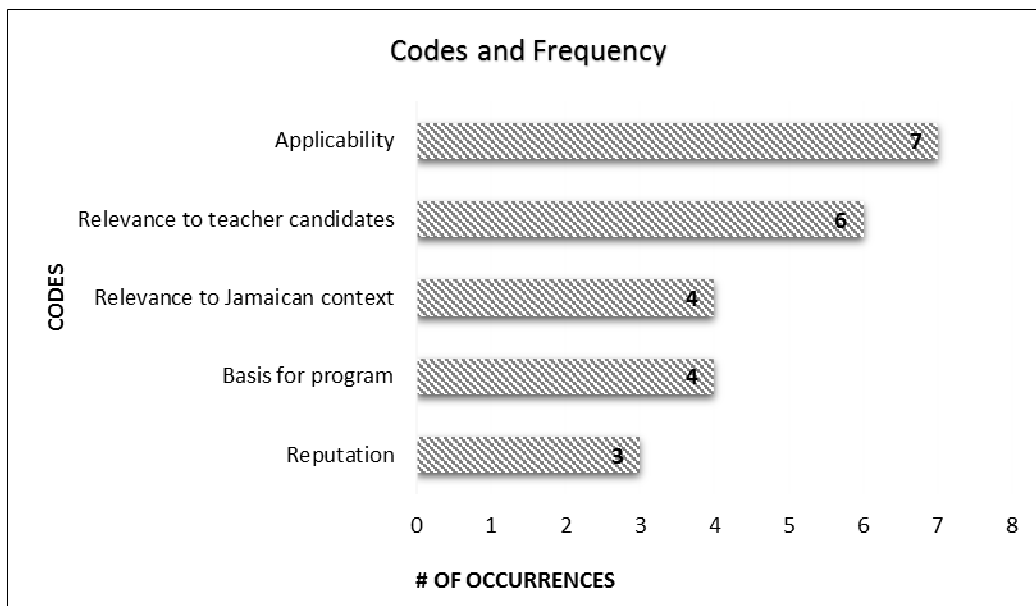
Figure 1. Code frequency for Research Question 1.

There were 36 codes for Research Question 1. These are represented graphically in Table 4 and Figure 1 in terms of their frequency. The codes most repeated were the physical environment and specifically the temperature of classrooms, as well as the adequacy of library materials, and the recording and posting of examination results.

Table 5

Code Frequency for Research Question 2

Codes	# of Occurrences
Reputation	3
Basis for program	4
Relevance to Jamaican context	4
Relevance to teacher candidates	6
Applicability	7

*Figure 2.* Code frequency for Research Question 2.

Five codes were determined for research question two and as Table 5 and Figure 2 show most of the participants (seven) commented on the applicability of the program to the classroom, and its relevance to teacher candidates (six responses). Relevance to the Jamaican context, the basis for the program, and the institution's reputation were also noted (four, four, and three responses, respectively).

Table 6

Code Frequency for Research Question 3

Codes	# of Occurrences	Codes	# of Occurrences
Staff recruitment	1	Accreditation	1
Staff responsibility	1	Pedagogical skills	2
Staff qualification	1	Research skills	2
Teaching practice	1	Pedagogical gap	1
General resources	2	Coping with work	1
Books	1	Staff qualification	1
Wifi	1	Customer service	6
Communicating with students	1	Office skills	1
Expense of tuition	3	Salary of staff	1
Efficiency	1	Teaching practice	2
Start date of courses	1	Record of lecturers	1
Food	1	Course outlines	2
Support	1	Lecturer photocopying materials	1
Assembly	1	Research manual	2
Recordkeeping	1	Communication between staff and students	1
Appointments	1		

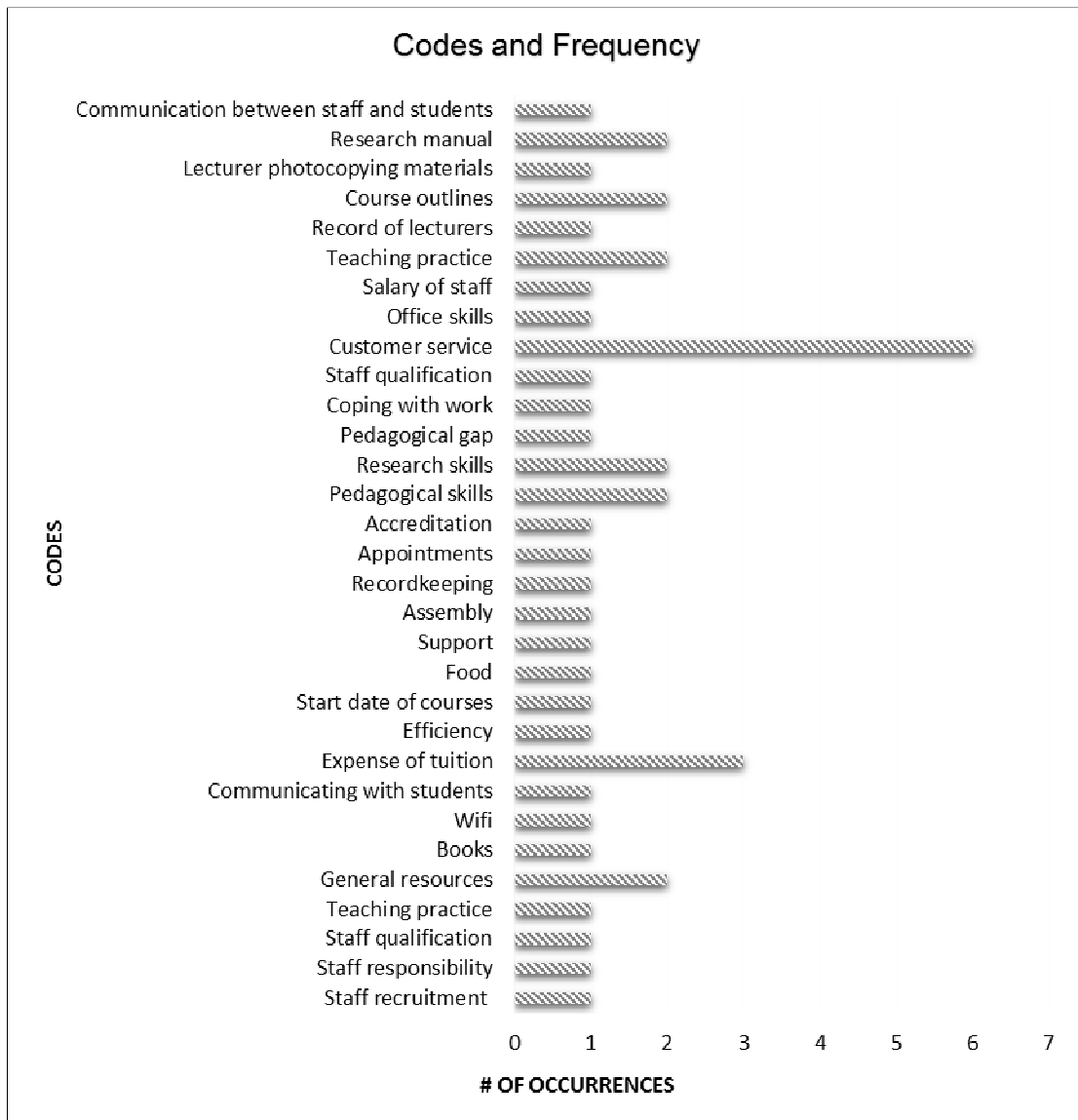


Figure 3. Code frequency for Research Question 3.

Research question three generated 31 codes. As shown in Table 6 and Figure 3, although the codes were so many, the frequency level for each was predominantly low. It was mainly one or two participants who commented on each code. This is probably suggestive of the wide breadth of issues the participants deemed as challenges. There were two codes that three and six participants respectively spoke about. Six participants spoke about customer service and three mentioned the cost of tuition.

Table 7

Code Frequency for Research Question 4

Codes	# of Occurrences	Codes	# of Occurrences
Early childhood education	1	PATH Program	1
Relationship to Ministry of Education's policies	1	Merging schools	1
Approach to teacher training	1	No Child Left Behind	1
Special Education in early childhood education	1	Science education	1
Matriculation standards	1	Inclusion classes	1
Preliminary course	1	Assessment	2
Math course	1	Assessment standards	1
Math and Science	1	Scoring protocol	1
Electives	1	Portfolio assessment	1
Compulsory courses	1	Lesson planning	1
CPR courses	2	Professional development	1
Class attendance	1	Quality control	1
Practice Teaching	1	New teachers' requirements	2
Dress code	1	Lunch	1
Trained teacher	2	Foundational	3
Trained administrators	1	Character – building	2
Parental Involvement	2	Impact on salary	1
JEEP Program	1	Foundational academic skills	1

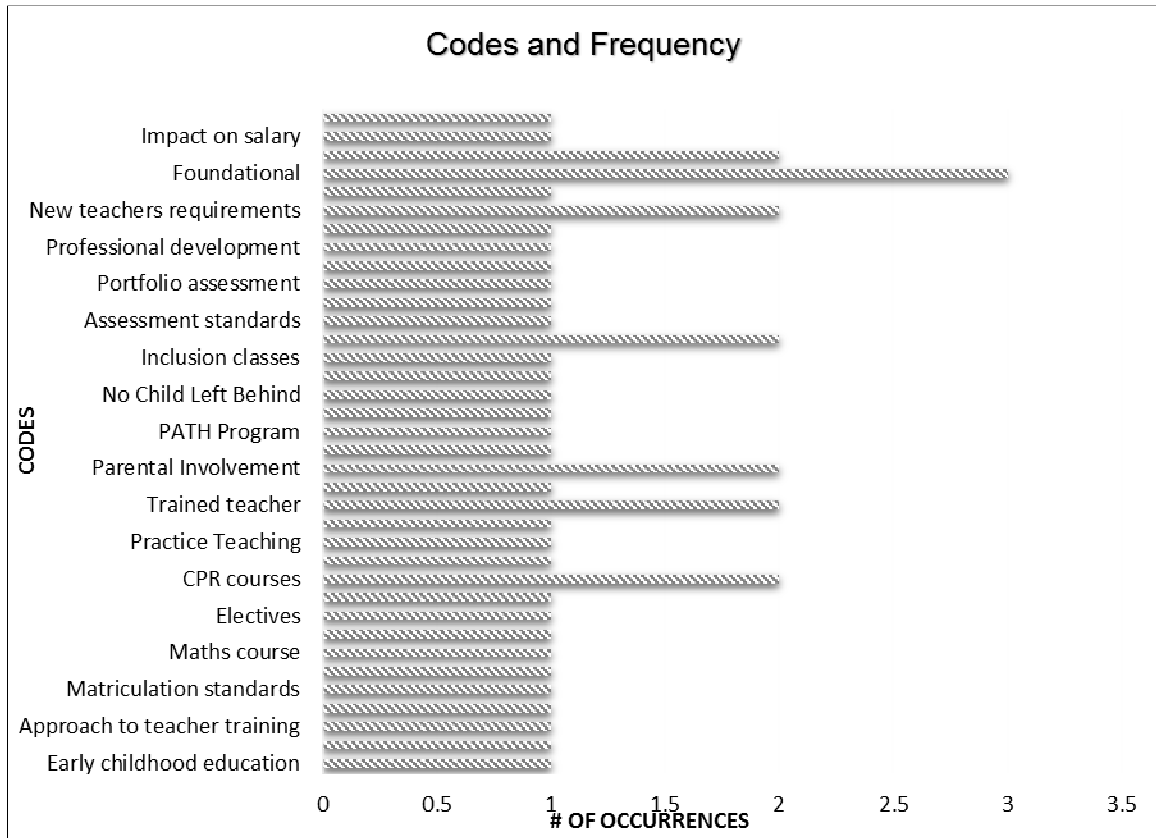


Figure 4. Code frequency for Research Question 4.

The matter of policy addressed in Research Question 4 was comprehensively discussed, resulting in 36 codes. As shown in Table 7 and Figure 4, these included current requirements that inductees in the programs at The Mico and the graduates are required to meet, as well as policy foci of the Ministry of Education including the qualification of teachers in early childhood education institutions, student assessment, and parental involvement in their children’s lives at school.

From the hodgepodge of concepts, codes, and variables, of codes, I then set out to identify patterns and themes. The process included phenomenological reduction in which the essence (the essential; the invariant structure) of the experience was continually returned to in order to derive meaning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To aid the process, I reviewed my reflective notes as well as the “structural descriptions” that the participants had provided in their responses.

The themes are presented in Table 8 and along with two sections entitled “memo” and “properties” are also in a data analysis summary in Tables M1 – M4 in Appendix M. The list of themes represents commendable aspects of the program as well as weaknesses as perceived by the participants through their “lived experiences.” An interpretive analysis of the themes reveals common relationships and dissimilarities. The themes are extensive and some cut across research questions and concepts. For example, the challenges identified applied to three levels of staff: administrative, teaching, and office (clerical staff) with common themes being communication, teaching practice and resources. Salary was seen as something that both The Mico and The Ministry of Education needed to pay attention to. On the other hand, parental involvement was regarded as a value of the Program at The Mico and a policy element at The Ministry.

Table 8

Themes Generated from Concepts

Concepts	Themes
Research Question 1	
	Teacher preparation to meet the needs of students; Relevance of courses; Teaching practice; Course content; Timetabling; Lesson plans
Pedagogy	Preparation of teachers; Efficacy of delivery of courses; Scoring protocol; Student presentations; New courses for lecturers; Knowledge of content
Physical Environment	Size of classroom; Comfort of classroom; Classroom furniture
Timetabling	Room assignment; Lecturer assignment; Schedule of courses across year groups
Orientation/Registration	Wait time; Inaccurate information; Online registration
Examination	Posting of results; Inaccurate Information/ poor record-keeping; Examination office; Online system; Physical environment (Gymnasium)
Library	Quality of books; Copies of materials (books, Journals, studies; Internet access; Library hours
Technology	Accessibility to labs; Size of labs; Timetabling of labs; Laptops on loan
Research Question 2	
Value of Program	Mico's brand; Preparation of teachers; Meeting needs of students; Model for other territories; Transferral of skills; Parental involvement; Preparation for the workplace
Research Question 3	
Challenges for Administration	Qualification of staff; Training and recruitment of staff; Teaching practice; Communication; Accreditation; Resources eg. books, internet; Technology; Food; Tuition; Timetabling; Registration
Challenges for Staff	Courses; Communication; Research skills; Pedagogical skills; Professionalism; Materials; Support (office) staff; Teaching practice; Salary
Research Question 4	
Policy Foci at The Mico	Literacy; Qualification for teaching; Special Education; Integrated Math and Science; Compulsory courses; Electives; Course protocol; Uniform policy
Policy Foci at The Ministry of Education	Teacher qualification; Staffing of early childhood education institutions; Quality assurance; Professional development; Early childhood education; Assessment; Parent involvement; Lesson plan; Integration; Inclusion classes; Student welfare program
Importance of ECE Policy	Foundational Skills; Relationship to other levels; Remuneration for teachers
Importance of Educational Policy to Nation-building	Social issues; Social structure; Personal development
Policy Focus Needed at The Mico	Personal development; Preparation of teachers; Teaching practice; Certification for teachers; Grooming for candidate teachers; Salary
Policy Focus Needed at The Ministry	Staffing in early childhood education institutions; Salary

Results

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?

Courses. Participants one to nine particularly spoke to the relevance, the adequacy and practicability of the courses. Participant 7, for example, observed that the courses were intertwined with child development and catered to the needs of the child, while participant eight suggested that the courses helped teacher candidates to understand the child better. Participant 4 further expounded that the courses catered to the “moral, physical, spiritual, and social” needs of children.

Participants 6 and 8 added that learning about some undergirding theories in early childhood education was very useful. For example, Participant 8 referred to being exposed to the learning styles of children while Participant 6 opined that although students may have questioned the relevance of learning about the theories, they eventually could see what she called the ‘connective thread.’

Along with Participants 3 and 4, Participant 7 felt that the program was well rounded and prepared candidates for work and activities in and outside the teaching profession. The behavioral management course, according to Participant 5, was good for her in the classroom and that once in the classroom she had to “match the theory to the practice.”

Participant 3 said that “The Teacher as a Professional” and “Business Discourse” were meaningful. He posited the view that “Business Discourse,” for example, which

every student irrespective of his or her program had to do was not about early childhood education, but was more suited to a business student. He felt however that it was useful as it exposed students to different kinds of documents at the workplace and how to present their documents when they are going for an interview. Participant 7 shared that skills in writing learned at The Mico extended outside the classroom even to administration as she was asked from time to time to assist with the production of documents such as letters, reports, and spreadsheets at the school where she worked. Participant 5 conceded that although students were upset when they had to do some electives (because they required students to complete what she called 'big exams. '), they learned quite a bit, and some students were even using some of the skills learned to get "work on the side." An example of electives she thought was very useful was "Events Planning."

The participants however presented some drawbacks. Participant 4 felt that some courses, for example, Conversational Spanish, was not very meaningful. She argued that written Spanish would be better, as Conversational Spanish is not done with early childhood education students. Participant 9 said some courses were not in-depth and some, for example, "Exceptionalities" were too heavy for the time that was allotted to it.

Participant 10 was of the view that there were too many courses and that some courses were repeated. In fact, she said majority of them overlapped and that some had different names but were the same. She said that "Exceptionalities" and "Early Intervention" were the same thing. So too were "Managing the Classroom" and "Classroom Management." She further argued that the courses required the same text and required the same reference books for students to source. Her sentiments were echoed by participant 8 who added that some courses were repeated across different semesters and

cited “Learners we Teach,” and “Foundation of Education” as examples. Participant 5 intimated that some courses were not really needed as the batch of students after them did not do some courses that they had done.

Participants 2, 5, 6, and 8 articulated that they did not learn to write charts while Participants 2 and 5 commented that chalkboard writing was not taught. Not being given a chance to develop both skills was seen as a shortcoming. Participant 8 also felt that not enough time was allotted for teaching practice.

Another drawback highlighted by Participant 4 was what she deemed as incongruence between courses done by the day students and those done by the evening students. She explained that although some courses across both evening and day programs had the same name, certain topics were different. She ended up wondering if that happened because the different lecturers selected different topics. She further elaborated that sometimes day and evening students would do different examinations.

Pedagogy. Eight of the participants spoke glowingly about some of the lecturers and all said most lecturers did a very good job. Participant 9 posted the view that some lecturers gave 100 % effort, while some gave about 70%. Participant 3 used the word “excellent” to describe some of them, adding that some even went “beyond facilitating,” and went beyond the call of duty to ensure that content was delivered. Echoing that sentiment, Participant 10 quipped, “You get more than what you bargain for.” Participant 1 said most lecturers performed very well and that students learned a lot from them. “Most of the lecturers were teachers themselves from the early childhood, so they know they’ve experienced how it is in the classroom - how to deliver and explain things in detail so that we understand.” Participant 8 explicated that there were some good lecturers who “came

to class, taught everything, do what they were supposed to do, get the lesson out, review and everything.” Participant 5 concurred that some lecturers were good and assisted students well, while Participant 6 clearly articulated that one could see the effort that some lecturers put into their work.

Participant 3, however, brought out the underbelly of lecturers’ pedagogy. Unimpressed by some lecturers’ delivery of instruction as he sat in class, he said he sometimes thought “I could lecture this course.” He questioned why some lecturers gave handouts and then have students sit and read the handouts. He suggested that discussion would be better; that students could have gotten the handouts to take home and go through and then discuss something else in class. Participant 6 also found the performance of some lecturers questionable. “It made me wonder if they were just there for being there and it made me wonder as well if they wanted to just have a job, to get some money.”

Participant 4 also had reservations about the practice of some lecturers. She felt that some lecturers seemed to believe that because they were facilitators they did not have to deliver. She said she would be left wondering, “Does that teacher know what he or she is teaching?” She said that that happened because a question would be asked of a lecturer but would not really be answered. She further argued that lecturers would tell students that they need to read for their degree so it was like they would just come and facilitate students. Students would do what they needed to do in the end which included just reading and having discussions. She explained that sometimes lecturers would just assign topics, put students in groups and tell groups to come and present. Students would take notes at that time or else go and read on the topics by themselves. She revealed that

sometimes a student may have felt like he or she did to want to go to class but would do so from a recognition that he or she was learning from his or her classmates.

Participant 5 felt that some teachers could have done more for students and could have added more value to their pedagogy. She suggested that some lecturers would come with information that was easily accessible in the internet. “What we go on the net that is the same thing they come with - nothing little new - to say even tidy it up and - yu understand what I mean?”

The particular issue of lecturers not engaging in research was addressed by participant 10. Like participant four she said that students were asked to do research as lecturers would sometimes give assignments without any notes. In the end, according to her, it was a case of the lecturer learning from the students rather than the other way around.

Is not you learning –for dem nuh have anything to give you. Anything deh have to give you deh have de book in front o’ dem reading, reading, reading and dem read two lines and den two – ummm - sentences and they explain and deh go on to two more sentences and explain and then ask you, “Have you ever seen anything or know of any situation like that?” And then they give you the research and even if yu ask questions pertaining to the research they can’t answer. “Go and do the research and come back.” And den when you come now and give them everything you see dem jotting down, writing, writing, writing. Dem nuh have nuttin to give.

Participant 1 highlighted a different angle to the perceived weaknesses in pedagogy. He said there were some lecturers who would tell students that they were teaching a new course and were trying to learn as they went along. He proffered that that

sometimes caused a lack of confidence in their teaching. He went on further to explain that students would wonder if sometimes lecturers would devise answers and assign grades ad hoc and based on students' responses. He said sometimes there would be no remarks from the lecturer on graded assignments.

Participant 8 specifically spoke about the delivery of instruction. She felt it was obvious some lecturers knew the content but did not know how to teach. There were some whom she felt did not teach and she shared her experience of having a lecturer who engaged quite frequently in storytelling and did not prepare students for examinations.

She came to class and if we had her on a Monday morning she told us everything she did over the weekend . . . And whenever - if for instance you have a test to be done, right, she give [sic] us the test and we are wondering what to put on the test paper and then she mark it and bring it back to us with the failing grade.

