

**Participants' Experience of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project
(TTELP): A Case Study**

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Abstract

This qualitative case study investigated participants' perceptions of the impact of a three-year leadership development programme on their professional lives. The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) was an internationally funded leadership development initiative directed by a McGill University-Université de Montréal consortium and delivered in Trinidad by a team of experts from the two Canadian universities. The objectives of TTELP were to equip the group of school principals, vice-principals and mid-level managers from the Ministry of Education with the skills to manage the government's programme of restructuring and decentralization of the secondary education system. The theoretical framework used in this study was Lave and Wenger's (1991) communities of practice. This social-constructivist framework is consistent with the new paradigm in leadership which views it as non-hierarchical and its development as an ongoing, systemic imperative. Data for this study were collected from an online survey followed by in-depth telephone interviews with nine participants. The semi-structured interview questions allowed participants to discuss their previous leadership development activities, their expectations and actual experience of TTELP and the implementation of the new knowledge and skills that they had acquired. The research questions that framed this study were: "What new knowledge and skills did the participants feel they had acquired?" and "To what extent have they been able to apply them in their schools?" Data from the survey and interviews with TTELP participants were triangulated with data from interviews with the two directors of the project, a National Lead Scholar and three teachers working under one of the participating principals. Findings from this study showed that participants felt that their knowledge base in leadership had improved significantly and their leadership skills had been enhanced by TTELP. They reported a strong degree of satisfaction with the programme,

especially with the instructors. The two aspects of the programme for which there were the strongest criticisms were the lack of time to do all that they needed to do during the programme and the absence of certification at the end of it. Key components of TTELP were evaluated using Leskiw and Singh's (2007) six-point model for evaluating leadership development programmes. Findings confirm the usefulness of these programmes in preparing educational leaders and building leadership capacity. The results also highlight the potential for problematic relationships and unsatisfactory outcomes in international programmes unless programme developers are able to forge collaborative partnerships with local counterparts and design programmes that are conspicuously sensitive to the needs of the international context. This study contributes to the existing knowledge base in leadership development by extending it to the developing world through an analysis of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project.

Keywords: Leadership, leadership development, international partnerships, communities of practice.

Résumé

Cette étude de cas portait sur les perceptions des participants de l'impact sur leurs vies professionnelles de leur participation à un programme de développement de leadership d'une durée de trois ans. Le projet en Leadership Éducationnel de Trinidad et Tobago (TTELP) était une initiative internationalement subventionnée et dirigée par un consortium de l'Université McGill et de l'Université de Montréal et offerte à Trinidad par une équipe d'experts des deux universités canadiennes. Les objectifs du TTELP étaient d'équiper le groupe des directeurs d'école, des directeurs adjoints et d'administrateurs intermédiaires du Ministère de l'Éducation avec les habiletés pour gérer le programme du gouvernement de restructuration et de décentralisation du système secondaire d'éducation. Le cadre théorique de cette étude était celui des communautés de pratique de Lave et Wenger (1991). Cette approche socioconstructiviste est cohérente avec le nouveau paradigme du leadership, qui la considère comme étant non hiérarchique dont le développement est un processus en cours, systémique et impératif. Les données de cette étude ont été colligées par des sondages en ligne et par des entrevues en profondeur par téléphone avec neuf participants. Les questions de l'entrevue semi-structurée permettaient aux participants de discuter du développement de leurs activités antérieures de leadership, de leurs attentes et de leur expérience actuelle du TTELP et de l'application du nouveau savoir et des habiletés qu'ils avaient acquises. Les questions de recherche qui encadraient étaient: «Quels sont le nouveau savoir et les habiletés que les participants pensent qu'ils ont acquis?» Et «Jusqu'à quel point ont-ils été capables de les appliquer dans leurs écoles?» Les données des sondages et des entrevues avec les participants du TTELP ont été triangulées avec les données des entrevues avec les deux directeurs du projet, un National Lead Scholar et trois enseignants travaillant sous un des directeurs d'écoles participants. Les résultats

de cette recherche montrent que les participants ont senti que leur savoir de base en leadership avait augmenté et que leurs habiletés en leadership avaient été augmentées par le TTELP. Ils ont exprimé un haut degré de satisfaction avec le programme, spécialement avec les instructeurs. Les deux aspects du programme qui ont reçu la plus forte critique furent le manque de temps pour faire tout ce qu'ils avaient besoin de faire durant le programme et l'absence de certification à sa fin. Les principales composantes du TTELP furent évaluées en utilisant les six points du modèle de Leskiw et Singh (2007) d'évaluation des programmes de développement du leadership. Les résultats de cette recherche confirment l'utilité de ces programmes de développement de leadership dans la préparation des leaders éducationnels et la construction de capacité de leadership. Les résultats soulignent aussi le potentiel pour les relations problématiques et les résultats insatisfaisants dans les programmes internationaux à moins que les développeurs de programmes soient capables de former des partenariats collaboratifs avec leurs contreparties locales et que l'élaboration des programmes soit remarquablement sensible aux besoins du contexte international. Cette étude contribue au savoir de base sur le développement du leadership en l'appliquant aux pays en développement à travers une analyse du « Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project ».

Mots clefs: Leadership, développement de leadership, partenariats internationaux, communautés de pratique

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Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Résumé.....	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	ix
List of Figures	xix
List of Appendices	xx
List of Abbreviations	xxi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Introduction to the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project.....	3
Snapshot of Political and Economic climate during the Delivery of TTELP	5
International Partnership in Research and Development.....	8
Instructional Objectives and Design	9
Organization of TTELP	11
Ministry of Education (MOE).....	11
Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP)	13
The Directorate of the TTELP Consortium	13
Advisory Committees	14
Project Coordinator	15
Field Manager	16
Instructors	16
National Lead Scholars	16

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions.....	21
Rationale	21
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	23
Leadership Development: An Evolving Paradigm	29
Theoretical Framework: Communities of Practice	37
CHAPTER 3: METHODS	43
Research Questions and Choice of Methodology	43
Selection of Participants	46
Sample Size in Qualitative Studies	50
Data Collection	52
Telephone Interviews.....	53
The Pilot Interview	61
Online Survey	63
In-Depth Interviews.	65
Teacher Interviews.....	67
Ministry Official	68
The Directors	69
Transcription.....	69
Data Analysis	70
Coding Crisis	71
Impact of Survey Methods and Results on Interviews	76

In-Depth Interviews	77
Transcription	77
Coding and Analysing Data from the In-Depth Interviews	78
Interviews with Teachers	79
The Ministry official	79
Documents	80
The three annual reports on TTELP.	80
Development of Themes	80
Ensuring Trustworthiness	83
Ethics.....	89
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	90
Part One: The Leadership Theme (I)	90
IA Introduction to Leadership Sub-Theme –PERSONAL	91
IA1 Personal Characteristics.....	91
IA2 Leadership Style	92
IA3 Background.....	96
IA3a Personal.....	97
IA3b Individual Schools	99
IA3c Systemic	99
Summary of Leadership Sub-Theme PERSONAL (IA).....	100
Introduction to Leadership Sub-Theme PROFESSIONAL (IB)	100

IB2 Dimensions of Leadership: Introduction	101
IB2a Dimensions of Leadership: Communication.....	101
IB2b Dimensions of Leadership: Interpersonal	103
IB3c Types of Leadership: Distributed.....	106
IB3d Types of Leadership: Transformational.....	108
IB: Summary of Sub-Theme PROFESSIONAL, Leadership.....	108
IC: Introduction to Leadership Sub-Theme –ORGANIZATION.....	109
IC1 Organization: Evaluation of Leaders	109
IC1a Evaluation of Leaders: Process	110
IC1b Evaluation of Leaders: Product.....	110
IC2 Organization: Levels of Leadership.....	110
Summary of Leadership Sub-Theme –ORGANIZATION (IC)	111
Summary of Theme I: LEADERSHIP.....	112
Theme II: CHALLENGES	112
Introduction.....	112
IIA Challenges Sub-Theme PERSONAL.....	114
IIB1b Challenges: Systemic -Politics	115
IIB1c Challenges: Bureaucracy	117
IIB1ciii Challenges: Incomprehensible decisions.....	118
IIB1d Participants not being used	120

IIB2 Hierarchical Leadership.....	120
IIB3 Resistance to change.....	121
Summary of the ‘Challenges’ Theme (II).....	123
IIIA Introduction to Sub-Theme FRAMEWORK	124
IIIA1 Category: Ministry Of Education.....	125
IIIA1a. Framework REFORM	126
IIIA1b. Framework: Selection of Participants	127
IIIA2. Leadership Development Category Framework: CONSORTIUM.....	131
IIIA2a. Category Framework: CONSORTIUM -Background	131
IIIA2b. Guiding Principles which informed the Design and Delivery of TTELP	132
IIIA3. Framework –COST	133
Participants’ Views of the <i>COST</i> of TTELP	135
Summary of Sub-Theme FRAMEWORK (IIIA)	136
IIIB. Introduction to Sub-Theme PLANNING	136
IIIB1a. Leadership Development Category: Individual Needs.....	138
IIIB1b. Leadership Development Category: Organizational Needs	143
IIIB1c. Sub-Category: DESIGN	146
IIIB2a LOCAL PARTNERSHIP -University of the West Indies (UWI).....	148
IIIB2b LOCAL PARTNERSHIP: Ministry Officials.....	148
IIIB2bi Ministry Officials –Selection.	148

IIIB2bii Ministry Officials -Organization.....	149
IIIB3 Category: ORGANIZATION.....	150
IIIB3ai SELECTION of Instructors.....	150
IIIB3aii ORGANIZATION of Instructors.	151
IIIB3b Logistics.	153
IIIB3c Category: Organization -> SUPERVISION.....	156
IIIB3ci Advisory Committees.....	156
IIIB3cii Directors.....	157
IIIB3ciii Evaluation	158
Summary of ORGANIZATION Category (IIIB3).	158
IIIB. SUMMARY of Leadership Development Sub-Theme: PLANNING.	159
IIIC Leadership Development Sub-Theme: DELIVERY.....	159
Delivery: International (IIIC1a).....	159
INTERNATIONAL: Delivery of Instruction (IIIC1b).....	162
IIIC1bi Perceptions of Foreign Service Providers.....	162
IIIC1bii Perceptions of Local Service Providers	165
IIIC2a MINISTRY OFFICIALS	167
IIIC3 Category: STRENGTHS.....	168
IIIC3a Sub-Category: INSTRUCTORS	168
Expertise and Professionalism – IIIC3ai.....	168

Pedagogical Skills – IIIC3aai	170
Modelling Leadership - IIIC3aiii	171
Charisma – IIIC3aiv	171
Summary of Strengths	173
Delivery: WEAKNESSES (IIIC4).....	173
Workload and Insufficient Time	173
Delivery Sub-Theme: Weaknesses	174
Technology	174
Non-Attendance	174
Local Partnership	174
IIIC4a. Leadership Development Delivery -Weaknesses: WORKLOAD	175
IIID Sub-Theme FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES: Introduction	177
Summary of Sub-Theme IIID Follow-Up	184
IIIE Introduction to Leadership Development Sub-Theme –POSITIVE OUTCOMES	184
IIIE1 Positive Outcomes: Affect.....	184
IIIE2b Positive Outcomes –New Knowledge and Skills	186
IIIE2bi Interpersonal Relations	186
IIIE2bii Team building	189
IIIE2biii Communication	191
IIIE2biv Planning.....	191

IIIE2bv Conflict Resolution.....	193
IIIE2bvi Reflection	193
IIIE2bvii Problem Solving.....	194
IIIE3 Positive Outcomes: Knowledge and Skills Enhancement.....	194
IIIE4 Positive Outcomes: Knowledge and Skills Implementation	199
IIIE5 Impact of TTELP on Teachers	205
IIIE6 Impact of TTELP on Students.....	206
IIIE Summary of Leadership Development Sub-Theme: Positive Outcomes	207
IIIF Leadership Development Sub-Theme: Negative Outcomes	208
IIIF Summary of Leadership Development Sub-Theme: Negative Outcomes.....	211
Summary of Programme Outcomes.....	212
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	214
Leskiw and Singh's six factors for effective leadership development	216
1. Needs Assessment.....	216
2. The Selection of a Suitable Audience.....	218
3a. Designing an Appropriate Infrastructure Part I: Organizational Culture.....	219
3b. Designing an Appropriate Infrastructure Part II: Logistics	221
4. Designing and Implementing an Entire Learning System	223
5. An Evaluation System	223
6. Actions to Reward Success and Address Deficiencies	226

Limitations	228
Implications for Future Research	230
Implications for Practice	232
Implications for North-South Cooperation on Leadership Development	240
Original Contributions of this Study	246
Conclusions	248
References	251
Appendices	261

List of Tables

Table 1	Courses offered in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project.....	10
Table 2	Domains of Effective School Leadership	36
Table 3	Reduction of Participant Pool	47
Table 4	Description of Survey Participants	49
Table 5	Advantages and Disadvantages of Telephone Interviews	58
Table 6	Example of a Coded Transcript: Principal's Answer to Survey Question #18	73
Table 7	Coding Coordinates for Four Units Coded at Table 6	73
Table 8	Two Entries from the Survey Master Document	74
Table 9	An Instance of Double Coding from the Survey Master Document.....	75

List of Figures

Figure 1. Organigramme of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project.....	12
Figure 2. Three Major Themes	91
Figure 3. Theme I Leadership	94
Figure 4. Theme II Challenges.....	113
Figure 5. Theme III Leadership Development: Sub-Themes	125
Figure 6. Sub-Theme IIIA Leadership Development: FRAMEWORK	126
Figure 7. Sub-Theme IIIB Leadership Development: PLANNING	140
Figure 8. Sub-Theme IIIC Leadership Development: DELIVERY	163

List of Appendices

Appendix A.....	261
Appendix B Transcription Protocol.....	262
Appendix C Online Survey Questions.....	263
Appendix D.....	267
Appendix E Participants' Replies to Survey Question 23	269
Appendix F Participants' Replies to Survey Question 24	271
Appendix G Themes and Categories from the Pilot Interview.....	274
Appendix H In-Depth Interview Questions	276
Appendix I Colour Coding Scheme.....	277
Appendix J Interview Questions for National Lead Scholar	278
Appendix K Interview Questions for Teachers	280
Appendix L Interview Questions for Directors	282
Appendix M Consent Form	284
Appendix N Needs Assessment.....	287

List of Abbreviations

IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IS	International Specialists
JAB	Joint Advisory Board
MOE	Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NLS	National Lead Scholars
PQSL	Premier Quality Services Limited
SEMP	Secondary Education Modernization Programme
SEMPU	Secondary Education Modernization Programme Coordinating Unit
TTELP	The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project
UWI	University of the West Indies

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project fascinated me from the moment I first heard about it. It was a million-dollar internationally funded leadership development programme and it was taking place in Trinidad and Tobago. A McGill University-Université de Montréal Consortium had won the bid for the delivery of TTELP. Over a three-year period they sent experts in leadership from the two Canadian universities to the Caribbean twin-island republic to deliver courses in leadership. I was intrigued. Right before my eyes an unimaginable, almost magical new world of professional development was opening up.

Participants were drawn from across the spectrum of the Trinidad and Tobago education sector and included high ranking Ministry of Education officials, school supervisors, principals, vice-principals and senior teachers. The project was to run for three years and a group of the participants was due to visit Montreal in the spring of the following year. The finale of the project would be a week of activities in Trinidad, culminating in a “Futures Conference” and the traditional graduation ceremony. It seemed uncharacteristically exotic and exciting for a professional development program.

My recollection of professional development events during my twelve years as a secondary school teacher in the Caribbean was so fundamentally different in both content and context that the phenomenon I was finding so dazzling seemed to herald a new paradigm in professional development. I just had to find out whether, for all its undeniable glamour, this programme made a difference in the leadership practice of the participants. Did the government of Trinidad and Tobago get value for money from TTELP?

The changing context of educational practice makes leadership preparation a very important issue. In the current climate of school reform, rapid developments in computer technology,

increasing diversity in the school population, and globalization, a new breed of educational leader is required and a new paradigm in professional development is emerging in response to that need. Leadership development in education is no longer a one-shot event on the school calendar, it is an ongoing, systemic activity, a professional imperative for educators and the key to effective schools in the new millennium.

While the literature on leadership development is extensive, there is a conspicuous lack of empirical studies from the developing world. The vast majority of scholarly studies on leadership and leadership development are from the western, industrialized world. This case study allowed the researcher to focus on a specific case in the developing world and to investigate issues of leadership and leadership development in that cultural and geo-political context. This qualitative approach provided the best methodological framework for in-depth understanding of these issues, allowing perspectives from the global South to emerge directly from the participants.

Findings from this study, by elucidating differences in the perception and practice of leadership in the developing world, will be useful to programme developers designing leadership development initiatives for countries like Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the service providers who deliver such programmes and the policymakers who must review and approve them. They will also be of interest to researchers and students interested in international development in education and the North-South discourse on sustainable leadership development in the context of educational change.

Introduction to the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) is an example of the kind of professional development model that is emerging under the new paradigm. In this case, there are the added layers of international relations and international development, since the project was directed by a Canadian consortium and delivered by a team of Canadian experts to educational leaders in Trinidad and Tobago.

The principal objective of TTELP was to help participants manage educational change. The participants were senior and mid-level managers from the Ministry of Education and school administrators, mainly principals, vice-principals and school supervisors. The changes that they were expected to implement and lead their colleagues through were mandated by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education as part of the republic's programme of educational reform (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004).

Given the complex nature of the partnership between the Consortium and the government of Trinidad and Tobago and the importance of context in educational practice, an understanding of the history and culture of Trinidad and Tobago is essential. Trinidad and Tobago became independent from Britain in 1962 and became a republic within the Commonwealth in 1976. Ninety-six percent of the 1.3 million inhabitants live on the island of Trinidad, with most of the remaining 4% living in Tobago, the smaller of the two islands that make up the twin-island republic. Trinidad and Tobago's history of colonization and immigration is reflected in the diverse ethnic origins of its population. The National Census Report for 2000 indicated that the two largest ethnic groups are Indo-Trinidadians (40%) and Afro-Trinidadians (37.5%). Trinidadians classified as being of mixed heritage account for 20.5% of the population and the breakdown for the remaining 2% is reported as: White/Caucasian (0.63% percent or 7,034

persons), Chinese (0.34% or 3,800) and Syrian/Lebanese (0.1 percent or 849) (Central Statistical Office, 2000).

Indo-Trinidadians are the descendants of indentured servants brought over from India to work on sugar cane and cotton plantations. Afro-Trinidadians arrived in Trinidad as slaves from many different places. The majority were patois-speaking Creoles who came with their owners, but some were imported directly from Africa by British slavers. Brereton (1981) reported that “slaves were also bought, stolen and kidnapped from the neighbouring colonies, especially Grenada” (p. 24).

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the sugar industry had already begun to decline and the economy had to be diversified. The republic of Trinidad and Tobago is a stable democracy, but its political stability did not ward off the economic challenges of the time. Nor did it do much to diffuse the tension between Indians and Blacks, which has been a constant on the political landscape of the country. Palmer (2006) asserted that divisions between Blacks and Indians were encouraged by the British. He noted in his conclusions that “the racial specter [sic] continues to haunt the nation, inflaming its tensions, heightening its fears and corroding its soul.” (p. 303).

The People’s National Movement (PNM), under the leadership of Eric Williams won six consecutive elections (1956 to 1986). This continuity and stability in government over three decades were, however, accompanied by economic problems and social unrest, which culminated in widespread disturbances in 1970–71. The Government declared a state of emergency in 1970 after violent protests by Black Power supporters and an army mutiny calling for an end to foreign influence over the economy. The state of emergency lasted for two years (Palmer, 2006).

The economy of Trinidad and Tobago is vibrant. The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) profile of the twin-island republic describes it as having "one of the highest per capita incomes in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its wealth stems from vast oil and gas reserves. Trinidad and Tobago is also a regional financial center and a significant source of capital flows in the Caribbean." Brereton (1981) reported that "World War II created a great demand for oil and ushered in an oil boom for Trinidad and Tobago." By the end of the war, oil had become the mainstay of the economy, "account[ing] for 80% of the country's exports and after the war, the oil industry entered a period of spectacular expansion (Brereton, 1981, p. 211). By 1962, Trinidad had a per capita income of £2.29 making it one of the wealthiest developing countries in the world (Palmer, 2006, p. 257). The economy of Trinidad and Tobago continued to grow during the TTELP years. Indeed, between 2000 and 2007, economic growth in that country averaged slightly over 8%, significantly above the regional average of about 3.7% for that same period. (International Monetary Fund, 2007).

Snapshot of Political and Economic climate during the Delivery of TTELP

A brief look at the political and economic climate which framed TTELP reveals some of the underlying tensions which may have informed attitudes and actions which impacted the delivery of the project. The project started in March, 2003 and ran until the end of February 2006.

Five months before the project officially started, the People's National Movement (PNM), under the leadership of Prime Minister Patrick Manning had claimed victory in the third general election in as many years, ending almost two years of political deadlock. His party held onto power for the full term (5 years) and repeated their victory in the 2007 elections.

Still on the political front, during this period former Prime Minister Basdeo Panday of the opposition United National Congress (UNC) was on trial for failing to disclose the existence of an overseas bank account while he was in office¹. He also faced corruption charges relating to an airport construction project². On the bank account charge, he was convicted and sentenced in 2006 to two years in prison, but the conviction was overturned by the Court of Appeal (Ramdass, 2012).

Another politically sensitive issue was the increasing crime rate in the country. Indeed, in October 2005, “at least 10,000 people took part in a protest - named the Death March - against a soaring rate of violent crime” (BBC, 2012). In a year which saw the number of murders committed in the republic rise to 386, the march was triggered by the murder of Keith Noel in his Belmont home in an apparent robbery that turned violent (Kowlessar, 2012).

The economy of Trinidad and Tobago continued to grow during the TTELP years. Indeed, between 2000 and 2007, economic growth in that country averaged slightly over 8%, significantly above the regional average of about 3.7% for that same period (Central Statistical Office, 2010). A significant event on the economic front was the August 2003 closure (five months into the delivery of TTELP) of the State-owned sugar company Caroni with the loss of

¹ Mr. Panday, during his term as Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from 1995 to 2001 had failed to include in the declaration of his assets, an account held at the National Westminster Bank at Wimbledon Hill Road, London containing approximately \$1.6 million (Ramdass, 2012).

² Details of the charges, brought jointly against Basdeo Panday and his wife Oma are that

“BASDEO PANDAY and OMA PANDAY:

On the 30 of December 1998, did corruptly receive from Carlos John and Ishwar Galbaransingh the sum of 25,000 pounds sterling as an inducement or reward in relation to Construction Package 3 of the new terminal development project at Piarco Airport, a matter in which a public body, namely the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago was concerned, contrary to Section 4 (b) of the Prevention of Corruption Act Number 11 of 1987” (Joseph, 2012).

more than 8,000 jobs. The BBC reported at the time that the company had lost “hundreds of millions of dollars over the past decade” (Leggett, 2003).

The political and economic status quo was more than the backdrop to the project. These contextual realities were inextricable from the unfolding of the project itself. Economic realities affect everyday life, but they also have political implications and the politics of Trinidad and Tobago seemed to take on a life-within-the-project which, although it did not amount to interference, was a pervasive and at times prickly presence, which could not be ignored nor dictated to but had to be appeased. Although the goals of the project were educational, any shortcomings of the programme would ultimately be more than a professional development failure. They could become a political fiasco at a time when the economic boom seemed to be in decline and a coalition government was as imminent as the next elections.

Trinidad and Tobago’s Education System

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) was conceived as part of the republic of Trinidad and Tobago’s programme of restructuring and decentralization of the country’s educational system. Trinidad and Tobago has one of the most successful education systems in the Caribbean. The importance of education is underlined by the slice of the national budget that the Ministry of Education receives: 15%, compared to 6% for health and 3% for defence, over the period 2000-2009 (UNICEF, 2012). Primary school attendance is compulsory and 70% of children in the 12-15 age range attend secondary school. The adult literacy rate is estimated at 98%. Caribbean Examinations Council certificates are taken in fifth form (grade 10 in Canada) and the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Certificate, required for university

admission, is taken two years later. The University of the West Indies (UWI) has one of its three campuses at St. Augustine, in Trinidad (UNESCO-IBE, 2010).

International Partnership in Research and Development

TTELP was a research and development project partly funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (US\$907,874.70) and was the result of a partnership between the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education's Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP) and a consortium of two Canadian universities, McGill University and the Université de Montréal. The Consortium had won an international bid, having submitted a proposal for the design and delivery of the project to the Board of Tenders and the Ministry of Education of Trinidad and Tobago in November 2001. TTELP was co-directed by Professor Lynn Butler-Kisber of McGill University and Professor Manuel Crespo of the Université de Montréal. The project officially started on 1 March, 2003 and ended on 28 February 2006 (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004).

Participants for TTELP were all selected by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education, without input from the Consortium. The group consisted of 43 administrators. Eighteen of them were senior and mid-level managers, drawn from the various divisions within the Ministry: Curriculum Development, Educational Planning, School Supervision and Human Resources. The other 25 were school supervisors, elementary and high school principals and vice-principals.

The breakdown of participants was as follows:

- 15 Ministry of Education officials
- 6 principals

- 11 vice-principals
- 8 school supervisors
- 1 Senior Dean
- 1 Head of Department
- 1 Guidance Officer

Instructional Objectives and Design

Within the framework of the Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP), TTELP was one of several “sub-project[s] within the Institutional Strengthening Component” (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 2). The principal goal of the project was to equip the 43 participants with the tools to effectively manage educational change. The achievement of this goal was critical to the implementation of the Trinidad and Tobago Government’s educational reform programme. In order to optimize the achievement of this main goal, the Consortium designed and delivered the project as two parallel components: a formal, instructional component intended to develop managerial competencies and a professional development component designed to help educational leaders implement the changes legislated by the government. TTELP also included a study mission to Montreal, Canada, which took place in May 2005. Participants for this mission were again selected by the Ministry of Education with no input from the Consortium.

The formal, instructional component of TTELP consisted of 10 graduate-level intensive courses that are part of the Graduate Certificates in Educational Leadership offered by the Centre for Educational Leadership (CEL), a research centre of the Faculty of Education of McGill University (See Table 1). Each course was delivered over a two-week period by professors from

McGill University and the Université de Montréal. There were two graduation ceremonies to celebrate the completion of the two certificates. The first was held in January 2005 and the second in February 2006. Participants received attestations from McGill University and the Université de Montréal.

The Ministry of Education had originally indicated that 20 participants would apply to do the certificates for credit, but in the end only five of the 43 participants applied. Of these five, only four were accepted into the programme by McGill's Faculty of Graduate Studies. Of the four who were accepted, one declined and another withdrew for health reasons. Tragically, one of the remaining two died in the second year of the programme, leaving just one participant who received credit for participation. The for-credit participants spent additional hours with each instructor for a total of 40 hours per course, in keeping with the specified time requirements for graduate courses at McGill (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 3).

Table 1

Courses offered in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project
(TTELP) 2003-06

Courses	Date
EDEM 610: Leadership in Action	October 6-17, 2003
EDEM 646: Planning and Evaluation	March 1-11, 2004
EDEM 693: School Improvement Approaches	June 14-24, 2004

EDEM 664: Policy Issues in Education	July 26-August 6, 2004
EDEM 628: Education Resource Management	September 27- October 4, 2004
EDEM 609: Issues in Educational Studies	February 21-March 04, 2005
EDEM 675: Leadership Theory: A case study approach	April 14-21, 2005
EDEM 677: Leadership and student engagement	July 4-15, 2005
EDEM 681: Practicum in Administrative Studies	September 19-23, 2005; October 24-28, 2005
EDEE 677: Leadership and Writing in the Workplace	November 21-December 02, 2005

Organization of TTELP

The delivery of TTELP was supported by a complex network of administrators and support staff working behind the higher profiles of the directors and instructors of the project. The organigramme (Figure 1) gives a clear picture of the various elements that came together for this project. I will now take a closer look at each of the elements mentioned here.

Ministry of Education (MOE)

The Ministry of Education of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago held overall responsibility for the project since it was a part of their reform programme for the education system of the twin island republic. It also represented a major investment for the country in the form of a US\$ 1 million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank. Decisions such as the selection of candidates for the programme and the degree of support or facilitation accorded to

the participants during the delivery of the programme were taken by the Ministry of Education with no real avenues for input or dissent left open to the directorate of the TTELP Consortium.

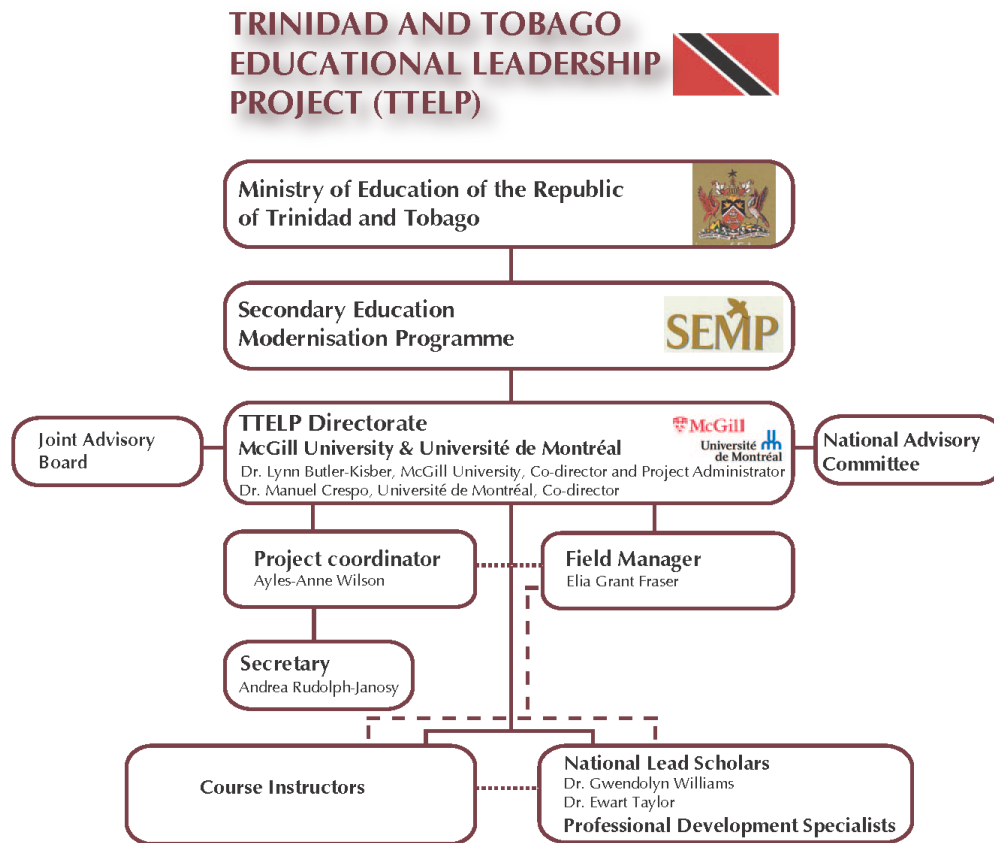


Figure 1. Organigramme of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP).

This flow chart illustrates the organizational structure of TTELP. Retrieved 19 January 2004, from the Université de Montréal's TTELP website (now closed).

Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP)

The Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP), established in 1999 and partly funded by a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank, was a comprehensive programme aimed at reforming secondary education in Trinidad and Tobago and building capacity in the system. The objectives of SEMP were:

- 1) The reform and expansion of the secondary school system that will result in five years of high quality secondary education for all the nation's children regardless of social and/or economic status;
 - 2) The creation of a curriculum that is relevant to the very demanding and dynamic world of work and
 - 3) The development of teaching technologies that will produce graduates who can adapt to the rapid changes being brought about through technological advances and globalization.
- (UNESCO, 2010).

The Directorate of the TTELP Consortium

The Consortium's directorate, Drs. Lynn Butler-Kisber and Manuel Crespo brought to this project a wealth of expertise in leadership, as well as extensive experience in leadership development at the local, national and international levels. As professors at McGill University and the Université de Montréal respectively, they were based in Montreal, but as directors of a project that was being delivered thousands of kilometres away, they needed to ensure that everything was in place for each course, that key personnel were doing what they were supposed to be doing and that everything was proceeding as it should. This monitoring was done partly through a series of planning and supervisory missions to Trinidad and partly through a

comprehensive system of ongoing evaluation which made emerging information about participants' progress, their needs, interests and programme-related problems available to the directors and other team members.

The planning and supervisory missions were undertaken throughout the three years of the programme's duration and often dovetailed with other missions and TTELP-related business in order to make the most of the trips, given the time and expense involved. The two directors tried, on each visit, to pay courtesy calls to the Ministry of Education, the SEMP Coordinating Unit (SEMPCU) and the offices of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). They also routinely used these visits to address issues such as logistical problems, to organize interviews to fill positions locally and, whenever possible, to visit local schools.

The supervisory missions were useful and rewarding for the directors, but they did not alleviate the frustrating sense of distance when things could not be fixed quickly and efficiently. Fortunately, the network of instructors, National Lead Scholars and the Joint Advisory Committee compensated somewhat for the distance from Montreal, becoming the eyes and ears of the directorate in the field. The reports that the instructors wrote at the end of their courses or seminars provided the Consortium with valuable information which they passed on to incoming instructors.

Advisory Committees

There were two advisory committees attached to TTELP which convened at least once a year: The National Advisory Committee (NAC) and the Joint Advisory Board (JAB):

The National Advisory Committee (NAC), based in Trinidad and Tobago, with the exception of the two project directors, consisted of officials from MOE and SEMPCU, one

external member, the two National Lead Scholars (NLS), two representatives of the TTELP participants and the two directors of TTELP. The role of the NAC was “to keep the various project stakeholders abreast of what is happening, and to encourage discussion and suggestions about the proposed work.” (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 6). The inclusion of project participants and National Lead Scholars made this committee particularly useful as a tool for monitoring and evaluating the delivery of the project.

The Joint Advisory Board (JAB), which was based in Montreal, focussed more on the management of the project. It consisted of members of the Consortium, the two Vice-Principals Research and International Relations, the two Directors of the Office of Research and International Relations, the two Deans of Education, the members of the Consortium’s Directorate and two officials from the respective International Research and International Relations Offices. The purpose of the Joint Advisory Board (JAB) was “to inform and get advice on inter-university management of the project” (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 18).

Project Coordinator

The project coordinator was a Trinidad national who had recently completed a graduate degree in Educational Technology at Concordia University. She was based in Montreal and worked in the Centre for Educational Leadership, (CEL) in close collaboration with Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, director of CEL and co-director as well as administrator of TTELP. The project coordinator was one of many bridges between the two cultures, working closely with the directorate of the TTELP Consortium as well as the SEMP Coordinating Unit and the Trinidad-based field manager.

Field Manager

The field manager was based in Trinidad and was charged with looking after issues of local organization such as logistics and liaising with local authorities, associates and businesses in order to support the delivery of the programme. During the first year of the project, however, the Consortium faced several logistical problems which the field manager was unable to resolve. Given this situation and the high cost of retaining her, the Consortium decided to let her go after the first year. The Field Office and problems relating to it are discussed at greater length in the Results chapter under the *Leadership Development* theme in the *Logistics* category of the *Planning* sub-theme.

Instructors

The instructors and international specialists were star features of TTELP. The instructors delivered the ten graduate courses in leadership which constituted the formal instructional component. The International Specialists were brought in as part of the continuous professional development component to deliver seminars based on the expressed needs and interests of the participants. The selection and organization of TTELP instructors were discussed under the *Instructors' Selection* (IIIB3bi) and *Organization* (IIIB3bii) headings of the *Planning* sub-theme.

National Lead Scholars

As noted above, TTELP was delivered as two parallel components: a formal, instructional component consisting of ten courses (See Table 1) and a professional development component designed to help educational leaders implement the changes legislated by the government. The continuous professional development component, was delivered between the courses by international specialists (IS) from the Consortium, and by the two National Lead Scholars. The IS seminars addressed topics which were selected in consultation with the

participants. The Lead Scholars were Trinidadian educational consultants Dr. Gwendolyn Williams, who was with the project from its inception, Dr. Ewart Taylor, who left the project at the end of the first year, and Dr. Jerome Delisle who replaced Dr. Taylor.

The role of the National Lead Scholars was essentially that of mentors and coaches and fell into two broad areas: Firstly, they were supposed to tweak the course content for cultural and contextual sensitivity in keeping with the guiding principles of TTELP that I outlined above. Secondly, they were expected to help the participants, in small groups, to understand and implement the changes mandated by the Government's programme of educational reform.

In their Annual Report for 2003-2004 the directors broke down this second aspect of the NLS's role, the coaching and mentoring part, as follows:

- Act as advisers and help to introduce the foreseen changes;
- Coach the trainees to refine their analysis of the changes to be introduced: what, how, what obstacles, which opportunities;
- Help the trainees in the identification of individual and group needs in terms of "encadrement" needs and training needs;
- Be functional in helping the trainees [...] to introduce the first stages of changes demanded by the school reform (curriculum innovation, decentralization, school-based management). (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 3).

The Annual report added that "the three consultants will work in conjunction with the professors who are responsible for the formal training. Special attention will be given to the training of trainers of future trainees. The Consortium will mentor the trainers of future trainees on the pedagogical and organizational aspects of training adults. The Consortium suggests that

these trainers of trainees be the participants taking the programme for McGill credits.”

(Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 3).

The micro-partnerships that were embedded within the structure of TTELP were more than just convenient. Their importance extended beyond the utility of their roles in TTELP: McGill in partnership with the Université de Montréal, the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education in partnership with the Consortium, the Canadian consultants and their Trinidad counterparts, these partnerships reflect, at the micro level, the increasing appeal and international profile of the partnership construct which has moved beyond teacher and student exchange programs to include almost every aspect of education. The partnership construct in education has evolved over the years to find its current expression in the building and maintaining of communities of learning wherever teaching and learning take place.

Partnership is one of the major theoretical concepts underlying this study. Leadership is developed and enhanced in and through communities, and the community is built on partnerships (Leskiw & Singh, 2007; Wagner et al., 2006). Partnerships are of extreme importance in the context of international projects. The delivery of programmes such as TTELP requires substantial logistical support. Without the reliable support networks from their home base, the infrastructural support that local partners can help to establish are vital to foreign service providers. Erratic logistical support is not an option at this level.

As noted in the review of the literature, successful leadership development is ongoing and systemic (Guskey, 1999; Leskiw & Singh, 2007). Effective leadership development, therefore, requires organizational support. Partnership with the relevant local organization is imperative. Without these local partnerships, sustainable leadership development is quite simply unachievable.

Partnerships are built on trust and their development takes time. They are at all times as strong and productive as the interplay of internal and external forces that define them. When there is a power imbalance or fundamental differences in past experience or expectations for the future, the likelihood of problems increases dramatically. In the case of TTELP, we have a western model of leadership being delivered to a developing country by a western team. Leadership, however, is a process which must be culturally defined. We expect that process to be different in the Caribbean from what it is in Canada. This is an important factor that should inform the design and delivery of the project and must be taken into account during its evaluation.

The directorate of the TTELP Consortium designed the programme with meticulous attention to detail. Sensitivity to the local context was no exception. In fact, it was a central premise in the leadership development philosophy of the directors. When asked to elaborate on the guiding principles of the Consortium, both directors mentioned the importance of cultural relevance. Director1 said “We wanted to minimize cultural distances between what we teach and train and their reality” (T/06/01-10) and Director2 agreed: “It had to be a culturally sensitive programme” (T/06/02-7). In order to achieve the goal of cultural sensitivity, the directors built into the project certain features and systems which were intended to heighten and sustain awareness of the cultural context and bring the delivery of the programme into closer alignment with the needs of the Trinidad and Tobago education system.

Firstly, the directorate tried to get nationals of Trinidad and Tobago involved in the project. As early as the proposal preparation stage of TTELP, efforts were made to secure local partners. The directors felt that the delivery of the project would be enhanced by the inclusion of senior academics from the School of Education at the UWI Saint Augustine campus in Trinidad.

The inclusion of local partners was particularly important to this programme, given that the directorate of the Consortium was based thousands of kilometres away in Montreal.

There were other Trinidad nationals working for the Consortium who were in a position to advise the directors on issues of cultural and contextual sensitivity. The project coordinator, based at the Centre for Educational Leadership in the Faculty of Education at McGill University was a Trinidad national. She worked under the supervision and in close collaboration with the co-director and administrator of the project, Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber. The field manager, based in Trinidad, was also a Trinidad national. The National Lead Scholars (NLS) were both Trinidad-born and -based educational consultants, selected for their expertise and experience in the area of leadership development.

The Consortium's commitment to a culturally sensitive, client-centered approach led to the two-component leadership preparation format, consisting of instruction on the one hand and mentoring and coaching on the other hand. Before finalizing the programme, they had carried out a needs assessment initiative in Trinidad and Tobago that informed the final design of TTELP. In order to achieve and sustain cultural sensitivity, the Consortium had to avoid the trap of delivering TTELP as a North-to-South knowledge transmission programme. It needed to be a reciprocal learning experience. The directors ensured that every member of the TTELP team, including instructors and coordinators both in Montreal and Trinidad and Tobago, was sensitized to this way of thinking.

Finally, the directors made several supervisory visits during the delivery period of almost every course. The purpose of these visits was primarily to monitor and scaffold course content and delivery, but the directors also took the opportunity to visit schools and to meet with officials

of the Ministry of Education, the Coordinating Unit of SEMP (SEMPCU) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). These visits allowed the directors to improve their understanding of Trinidad and Tobago and especially of the education system there.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The summative analysis of a programme is usually done in order to assess the success of the programme, to measure that success against the costs incurred, and ultimately to allow stakeholders “to make informed decisions about whether to extend a program to other participants or beneficiaries” (Singleton & Straits, 1999). The purpose of this single instrumental case study was to discover the impact of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) on the leadership practice of principals and vice-principals who participated in the project. The central question driving the design of this study was: “What impact did TTELP make on the professional practice of the participants?” Sub-questions which framed the study were:

- 1) What new knowledge and skills did the participants acquire?
- 2) To what extent are the new knowledge and skills being implemented in the participants’ practice?
- 3) How are changes in the leadership practice of the participants impacting teachers?
- 4) How are changes in the leadership practice of the participants impacting students?

Rationale

Leadership development has become the major focus of in-service professional development over the past half century. With increasing interest in programs and partnerships and demands for funding to support such training, comes increased accountability (Health Care Innovation Unit & School of Management, University of Southampton, 2004). Stakeholders at all levels

need to know whether the time spent away from sites during training and the financial investment are justified by the quality of emerging leaders, the building of leadership capacity and, perhaps most importantly, whether we are simply training individuals or whether the impact of the training is being transmitted beyond the individual participant to other team members and eventually throughout the organization (Singleton & Straits, 1999).

It is important, too, for stakeholders to know how professional development programs benefit students because the most important criterion in summative evaluations of professional development programs is student gains. There is, however, a conspicuous lack of empirical studies showing a direct link between professional development activities and student learning (Su, Gamage & Mininberg, 2003). For many educators, the relationship is obvious, but until it is empirically supported, it remains a supposition. There is ample evidence that professional development has a positive impact on teacher perceptions of professional gains. There is even more evidence that teachers with good content and pedagogical knowledge have a positive influence on student outcomes. We need more empirical studies in order to determine whether stated goals have been met, to elucidate the relationship between professional development and student outcomes and to improve on the delivery model (Guskey, 1999).

This study seeks to discover evidence of the new knowledge and skills which principals should have acquired during the program. This evidence will allow the assessment of the impact of the project on the professional lives of the participants. Improvements in teachers' knowledge and skills can be expected to have a major impact on student outcomes in the long term. It is, therefore, important to assess the use of new knowledge and skills before assessing the impact of the project on student outcomes.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The most critical dimension of any organization is its leadership. Leaders set the tone for organizational outcomes at every level. Key factors such as organizational vision, strategic planning, communication, employee motivation and satisfaction are all determined by the quality of leadership. In the corporate world, this has serious implications for productivity and therefore, for the overall success of the organization. In education, it can mean the difference between schools where students succeed academically and go on to make a meaningful contribution to society and schools where they do neither.

This study draws on two related fields of research: the broad area of professional development, with a specific focus on leadership development activities; and the leadership literature, with a specific focus on emerging research in educational leadership. Cunningham and Cordeiro (2006) define leadership as:

an activity or set of activities, observable to others, that occurs in a group, organization, or institution and which involves a leader and followers who willingly subscribe to common purposes and work together to achieve them (p. 155).

The leadership literature is vast and not all of it is relevant to educational settings. It is important to note the distinction drawn by researchers in the field between leadership and management. Management focuses on efficient use of resources, on seeing that things get done. It seeks order and stability. Leadership, on the other hand, seeks constructive change. It is about developing, promoting and realizing a vision for the organization. The main objective of leadership is, therefore, to give an organization direction and purpose. Administration is the general term that subsumes both management and leadership.

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration³ defines educational leadership as:

giving purpose and vision and direction for individual and group processes; shaping a school culture and values; facilitating the development of a strategic plan and vision for the school; formulating goals and planning change efforts with staff; and setting priorities for the school in the context of community and district priorities and student and staff needs.

Evolution of the Leadership Construct

The leadership construct has evolved dramatically over the years. Indeed, Gronn (2006) talks about the chequered history of leadership theory, observing that “the field has been renowned, even notorious, for the succession of various leadership types it generates. Some of these endure, although most do not” (p. 1). Leadership theorists generally recognize four stages in the evolution of the leadership construct (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006; Fiddler & Atton, 2004).

The earliest stage was dominated by trait theories of leadership. These were followed by theories which emphasized teachable skills. These, in turn, gave way to situational approaches to leadership, where the appropriate leadership practice is thought to vary with the context, and finally to the currently dominant transformational approach to the construct where the leader articulates a vision that is appealing to followers, who are inspired and empowered to join the leader in realizing that vision. A closer look at these four stages follows.

Early conceptualizations of leadership were based on trait theories which viewed leadership as being significantly influenced by certain intellectual and emotional traits (Cunningham &

³ The National Policy Board for Educational Administration is a consortium of ten American educational organizations committed to promoting high quality preparation and professional development for educational leaders.

Cordeiro, 2006). Leaders were born, not made, and were viewed as prodigies with superior qualities that distinguished them from others. They exuded a certain charisma, which consolidated their appeal to their followers. Fiddler and Atton (2004) found this view simplistic because the underlying assumptions in leadership theory “increasingly took account of development through early education and life experiences to produce leadership abilities” (p.22). The traits which were thought to differentiate leaders were, in fact, too general to discriminate effectively between leaders and non-leaders.

Trait theories of leadership eventually gave way to behavioural views which emphasized teachable skills: intellectual, technical and inter-personal. In an effort to help leaders identify their leadership style and understand the behaviours of their followers a wave of instruments were developed. Douglas McGregor (1960) devised a scale to measure leadership style. The X-Y Scale, based on McGregor’s Theories X and Y reflect a binary view of beliefs about followers’ response to leadership behaviour along two continua: autocratic style and democratic style.

Another well-known instrument from the same period, the NREL Behavior Matrix⁴ (1985) used two continua, dominant-easygoing and informal-formal, to help leaders identify their own behaviour style. This instrument places leaders in one quadrant of the matrix, but acknowledges that successful leaders can be found in any one of the quadrants and that organizations need all four types of behaviours in order to be successful (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006).

With the Ohio State Studies, research on leadership moved from a single-axis paradigm (democratic versus autocratic) to a two-dimensional paradigm based on two continua: consideration and initiating structure. Previous studies had suggested that these two approaches,

⁴ Founded in 1966, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL or NREL) is a private nonprofit American organization working closely with schools, districts, and other agencies to develop creative and practical solutions to important educational challenges. Their mission is to improve learning by building capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development.

sometimes conceptualized as concern for people and concern for results respectively, were at opposite ends of the same continuum. Halpin (1956, 1960) and others showed that they were complementary in leadership approaches. Findings from a substantial body of research on this model have found that “consideration and initiating structure are positively related to various measures of group effectiveness, cohesiveness, and harmony. Based on these studies, the most desirable approach to leadership development is to stress the importance of people and the importance of the task (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006).

The New Managerial Grid (Blake & McCanse, 1991; Blake & Mouton, 1964, 1978) is similar to the Ohio State Studies grid in that it is a two-dimensional grid featuring “concern for production” and “concern for people.” Findings from research on this instrument reflect those of the Ohio State Studies, with the most effective leaders being described as high on both dimensions.

The search for the ideal mix of leadership behaviours eventually gave way to the recognition that effective leadership depends on the context and specifically on the fit among contextual variables which include the task, the followers and the leader’s style. This situational or contingency model of leadership stressed “the capacity of leaders to adapt their personal style to the situation and the followers” (Avolio, 1999; Health Care Innovation Unit & School of Management, University of Southampton, 2004).

Although the core idea of situational leadership has not been discredited, several features of the framework have been questioned. Fiedler and Chemers (1974, 1984) maintain that leadership style is a fixed personality-based trait that no amount of training will modify. Hersey and Blanchard (1977, 1993; Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 1996), on the other hand, maintain that leaders have to be able to adapt their styles to suit the situation and especially the level of

readiness (technical, psychological and professional) of their followers. Not all researchers agree that leadership varies with each situation (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006) and situational and contingency models have been criticized for ignoring the Pygmalion effect.