She said she kept saying the lecturer needed to do the test because she was sure she couldn't pass the tests she set. She spoke of a time when the lecturer was "iffing and butting" about the course outline, explaining that she was not the one writing the course and therefore had to wait for the course outline. During that time, every day she would just go to class and talk about what she had done over the weekend and what she had done for her wedding. It was close to the test when the students finally got the course outlines. Participant 8 explained that the lecturer simply read from the set text and encouraged the students to go buy the book and read it. Needless to say, she said her classmates and she had to 'cram,' and half of them could not do the test because "we never knew what to put on the paper."

Physical environment. Some recurring comments about the physical environment were the small size of the classrooms, the temperature of the classrooms, and insufficient classrooms. Participant 4 said the rooms were small, hot, and some did not have any fan. The discomfort of some of the rooms was highlighted by Participant 7 who spoke about the absence of fans and poor lighting in some cases, and Participant 3 who was elated that two huge ceiling fans were installed in the gymnasium where the largest examinations and college-wide activities are held. Participant 6 spoke about an incident when the lecturer actually had a class for about 20 minutes outside. The AC in the room to which they were assigned was not working, and the lecturer did not want to just give them three hours' free time. But outside was not a good option as they had the sun to contend with.

Participant 1 described the situation with rooming. Often at the beginning of a semester, students would go to a classroom that was assigned and another class would be there. The students would then go look for a classroom and, "just take over one and just say that it is ours. You know. That it's like first come, first serve." Participant 7 also shared her experience of "capturing" a classroom when she said students would go to administration and ask, "Okay, where are we - have class?" They would say, "We didn't - ummm - find any class, you know, so just walk around and look and if once you don't see any lecturer there, then own it." Participant 5 described her experience as follows:

At the first when we started out, it was ups and downs, you know. That September morning you go to this class and this is not there and for about two weeks we were walking up and down to different classes. We walk - we walk - we walk -all over until they get a suitable classroom. And then . . . the lecturer would come

with us, you know. One thing, you know, the lecturer come with us and said, “Alright, let us go and find a classroom” . . . but after we settled - We – we - we had good classroom.

Another problem cited was an inadequate number of chairs. Participant 2 who concurred with Participant 3 in commenting on this problem said, “Sometimes you got no chairs, you have to go and walk and look chairs from somewhere else - not enough chairs.” She then offered up a casual factor, claiming that when it was exam time or if there were a function in the gymnasium, chairs would be taken from the classroom. That limited the number of chairs in the classroom. If a student, therefore, did not go early or if the class were large, chairs would have to be found from elsewhere.

Participant 3 on the other hand, postulated that poor communication contributed to the problem. He claimed that communication between the groundsman and administration sometimes broke down, and argued that sometimes the persons responsible for furnishing the classroom with chairs and desks for each lecture did not put in adequate number of desks and chairs inside the classrooms.

Participant 7 also commented on the shortage of chairs but also spoke about the disruption that occurred as a result. She said that one classroom may be smaller than another and may be adequate for one group of students. “When a larger group of students come in later however, they find that they have to be going next door to pull a chair or desk,” she explained. That, she felt, proved a bit disruptive for those students who had previously entered the classroom and for classes already in session.

While in general the participants did not comment on the landscape or the buildings, Participant 2 spoke about the Buxton building. She said she appreciated its

historical value but never liked having class there. “The boards are old and sometime when you walking you feel like you can fall. I have had classmates who have slipped on them and get sprained ankle - and so on.”

Timetabling. The participants regarded timetabling as a major problem.

Participant 9 explained for example that one computer course was done in the first year but was already done in the diploma program, Participant 2 mentioned that courses suitable for year I were done in year 4 and vice versa, while Participant 5 said that behavior management was placed in final year but would have served a better purpose being placed even before teaching practice.

Participant 10 referred to the timetable as being ‘jumbled.’ “So it start to get jumble up and ting like dat. And you find you are doing this course now when somebody did it in first year and the first year doing the fourth year courses.” When that happened, according to Participant 2, students were not told why and lecturers would even question the schedule. “How come you, Guys, just doing this and it is a year one course?” She lamented that that state of affairs sometimes resulted in inconsistency in the programs of the day students and the evening students, as the evening students would not be “on track like the day students . . . So you find that there was a little mix up there . . . We were not in line with the day students.”

There was another problem for both evening and day students. Participant 7, an evening student, spoke about having two different classes in one day, and starting at four and going up until nine. On the other hand, Participant 8, a full time student, also complained about the schedule and said that a review was necessary as some students ended up having classes for long periods of time. “We were day students and we had to

put in like four sets o' classes in that time, Miss, so that we had the normal 8 o'clock class and we would be leaving school at 8 in the night."

Participant 4 spoke about problems in getting class started at the beginning of semesters, explaining that at times when students turned up at the beginning of a semester to meet one lecturer, a different lecturer would turn up. A different slant was presented by Participant 3 who said sometimes students would turn up for a new course and there would be no lecturers. She expounded that when the department that is responsible for the course or the head of the department was contacted, students would be told that the lecturer would soon be there, or there were only two lecturers for the course and one would be assigned shortly. The end result of all of this, according to Participant 4 was that basically it would take two to three weeks of every semester for the timetable to be sorted out, and that resulted in quite a bit of work left to be done by the time the end of the course came around. Participant 3's timeline was three to four weeks.

Orientation/Registration. Participants 6, 8, and 10 saw registration as a long and tedious process. When asked to comment on the process Participant 6 was very dramatic, "Oh, Lawddddd! That was a processsss . . . Oh, Lord! That was a long, hot, miserable, frustrating . . . Oh, it was long and it was challenging, and I don't think it should – It's the first taste you get of Mico."

Participant 10 also invoked religion, "Lawd Jesus! Have mercy! (Laughter) Lawd Jesus, have mercy!" before going on to expound:

Registration period is disgusting. It turn [sic] you off. It is everything that is negative. The long length o' period. You have to sit for over two and a half hours. Alright – you want to go to pay some money at the Accounts and you need to see

the person who is at the computer, you know, in a different section. You have to get – you have to go and pay the money at the Accounts, come back down and sit down, get a number to go in to see the – the – the - the chief lady in the Accounts. And if you who go there - the same business is just two doors - if you finish there you just go straight in that door? Why come back downstairs if come sitting for another hour and a half after you have been there for two hours. It stinks.

Participant 8 reiterated the repetitive process of walking up and down but added that registration in general did not well work for the day students. She explained that when it was time for “evening school,” the Office would stop processing day students no matter how much or how long they had been there to deal with the evening students.

In speaking about the crowd, Participant 10 alluded to “Mass Camp.” “You would think some big entertainer is there. No sah.” She shared an experience involving a friend who waited two and half hours to reach the security desk. Just as she reached that desk she saw the coordinator of the course who informed her that the course was not being offered then and was being offered in January. She further complained about communication as it relates to registration being a problem, pointing out that even though students may have called to get information they would not get through. So on going to the office in person they would then hear that, “Registration start from last week,” or “And is tomorrow it finishing.”

Participant 9 who also spoke about the long lines brought a fresh perspective to the issue as she commented on the attempt by The Mico to have online registration. She said that many times even though a student may have paid the fee he or she could not register online, and that sometimes even when an office staffer was doing the checks and

balances to clear a student, the payment would still not show in the system. A student would still have to definitely show up with his or her receipt.

Examination. The participants mainly addressed how students were notified about their grades and they indicated that some changes had occurred in the processes. Participant 5 used the word “disaster” to describe the examination process and posting of results. She explained how she completed a course in 2013 and up to some months in 2015 it was still not on her transcript. She even had to call the lecturer for the course to get the matter sorted out as Examinations was insisting the problem was that the lecturer had not given them the grade.

The imagery of a treasure hunt was used by Participant 1 to describe the experience of searching for grades on the noticeboards. “It’s like a treasure hunt, looking around the campus to find where they post the results . . . Cuz they post them and we don’t even know.” He explained that students would find out about the posting of the grades when one person would say, “You know, I saw the grades.” Then everybody would watch to see. He then went on further to talk about discrepancies in the posting: discrepancies such as students Ids being mixed up or a failing grade being posted although the lecturer has a passing grade. The latter was such a grave problem for Participant 4 that she spoke about “living at exam” to attempt to sort it out.

I remember doing this exam and there was no way a think a fail the exam. And when I went I saw a “D” on it - so when I went to the lecturers and the lecturers say to me that he saw the course grade and it was pass. He didn’t see the exam. And I have to be coming down there like two weeks straight going to exam every evening, asking them to look. And after that I

have to go for the lecturer -carry over exam, make him go in there go look.

And then I found out that I didn't fail the exam . . . Sometime they don't see you name. Sometimes they have part of the course but he exam mark is not there. Sometimes they tell you they don't see you in the class.

Sometimes they search and find you in another class.

Participant 2 pointed out that grades were placed on different notice boards: notice boards over by the Degree Centre, Buxton building, and Examinations. And in response to a question about how students would know where to look for grades, echoed what Participant 1 had said. "One person from the group would just say grades are out - like persons, random persons in the class just check the board." Participant 3 spoke about the tedium in trying to find the grades as in his opinion, the list could form a 'L' column from one end to the other, top to bottom. The student would have to walk and read every single paper in order to find his results. This participant was critical of this process and argued that if a student knew another's ID number he or she would know that person's grade. "And in most cases people know other people's number because you have to work in groups in the class.

Conversely, he had words of commendation for the new electronic system which he said and said had occurred within the latter two, three years. He said his experience with it was 'good.' When told that some students complained that it was faulty, he retorted, "I don't believe that has anything to do with the system. It has to do with the Department and the lecturer submitting the grades on time."

Library. The library was used to different degrees by the participants and did come in for some commendations. Participant 7 said she never had any hiccup. "The

internet was always up and we had sufficient computers when I went.” She also never had any problem with the computer laboratory. She went on to explain however that she hardly used the library and only did so to “sit quietly and to access the internet with my laptop but it wasn’t for the use of the textbooks.” Participant 8 who had never been in the library liked the fact that the library was open until about 10 o’clock in the night making it always accessible. Participant 10 explained that the library hours were extended after the evening students had complained, to include Saturdays and Sundays.

With regards to materials the participants in general highlighted some weaknesses. Participant 3 called the books “ancient” and said that even if there were a current text there were limited copies so one may not even have been able to borrow them. But what he probably lamented more than anything else was the absence of studies:

When I was doing the action study I could not go to the library and get a get a copy of a study that was done by a Mico student on a similar topic that I was doing. And I said that should not be the case. Even ITER - we now have an ITER department - research department. I could not go to ITER. . . No studies. . . The librarian told me that, “Oh, we used to do but we don’t anymore.” . . . I went up there in person and I could not get a study.

Technology. Participant 2 thought access to technology was “very, very limited, very limited,” but that a laptop and a projector may have been accessed when a student had presentations to do. However, one would have to book it at the E-lab two/three weeks in advance. Participant 3 however pointed out that there had been an increase in the number of computer labs, up to a total of eight. Still he thought more computers were needed. Participant 4 thought the computer rooms in particular were small, but stated that

they facilitated students getting assignments done.

Participant 5 was not impressed with the computer labs as according to her, “Every time you go in there, there is - there is a problem. Every time you go in, the system is down most of the time.” She did not rely on the labs though as she used her laptop, and conceded that improvements were being made with accessibility. She still had some negative comments however about the condition of the computers as she said that they were “full of virus.” She had actually lost three drives due to virus. Participant 6 also had a thumb drive damaged by a virus, so she thought attention needed to be paid to the cleaning and debugging of the computers.

There were changes to the opening hours of the computer labs and that, according to Participant 10, was helpful. She said in the evenings it used to be crowded with day students and that limited access to the computers to the evening students. However, when the opening hours went up to 10:00 pm and the day students left by 8:00 pm, that gave evening students the two hours after they finished classes to get work done there.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflect organizational development and relate to performance improvement at The Mico?

Value of program. The new degree program was seen as being valuable to The Mico as it contributes to the institution’s overall goals. Participant 4 thought the change was being undertaken as The Mico wants a more holistic development in teacher training, wants teachers to be more qualified or to be better able to understand the children in both early childhood and primary education institutions, and wants them to be able to handle

challenging situations in the classroom. That comment suggesting that the change is direct and purposeful was supported by Participant 3 who suggested that the move was very 'strategic and timely.' He referred to the world as being dynamic - changing every day – and concluded that The Mico may just as well “get in gear and move with the change.”

Participant 3 went on further to claim that The Mico has name recognition and described the institution as a very “stalwart” institution. He felt however that the institution was “playing catch up” in Jamaica and regionally. When asked to clarify his statement since The Mico was the first teacher training institution in the English-speaking Caribbean, he explicated that, “Outside of that we’re still playing catch up because of where the system and certain things are concerned on campus.”

Participant 4 argued that since The Mico is the leading teacher training institution there should not be other teachers' colleges doing higher courses. She therefore concluded that The Mico, “can't stay at that diploma level,” (which Participant 7 actually claimed is not rated that much anymore inside as well as outside Jamaica) and commented that other teacher training institutions in the Caribbean region will be able to learn from “The Mico experience.” Participant 1 and Participant 8 stated that the upgrade will perhaps encourage teacher candidates to pursue studies at the institution rather than going elsewhere, and Participant 1 along with Participant 5 alluded to the fact that the institution would get more recognition. In addition, Participant 10 pontificated that The Mico is recognized for its preparation of teacher candidates. She contested that other teachers' college do much practical work like making chart but do not provide as much notes as The Mico does. She shared that at her place of work she encountered trained

from other institutions who were not familiar with things that she had learnt at The Mico. Additionally, she was of the viewpoint that schools tended to have a preference for students from The Mico to complete the teaching practice exercise.

Participant 6 regarded the changes being undertaken at The Mico as, “a change in the right path. It’s a change to betterment.” She explained further that it benefits the lecturers who have to improve on their qualification, and helps students to become more marketable to the point of even going overseas to pursue whatever they want to do.

Research Question 3

What are the graduates’ views about how the change is being implemented?

Challenges for administration. The participants identified a hodgepodge of challenges which they thought both the administration and the staff and faculty were facing. They included communication, professional development, curriculum, and support services. Participant 7 raised the issue of customer service. She said she wondered about workers having “attitude” and the need for the institution to conduct workshops to sensitize office staff to be pleasant and accommodating and courteous. She suggested that such training would go a long way in “selling” the institution, and was critical of employing persons because they were former students and not necessarily on the basis of competence to deal with the customer and with the public.

Participants 5 and 9 also suggested that the office staff was in need of customer service training. Another type of training was highlighted however by Participant 4. She trumpeted the need for training for particular skills in getting the job done faster or better than how it used to be done. She cited the example of changing from creating files

manually to setting them up on the computer. This probably ties in with what participant six saw as a challenge. She felt that:

Mico is really bad with record keeping - like point blank - really blank - flat out. They need some tightening up there. They can never find dis. They always misplace dis. And they send you to - they might send you to – to go to the HOD for dis, to report dis. You send – you go to administration and you want a status letter. You go up and pay for it. And then you have seven working days to wait for it. You don't get until probably two weeks after so when they set a timeline they rarely meet it . . . And then they will have so many errors. You will tell them to do a simple status letter and they probably spell your name wrong . . . Probably they rushing to do a million and one things – probably - and they spell you name wrong.

She shared an experience she had when neither Examinations nor the lecturer of a particular course could find her grades. She had to resubmit all her work back to the lecturer. She felt lucky as that had happened in second year and not third year when her computer had had a virus and had crashed.

Another challenge identified by the participants was communication. Participant 3 described the following scenario when Student Affairs did not know where to send somebody to get a copy of the research guide for the masters' program, although it was available at the graduate school. And he said he could name quite a few more departments that did not know where to get it. He added that some of the times depending on who is at the front desk at graduate school they might even send the enquirer to the bookshop.

Participant 2 regarded communication as the biggest difficulty with administration and spoke about asking for information and being sent somewhere else. When she got to that other place she was sent back. Of course communication extends to online communication. Participant 8 enumerated the process of having access to wifi and the general inaccessibility to it as a drawback at The Mico. She complained that one had to go to certain parts on the campus to get the wifi and that those specific areas would be obviously cramped because everybody would be trying to use the wifi at the same time. A particular protocol she had a problem with was having to go to the technology lab to be cleared. That entailed being registered and then getting a password. She was querulous about what the difficulty is in just providing wifi and having students on the campus accessing it from anywhere. She also commented on the lack of wifi at the female hall of residence. She added however that probably only two or three persons could connect to it, and even then it was very slow and inconvenient. Persons, she said, had to be up at about 3 a.m. to try to get it to operate quickly.

The cost of the program was pinpointed as a challenge. Participant 8 regarded the school fee as one of the most expensive, if not the most, among other teacher training institutions. Participant 2 claimed that The Mico's fee is more expensive than that of The University of Technology (UTECH) and The University of the West Indies (UWI). Another issue she referenced was food, saying that while persons who board could go to the cafeteria at 5:00 p.m. for supper, those who did not board probably had to go buy something. (Only the persons who board were catered to at 5:00 p.m.)

Participant 7 also brought up the matter of the accounting system in the bursary. She shared her personal experience of attempting to pay her school fee once, and just

being told then that a different bank was being used. But when examination time came around she was told she could not do the examination because she owed \$50,000. She took in her receipts and it was established that the office had made a mistake.

The issue of textbooks was also raised by Participant 3. He explained that the institution had changed its protocol concerning the purchase of books as the bookshop no longer made copies of books and a book voucher which operated like a card, available to departments. That change, according to him, resulted in the books at the bookshop gathering “dust and web.”

Another challenge for administration was a matter raised by Participant 4. That had to do with some differences between day and evening students. As mentioned on page 161 in the section on courses, Participant 4 claimed that sometimes there were differences in the topics in courses that the day and evening students did and there were also differences in the examinations. But she went on further to contend that the differences between how day and evening students were treated extended to teaching practice. She claimed that the institution would, “look schools for the day students and evening students have to look schools for themselves.” She explained how there were two schools in the area where she lived that would have accommodated her for her teaching practice, but her supervisor refused to travel to her district. “The supervisor was actually telling me that the only way she would come was if I give her back her gas money. So I had to look a school closer . . .”

Challenges for staff. Participant 4 identified pedagogy as an area that particularly challenged staff and she suggested that lecturers empower themselves by engaging in more studies to teach at this higher level. In terms of pedagogy, Participant 9

felt that lecturers should model teaching to the different styles, should get more familiar with the APA style, and should provide more guidance in research to students. She guessed that probably as many as 95% of the persons who were graduating from The Mico did not know how to use APA properly and pointed out that different teachers were demonstrating its application differently. She felt in general lecturers told students to buy a book and then they just left them with the book. That, she said was inadequate.

Participant 4 had some suggestions for improving the research manual developed and sold at The Mico, and specifically referenced Chapter 4:

For Chapter 4 - in the manual that speaks to – ummm - putting together the results of the research - in doing the results you would have to do charts or diagrams or whatever. I believe when you are using an IT book and they are teaching you how to open an excel window to insert some chart you see a small excel window with an arrow pointing where to touch to get what. It shows what comes up next. So they could - because students have to do pie charts and not everybody is computer literate to the extent where they can actually put in a pie chart. So in that section of Chapter 4 where you are being given a guide they could put in some images . . .

Also related to pedagogy was another comment, made this time by Participant 6. She was concerned about the need for lecturers to balance work and study. She conjectured that with the upgrade lecturers perforce had to upgrade themselves as well. She articulated her reason for conjecturing that by speaking about a teacher who was studying as well. She said she could see that she was drained and that didn't make her class as effective as it could have been. Her interest was there but it didn't play out effectively.

Participant 5 articulated her feelings about a challenge she saw as the office staff playing and idling too much, and not focusing enough on their work. That she claimed affected their productivity.

You just go there and see them sitting, chatting their personal business . . . you go there and ask for a print out or something and you have to come back and you mek forty trips and it still not ready. And yet when you go there you hear them talking about last night and this morning and what they going to wear tomorrow.

Research Question 4

What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

Policy foci at The Mico. Participant 1 regarded literacy and early childhood education as policy foci at The Mico. He cited as evidence the building of the early childhood education center catering to children with special needs at The Mico. This focus on special education was reiterated by participant four who said that efforts were made by the Department to sensitize teacher candidates not only to the demands of the children with special needs, but also to ways in which they can help the parents of special needs children.

Some attention was being given to teacher qualification, according to Participant 3. He said that teacher candidates were being required to procure CPR certification and a food handler's permit. Some schools were requiring it so The Mico was moving towards including it as a prerequisite for certification. Participant 6 also spoke about the need to have CPR training.

One policy greatly praised by one participant, Participant 5, was the opportunity afforded students to matriculate. Students who may not have had all the requisite Caribbean Examinations Course (CXC) or General Certificate Examinations (GCE) were accepted to pursue the degree program, but spent the first two years completing the subject(s) in one or both examinations. She said if it were not for that policy she would not have her degree today as she only had about three subjects prior to going to The Mico. She hoped that that policy would continue as, “there are a lot of people out there who even like me who still cannot get the subjects that are needed to enter straight into the four-year program.”

Participant 6 had high commendation for another policy related to matriculation. That was the one that allowed incoming students who did not have at least a level one or two in Mathematics to do a course, “Maths 100.” That established the fact that the students knew at least the basics of Mathematics. She also felt that having some compulsory courses such as “Orientation to Documentation” for all students was good. Obviously speaking on the behalf of other students she said it taught them how to actually not plagiarize, how to quote, etcetera.

An interesting point raised by Participant 8 was the alignment of the policies of The Mico with those of the Ministry’s. She elucidated the matter by pointing out that The Mico does pay attention to the policies of The Ministry and that there are some classes in which policies are examined. She recalled having a class in which the Early Childhood Education Handbook was read and examined by the teacher who addressed issues such as dress and behavior. She said emphasis was put on lesson planning and if students went on teaching practice and the lesson plans were not up to standard after the first couple of

weeks they would be pulled from the activity. She reiterated that that as well as inappropriate dress and any other conduct deemed unbecoming of a teacher would be cause enough for a student being pulled from the Practice.