The 1980's and 1990's saw a sustained effort to draw a distinction between leadership and management. It had started in 1975 with Zaleznik and Kets de Vries. These efforts yielded mixed results. Gronn (2006) claims that "the language of management was displaced (some critics even say demonised) by the language of leadership. To continue to manage (or to administer), and to identify oneself as a manager or to be labelled as a manager (or an administrator) was no longer sufficient" (p. 3). In the new lexicon, according to Fulmer (1997), it is no longer enough to be training managers or even educating executives. "Almost every organization is trying to create *leaders* who are capable of helping the corporation shape a more positive future" (p. 59).

There is still no consensus among researchers on the distinction between leadership and management. In general, however, management focuses on efficient use of resources, on seeing that things get done. It seeks order and stability. In the words of Fulmer (1997), managers are "bureaucrats who administer complexity and try to make the status quo more efficient." Leadership, on the other hand, seeks constructive change. It is about developing, promoting and realizing a vision for the organization. The main objective of leadership is, therefore, to give an organization direction and purpose. Administration is the general term that subsumes both management and leadership.

From the early 1980's the fourth and currently dominant view of leadership began to emerge. It started with J. McGregor Burns (1978), who was the first to use the term "transformational leadership," which he contrasted with transactional leadership. Transactional leadership is based on incentives and disincentives. Desired behaviours are encouraged by a

system of rewards, and behaviours that are not valued are punished. Transactional leaders have a “command-and-control mentality” (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006). Transformational leaders, on the other hand, create a vision for their organization and inspire followers to commit themselves to the realization of that vision. Current views of leadership are dominated by the transformational paradigm and this is the view of leadership which is being promoted for school principals. Unlike previous paradigms which viewed power and responsibility as embodied in the leader, the transformational paradigm is committed to distributed leadership and the sharing of responsibility.

Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter (1990) list the defining features of transformational leadership as identifying and articulating a vision, fostering acceptance of group goals, providing an appropriate model, high-performance expectations, providing individual support, providing intellectual stimulation, contingent reward and management by exception. The development and consolidation of common interests and collaborative action is central to the success of transformational leadership. According to Cunningham and Cordeiro (2006), transformational leaders in education are driven by three fundamental goals:

- Helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture
- Fostering teacher development, and
- Helping teachers solve problems together more effectively.

They achieve this through “collaborative goal setting, shared power and responsibility, continued professional growth, resolved discrepancies, teamwork, engagement in new activities, a broad range of perspectives, validated assumptions, periodic reflection, monitored progress, and intervention when progress stalls” (p. 188). The transformational leader is a facilitator at the

heart of a distributed leadership network. Fiddler and Atton (2004) note that “most writers agree that both forms of leadership – transactional and transformational – are required” (p.25).

Fiddler and Atton (2004) discuss three major features of the paradigm shift represented by transformational leadership. Firstly, “leaders are distinguished by being recognised as such by followers” (p.24). It is important to understand what this means in terms of leader selection. Leadership, under the new model, is socially constructed. Promoting teachers to the principalship on the basis of seniority alone, for example, could pose serious problems if the ‘next in line’ is someone who, for whatever reasons, is not recognized as a leader by his/her intended constituency of followers. In such a case there would, in effect, be a leadership vacuum. Secondly, “followers have an impact on the leader” (p.24). Followers do much more than simply follow under the transformational paradigm. Not only does the leader need their recognition to have any authority, but s/he needs their ongoing support in order to develop and function as a leader. What followers do determines what leaders do, so that the relationship is interdependent, more democratic. Thirdly, “leaders have some particular personal characteristics but also exhibit behaviours which might be developed” (p.24). Researchers in the field recognize, therefore, that leaders bring certain personal qualities to the position, but that effective leadership practice also entails behaviours which can and must be developed and enhanced.

Leadership Development: An Evolving Paradigm

The need for leadership development emerged naturally from the recognition that leadership is a complex construct. It is not just an acquired set of skills or inherited personality traits. It is a way of interacting with organizational players and forces and it can be learned. In addition, the surge in educational reform movements worldwide and the resulting decentralization in education systems have given new leadership responsibilities and authority not just to principals,

but to teachers in general. As Hill and Ragland (1995; cited by Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2006) noted, “a wider population is now envisioned as having leadership potential, and we are flattening organizations, empowering more people, and decentralizing decision making” (p. 190). Senge et al. (2001) observe that “organizations will enter a new domain of leadership development when we stop thinking about preparing a few people for “the top” and start nurturing the potential for leaders at all levels to participate in shaping new realities” (p. 568). They go on to assert that “the core leadership challenge of our era lies in addressing core issues for which hierarchical authority is inadequate” (p. 568).

Fulmer (1997) discussed the evolving leadership development paradigm under seven headings representing major shifts in the paradigm. Firstly, the role of the participants has changed from passive listeners to active agents who “listen occasionally, interact frequently [...] and frequently spend a significant portion of time demonstrating their ability to apply concepts to real challenges” (p. 60). This is consistent with constructivist approaches which dominate all aspects of contemporary educational theory and practice. Fulmer (1997) also noted the trend in participant selection of “drawing participants from many vertical slices of the organization rather than from one thin horizontal slice” (p. 61). This strategy is considered to deliver more significant outcomes in leadership development programmes

Secondly, the design of leadership development programmes has changed dramatically from one-shot professional development activities that ranged from one-day events to programmes which were delivered over several months, but where there was no follow-up of any kind. This kind of design has given way to a new emphasis on ongoing coaching and mentoring, on leadership development as lifelong learning. There is a growing body of professional development evaluation research that clearly shows that these one-shot, short-term activities do

not deliver. Reitzug (2002) puts it bluntly: “The effect of such staff development efforts on teacher practice and student achievement reflects the financial and mental investment in them – minimal, at best” (p.236).

The third shift is in the purpose of the programmes. A major shortcoming of earlier models of leadership development, with their emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and skills, was the failure to follow through with opportunities for participants to demonstrate and get feedback about their ability to apply that new knowledge to solving real problems in the workplace. In the new world of leadership training, the emphasis is on action learning. Fulmer (1997) gave the corporate example of Motorola’s university which, in the 1980’s, created an Application Consulting Team (ACT) to support the application in the workplace, of knowledge and skills gained from Motorola courses. ACT was staffed by managers with 20-plus years of experience “who prefer to mentor, coach, and assist in the transfer of learning rather than continue with traditional management responsibilities” (p. 64).

The fourth point is that the new paradigm is a bridge to the future. Transformational leadership is the model being promoted in schools and transformational leadership is about change: effecting change, anticipating change and riding waves of change smoothly (Fullan, 2001; Guskey, 1999). This means that leaders must cultivate the ability to predict future trends and anticipate solutions to problems inherent in these trends. Leaders must be visionary and that vision must include solutions to potential problems. The new paradigm is not just about waiting for future events, however, but about envisaging “how specific actions in their own organization can help create or mold the future” (Fulmer, 1997; p. 65). Fulmer gives the example of the three-year Johnson and Johnson Creating the Future initiative where the top 700 executives were challenged to extend their thinking horizons and work on managing the next millenium.

The fifth point in the new paradigm is the players. Executive educators used to be specialists in management. In the new paradigm, they may bring a varied and much valued skills set. Many major organizations are retaining academics and consultants, who “become a semipermanent part of the organization” (Fulmer, 1997; p. 67).

Presenters in the new paradigm put less emphasis on flashy delivery and more on the ability to facilitate change. Fulmer (1997) notes that the most valued executive educators are not those who have vast knowledge of the field, but those who are “able to elicit participant input in such a way as to help with the resolution of actual issues” (p. 68). and stimulate participants to learn.

The seventh and final point is the training location, which was very important in earlier models and was usually a prestigious university setting. Although universities are still popular settings for leadership development programmes, corporate settings are being used more frequently and many of the larger companies have spent a great deal of money on building their own corporate universities. In addition, advances in technology have made it easier to offer programmes to large numbers of managers in more than one country at the same time.

Best Practices In Leadership Development

Leskiw and Singh (2007) reviewed the literature on best practices in leadership development and made recommendations for programme developers. They found that six factors were vital for effective leadership development: needs assessment, the selection of a suitable audience, designing an appropriate infrastructure, designing and implementing an entire learning system, an evaluation system and actions to reward success and address deficiencies. I will return to these recommendations in detail in the Discussion chapter when I assess the impact of TTELP in relation to Leskiw and Singh’s findings.

Educational change is a reality of the new millennium and effective leadership preparation is a critical factor in the successful implementation of educational change. Change, however, is a complex process and organizational change even more so. As Fullan (1993) reminded us “If there is one cardinal rule of change in human condition, it is that you cannot *make* people change. You cannot force them to think differently or compel them to develop new skills” (p. 23). While acknowledging this, however, Fullan believes that “the main problem in public education is not resistance to change, but the presence of too many innovations mandated or adopted uncritically and superficially on an *ad hoc* fragmented basis” (p.23). Fullan (1993) identifies eight basic lessons of the new paradigm of change. They are:

- 1) You can’t mandate change.
- 2) Change is a journey not a blueprint.
- 3) Problems are our friends.
- 4) Vision and strategic planning come later.
- 5) Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.
- 6) Neither centralization nor decentralization works (Both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary).
- 7) Every person is a change agent.

Senge et al. (2001) note that most change initiatives fail, even many that seem promising. They compare the change process in learning organizations to the biological growth process, noting that “all growth in nature arises out of an interplay between reinforcing growth processes and limiting processes” (p. 7). Senge et al. argue that most learning initiatives fail because they focus on the changes that they want to produce and not on the processes that limit those changes. They assert the need to understand “the forces and challenges that impede progress, and to

develop workable strategies for dealing with these challenges” (p. 10). Senge et al. (2001) identify ten challenges that confront those who want to bring about profound change: Control over one’s time; inadequate coaching, guidance and support; making a case for the relevance of change; management clarity and consistency; fear and anxiety; negative assessment of progress; isolation and arrogance; the prevailing governance structure; the inability to transfer knowledge across organizational boundaries; and the challenge of organizational strategy and purpose.

The form that these challenges take and the manner in which leaders deal with them can be expected to vary depending on the context. The key idea advanced by both Fullan (1993) and Senge et al. (2001) is that leaders need to anticipate these challenges and develop strategies for dealing with them if they are to implement meaningful change in their organizations. Brown and Conrad (2007), in their investigation of school leadership in Trinidad and Tobago, argue that “leaders’ behaviors and followers’ responses to such behaviors are shaped by the dynamics and culture of a given organization [...] No leadership behaviors” they insist, “are effective in all situations and contexts” (p. 181). They caution against the assumption that Western leadership practices will transfer seamlessly into the Caribbean or other developing world contexts:

Understanding that the same behaviors can mean different things and have different effects in different societal and cultural contexts is critical to evaluating reform initiatives, especially in nations such as Trinidad and Tobago, in which most reforms are funded by international agencies. Such institutions are influenced by the culture in which they are embedded (Connerley & Pedersen 2005), and, therefore, they generally conceptualize educational leadership using theories developed and policies and practices employed in Western, more industrialized societies (Caribbean Education Task Force 2000; Louisy 2001)” (p. 184).

Brown and Conrad (2007) describe the education system in Trinidad and Tobago as

“characterized by an overly centralized bureaucracy in a time of continuous educational reform” (p. 188). This bureaucracy meant that principals faced the challenge of a lack of authority. Brown and Conrad’s study found that the principals they interviewed practiced leadership as a “subverting activity”, which they distinguished from subversive activity in that the aim of the latter is to undermine the system, whereas their aim was to make it more effective. These principals said that their subverting activities, which included strategies such as networking with other principals to get information on how to achieve their objectives as well as going ahead with their plans and apologizing to the Ministry after the fact for not following protocol. These educational leaders all felt that their subverting strategy was “an enabling device that allows them to deliver where the system fails to deliver” (p. 189).

Although there is still a great need for empirical studies of professional development, the existing body of literature is providing a range of conceptual and practical tools. These include criteria, guidelines and standards (see Table 2) which can be used as frameworks for promoting, designing, delivering and evaluating professional development activities. We now know much more about the key elements of professional development: which formats work best; prerequisites, key principles and components for effective professional development; elements required for successful professional development activities (for example, modelling effective pedagogy); follow-up protocols; levels of outcome (Reitzug, 2002); and frameworks for the evaluation of professional development activities (Guskey, 1999). All these tools must be applied to bridging the gap between theory and practice in the relationship between professional development and student achievement.

Table 2

Domains of Effective School Leadership

Domain	Task Areas
Leadership	Vision, Role-modelling, Team-building, Setting meaningful goals and rewards
Management	Planning, Co-ordinating, Implementing, Monitoring Controlling, Directing, Delegating Resource allocation and management
Interpersonal	Communication (written and oral) Motivating, Assisting, Caring, Counselling Appraising, evaluating & developing teachers Student guidance and development
Decision-making	Assessing, Evaluating
Communication	Public relations, Development of networks Advising, Influencing, Making a case for
Problem Solving	Identification, Analysis, Solution Critical Evaluation
Personal Development	Learning, Researching

Technology

Personal Characteristics Change-oriented, High level of self-confidence, Tendency to dominate, Need to influence others, Strong conviction in the integrity of one's own beliefs, Judgement

Training is effective to the extent that it meets the needs of the target population and evolves systematically in response to emerging needs. That requires a continuous cycle of needs assessment, program development, implementation and evaluation. The field has continued to adapt to the changing needs of stakeholders and the changing demands of the cultural, political and economic landscape. Emerging models of leadership development are now underpinned by research and reflective practice (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1996). There have been calls, for example, for the inclusion of performance-based standards into principal preparation programs, as well as the integration of clinical experiences, and tiered certification systems in which the second-level certificate requires evidence of successful on-the-job performance (Lashway, 2003). They are more likely to succeed because of the radical change in structure: a focus on systemic change rather than on individual principals, an increase in evaluation research, the creation of models for evaluating professional development programs and a growing insistence, at the institutional and national levels, on accountability.

Theoretical Framework: Communities of Practice

Communities of practice have existed as a social phenomenon throughout history. Wherever groups of people have gathered together to work or to pursue common interests on a regular basis, the presence of such communities has been noted. Great political and religious

leaders and their followers; groups of performers (circus acts, theatrical groups) and other artists, are some examples. The notion of communities of practice as a construct in learning theory, however, was conceptualized by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991). Lave is a social anthropologist at the University of California at Berkeley and Wenger, a veteran teacher and researcher from the University of California, is now an independent consultant, setting up and developing communities of practice in organizations.

Lave and Wenger coined the term “communities of practice” while studying apprenticeship as a learning model at the Institute for Research on Learning in Palo Alto, California. They found that, contrary to popular belief, apprenticeships were more than just relationships between masters and students. Their studies of apprenticeship showed the construct to be a complex set of social relationships that drive and support the learning process. The term community of practice was coined to refer to “the community that acts as a living curriculum for the apprentice” (Wenger, 2007; p. 4). Lave and Wenger’s theory was presented in “Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation” (1991).

Wenger (2007) defines communities of practice as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (p. 1). As noted above, communities of practice are not a new phenomenon. In fact, Wenger asserts that “communities of practice are everywhere”. So ubiquitous, that he adds: “At home, at work, at school, in our hobbies, we all belong to communities of practice, a number of them usually. In some we are core members. In many we are merely peripheral. And we travel through numerous communities over the course of our lives” (p. 3).

Lave and Wenger caution that not every group calling itself a community can be considered a community of practice. Three important criteria must be met before this classification can be applied:

- Firstly, the **domain**: A community of practice “has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people” (Wenger, 2007; p. 1).
- Secondly, the **community**: “In pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other” (Wenger, 2007; p. 2).
- Thirdly, the **practice**: “Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction” (Wenger, 2007; p. 2).

Wenger explains that “It is the combination of these three elements that constitutes a community of practice” (Wenger, 2007; p. 2) and these communities can be cultivated by “developing these three elements in parallel” (p. 2). Lave and Wenger (1991) use five examples of apprenticeships to illustrate communities of practice in action: Yucatec midwives in Mexico, Vai and Gola tailors in Liberia, US Navy quartermasters, butchers in US supermarkets, and “nondrinking alcoholics” in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Learning in the community of practice is a natural social process that evolves over time from legitimate peripheral participation to full participation. It takes place not in the mind of the individual, but through participatory interactions between the individual and the community. As

William F. Hanks said in his foreword to their ground-breaking book on Communities of Practice, “Learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; p. 15). “Rather than asking what kinds of cognitive processes and conceptual structures are involved, they ask what kinds of social engagements provide the proper context for learning to take place” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; p. 14). In this model, then, learning is ongoing, a lifelong process driven by the synergy of the community in intersecting paths of participation as learners move from the periphery of the community to core positions which reflect their emerging status as mature, fully engaged practitioners and consolidate their identities as members of the community.

By making the community of practice the locus of learning as well as its curriculum, Lave and Wenger have made it the epistemic centre of their theory. This valorization of the role of society in the process of learning and knowing puts Lave and Wenger firmly within the social constructivist traditions of Vygotsky (1978). Unlike Piaget (1952), whose focus was on individual knowledge construction, Vygotsky held that human cognitive development is rooted in social interaction with knowledgeable, significant people in a person’s life. Communities of practice, as articulated by Lave and Wenger (1991) are consistent with the broad lines of Vygotsky’s epistemology.

Communities of practice work well as the conceptual framework for this study for several reasons. Firstly, the emphasis on the life and the generative power of the community reflects emerging consensus among practitioners and researchers alike that leadership development must be systemic and ongoing if it is to be effective. Lave and Wenger’s communities comprise apprentice-participants at every point along the novice-master continuum. The importance of opportunities for participation among them is strongly emphasized. This reflects the new

democratic approach to leadership development and the resulting impact of flattening organizations. Past and present conditions in the culture usually determine the nature and extent of individual learning, in much the same way that the culture of schools is likely to impact the nature and extent of teachers' and therefore of students' learning. As Reitzug (2002) noted in a previously cited passage, professional development is not just about acquiring managerial skills, it is about building a culture.

Secondly, the emphasis on culture underlines the shift in focus away from the development of individual leaders to the development of the community of educational leaders and beyond that, to promoting change at the organizational and national levels. The importance of culture, of the system or organization, in leadership development cannot be overstated. Systemic change and ongoing support are critical to the development and sustainability of leadership in education.

Thirdly, social constructivism is a theory of cognitive development and this study is about learning – about how principals learn and about how that new knowledge, in turn, impacts students' learning. Learning theory evolved over the course of the last century through major paradigm shifts, culminating in the current dominance of the constructivist paradigm. Social constructivism emphasizes the context and process of learning. Knowledge is situated, embedded in the culture, and the learning process is the dialectic between the individual and that culture, mediated by a more knowledgeable person. The isolation of the teacher and the student, too, under the old behaviourist paradigm has given way to the construct of community with interactive instructional methods replacing the unforgettable monotony of knowledge transmission.

Emerging models of leadership development such as TTELP emphasize the development and growth of learning communities where members can negotiate the meanings of ideas and

practices. There is a very good fit between the epistemological assumptions underlying social constructivism and the emerging paradigm in leadership development. It is not difficult to see how the concept of community can energize the operationalization of leadership development as a dynamic construct, generating knowledge and showcasing skills that are easily implemented in the real world of leadership practice and as sustainable as the community itself.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

This case study examined the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) from the perspective of key players in the project. The main objective of the study was to discover participants' perceptions of the impact of the project on their leadership practice. Assessing participants' reactions is the most common form of professional development evaluation (Guskey, 1999), and qualitative methods are particularly appropriate for addressing participant meanings and perspectives (Creswell, 2013). The case study approach was considered appropriate because, as Creswell said "A case study is a good approach when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases" (Creswell 2013, p. 100). TTELP is bounded in time and space, as the project was delivered in Trinidad to nationals of Trinidad and Tobago from 2003 to 2006. It is to that geographical space and time that this study returned in order to get a deep understanding of the impact of the programme on participating principals and the institutions they led.

Position of the Researcher

Creswell (2013) asserts that all writing is positioned and that qualitative researchers need to make clear their position by speaking directly to how their own personal, cultural and historical identity may have shaped their choice of research questions and methodology as well as their interpretation of findings and conclusions.

This researcher is Afro-Caribbean, was born in Barbados, attended primary and secondary schools in Barbados and, after university abroad, taught at a secondary school in Barbados for 12 years. During those teaching years, I attended professional development events once or twice per year and found them useful in a vague, generic way, but not particularly

meaningful. I was drawn to the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project because it was situated in the Caribbean but also because it went far beyond the kind of professional development events that I had experienced.

My initial sense of insider status, however, had an outsider counterpart that was not fully acknowledged as I embarked on this study. I may be from the Caribbean, but my Barbados (*Bajan*) identity was a powerful and potentially problematic issue that may have influenced my relationship with the participants from the very beginning. My views of Trinidad and Tobago had been shaped years earlier by three outstanding teachers at my secondary school, two from Trinidad and one from Tobago. During my undergraduate years, I had met about 12 Trinidadians, all ethnically Indian and most of them pursuing degrees in Law. They were generally gregarious and funny but also ambitious and hard-working. It is from those years that I retained a view of 'Trinis' as a people who work hard and play hard.

I was aware, as a secondary teacher in Barbados, that Trinidad and Tobago was consistently getting excellent results in the standardized 'O' and 'A' Level examinations. The Trinidadians I would meet in Barbados were academics or business executives. I was also aware that there was a flying fish controversy between the two countries: This local Barbados delicacy was more abundant in Trinidadian waters and Barbados fishermen were venturing into Trinidadian territory in search of the prized fish. They were increasingly ending up in Trinidadian courts. While these forays into Trinidad's sovereign territory were a serious violation, they also had an element of local folklore to them. I remember telling Trinis I knew that I had heard that they were eating flying fish for breakfast, lunch and supper to make sure that there were no more left in the sea for Bajans.

There must have been other political issues between Barbados and Trinidad of which I was unaware. My post-secondary education had taken me away from Barbados and in fact I have lived half of my life and over two-thirds of my adult life in Europe and North America. Although my identity is that of a Black Caribbean woman, my participants did not necessarily see me in that light: They, understandably, saw me as an extension of McGill University and, rather than Caribbean, they saw me as a Bajan. One participant had told me early on that they were angry with McGill, angry with the Ministry and angry with everybody. When I tried later on in the data collection process to explain to one participant that her participation was important to me and that I had had problems securing the participation of other TTELP participants, she snapped: “Have you considered” she asked “that it may be because you’re from Barbados?” I was speechless and so she continued: “because why should we give out interviews to someone from Barbados?” I was stunned. It had not occurred to me that the problems I had experienced might have been the result of my nationality. That outburst forced me to review the difficulties I had experienced and I had to concede that the many closed doors could have been a response to my being from Barbados. I could not, however be sure about this and since the incident had occurred towards the end of data collection, I accepted it as an unpleasant experience and moved on.

I believe, with hindsight, that the feeling of connection with TTELP that I mentioned earlier influenced my selection of the project as a worthy focus of research and coloured my research questions. I am sure that my identity as a Black Caribbean person influenced my interpretation of participants’ stories. I can identify, for example, with the National Lead Scholar’s feeling of being excluded and their comments about small island people not being powerless. I also fully understand the incomprehension of the participants at receiving a certificate of participation at the end of a three-year programme.

My own experience as a teacher in the Caribbean led me to adopt a Community of Practice framework, in which the focus is on how leadership and its development are evidenced in the school system in Trinidad and Tobago.

Research Questions and Choice of Methodology

I went into this study with no preconceptions about what the participants' experience would be; all the more so because I had no direct experience of educational administration and had never experienced this kind of professional development myself. I felt that a structured approach based on a review of the literature would over-influence participants' reports of their perceptions. I wanted to understand the phenomenon of this leadership development initiative from the participants' point of view. I wanted the themes to emerge from their experience, from their reports and to be articulated in their own words. In short, I wanted to hear and describe their story. These objectives precluded quantitative methods as the main approach in the first phase of this study.

My research questions were: (1) What new knowledge and skills did the participants feel they had acquired? and (2) To what extent have they been able to apply them in their schools?

Selection of Participants

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) was delivered within the broader leadership development mandate of Trinidad and Tobago's Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP). The focus of SEMP was the building of leadership capacity within the education system and participants were drawn mainly from the ranks of secondary principals and vice-principals, school supervisors and managers from the Ministry of Education.

There were 43 participants in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project:

- 6 principals

- 11 vice-principals,
- 8 school supervisors
- 15 Ministry of Education officials
- 1 Senior Dean
- 1 Head of Department
- 1 Guidance Officer

Participants for TTELP were all selected by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education and were themselves unaware of the criteria for selection. McGill University and the Université de Montréal, the consortium which won the bid to deliver the project, had no input in the selection process. For this study, my original plan was to have the entire group complete the survey and then do in-depth interviews with all six principals and a purposive sample of the vice-principals.

Table 3

Reduction of Participant Pool

	Original number of TTELP participants	43
Number lost	Due to:	Remaining participants
15	Ministry participants excluded	28
12	No contact information available	16
2	Withdrew for health reasons	14
3	Did not take online survey	11
2	Did not complete survey	9

I sought permission to have the 15 Ministry of Education officials do the survey, but after a formal letter, several email exchanges and three telephone calls to the Chief Education Officer

there seemed no way to get a response to my request and I had to proceed without the Ministry group.

The remaining 28 participants fell under the jurisdiction of the Director of School Supervision, who gave permission for them to participate in the study. However, getting contact information for the participants became the next major challenge. When I requested contact information from the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education, they pointed out that McGill had that information; and so I began the slow, unpredictable business of getting contact information from the outside. The Department of School Supervision eventually mailed a complete list of Trinidad and Tobago school principals. Regrettably, that list was not current, and many of the participants were not listed. Several who were on the list had since been promoted to different jobs and the current contact information was not available from the old schools. Of the 28 participants for whom permission had been given, valid contact information was obtained for only 16. The remaining 12 were either not listed or incorrectly listed. All attempts to get further information from the Director of School Supervision were unsuccessful. Email addresses for missing participants, supplied by their colleagues who were reached for interviews, also failed to elicit any response.

Of the 16 participants I was able to contact, two vice-principals, both male, withdrew for health reasons before completing the survey. Of the remaining 14, only 11 actually went to the website to complete the survey. Of those 11, two started the survey, giving their names and their schools, but never went back to complete it, despite several attempts on my part to encourage and support them. A third participant left the survey unfinished, but had completed the entire first section. I decided that this constituted enough data for the participant to be included in the

study. Numerous emails had been sent to participants. I logged 230 phone calls to Trinidad and Tobago and, in the end, I secured nine participants (See Table 3):

- 4 principals
- 2 vice-principals
- 2 school supervisors
- 1 Senior Dean

Table 4

Description of Survey Participants

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Position	Years Of Service	
				in Current Post	in Education
Renukah	F	56-60	Principal	2	35
Chris	M	46-50	Principal	5	20
Kathy	F	51-55	Principal	7	25
Michelle	F	51-55	Principal	2	8
Doreen	F	56-60	Vice Principal	6	34
Asha	F	51-55	Vice Principal	6	39
Bob	M	51-55	Supervisor III	6	35
Kamini	F	51-55	Supervisor II	2	10
Hashim	M	51-55	Ag. Senior Dean	7	32

My original plan, as outlined in my proposal, was to have the entire group (n = 43) do a survey and then, from that group, to select a purposive sample of 4-6 principals for in-depth

interviews. In the end, as noted above, I did not obtain permission to interview the participants from the Ministry of Education. Compounded with the previously documented difficulty in contacting the school-based participants, this meant that, in the end, I interviewed all the participants I could get, resulting in a sample of nine participants. Since one of the principals who completed the survey was not available for follow-up interviews, I decided, with the approval of my committee, to conduct in-depth interviews with all eight available participants.

Sample Size in Qualitative Studies

Traditionally, sample size has been considered to matter less in qualitative research where there is no explicit emphasis on power or reducing sampling error. The relation between sample size and sample adequacy is especially tenuous in qualitative research. To begin with, there is no demonstrable way of estimating sampling error in qualitative research, given the non-probability samples typically used in qualitative studies.

The qualitative paradigm does have significantly different objectives: The qualitative researcher is more interested in giving voice to participants, in exploring the worlds of participants and discovering participants' meanings. In qualitative methods we seek not so much accuracy, as clarity; not so much precise measurements as deep understandings and, as DePaulo (2000) noted, "the objective in qualitative research is to reduce the chances of discovery failure, as opposed to reducing sampling error" (p. 2).

Given that the objectives of qualitative research are non-inferential, how important, then, is sample size? There are compelling arguments for and against the importance of sample size in qualitative studies. Even though there is no focus in the qualitative paradigm on making inferences, sample size is very important for practical reasons. More than the actual number of

participants, it is the question of sample adequacy that is important and a qualitative sample is considered adequate when it facilitates saturation. Mason (2010) insists that “if a researcher remains faithful to the principles of qualitative research, sample size in the majority of qualitative studies should generally follow the concept of saturation when the collection of new data does not shed any further light on the issue under investigation” (p. 2). Unfortunately, the perception of saturation is highly subjective and even the most practiced qualitative researchers cannot agree on the optimal sample size for timely saturation. A larger sample will almost always provide more detailed answers to the research questions, but a sample that is too big will entail a waste of time and resources beyond the point of saturation without further enhancing the findings. On the other hand, a sample that is too small will fail to cover the full range of perceptions in the population, fail to reach the point of saturation and would represent an effectively unknown population. The goal, therefore, is to find a sample that is adequate, one that is economical, but that yields rich data and leads to findings that are trustworthy.

Mason (2010) views the connection between sample size and qualitative standards as provisional and pragmatic: “Qualitative samples must be large enough to assure that most or all of the perceptions that might be important are uncovered” (p. 2). When the researcher judges that all important perceptions have been uncovered, the study (data collection phase) is said to have reached saturation point. It is considered futile to collect data beyond this point, however many additional participants may be available, because the additional data is not adding any new information to the study.

While sample size is clearly not irrelevant or inconsequential, the size of the sample per se is not the deal breaker or deal maker (Morrow, 2005) in qualitative research that it clearly is in

quantitative methods. Sample size, however large, “does not guarantee adequate evidence” (Mason, 2010). As De Paulo (2000) observed: “More important than numbers are sampling procedures: The quality, length and depth of interview data; the variety of evidence.” To this list, Morrow (2005) adds “the information richness of cases; and adequate sampling: Sampling errors so small that they do NOT invalidate conclusions reached by the researcher.

In conclusion, this sample, like all non-probability samples is not representative of any larger population and findings cannot, therefore, be generalized. This is a limitation because while generalization is not a primary concern in qualitative research, we still want findings to be credible enough to merit serious reflection and discussion. Because of the attention given to ways of increasing trustworthiness, findings from this study cannot be dismissed as idiosyncratic or having no validity beyond the individual contexts of the participants interviewed for this study.

Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained from a survey and one in-depth interview with nine TTELP participants. In addition, I interviewed one National Lead Scholar, as well as three teachers working under one of the principals interviewed, and the two directors of the project. Yin (2009) recommends multiple sources of data for case studies, including documents, archival records, interviews and observation. Documents are one of the four “basic sources of qualitative information” mentioned by Creswell (2013). In addition to the survey and interviews, I consulted the three annual reports on TTELP written by the Consortium (Consortium McGill University-Université de Montréal (2004, 2005 & 2006).

Telephone Interviews

The pilot interview was my first telephone interview and the only dry run I did before beginning to interview the Trinidad and Tobago participants, all of whom were interviewed by telephone. The decision to do telephone interviews with participants in Trinidad and Tobago was not taken lightly: The geographical distance from Montreal, compounded by the fact that the nine participants were scattered all over the twin-island republic, made travel to Trinidad and Tobago too expensive a proposition for me. The alternatives were to try free videoconferencing software such as Skype, or to do telephone interviews. Previous conversations with one of the two directors of TTELP, had revealed that there were serious internet-related issues in communicating with Trinidad and Tobago. Under the circumstances, the telephone interview was the most reliable option.

Nonetheless, I still had misgivings about the telephone as an interview medium: I was aware of the kind of telephone surveys where unsuspecting subscribers found themselves at the receiving end of cold calls from pesky telemarketers. General intolerance for these uninvited, unwelcome, invisible trespassers made it perfectly acceptable to hang up, without asking or answering any questions. The connection seemed too tenuous, the respondent too elusive for research purposes. In addition, no one among the many researchers I knew had used telephone interviews for data collection. It seemed not just preposterous, but somewhat lame to be collecting data by telephone for a serious study.

There was consensus among researchers (see Mertens, 2005; Shuy, 2002) that face-to-face interviews were unrivalled in their ability to produce rich, reliable data. All other interview modes were measured against the face-to-face standard and failed to measure up. The in-person interview approximated to natural everyday conversation, it produced more small talk, politeness

routines, joking, nonverbal communication and asides. The telephone interviewer, on the other hand, had to deal with a major ‘handicap’: the absence of a visual dimension and the resulting inability to “observe the interviewees’ body language and their contextual surroundings as a part of the interview” (Mertens, 2005, p. 173). This situation, according to Shuy (2002), creates an unnatural context because so much that happens in conversation is contingent on the physical and visual responses, reactions and cues. Respondents are, therefore, less likely to speak freely, resulting in less self-disclosure and hampering the development of trust and intimacy (Mertens, 2005; Shuy, 2002). This is a potentially serious drawback when the research is about sensitive issues. Braverman (1996, cited in Mertens, 2005), in his discussion of two studies that compared responses to questions about substance abuse, found that “the strongest evidence of underreporting occurred in the telephone survey mode. He suggested that the underreporting may be due to respondent confidentiality concerns and lack of opportunity to build trust in the telephone mode” (p. 173).

Wilson and Edwards (2001) examined the use of telephone interviews for data collection in educational settings. Drawing on findings from recently completed studies by the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) which had used telephone interviews, they identified three major advantages and disadvantages of telephone interviewing and recommended strategies for the effective use of telephone interviews in educational research.

The three potential disadvantages of telephone interviews highlighted by Wilson and Edwards (2001) were sampling errors, low response rates and quality of information. The first of these problems, sampling errors, was compounded by the fact that in the UK there is no complete listing of residential numbers from which samples may be drawn. Wilson and Edwards noted that researchers usually solved this problem by “resort[ing] to either quota samples or random

samples” (p. 3). They found clues to potential errors in statistics on telephone ownership in the UK: These statistics showed that 10% of households in the UK do not have a telephone. While it was noted that that percentage was falling, the researchers expressed great concern at the fact that “households without telephones tend to be in disadvantaged areas, headed by young adults, unemployed people, those on low income and lone parents” (p. 3). Another clue found in the statistics was the 25% of households who do have a telephone but who are unlisted. Wilson and Edwards (2001) noted that this percentage was rising and that unlisted households “tend to be younger, located in urban areas and include more young women” (p. 3).

The second potential problem, low response rates, was “caused either through failure of the researcher to contact the targeted respondent or respondents’ refusal to be interviewed” (p. 3). Wilson and Edwards (2001) gave great practical advice for dealing with the problems they identified. Recommended strategies for improving poor response rates included making contact in writing before the interview through principals’ or professional associations and calling a potential respondent three times only and then moving on.

The third problem, quality of information, is related to the more rapid pace of telephone interviews compared to other interview modes, and the lack of visual cues. These researchers found that letting the respondents have the interview topics in advance helped to improve the quality of information obtained from the telephone interview.

On the positive side, Wilson and Edwards (2001) spoke of three major advantages associated with telephone interviewing: Greater geographical coverage, greater flexibility in terms of both location and time; and the ability to use random sampling.

Glogowska, Young and Lockyer (2011) investigated the use of the telephone to collect qualitative data in educational settings. Contrary to findings from most of the previous research on telephone interviews, they concluded that “some respondents may be more willing to discuss certain subjects over the telephone and may feel physically safer doing so than in face-to-face interviews” (p. 20). The interviewer for their study found that “the distancing effect of the telephone interview did prove helpful in some cases and may have improved the quality of the data collected” (p. 22). Interestingly, this interviewer was confident that she could bridge the gap when necessary, reporting that she “felt able to engage on a more personal level with the respondents when needed” (p. 22). The respondents were not as inhibited as the researchers had expected, even though they were students who had withdrawn from programmes and who were being asked “to recall and discuss potentially distressing personal events such as academic difficulties, financial problems, family illnesses and bereavements and their own health problems” (p. 20). Glogowska, Young and Lockyer (2011) found them to be “extremely frank” in discussing the issues which led to their withdrawal and reported that “none of them exhibited any overt distress during the interview” (p. 20). Whereas most of the literature reviewed for this topic discussed telephone interviews in terms of participant invisibility and its attendant problems for the interviewer, this study also examined the issue of interviewer invisibility and showed that it can be an asset for the interviewer as well as for the respondent.

Glogowska, Young and Lockyer (2011) listed as possible disadvantages “the potential difficulties with building rapport when visual cues are lost, the need for concentration and energy on the part of the interviewer to keep the interview on course and to remain engaged, and the likelihood of respondents being distracted by other things around them while they are being interviewed” (p. 18).

The more I read about telephone interviews, the more I realized that my misgivings were based on a context that had changed dramatically over the previous decade. Telephones, and especially cellphones, had intensified their presence in the lives of everyday users in a way unimaginable in the previous millennium: “An expansion of ownership of telephones in the population means that representative sampling is not as difficult to achieve as it was when having a telephone was an indication of wealth” (Glogowska, Young & Lockyer, 2011, p. 18). More importantly, the intense, everyday use of cellphones had created a comfort level with the medium that was tantamount to a paradigm shift. Many young people, in particular, were completely at ease using the telephone or cellphone to communicate even their most intimate thoughts.

The literature on the use of telephone interviews has been slow to reflect this paradigm shift, with mainstream thinking in this narrow field continuing to suggest that the use of the telephone for interviews jeopardized the development of trust (Mertens, 2005; Shuy, 2002). Findings from Glogowska, Young and Lockyer’s (2011) study suggested that the non-development of trust and intimacy in telephone interviews may be an effect not of the medium itself, but of the respondents’ prior experience and comfort level with the telephone and the interviewer’s mastery of the medium. The postulated relationship between the blindness of the medium and respondents’ ability or willingness to allow the development of trust and intimacy has, not surprisingly, weakened over time as telephone and, in particular, cellphone use has soared.

As telephone use for the collection of qualitative data in educational research continues to increase, researchers in the field have been emphasizing the importance of recognizing the disadvantages of this medium at the planning stage of research. Glogowska, Young and Lockyer (2011) insist that “if face-to-face interviews are rejected in favour of a telephone approach, this

needs to be fully justified. The particular advantages and disadvantages of conducting interviews over the telephone must be balanced for each study” (p. 25). We know, for example, that the increased use of telephones and the resulting decrease in users’ inhibitions are especially pronounced among young people. Glogowska, Young and Lockyer (2011) underline the importance of recognizing this limitation in studies using telephone interviews:

Many young people are comfortable with the use of telephone and mobiles but this may not be true for other sections of the population, particularly if they have communication difficulties, a hearing impairment, speak English as a foreign language, are physically frail or cognitively disabled. All such limiting factors should be heeded if a telephone interview design is being considered. (p. 25)

Table 5

Advantages and Disadvantages of Telephone Interviews

Advantages	Disadvantages
Greater geographical coverage.	Visual cues unavailable – body language, contextual surroundings.
Greater flexibility (location and time).	Development of trust, intimacy hampered because of the above.
Can facilitate random sampling.	Underreporting, less self-disclosure because of the above.
Less time-consuming.	Shorter, less thoughtful answers. Problems with the quality of information.
Good for collecting open-ended responses.	Likelihood of respondents being distracted by other things around them while being interviewed.
Higher response rate than mailed surveys.	Need for interviewers’ concentration and energy to keep the interview on course and to remain engaged.

	Possible sampling errors.
	Low response rates

The disadvantages of telephone interviews are well-known (see Table 5). The absence of a visual dimension and its ensuing problems form a conspicuous bloc among these shortcomings. Wilson and Edwards (2001), in collaboration with the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE), participated in several studies where telephone interviews were used. They gave the telephone interview their vote of confidence more than a decade ago: “We found that overall the advantages outweighed the possible disadvantages.” (p. 4).

Wilson and Edwards (2001), while endorsing the telephone interview as a tool for collecting quality data, are adamant that it should never be used as a stand-alone method, but only in conjunction with others in a multi-method design: “We would not recommend that telephone interviewing is used as a ‘stand-alone’ method, but should be used in conjunction with another research method (Wilson & Edwards, 2001, p. 4).” This advice seems sound, given the questions about credibility that often stalk qualitative findings. The pragmatic consensus is that telephone interviews are an acceptable option in cases where geographical constraints, financial or time limitations, considerations of personal security or other such extenuating circumstances complicate the organization of in-person interviews.

Findings from the literature on telephone interviewing show, with increasing conviction, that the medium itself is fully capable of delivering quality data. Glogowska, Young and Lockyer (2011), for example, have asserted that “there is already evidence to suggest that data obtained through telephone interviews are no less valid than those obtained in face-to-face interviews” (p. 21). It is made quite explicit, however, that there is no magic in the medium itself, that the onus

for quality delivery is on the research team and that the role of the interviewer is paramount.

Wilson and Edwards' (2001) criteria for the collection of quality data from telephone interviews reflect current thinking in the field: "Given good research design, careful planning and sensitive interviewers, we have no reason to question the quality of information" (p. 4).

As I said at the beginning of this section, the decision to interview participants from Trinidad and Tobago over the telephone was not taken lightly. Geographical distances - between Montreal and Port-of-Spain and among the participants' addresses across the two islands - weighed heavily in my decision to do telephone interviews. I knew that as educational leaders, my participants were used to having serious telephone discussions with colleagues, parents and officials of the Ministry of Education. I could still not be sure how comfortable they would be with the idea of discussing sensitive matters on an international telephone call.

Fully aware of the limitations of the telephone medium, I adopted four strategies for bolstering the trustworthiness of data from the telephone interviews: Firstly, great care was taken during the interview to put the participants at ease and maximize the likelihood of getting rich, accurate data, for example making sure to give an adequate preamble to remind them of the purpose of the interview and to put them at ease. Secondly, I did my best, through rehearsals and metacognitive strategies (ongoing monitoring of the interview to identify any indications of discomfort and intervene with proactive lines of commentary to neutralize them), to attempt to standardize the interview protocol and refine my interviewing skills. Thirdly, during the actual interviews, special attention was given to probes and prompts designed to elicit perceptions which may not be readily expressed because of the telephone medium. Fourthly, triangulation with the directors of the project and the National Lead Scholars was used to confirm or disconfirm findings from interviews with principals.

Emerging evidence from studies of telephone interviews is helping to boost the credibility of data obtained through this medium. These developments are encouraging for those who find it practical, necessary or simply preferable to conduct interviews over the telephone. In a voice that is gaining in volume and clarity with every new study on the subject, these researchers are telling a new story about telephone interviews, one that sounds familiar but has a happier ending. Face-to-face hegemony is still the status quo in the field of interview modes, but the balance of power is shifting slowly and no one should underestimate the potential and the promise of the telephone. Even without the visual component which will inevitably become a standard feature of telephone technology in the near future, the telephone has the potential to deliver quality data in a low-cost, high-speed format, from anywhere in the world at a fraction of the cost and time of the face-to-face interview.

The Pilot Interview

Pre-testing is a very important step in the design and evaluation of data collection instruments (Bell, 2002; Yin, 2009). If there are adjustments to be made to the instruments, pilot data can identify areas where changes are required and allow the researcher to incorporate those changes before data collection proper begins. Singleton and Straits (2002) said that the purpose of a pilot interview is to ensure that “the survey questions and instrument as a whole are evaluated to ascertain that they meet survey objectives and quality standards.” Yin (2009) recommends pilot testing as a way “to refine data collection plans and develop relevant lines of questions.”

Background Information on Pilot Interviewee

I had planned to do the pilot interview with a secondary school principal from Trinidad and Tobago, but was unable to find one. Not wanting to use one of the four principals I had lined up

for the study, I decided to use a senior teacher in a secondary school in Trinidad whom I will call Maria. She had been teaching modern languages at the secondary level for 15 years and acting as Head of Department for the past five, but she had no experience as a principal or vice-principal. Maria⁵ was very knowledgeable about the education system in Trinidad and Tobago. She had participated in many professional development activities and attended one leadership development course, but had not participated in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project.

The imperfect fit between the pilot interview and the study participants resulted in several limitations: Firstly, the pilot interview questions which I had developed had to be adapted (See Appendix A), given that Maria had not participated in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. Since she could not comment meaningfully on TTELP (She had not even heard of the project before the interview), the questions were rewritten to generate background information about professional development in general and leadership development in particular in the Trinidad and Tobago education system. In addition, I had decided to ask her about the appropriateness of the TTELP model of leadership development for Trinidad and Tobago as well as the likely impact of the programme on the participants primarily, but also on the students and teachers working under them.

The full benefits of pre-testing were not derived from this pilot interview, largely because Maria's background, experience and ranking as an educational leader were not sufficiently matched to those of the participants that I would be interviewing. As a result, data from the pilot

⁵ All participants are referred to by pseudonyms in this thesis.

interview could not meaningfully inform a detailed restructuring of the interview instrument as originally intended.

Nevertheless, the pilot interview served as a dry run for the in-depth interviews, allowing me to familiarize myself with three very important features of the data collecting context: Firstly, the telephone as a medium for data collection, secondly, the audio recording of the telephone conversation, and thirdly, the distinctive, vibrant accent of Trinidad and Tobago. The experience of the pilot interview gave me the opportunity to discover and resolve any potentially troublesome issues related to the use of the telephone for data collection. My concern about the quality of reception on the long distance line was all the more important because the conversations needed to be recorded for subsequent transcription and coding. The pilot interview also provided an opportunity for me to reacquaint myself with the accent of Trinidad and Tobago. I had never been to the twin-island republic and had not heard the accent much since my undergraduate days many years earlier. It was important, going into the in-depth interviews, to have a sense of how well I would understand my participants and what challenges the transcription of the interviews might present. On a long distance telephone connection where reception could be erratic and where I would not have the benefit of being able to lip read, these unpredictable elements needed to be demystified.

Online Survey

The online survey was the first source of data from TTELP participants. It needed to provide basic descriptive information about the participants as well as allowing them to describe their experiences of leadership and leadership development before TTELP. These self-descriptions would be the baseline against which their perceptions of personal and professional growth after TTELP would be assessed.

The survey consisted of 33 questions (see Appendix C): 15 questions about the participants' experience of the programme, 11 about their professional background and 7 demographic questions that required no analysis: date, name of school or department etc. The questions were developed by me in collaboration with one of the programme directors and were designed to answer my research questions as well as to provide feedback to the consortium.

I considered carefully the option of having hard copies of the survey couriered down to Trinidad and Tobago and delivered or mailed to participants by a local research assistant or recommended educator. This person would also organize the collection and return of the completed surveys to me at McGill University. I rejected this option because it posed several problems, among them the handing over of control to people I did not know well; the potential threat to confidentiality and anonymity; and the effect that perceived threat might have on participants' willingness to be frank in their responses or to participate at all. In addition, because at that stage the plan was to send the survey to all 43 participants, it was difficult to estimate how long the data collection process might take or what the final cost might be.

Given these concerns, I opted for Survey Monkey and was able to quickly set up the survey. I had it tested by two doctoral students at McGill for clarity of instructions and user-friendliness of the site. Both students gave it their approval in both areas. Their comments (See Appendix D) were used to fine tune the survey.

Information and consent forms (see Appendix N) were sent to participants as soon as contact with them was established. Participants were usually requested to read the forms carefully and return a signed copy to the researcher. Consent for the online survey, however, was organized differently. Firstly, consent forms were emailed to participants as attachments for them to read at their convenience. When they later visited the Survey Monkey website to complete the survey,

the first two boxes to be checked were consent boxes (See Appendix C) and these were retained, together with the accompanying survey data, as proof of consent.

Participants navigated their way through the survey without any major difficulty. A source of frustration for some was the fact that it had to be completed in one go. I had set up the survey so that there was no way to interrupt the process and return to it at a later date. In fact, it was not even possible to return to previous pages in an ongoing session to make changes. I became aware of this when I got in touch with participants who had left the survey unfinished. By then, however, others had completed it under these conditions, so I decided not to attempt to change the conditions half way through. With hindsight, building that flexibility into the survey might have made the site more user-friendly to my participants and I might have succeeded in retaining all 11 subjects who visited the website.

In the end, in spite of my best efforts, different conditions had to be allowed for one participant, a school principal who had not completed the survey. With great reluctance but little choice, given the number of participants I had left, I decided to allow this participant to complete the unfinished section (Questions 21-31) on the telephone. It was done immediately before the in-depth interview. Many attempts to encourage this participant to complete the survey had failed. These questions dealt specifically with the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project and the impact it had on participants. The follow-up interview could not have been done without it, and the withdrawal of this participant would have reduced the number of participants at the follow-up stage to seven.

In-Depth Interviews.

I had spoken briefly to the participants in order to set up the interviews and answer any remaining questions about the study. The in-depth interview, however, would be my first

opportunity to interact at length in real time and *viva voce* with the participants. I expected the open-ended questions and interactive nature of the interviews to generate deeper, more reflective statements.

The broad objectives of the in-depth interviews were twofold: to allow participants to reconstruct their experience of TTELP within the broader context of their professional lives and to give them the opportunity to raise issues which were important to them, but which may not have been addressed by the survey or by the interview questions. After reading the first batch of completed surveys, I added a third objective: to get participants to clarify or elaborate answers given in the online survey. Questions about the completed survey were always addressed before the start of the in-depth interviews proper. One principal had indicated that they would be unavailable for further participation after the survey, so there remained only eight participants for the in-depth interviews.