Participant 9 specifically mentioned something else that The Mico was reinforcing and that was the integration of Science and Mathematics. She was proud of the fact that her post-diploma cohort was the first such group to do it. Participant 4 on the other hand mentioned the succoring of pedagogical skills by explaining that probably in as many as 20 courses students were required to write lesson plans.

Policy foci at The Ministry of Education. The policy foci of the Ministry of Education as perceived by the participants included teacher qualification, the staffing of early childhood education institutions, curriculum, quality assurance, assessment, professional development, parental involvement, and student welfare. Participants 1, 4, and 10 articulated that having trained teachers (maybe just diploma – trained) early childhood education was one focus. Participant 10 for example spoke about the fact that every basic school needed to have at least one trained teacher and explained that the principal did not have to be trained. If the principal were not qualified to go to college, then the Ministry would send a trained teacher to the school. In cases where there was no principal a trained teacher would be sent to be the chief administrator.

Participant 4 explained how she saw the policy working out:

They say at least one now but I think they were saying that everyone must be trained, you understand? So maybe the next five six years they are going to say, “Well, if you are not a trained teacher you have to come out of the sector because what they are doing now is that they are merging schools. If they come to your

school and you don't have a trained teacher I think they are merging your school with another school that has trained teachers.

How that worked according to her was that the Ministry was opening up infant schools in the primary schools, and building where necessary. She said trained teachers for infant schools were being sought and suggested that that was why she said in the next five six years maybe the Ministry would say if one is not trained he or she would be out. In response to a question she confirmed that administrators were being required to be trained and that special training was being conducted.

The development of staff as well as schools seemed to be the underlying focus here as shown in participant 10's description of the Jamaica Emergency Employment Program (JEEP) being undertaken by the Ministry of Education. This was a program she said in which a diploma-trained government – paid teacher was sent on contract to a school for five months. That teacher served as a teacher assistant and the aim was to provide support to the school. In terms of teacher development participant seven spoke about teachers now needing to have a food handler's permit and police record, and in emphasizing the importance of the children's health and development and well-being added a humorous touch.

So it's no longer – ummm - once you look like you can watch the children you are okay. (Laughter) . . . No - but a mean when I even talk to one or two people who are in the system and I say, 'What qualification you have?'

'Bwoy, you know . . . you know, I don't really have nothing. You know is one a mi friend say a mus' come help her, you know.'

And in helping before you know it, you are a part of the system. And I find –

ummm - about six years to be exact, Ministry is coming down really hard in making sure that these people have all the necessary thing, that in order to be admitted in the classroom.

Tying in with the focus on teacher qualification is the issue of accountability, and for this the Ministry is also taking some particular steps. Participant 4 pointed out that persons were coming from the Early Childhood Centre (ECC) into schools to ensure quality control in terms of things such as the number of students to each room, and the number of teachers to each student.

But accountability was also being insisted on in relation to teacher pedagogy. Participant 4 added that the Ministry was requiring lesson plans to be written in accordance to the Ministry's curricula. The plans also needed to be flexible enough that if, for example, rain interrupted Physical Education class, the teacher would be able to conduct a lesson incorporating some physical activity, in the classroom.

Another example of the kind of focus the Ministry is placing on accountability was provided by Participant 7 who mentioned that at her workplace the Ministry would check to see if the younger children were eating from the canteen. That she said was because the Ministry had stipulated that the younger children (she thinks three to five years old) should take their own lunch to school. Also of importance to the Ministry was having all Grade 1 level children registered with the Ministry of Education. Participants 1 and 8 found that commendable, and Participant I particularly liked the Ministry's slogan, "Every Child Can Learn, Every Child Must Learn." He went on further to speak about the Ministry's requirement that the Grade 1 children completed a Grade 1 learning profile at the beginning of the school year to determine the exact level at which each child is

operating.

Participant 7 mentioned a focus on the Grade 4 Literacy test and explained that if students had not passed that test they would not have been allowed to do the GSAT examinations which is done in Grade 6. She felt that helped to stem the practice of some schools in moving students on to the next grade although they are performing below the expected grade level. She spoke about the significance of the Grade 4 examination to the extent that regular school activities would be suspended on the day when the examination was being administered, and Ministry personnel would go in to administer the examination themselves.

Another policy focus highlighted by Participant 7 in relation to assessment was a movement towards portfolio assessment, which started at Grade 3. This participant felt that this type of assessment had both pros and cons. She explained that some students do well in examinations and are able to pace themselves, but there are others whom she said are “naturally bright,” but they have a problem just sitting. She also felt that this type of assessment caters to the different learning styles of children and she particularly liked the focus on scoring for specific items rather than scoring for everything all at once. She also liked the fact that the assessment forces teachers to evaluate their work.

Participant 7 also liked the emphasis being placed on parental involvement. The deep and improved interaction, she said, assures a parent that the teacher knows his or her child. In approving this policy focus, Participant 5 adumbrated that she had recently read that the Jamaican government was allocating about 14 billion dollars to early childhood education, and that some of that money was to deal with nutrition and improving parenting involvement, including having them attend parenting workshops. She lauded

the initiative to have workshops as she deemed discussions about certain issues a good practice, and expressed the view that, “teacher alone cannot deal with everything.”

One Ministry initiative encouraging the involvement of parents was the Parental Values and Attitudes Promotions Programme (P-VAPP) which was part of the Respect Agenda Programme. As described by Participant 10, the Respect Agenda Programme was meant to promote core social values and started with a two-day training of school principals who would then go back to their schools and turn-key. Parents would be invited in for training, which would be conducted for a period of ten months (a two-hour session per month). At the end of the training the parents got an examination from the Ministry of Education and if they passed, they got a certificate. The school had to have a certificate prominently placed to show that it embraced and was authorized to conduct the Respect Agenda Programme.

Schools succoring each other seemed to be a policy focus of the Ministry of Education. Participant 10 explained how the Development Officer (DO) assigned to her zone (Ministry’s grouping of schools in the same and /or neighboring areas) would ask her to provide support for other principals. Sometimes when she conducted workshops at her school the DO would invite teachers from other schools to attend. This participant expressed her dissatisfaction that financial support was not provided, and suggested that participants at the workshop “make and take.” In providing elucidation for her phrase she explained that the invited participants who attended the workshops would take the material that is provided, to go back and teach their children or teach the parents. Therefore, she thought they should “make” a financial contribution to the workshop.

Participant 9 commented on the curriculum saying that she liked the Ministry's initiatives to have more inclusion classes and to integrate Maths and Science into teaching sessions. Participant 2 on the other hand focused on welfare programs of the Ministry of Education, namely the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) which she said provided bus fare and lunch for students in need, and the breakfast program.

Importance of early childhood education policy. Participant 9 referred to the importance of early childhood education policy, pontificating that “. . . everybody would know which direction they are going and really know what's the focus and what's the purpose.” She then made the connection to the students as she said that policy helps to direct students in a particular direction and provide a foundation for primary school, which would continue with such policies.

In showing the importance of early childhood education policy to the other levels, Participant 1 explained that at his workplace, teachers at the higher grade levels would complain about students' writing. The weaknesses included students not being expressive in their writing and having problems with story-writing and letter writing. As a teacher at the lower levels he would go and change his lesson plans to see if he could work to address the problem.

Participant 8 articulated it differently. Speaking of the children at the early childhood education stage she said, “You have to mold them, get them toughened up and ready for the primary school stage. She further expressed the belief that, “Whatever teacher do at the early childhood stage can either make a child, or break the child

completely. I believe that fully.” She then made a case for educational policies as they relate to disciplining a child, including policy against beating a child.

This perspective was supported by participant 10 who spoke about the significance of the Respect Agenda training, and condemned flogging. She stipulated that teachers should find strategies and ways to punish students and should not “boof, boof, boof” them. She hailed the program as she saw it refocusing on some core values which she felt had broken down. She also intimated that many children will practice what they learnt at the basic school level if they did well in school and felt “good” about their school and teacher.

Whenever they go to primary school is like they have a mindset weh seh, “Yes, mi did do good at primary school. Mi want do good here so to. So they go – and, you know. As I say, in all stage going straight up to university, doctorate, masters, a teacher can either make a child or break a child. Even as big as we are, if you going to a class and a teacher has a negative attitude, it naturally rubs off on everybody in the class.

Participant 2 proposed that education is key and that young children will believe their teachers. She suggested that even when they get to high school they will remember things their basic school teacher had said. Participant 7 argued that with a policy focus on the holistic development of a child there may be less people who would just want to stop at primary school or high school. She believed that with a good foundation a child may want to achieve more, adding that when people are more educated and well-rounded they are more conscious of their environment. She asserted that with education, there may be less people who feel

a need to do things to promote themselves because they have a good sense of who they are.

Participant 5 invoked Lev Vygotsky in extolling the virtues of early childhood education by saying she loved his theory that what a child learns at this stage will be with that child for life. Participant 6 on the other hand, resorted to the Jamaican vernacular in demonstrating the significance of educational policy. “Oh, wow! I mean, you could ask a mad man on the road that, and he would tell you that, “Bwoy, Sistren, if the foundation in early childhood nuh set, den you nuh have no way a go.” She then reverted to the standard English saying that it is important for the early childhood education level within Jamaica and the world itself to be an effective platform for children to learn according to their learning styles.

Importance of educational policy to nation-building. The importance of educational policy to nation-building was explicated by the participants in terms of social issues including crime and poverty. Participant 2 argued that an educated person thinks differently from somebody who is uneducated. The latter, she said, may seem “dark and ignorant,” and may be quick to jump to conclusions instead of finding solutions. She postulated that that may be why there is so much crime. “These guys who are committing the crime - they not as educated and they just want a way out, and maybe that is the only way out for them.” She conceded however that many of them may in fact be educated but they engage in crime because of greed.

This relationship between education and crime was reiterated by Participant 7 who said that, “When you cater for the holistic development of a child it actually sets a lot of things in place where you probably have less crime. Participant 9 did not mention

the word “crime” but she spoke about the importance of educational policy to social order. The incidence of crime is indicative of a breach of social order. In speaking about social order, Participant 9 propounded that without the kind of structure that a good educational foundation offers, some adults might “let loose” – out of control.

Social order is related to the literacy level of a community. Participant 7 specifically addressed literacy, purporting that the existence of educational policy may lead to less illiteracy. This viewpoint was supported by Participant 3 who said that:

The more literate people are, the more rational they can be in decision-making. They can make wise decisions. They can be critical thinkers. They can think through problems without resorting to violence because sometimes when you reason with some of these people not even a baby think [sic] like that and it has a lot to do with the level of education.

Participant 6 spoke of some personal character traits which she thought are important to a country, and which can be taught at the early childhood education level. Suggesting that Jamaicans, and Caribbean people, in general need more patience because they operate too much in the fast lane she suggested that in early childhood education, children may be taught to be more patient, to be more tolerant, to have faith and more understanding, and to be loving and caring. She stated that if certain rules and morals are instilled in students and “not just go through one ear and come through the other,” things would be better.

Policy foci needed at The Mico. Participant 8 addressed the issue of accountability and as she saw it, the need for The Mico to ensure that lecturers are

equipped to effectively deliver instruction and to model to students how to teach. She suggested:

Every test the teacher writes to give us they should do the test first before they give us. . . I was applying for a work and one o' the things they required is that if you are selected you suppose to write a lesson plan and teach a lesson so they could see how you teach the lesson. I believe Mico should do that.

She further added that The Mico should constantly check up on lecturers to see if they are doing what they are supposed to be doing. This would include checking lecturers' lesson plans and observing lecturers teach, and grading them.

Continuing with the idea of teacher performance, Participants 6 and 8 spoke about the need for The Mico to reinforce dress policy. Participant 8 hinted at a bit of hypocrisy on the part of lecturers by saying that, "They come and seh no red hair and the next day the same teacher who seh no red hair come in the red hair." Participant 6 said that many students do not intend to do teaching and just want a degree. She declared however that at the end of the day the student is a teacher and ought to carry himself or herself appropriately. She concluded this dictum by saying uniform helps with professionalism.

Participant 3 also wanted to see some attention given to professionalism while Participant 6 wanted to see some change to the physical environment although she did say she did not have a problem with the environment. Making reference to the University of Technology (UTECH) and the University of the West Indies (UWI) she said she would like to see a gazebo built for the early childhood education department (and other

departments) where students could ‘sit and lounge’ and study. She insinuated that this would indicate that early childhood education students are treated similarly to other students.

Participant 8 would love to see improvement in policies related to examinations. Particularly, she wanted to see a decrease the length of time taken to pick up examination cards. She recommended that Examinations should not wait until one week before the examination to prepare the cards and that it should be prepared in advance that even if a student went to pick up the card two months before the examination he or she could do so.

Two other issues raised by participants were teacher certification and attendance policy. Participant 3 supported The Mico’s policy of having teacher candidates meet certain requirements on graduating, namely getting the food handler’s permit, CPR certification, and police record. Regarding the attendance policy, Participant 10 felt that the Mico should revamp it. She explained that the policy at the time was that if a student missed four or more classes in a Course he or she automatically failed the course. She suggested that more allowance should be given as sometimes a student faces several extenuating circumstances outside his or her control.

She also suggested that more leniency should be extended towards students who have difficulty paying their school fees as stipulated, and that for example, students should be able to register for classes, even if they do not have the school fee. That, she felt, ought to be considered especially if a student has already completed as many as two years of his or her program. As it stood, if a student did not have the school fee, he or she could not register. At least half of

the school fee had to be paid and there was a charge for late registration. Then the other half had to be paid before the student was allowed to sit the examinations. She asserted that sometimes concessions were given to a privileged few like persons who have lecturers “adjudicating” for them. She shared a personal experience when she had difficulty paying her school fee and had gone to see more than one person when the persons dealing with the matter realized that she had a relative on staff. One person asked her why she had not said she had “family lecturing there” and explained that had she done so she would have been attended to. To that she responded, “Miss, I’m not here for like. Treat mi jus’ like how you treat everybody else.”

Policy foci needed at The Ministry of Education. Participant 1 suggested that The Ministry of Education should put more emphasis on personal development to meet the challenges presented by today’s students who are technologically savvy and talented. He spouted however that some pose behavioral problems so candidate teachers should be trained to deal with these problems.

Participant 3 suggested that the Ministry ought to increase teachers’ salary and address the issue of the number of trained teachers in early childhood education institutions. He did recognize the fact however that the Ministry already pays one or two trained teachers in these facilities. He said he would feel better if the government reduced the amount that they collect from his PAYE and the income tax and just take some of that and pump it into education tax. He said he should be charged for his child’s education rather than his child being charged. The point that the Ministry needed to increase teachers’ salary was also repeated by Participant 4.

The matter of the number of trained teachers was another cause for concern for Participant 5. She felt the number should be increased from one trained teacher and that trained teachers should be placed at varying levels in early childhood institutions. She would have liked to see even two or three teachers with degrees in each basic school or other early childhood institution – perhaps one at the K-1 level, one at the K-2 level, and one at another level. She saw the increase in the number of trained teachers as being important as she was convinced that what a child learns at this stage is for life. She added that if children are not given the right start, twenty years from hence things in society will be worse.

Participant 5 would have also liked to see the school feeding program extended to more schools. She doubted that it was in all schools and felt that giving students breakfast, helps students to learn more. Participant 7 on the other hand, was concerned about the prevention of abuse to children (both physical and verbal) and wondered what the Ministry could put in place. That, she felt was necessary of course to protect the child but she added that it would also protect any teacher that may end up bringing such infraction to the attention of an administrator. She shared an experience when she thought the visitor of a teacher had access to students and was behaving inappropriately towards a child. She told the Principal who immediately sent out an email advising teachers not to have visitors in the classrooms. She also vented about teachers not being fired when they have shown ineptness in their work, have declared their dislike of students and have even had parents complain about them. She felt stronger actions were needed.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was attained in this paper by the establishment of credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability. First of all, I sought approval and procured it from the Walden University Institutional Review Board as well as The Mico, namely the Vice-President, Academic Affairs, the Dean of the Faculty of Education and the head of the Department of Early Childhood Education. Subsequently the participants were recruited and in an attempt to maintain the ethical principle of beneficence and justice a policy of full disclosure was used adopted. For example, I provided participants with information packages outlining the procedure, risks and benefits of being a part of the study, and they were asked to sign a consent form. Before every interview I reminded the participants about the processes and they were given the opportunity to ask any question or raise any concern.

The methodologies used in collecting and analysing the data added to the credibility of the work as well as the confirmability. Having a diverse sample of participants representing different year groups with varying demographic and professional experiences aided in procuring a mishmash of perspectives from which themes could be derived. Then using triangulation and incorporating the semi – structured interview as the main means of data collection complemented by reflexive journaling, memoing, thick description, and bracketing all added to credibility. Additionally, member check and peer review were used to ensure accuracy in the presentation of the data and the reasonableness of the findings and conclusions drawn.

I used thick description combined with memoing, and reflexive journaling to add depth to the narrative. I was able to provide details and make sense of nuances and

innuendos. Of equal importance, however, was the narrative style that the participants also used. In general, they used figurative language and the colorful Jamaican vernacular. Participant 1, for example, described trying to find grades on the noticeboard as a treasure hunt. Participant 10 compared the large crowd waiting to register to the crowd at ‘mass camp.’ She also used the Jamaican idiom, “boof, boof” when talking about teachers hitting students. All of this added details, but also portrayed “voice” which is of course indicative of individuality and by extension, credibility.

At the heart of trustworthiness is confidentiality and to maintain it I had to pay particular attention to the collection and storage of the data. That included anonymizing the data, recording the interviews electronically to a secure and encrypted repository for digital audio files, and uploading them to a secure password-protected server where they will be kept for a period of three years. The only identifiers attached to the stored files were numbers and corresponding pen names.

Transferability and dependability are two important aspects of achieving trustworthiness. The themes discussed in this study are attributable to common concepts across programs and departments at The Mico. These include courses, pedagogy, timetabling, registration and examinations. For example, there are some courses that are taught across programs, and there are also some lecturers who teach across programs and departments. Another commonality is the fact that every student has to use the main support services such as the Examinations Section and Student affairs. Transferability may therefore be applied in these contexts. It is not just limited to the internal environment however. Other teacher training institutions share common features with The Mico and together they come under various umbrella groups including the Ministry

of Education. Many of them are being upgraded to university status and will have to be accredited by the same accreditation authority The University Council of Jamaica.

Transferability of certain elements of this research is therefore possible.

There is also some degree of dependability. A similar study may be conducted in the future as the variables and concepts are not things that change in nature. The name of a section for example, Student Affairs or the library may change, but their functions and their role in the institution remain.

Summary

This chapter in a sense made the study “operational.” In it I detailed how the data was collected and analyzed and what the results were. The data was collected primarily by interviews and these interviews were coded to arrive at the concepts, variables and themes. These were shown graphically. As a “narrative,” the “stories” shared by the participants were enhanced by their actual verbiage and were organized chronologically according to the research questions. Similarities and contrasts in the responses of the participants were noted. In addition to analyzing the main interview in this chapter, I presented an overview and the findings of a pilot test, and addressed the issue of trustworthiness in the data collection and data analysis processes.

In Chapter 5, I detail the interpretation of the findings, and I make recommendations for further action and study. I also present my reflection and discuss what the social implications of the study are before drawing the general conclusions.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore participants' perspectives about the new bachelors' degree program in Early Childhood Education at The Mico University College in Jamaica. This new degree program was introduced as part of the institution's strategic plan in changing from a diploma-granting institution to a degree-granting institution. This change has been in keeping with current trends towards reforms in teacher education that address issues such as curricula, and accreditation and certification of teachers and teacher training institutions (Pantić, 2012).

The study was conducted against the background of the theories of organizational development and performance improvement. Both are applicable to The Mico because, in an attempt to improve its effectiveness, the institution is placing emphasis on strategies, structures, and organizational processes and organizational design (Cummings & Worley, 2009; Ghorbanhosseini, 2013). Van Tiem, Moseley, and Dessinger (2012) suggested that for performance improvement to take place there must be opportunities for individuals and communities to develop their potential and capacities, and a system's capacity to anticipate, apprehend, and add to positive potential must be strengthened.

Participants in the study were 10 graduates of the program, including day students, evening students, and one student from the post-diploma program. They completed the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education at The Mico between 2008 and 2015 and graduated between 2012 and 2015. Data were collected primarily from in-depth interviews of each participant, and were supplemented by information from the institution's programme document and graduation booklets. The

interviews were semi-structured and included additional follow-up questions asked of particular participants for clarification and or explanation/exposition.

The data collected during the study were utilized to answer the following four research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?
2. What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflects organizational development and relates to performance improvement at The Mico?
3. What are the graduates' views about how the change is being implemented?
4. What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

These four research questions were meant to elicit from students their perceptions about how the program was being implemented, what they regarded some of the challenges to be, what is they thought about the significance of the program to The Mico and to the country as a whole, and how the program reflects and relates to policies at The Mico and those stipulated by the Ministry of Education.

My aim of presenting the perceptions of the graduates was not just to represent their experiences (things) but to influence “action selection adaptively” (Morsella, Hoover, & Bargh, 2013, p. 262). Of course, from an ontological perspective the world is

complex, interactive, and layered with multiple perceptions, but epistemically it is through interaction with the world and those in it that learning and understanding of self and others take place and context and insight are provided into the “fluid nature of socially constructed reality” (Reece, 2013, p. 21). The perceptions of the graduates were based in part on how each individual interacted with his or her environment, so differences existed in their responses. From the mishmash of experiences, however, I identified commonalities in perceptions and themes to arrive at conclusions about areas of strength and weakness in the new degree program in early childhood education.

Interpretation of Findings

The following concepts emerged from the research questions: *courses, pedagogy, physical environment, timetabling, orientation/registration, examination, library, technology, value of program, challenges for administration, challenges for staff, policy foci at The Mico, policy foci at the Ministry of Education, importance of early childhood education policy, importance of educational policy to nation-building, policy foci needed at The Mico, and policy foci needed at the Ministry*. From the data, I identified 151 codes and these generated themes including: *the preparation of teachers to meet the needs of students, The Mico brand, teacher qualification, and staffing of early childhood education institutions*. According to the participants, some of the challenges facing administration related to program elements such as the *qualification of staff, training and recruitment of staff, teaching practice, communication, and accreditation*.

In general, the participants identified commendable aspects of the program such as its value to the institution and to the country as a whole, the grounding in educational theories that it provides, and the tailoring of the curriculum to fit the needs of the students

in the Jamaican classroom. They also offered their views on what they saw as some of the weaknesses and challenges regarding program elements and policies at the institution, proffering their own suggestions on how some policies may be strengthened or new policies that ought to be introduced. All of these were set against the backdrop of policies of the Ministry of Education including initiatives promoting literacy for all, initiatives providing teaching and learning opportunities that seek to “optimize access, equity and relevance throughout the education system,” and initiatives supporting student achievement and improving institutional performance to achieve national targets (Vision 2030 Plan, 2009, p. 7). This revamping of programs mirrors international trends in education such as the upgrading of programs. According to Darling-Hammond (2010), nations around the world are expanding educational access and “revising curriculum, instruction, and assessment to support the more complex knowledge and skills needed in the 21st century” (p. 5).

Research Question 1

In general, the participants were of the view that the program prepares candidates to teach and meet the needs of students. There was the feeling that the courses suited the task of teaching candidates how to teach in early childhood education institutions, and, through exposure to educational and learning theories, established a formative framework for the prospective teachers. There was talk, for example, about learning to write lesson plans and engaging in teaching practice, about theories of scholars such as developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky, and about courses such as classroom management.

There was the feeling, however, that some courses were redundant and that they were given different names to different cohorts but had the same content. Research, in

particular, came in for special attention because some participants felt that not enough guidance was given in terms of instructional material, and that guidance from lecturers was wanting. One participant added that there was an absence of studies conducted by past students.

Complaints among students about curriculum are not unusual. In a study entitled, “‘Miss, I Am Not Being Fully Prepared’: Student - Teachers’ Concerns about Their Preparation at a Teacher Training Institution in Jamaica,” Roofe and Miller (2013) made the point that the “curriculum of any teacher preparation programme is one of the criteria used to judge the quality of the programme. Therefore it must be carefully designed to incorporate all the elements that will contribute to positive outcomes” (p. 9). The students in that study expressed concern about an extreme workload in semester two, the lack of adequate equipment, and the cost for practical courses. The researchers opined that concerns such as these may “enable or constrain students’ decision-making towards success or progression in a programme” (p. 9).

Some participants in this study on The Mico felt that more hands on training like the making of charts was needed. The importance they placed on such activity is consonant with current literature. Reece (2013) in his study on the perspectives of teacher students in first-year studies courses about teacher-student engagement reported that participants spoke about how much they liked that they were engaged in hands-on activities, and that they thought they “learned by actually doing and got more out of the class because it was practical” (p. 37).

The participants all thought the lecturers basically seemed to have good command of the content, although it was obvious that some were teaching new courses. Participants

also noted that some did a good job at delivering pedagogy, but felt there was a need for improvement in other cases. There was the suggestion that some lecturers needed to engage in more research to prepare for their classes, and another that some ought to pay attention to how they delivered instruction, for example by having more student engagement in the lessons. The call for more research was similarly made by UNESCO in its 2013 report in which it recommends the integration of research into initial teacher-training programs for the production of “knowledge on key aspects of teacher training, teaching processes and educational work with pupils based on practical experience” (p. 110).

Timetabling seemed to pose some problems. For example, participants shared how students and lecturers would sometimes turn up for classes and would find someone else in the classrooms. It was somewhat of a norm for students to go looking for classrooms and just “capture” a room. Other problems related to timetabling was “group-specific. There was a complaint about evening students having to attend classes every day at first, and on the other hand one participant fussed about day students having classes from 8 am up to 8 pm for lectures and 9 pm if they had to stay back to collaborate with each other on assignments. The timetable was eventually adjusted and allowed Fridays off, for example, for evening students. Other issues included uncertainty about the lecturer assigned to a course as well as the sequencing of courses. For instance, Participant 5 complained about a course being pertinent to teaching practice being done in year four, after teaching practice.

With regards to the physical environment the size and comfort of the classroom came in for most attention. Participants lamented the size and the heat of the classroom

on the older building because many of them had no air condition. Some also spoke about the shortage of chairs in some classrooms especially when chairs were diverted to the gymnasium for the hosting of events.

One main complaint was the wait time in processes such as registration and in accessing services at Examinations. Additionally, there was the complaint that the traditional method of posting examination results on noticeboards was too open. The point was made that if persons knew the identification number of a person they could see the results. More than one participant also averred that sometimes the results were inaccurate. But the inaccuracy did not only rest with Examinations. One participant, Participant 6, actually shared her experience of discovering that a lecturer did not have grades for her after Examinations had posted her results with a grade for that subject missing. The participants seemed to welcome the new online system although one participant was not impressed about its functionality.

The library was generally deemed to be in need of improvement. While participants appreciated the fact that internet service is available they rued the lack of enough books and other materials. Participant 3 in particular, found it incredulous that no study conducted by graduates was available. Another participant complained that some of the available books were not in good condition. The participants liked the fact that the library hours had been extended to 10 p.m. weeknights and to Saturdays and Sundays, and that similarly the hours at the technology labs. were extended. Regarding the labs., some participants bemoaned the time used to make an appointment for the use of a projector and laptop, and some evening students thought the labs. were sometimes

crowded with day students in the evening. There was the feeling, however, that the extended lab. time helped to alleviate that problem.

The fact that the participants had grouses about matters of timetabling, support services, and resources, is not surprising given the fact that the literature shows evidence of similar complaints by participants in other studies. For example, in the study conducted by Rooft and Miller (2013), student-teachers expressed concern that the instructional technology module had not adequately exposed them to technology and that lecturers had not made use of advancements in technology to equip them for teaching (p. 10). The authors supported that finding by observing that the concern by the student teachers was aligned with Watson's (2013) view, that "despite the rapid technological changes that have taken place, countries within the developing world, including Jamaica, are not equipped to deliver the benefits to their people" (p. 10). They lamented what they deemed as a lack of usage of information and communications technology (ICT) in the institution they studied, saying that, "Teacher preparation programme is problematic given its technological thrust and the Jamaican Ministry of Education's efforts to embed ICT in teaching and learning (p. 10).

Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, and Ravina (2011) who examined the effectiveness of school and teacher characteristics on improving students' years of completed schooling and learning, stated that perhaps the clearest finding was that "having a fully functioning school – one with better quality roofs, walls or floors, with desks, tables and chairs, and with a school library – appears conducive to student learning" (p. 41). They provided additional fodder for the point of view that non-academic issues need to be addressed, by claiming that much of the research literature

seem to focus on basic school and teacher characteristics, when in fact the ways that schools are organized may actually require more attention (p. 46). The UNESCO report (2013) further recommended that institutions and their staff create conditions to acquire the requisite capacities to design and introduce teacher training opportunities at a new required level.

It is of crucial importance to strike a balance between, on the one hand, pressure for accountability through examinations, accreditation and new standards and, on the other hand, support through institution-building policies, capacity building and investments to create institutional conditions conducive to change and to allow adequate time for the necessary changes. It is also vital to support training institutions to play their appropriate role in the context of each zone or region. (p. 46)

Research Question 2

The participants were of the view that The Mico brand is well – known and is a model for other territories. There was a general opinion that the program prepared prospective teachers to meet the academic needs of students and supported the overall development of children. The latter agenda was highlighted by the OECD in its 2015 report. It was argued in that report that developing children’s social and emotional skills at an early stage is particularly important since these skills develop progressively and build on past investments made on them. The claim was made that children “with higher levels of social and emotional skills (e.g., self-confidence and perseverance) are likely to benefit more from further investments in cognitive skills (e.g. maths and science classes)” (p. 14).

The participants in this study being presented also suggested that value was added to the program because of the fact that the need for parental involvement in the schooling of their children was given some priority. The Ministry of Education alluded to the importance of parental involvement by listing one of its concerns as the “absence of adequate parenting support for the children and the schools” (Vision 2030 Plan, 2009, p. 21). The need for parental involvement was also supported by the OECD (2015) which cited multiple sources in its claim that supportive parents who are actively engaged in literary and writing activities “enhance children’s cognitive, social and emotional skills” (p. 82). The OECD (2015) went on further to suggest that “Parental involvement in children’s schools, like attending parent teacher meetings, may foster children’s social and cognitive development by improving both family and social learning contexts” (p. 41).

Additionally, some participants pointed out that candidate teachers were exposed to training in tasks such as events planning and were able to hone administrative and clerical skills. These, the participants had found useful at the workplace in as well as outside the field of education.

Research Question 3

Wiggins (2011) opined that managing educational reforms can be very difficult for those implementing them and referenced Mortimore (2004) in saying that the greatest challenge is to “determine how to preserve strengths while remedying weaknesses” (p. 26). Some of the challenges facing administration according to the participants in this study on the new degree program at The Mico related to program elements such as the qualification of staff, training and recruitment of staff, teaching

practice, communication, and accreditation. The participants felt that some attention needed to be given to the support services and to resources such as books, internet, technology, and food. There seemed to be a general consensus that the recruitment and training of office staff needed some shoring up with a focus on improving customer service. One participant mentioned that the upgrade in the status of the institution required training in computer skills. They also explicated that the administration needed to better communicate with the student population concerning processes such as registration and examination, and expressed some disquiet about the length of the accreditation process.

There was a concern raised by participants that merits some attention by administration. That related to differences in the program and how the program was being managed for full time (day) students and part-time (evening) students. Of course both day and evening students would have looked at some issues through different lens, but considering that the grouses ranged from differences in the courses and examinations, to the schedule of classes, to access to support services, the issue probably should not be ignored.

The challenges for staff that the participants identified related to courses, communication, research skills, pedagogical skills, professionalism, materials, support (office) staff, teaching practice and salary: some of which have been previously discussed to. The issues included inadequate research by lecturers and a lack in the quality of succoring provided to students conducting research. Reece (2013) weighed in on the matter of student-teacher interaction by making reference to Aspland (2009). The argument was made that in a study conducted by Aspland students identified two

strategies in teaching that they found meaningful. The students felt that teacher responsiveness to questions in class and their recapping of the main points are beneficial to students' success and that scaffolding efforts such as clarifying concepts discussed in class are factors that contribute to good teaching practice (p.6). A recurrent comment in this study about The Mico, was that there were weaknesses in how the office staff dealt with customers, and that there was a need for professional development training. It was interesting to note that some participants expressed the wish for an increase in salary for lecturers.

Research Question 4

Policy foci at The Mico that was highlighted included Literacy, Education, Integrated Maths and Science. The latter had to do with the concept of teaching Maths and Science as one subject and is representative of the focus of The Ministry of Education on integrating these two subjects. Another policy item at The Mico discussed by the participants was the matriculation standards and in particular the opportunities afforded prospective students to improve their qualifications to matriculate. For example, students may be asked to complete a Maths course if they had not gained a pass in Maths in CXC or GCE, and that was seen as being praiseworthy. Another participant commended the policy of having students spending two years to complete courses to matriculate. She explained that that was how she managed to eventually pursue and complete the Degree. Other policy issues that were lauded included the fact that some courses and electives are compulsory. There is now the requirement for students to complete training in CPR and to procure a food handler's permit and a police record

before they can graduate. There is also a uniform policy about which some person felt more attention needed to be given.

In terms of educational policy at the national level there was general admiration for the Ministry's focus on early childhood education, exemplified by the fact that all children at the Grade 1 level must be registered for school. This focus is reflected by the Ministry's motto which is, "Every child can learn . . . Every child must learn" (Vision 2030 Plan, 2009, cover) and in its declaration that there ought to be universal access to education to early childhood, primary and grades 7 to 9 of the secondary level (Vision 2030 Plan, 2009, p. 8). Darling – Hammond (2010) cited Nobel Peace prize winning economist James Heckman in purporting a viewpoint that concurs with the Ministry's focus:

Skills beget skills and capabilities foster future capabilities. All capabilities are built on a foundation of capacities that are developed earlier. Early learning confers value on acquired skills, which leads to . . . early mastery of a range of cognitive, social, and emotional competences making learning at late ages more efficient, and therefore easier and more likely to continue . . . Early interventions promote economic efficiency and reduce lifetime inequality. (p. 34)

Another Ministry initiative deemed to be meaningful is having more teachers at the early childhood level trained. In particular, its stipulation that each early childhood education institution should have at least one trained teacher, was deemed to be commendable. One participant went a step further and posited the view that the number should be raised to two to provide employment opportunities for more teachers with degrees. A particular government initiative one participant spoke about was the JEEP

programme described in Chapter 4 (see page 183). The initiative was highlighted in an update by The Minister of Education, Hon. Rev. Ronald Thwaites in a sectoral presentation to the Jamaican Cabinet. He informed the cabinet that the 2014 targets of hiring 200 early-childhood trained teachers through JEEP and 40 permanently thereby providing 480 basic schools with access to trained teachers, had been met. He further informed them that an additional 400 basic schools were projected to be supplied with trained teachers for the 2015-2016 school year, and announced that at the time there were 2,263 trained teachers in the Early Childhood sector, representing 23% of the total complement (Thwaites, 2015, sec. Early Childhood).

The participants commented on policies regarding instruction and assessment. For example, the Grade 1 Learning Profile which determines the level at which children at the Grade 1 level are performing, and the Grade 4 Literacy Test were spoken about as being useful. Regarding instruction one participant liked the fact that The Ministry was requiring that lesson plans meet certain criteria that allow substitute teachers to effectively execute them.

The policy of meeting the holistic needs of a child was addressed by the participants. There was mention for example of attempts to get increased parental involvement towards this venture, and to train parents to help their children develop positive values and attitudes through the P-VAPP which is part of a larger Ministry of Education initiative, the Respect Agenda Programme. Administrators are trained and they in turn conduct workshops with parents who earn a certificate on completion of the sessions. The Ministry of Education website does indicate however that other school personnel such as deans and guidance counsellors are trained and that the training

provided is aligned with a public educational campaign. Materials are provided to both parents and school personnel. One main material is a manual, “Strictly Positive: A Resource Guide on Positive Disciplinary Practices,” an adaptation from “Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning Friendly Classroom” by UNESCO. This manual reflects the Ministry’s official policy of ending the use of corporal punishment of all forms in schools.

Other initiatives catering to the needs of a child which impact learning include the Path program. This actually provides a cash grant for children who are in need of that kind of support, although one participant said it provides bus fare and breakfast for children. Mention was made of a related policy which requires children younger than Grade 1 to take their own lunches to school. The government’s attempts to address the holistic needs of the child was also borne out by the Minister of Education in the aforementioned speech. He posited the view that providing nutrition in schools is adding value to the lives of young children and brightens their prospects. He further explained that one of the Ministry’s targets for the succeeding financial year was to “spread around 20% of the school-feeding budget of \$4.6 billion on locally grown fruits, vegetables, tubers, eggs and other proteins” which he insinuated was a great improvement coming from “zero use of local produce.” He added that the aim was to get to 50% in three years (Thwaites, 2015, sec. Early Childhood).

The participants thought that educational policy and policy specifically at the early childhood education level are important. In general, they commented that policy at this level establish foundational skills on which students build at the other levels. It was also regarded as being pertinent to the remuneration for teachers. It was also spouted as

being necessary beyond the classroom because it contributes to the establishment and maintenance of social structures, and the alleviation of social problems such as crime and poverty.

The Social Implications

Education is widely accepted as a means of upward mobility and social change. It is an integral part of the political processes of national as well as local governments and has much utility in addressing social ills such as the intergenerational transmission of poverty, increased demand for costly social services, and in some cases political instability (Britto, Engle, & Super, 2013). In the Caribbean, poorer countries as indicated by lower per capita income or human development indicators and economic constraints contribute to educational inefficiency, and according to Anne Hickling-Hudson (2014), in Jamaica, this contributes to a “20.1% illiteracy rate, an unemployment rate of 14.2% in 2012, a high poverty rate, and a high rate of violent crime (p. 4).

Some researchers argue that these types of economic and social problems are heightened by the gap between scientific knowledge and the implementation of relevant policies and programs in early childhood education. Britto, Engle, and Super (2013) further expounded that this gap is demonstrated through “poor health; inferior cognitive skills; lowered lifetime earnings; and reduced contributions to family, community, and society” (p. 4). Any gap between early childhood education and individual as well as communal development and sustainability has to be bridged by the quality of teacher training that early childhood education teachers receive. They further argued that what is required is a “comprehensive, cohesive, evidence-based framework to guide investments

and action for programs and policies to improve outcomes in children’s earliest years” (Britto et al., 2013, p. 4).

This study was meant to address this gap between early childhood education and social development and sustainability, by shedding some spotlight on teacher training for early childhood education teachers. In particular, it was used to examine the training being offered by The Mico University College in its newly developed bachelors’ degree program in Early Childhood Education.

The information and insight gained from this study have the potential to influence future teacher training and educational policies not just at The Mico but also within the educational landscape in Jamaica. It is my hope that The Mico will take practical steps towards addressing the concerns raised here. These concerns have to deal with issues such as pedagogy, research, and library materials. If The Mico were to do this, then the quality of training teacher candidates receive, will improve. Enhanced training means that graduates would have been prepared to deliver a higher quality of service – instruction. Children in the early childhood institutions where these graduates teach, in turn should have enhanced education. If they do, then they are better prepared for the higher levels of education, and ultimately a better quality of life.

The Mico is a leading teacher training institution in the English-speaking Caribbean. It is the first teacher training institution to offer undergraduate and graduate degrees in Jamaica and the English-speaking Caribbean. Because of its eminent role, what happens there has the proclivity to be replicated or at least modeled in other teacher training institutions. When other teacher training institutions improve their offerings then the teacher candidates in their institutions will be better trained. Of course there is then a

ripple effect as better teachers deliver better pedagogy and better pedagogy means more meaningful learning for students.

With The Mico performing a leading role in teacher education the latter will continue and perhaps become more effective in shaping policy on education and in preparing teachers to become transformative agents (Steinbach, 2012). Down (2011) agreed that teacher training institutions have a leading role to play. She asserted that “teacher training institutions have the potential to bring changes within the educational systems that will shape the knowledge, skills, and perspectives of future generations” (p. 42). Functioning as a transformative agent, The Mico will endeavor to develop critical, literate socially aware citizens who are acutely aware of their civic responsibility and the need to help build social capital (Collins-Figueroa, Down, Gentles, Newman, & Davis-Morrison, 2011).

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study relates to its transferability. The sample size was 10, and that was deemed adequate as the saturation point was expected to be reached at that number. From the transcriptions, one can conclude that the participants shared some common opinions, ideas, and thoughts about some common experiences. Yet, there were some differences. For example, some participants spoke about the dearth of materials at the library because they had tried to access materials there. Others had not really used the library. Of course no one person speaks on the behalf of others in a group, so there will be differences in perspectives. This means that there will be limitation to the extent to which transferability can occur.

This limitation extends to the offerings of the Mico. While there are some common features between programs and resources at The Mico, and that contributes to the transferability of this study, the fact still remains that there are some differences. The Early Childhood Education program must have some defining qualities so there will be some limitation to the extent to which conclusions drawn can be applied to other programs at the institution.

This is also true of its transferability to other teacher training institutions in Jamaica and the Caribbean region. At the macro level there are geographic, demographic and even cultural factors that impinge on the experiences of teacher candidates and how they view their experiences. Phenomenological research is meant to present perspectives about a phenomenon in its 'appearing.' The point is the 'appearing,' may be 'colored' by environmental and demographic factors some of which may be outside the control of the participants. Therefore, participants will share a common experience, but may have divergent perspectives about same. There will be differences in how educational programs are managed and are experienced on different campuses.

Recommendations for Action

This study has been conducted with the hope that the institution as a whole and the Faculty of Education and the Department of Early Childhood Education in particular will use it to stimulate a review of how the Bachelors' Degree in Early Childhood Education and all the other degrees are being implemented. Some of the issues discussed by the participants in this study relate to institutional policies and practices. These include for example policies related to examination and registration procedures, and the alignment of educational policies to the perceived needs of students in Jamaican schools

and to the policies of The Ministry of Education. The institution and the faculty can therefore use the feedback from the graduates in this study to review and revamp all the relevant programs. Of course it would be prudent for the Department of Early Childhood Education to do likewise, and to take measures to address some of the challenges outlined in this study. In order to do the latter, the Department of course would have to seek the support and permission of the faculty and the institution at large.

The literature reinforces the need for teacher training institutions to evaluate their programs. Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, and Ravina (2011) adumbrated that part of the future success in designing and implementing effective education policies lies in introducing an “evaluation mindset.” They also opined that, “The absence of interest in learning about the efficacy of new programs or policies is not restricted to developing countries, but is indeed present in developed countries” (p. 45).

But apart from the institution in general, various group and individuals at the institution should probably take the initiative and engage in reflective practices to improve their pedagogical skills, practice and/or work. Based on the participants’ responses although there is much to commend lecturers about, there is room yet for improvement in how records are kept, how classes are conducted, and how research is presented to students. Lecturers could therefore on their own volition engage in professional activities to improve their craft.