The interview itself consisted of five highly open-ended questions (see Appendix I) that the researcher developed. Questions 1 and 2 were my core research questions. Questions 3 and 4 were intended primarily for future explorations of the data, looking at changes in beliefs and assumptions among participants and at the relationship between participants and instructors. Question 5 was designed to complement the survey question on the same subject, which had produced a surprising mix of answers. I wanted to give participants the opportunity to return to the subject and go into more detail, given the importance of follow-up activities in the leadership development literature (Guskey, 1994; Reitzug, 2002).

The in-depth interviews, like the pilot interview, were done by telephone. The advantages and disadvantages of telephone interviews were discussed in the section on the pilot interview. I had learned from that first interview that despite findings in the literature showing that telephone

interviews lack the natural flow of in-person interviews (Mertens, 2005; Shuy, 2002) and do not support the development of intimacy (Glogowska, Young & Lockyer, 2011), participants would speak freely if they felt comfortable and had things that they wanted to share. There would, obviously, be more at stake for TTELP participants than for the pilot interviewee. From my own experience and understanding of Caribbean culture, I expected TTELP participants to avoid saying anything that would offend or discredit their own Ministry of Education out of a combination of national pride and concern for their own professional advancement. They would be guarded, but not silent, uncomfortable at times, but not afraid to speak their minds. I felt, therefore, after the pilot interview, that there was a risk of my overcompensating for the disadvantages inherent in telephone interviews. A balance had to be struck. This would be the challenge for the in-depth interviews. I would have to monitor the pace and the productivity of the interviews. Were the data being collected excessive? Were they extraneous to my research questions? This was the kind of metacognitive challenge I accepted as necessary at this stage of data collection.

The interviews ranged in duration from 28 to 72 minutes. They were all recorded using a digital audio recorder plugged into the telephone line using an adapter designed for that purpose. All telephone interviews conducted for this study were recorded in this way, using the same equipment.

Teacher Interviews

I interviewed three teachers working under one of the participating principals. The focus of this study was perception of changes in leadership practice as a result of TTELP. It made sense, therefore, to interview teachers working under these principals since they were in a privileged position to notice and report on improvements in leadership skills.

The aim of the teacher interviews was to discover whether, in the view of these three teachers, change had occurred in the leadership practice of their principal, who was one of the participating principals in TTELP.

The instrument for the teacher interviews consisted of eight questions developed by the researcher (see Appendix L). The first four questions sought information about the teacher's professional background, their experience of leadership development and their views of effective educational leadership. The last four questions asked the teachers to report on perceived changes in their principal's leadership practice.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted by telephone and recorded in the manner described for previous telephone interviews. Teachers consented by returning the signed portion of the consent form by fax, email (with scanned signature) or regular mail.

Ministry Official

The Ministry official was an expert in educational administration with experience both as a professor of education at the University of the West Indies and as an educational consultant. I expected him to understand and have insightful comments not just about the participants, but about the service providers, the Consortium, as well. A Trinidad and Tobago participant with expertise in leadership development could potentially enrich the study by facilitating the triangulation of data from participants and the Consortium. He might also provide a more intimate account of participants' views of leadership and their responses to TTELP.

The Ministry official was interviewed by telephone and the interview was audio-recorded as described above for interviews with other participants in Trinidad and Tobago. The interview instrument was developed by the researcher and consisted of eight questions. Three of those

questions dealt with the official's interactions with TTELP, and their view of leadership issues in the Caribbean. The interview lasted for 45 minutes.

The Directors

The two directors of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project were interviewed in person in their respective offices at McGill University and the Université de Montréal. The two directors, the faces of the Consortium, were responsible for the overall management of the project: The design of the instructional system; the recruitment of instructors and support staff in Montreal as well as in Trinidad; and the writing of the final report. More than anyone else, they knew the background and understood the workings of TTELP. I interviewed the directors last in order to let them clarify any issues that were raised by other participants.

Questions for the directors (See Appendix M) were developed by the researcher in collaboration with one of the project directors. The questions covered a broad range of topics from the earliest meetings about the project to the guiding principles behind it, the operationalization of the project and an assessment of its impact. The semi-structured interviews lasted between 1 hour 15 minutes and two hours. The interviews were audio-recorded and consent forms were signed before the interview began.

Transcription

The pilot interview lasted for 48 minutes. It was recorded using a digital audio recorder and then downloaded to my computer and transcribed using DSS software. The transcription took ten hours and produced a 38-page (double spaced) transcript. I listened to the full interview first before beginning to transcribe. Before classifying a word or phrase as undecipherable, I listened

to it at least ten times. Transcription conventions used for the pilot interview and all subsequent interviews are listed at Appendix B.

Data Analysis

The theoretical framework used to guide both the questions asked and which guided the analysis is that of *Communities of Practice* (Lave and Wenger, 1991) with its strong emphasis on the context and process of learning. The epistemic centre of this framework is the community: Knowledge is embedded in the culture and the learning process is an ongoing series of participatory interactions between the individual and the community.

In the present study, both leadership and leadership development were seen as occurring within a specific professional community of practice. The themes and categories were interpreted as to how these participants constructed their notion of leadership and its development through the lens of their shared community of professional educators in the Trinidad and Tobago educational system.

Once the surveys were completed, I read each one through and proceeded to analyse them question by question. First, I compiled the descriptive information (from each of Questions 6-16) into lists, keeping to the same order of participants, so that I could see, at a glance, what the variation was in each category and whether there were other patterns emerging such as differences between administrators and principals. A summary of the descriptive data is shown in Table 4. All participants are referred to by pseudonyms, which are retained throughout this study.

For the remaining survey questions (#17-#31), I organized the data by question, as I had done for the background information. I decided, however, because these were data from open-ended questions rather than simple lists like the earlier answers, to draw a table for each survey

question. I listed participants' code numbers and profession, but the order remained the same as for the first set of questions (Appendices F and G illustrate this). When data for all the survey questions were compiled in this way, I began to analyse them.

The pilot interview had yielded three broad themes, with 10 sub-themes, 11 categories and 3 sub-categories (See Appendix H). As I read the survey answers, I checked emerging themes against categories from the Pilot data. There was some overlap, as all three broad themes from the pilot interview were represented, but the survey data generated many new dimensions of those themes.

I continued to analyse these data in my own way, which I would define as impressionistic: Checking emerging themes against the Pilot categories; reading and re-reading the nine answers under each question; asking myself "What is going on here?" and "What do data from this question add to the picture of leadership development emerging from this study?" I would re-read the answers until I was satisfied with my answer to these two questions (usually between 4 and 10 times) and then I would write a summary of results for that survey question. After I had analyzed and summarized data from all the survey questions, I used those summaries to write a summary of survey results.

Coding Crisis

About six months after I had written up the results from the survey, I was analysing the in-depth interviews when suddenly I found myself wondering why I had not coded the survey data. The answer that came to mind was that they were not coded because it was not an interview. It seemed to me that the questions each denoted a category, making formal coding redundant for such relatively short answers. While this explanation made sense, it did not provide a

justification for not coding the survey. I went back to the survey and did the coding, just as I had done for the pilot interview.

The survey coding built on the pilot coding, moving farther away from Maykut and Morehouse's (1994) constant comparison and focusing, instead on finding a way to capture emerging patterns at a glance and to retrieve the data quickly.

By this time, I had read the survey data through many times and was aware of the emerging themes. I decided to retain the survey question as the focus of my analysis because the questions were semi-structured and the analysis would be more focused than an analysis by subject. As I had done for the impressionistic, earlier analysis, I drew a table for each survey question. I listed participants' code numbers and profession, and then added a third column for the codes. I then read the data again, unitizing it on the transcript itself by using double forward slashes in red (//) between units. Moving the units to a secondary location, whether to an index card or to a Word file had proved time-consuming and without any obvious advantage.

After unitizing the data, I read it through again, this time using the coding column to code each unit. The first coding was deliberately quick and always tentative: I used whatever thoughts came to mind first, without being too analytical or trying to compare it with previously coded units. Then I did another more careful reading, checking related sub-themes, categories and sub-categories before deciding whether there was a good fit between previously coded material and the new unit. As an example, I shall now look at how I coded one principal's response to survey question #18 (see Table 6). I found four important issues under two broad headings. The participant was highlighting training needs that are important to her, specifically confidence building and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. These were seen as part of the broader professional goals of personal development and professional growth.

Table 6

Example of a Coded Transcript: Principal's Answer to Survey Question #18

18. Explain why you chose those three professional development experiences.

Data Code	Answer	Coding
0104	To fill knowledge gaps // To gain confidence in these areas // that I considered important for personal // and professional development	Training Needs (Ind)⁶ ANKnSk ⁷ Confidence building Professional Goals Professional growth Personal development

The coding coordinates for these four units are listed in Table 7. They were added to the participant's file, which is titled "Overview of Categories: 0104" i.e. categories from one data set: 01 which is the survey and from one participant: 04 meaning participant #4. To facilitate retrieval, coding coordinates are listed in strictly alphabetical order.

Table 7

Coding Coordinates for the Four Units Coded at Table 6

Theme	Sub-Themes	Categories	Source Codes
Leadership Development -> Professional Goals -> Personal development	(S18 ⁸)	(0104 ⁹)	
Leadership Development -> Professional Goals -> Professional growth	(S18)	(0104)	
Leadership Development -> Training Needs(Ind) -> ANKnSk	(S18)	(0104)	

⁶ Individual (versus systemic) training needs.

⁷ Acquisition of new knowledge and skills

⁸ Source code: Data is from survey question #18.

⁹ Data Code: 01 is survey code; 04 is the participant number.

Leadership Development -> Training Needs(Ind) -> Confidence building (S18) (0104)

When coding of the survey was completed, I copied all the coding coordinates from the individual question coding sheets and pasted them into a master document called ‘Overview of Survey Categories.’ My intention was to have a summary of the survey data at my fingertips: to be able to pull out information about participants or themes effortlessly and efficiently. Two entries from the Survey Master are listed in Table 8 and discussed below:

The coding coordinates are quite simple in themselves. Beginning with the themes, they move in the direction of the categories and sub-categories. The source code, in parenthesis, identifies the survey question which yielded these data. The frequency section begins with a total count (bolded) indicating the number of units from the given survey question coded for this category. After that, there is a breakdown of the distribution among participants. This facilitates retrieval of information by showing clearly that of the 19 units of data from survey question 27 which were coded as ANKnSk, 13 came from one participant, #9. It is clear, likewise, that participants numbers 1, 2 and 8 contributed 2, 1 and 3 units respectively. There were no data at Q. 27 on ANKnSk from participants numbers 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7.

Table 8

Two Entries from the Survey Master Document

Theme	Sub-Theme	Category(Source Code)	Frequencies
-------	-----------	-----------------------	-------------

Leadership Development -> Impact -> Positive -> ANKnSk¹⁰ (S27)¹¹

19¹²: 01x2¹³●02●08x3●09x13

Leadership Development -> Impact -> Positive -> New Paradigm (S24) **10:** 01x2●02●04●05x2●06●08x3

The second set of coding coordinates provides a similar snapshot of participants' perceptions of the impact of the programme. The ten units which were coded for perceptions of a paradigm shift came from six of the participants. The frequency chart shows that subject #8 contributed three of those units and that subjects #3, #7 and #9 made no mention of a perceived paradigm shift.

Changes of Coding and instances of Double Coding were also noted on the Master files. In one case, a participant had mentioned distributed leadership three times in her answer to the survey question. These points were important to any discussion of the various models of leadership, but also in a discussion of the importance of teambuilding. For these reasons it was double coded. The double coding protocol for the Survey Master is illustrated in Table 9. The three units appear twice on the Master file, but each entry is cross-referenced to the other, so that I was aware that they were coded twice. On the actual Survey Master document, they appear on pages 2 and 7 respectively.

Table 9

An Instance of Double Coding from the Survey Master Document

¹⁰ Acquisition of new knowledge and skills

¹¹ Source code: Data is from survey question #27

¹² Total amount: 19 units coded as ANKnSk came from survey question #27

¹³ Of those 19 units, 2 came from participant #1

Theme	Sub-Theme	Category(Source Code)	Frequencies
Leadership -> Types of Leadership -> Distributed Leadership(S22)			3: 06x3
<u>DB coded as:</u> [Leadership Development -> Impact -> Positive -> Teambuilding(S22)]			
.....			
Leadership Development -> Impact -> Positive -> Teambuilding(S22)			6: 06x3●09x3
<u>DB coded as:</u> [Leadership -> Types of Leadership -> Distributed Leadership(S22)]			

Footnote: Units that are highlighted in yellow are double coded. Squared brackets which follow identify the other category in which the units appear.

The Survey Summary and other Master documents compiled from these data required extra time and energy which were always in short supply during the analysis and writing of this thesis, but in the end the effort was well rewarded as these documents made a huge difference in my ability to retrieve data for review, comparison or further analysis.

Impact of Survey Methods and Results on Interviews

Given the generally positive perceptions of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) which emerged from the online survey, I decided that it was important to explore, in the in-depth interviews:

- Those areas where participants had made suggestions for improving this kind of professional development programme.
- The question of implementation, which was not asked directly in the survey, but emerged as a factor in participants' favourable evaluation of the programme.

Whereas the survey questions were structured and produced relatively short answers which stayed close to the topic, the in-depth interview questions were much more open-ended and

encouraged participants to re-live their experience of the project, the highs as well as the lows and take us on a metaphorical tour of the ground they had covered both during and after the programme.

In-Depth Interviews

My fears about problems with technology were unfounded. The telephone interviews were conducted without any disconnections or other glitches. One vice-principal and one school supervisor conducted all communication, including the in-depth interviews, on their cellphones. Problems with email were cultural rather than infrastructural: Many participants in Trinidad and Tobago were not in the habit of checking their email regularly.

The real problem with the principals was finding an entree into their busy schedule and getting them to commit to a time slot for the interview. Just getting them at the other end of a telephone line was something of a triumph. Support staff was very protective and in most cases, I ended up having to make numerous calls before being able to speak with the principal. The best time to call, I was told repeatedly, was around 6:00 am. At the time when I was conducting these interviews, that would be 5:00 a.m., my local time, so that I would have to either make the call from my cell phone (since I did not have a land line) or come into McGill at that time to make the calls. Even during the interviews, there was often a sense of intense activity around the principal's office and I remember one principal, about 15 minutes into an interview, pleading with me to wrap it up as quickly as possible because he had ten parents waiting outside his office and would have to go.

Transcription

The interviews were all recorded in full, including the first segment that dealt with the Survey questions. They were recorded using a digital audio recorder and ranged in duration from

28 to 67 minutes. Immediately after each interview, I downloaded the audio to my computer and transcribed it using software associated with the audio recorder. I listened to the full interview first before beginning to transcribe. Before classifying a word or phrase as undecipherable, I listened to it at least ten times. I typed in the timestamp from the software several times per page, depending on the number of difficult passages. Transcription conventions used were the same as for the pilot interview (See Appendix B). There were thus three transcripts for each interview: the Master transcript, an anonymized Master with all identifying information removed, and a third coded and partial transcript which retained only those parts of the interview which addressed my research questions and which I used for my data analysis.

Coding and Analysing Data from the In-Depth Interviews

Using the last mentioned of these transcripts, the coding transcript, I proceeded to read each interview, unitizing and coding the transcript as I had done for the survey. The process was exactly the same as for the survey transcripts, so I will not repeat the details here.

Once the final coding decision for a unit had been made, I colour coded the transcript, as I had done for the pilot interview. The colour coding key used in transcripts throughout this study is at Appendix J. Coding coordinates for all the units from the interview data were copied and pasted into participants' Interview files and would eventually be compiled into an Interview Master file.

The in-depth interviews represented a significant development. Methodologically, they signalled a clean break from the constant comparison of Maykut and Morehouse (1994). They also gave full voice to the participants, who were free to talk at length about any area of the project.

Interviews with Teachers

Interviews with three teachers working under one of the participating principals generated many of the codes that had already emerged in the in-depth interviews, providing confirming evidence for these codes. The teachers spoke about their principal's enhanced leadership skills, with particular emphasis on her interpersonal relations which they all described as excellent. They also spoke of communication skills and conflict resolution skills, reporting that this principal had become more open with students and teachers, spent more time with them, and showed more commitment to them.

The Ministry official

Data from the Ministry official provided supporting evidence for categories from the TTELP participants as well as the directors. The official expressed praise for the instructors and confirmed that the participants were very happy with them. He expressed support for the Consortium and suggested that obstacles were put in their way as a result of the competitive nature of the bidding for delivery of the programme, which was won by the Consortium. This extended the categories of challenges faced by the principals to include challenges faced by the Consortium. The Ministry official also spoke of challenges which the other officials confronted. These include variation among the participants, which made it very difficult for the officials to address the varied needs of the group and the related issue of time. Like the participants, the Ministry officials found that there was never enough time to accomplish all that was expected of them. As we shall see in the following section, this was in contrast to the views of the directors, who did not understand why time was an issue in TTELP. The relationship between the Consortium and the Ministry officials provided more categories of challenges as it emerged that other officials, who were not available for interviews, were not always happy with the direction

that TTELP was taking. The Ministry official who was interviewed spoke of a lack of true collaboration and said that at times the communication between the Consortium and the officials broke down.

Data from the Ministry officials supported the triangulation of data from other sources and provided new categories of challenges which shed light on the complexity of leadership development in the context of Trinidad and Tobago.

Documents

The three annual reports on TTELP written by the Consortium (Consortium McGill University-Université de Montréal (2004, 2005 & 2006), were consulted after I had analysed data from all other sources. As I read through the reports, I made notes in the margins when issues mentioned in the reports were related to emerging themes from the survey and interview data.

The annual reports provided very useful background information on TTELP: Issues relating to the earliest discussions between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Consortium, for example, were clearly outlined in the reports. These reports confirmed much of what the two directors had said in their interviews with me, for example the fact that they were very sensitive, from the beginning, to the need for contextual relevance and sensitivity. In other cases the reports echoed my uncertainty, such as on the question of why the National Lead Scholars, a brilliant idea by all accounts, proved so difficult to operationalize.

Development of Themes

Categories play a very important role in organizing the data in qualitative research, but more importantly, they have a critical epistemological function which is to help the researcher discover the meaning of the data (Ely et al., 1991, p. 150). The development of themes in

qualitative studies forms an important conceptual bridge that must be a clear and credible link between data analysis, results and conclusions.

In keeping with qualitative traditions, my approach to data analysis was inductive (Ely et al., 1991; Huberman & Miles, 1998, Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). There were no a priori codes to guide the analysis, rather the codes emerged from participants' data. An exception to this was the online survey: Questions, for example, about follow-up activities and performance evaluations, predetermined the inclusion of these two codes.

Codes were given basic names drawn, whenever possible, from the actual words of participants (in vivo codes). When, for example participants spoke about "meetings at the Ministry" or "late promotions," these phrases were used, as is, to describe the categories into which those units were placed. Similarly, when a participant exclaimed: "You know, I remember **[Instructor01]** talking about relationships, relationships, relationships [...] I remember him saying that. Oh! He's a wonderful man!" (T/02/01-30), this chunk of data was placed in the *Instructor (Positive)* code.

As the analysis proceeded from categories to broader themes, however, the codes were more often than not, chosen by me. The categories *Meetings at the Ministry* and *Late Promotions*, for example, were eventually filed, along with other categories, under the sub-theme *Bureaucracy*. The participants never used that word, but I selected it as the most appropriate description for a broad range of comments about attitudes, events and policies in the education system generally or in the Ministry of Education specifically which frustrated participants' ability to acquire, enhance or implement their leadership skills.

The iterative process of constant comparison was the analytic force driving the coding. This meant that in the earliest stages of coding, categories were in constant flux as they were

elucidated internally by additional units or set in sharper relief by new units assigned to contrasting categories. When all the data had been coded, I checked and re-checked the categories in order to ensure that units in the same category were similar and that those assigned to other categories were indeed different.

When I was satisfied with the codes, I moved on to the next level of analysis: exploring relationships and patterns among the categories in order to find themes that capture the stories of most participants (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Thoughtful, intensive re-readings of the data, category by category, led to the emergence of three themes which hosted 49 categories and sub-categories.

At this point, one of my co-supervisors suggested, that I draw a simple diagram of all the categories in the study. With my categories spread densely over a sheet of paper, I drew lines around those that were closely related, encircling each family of categories with one line. A second, then a third line accounted for all the categories. I had to re-think and then re-trace the lines a few times, checking and re-checking entries in some categories, and revisiting rules of inclusion, until I felt sure that each category was in its best-fit circle. In the end, the categories clustered around three major themes: Leadership, Leadership Development and Challenges.

The intention was always to give voice to the participants, to honour their reflections and perceptions. For this reason, all data were coded with the exception of salutations and elements of friendly conversation which were irretrievably off-topic. A good example of this is the brief exchange that I had with one vice-principal when I discovered that we shared a love of crochet.

Ensuring Trustworthiness

The purpose of evaluation studies is to determine whether stated objectives were met, whether the return on investment was favorable and whether or not the programme should be renewed. The stakes are high and so too should be the quality of research methods used in the study. There should be no doubt in the minds of those who must read the findings and recommendations and make decisions based on them that the findings are trustworthy.

While there is not the same emphasis as in quantitative research on generalizing to a broader population, it is still important to design a study which is robust enough to ensure that what emerges about the experience of participants will not easily be dismissed as peculiar to them and not applicable or relevant to the broader population of leaders in education. Seidman (1991) makes the case for reconceptualizing representativeness in qualitative research:

The job of an in-depth interviewer is to go to such depth in the interviews that surface considerations of representativeness and generalizability are replaced by a compelling evocation of an individual's experience. When this experience can be captured in depth, then two possibilities for making connections develop. They are the interview researcher's alternative to generalizability. [...] First, the researcher may find connections among the experiences of the individuals he or she interviews. [...] Second, by presenting the stories of participants' experience, interviewers open up for readers the possibility of connecting their own stories to those presented in the study (p. 42).

In qualitative studies, the key to producing a study with credible results is trustworthiness. Ely et al. (1991) assert that "A qualitative researcher pays continuous, recursive, and, we dare say, excruciating attention to being trustworthy." (p. 156). Denzin (1998) describes trustworthiness as consisting of four components: Credibility, transferability, dependability and

confirmability which, he notes, correspond to the positivistic constructs of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity respectively. Guba and Lincoln (1989), list the following strategies for enhancing credibility in qualitative research: Prolonged and substantial engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, progressive subjectivity, member checks and triangulation. For the enhancement of transferability, they suggest thick description and multiple cases; for dependability, they recommend a dependability audit; and for confirmability, a confirmability audit or chain of evidence.

I shall now do a brief review of strategies used in this study to enhance trustworthiness: Data for this study were collected from multiple sources: Firstly, there were interviews and survey data from school supervisors, principals and vice principals. I also interviewed the two directors of the project, one of the National Lead Scholars and three of the teachers working under one of the school principals. In addition, I reviewed several documents relating to the programme, including the three annual reports produced by the directorate of the TTELP Consortium.

Multiple data sources are important in qualitative research because, in the words of Eisner (1991), “we seek a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility, that allows us to feel confident about our observations, interpretations, and conclusions” (p. 110). Many of the major themes that emerged from the data, recurred in most or all of the data sources. The issue of non-certification, for example, so dominant in the data from TTELP participants was acknowledged by both project directors as an issue that arose during the earliest negotiations among stakeholders, became a contentious issue early in the life of the project and never went away, retaining its contentious status and power to rankle as late as two years after the end of the project. The annual reports document the existence and persistence of this problem: high level

discussions about it and attempts to find a solution by the Ministry and the directorate of the Consortium and, in the end, frustration that resolution was not to be.

The Ministry official, too, acknowledged, that non-certification was a major issue for the participants. With the benefit of greater detachment from the issue than other players, he was able to understand both sides of the issue: He pointed out that TTELP was not designed for certification. This issue, then, should never have become contentious.

I don't think that the programme, the TTELP programme, was built for certification. [...]

There was the perception from the service provider that ... ok, well, we're training you to use information and to apply it (T/05/01-3).

But he also stated matter-of-factly that a course without a certificate at the end would be the butt of jokes in Trinidad and Tobago: The service providers, then, might reasonably have been expected to anticipate participants' malaise over the award of a certificate of participation rather than a diploma of some kind.

but context is context and in the Caribbean you can't (**tell people**). "I was in a program but I don't have a certificate." They will laugh their heads off. So, I think that generated the concern (T/05/01-4).

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) noted that "the combination of interviews, observations from the field and reviews of relevant documents increases the likelihood that the phenomenon of interest is being understood from various points of view and ways of knowing (p. 146). We see this clearly with the certification theme as it emerges, elucidated by conflicting perspectives, the data achieving not so much convergence, as a multi-faceted authenticity which reflects the

complexity of the problem (with its political, economic, professional, cultural, emotional and administrative dimensions).