In promoting the use of reflection in higher education, Elliott (2012) argued that higher education institutions are supposed to “protect and nurture the growth of reflective intelligence in society (p. 8). He argued that this reflection in today’s society is increasingly taking shape as a “practical science paradigm of inquiry” and pointed out the

obvious: The ability of teachers in higher education to support reflective practice in schools is predicated on how these teachers operate as reflective practitioners themselves. The UNESCO (2013) in fact called for reflective practice by proposing that initial training programs:

aim to build pedagogical knowledge by building teachers' capacities to conduct self-evaluation and reflect on their own practices, to use diverse methodologies (including the use of ICTs in education) and to improve their ability to share with and learn from colleagues. (p. 110)

Wiggins (2011) concurred with other researchers about the importance of sharing reflective ideas by purporting that reflection is most helpful when teachers share their insights with each other. As explained by Conrad and De Four-Babb (2013) teachers are able to make deeper sense of what they are doing, improve their practice and their students' learning, compare their work with others, and "explore similarities, differences, gaps, and best practices that exist in terms of developments in teacher education" (p. 71). Reflection should really result in actions of change, and when done in teacher education it should impact the education system from the earliest years right up to the other levels.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study fills a gap as there is a need for research to evaluate the implemented changes and inform the direction of future practices (Pantić, 2012). The 2013 UNESCO report which actually examined the education system in eight countries in Latin America and the Caribbean postulated that there is an absence of rigorous evaluations, and assessments or studies to determine the feasibility of programs. There is of course a dearth of evaluation of reforms in education globally, but that is perhaps even more acute

in the Caribbean and of course that applies to Jamaica. According to Britto et al. (2013) there is a minimal inclusion of evidence in early childhood education literature from lower and middle income countries due mainly to a scant regard for program evaluation and monitoring. The UNESCO report further suggested that there is not much strong evidence about how the quality of training processes influences the teaching practice, and consequently student learning

Many of the teacher's colleges in Jamaica are upgrading, but not much evaluation has been put in the public domain. The UNESCO in the report mentioned above claimed that there is no current comparative study among the countries in the Caribbean that were studied, but noted that there were parallel trends. The lack of comparative study holds true for teacher training institutions in Jamaica. In general, there is a shortage of studies and a shortage of journal articles. With regard to the Mico College in particular there are now 21 undergraduate degrees being offered, but this study is the first formal in-depth evaluation of any of them.

Studies of elements of teacher training need to be conducted across the Caribbean including Jamaica. It really stands to reason that if teacher training institutions are upgrading their status and are now beginning to offer undergraduate degrees, then some research ought to be undertaken and must form part of the platform for policy formulation and policy implementation. This study can serve as a guide into areas that these training institutions may want to examine, and may be instructive of the kinds of policies that are needed. In fact, other teacher training institutions and The Mico may follow the recommendation of UNESCO (2013) to engage in joint studies.

Sections of this study may particularly prove useful. For example, the literature review could be used to yield further scholarly work on phenomenology as a research method, leadership, or on the management of change. Papers could be written and offered to academic entities for publication in Jamaica and the Caribbean. Such entities include the *Caribbean Journal of Education* published by the University of the West Indies School of Education.

If The Mico in particular is to continue on its path towards performance improvement and organizational development, then further studies are required. In addition to perhaps examining the programs in general and how they are being implemented, there is scope for further studies on the policies that undergird these programs. Some areas that some participants identified as problem areas included registration protocols and the handling of student records, and these are two areas that certainly could be examined.

The UNESCO report (2013) revealed that an oft-repeated criticism about initial teacher training is that theory and general knowledge are given much attention, while classroom teaching skills for specific subject matters that correspond to the curricula are ignored. It further contended that, “Lack of continuity in teacher policies and the proliferation of unconnected programmes are obstacles to progress towards the desired results and create confusion and discouragement among teachers (p. 136).

Gaps of these sorts may be addressed by the various departments including the Department of Early Childhood Education. Particular teaching skills pertinent to various subjects in this Department and their relationship to Department policy and policy of The Ministry of Education could become matters of research. Relating such studies to policy

would be significant as policy would be indicative of the alignment of subject matters being studied to the needs and goals of the educational sector and ultimately to the development of the country.

Latham (2013) highlighted communication within organizations and declared that communication not only informs the workforce about the direction of the organization, but facilitates access to feedback from the workforce. Action research is one type of activity that may be used to procure feedback from staff. Sabeerah Abdul-Majied and Margaret Cain (2013) in their study on “Teachers’ Views of Quality Teaching/Learning at the Infant Level in a New Primary School” promoted action study in the change process and suggested that it encourages “collaborative involvement, and assists with changing values and the new system of norms or professional and behavioral practices that are associated with successful change and sustainable development” (p. 83). The Department of Early Childhood Education and other departments could conduct action research in which staff critically appraise their work and engage in reflective practice. This would go a long way in addressing weaknesses, and in developing policies and protocols to strengthen institutional capacity and performance and enhance organizational development.

Researcher’s Reflection

The upgrading of programs at The Mico is suggestive of an attempt to increase sustainability. As propounded by Van Tiem, Moseley, and Dessinger (2012), sustainability means that brand image has to be improved and that there are certain advantages such as market innovation, cost savings, and competitive advantage that accrue from it. Still, according to Guzmán, Castillo, Lavarreda, and Mejía (2013) there is

the challenge to institutionalize teacher training policies to foment sustainability (p. 10).

In an attempt to achieve sustainability. The Mico may want to formulate and implement its policies towards sustainability in keeping with the following criteria:

- Stability – maintenance of a certain course of action over time;
- Adaptability - adaptive to political and economic situations;
- Coordination and consistency – good cooperation and communication among agencies and stakeholders;
- Quality of implementation – align to laws or programs of action;
- Public approach – policies that are in the interest of the public.

(UNESCO, 2013)

To aid in developing a sustainable society The Mico probably ought to expose its teacher candidates to humanist literacy of narratives of cultural and gender identity along with the usual “epistemic domain of academic knowledge in the various disciplines, the technical domain of procedural skills and the public domain of socio-political knowledge and know-how (Hickling-Hudson, 2014, p. 9). Teacher candidates would therefore be taught to interpret and create materials that present the struggles of the Jamaican society and would be encouraged to develop empathy for the disadvantaged and marginalized. On graduation these teacher candidates would be inclined perhaps to exhibit high self-esteem and a strong cultural identity, as well as a commitment to improving the Jamaican society. This ought to propel them to develop the kind of classroom proposed by Seltzer-Kelly et al. (2011): a classroom in which there is “reflexivity, complexity and complicity.” The teacher candidates would be prepared to actively engage students and themselves. Such a classroom presents the academic in an environment that is caring and

empathetic, and as McKeown & Hopkins (2011) suggest engender student-centered learning that is related to real-life experiences and issues.

Important parts of the change process which Latham (2013) called “transformation to performance excellence” are collaboration and communication. The various departments at The Mico ought to engage in research that relates to how they conduct their pedagogies and about the outcomes. They could then conduct some comparative studies across departments to aim at consistency in efforts to achieve organizational objectives.

Departmental studies would also be meaningful in building organizational culture and commitment. Stakeholders such as workers in any organization will show one of three commitments: affective, continuance and normative. There may be persons who strongly identify with the goals of the organization (affective commitment). On the other hand, some may support the endeavors out of (a) a sense of obligation, (b) their personal values, or (c) socialization. All of this is normative commitment. Then there are those who will exercise commitment because of their estimation of opportunity cost and a sense of personal investment (Ghorbanhosseini, 2013; Keskes, 2014). It is the goal of every organization to build affective commitment in an attempt to aid organizational development and improve performance.

The Mico is no different, and to do so staff must become engaged in the learning process and must therefore engage in reflective research. This will help them to appreciate the aims and goals of the changes, and will help them to be more amenable to making adjustments to accommodate new practices (Abdul-Majied & Cain, 2013). In this process they can in fact plan for their own personal and professional growth, and as

suggested by Abdul-Majied and Cain (2013) this kind of planning by individuals should be done even before there is an attempt to implement a change.

This type of study (phenomenological) is one that The Mico and/or its departments can utilize to good effect. Kafle (2011) recommended the hermeneutic phenomenological approach by saying that it is concerned about “illuminating details and seemingly trivial aspects within experience that may be taken for granted in our lives, with a goal of creating meaning and achieving a sense of understanding” (p.191). The semi- structured nature of the interview used in this particular case provides for the gathering of in-depth information as the participants are able to explain and expound on their responses. The researcher not only gets the participants’ opinions and thoughts, but he or she is able to find out what the participants’ feelings are. Of course the researcher has to be wary of injecting himself or herself into the discussion in terms of commenting on issues being discussed. It is for the opposite of this however; the possibility of having the participants share their lived experiences, that this type of study is useful.

Conclusion

Teacher training institutions in Jamaica and countries the world over have been revamping, developing and introducing new educational policies and programs to meet the demands of technologically advanced and pluralistic societies that have increasingly become economically competitive. Among these policies and programs are those related to early childhood education and teacher training. The Mico Teachers’ College in Kingston, Jamaica, in a strategic move, upgraded its status to a university college and its suite of offerings to include undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, there is very

little evaluation (formal and informal) of these newly developed programs at The Mico and at other institutions across the Caribbean and beyond.

The purpose of this qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study was to examine The Mico University College's Early Childhood Education undergraduate degree program through the lived experiences of ten graduates of the program. The aim was to have the graduates reflect on their academic experiences, share their perceptions about the quality of the degree program, and about how the change is being implemented and how it impacts organizational development and performance improvement. They were also asked to address specifically issues of policy and to comment on (a) how the major policy shifts at The Mico relate to changes in national educational policies and (b) how together these policy shifts may impact future processes at The Mico and the educational system in Jamaica, and aid the development of the country.

The study was set against the background of two main theoretical frameworks: organization development and performance improvement. The primary methodology was in-depth semi-structured interviews supported by thick description, memoing, reflexive journaling and perusal of artifacts, while the analytical methods consisted of coding of interview transcripts and identifying common themes.

The interviews generated some insightful information about policy issues related to issues such as pedagogy, courses, timetabling, examination and registration protocols, and resources including technology and the library. Commendable elements were identified in all areas and as one would expect the participants identified weaknesses as well. Importantly, they pinpointed congruence between policies at The Mico with some

of those at the Ministry of Education and added some that they thought either The Mico or The Ministry should pay more attention to.

It is my expectation that this study will stimulate discussions and research at The Mico and similar institutions revamping and introducing undergraduate and graduate programs. From the lived experiences of the graduates, lessons can be learnt, and strengths and weaknesses can be identified. The Mico should then be better able to align its policies to practice, and to garner the necessary resources to support any initiative being pursued. All of this is necessary if The Mico is to achieve its goal of supporting “the development of a whole child – one who is knowledgeable, healthy, motivated and engaged” (The Department of Education, 2008, p.13). With such a foundation, children should grow to become citizens “who can play an active and constructive role in society and develop educable individuals who have the creative and analytical skills, the attitudes to learning, and the emotional intelligence, that equip them for on-the-job training and lifelong learning” (Vision 2030 Plan, 2009, p. 49).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Permission to Conduct Research

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "JacobsLetter of Cooperation and Data Use Agreement...". The document is a letter from The Mico University College, dated April 2, 2015, addressed to Ms Patricia Jacobs at 9205 Seaview Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11236. The letter grants permission for a research study on graduates' perceptions of a degree program in early childhood education at a Jamaican teacher training institution. The study involves recruiting twelve graduates, conducting a phenomenological study, and disseminating findings to various journals and institutions.

The Mico University College
 10 Morescours Road, P.O. Box 497, Kingston 5, Jamaica, W.I
 Tel: (876) 929-5240-4; Fax: (876) 924-2238
 Website: www.themicouniversitycollege.edu.jm; Email: themicouniversitycollege@yahoo.com

April 2, 2015

Ms Patricia Jacobs
 9205 Seaview Avenue
 Brooklyn, NY 11236

Dear Ms Jacobs

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled, "Graduates' Perceptions of a Degree Program in Early Childhood Education at a Jamaican Teacher Training Institution" at The Mico University College. Consequently, you are authorized to do the following:

- Recruit twelve graduates of the Degree Program in Early Childhood Education: ten for the main study, and two for a pilot test. (The individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.)
- Conduct a phenomenological study consisting of an initial online survey, a pilot study and interview sessions.
- Use background information as well as information related to the program offerings from the relevant program documents, graduation booklets and other artifacts where necessary.
- Engage two faculty members in peer reviewing.
- Present your findings to Walden University.
- Share your findings with the participants.
- Provide a hard copy of the dissertation to the Faculty of Education and Leadership, the Institute of Technological and Educational Research (ITER) and the library here at The Mico.
- Disseminate a summary of the research paper as a whole or a research paper based on the literature review to ITER's Journal of Education, and with further approval from The Mico, to the *Caribbean Journal of Education* at The University of the West Indies, the Ministry of Education and to any other scholarly journal in Jamaica and the Caribbean.

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7/5/2016

JacobsP\Letter of Cooperation and Data Use Agreement... Picture Tools

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It is agreed that The Mico's role in this study will be to:

1. Facilitate and assist in the recruitment of participants.
2. Make available relevant program documents for the procurement of information on particular institutional programs and policies.
3. Provide you with access to data on graduation statistics for the Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education from The Department of Early Education and the Examinations section.
4. Provide the data via the internet, if possible, and if this becomes challenging then alternatives mutually agreed upon will be considered.



Prof the Hon Errol Miller, CD, OJ, PhD, Chancellor • Dr R Karl James, CD, Pro Chancellor •
Dr Ryland T Campbell, CD, Deputy Pro Chancellor • Prof Carol Clarke, PhD, Interim President

The data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the supervising faculty/staff of Walden University without permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and The Mico.

Page 1 of 2 485 words

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You may terminate this agreement at any time once you notify The Mico and return or destroy the data. The Mico also reserves the right to withdraw from the study at any time if extenuating circumstances warrant such an action.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the Institution's policies. It is The Mico's expectation that you will be responsible for complying with the conditions as stated above.

Alaine Ying
Name

Alaine Ying
Signature

Vice President, Academic Affairs
Position

04/02/2015
Date

Signatory

I, Patricia Jacobs, agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this letter.

P. Jacobs
April 3, 2015

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Appendix B

Interview: Main Questions

1. What are your views about the quality of the new degree program?
2. How would you describe your classroom experience at The Mico?
3. How would you describe the delivery of support services at The Mico?
4. Describe your experience in accessing support resources at The Mico.
5. How does the new undergraduate degree program reflect organizational development and relate to performance improvement at The Mico?
6. What are your views about how The Mico is transitioning to university status?
- 7(a).What are some of the major policy shifts in teacher training education in general and early childhood education in particular undertaken by The Mico University College administration?
- 7(b).What are your views about these policy shifts?
8. What other policy shifts, if any, would you like to see?
- 9(a).What are some of the major policy shifts in education undertaken by the government of Jamaica with regards to early childhood education?
- 9(b).What are your views about these policy shifts?
10. To what extent do educational policies at the early childhood education level inform educational policy at the higher levels?
11. How does educational policy make a difference in people's lives and in the development of a country?

Appendix C

Interview Probing Questions

1. (a) How would you describe the quality of the early childhood degree program in terms of training the teacher candidate how to teach?
(b) To what extent did the courses in the Degree program cover subject matters pertinent to early childhood education and prepare the teacher candidate to meet the needs of the students in his or her classroom?
2. (c) Describe your classroom experience in terms of the physical environment, timetabling, etcetera.
(d) In general, how would you describe the delivery of pedagogy?
3. (e) Describe your experience with the orientation and registration protocols.
(f) Describe your experience with the examination protocols.
4. (g) How adequate and accessible were services like the library and technology?
5. (h) Does the new degree in early childhood education add value to the development of the institution and its role in teacher training in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean region? If so, how?
(i) How does the new degree in early childhood education impinge on the performance of The Mico in adequately preparing teachers for the Jamaican context?
6. (j) What are some of the major challenges for administration in leading the change?
(k) What some of the challenges for faculty and staff in implementing the change?

7. (l) How are these policy shifts impacting the quality of training in early childhood education that is being offered?
 - (m) What are some of the potential advantages of these policy shifts to teacher education at the national as well as the regional level?
9. (n) How are these policy shifts impacting the quality of early childhood education in Jamaica?
 - o) How do educational policies at The Mico reflect the shifts in early childhood education at the Ministry of Education?

Appendix D

Pre-interview Survey Questions

1. Are you currently teaching?
2. At which grade level do you currently teach?
3. When did you enroll in the undergraduate program at The Mico?
4. When did you graduate from the undergraduate program at The Mico?
5. How long have you been teaching?
6. At what level do you currently teach?
7. How long have you been teaching at this level?
8. How long have you been teaching at this grade level?
9. What was your highest level of education before you entered The Mico?
10. What was your highest level of qualification before entering The Mico?
11. Has the completion of the undergraduate degree resulted in any of the following at your place of work:
 - a promotion,
 - more responsibilities/duties, and/or
 - an increase in salary?
12. Were you teacher trained before you entered The Mico? If so, where were you trained, and when did you graduate?
13. a) Since the completion of your degree, have you changed jobs or place of work?
b) If you answered yes to the immediate question above, say why.
 - i) Professional mobility
 - ii) Opportunity for better salary
 - iii) Job dissatisfaction
 - iv) Other

Appendix E: Responses to Pre-interview Survey

Questions	Responses			
Are you currently teaching?	No P.2; P.3; P. 6; P.7; P.8		Yes P.1; P.4; P.5; P.9 P. 10 (Principal)	
How long have you been teaching?	Under 5 Year P.1; P.4; P.5	5 – 10 Year P.7	10 + Year P.9: 12 P.10: 30	Never P. 2; P.3; P.6; P.8
At which level do you currently teach?	Primary P.1; P.5; P.7	Pre-Primary P.4; P.9, P.10	None P. 2; P.3; P.6; P.8	
How long have you been teaching at this level?	Under 5 Yr P.1; P.4; P.5	5 – 10 yr P.7	10 + Yr P. 9: 12 P.10 30	Never P. 2; P.3 P.6; P.8
At which grade level do you currently teach	P.1: Grade 1 P.5: K2 P.7: Grade 3 P.9: Grade 3		Not Applicable P.2; P3; P.6; P.8 P. 4 (Pre-primary) P.10 (Principal)	
How long have you been teaching at this level?	Under 5 Yr P.1; P.4; P.5; P.7; P.9	5 – 10 Yr Principal (10 years)	10 + Yr	Never P. 2; P.3; P.6; P.8
What was your highest qualification before you entered The Mico	CXC: P. 1; P.2, P.3, P.4; P.8; P.9 GCE & CXC: P.5 GCE: P.10 A/0 (CAPE)			
Were you teacher trained before entering The Mico? If so, where were you trained?	No: P. 2. P.3; P.6; P.8	Yes P.1: Level 1 & 2 ECE, HEART/NTA P.4: Level 1 & 2 ECE, HEART/NTA P.5: Level 1 & 2 ECE, HART/ NTA P.9: Level 1 & 2 ECE, HART/NTA P.10: Level 1 & 2 ECE, HEART/NTA		
When did you enroll in the undergraduate programme at The Mico?	Pre-university 2009: P.2 2008: P.5	Degree 2008: P.1; P.4; P.7 2010: P.2, P.5 2011: P.3; P.6; P.8	Post-diploma 2013: P.9 (Dip. 2007 – 2011) 2011: P.10 (Dip. 2009 -2011)	
When did you graduate from the undergraduate program at The Mico	2012: P.1; P.4; P.7 2014: P.2; P.5 2015: P.3; P.6; P.8; P.9; P.10			
Since the completion of your degree have you changed jobs?	No: 2, 3, P.6; P.7; P.9; P.10	Yes P.1; P.4; P.5	N/A P. 6: P.8	
If you answered yes to the immediate question above, Say why:				
P. 1. Got a job as assistant teacher and then class teacher. P.4: Got job in field. Not in field before. P.5: Was made redundant while at The Mico.				
Has the completion of your undergraduate degree resulted in any of the following:				
a promotion b)	more responsibilities P.4	c) an increase in salary P.4		
No P.2, 3, P.5; P.6; P.7; P.8; P.9, P.10 Yes: P.1 (All three) P.5 Reason – job as Assistant Teacher Not applicable: P.6; P. 8 (Just graduated)				

Appendix F

The Pilot Test

Summary of Demographic Information

Both participants were teaching at the time; one under five years, the other between five to ten years. They both taught at the primary level: one under five; the other, five to ten years. One participant taught second grade and the other taught Grade 1. One was schooled up to the university level, while the other only had High school/Junior High school, and they both attained certificates in the Caribbean Examinations Council. One additionally obtained a certificate in Early Childhood Education. She was teacher trained before entering The Mico in 2008. That was the year the other participant also entered The Mico. Both graduated in 2012 and had since changed their place of work.

Instrumentation

Participant one was interviewed via Skype, and participant two by telephone and Livescribe. The Livescribe platform consists of both a written as well as an electronic element. The Skype recording was supported and saved with the use of the MP3 software.

Reflexive Journaling

While conducting the interview with participant one (Ella St Patrick – pseudonym) via Skype I was conscious of the fact that she seemed a bit distracted a few times as her daughter was with her. The daughter was not in the room with her but apparently came in from time to time. Ella was also apparently combing her daughter's

hair. In interview two I wondered from time to time if the interview was too long. It seemed a bit longer perhaps because it was done via telephone rather than Skype.

The debriefing was not conducted immediately afterwards. It was conducted with Ella on Tuesday June 9 via telephone, three days after the interview. Participant two answered the debriefing questions via email on Friday June 12. I emailed the questions so the participant could familiarize herself with them prior to me calling her, but she went ahead and answered them online. Although there was no problem with participants answering, I still think it would have been better to have the debriefing as soon as possible after – perhaps the same time or at least one day after. That way one is more assured that the participants would be better able to recollect details of the interview more easily.

The number of specified questions seems to be adequate but of course as one would expect in any discussion, other questions had to be asked as a result of particular responses given by the participants. In general, I avoided making statements of judgment, but on a few occasions I did just that. For example, I added remarks about lecturer performance at The Mico, and do need to be more careful not to do that.

The two participants really were able to comment on all the questions and their responses had several points of convergence. One can therefore conclude that the saturation point will be easily reached in the main study, and that the ten participants should be adequate. One area that I need to improve on for the main study is my questioning techniques. Although I have my main questions, and my follow-up questions I was redundant and in cases my questions reflected tautology and circumlocution.

Analysis of Interview

The Program

Both participants opined that the Degree program under review was meaningful. Ella St. Patrick contended that the Program was “good in preparing teacher for the real world” and that she became a better teacher and a better person for having done it. She further added that the Program helps to sensitize the teacher candidates to the needs and problems of students, and reminded her that the role of a teacher is more than being just to teach (pedagogy). She further pointed out that there is still some work to be done as lecturers are somewhat out of touch with what is happening in the classroom including changes in types of assessments. She argued that since schools have their own way of doing things and their own culture, even with good preparation there cannot be total preparation.

Pedagogy

Both participants thought lecturers in general did a decent job in delivering pedagogy with participant one saying that some lecturers presented interesting and interactive lessons. There was some criticism however. Ella called for more hands-on application of theory and suggested that classrooms at The Mico be ‘dressed’ in a more appealing manner.

In terms of the classroom setting now they can make it a little bit more friendly . . . seeing that early childhood . . . the classroom can be a little bit more friendly and conducive to learning There is no information anywhere in the classroom. I can understand that it is not a classroom but you are teaching teacher and the wall are blank. There is no map. There is nothing at all that you can read within

your classroom even if it is something motivating or different quotes from different –aamm- theorists so that it can impact you so that when I come in the class I have something to look at. Just like our students they might not remember everything that the teacher is teaching.

In relation to the delivery of pedagogy, there was harsh criticism of a few lecturers.

According to participant one she could be:

. . . a lecturer without a degree. Let's just put it that way. I could just come and lecture - just take the book and let's read it and then I ask you what you get from it what did you just read. What did you understand when I ask you a question? It is there in the book. Just read it and you will find it and it is within class setting – so you came with an article or you tell us to turn to x page and we are reading the page and then if we have any question to ask you, ask back another student or we are told that it is in the book so we need to find it.

Registration

The participants claimed that the process was not smooth and that the information was inadequate to the point where some prospective students ended up spending two years to qualify and then four years to complete the Degree, for a total of six years, rather than the usual four years. They felt that the problem with registration impacted orientation. Ella shared her experience about how inadequate and or perhaps unclear information contributed to her being placed in the pre- degree group which would have meant that she would have had to spend six years to complete her degree, Thankfully, the error was discovered and corrected after a few months.

Orientation

Regarding orientation, participant one explained how:

on the day when classes were scheduled to start it was a different game in terms of finding where to go finding who to talk to – there is no sign pointing your there or there for even though they have the different offices because the early childhood degree program was fairly new there is one particular person who has most of the information and that person could not have been found so we spent half of our class time trying to find who to talk to tell us what to do and where to go. They could have more signs even if it is just printed sign for the new students to make it a little easier and have different representatives on the ground with the information to give us instead of us trying to find each office to find out who we need to talk to so they could some persons on the ground who have the information know about the different program who can point us in the direction so that the time that is spent loitering and searching can be quite short.

Examination

Ella intimated that examinations were conducted smoothly and that she had no problems with the examinations office, but participant one articulated at length about the posting of the examination results. She postulated that procuring the results was cumbersome:

. . . because they have more than one section where results are posted now how they do it now they have everything on letter size paper and you have to use your fingers and point and go through everything to find it, it would be good if they have a primary section, a early childhood section, and some big bold heading at

the top saying whichever subject area but because they are trying to fit everything into this little glass case that they have it makes it hard for you to find your results. Some result are one side of the campus and the next result you have to go there or you have to go and search for lecturer herself or himself to get your information.

The Physical Plant

Both participants complained about the physical plant and specifically the classrooms which they said had poor ventilation and were hot, Participant one spoke about raining falling and that predicating the closing of the windows, But, Ella that of course made the room hot. Ella recalled having to go for classes over by The Mico Practicing School but because of the absence of walls in some of the classrooms, with rain falling, the students got wet. Ella added that summer was the best time for classes as with the day students off, the evening students had enough classrooms and quiet.

Timetabling

In her response she continued to comment on timetabling which she was contented with:

The best time for us at Mico as part- time students was during the summer when we had to go to school in the days. That was and that's where the entire group said we did the best because we had the school to ourselves. It was quiet. We had longer classes, we weren't tired after coming from work to go to class - so that's what I think. Aamm - timetabling worked out well. They tried their best not to let us have classes on a Friday cause they knew how stressful that was. I think for first year and the final year we didn't have classes on a Friday at all - aamm -

always after four classes begin so they catered to us as teachers leaving school to come, giving us enough time. So I, we did appreciate the timetable . . . we never had more than five courses per semester and that was the max. That happened I think only the third year . . . we have like only four courses per semester . . . So we never went to class on a Friday and we had a course per day- Monday is one course, Tuesday is another, Wednesday is another, Thursday is another.

Library

The library was presented by the two participants as being woefully lacking. They said there was no database, the texts were outdated and that students were not able to rent books. Ella expressed how strongly she felt when she said, “Nothing is in the library. The library have no use. I never go library go get a book that I need yet! Have to go up a UWI or supn. There is never a book that I could use.” Participant one was very dramatic when asked to comment on the library.

Lord have mercy – awright our library doesn't work we have a library with books that are outdated and even the books that are available we can't take them out of the school we are not allowed to "rent" you know like you can rent a certain textbook up to a certain time and then bring it back to match your course?

Technology

Participant one and Ella were appreciative for the use of the computer room for typing and printing, although sometimes that was restricted when in use by the day students. Printing was also possible at the bookshop.

Challenges in the Change Process

Delivery of instruction and coordination of the program. While both participants had some praiseworthy comments about the delivery of instruction and about some of the coordinators of the program, they identified some weaknesses. Participant one postulated the view that instruction was not being conducted effectively and that more hands -on and practical activities were needed. Ella heaped accolades on one coordinator for the program, saying that, “She was very good you know. Mi tell you seh she run up and dung fi wi and . . . So you see like when she was in charge of us when we got back to school each semester we knew who our lecturers were, we got our timetables on time, we knew the rooms for the classes.” On the other hand, however, she concluded that one coordinator was inept as she did not provide enough support and was also not proficient with her pedagogy. “We neva got grades on time, she neva have time fi mark assignments, and classes weren't fully prepared for . . .”

Communication with The Mico. The participants felt that communication between The Mico and the evening students could be improved. Participant one postures the view that there is a disconnect between the day and evening students, and that the evening students are not kept abreast of events at the institution.

A mean in terms of giving us some information before hand – while participant 1 at school did not go until we got there so even if the information is somewhere on some noticeboard somewhere around the campus for the evening student there is a big disconnect between them and the day student the full time student, because when events are happening at the school we don't know until we got here. There is nobody coming to feed us with information there is no central hub that early

childhood go for what's happening now or anything being circulated so we could come study and then leave so even though we are Miconians we studied there for four years that sense of pride and joy that the day students would have or have the evening students don't really have it because there is no connection,

She continued:

When they having sports day is only when we come and we hear the cheer or whatever and then we search to find out who is having sports day when is the sports day there is a disconnect between the day and the evening it is one college and we are all going there and we are leaving with one certificate with the same name at the top but in terms of how information is being communicated to the evening student that would need to change as well one way of changing that is by communicating through technology send message on our phone to say this is coming up and there will be no class or look forward to this or can you support this or get us involved when they are having workshop sometimes we are not aware of it if our lecturers do not inform us then the information cannot be transmitted to us. so most of the time as evening students we don't know what is happening so we are going there to get our degree and then back the major challenge Mico is having is communication communicating passing on information to students and that can be fixed with technology.

She also suggested that the lecturers need to adequately use technology as well.

Sometimes we send email. When you ask Miss, "Miss, did you get the email? Miss, did see my email?" They tell you, "No." They didn't see it because a lot of our lecturers or most of our lecturers are not - they only go to check their own

personal email or probably to go on social media but in terms of using the email as a form to communicate with the students I believe that is going to be a challenge.

Communication with the Ministry of Education. Participant One adumbrated that students in the Degree program need to be kept more in the loop by the Ministry of Education.

A challenge we are having with some of our schools whenever the Ministry is having an event the information is sent to the principal of the school and then the information is not being filtered down for everyone to get it so is only when you see it on television or somebody tell you about it, you seh 'but I didn't know about this,' an' then you will hear that the Ministry seh that they sent out the info. . . . Whenever an event is being planned by the Ministry they can inform the students so that they can be a part of it and that they can come back and make impact in their classroom and also to their students and the general public at large because when are we fed with information then we are able to pass it on to our parents so when the Ministry is planning an event the school can facilitate it and hold some of their events there so that the lecturers and students can access the information and be a part of the change that the government is trying to do in our country . . . so for example, the Ministry want to do a workshop they can choose Mico as a venue to have their event because we have students who are already there and other students can come along with parents and persons from the general public come to Mico and get the information and be a part of what the Ministry is doing because sometimes the Ministry is having events and sometimes we are not aware

of where it is because of the location but having an event at Mico. Mico is well known and they can filter the information to those who are around its environment.

Registration. Ella spoke to the issue of students being registered and completing a semester only to be told that they could not sit the examinations because of failure to pay their tuition fees.

But persons were sorely disappointed when dem pay three quarters a dem school fi de semester and then can't do de exam. I just think a little more leniency can be done or more regulation if yu understand what a saying. Regulate payment versus class attendance and make sure that in ratio they are balanced.

Policy Changes

Course offerings at The Mico. Participant one was of the view that the curriculum at The Mico now reflects greater focus on the needs of teachers. She also highlighted particular courses to help teachers move away from general course towards courses aimed at helping the children in other ways. She felt that now there is the recognition that teachers have need and that the total man must be taken into account. This includes courses related to the personal development of teachers.

So instead of developing us to go instead of teaching us to just go and teach the children Mico made a as they realize that a lot of teachers are hurting and they have their own personal things that is affecting their studies and affecting them from doing a very good job of teaching and they thought to give us those courses so we did personal development and we did ammm a family life program yeah a family program where we look at different hurt different pain and how to

resolve it . . . so instead of focusing only on the academics they start to look after their teachers and make sure they were not only educational ready for society but that they were emotionally fit, physically fit, and socially fit.

Parent involvement. Both participants spoke about parent involvement as a shift by Ministry of Education although Ella was a bit cynical in suggesting that The Mico may have emphasized it when she was a student to meet the demands of accreditation.

. . . so we had workshops with people well I had a workshop I had to go with Ms - a Ms Morgan mi go wid - yes - to a workshop with some students. Okay they had a course to do and in the course one of the, one of the assessment thing, one of their criteria to get a good grade was to host some program - some teacher /parent connection programme to enhance teacher/student relationship in the classroom. And I had to go to the programme and I had to speak to both the parents and the new upcoming teachers in terms of what to expect and how to support children. So that is probably a good change because Mico is - okay the Ministry of Education wants parents to be more involved in the learning for students and Mico has been trying to introduce programmes that help teachers to enhance that, to enhance parent involvement in the classroom.

Ministry of Education. Participant one discussed the Ministry of Education's focus on basic school education by their introduction of the Grade 1 individual profile which is a reading assessment administered to children going into Grade 1. She argued that The Mico needs to pay some attention to this by preparing teachers to use it.

I am not even sure I'm doing it 100 properly, 'cause I wasn't trained for it. We were just sent into the classroom and this is what you have to do and it is a Early

childhood exam and a Early Childhood diagnostic test that each student has to do once they're going into the school system and I wasn't aware of that until I got in the system.

Ella also addressed the matter of the training of teachers and pointed out that basic schools and infant departments of primary schools now must have more qualified people on staff. “Now in Jamaica there has to be at least one teacher who is trained as an early childhood educator and has a Bachelors Degree. Before, when I was growing up it was only probably CXC they had to have to teach - probably five CXCs. But now there has to be at least one or two.” She added that she now understands that The Ministry is moving towards the teachers having at least a diploma.

Performance of The Mico

Ella contended that early childhood education is being provided now with better qualified teachers – that there is a movement towards teachers having at least diplomas. She also shared her experience of being interviewed overseas for a job and of the comment being made that The Mico is the best teacher training institution. Participant One in commenting on the upgrading process at The Mico asserted that it is a:

step in the right direction because it shows that the institution is growing and they are seeing that we can reach and teach more persons in less time so that they can come back to do the masters at the same institution so instead of spending six years doing one program they could have done four . . . and I will give an example when I was researching to find a college to do my degree I went to another institution . . . did the interview, did the registration did everything, waiting to dodid my medical and everything - and then I heard I saw article

saying that Mico offering the degree program in four years and if I had gone to the other institution I would have just about finishing my degree and I have done Mico almost two years now . . . I am competing two years now so it just shows that we are ahead and we are moving in the right direction and I am hoping that other institutions will follow it shows that Mico is a trendsetter.

Feedback on Interview Questions

Participant 1 (Ella St. Patrick)

1. Was there any question that was not clear enough?
One was not clear enough, but your follow –up question clarified.
2. Was there any question that you did not know enough about?
No.
3. Is there any question that you would have asked and it was not included?
No. Policy was good.
4. Was the time allotted adequate?
Yes.

Participant 2

1. Was there any question that was not clear enough?
The only question I was not clear about is the question regarding policy shift. I am not 100% sure I answered the question properly.
2. Was there any question that you did not know enough about?
Same as answer I gave in question number one.
3. Is there any question that you would have asked and it was not included?
Not that I can think of at this moment.
4. Was the time allotted adequate?
Yes, it was adequate.

Appendix G
Participant Invitation Letter

August 11, 2015

Dear Ms (Participant Six)

This is Patricia Jacobs. I have been pursuing a doctoral degree at Walden University and I am now preparing to conduct my dissertation research.

I am interested in having graduates of the undergraduate degree program in Early Childhood Education share their experiences as undergraduate students at The Mico. This will entail reflection on their academic experiences, their views about how the change from a diploma-granting institution to a degree-granting institution is being implemented and how this change impacts organizational development and performance improvement, and how the major policy shifts relate to shifts in national educational policies and how together these shifts may impact future processes at The Mico and at similar institutions regionally.

In order for me to learn about this, I am inviting you to participate in a one-on-one interview session with me that will be conducted via Skype or via the telephone. You will choose whichever method is most convenient for you.

I have attached an informed consent form for your review and agreement. All responses and information you provide will be kept strictly confidential, and no one except me will know whether you participate or not. Of course, while your participation would be helpful, and I would be most appreciative of your consideration to participate, you are not in any way obligated to participate.

If you have any questions, you may email me at patricia.jacobs@waldenu.edu, or text me using *WhatsApp* at ----- . My other telephone number is -----

Sincerely



Patricia Jacobs (Ms)

Appendix H

Confirmation of Consent to Participate

On Mon, Aug 10, 2015 at 10:30 PM, (Sender's name and email address deleted) wrote:

Dear Ms. Patricia Jacobs,

I will be more than happy to participate in your research project. I consent in participating in your research.

Regards

(Name deleted)

From: (Participant 2, Nells)

Date: Tue, Aug 11, 2015 at 10:18 AM

Subject: Re: Preparation for Interview

To: Patricia Jacobs <patricia.jacobs@waldenu.edu>

I consent to participating in this project.

Im available any time this week at about 10:00 am.

From: Patricia Jacobs <patricia.jacobs@waldenu.edu>

To: (Name and email address deleted)

Sent: Friday, August 7, 2015 9:03 PM

Subject: Jacobs' Dissertation

Dear (Name deleted)

Thanks for consenting to participate in my research project. As promised I am attaching the invitation letter and the consent form. After perusing these documents, you will just email me a statement consisting of one sentence in which you will say that you consent to participate in the project. Once I have received the consent agreement, I will forward to you a pre-interview questionnaire which is meant to provide me with some background information about your scholastic and professional experience. I ask that you complete this and email back to me.

Once this is done I will conduct the interview.

Thanks for being willing to participate in this project.

Regards.

Pat

Appendix I

Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a dissertation study ascertaining graduate students' perspectives about the new undergraduate degree program in Early Childhood Education at The Mico University College, and related issues about the change process and educational policies at the Institution and in Jamaica in general.

This study is being conducted by Patricia Jacobs, a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I previously worked as a faculty member at The Mico where among my duties/functions was lecturer of Children's Literature to the first cohort pursuing the Bachelor of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education. Currently I have no professional relationship with the Institution.

Before you decide to be a part of this study, you need to be aware of its implications. If you agree to take part in this study, your affirmation "I consent to participating in this research project," will be indicative of your position. This consent form provides further information about the project. Your decision to take part in the study is totally voluntary, and you have the option of choosing not to participate.

Procedures:

The purpose of this study is to review The Mico University College's (The Mico's) Early Childhood Education undergraduate degree program through the lived experiences of current elementary school teachers who have completed the program. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

1. Participate in one private 1-1 in-depth interview with the researcher for the purpose of gleaning information about your experiences. The interview will be completed online via Skype or via the telephone and will be audio recorded. The duration of the interview should be approximately one hour.
2. If it becomes necessary for the researcher to get clarification on points discussed in the interview, there will be a follow-up interview. This should take no longer than half a hour. These interviews will be completed at your convenience either before or after work hours, or over weekends.
3. You will have an opportunity to review your responses and a transcript of your interview prior to its inclusion in the study. At that time, you may make corrections or provide further explanation to your answers if you wish.

Here are a few sample questions:

1. Describe your experience as a student at The Mico
2. How has the undergraduate degree at The Mico impacted you professionally and in particular your practice in the classroom?
3. a) What are some of the major policy shifts in education undertaken by the government of Jamaica with regards to early childhood education?
b) What are your views about these policy shifts?

Before the interview is conducted you will be asked to complete a short questionnaire containing 13 questions. This questionnaire is meant to provide the researcher with some background information about your educational and professional experiences. Here are some of the sample questions:

1. Are you currently teaching?
2. When did you enroll in the undergraduate program at The Mico?
3. When did you graduate from the undergraduate program at The Mico?
4. How long have you been teaching?
5. What was your highest level of education before you entered The Mico?

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The things you will be doing in this study have no more risk than what you would be doing in the course of everyday life. Understandably, there will be some inconvenience as you are being asked to make some time to participate in the research process. While there are no individual short- or long-term benefits to you for participating in this study, the overall benefit to participating is that you will be helping to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the revamping of teacher training at The Mico. This will have policy implications not only for the Institution but for the Ministry of Education in Jamaica and education in the wider Caribbean region.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with either The Mico University College or with the researcher. If you initially decide to participate, you are still free to withdraw at any time without affecting these relationships. Your withdrawal from the project will not be reported to anyone and will have no negative consequences. You may refuse to answer any questions you consider invasive or stressful.

Compensation: You will not receive compensation for your participation in this study.

Costs: There are no costs to you for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept in a confidential location by the researcher. The interview audio tapes and all data collected in this research will be kept confidential by the researcher and stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home for five years, at which time they will be destroyed. The responses and participant identities will be coded so that individuals cannot be identified. All verbal or written reports will use only coded information. The names of both the participants and the schools where the participants work will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms

Participant Consent Form (4).pdf 3 / 3

names of the participant and the schools will not be used in any report of this study that might be published. Only the researcher and the particular participant will know the pseudonym for each person. The researcher will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a participant.


Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Patricia Jacobs. The researcher's faculty advisor is Dr. Lori Demeter at Walden University. You may ask any questions now or later of the researcher via Whatsapp or regular texting at 347-630-5458, by telephoning 347-374-2520 or by emailing patricia.jacobs@waldenu.edu. Additionally, if you have any questions about your rights as a participant, you may contact Walden's Research Participant Advocate at 612-312-1210 or at the email address irb@waldenu.edu. Walden University's approval number for this study is 05-20-15-0104186 and it expires May 19, 2016.

Statement of Consent:

Kindly review this form, and relay your decision to participate in the research project by sending an email to the researcher, Patricia Jacobs. The email will contain a statement in which you will say that you consent to participate in the study. This statement of consent will be your commitment to participating in the project. You may keep a copy of the consent form for your record. My email address is patricia.jacobs@waldenu.edu.

Elizabeth
Munson
2015.05.20
16:21:17
-05'00'



11:44 PM
3/26/2016

Appendix J: Peer Review

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

During the course of my activity in peer reviewing the research paper, “Graduates’ Perceptions of a Degree Program in Early Childhood Education at a Jamaican Teacher Training Institution,” I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participants.

I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will access, use or disclose confidential data only for the express purposes of reviewing the research paper.
2. I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family, and will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant’s name is not used.
3. I will protect all confidential information to which I have access, or which I otherwise acquire, from loss, misuse, alteration or unauthorized disclosure, and will not make any unauthorized transmission of information or inquiries.
4. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
5. I will make sure that paper records are not left unattended in areas where unauthorized people may view them.
6. I will appropriately dispose of confidential information in a manner that will prevent a breach of confidentiality and will never discard paper documents or other materials containing confidential information in the trash unless they have been shredded
7. I will only access or use systems or devices I’m officially authorized to access and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.
8. I will safeguard and protect portable electronic devices containing confidential information including but not limited to computers, smartphones, PDAs, CDs, and USB drives
9. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
10. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

Name ___ Patricia Rochester

Address 48 Rome Avenue

Gregory Park P.O

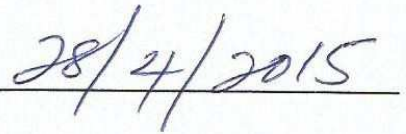
St Catherine

Jamaica W.I

Signature _____



Date _____



Appendix K

Member Check

From: Participant nine
 Date: Wed, Oct 7, 2015 at 8:18 PM
 Subject: Re: Interview Transcription
 To: Patricia Jacobs <patricia.jacobs@waldenu.edu>

Hi how are you doing. I am okay with what is there. So go ahead and you what you have to do.

bless

From Participant 3
 On Tue, Oct 20, 2015 at 5:46 AM 'Timmy' wrote:

Greetings Ms. Jacobs. The attached transcript is indeed an accurate one. I have read through and found every detail to be as was discussed.

Sorry for the delay in my response.

Regards;

-Original Message-----

From: Patricia Jacobs
 Date: 07/10/2015 03:29:32
 To: -----
 Subject: Interview Transcription

Dear Petal

Thanks once again for participating in my research project.

Attached is the transcription of the interview. Could you kindly read and confirm that this is an accurate transcription? Of course if there is anything that you disagree with feel free to indicate and provide correction.

You may email or text me your response.

Much appreciation.

Pat

Appendix L

Peer Review Summary

How would you describe the presentation of the data analysis? Is it clear enough?

The presentation of the analysis was clear. The style of writing coupled with the language use, made the information easy to read.

Yes. Very clear.

How consistent is the interpretation of the data in Chapter 5 with the results in Chapter 4?

Considerable work went into the interpretation of the data. The information almost seem to have a one to one correspondence with the results and data.

Quite consistent.