The theme of instructor excellence is one where we see the kind of convergence across data sources that “lends strong credibility to the findings” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 146). There was consensus among the participants that the instructors were outstanding both academically and professionally. This could have resulted from perceived pressure to say what would be viewed as socially acceptable. The convergence of excellent ratings of the personal, professional and pedagogical qualities of the TTELP instructors – from the directors, the Ministry official and the annual reports - lent power and persuasion to the theme.

One of the directors echoed the students’ enthusiasm for the instructors when she exclaimed: “Loved the instructors! The instructors were so good!” T/06/02-36. The Ministry official also had praise for the instructors, as well as the curriculum:

... pretty good theoretical content. They went through the material ... Excellent, actually, so they should have picked it up (T/05/01-11).

I think that what was good would have been the variety of the courses, the scholars themselves who participated in the courses ... that was of pretty good quality. (T/05/01-22).

The multiple sources of data used in this study allowed for the corroboration of participants’ perceptions of massive knowledge gains, and implementation of leadership skills, two key themes which were the focus of my research questions. Participants had nothing but praise for the quantity and quality of information they had acquired. They reported that from day one, they were acquiring knowledge which they could take back to their respective schools and

implement. Their leadership practice was improving all the time. This report of massive gains in knowledge and leadership skills was corroborated by the Ministry official as well as by the two directors. In addition, I interviewed three teachers working under one of the principals and they were of the impression that, as a direct result of her participation in TTELP, their principal had indeed improved her leadership skills.

One of the strategies recommended for enhancing credibility is peer debriefing. Although peer input could have been greater in the case of my study, it is worth mentioning that the online survey was piloted by two colleagues, both of them PhD students at the time, who were requested to complete the survey and to give feedback on the survey content and protocol as well as the Survey Monkey website. Feedback from these two reviewers was used to make minor, but useful improvements to the survey. The first drafts of the survey results and the methodology chapter were reviewed by a research associate and a post doc respectively, both graduates from the McGill Faculty of Education, who were able to offer general comments to the effect that my data analysis and the reporting of my results were proceeding as they should.

As a strategy for enhancing credibility in qualitative research, member checks are highly rated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Mertens, 2005). Researchers return to respondents with transcripts of the interviews conducted and get them to check that they have been accurately represented. There is no doubt that member checks can enhance the researcher's ability to represent the experiences of the respondents more accurately, but despite the obvious advantages of the member check, most researchers recognize that it can lead to endless requests for changes to the transcript. The member check is considered so important, its contribution to the trustworthiness of a study so significant, that any risks are outweighed by the certain rewards of the strategy.

The risks warrant some scrutiny here because they persuaded me not to carry out member checks with TTELP participants, even though I agree, in theory, with Maykut and Morehouse (1994) that “all research participants appreciate and deserve to learn of the outcomes of a study they have helped make happen” (p. 147). Poland (2002) describes member checking as “potentially problematic” and proceeds to explain the reasons why:

When a researcher presents a transcript to a respondent for review, what he or she typically gets back are not only corrections to (perceived) errors in transcribing, depending on the person’s recollections of what was said, but also attempts to clarify, justify, or perhaps even revoke or alter aspects of what was said (p. 643).

Poland thinks that the sight of their words in print and the thought of them “falling into the wrong hands” produces anxiety in respondents, especially for “professionals who may have made comments about their colleagues or employers that could be damaging if revealed” (p. 643).

I have already described the problems that I faced in trying to recruit participants for this study. Throughout the data collection period, I was worried that participants might withdraw at any time, as they were free to do so. One participant had even pleaded with me to let him go, but I had resisted. I believe that member checks with the TTELP participants would lead to withdrawals and that any withdrawal could lead to others as the news of it spreads among participants. With only 9 of the 43 participants secured for the study, I have decided not to do anything that could lead to participant flight, and that, regrettably ruled out member checks.

While researchers must be committed to doing whatever it takes to conduct meaningful studies with findings that are credible, there is no wisdom in requiring qualitative research “to meet some or all of the usual positivistic criteria of truth” (Altheide & Johnson, 1994, p. 485). In

this study, the participants' stories are given prominence. What has emerged is a compelling view of the leader-in-training in Trinidad and Tobago; but principals and vice-principals everywhere will, hopefully, see reflections of their own journey in the TTELP stories that they read here.

Ethics

Ethical issues pertaining to the collection and analysis of data for this study and the reporting of results have been given serious consideration. Firstly the rights of participants were fully respected. At no point were participants exposed to the risk of physical or psychological harm. Details of the study were provided for their consideration before they agreed to participate. Information about the purpose of the study, the use of results and the likely consequences of the study on their professional lives were included in the information package they received at the very beginning.

The information and consent forms (see Appendix N) made it clear to participants that they could refuse to participate in the study and were free to withdraw at any time. Information provided by participants was protected by the researcher who guaranteed their anonymity by assigning numbers to all documents collected from them. In addition, no financial reward or inducements of any kind were offered for participation in this study.

This study was carried out and its findings reported honestly and accurately, with respect for the intended audience. I made every effort to produce a text that was free of jargon and understandable to those being studied. Every effort will be made to communicate the practical significance of my research to the community of researchers and practitioners, so that inquiry will be encouraged and used. This may entail writing a summary of the study and/or giving talks geared to the needs of the various stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

As described in the Methods section, analysis of the data from this study led to the emergence of three major themes: Leadership, Challenges and Leadership Development (see Figure 2). Each theme consists of sub-themes, categories and sub-categories which drove the emergence of the major themes. The results section is divided into three parts, one for each of the major themes which will frame the discussion of the findings from this study. In each section, there is a chart showing the hierarchy of categories under each theme. Within each of the three theme-based sections, results will be presented in the order indicated on the chart. There will be a brief summary of results for each theme as well as for each sub-theme.

Part One: The Leadership Theme (I)

The Leadership Theme (see Figure 2) is about how leadership is manifested in a given space. In the context of this study, what does leadership look like in an educational space? The focus of this theme is relatively narrow, trained on the leadership construct itself. Basic information about the personal characteristics and skills set associated with effective leadership fall under this theme, as do types of leadership, levels of leadership and other lists of dimensions and domains which define the essential features of the construct. The importance of leadership is a fundamental premise of this theme, so strategies for its formative evaluation, deployment of leadership within organizations and the building of leadership capacity all fall under this theme. Three sub-themes emerged from the leadership data: Personal, Professional and Organizational.

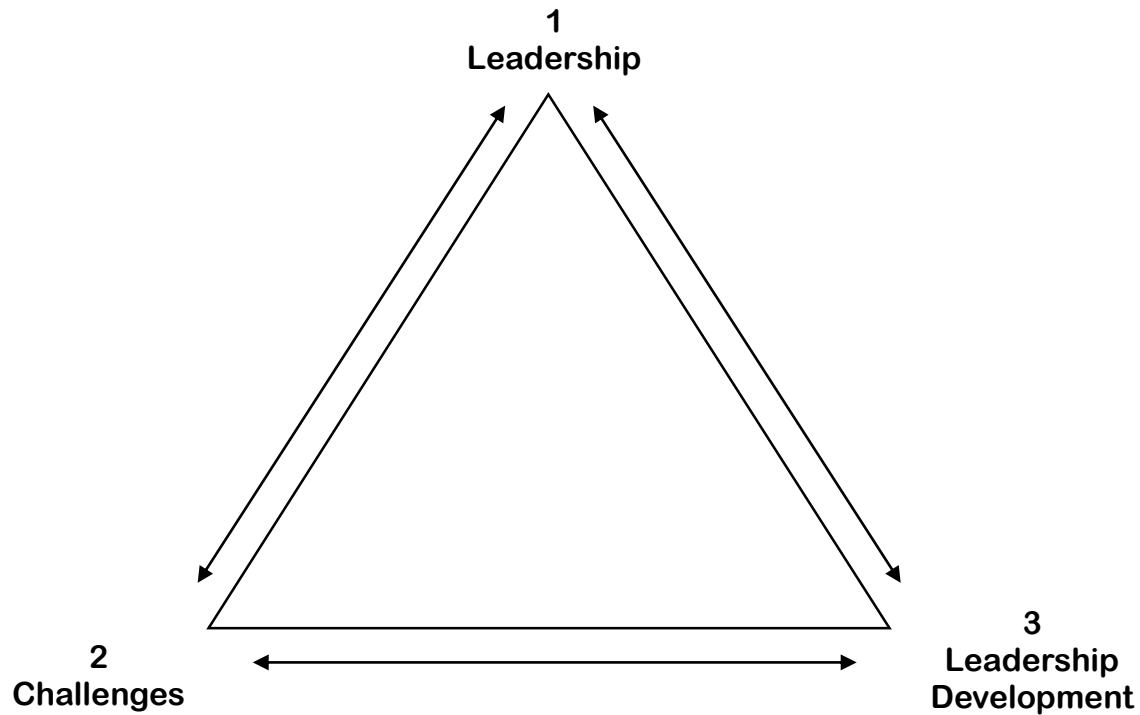


Figure 2. Three Major Themes. This figure illustrates the three general themes which emerged from this study.

IA Introduction to Leadership Sub-Theme –PERSONAL

This sub-theme describes each participant's unique leadership signature. Participants spoke about their background in educational leadership, the schools they headed, their academic background as well as personality traits and their own leadership style.

IA1 Personal Characteristics

Survey questions 24 and 25 asked participants to describe themselves before and after participating in TTELP. Their self-descriptions bring a personal dimension to the study and provide endearing snapshots of the future leaders in the throes of a major paradigm shift.

Chris said that before participating in TTELP, he was a headstrong individual with an inflexible mindset and an autocratic leadership style. He credited TTELP with helping him to

forge a gentler, more accommodating and more compassionate leadership persona, even though he admitted that his fiery temperament was still evident in some of his interactions: “It helped a great deal. It also built a lot of new things within my personality. I’m still headstrong. I’m still stubborn and I still tell Ministry officials where to get off, **(but I do it in a different perspective of mind now.)**” (T/02/08-3)

Asha, a vice-principal of six years, with 40 years of service in the Trinidad and Tobago education system, described herself in the interview as conservative, but very approachable and a good listener. At the time of the interview, she was slowly implementing the new knowledge and skills gained from TTELP. “I try not to make drastic changes,” she said. The teachers working under Asha found her “more understanding [...] more a people-person [...] more approachable” than the principal and while remaining accessible to her staff, she was careful not to alienate or antagonize the principal: “She is the principal. I try my very best to ensure that I give her the respect that she deserves.” (T/02/01-1)

Equity was a major concern of Asha’s. She believed that rules should apply to everyone. “Some leaders,” she said, “they have one rule for one and another rule for others and that I find unacceptable.” She reported rampant political interference in the education system, but asserted, nonetheless, that she would not accept political favours: “If a job is advertised, I will apply. Interview me with everybody else. Take me on my merit, not because I have political [...] connections].” (T/02/01-1)

IA2 Leadership Style

Kamini said that she adopted a more participatory approach to leadership and became more people-oriented as a result of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project

(TTELP). The new knowledge acquired from TTELP empowered Kathy to reflect on her own leadership style and to hone a skills set, which she could then use in her leadership practice.

One of the key things that Kathy learned was the importance of democratic leadership for motivating and developing teachers. All her life, she had been an autocratic leader. She felt very strongly, before participating in TTELP, that this approach was the most effective and efficient:

“If you want to get the job done, [...] tell them that they have to do it and you get it done.”

(T/02/06-2) She was, however, increasingly aware that her approach did not always work for her teachers: “Autocratic leaders have a tendency to demotivate their subordinates, because our subordinates, they would always like to know that they are part of the decision-making and not that things are just thrust upon them.” (T/02/06-1)

Early on in the program, therefore, Kathy made a conscious effort to change her autocratic style to a participatory approach by focussing on team work. This participatory leadership model would be empowering for teachers as they became active participants in the decision-making process. She successfully introduced more democratic features into her leadership practice and felt secure enough as a leader by the end of the programme to insist that

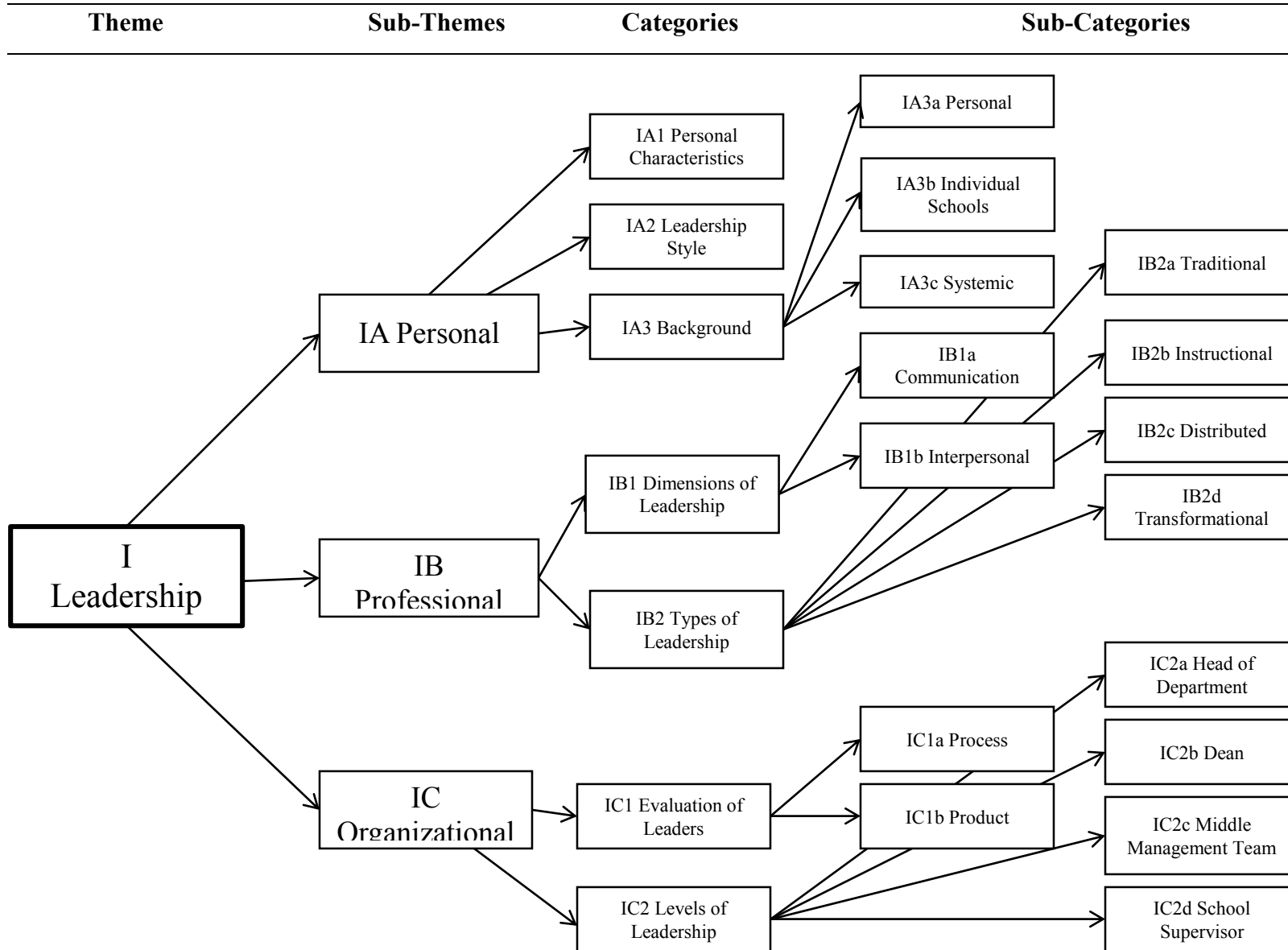


Figure 3. Theme I Leadership. Categories which emerged from the data and led to the theme of leadership.

the leadership style used in a given situation should be informed by the nature of the situation, and not by any a priori commitment to a particular approach.

Asha had to make many external changes such as the creation of a middle management team, but many of the changes that she had to effect were personal, as she revised her assumptions about leadership and adopted a new leadership style with a new vision for her school. She, herself, had always practiced and observed in the leaders around her a top-down approach to leadership. For many years, she had expected, and even demanded, compliance:

Because that's what I knew. That's what I was exposed to all my life. Top down, you know. You give an instruction, you expect them to carry it out." I felt bothered when people questioned it ... and you know, in my mind, I keep saying 'I am the princ-
(xxxxxxxxxx) you have to do this.' Now, that has changed for me. If people question, I am very willing to listen "Ok, let me hear" "Ok, do you have an alternative ... method? Ok. Well, let us see what you are saying. Well, fine" and sometimes, you know what, it is alright for me to say "Ok, well, then my idea wasn't such a good one. Yours is better. Let's go with that." And I don't have a problem. (T/02/01-26)

TTELP sensitized her to the advantages of a more democratic approach, which she began to cultivate and implement almost immediately. In the end, she described her own style as "incorporat[ing] both the authoritarian and democratic styles in dealing with subordinates." She explained that leading a school which is "old with a rich legacy and certain traditions [that] create the positive school culture" meant that "sometimes it is necessary to be authoritarian." The programme confirmed her sense that different approaches were valid in different contexts.

Hashim, too, reported that as a result of his participation in TTELP, he had changed his leadership style: He was now more of an instructional leader. He also said that [TTELP] “brought me to the realization that I was on the right track in much of what I was doing [...] without knowing that it was the correct thing[...] I found out after the training programme that I’d been doing good things.”

Examples of this are the tough-love approach that Hashim had used with a group of troublemakers at his school; his instinctive sense that problems in education require flexible approaches which take into account the situation and the times; and his lifelong belief that the primary focus and justification for whatever we do in education must be student outcomes.

You cannot keep doing the same things you’ve been doing 10, 15 years ago. You have to come up with new strategies and innovative ways to try and stimulate the [...] learning process and this is something that the programme would have actually impressed upon us (T/02/02-12).

IA3 Background

The first part of the survey provided descriptive information about the participants. In addition, participants sometimes shared stories about their experience of educational leadership, their schools or the education system in Trinidad and Tobago. By the end of the study, we had retained a pool of information about participants’ academic background, previous professional development activities and their experience of leadership development events and activities. This information formed an important backdrop for each of the participants, shedding light on their

world view, their approach to educational leadership, and even, in some cases, the baggage they brought into the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP).

IA3a Personal

The principals and vice-principals in this group were highly qualified and motivated to learn. They had all done the Diploma in Education and four of the six had done the Certificate in Management and Leadership. In addition, one of them was completing a M. Phil and another was pursuing a PhD in Education. Four of the six had done additional courses or attended workshops or conferences in educational leadership or management. These additional courses and workshops were usually organized and subsidized by the Ministry of Education and, in some cases, by the school itself. Two of the principals had done courses in Computer Studies and one had done a diploma in the teaching of Integrated Science.

The two supervisors, Kamini and Bob, had both attended workshops which the Ministry had organized for their training: basic preparation for school supervision, followed by more advanced training in conducting interviews and disciplinary investigations. Bob was a school supervisor with 35 years' service in the Trinidad and Tobago education system, 18 of them in teaching and the remaining 17 in supervision. Although still officially a school supervisor III, he had been seconded to the Restructuring and Decentralization Action Unit of the Ministry of Education. At the time of the interview, he had been working there as a Project Officer for six years.

Kamini was a school supervisor with ten years' service in the Trinidad and Tobago education system. Her first degree was in Educational Administration and she had risen rapidly through the ranks – from being a teacher, then vice-principal and principal at the primary level -

to become a supervisor in less than ten years. At the time of the interview, she had been a school supervisor II for two years.

Kathy was a secondary school principal in her early to mid-fifties. At the time of the interview, she had been an educator for 25 years, the last seven of them as principal of her school. She had been promoted to the principalship from the vice-principal's position at the same school.

Hashim said that for the past seven years he had been Acting Senior Dean. He was heavily involved in the school: in administration because of his senior position, but also in many extra-curricular activities. Hashim had strong views about education. He believed, for example, that a military-run boot camp to instil discipline in students was wrong. He liked the idea of exchanging ideas with different cultures, arguing that the resulting "cross-pollination" led to a deeper understanding of issues and people. He viewed education as a "labour of love" where salaries would never reflect the workload or the quality of work done. He also felt strongly that teachers need to be more vocal, more assertive and more committed to making a difference for students.

Hashim was involved in social and political causes and deeply concerned about the vulnerable and disadvantaged. He shared with me his conviction that his own advancement as an educational leader had been hampered by his political affiliations. This belief was never allowed to weaken his commitment to his students or his excitement about the opportunities created by a good education.

1A3b Individual Schools

In speaking about their schools, participants often supplied background information such as the kind of school (Government run or private, religious or non-denominational etc.) number of students and range of classes. Any discussion, analysis or comparison of educational issues needs to be framed by basic information of this kind. I found out, for example, that Hassim, the Canadian-trained dean was teaching at a relatively small Government Secondary School with no sixth form and just under 700 students on its roll. Renukah, on the other hand, was principal of a school with 800 students and had 150 faculty and other staff working under her.

1A3c Systemic

Much of what happened (and did not happen) at the Trinidad end of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project is best understood in terms of the local culture and politics. Background information on the education system in Trinidad and Tobago gave very interesting insights into the workings of Government departments and institutions and shed light on some of the decisions that were taken concerning the project.

We learned from Asha, for example, that “We don’t have a substitute teacher programme in Trinidad.” Likewise, Kamini’s comments on the managerial culture of the Ministry of Education helped us to understand why many participants felt abandoned after TTELP finished:

Nobody. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. It’s done. We have our certificates and it’s there on our file. No mention, nowhere, no ... We did a report and that was about all. That’s gone ... into the archives! (T/02/03-19) [...] The culture of our Ministry. If somebody drives an

initiative ... like the person who was at the helm of this initiative at that time, is not even in the organization any more. Right? So, that remains there. [...] Yes. That remains there. That person is no longer there. So, someone else come[s along] and they will drive another initiative and that is what happened. (T/02/03-20)

Summary of Leadership Sub-Theme PERSONAL (IA)

The sub-theme 'Personal' grouped together all background information by and about individual participants. Personal characteristics were drawn from participants' discussion of their own personalities and idiosyncrasies, their struggles and triumphs. Background information about schools headed by participants and about the Trinidad and Tobago education system was also placed here. In addition, and in keeping with the overarching leadership theme, personal qualities and skills identified by participants as associated with good leadership were also included in this sub-theme.

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project helped several of the participants to smooth over some of the rough edges of their leadership style. Chris and Asha both reported that they were able to bring fiery temperaments under control over the course of the programme. Many of the participants also reported a paradigm shift which saw them move away from a hierarchical approach to more democratic, participatory approaches to leadership.

Introduction to Leadership Sub-Theme PROFESSIONAL (IB)

The professional sub-theme has as its focus issues relating to the practice of leadership: The leadership skills that drive effective leadership practice and the various kinds of leadership, from the traditional to the transformational.

For many TTELP participants, democratic approaches to leadership became a reality over the course of the programme. Despite working for most of their careers in a culture in which hierarchical models of leadership are the norm, these participants embraced distributed and transformational models of leadership and set about implementing them in their leadership practice. They created their own management teams and seemed enchanted at the ease with which they could now get teachers to buy into their proposals for the school and support them all the way to realization. They also came away with the understanding that you need a vision of where you want to take your school and that vision must be spelled out in a strategic plan.

IB2 Dimensions of Leadership: Introduction

Leadership is a multidimensional construct and effective educational leaders must possess a complete skills set which allows them to move seamlessly among the many roles which their position entails. Renukah, one of the participating principals put it this way: “a good educational leader has to be several persons at the same time.” “You have to be [an] instructional leader, [an] ambassador, you know, communicate with the community and so on. You have to be [...] collaborative [...] keep yourself on the cutting edge, be well informed.” We are “modernizing, constantly changing [...] so we have to be change agents as well.” As an example, she said that educational leaders need to “be able to change the culture of the school if it’s a negative one.”

IB2a Dimensions of Leadership: Communication

The importance of communication was emphasized throughout the programme. Participants were taught strategies for improving their communication skills, not just in the area of interpersonal relationships, but in the broader context of asserting their influence as leaders, making a case for proposed innovations and networking at all levels of the education system. By

the end of the programme, they all saw the value of communication skills in ensuring collective responsibility and facilitating collaboration among teachers and administrators in the realization of improved student outcomes.

Kathy was able to hone her communication skills through TTELP. She learned that there is major communicative power not just in speaking, but in listening and in doing. The leader must, therefore, be aware that s/he is always communicating, even when s/he is silent and even when the chosen course of action is to do nothing.

...and we learned that your communication has to do with not only the thought, mental thought, but your actions as well, you know? ... and how you speak with people and the actions you use could really demotivate your workers. This was very, very helpful the section on oral presentation, you know (T/02/06-4)

Through the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project, Asha learned a great deal about communication not only with her own staff, but with the Ministry. For example, she related the story of needing to approach the Ministry of Education about getting an IT technician for her school. "I wrote up a proposal [in one of the TTELP classes]" she recalled "and [...] the lecturer [...] said it was excellent." Asha described this exercise as "very real" and noted that the proposal she wrote was "used later on for a computer technician for our school."

Hashim said that the programme impressed upon participants other aspects of communication, such as the "need to entertain all views and to be as objective as [possible] and not only be objective, but to have foremost in the mind the purpose, and that purpose of all our activity is to increase student learning and the success of the student" (T/02/02-14).

IB2b Dimensions of Leadership: Interpersonal

The importance of relationships and team work was emphasized by TTELP instructors, who themselves came in for high praise as positive role models in this respect. Strategies for team building were frequently mentioned by participants (17 units) as having made a difference in their leadership practice. They spoke of increased sensitivity and empathy in regard to employee issues, which enhanced interpersonal relations in the workplace.

Bob said that his interpersonal skills were strong going into the programme, but he reported that they were further strengthened by the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. Like Doreen, he came out of the programme with a heightened awareness of the importance of interpersonal relations in organizations: “I’m more **(convinced)** that that is a critical element in an organization, you know, having people get along.” (T/02/05-4)

Kamini, likewise, mentioned her increased awareness of “the importance of relationships within the organization” as one of three outcomes of the programme that had a major impact on her leadership practice.

Coming out of the programme, Renukah realized that teachers and students “must feel valued. They must feel motivated” and that good educational leaders will ensure that they do.

Chris reported that after TTELP, he felt better equipped “to let others lead [...] to motivate others and EMPOWER¹⁴ them to do a better job.” He described his gains as “a whole new skills set” which had enhanced his interpersonal relations. He now “listens and empathizes

¹⁴ Participant’s emphasis.

with teachers. [His] door is always open.” His definition of a good educational leader was one “who is willing to provide information, guidance and empower others.”

Kathy considered the slice-through approach¹⁵ a positive feature of the program because it facilitated interpersonal relations among managers from across the many departments of the Ministry of Education. She said that as a result of this feature, she “was able to enter into relations with these officers and create a link between the school and head office.”

TTELP also fostered in Kathy an openness to and interest in student leadership. She noted that “students like their voices to be heard and they also want to be part of the decision-making” (T/02/06-8). In her school, a student council has been established and student leadership is evident in issues that matter to students including the design of school uniforms and the organization of morning assemblies. Although the student council is still “in its embryonic stage”, Kathy was clearly delighted that the students “feel a part of the school, they **(have ownership)** of the school.” (T/02/06-8)

¹⁵ The participants were drawn from across the entire spectrum of educational administration in Trinidad and Tobago. The group included guidance officers, heads of departments in schools as well as vice-principals, principals and school supervisors. In addition, there were officials from the Ministry of Education including curriculum officers, the Director of Planning and the Director of Human Resources. This method of participant selection, offering a cross-sectional view of the target population, became known as the slice-through approach.

Michelle found “the focus on sharing information” particularly valuable. She said that she now encourages her staff to cultivate the habit. She described a good educational leader as “one who listens - a lot.”

Doreen felt that interpersonal relations were the most important part of the educational leader’s skills set: “For me, the leader has to be a people person who can encourage [...] not just the teachers, **[but]** the teachers, the children, the parents.” (T/02/07-15) “Leadership must be able to motivate and to encourage [...] for the good of the school.” (T/02/07-16)

For Asha, the most positive aspect of the programme was the slice-through approach because it allowed her to build important relationships. She said “I was able to interact with people from various sections of the Ministry of Education thereby creating a network system - which I still use today.” As an example, she explained that she used her contacts from the programme who work in the Department of Curriculum to “speed up things with respect to staffing.” Asha’s definition of a good educational leader underlined the importance of relationships: “A good leader is one who [...] listens to what people say and also what is not said, who interacts and relates well with all concerned ... relationships, relationships, relationships.”

The focus on relationships that characterized TTELP, according to participants’ reports, led to significant changes in Asha’s leadership practice. She recalled successive instructors pondering, discussing and always returning to issues such as “How do you understand people and how do you get people [...] to perform the best?” (T/02/01-5)

That has helped me, understanding members of staff, because before, [...] I would get worked up and angry when people ... when they’re not pulling their weight ... and I

started to realize ... listen, you will never get 100% on board ... but if I get 90% ... let me work with what I have ... you know, because there will always be somebody ... who will say “No. I not doing that. That is not a good idea.” You will always have dissent. So, don’t wait to get everybody on board. Just move. And I have been doing that (T/02/01-5). “That program has helped me tremendously, in terms of being a good leader, and to lead and get the [...] results, get the [...] cooperation.

Another insight from TTELP led Asha to improve relations with the broader community, beginning with parents and alumni. Asha started to see these untapped human resources around her and adopted a new strategy:

We had the PTA, we had the alumni, we had people, but I did not really see their role. Now, you know what I have done through that course? I have asked parents to do a little profile on themselves and to see what area in the school they can help. We don’t have a substitute teacher programme in Trinidad [...] We’re taking them now, the parents who are willing to volunteer and we’re asking them to help supervise the different areas, come and spend two hours. (T/02/01-4)

IB3c Types of Leadership: Distributed

Bob said that he had noticed more commitment to distributed leadership among principals who participated in TTELP. He felt that teachers and students working under these principals stood to benefit from the expected improvements in leadership practice:

I have a sense that [they] are [...] getting their committees together, having the school management teams, ok? because that is an element of structure within the school-based management model that we’re using, so you have a school management team, they must

have their School Development Plan and so on, so on. So, I know there is that emphasis on that. And I'm certain that it would have been given the impetus from the training programme that the principal attended. (T/02/05-9)

This was a totally new approach for Asha who had been an authoritarian leader when she joined the programme. She found that the training enhanced her leadership practice in the area of teambuilding and her approach became more democratic as a result:

I'm throwing out suggestions. I am asking members of staff, and you know what? It makes my life a lot easier **(laughs)** [...] which is very important, cause I'll tell you what, when teachers believe that they ... they came up with the idea, they are going to buy into it and they are going to run with the idea and I don't have any problems, so I ... what I do, I ... I ... discreetly ... Sometimes I lobby, eh? I must say that. I will throw out ideas to different people. Let them chew on it for a while. (T/02/01-6)

To illustrate this emerging leadership style, Asha told the story of a school hall that needed renovations and how the school's administration got the staff to buy in to the idea:

So [...] what we did the principal and myself, we lobbied around: [...] "This would be a wonderful idea. [...] and then we wouldn't have the children in the **[hall]** blasting music and everybody passing and seeing them. It will have an enclosed classroom and they can be more creative." And you know what? Everybody bought the idea. We wanted that. And it worked, and you know what? It came as if it came from the staff, you understand? You have to be subtle. You have to know what you're doing and you have to make people feel that they are part of the decision-making process. (T/02/01-7)

For Hashim, too, delegating was to become a newly acquired skill. He found it not just practical, but liberating:

One of the first things was about time management and the delegating. We are able to delegate responsibility to others, subordinates and we're able, then, to do a lot more with your day than if you had this one-manism ... Onemanship, trying to do Jack-of-all-trades kind of thing (T/02/02-10).

IB3d Types of Leadership: Transformational

Kathy learned from TTELP that you must have a vision of where the organization is headed and that vision must inform activities and decisions in the everyday life of the school. Even before TTELP finished, Kathy had sat down with the management team at her school and drawn up a five-year strategic plan which reflected her vision for the school. She has since revisited and revised that plan in consultation with team members.

TTELP helped Asha to understand that a strategic plan is absolutely necessary before you can move a school forward as an administrator, [...] you need to plan, you must have a vision, a mission, which is what you will use to formulate your plan.

IB: Summary of Sub-Theme PROFESSIONAL, Leadership

Participants came away from TTELP with a heightened awareness of the importance of communication for effective leadership. They reported improvements in both written and spoken communication. They were also sensitized to the need to extend lines of communication beyond the school gates by reaching out to the community. Interpersonal skills, they learned, are critical to the success of any organization. The importance of relationships was stressed throughout the

Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project and participants reported immediate and impressive results when they applied their new knowledge and skills to their leadership practice.

Distributed and transformational leadership approaches were widely adopted by participants, even though this meant giving up the power and control they had enjoyed under hierarchical models of leadership, which are still prevalent in the Caribbean. Distributed leadership is a key part of the reforms being instituted by the government of Trinidad and Tobago, which has mandated the creation of management teams in the schools. Many of the participants went back to their schools and created management teams. Any fears and frustrations they may have had over this paradigm shift were obviously allayed as they started to see the effects of these new, more democratic leadership practices on team spirit, employee morale and their own personal growth.

IC: Introduction to Leadership Sub-Theme –ORGANIZATION

This sub-theme describes the strategic deployment of leaders within organizations and the need for ongoing evaluation of leadership performance. Here we meet key players in the hierarchy of educational leadership in Trinidad and Tobago and get a glimpse of their lines of communication and pathways to upward mobility.

IC1 Organization: Evaluation of Leaders

One of the survey questions asked participants about the contribution of subsequent evaluations to their development as educational leaders. Participants discussed the relationship between evaluation and leadership development in terms of either what they learned from the process or what they gained as a result of the evaluation.

IC1a Evaluation of Leaders: Process

The two school Supervisors, Bob and Kamini, explained that, as part of the evaluation process, they were required to state their goals for the coming year and those goals would be the basis of their evaluation at the end of the year. This diagnostic approach meant that specific “recommendations for improvement were shared” with those being evaluated. These two supervisors found the evaluation process relevant and rewarding.

Renukah reported that evaluations “have substantially enhanced my performance.” For Kathy, too, evaluations translated into opportunities to “work on improving weak areas and build on strengths.”

IC1b Evaluation of Leaders: Product

Some participants chose to focus on the rewards of positive evaluations. Chris found that the “excellent appraisals” he had received “in the past from my superiors [...] validated the effort I put in to make a contribution in the education of children.” In Doreen’s case, “positive feedback from [a] school supervisor provided motivation for continued development.” Asha reported that her promotion to the position of vice-principal was heavily influenced by “an extremely positive Special Report on my performance which was submitted by the Administration of my last school.”

IC2 Organization: Levels of Leadership

Levels of leadership within the Trinidad and Tobago education system are in line with international standards. Teachers can be promoted to Head of Department and then to the position of Dean. Above the Deans are the Vice Principal(s) and Principal. School Supervisors (SSI, SSII and SSIII in ascending order of seniority) are at the top.

The middle management team was a hot topic in the in-depth interviews, partly because its creation had been mandated by the Ministry as part of its drive towards decentralization and school based management. It was a popular topic, too, because it demonstrated how many of the participants were implementing the new knowledge and skills they were acquiring from the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. Asha discussed her newly formed team as follows:

What we have also done too, we have created a middle management team within the school, with the Heads of Department and the Deans [...] We meet with them very often. That, too, came out [...] of that programme. (T/02/01-7) The principal and vice principal cannot be everywhere, but the Deans and the Heads of Department can. (T/02/01-3)

They were able to set up their middle management team and, according to their reports, they quickly saw improvements in leadership outcomes: the school environment became more collaborative, communication and efficiency improved.

Summary of Leadership Sub-Theme –ORGANIZATION (IC)

The deployment and evaluation of leaders were the two topics under the “sub-theme’ *Organization*. There are many levels in educational leadership. The middle management teams mandated by the Trinidad and Tobago Government bring together a cross section of these leaders to manage schools as part of the decentralization process.

All educational leaders in the schools and in the Department of School Supervision are evaluated annually. Most of the participants reported finding the evaluations helpful, some because of the strengths and weaknesses identified by the process, others because of the promotions or other benefits associated with positive evaluations.

Evaluation of leaders is critical for personal and organizational growth. Any weakness in leadership can have a devastating impact on employee development and satisfaction and therefore on organizational productivity and success.

Summary of Theme I: LEADERSHIP

The leadership theme included stories of personal, professional and organizational strivings for excellence in leadership. There were snapshots of the main characters in this study as they prepared to embark on a journey of discovery and renewal in educational leadership. It also featured elements of the journey as they discussed the importance of communication as a tool to ensure the smooth running of the leadership effort.

Participants gave us a preview of outcomes of the project in their celebration of victory over fiery tempers and in their embrace of democratic approaches to leadership. Finally, the emphasis on the importance of evaluation of leaders reminds us that leadership is not a destination, but a journey and that there will be challenges along the way.

Theme II: CHALLENGES

Introduction

All leaders face challenges from time to time and must make critical decisions on how to confront them. Indeed, the ability to steer an organization through challenges is among the most important skills that a leader should possess in times of change and upheaval. In education, challenges must always be taken seriously and addressed proactively because the stakes are so high. There are challenges in education that have the potential to paralyze entire systems and seriously undermine student outcomes. Even problems with limited impact on the system can burden the principal, slow them down and erode their positive attitudes, compromising their

efficiency and ultimately their ability to provide the conditions conducive to excellent student outcomes. TTELP participants reported a wide range of challenges, from fiery tempers to unforgiving politicians. The challenges they experienced fell into two categories: ‘personal’ and ‘systemic’ (see Figure 4).

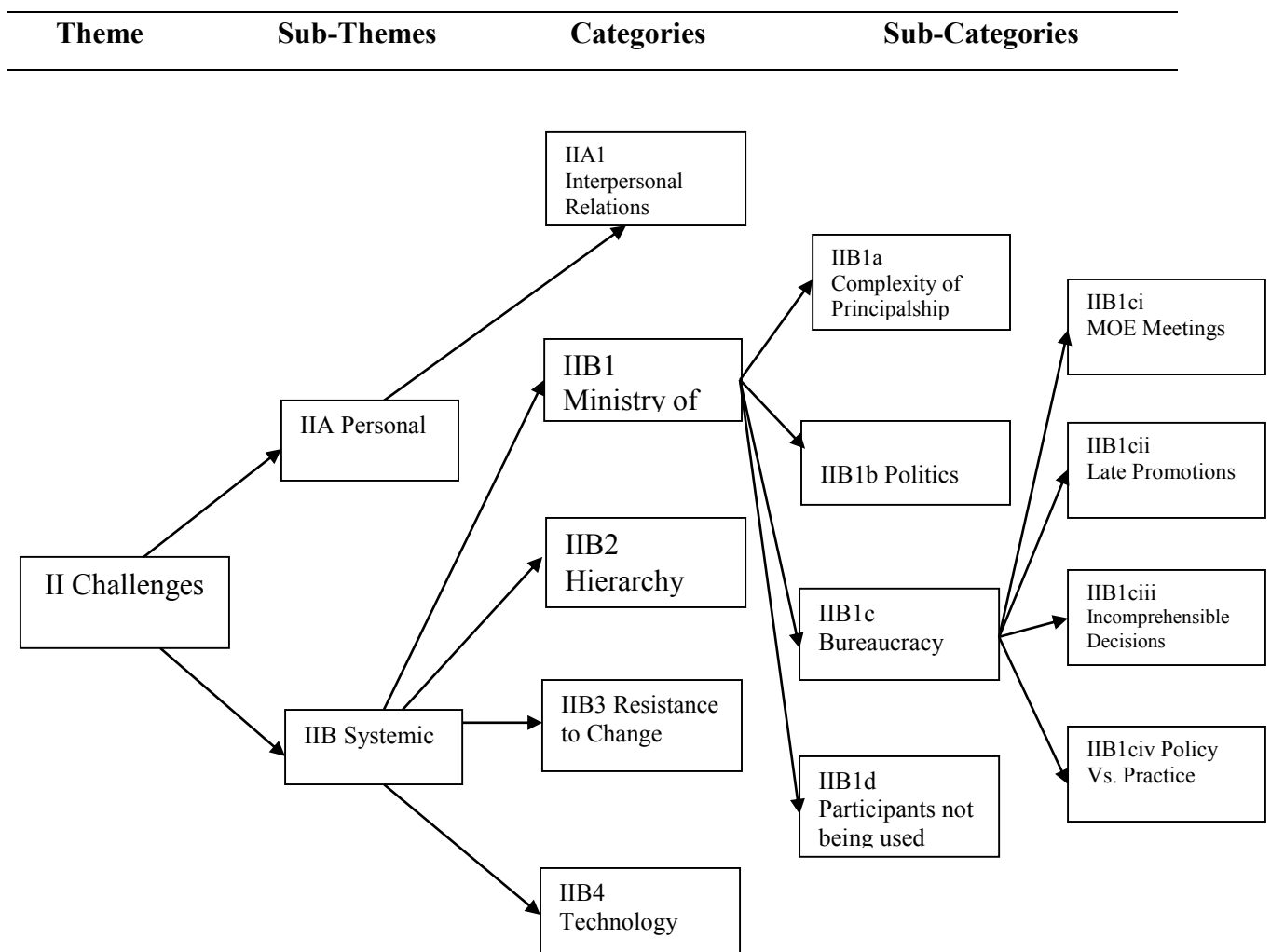


Figure 4. Theme II Challenges. Categories which emerged from the data and led to the theme of Challenges.

IIA Challenges Sub-Theme PERSONAL

Every organization has its share of challenges. Effective leaders know which challenges need to be addressed immediately and forcefully and which will only be resolved over time. Many of the challenges facing TTELP participants were systemic: big problems that were beyond their control. A small proportion of the challenges they faced were, however, personal in nature and more easily controlled.

Renukah, for example, was impressed with the idea of distributed leadership and set about implementing this new approach in her school. Unfortunately, she was incapable of trusting other people to get the job done and ended up doing a lot of extra supervision herself, which clearly defeated the purpose of distributing leadership in the first place.

On another personal note, an early challenge for Asha was the loneliness that can result from being in a leadership position. She found that the need to be seen to be fair made it difficult for her to have friends among the teachers working under her and left her in a very lonely position as a leader.

One of the first things I learnt is that you are friends with everybody and you are friends with nobody. It is very lonely at the top. [...] I have learned that you cannot ... you have relationships with your staff, but there is a line you must draw, because you could be easily, very easily be accused of being partial to one group or being biased to people who others will perceive as your friends (T/02/01-24).

Lack of trust appeared to be more than just an isolated individual problem. In fact, it seemed so entrenched in the culture than Hashim illustrated the cut-throat, distrustful ethos of the system by referring to the story of the liberation crab:

The one crab is going to the top of the barrel to liberate the rest of the crabs, but them rest of the crabs in the barrel don't want him to go over the rim for nothing, because he might leave them in the barrel after. (T/02/02-34)

IIB1b Challenges: Systemic -Politics

Almost all of the units coded as Leadership Challenges were about the destructive effect of party politics on the selection, promotion and development of educational leaders in Trinidad and Tobago. Asha provided detailed information about the nature and extent of political interference in the Trinidad and Tobago education system: "It is so blatant here. It is so blatant." (T/02/01-23)

Asha spoke of privileges being accorded to participants by the Ministry of Education on the basis of political affiliation: "There was a lot of [...] politics in the [Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project] because there are certain people who are affiliated with the present Government who were given special privileges. (T/02/01-21) Promotions, she said, followed the same partisan pattern: "There are a few of their friends who'll get some top jobs and that's it. The rest of us, we are out in the wilderness" (T/02/01-27).

Asha understood that in many cases, these promotions were intended to secure a higher pension for the administrators involved. She, nonetheless, condemned the practice as unethical, asserting that she could never accept such an appointment. It was clear, from her account that this led to situations where administrators were ridiculed because it was common

knowledge that they were promoted on the basis of political rather than professional considerations. For example, she discussed participants' response to the surprise promotion of one of their colleagues after the programme had ended: "and, you know, a couple of us had a good laugh because <@> we say **(Laughter)** "Oh my goodness! She slept in every class. She never hand[ed in] an assignment, and she is a [Title13] now." **(Laughter)** You know, we were laughing </@> (T/02/01-21).

According to Asha, incidents of this kind are rampant. "And this is only one case that I'm telling you about. [...] There are many ... many that I know of." They complicate leadership development and practice throughout the system and suggest indifference to educational outcomes on the part of the Ministry of Education: "These people only do, you know, what will help them. They looking after themselves ... and they don't care about the school system." (T/02/01-23)

The culture of colonially-inspired hierarchies, with their legacy of competitive factions and distrust, left many potential leaders like Hashim in the wings waiting to be anointed as a leader. In a system noted for its bureaucratic delays, that wait could go on for years. In Hashim's case it had. Overlooked for many years, Hashim had imagined that the leadership development opportunity provided by the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project would facilitate his rise to a top leadership position. Three years after the programme ended, however, that had still not happened.

Politics and religion could also complicate leadership practice and, in some cases, paralyze careers. As a politically engaged person, Hashim is fully aware of this challenge and

resigned to it as a part of the political landscape in Trinidad and Tobago: “Let’s say my politics is wrong. [...] Yes. My politics is wrong right now. [...] My party is not in power.” (T/02/02-20)

Initiatives proposed by Hashim for improving student opportunities and outcomes through an alternative syllabus were largely ignored and never implemented: “It has not been considered as favourable, I guess, because the politics is wrong.” (T/02/02-21) He later gives the example of a colleague, a vice-principal, whose promotion had been blocked by politics: “Joanne’s situation is this: Joanne should be the principal in the school that she’s in, but because of politics [...] she isn’t. [...] Joanne is a bitter person” (T/02/02-27).

The Ministry official, too, acknowledged the encroachment of politics in professional lives. He hinted at wrongdoing in a comment about the “administrative and legal obstacles” which affected the consortium’s ability to get the job done (T/05/01-24). “The system is not very transparent” (T/05/01-17), he said bluntly. He spoke frankly, too, about the power of political alliances and the resulting political reality that, given a framework of competition, someone with the right connections could easily shut down a project (T/05/01-26).

IIB1c Challenges: Bureaucracy

Government bureaucracy was another challenge for educational leaders in Trinidad and Tobago. There seemed to be endless meetings at the Ministry of Education, incomprehensible decisions and other issues which resulted in delays and frustration for those involved. The best example of this kind of challenge is described by Asha as follows:

Now before I went into the school, the vice-principal position was held by a teacher in the school ... a Math teacher, Ok? who was acting. Because of the bureaucracy, as I always say, we could say what we want, we’re still Third World. It took three years to advertise the post. That girl was acting in that position for three years ... and then when

the interviews were held, I came first in the interview and I was given the position and when I went there that girl was very bitter, was very angry. [...] Initially, she was sabotaging my efforts (T/02/01-24).

The fallout from this kind of bureaucratic fiasco created unnecessary tensions which added to an already heavy load of leadership challenges for Asha and began to affect her health. Fortunately for her, the conflict resolution strategies she had acquired through TTELP empowered her to resolve this problem and establish a civil relationship with the teacher in question.

IIB1ciii Challenges: Incomprehensible decisions

It is clear that participants found that there was unnecessary mystery surrounding the selection process for both the programme and the visit to Montreal. I have already discussed the fact that the criteria for selecting participants for TTELP have never been explained. The visit to Montreal was a further source of dissatisfaction for those participants who were not selected to go. The criteria appeared to them to be political, although the official line was that it was based on grades. As Renukah said pointedly “We couldn’t understand. [...] We felt that there was no equity in the selection, and we felt that all they had been preaching about, when it came to practice, it didn’t happen.” (T/02/09-24).

The issue of certification, too, could have been dealt with in a more transparent and proactive manner. That would have precluded or, at least, minimized the perception of ambivalence on the part of the Ministry of Education which, unfortunately, persisted long after the end of the programme.

They did not apply, were told to not even think of declining, according to Doreen, and were not aware of the criteria for selection. Participants were genuinely mystified about their selection and some suggested later in the survey that all educational leaders should have been invited to apply. In follow-up interviews, some disclosed that they had been selected after the programme had started and that this was due to a series of withdrawals early on. Chris, for example, joined the programme in October and missed the first course. Kathy joined in March of the following year, “so I had some catching up to do” she said.

Doreen was approaching retirement when she was selected for TTELP. She went to the first meeting intending to suggest that a younger teacher would benefit more from the programme. She never got to make the suggestion. The Ministry representative made it clear that selection was not negotiable:

He called us in for the very first meeting and he said [...] “Now, you all are specially chosen and I want no one here to say that you’re not interested! Because that would be ... you know, it would show a lack of ...” whatever ... I went there going to say well, I know I’m going to retire just now and I had just finished **(the certificate)** and, you know, I felt maybe I could say, “No, I’m not interested”, but the way he said “We have chosen you, we’ve specially chosen you and we don’t want anybody to say they’re not interested. (T/02/07-6)

The goals of governments, understandably, have priority in government-funded development programmes and it is still the norm for candidates to be selected by the government in question. We raise the issue here because it has implications for practice: a group of candidates selected on the basis of criteria that are not academic and not related to performance

in the target domain of the training programme could seriously compromise the ability of the service providers to achieve their stated objectives. Programme developers should, therefore, be aware of the potential for conflict between the goals of the government and the goals of the programme.