Are there examples of redundancy in the presentation of the data and findings? If so, what idea/concept in particular is repeated?

I would not say redundancy rather a repeat of necessary concepts and explanation of ideas done for emphasis and for connection of ideas discussed.

I did not find any redundancy.

Is there any evidence of bias in the interpretation of the data? If so, how is this shown?

No, not that I have come across.

I observed no evidence of bias.

To what extent are the conclusions supported by the data?

The data to a large extent is what is analysed and conclusions made as a result. The conclusions seen in this study are largely supported by data.

The conclusions are well-supported by the data.

Is there anything else that you wish to comment on?

Yes. I find the study very instructive and I hope that the specific institution will be given a copy of this study since there is copious information from which they could greatly benefit.

The conclusions and recommendations would be very useful to The Mico and the wider educational community.

Appendix M: Data Analysis Summary

Table M1: Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?

Concepts	Comments	Memo	Themes	Properties
Courses	Courses intertwined with child development – about the holistic development of the child including needs of the child. (P.7)	Examples of relevant courses: Behavior Management, Literacy (P1) Business Discourse,	Teacher preparation to meet the needs of students Relevance of courses Teaching practice Course content Timetabling Lesson Plans	Course about exceptionalities good but too much for such short time (P. 9) Have to sometimes to copy hand-outs(P3) 1 st year computer course unnecessary (P. 9) as already did computer course in Diploma program “Learners we Teach” and Foundation of Education of Education” have similar content. (P.8) Courses may have same name, but content is different. (P. 4) More thought needs to be put into program design to better prepare candidates to better help Jamaican children (P.6)
	Course on operating within the workplace helpful. (P. 1)	The Teacher as a Professional (P. 3)		
	Well-rounded program - Prepare candidates for work and activities even outside teaching (P3; P.7).	Because of course in Events Planning, graduates can even earn additional income. (P5)		
	Some courses not relevant (P4; P5) Some courses relevant but too heavy. Others relevant but not in-depth (P. 9)	Some irrelevant courses: Drama and Conversational Spanish (P4) Felt Conversational Spanish does not prepare students to write Spanish.		
	Some content repeated across courses. Different name, different semesters, but same content. (P.8; P.10)			
	Not taught to write on chalkboard and make charts (P2; P5)			
	Not taught to make charts. (P.6; P.8)	P. 9 was member of Post-Diploma group who had spent – years doing the Diploma before the Degree		
	Not on a large scale (P.5)			
	Not enough practice teaching time. (P.8)			
	Problem - Doing year 1 courses in year 4 and vice versa (P.2) Jumbled sequence. (P.10). (See timetabling.)	Course in “Behavior Management” would have been better coming before Teaching Practice. (P. 5)		
	Differences in content of courses and exams. being done by day students and by evening students. (P.4)	Broad meaning of ‘technology’ however does include charts.		
	Other courses needed. (P.6)			
Course schedule. (P.5; P.6)				

	<p>Shortage of materials - - course outlines, assignment sheets, handouts. (P.3)</p> <p>Courses provide for students to write lesson plans. (P. 4)</p> <p>Lesson plans follow guidelines but flexible. (P. 4)</p> <p>Emphasis on use of technology in lessons, but many schools do not have technology. (P.8)</p>			<p>Third and fourth year courses done in first and second year. (P.6)</p> <p>Courses about theorists such as Vygotsky and Piaget meaningful. (P. 6)</p> <p>“Orientation to Documentation” course useful in administration. (P.7)</p>
Pedagogy	<p>In general good. (P1; P3; P5; P.7) About 80 – 85% did well. (P4). Some give 100%; some 70% (P. 9)</p> <p>Some lecturers showed much effort. (P.6)</p> <p>Lecturers professional. (P.10)</p> <p>Some modeled pedagogical skills well. (P5)</p> <p>Accommodating –explain information, provide suggestions, tips (P2) Beyond call of duty (P3)</p> <p>Presentations by students helpful eg. had to write lesson plans (P4)</p> <p>Some courses new for lecturers (P1)</p> <p>Some needed to do more research. (P5)</p> <p>Some lecturers needed to add value to the research (P5)</p> <p>Wondered if lecturers understood courses (P1) Know what they teaching (P4). Felt could teach the course (P3)</p> <p>Wondered why some lecturers</p>	One lecturer, at first, seemed a bit robotic, but students got to understand and appreciate her later on. (P.7)	<p>Preparation of teachers</p> <p>Efficacy of delivery of courses</p> <p>Student presentations</p> <p>New courses for lecturers</p> <p>Knowledge of content of lecturers</p> <p>Scoring protocol</p>	<p>Lecturers’ interpretation of being facilitators. (P4)</p> <p>Wondered if some lecturers just there to get a salary. (P.6)</p> <p>Some should go elsewhere. (P.6)</p> <p>Some promise to get back to students about questions and never do that. (P.6)</p>

	there. (P.6)			
	Scoring faulty. Scored one and used as template. Sometimes no comments on paper. (P1)			
	Some facilitators do not answer questions properly (P4)			
	Few cannot even answer questions. (P.6)			
	Sit and read handouts (P.3) Students read, discuss, present (P.4)			
	Some lecturers could teach. Some knew content but could not teach. (P.8)			
	More hands-on needed (P.5)			
Physical Plant/ Classroom	Have to look for classrooms (P.1; P.5; P.7)		Size of classroom Comfort of classroom Classroom furniture	Problem at beginning of semester (p1) Degree Center has AC (P4) Counseling Center hot (P3) Some persons trip and sprain ankle (P2) Altitude allows wind to circulate (P3) Communication between groundsmen need to improve to put back chairs in classrooms (P3) Crowded sometimes because the post-diploma group was small and would be always merged with another group. If classroom even not too small there would be an overflow to an extent
	Go for class and no chairs in classrooms (P.2; P.3)	“Chucked up” means “packed.”		
	Some new classrooms with AC (P.4)	Participant 7 says that students told to walk and look for classroom. Once no teacher there, they should “own it.”		
	Rooms hot. (P2, P3; P4; P9; P.10). Some without fan (P4; P.7) Miserable, small, crowded (P. 9) small and “chucked up.” (P4)	Sometimes students have to leave class to go try to get lighting or fan fixed. (P.7)		
	Rooms not “chucked up.” (P.8) Spacious. (P.10)			
	Some rooms had fan and some newer classes had AC. (P.8)			
	Unsafe (P2)			
	Buxton Building – old, wooden. (P2)			
	Altitude of Buxton Building. (P. 3)			
	No complaints about environment but had one AC breaking down. Room hot. (P.6)			
	Sometimes lighting poor. (P.7)			

	<p>Later on in program, had classes over by Counseling Center. (P.7)</p>			<p>sometimes where some students sit outside the room (P. 9) When AC broke down, could not find a classroom for the session. Had part of session – under a tree. Sun was hot. (P.6) Would be nice to have a little gazebo for E. C. (P.6)</p>
Timetabling	<p>Turning up for course at room and course not there (P.1, P.2; P.4)</p> <p>Other class in assigned room (P.5)</p>	<p>Felt that because Cohort was initial group (trial and error) Administration wanted to ensure that courses all covered so may have crammed first two/three years. (P.7) Also felt that persons especially Seventh Day Adventists wanted Fridays off. Thought that ensuring courses are completed may have seen a better option to carrying over courses to the summer. (P.7).</p> <p>Had classes that evening up to 9 pm. (P.7)</p>	<p>Room assignment Lecturer assignment</p>	<p>Problem beginning of every semester. (P1; P3; P4). Capture classrooms – first come, first serve even in areas not originally timetabled (P1) Room on timetable changes (P2) Thursday and Friday then mainly used for ‘make – up’ classes (P.6)</p> <p>Participant 8 was ‘day student’ but had evening classes sometimes to accommodate elective courses that were course requirements.</p> <p>Sequencing of courses changed to minimize cheating.</p>
	<p>Problem with assignment of lecturers (P.3; P.4)</p>			
	<p>Two – three weeks for problems to be sorted out (P3; P4)</p>			
	<p>Three/four weeks for classes to start. (P.8) (See challenges for administration.)</p>			
	<p>Okay. Except during 1st when classes on Fridays. (P. 9)</p>			
	<p>Classes every day at first. Then worked out change with lecturers to have classes mainly Monday – Wednesday. (P.6)</p>			
	<p>Had classes Monday – Friday for first two/three years. In fourth year given either Thursday or Friday off. (P.7)</p>			
	<p>Some classes for whole day – from 8: pm. to 8:00 pm. Secondly, sometimes classes too scattered - over four days and at times one class for one day.</p>			

	Once had two different classes in one evening. (P.7)			(P.10)
	Jumbled – third year doing first year work and fourth year doing third year work. (P.10). Problem (P.2) See Courses.			
Orientation/ Registration	Long lines – spend whole day to register (P. 1; P. 4; P.5; P.7; P.8)	At first no online registration. (P. 1) Participant 2 and 3 did not encounter problems with registration as they worked on campus. Participant 9 graduated 2015. Participant 4 felt things probably not in place because her group was first group in program. Some things not in place and staff has be doing several things at the same time. Once was told that she owed college fee but actually had not. (P. 7)	Wait time Inaccurate information Online registration	No matter how line long, once evening students come Office stops dealing with day students. (P.8) Size of day students cohort is large. Secondly sometimes students turn up late (early September) for registration. Students who register early have much less problem. (P.8)
	Some persons sent to different places. (P. 4) Running up and down. (P. 6; P.8)			
	Some protocols not in place (P. 4)			
	Good experience (P. 2; P. 3)			
	Awful and miserable experience. (P. 9) Long, hot, miserable, frustrating. (P. 6). Confusing (P.8)			
	Online registration not efficient (P. 9)			
	Heard of improvement now with computerization. (P.5)			
	System always down. (P. 9)			
	Keeping of record poor. (P. 7)			
	Nobody specifically assigned to follow-up re: payments to the bank. (P.7)			
Examination	Results posted and students do not know until a student say it. (P 1; P. 2)	P. 3. Contends that weakness n electronic system some participants complain about is not due to the technology, but rather the department and the lecturer. Participant 3 graduated 2014; participant 9 graduated 2015. Participant 4 actually had to take lecturer to Examination section to sort out problem with grade. Recalled lecturer advising her	Places where results are posted. Information in posting Examination office Online system Gymnasium Examination careless (P5)	Not all results posted at Continuing Center for evening students as board small (P.2) Standing fans in gymnasium were not adequate. Two ceiling fans now make quite a difference (P. 3)
	Results posted all over the place Had to walk all over the place. (P. 1; P. 2; P. 3)			
	Then long lines. (P. 3)			
	Results can be seen by everyone if person's ID number is known (P. 3)			
	Eventually started posting on main board at Exams. (P.2)			

	<p>Some students do not find any record for them – no ID. on noticeboard (P. 1; P. 4; P.7) Results show failure when the student had passed. (P. 1; P. 4) No grade (P. 6)</p> <p>Subject not on transcript. (P5)</p>	<p>not to query a failing grade that she had received but to just do over the exam. “This Mico,” the lecturer had said.</p>		<p>Had to repeatedly go to Exams to sort out issues with grades. (P. 4)</p>
	<p>Sometimes examination office cannot find data on student – name and grade. Students have to keep going there and waiting. (P. 4)</p>	<p>Participant 6 had to resubmit assignments to a lecturer as Examinations had no grade and the lecturer could not find grades for her either.</p>		<p>Grades still missing for Participant 6 although she had paid to get transcript during program and followed up continually with lecturers to keep abreast of how things were. (Research question 3)</p>
	<p>Electronic system good (P. 3) Weakness in electronic system (P. 9)</p>	<p>Searching for grades like a treasure hunt. (P.1)</p>		<p>Sometimes a lecturer may be able to “put in a word.” “Who knows whom.” (P.8)</p>
	<p>Gymnasium used to be hot and miserable. Now better. (P. 3)</p>			
	<p>Sometimes students cannot do exam. Because they do not have zero balance on their school fee. (P.8)</p>			
Library	<p>Utilize the library a lot (P.1)</p>	<p>Had own computer and printer (P. 1)</p>	<p>Quality of books</p>	<p>Sourced books outside as many in the library outdated. (P. 1)</p>
	<p>Outdated books (P.1; P.4) Ancient (P. 3; P. 9)</p>	<p>Perplexing as when I was a student back in early 1980’s Studies were available.</p>	<p>Limited copies</p>	
	<p>Limited copies. (P.3. P.4; P.6) Sometimes one copy of a book. (P. 1)</p>	<p>Participant 9 felt books with notes were donated books.</p>	<p>Journals</p>	<p>Library used to close at 5 pm. Now close at 8 pm. (P. 3)</p>
	<p>Good. Only went there to do assignment to access internet. Never used books. (P.7) Never really used library. (P. 5; P.6) Never used library at all. Used mini-library by Guidance and Counselling Department. (P.2)</p>	<p>Participant 2 did not have comment about main library as she did not use it. She used the mini-library in Counseling Department.</p>	<p>Internet access</p>	
	<p>Some books had notes in them. (P. 9)</p>		<p>Library hours</p>	<p>Could not get any study to borrow when he was writing research. (P. 3)</p>
	<p>Internet down most times (P.1; P. 9)</p>			
	<p>Library hours more flexible now. (P. 3) Open later now. (P5; P.8)</p>			
	<p>No current journals. No studies done by students. (P. 3)</p>			

	Few journals (P.4; P. 9). Had to be used in library. (P. 4)			
	Spacious. (P5)			
Technology	Very limited – only five or six laptops that students could borrow to do presentations. Had to reserve two to three weeks before presentations. And still may not get. (P. 2)		Accessibility to labs	Even in the evening. (P. 3)
	More access to labs to day students. (P5)		Perceived inequity between day and evening students. (P5)	Thumb drive for P.5 and P.6 got virus.
	Limited projectors for loan. (P.6)		Size of labs	
	Need more computers. (P.6)		Timetabling of labs	
	Go to more than one lab. And classes in them. (P. 3)		Laptops on loan	
	Better now as there are 8 labs.(P. 3)		Thinks probably two projectors for campus. (P.6)	
	Can get work done at labs. (P. 4). Can print at some labs. (P. 3)			
	Some computer rooms small. (P. 4)			
	Internet down most times. (P. 9)			
	System down most time. (P5)			
	Computers have virus. (P5)			
	Need to debug computers. (P.6)			

Appendix M: Data Analysis Summary

Table M2: Research Question 2

What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflect organizational development and relate to performance improvement at The Mico?

Concept	Code	Memo	Themes	Properties
Value of Program	Mico is a brand. (P. 2; P. 3; P5; P.8) Expanding important. (P. 2) Have to stay on top. (Other institutions upgrading. (P. 4) Mico will be example to other territories. (P. 4)	Participant 3 felt having a diploma in today's society is like having a certificate or CXC's.	Mico's brand Preparation of teachers Meeting needs of students Model for other territories Transferral of skills Parental involvement Preparation for the workplace	Post-degree survey conducted by graduates. (P.1) Teacher is "counselor, nurse, everything." (P. 2) More recognition worldwide. (P5) Mico should perform better in preparing teachers for Jamaican context. (P5)
	Facilitates accreditation. (P.8)			This teacher can teach across grades and up to primary level. (P.7)
	Diploma not valued as much as before. (P.7)			Elements of teaching – learning styles, understanding child, use of materials (P.8)
	Move is important, strategic, timely. (P. 3)			
	Program prepare candidates to meet needs of students in the classroom (P1; P 4; P.8). Caters to moral, spiritual, physical, social needs of children (P4) Prepare teachers to meet emotional needs of students. (P.2)			
	Program prepare candidates to teach. (P.8) Preparation to teach 95%. (P.9).			
	Helped to develop a productive teacher. (P.6) Help to produce better teachers. (P. 4; P.10) More rounded teachers. (P.7)			
	Teachers able to practice what is learnt (P1; P5)			
	Prepare teachers for more			

	than teaching. (P7)			
	Provision of theoretical framework for elements of teaching. (P. 8)			
	Facilitated application to theory. (P.7)			
	Facilitate students getting certified. (P. 5)			
	Useful to persons who migrate overseas. Graduates can travel overseas and branch off into other things. (P.6)			
	Some lecturers taught overseas so that experience valuable. (P.1)			
	Emphasis on getting parental involvement useful (P. 1)			
	More variety of programs. (P. 2)			

Appendix M: Data Analysis Summary

Table M3: Research Question 3

What are the graduates' views about how the change is being implemented?

Concept	Code	Memo	Themes	Properties
Challenges for Admin.	Perhaps some staff not qualified (P. 1)	There is now an Assembly (short version of day assembly) for evening students. (P. 2)	Qualification of staff Teaching practice Communication Accreditation Resources eg. books, internet technology Food Tuition Timetabling Registration	Last meal served to students who live on at six o'clock. Rastaman prevents people from going to Crossroads. (P. 2)
	Have to get staff from outside. (P.1)			
	Teaching practice to be more effective in preparing teachers for the classroom (P. 1)	Having a food court would also bring in revenue for Mico. (P. 2)		Felt like guinea pigs. E. C. trying to find its way. Not much attention - 'last pickney' (P.6) Nobody really "fighting" for students. (P.6) Students pay half of fee to register; other half to do exam. More leniency. Revamp the process – probably have other decision-makers intervening. (P.10)
	Inadequate resources eg projector (P. 1)	Only Department insisting students buy the books is the Counseling Department.		
	Communicating with students. (P. 1)	Not just employ workers based on familiarity. (P.7)		
	Length of accreditation process (P. 2)			
	Tuition too expensive. (P. 2; P.8)	Students have to be cleared at the lab. (That means they are registered students). Additionally, wifi service only available at certain parts of the campus. (P.8) Participant 8 explained that two or three persons at the		
	Registration, examination and tuition fee. (P.10)			
	Not having an Assembly for Day students used to be a problem. (P. 2)			
	Food – need a food court. (P. 2)			
	Mico playing "catch up," in terms of the 'system' and resources. (P. 3)			
	Books in bookstore gathering dust. (Departments not using them.) (P. 3)			
	More efficient online systems. (P. 9)			
More efficient registration system (P. 9)				

	<p>Uncertainty about who administering Program. (P.6)</p> <p>Need to train staff to be pleasant, accommodating and courteous. (P.7)</p> <p>Pay attention to recruitment of staff. (P.7)</p> <p>Inadequate wifi service on campus. No wifi at the ladies' hostel. (P.8)</p> <p>Program for early childhood education starts three or four weeks later than other programs. (P.8)</p> <p>More care for evening students than day students. (P.8)</p>			<p>hostel may access wifi but it is slow. Faster wifi may be accessed around 3:00 am.</p> <p>Reasons include inaccuracy with timetable, problem getting lecturer for course. (P.8)</p>
Challenges for Staff	<p>Some courses new to lecturers so they along with students are learning them. (P. 1)</p> <p>No course outlines at beginning of semester. (P. 1; P.8)</p> <p>Staff need better salary (P. 2)</p> <p>Communication – staff not having correct information to pass on to students. (P. 3)</p> <p>Lack of professionalism. (P. 3)</p> <p>Staff photocopying materials for students rather than having students buy the books. (P. 3)</p> <p>Research manual needs charts and graphs to support text. (P. 3). Research manual inadequate. (P. 9)</p>	<p>Participant 2 felt that if staff is paid more perhaps they would do more.</p> <p>Participant 6 had to resubmit all assignments for a course as Examinations and lecturer had no grade.</p> <p>Have to follow-up with (run behind) lecturers to ensure accuracy of grades posted by Examinations. (P. 6)</p> <p>Lecturers, in trying to procure certification are studying and working. (P.6)</p>	<p>Courses Communication Professionalism Materials Support staff Teaching practice Salary</p>	<p>Lecturers search for schools to place day students, but evening students have to look for schools for themselves. (P 4)</p> <p>Lecturer told 'stories' (about her life) rather than teach. Then gave tests which students failed. Came class without course outline. Students got outline near to exam. Crammed but failed exam. (P.8)</p>

	<p>Support staff (office) needs to be trained eg. computer skills (P. 4)</p>			
	<p>Support (office) staff needs to develop better 'people' skills. (P9; P5)</p> <p>Office staff needs to focus more on work – idle too much. (P5)</p>			
	<p>Lecturers need to engage in study (better qualified) and more research. (P. 4)</p>			
	<p>Balancing work and study challenging. (P.6)</p>			
	<p>Staff needs to learn and model teaching to the different learning styles. (P. 9)</p>			
	<p>Lecturers need to lecture. (P.8)</p>			
	<p>Lecturers need to learn APA style properly and to be consistent. (P. 9)</p>			
	<p>Lecturers need to do a better job of guiding students engaged in research project. (P. 9)</p>			
	<p>Placement of students for teaching practice (P. 4)</p>			
	<p>Supervisor not willing to go to some rural schools for teaching practice. (P. 4)</p>			
	<p>Record-keeping – lecturer cannot find grades. (P. 6)</p>			
	<p>Errors on documents obtained from offices. (P.6)</p>			
	<p>Does not meet dates given to customers. (P.6)</p>			

Appendix M: Data Analysis Summary

Table M4: Research Question 4

What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

Concept	Code	Memo	Themes	Properties
Policy Foci at The Mico	Literacy (P. 1)	Center provides access to resources. (P. 9)	Early Childhood Education Center Literacy Qualification for teaching Special Education Integrated Math and Science	School accepts kids with special needs. Children coming in with special needs. (P. 4) Two courses targeting special education done but catered mainly to parents. Day students' classes centered around children with special needs. (P. 4) Participant 9 Post-diploma group was the first to be involved with an integrated Maths and Science course. Participant 6 felt allowing students to do course meaningful as fact that they do not have a level one or two in Maths in the CXC dos not mean that they would not be a able to teach
	Early Childhood Education – having a center for it. (P. 1)	The two-year preliminary program affords persons to qualify to do the Degree program		
	Early Childhood Center has a school	Elective courses such as Events Planning very useful (P5)		
	Graduating students have to get CPR certification. (P. 3)			
	More sensitization to special education in early childhood education program including reaching out to parents. (P. 4)			
	Policy of not looking schools for evening students for teaching practice. (P. 4)			
	Mico taking a holistic approach to the training of teachers eg teachers needing to understand children. (P. 4)			
	Integration of Maths and Science. (P. 9)			
	The two – year preliminary program is a blessing. (P5)			
Candidates can do a Maths course to fully matriculate. (P.6)				

	Some compulsory courses such as “Orientation to Documentation” useful. (P.6)			Maths. Wearing uniform aids professionalism . (P.6)
	Elective courses meaningful. (P5)			
	Students allowed to miss only three sessions per course. Fourth – students supposed to fail the course. (P.10)			
	Dress and uniform policy needs to be stricter. (P.6)			
	Students in early childhood education have to do a course in CPR before they can graduate. (P.6)			
	Bar for matriculation higher. (P.7)			
	Mico is reinforcing policies of The Ministry re: dress, conduct, protocol for teaching practice. (P.8)			
Policy Foci of Ministry of Education	Early Childhood Education – every early childhood facility should have at least one trained teacher. (P.1; P.10)	P. 10 says that Principal does not have to be trained. Different from P. 4.	Trained teacher School merger Quality assurance Grade 1 Test Path Program. Lesson plan Integration Inclusion	JEEP program – trained teachers are sent into schools as assistant teachers to provide support. (P.10)
	Merging schools. (P. 4)	Trained teacher may just be diploma-trained. (P.10)		If children are way below the grade level and based on the age, they might be asked to repeat. If they cannot repeat
	Administrators of ECE facilities need to be trained teachers and to have other special training. (P. 4)	Administered at the beginning of Grade 1 to determine the		
	JEEP program. (P.10)			

	Grade 1 test – Grade 1 learning profile. (P.1) Grade 1, Grade 3 and Grade 4 Diagnostic Test. (P.7)	academic level of each child to structure instruction to meet his or her needs. Grade 4 literacy administered directly by The Ministry of Education. (P.7)		they may then have special classes with a reading teacher. Parents are also advised to get further help. (P1)
Scoring for particular elements. (P.7)	The Diagnostic consists of both numeracy and literacy. (P.7)			
If a child does not pass the Grade 4 Literacy examination, he or she cannot do the GSAT examination. (P.7)	To ensure every facility has at least one trained teacher, schools are merged. For example infant departments are attached to primary schools. (P. 4)			
Portfolio Assessment. (P.7)	Ministry check on things such as number of students per class and number of teachers to students. (P. 4)			
PATH Program- subsidizing bus fare and lunch for students. Breakfast program as well. (P. 2)	In-house professional development. Workshops also conducted by staff in other schools. Schools grouped according to zones. Meetings and workshops done in zones. (P.10)			
Lesson plan of teachers in early childhood education must align to curriculum of The Ministry. (P. 4)	PVAP program – at the end parents do an exam set by			
Lesson plan of teachers in early childhood education must be flexible so that it can be executed by substitute teacher. (P. 4)				
Quality control by The Ministry. (P. 4)				
Professional development for staff. (P.10)				
Emphasis on parental involvement. (P.7) PVAP Program - ten two- hour sessions (one per month) of personal development activities for parents.				

	(P.10)			<p>The Ministry and awarded a certificate. (P.10)</p> <p>Schools handpicked by Ministry for participation in the Program and principals trained. They then turn-key to parents. (P.10)</p> <p>Parenting workshops passing on tips on homework help, aiding children with special needs, etcetera. (P.5)</p>
	<p>Move to have all children registered in school. (NCLB). (P.8)</p> <p>Emphasis on Science Education in primary schools. (P5)</p> <p>Inclusion classes. (P. 9)</p> <p>Integration of Maths and Science (P. 9)</p> <p>Parenting workshop. (P.5)</p> <p>Breakfast program in all schools. (P.5)</p> <p>Children under five should not eat cafeteria lunch. (P.77)</p> <p>New teachers have to get a police record. (P.7)</p> <p>New teachers have to be trained to do CPR.</p>			

	(P.7)			
Importance of Early Childhood Education Policy	Foundation to other grades/levels. (P. 1; P.6; P.8)		Foundational Skills Relationship to other levels Remuneration for teachers	Policies – how teachers treat students – no flogging eg. important. (P.10)
	“Make or break a child” - shapes what they become. (P.8)			
	Skills such as comprehension, paragraph writing and Math (P. 1)			
	Children like sponges – will remember good things they learnt at early stage. (P. 2)			
	Policies must be made, kept and evaluated. (P.10)			
	Training early childhood education teachers make it possible for them to get better paid. (P. 3)			
Importance of Educational Policy to Nation-building	Decreases ignorance and by extension crime (P. 1; P. 3; 9.7)		Social issues Social structure Personal development	Evocation of the theory of Levi Gotsky. (P.5)
	Education as way out of poverty. (P. 1)			
	More literate – more rational in decision-making and better critical thinkers. (P. 3)			
	More literate. (P.7)			
	Structure and order at early childhood level sets stage for structure into adulthood, (P. 9)			
	What a child learns at early stage remains with him for life. (P.5; P.7)			
	Teach values such as			

	patience. (P.6) respect (P.10)			
Any policy focus needed	More attention to personal development of teachers – behavior. (P. 1)		Personal development Preparation of teachers Teaching practice Certification for teachers Grooming for candidate teachers Emphasis by government on education Salary	Lecturer says no red hair, but turns up with red hair.
	More attention to preparing teachers to cope with students in today’s society. (P. 1)			Secondary Education gets more attention. (P.8)
	More emphasis on preserving the well-being of the child-protecting the child from verbal and physical abuse. (P.7)			
	Teaching students according to their learning styles. (P.7; P.9)		More attention to conduct behavior and speech of students. (P. 3)	
	More emphasis on teaching practice – more instruction. (P. 1)			
	Teacher training institutions should ensure that graduating students have Food Handler’s Permit, Police Record, CPR certificate. (P. 3)			
	More enforcement of dress code.			
	Evaluation of lecturers should be done eg. check lesson plans, watch lecturers lecture. (P.8)			
	Lecturers need to model for students. (P.8)			
	Not enough attention to early childhood education. (P.8)			

Policy focus needed at The Ministry of Education	Government take less from PAYE and income tax and charge more education tax. Let parents pay for education. (P.3)	Degreed teachers not getting jobs and not being paid adequately. (P.5)		More trained better prepare stuentns for life – better start
	Need to pay more salary since requiring teachers to be more trained. (P.4)			
	At least two/three degreed teachers in basic schools. (P.5)			

Appendix N: Codebook

Table N1: Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of the graduates of the undergraduate degree program in early childhood education about the new undergraduate degree program they recently completed?

Question	What are your views about the quality of the new degree program in terms of training the teacher candidate to teach?				
Follow – up Question	To what extent did the courses cover the subject matters pertinent to Early Childhood Education and prepare candidates to meet the needs of the students in the classroom?				
Concept	Variable Name	Variable Label	Variable Definition	Interview Location	# of Respondents
Courses	Courses1	Relevance	Relevance to early childhood development and early childhood education	P.7	1
			Extent of relevancy	P4; P5; P9	3
	Courses2	Adequacy	Breadth of courses	P. 3, P.6	2
	Courses3	Practicality	Applicability to classroom	P.2; P4; P5; P6; P8	5
			Applicability to other work situation outside the classroom	P.1; P.7	2
	Courses4	Schedule	Sequence of courses within and across year groups. Across day and evening students	P2; P.4; P5; P6; P10	5
	Courses5	Redundancy	Repetition of courses with different names	P8; P10	2
Question	How would you describe your classroom experience at The Mico? a) The delivery of pedagogy b) Timetabling c) The physical environment				
Pedagogy	Pedagogy6	Quality	Rating of quality	P.1; P3; P4; P5; P7; P.8; P9	6
	Pedagogy7	Effort	Rating of effort by lecturer	P3; P6	2

	Pedagogy8	Pedagogical skills	Teaching methods used by lecturers	P3; P4; P5; P6	4
	Pedagogy9	Knowledge of content	Familiarity with and knowledge of content	P1; P3; P4; P5; P6	5
	Pedagogy10	Student engagement	Contribution by student to lessons	P3; P4; P5	3
Timetabling	Timetabling11	Rooming	Double assignment to rooms	P1; P2; P4; P5; P7	5
	Timetabling12	Assignment of lecturers	Double assignment of lecturers	P3; P4	2
	Timetabling13	Schedule	Schedule of courses on daily basis	P6; P7; P9	3
			Schedule of courses according to cohort	P2; P10	2
	Timetabling14	Start of classes	Problems at start of classes	P3; P4; P8	3
The Physical Environment	PE15	Size	Size of classrooms	P4; P8; P9; P10	4
	PE16	Temperature in classrooms	Temperature of classrooms	P2; P3; P4; P6; P7; P9; P10	7
			Means of alleviating discomfort	P4; P7; P8	3
	PE17	Structure	Material used to build classroom and altitude of building	P2; P3	2
	PE18	Furniture	Number of chairs and desks in classrooms	P2; P3	2

Question	What was your campus experience like in terms of the following? a) Orientation and registration b) Examination				
Orientation	Orientation19	Orientation activity	Experience of orientation	P7; P8; P10	3
Registration	Registration20	Wait time	Length of time to get registered	P1; P4; P5; P7; P8	5
	Registration21	Protocol	Being processed by different offices	P4; P6; P8	3
	Registration22	Emotional experience	Positive emotional feeling	P2; P3	2
			Negative emotional feeling	P6; P8; P9	3
	Registration23	Electronic system	Office computer system	P9	1
			Online registration	P5; P9	2
	Registration24	Record-keeping	Quality of record-keeping	P7	1
Examination	Exam25	Results	Posting of results in several places; openness of results.	P1; P2; P3	3
			Lack of information about posting	P1; P2	2
	Exam26	Record of results	No record	P1; P4; P7	3
			Inaccuracies	P1; P4; P5; P6	4
			Wait time	P3; P4	2
	Exam27	Electronic system	Experience with electronic system	P3; P9	2
	Exam28	Sitting of exams.	Physical environment	P3	1
			Clearance	P8	1

			protocol		
Question	How adequate and accessible were support resources such as technology and the library?				
Library	Library29	Adequacy and quality of reading/research Materials	Outdated books	P1; P3; P4; P9	4
			Number of copies	P1; P3; P4; P6	4
			Condition of books	P9	1
	Library 30	Journals and Studies	Availability of journals	P3; P4; P9	3
			Availability of studies	P3	1
	Library30	Internet	Availability of service	P1; P9	2
	Library31	Library hours	Opening hours	P3; P5; P8	3
Library32	Utilization	Purpose for library use and extent of usage	P1; P2; P5; P6; P7	5	
Technology	Tech33	Accessibility to technology	Access to labs for typing and printing	P3; P4	2
			Access to labs for day students	P5	1
	Tech34	Technology hardware	Access to laptops, projectors, and PC	P2; P6	2
	Tech35	Maintenance	Reliability of system	P5; P9	2
			Viruses	P5; P6	2

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Table N2: Research Question 2

What are the perceptions of the graduates about how the new undergraduate degree program reflect organizational development and relate to performance improvement at The Mico?

Question	How does the new undergraduate degree program reflect organizational development and relate to performance improvement at The Mico?				
Follow – up Questions	a) How does the Degree program contribute to Mico’s ability to adequately prepare teacher for the Jamaican social context? b) Does the Degree program add value to Mico’s development and its role in teacher training in Jamaica, the wider Caribbean region? If so, how?				
Concept	Variable Name	Variable Label	Variable Definition	Interview Location	# of Respondents
Program Value	Programval36	Reputation	How Mico is regarded	P.2; P.3; P.5	3
	Programval37	Basis for program	Why the Program has been undertaken	P.2; P.4; P.7; P.8	4
	Programval38	Relevance to Jamaican context	Meeting the needs of students, candidates will teach	P.1; P.2; P.4; P.8	4
	Programval39	Relevance to teacher candidates	Preparation of candidates to teach	P.4; P.6; p.7; P.8; P.9; P.10	6
	Programval40	Applicability	Application to the classroom	P.1; P.5; P7	3
			Beyond Jamaican classroom	P.6; P.7	2
			Theoretical framework	P.7; P.8	2

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Table N3: Research Question 3

What are the graduates' views about how the change is being implemented?

Question	What are some of the major challenges that a) The Mico administration and b) the Mico staff and faculty are facing in the transitioning process?				
Concept	Variable Name	Variable Label	Variable Definition	Interview Location	# of Respondents
Challenges for Administration	Adminstaffrecruit41	Staff recruitment	Recruitment of administrative staff	P.7	1
	Adminstaffres42	Staff responsibility	Determining who is in charge	P.6	1
	Academicstaffqual43	Staff qualification	Recruitment of academic staff from outside	P.1	1
	Teachingprac44	Teaching practice	Effectiveness of teaching practice	P.1	1
	Resources45	General resources	Adequacy of resources	P.1; P.3	2
	Books46	Books	Purchasing of books by students	P.3	1
	Wifi47	Wifi	Adequacy of wifi service at the hostel and on the main campus	P.8	1
	Communication48	Communicating with students	Passing on information to students	P.1	1
	Cost49	Expense of tuition	Expense in comparison with other tertiary institutions	P.2; P.8; P.10	3
	Technology50	Efficiency	Efficiency of online registration system	P.9	1
	Courseschedule51	Start date of courses	When courses in Program are scheduled to begin	P.8	1
	Studentservices52	Food	Food services on main campus	P.2	1
	Studentservices53	Support	Succoring for day students	P.8	1
	Studentservices54	Assembly	Assembly for evening students	P.2	1
	Officerecord55	Recordkeeping	Errors on documents	P.6	1
	Office56	Appointments	Meeting appointments with students	P.6	1
Accreditation57	Accreditation	Length of process to get accredited	P.2	1	
Challenges for Staff	Staffpedagog58	Pedagogical skills	Lecturing skills and teaching to various learning styles	P.8; P.9	2
	Staffpedagog59	Research skills	Knowledge of APA style	P.9	1

			Guiding students in research project	P.9	1
Staffexperience60	Pedagogical gap		More study and research needed	P.4	1
Staffworkload61	Coping with work		Balancing work and study	P.6	1
Staffqual62	Staff qualification		New courses for academic staff	P.1	1
Staffsoicalskills63	Customer service		Development of social skills of administrative staff	P.3; P.5; P.7; P.9	4
			Professionalism	P.3; P.5	2
Staffofficeskills64	Office skills		Training in computer application, etc.	P.4	1
Staffsalary66	Salary of staff		Impact of low remuneration	P.2	1
Teachprac66	Teaching practice		Placement of students	P.4	1
			Lecturers' reluctance to go to rural areas	P.4	1
Recordkeeping67	Record of lecturers		Lecturers not finding grades	P.6	1
Courseoutlines68	Course outlines		Availability of course outlines at beginning of semester	P.1; P.8	2
Photocopying69	Lecturer photocopying materials		Lecturer photocopying for students	P.3	1
Researchmaterial70	Research manual		Inadequacy of research manual	P.3; P.9	2
Communication71	Communication between staff and students		Incorrect information by staff	P.3	1

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Table N4: Research Question 4

What are the graduates' views about how the new undergraduate degree program aligns with the major national policy shifts in teacher education and how these policy shifts can improve future processes at The Mico and similar institutions regionally?

Question	What are some of the major policy shifts/foci in teacher training education in general and early childhood education in particular being undertaken by The Mico University College administration?				
Follow – up Question	What are the potential advantages of these policy shifts/foci to education at the national and possibly at the regional level?				
Courses	Variable Name	Variable Label	Variable Definition	Interview Location	# of Respondents
Policy Foci at The Mico	Earlychildhood72	Early childhood education	Focus on early childhood education	P.1	1
	MOEpolicies73	Relationship to Ministry of Education's policies	Reinforcing policies of Ministry of Education	P.8	1
	Teachertraining74	Approach to teacher training	Holistic approach to teacher training	P.4	1
	Specialed75	Special Education in early childhood education	Sensitization to special education in early childhood education	P.4	1
	Matriculation76	Matriculation standards	Higher matriculation standards	P.7	1
	Matriculation77	Preliminary course	Two-year preliminary course	P.5	1
	Matriculation78	Maths course	Completion of Maths course to matriculate	P.6	1
	Courses79	Maths and Science	Integration of Maths and Science	P.9	1
	Courses80	Electives	Importance of elective courses	P.5	1
	Courses81	Compulsory courses	Usefulness of compulsory courses	P.6	1
	Courses82	CPR courses	Certification in CPR	P.3; P.6	2
	Attendance83	Class attendance	Number of absences allowed	P.10	1
	Practeach84	Practice Teaching	Placement of evening students	P.4	1

	Dresscode85	Dress code	Dress and uniform protocol	P.6	1
Policy focus at The Ministry of education	Trainedteacher86	Trained teacher	Number of trained teacher at facility	P.1; P.10	2
	Trainedadmin87	Trained administrators	Administrators being trained teachers	P.4	1
	Parentinvol88	Parental Involvement	PVAP Program. (Workshop for parents)	P.10	1
			Emphasis on parental involvement; parenting workshop	P.7; P.5	1
	JEEPprogram89	JEEP Program	Strengthening of school capacity	P.10	1
	Pathprogram90	PATH Program	Providing breakfast and bus fare for students	P.2	1
	Schoolmerger91	Merging schools	Meeting trained teacher requirement	P.4	1
	NCLB92	No Child Left Behind	Every child being in school	P.8	1
	Scienceed93	Science education	Emphasis on Science Education in primary schools	P.5	1
	Inclusclasses94	Inclusion classes	Inclusion classes	P.9	1
	Assessment95	Assessment	Grade 1 Test – Grade 1 learning profile	P.1	1
			Grade 1, Grade 3 and Grade 4 Diagnostic Test	P.7	1
	Assesment96	Assessment standards	Grade 4 Literacy examination and GSAT examination	P.7	1
	Scoring97	Scoring protocol	Particular elements	P.7	1
	Portfolio98	Portfolio assessment	Using portfolio assessment	P.7	1
	Lessonplan99	Lesson planning	Flexibility/adaptability of lesson plans	P. 4	1
	PD100	Professional development	Professional development for staff	P.10	1
	QC101	Quality control	Quality control by Ministry of Education	P.4	1
	Newteacher102	New teachers' requirements	Police record	P.7	1
CPR training			p.7	1	
Lunch103	Lunch	Children under 5	P.7	1	
Importance of early	Seminalrole104	Foundational	Relationship to other grades/ levels	P.1; P.6; P.8	3

childhood education	Character105	Character – building	Impact on character of child	P.2; P.8	2
	Early education teachers106	Impact on salary	Impact of training early childhood education teachers on salary	P.3	1
	Academicskills107	Foundational academic skills	Skills such as comprehension, paragraph writing and Math	P.1	1
	Policyapp109	Policy approach	Policies made, kept, evaluated	P.10	1
Importance of Educational Policy to Nation-building	Mitigatingfun110	Mitigating social ills	Mitigating poverty	P.1	1
			Mitigating crime	P.1; P.3; P.7	3
	Knowledge111	Knowledge base	Building knowledge capacity	P.1; P.3; P.7	3
	Socvalue112	Social values	Influence on literacy, decision-making and critical thinking	P.3; P.7	1
	Indvalue113	Foundational value	Impact on structure in adulthood	P.9	1
	Indvalue114	Lasting value	Longevity of what is learnt in early childhood	P.5	1
	Indvalue115	Types of values	Values such as patience and respect	P. 6; P.10	2
	Prepareteach116	Preparation of teachers	Preparing teachers to cope with students in today’s society	P. 1	1
	Childprotect117	Preserving well-being of the child	Safeguards to protect the child from verbal and physical abuse	P.7	1
	Learningstyle118	Learning styles of students	Teach according to learning styles of students	P.7; P.9	2
	TP119	Teaching practice	Instruction on teaching practice	P.1	1

	Gradpro120	Graduation requirement	Graduating students having police record CPR certificate	P.3	1
	Dresscode121	Dress code	Enforcement of dress code	P.3	1
	Studentcon122	Student behavior and conduct	More attention to conduct, behavior and speech of students	P.3	1
	Lecturereval123	Evaluation	Evaluation of lecturers' pedagogy	P.8	1
	Teacherdem124	Teacher demonstration	Modeling of teaching by lecturers	P.8	1
	ECEfocus125	Early childhood education	Attention to early childhood education	P.8	1
Policy Focus Needed at The Ministry of Education	Tax126	Payment for education	Amount paid for education tax versus PAYE and income tax	P.3	1
	Teachersal127	Remuneration	More pay for teachers now more qualified	P.4	1
	Trainedteacher128	Staffing with teachers with degrees	Number of degreed teachers in schools	P.5	1

Appendix O

Training Course

Protecting Human Research Participant



Glossary

Ahm	-	Expression of hesitation similar to “Let me see.”
And all o’ dat	-	Things like that; etcetera
Anyone yu tek it	-	Either one
AV	-	Audio visual
Bly	-	Chance, favor
CDA	-	Child Development Agency
CPR	-	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
Cuz	-	Because
Dem	-	They
Dog nyam yu suppa	-	It will be bad for you.
Donkey years	-	Many years
ECC	-	Early Childhood Commission
Eh?	-	What did you say?
Fi	-	To
Gonna	-	Going to
GSAT	-	Grade Six Achievement Test
HEART	-	Human Employment and Resource Training Trust/National Training Agency
High school	-	Secondary school
ID	-	Identification
Is like	-	It is similar to
IT	-	Information Technology
Kinda	-	Like
Kinder 2	-	Kindergarten 2
The Mico	-	The Mico University College, formerly The Mico Teachers’ College
Mico Prac	-	Mico Practicing Primary and Junior High School
Ministry of Education	-	The government entity responsible for the management and administration of public education in Jamaica

Mmhm/Aaha	-	Yes.
Mussi	-	Must be.
No suh?	-	Isn't that the truth?
PAYE	-	Pay as you earn.
PE	-	Physical Education
Post Dip	-	Post Diploma
PUMP	-	Pre-University Men's Programme
Rasta	-	Rastafarian
Teacher ed.	-	Teacher education
Tek	-	Take
Ummm	-	Expression of hesitation similar to "Let me see."
Wey dem sey?	-	What do they say?
Yu	-	You