IIB1d Participants not being used

Another challenge for which some participants blamed the Ministry of Education was the fact that graduates of TTELP were not being used more by the Ministry. This led to a feeling of being abandoned, best articulated by Hashim. Three years after the programme ended, he still felt ignored by the Ministry: “I am not being called upon to do anything. So, I consider myself a wasting resource [...] I feel like a wasting resource.” (T/02/02-8)

IIB2 Hierarchical Leadership

Other systemic challenges facing the participants were an entrenched hierarchical system of leadership and a related and equally entrenched resistance to change. Hashim considered the tradition of hierarchical leadership a colonial legacy and felt that it compounded many other existing problems. This hierarchical framework had the power to paralyze new leaders who favoured a bottom-up, democratic approach. Many senior administrators in the system paid lip service to the concept of school based management, while holding on to a leadership style which was essentially autocratic. Many of them exhibited a “very starchy kind of behaviour” (T/02/02-26) which Hashim put down to having reached positions of authority they never expected to attain. This led to autocratic attitudes summed up by Hashim as “I am the boss and you hop, skip and jump.”

IIB3 Resistance to change

A persistent problem which the consortium faced and to which I alluded in the discussion of the University of the West Indies' response to the consortium's invitations was the initial, prompt, affirmative response which would never be honoured. One of the project directors referred to this phenomenon as "two discourses" (T/06/01-4). The Ministry official called it "two faces." He said: "Oh, well you know that's the Caribbean thing [...] As a consultant ... clearly, there are people who show you two faces. They have to agree about, you know, "empowering", "transformative" But in their own practice, they're not, and they just hope that you don't find out" (T/05/01-13).

The Ministry official was talking about the existence of hidden resistance in the culture of the region, so that participants could have given the impression that they were happy with the new knowledge and had been implementing it, when in fact, they may have rejected it and had no plans to implement anything that is at odds with previously held beliefs.

Resistance to change continued to be a challenge for participants returning to their leadership positions after the programme ended. Kathy found that resistance to change was especially pronounced among older teachers:

They are in the comfort zone and they do not welcome change, you know [...] The older teachers [...] who were already bent in their ways ... you know, they sort of resisted change, they resisted, but you work with the younger ones to help bring the older ones on board. (T/02/06-6)

Kathy gave the example of a TTELP project she did on introducing technology into education. When she first attempted to implement it in her school, there was resistance, but

eventually two teachers were trained and she was able to use them to train other teachers. These teachers are now teaching with technology across the curriculum.

Hashim painted a picture of senior administrators who held on to their power and were not interested in distributed leadership or any other kind of change which could be seen as challenging their authority: “Delegation is not a word in the dictionary, and the people see it as others usurping their role [...] and the prominence and the status that goes along with that sort of thing, and people are just not willing to do [that].” (T/02/02-29)

The buoyancy that Hashim felt after TTELP was doomed, in the short term, he felt, by unchanging leadership practices from a bygone era and a bygone cultural context. The undercurrent of resistance from administrators, on the one hand, with no desire for power sharing, and from subordinates, on the other hand, who responded only to directives from the top, created a situation which made Hashim feel isolated and irrelevant.

Unfortunately, participants returned to their posts in a system where traditions are formal, change is slow and the majority of their colleagues have not been exposed to the teachings of the TTELP. Hashim remarked that;

there is need for a much wider application or sensitization in order for this whole thing to work, otherwise, in other words, you have trained us ... but the system itself has not undergone any sort of shift or change. [...] and therefore, we are in a vacuum. We are the piggies in the middle. (T/02/02-29) 39

There is undeniable sadness in the juxtaposition of so much positive feedback and so much frustration. Hashim felt like a “wound-up toy”, ready for action, paralyzed by the unwillingness of senior administration. The idea of being contained and constricted is elegantly

expressed in the metaphors of being “in a vacuum” and “piggies in the middle.” It is not surprising, therefore, that he considered himself a “wasting resource.” (T/02/02-8) 40

Summary of the ‘Challenges’ Theme (II)

Personal challenges faced by educational leaders in Trinidad and Tobago included the familiar loneliness-of-being-at-the-top and the related problem of trust. Systemic challenges were more dangerous and more entrenched: Participants had to deal with a hierarchical view of leadership which was embedded in a culture which they considered a legacy of their colonial past. Resistance to change was an inevitable feature of this challenge and compounded the problem.

Bureaucratic problems had the effect of slowing things down, including new appointments and promotions. In addition, it created a lack of transparency, which made some of the Ministry’s decisions seem incomprehensible.

One of the greatest challenges facing leaders in education in Trinidad and Tobago was the sense of alienation and frustration which develops when the system becomes so politicized that people’s rights and well-being are ignored if they are affiliated with the ‘wrong’ political party.

Challenges can be a major stumbling block in a leader’s rise to the top, but they need not be. Increasingly, organizations are seeking out leaders with a proven track record in guiding organizations through difficult times and on to renewed success. Such leaders meet challenges head on and draw inspiration from the deployment of strategies which are not used in their everyday leadership practice and which sharpen and strengthen their leadership skills. It is leaders of this calibre which leadership development programmes now seek to develop through

ongoing, systemic approaches which draw on best practices that transcend cultures and disciplines, to promote and facilitate the art and science of leadership in a climate of global challenges.

IIIA Introduction to Sub-Theme FRAMEWORK

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project was one of several programmes organized by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago as part of its reform program for the education system in that country. The two main objectives of the project were systemic: managing decentralization and building leadership capacity.

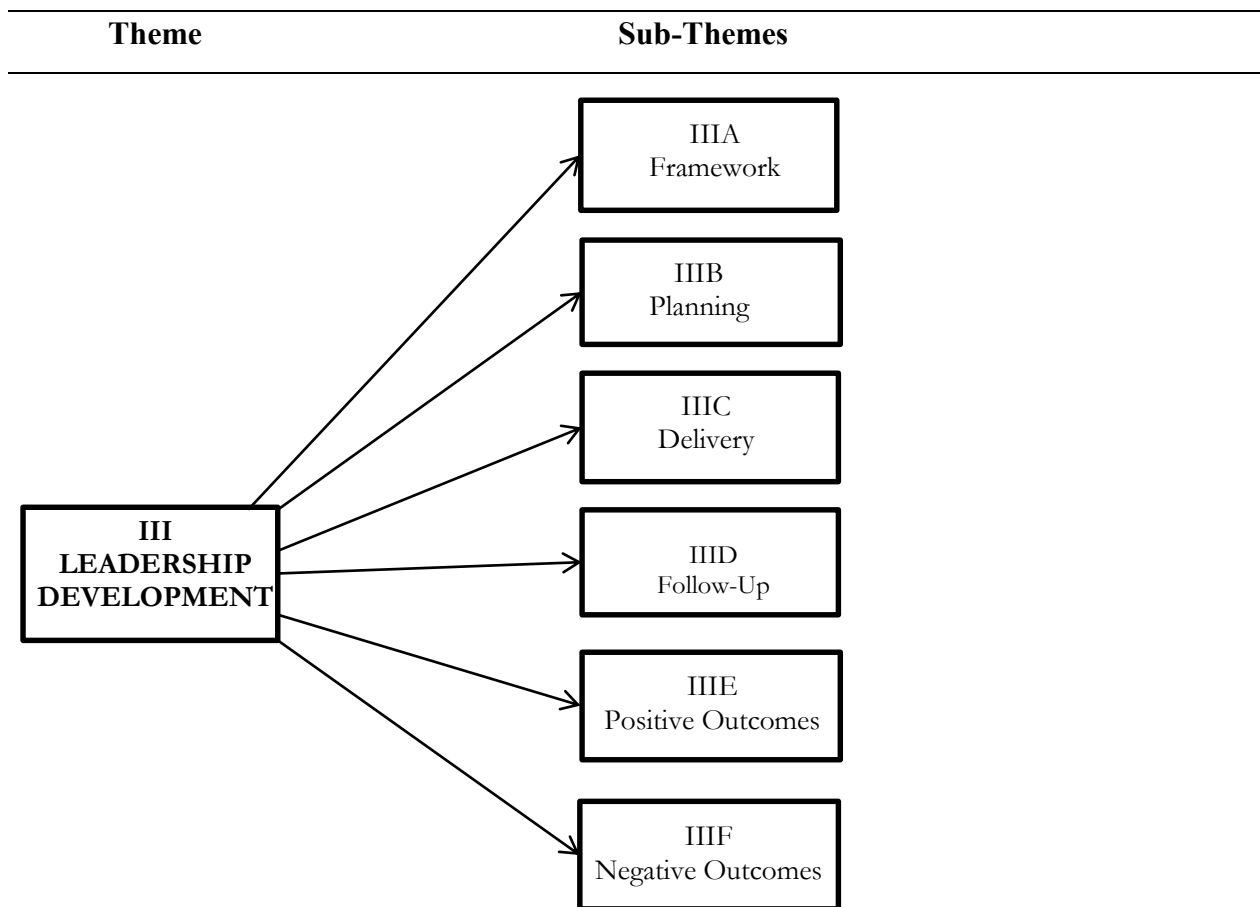


Figure 5. Theme III Leadership Development: Broad sub-themes in participants' experience of leadership development.

IIIA1 Category: Ministry Of Education

The Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education was the political and economic authority driving leadership development initiatives in education in the twin-island republic. The broad objective of TTELP, in alignment with the Ministry's reform programme was to develop a cadre of leaders to manage decentralization and build capacity in the education system. The Ministry itself, however, wielded enormous power and this was consolidated by a systemic consciousness

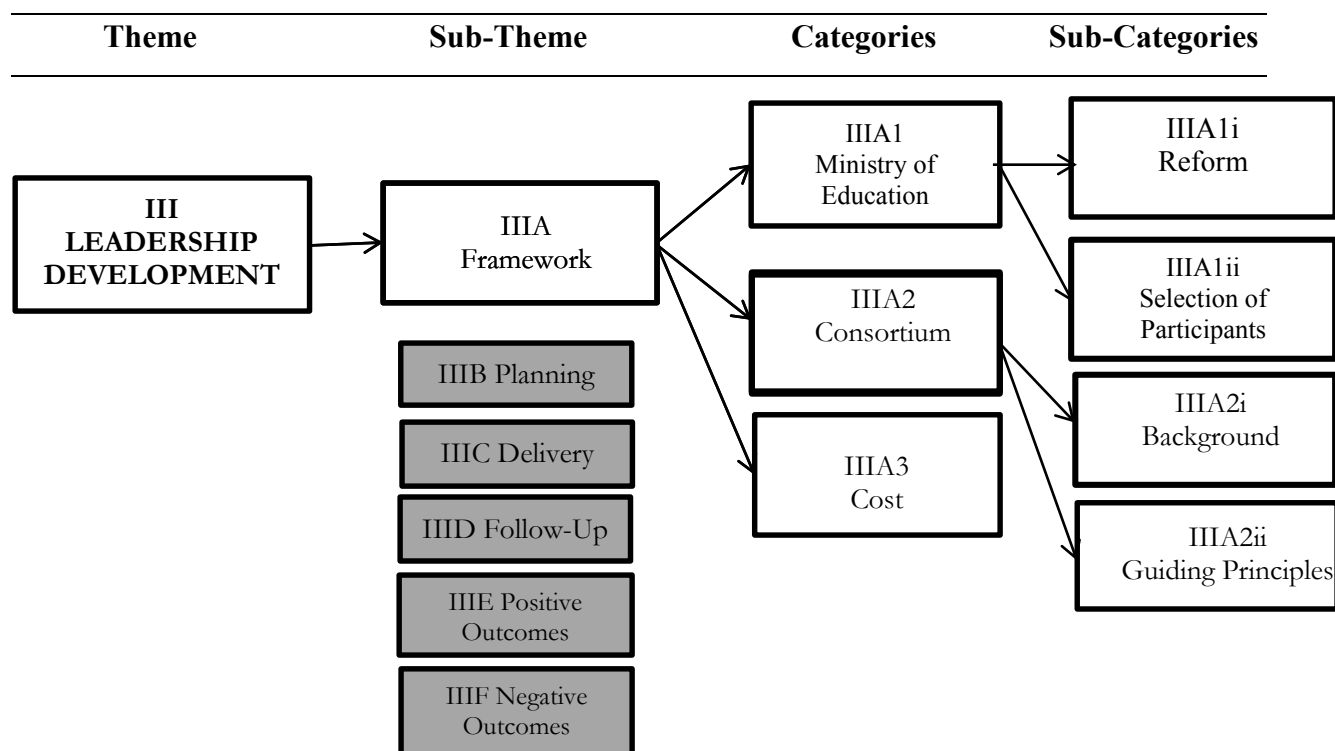


Figure 6. Sub-Theme IIIA: FRAMEWORK. The framework dimension of leadership development and the categories which led to its emergence of hierarchy combined with a reluctance in the culture to openly oppose authority and especially the authority of the Ministry.

IIIA1a. Framework REFORM

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) was designed as part of the Government's reform of the education system in the twin-island republic. Specifically, it fell under the aegis of the Secondary Education Modernization Project (SEMP). The main objective of TTELP was to prepare educational leaders to manage the decentralization of the education system and to build leadership capacity in the system. The curriculum designed for this project included theories and issues in leadership, as well as exposure to best practices in

leadership, and opportunities, through projects and role-play, to practice and hone leadership skills. The mandate of the restructuring programme included concrete goals such as the creation of management teams in the schools, the creation of School Boards and the establishment of student councils. One of the participants was working in the department overseeing these changes and gave us insights into the progress being made at the time:

For the last five or six years, I've been attached to what you call the Restructuring and Decentralization Action Unit [...] and in that Unit, although I retained my original post of School Supervisor III, I'm operating there as a Project Officer. [...] Essentially, the Unit is responsible for facilitating the restructuring and decentralization of the Ministry of Education. [...] My remit there is for the area of the institutionalization of school-based management, so in that, we run workshops, training workshops for primary and secondary schools in terms of carrying out their mandate, carrying out their rules for ... as members of the school-based management team, ok? ... and we do follow-up visits and produce support materials for them and so on. So, basically, that is it. We **[are]** also, in a way, too, monitoring the effectiveness of what we do. (T/02/05-1)

IIIA1b. Framework: Selection of Participants

The selection of candidates for TTELP proved to be extremely interesting for two reasons: Firstly, the Ministry used a novel, creative and by all accounts effective “slice-through” approach to bring together a cross section of mid-level and senior educational leaders from all departments of the Ministry. Secondly, the candidates themselves asked repeatedly but never got the answers they needed and, therefore, never quite understood the selection criteria used by the Ministry of Education. The Consortium, it must be noted, had nothing to do with the selection of participants. Both directors stated clearly that they were never consulted by the Ministry of

Education, neither for the original selection of participants, nor for the Study Mission to Montreal in May, 2005:

They were selected by the Ministry. [...] We didn't select them. [...] We don't know which criteria they used. [...] We got what they sent to us (T/06/01-24). Well, you know, [we] had no, no, participation in that selection. [...] We were just given a list. [...] The first day we went there and met with them, people just came. They were the people. And for a year, we just got a list of people (T/06/02-47).

One of the survey questions asked participants how they had been selected for TTELP. They all said that they had been selected by the Ministry of Education. None of them had applied and, according to Doreen, they were told at the first meeting not to even think of declining. Five participants (Chris, Kathy, Doreen, Asha and Bob) reported that they were selected by the Ministry. Three of them (Renukah, Michelle and Kamini) reported that they were selected by the Department of School Supervision (DSS). Their accounts of how they became TTELP participants are interesting and shed some light on the process:

Chris reported that he was doing another leadership development programme when he was appointed as a principal and had to withdraw from that programme. Shortly afterwards, the Ministry of Education offered him a place on TTELP. Hashim felt, but was not entirely sure, that his selection was based on his application to "a previous programme in school leadership and management." (S21)

Participants were genuinely mystified about their selection and some suggested later in the survey that all educational leaders should have been invited to apply. In follow-up interviews, some disclosed that they had been selected after the programme had started and that

this was due to a series of withdrawals early on. Chris, for example, joined the programme in October and missed the first module. Kathy joined in March of the following year, “so I had some catching up to do” (S21) she said.

Doreen was approaching retirement when she was selected for TTELP. She said “I felt maybe I could say, “No, I’m not interested” (T/02/07-6), but the Ministry representative made it clear that selection was final and not negotiable:

He called us in for the very first meeting and he said (**Doreen put on a stern, serious voice**) “Now, you all are specially chosen and I want no one here to say that you’re not interested! [...] We have chosen you, we’ve specially chosen you and we don’t want anybody to say they’re not interested.” (T/02/07-6)

The mystery of the selection criteria remained a source of irritation for some participants. Hashim, for example, revisited the subject during the in-depth interview: “Fifty-two people were selected and told “You’re doing this programme.” Fine. [...] They didn’t tell us you’re doing it for a grade, award or nothing. We asked, we asked over and over how and why we were selected.” (T/02/02-7) They never got an answer to these questions from the Ministry of Education. In fact, the mystery of the selection process was repeated and compounded by the selection of 22 candidates for a visit to Montreal in May of 2005. For some of those who were not chosen, it was evident that the selection criteria were political. The Ministry said that selection for the trip was based on TTELP grades, but several participants said in the follow-up interviews that this explanation was inconsistent with what they knew about grades received up to that point in the programme.

The selection process may have been unnecessarily mysterious, but even its fiercest critics had to concede that the final lineup of participants was ingenious in its panoramic sampling of leaders in education in Trinidad and Tobago: They were drawn from across the entire spectrum of educational administration in the country. The group included guidance officers, heads of departments in schools as well as vice-principals, principals and school supervisors. In addition, there were officials from the Ministry of Education including curriculum officers, the Director of Planning and the Director of Human Resources. This method of participant selection, offering a cross-sectional sample of the target population, is known as the slice-through approach.

There were positive comments about the slice-through approach from almost half of the participants. They said that it gave them the opportunity to build important bridges between their schools and the Ministry of Education. Kathy listed the slice-through approach as one of the most positive features of TTELP. She was able to build relationships with officers from the Ministry and “create a link between the school and Head Office.” (S25) It improved her understanding of how the various divisions of the Ministry of Education worked and at the time of the interview, that link had become a vibrant partnership: “[...] Up to now, if I call any one of these persons out there to assist me in some manner, they would try, eh? They would try very much to help.” (T02/06-12)

Doreen, too, rated the slice-through approach highly. It had the effect of opening doors in high places and, to any leader in education, this was priceless: “[...] That’s where we benefitted because I met with so many people from the Ministry that I would not have known before.” (T02/07-3)

Hashim, too, liked the slice-through approach, which he found “very meaningful and helpful towards better understanding and appreciating the total picture.” “For the participants, it was a very rewarding experience, because what it did, it brought us in a one-and-one relationship with the full hierarchy, so that X understood what Y was about and Y would understand what’s happening in (W’s) World etc. So that I give them 400% for it” (T/02/02-23).

IIIA2. Leadership Development Category Framework: CONSORTIUM

An invitation to tender for the delivery of a leadership development programme in Trinidad and Tobago led to the partnership between McGill University professor Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber and Dr. Manuel Crespo, of the Université de Montréal. A bid for the delivery of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) was submitted by a Consortium from the two universities in November 2001 and that bid won. The project officially started on 1 March, 2003 and ended on 28 February 2006 (Consortium McGill University and Université de Montréal, 2004).

IIIA2a. Category Framework: CONSORTIUM -Background

Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber was initially involved only as a collaborator on the bid. “My name was there as being someone in leadership but I was not directly involved in the application per se” (T/06/02-2). After the bid was won, however, she became involved “and once we knew that [...] they were going to have people apply for credit, they said Lynn will you take it on ... with Manuel. Manuel was [...] already designated” (T/06/02-2).

Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber has held numerous leadership positions at McGill, among them Director of Graduate Studies, Director of Student Placement and Dean of Students. She is currently the Director of the Office of Leadership in Community and International Initiatives

(LCII, formerly the Center for Educational Leadership – CEL). She said “I’ve learned leadership from being in it, rather than getting a degree in it. [...] My doctoral work is not in leadership” (T/06/02-12). Before TTELP, Dr. Butler-Kisber had been involved in smaller leadership development projects internationally, including one in the Turks and Caicos, but TTELP was her first big international project. She enjoyed the experience, but admits that it was “a steep learning curve for me because I was not only the co-director, but I was also the project manager” (T/06/02-13).

Dr. Manuel Crespo’s background is in the sociology of organizations. He is in the Educational Administration Department of the Université de Montréal, where he has been involved in “trainee and informal programmes with school principals and vice-principals for a long time” (T/06/01-12). Dr. Crespo had been involved in big international leadership development projects before TTELP, including one in the Dominican Republic.

The partnership between the two directors of the programme was excellent. Dr. Butler-Kisber said “It was one of the easiest partnerships I think I’ve ever had. It was great” (T/06/02-12). Dr. Crespo agreed: “In terms of exchange, administration, reports, human interrelation and all that, it was perfect” (T/06/01-12).

IIIA2b. Guiding Principles which informed the Design and Delivery of TTELP

The directors were in agreement and very clear about the kind of programme they would develop for Trinidad and Tobago. The design and delivery of TTELP were informed and underpinned by principles which were based on best practices in leadership development and on the previous experience of the two directors. The programme:

- was not to be a theoretical programme, but theory-into-practice (T/06/01-11).

- had to be interactive (T/06/02-7).
- had to be culturally sensitive (T/06/01-10; T/06/02-7).
- had to reflect a changed relationship, not to be about imposing knowledge, but learning together: non-hierarchical, non-colonial, no longer a “we-are-the-best-and-you-have-to-follow-us” interchange (T/06/01-10, 11).
- had to include continuous professional development (T/06/01-11; T/06/02-7, 9).

IIIA3. Framework –COST

The financial aspect of TTELP is interesting and warrants some discussion here. The million-dollar budget is one of the defining features of the project and gives a sense of its magnitude. A budget of this scale probably creates high expectations in certain areas and envy in others. Even if all this remains unspoken, the resulting attitudes can still leave their mark on the heart of a project such as this.

Although the budget did not impinge directly on my research questions, many of the problems which the Consortium faced seemed to have a financial dimension. Here are some facts about the budget, followed by a brief discussion of problems mentioned by participants of this study which have a connection to the budget:

The budget for the project was US\$960,000 and that had to cover everything (T/06/02-6). Just as the project was beginning, the Canadian dollar rallied against the US dollar, reaching parity and maintaining its strength. The Consortium had budgeted 2% for contingencies, but the strong Canadian dollar caused a loss of 14% (T/06/01-6). In addition to being a co-director, Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber was the project manager for TTELP. “We were hit hard [...] from the

beginning,” she said. “I was worried about the budget, so I ran a very tight ship.” “It was a nightmare of a budget” (T/06/02-48). The tight budget forced the Consortium to make decisions which reverberated throughout the programme:

- Space for the first TTELP course had been found and reserved through the University of the West Indies. This arrangement, however, fell through just before the course was due to begin. The first three courses were held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Port-of-Spain. The participants loved this venue, but the Consortium found it too expensive. Alternative space was eventually secured, but participants were never quite as happy there and complained about the food, among other things.
- The Consortium had originally planned to organize an International Specialist Seminar between each course, but the expense of flying specialists down for the one-week-long seminars proved prohibitive and the seminars were delivered somewhat less frequently, two or three times a year.
- Candidates who were interviewed for the Ministry official positions, almost all of them, were asking for US\$1,000 per day. In the end, the Consortium could only offer CAD\$500 per day.
- The Field Manager, a critical local resource person, was let go after six months, largely because she was not able to resolve the logistical problems which were her main responsibility, but also because the Consortium found that it was too expensive to maintain an office in Trinidad. They also felt that the work being done by the Field manager could be done just as effectively and more economically by the Project Coordinator in Montreal.

- The non-certification problem was really about money: In the end, paying extra money for credits for all 43 participants at international rates was the only way to get it done. The Consortium's budget made that impossible.

Participants' Views of the *COST* of TTELP

The question of whether the Government of Trinidad and Tobago got value for their investment was only ever discussed by participants in relation to the problem of non-certification. There is consensus among participants that the knowledge and skills gained from the project were invaluable. When, however, the issue of non-certification is raised, there is invariably an outcry from participants that for the amount of money the Government spent on TTELP, they should have been properly certified.

Kamini said that one of the directors of the project had told them that:

the course that they planned for us was for a Master's degree, but then our Government or whoever was the negotiator found that it was too expensive to allow all of us to have a Master's degree ... to fulfil it and they made the arrangement with your people "Ok we'll just give them certificates of participation and allow two people, we would pay for only two people." So, again at that level, when the decision was made, they did not think it through. So, we did the full course, we did all the assignments, and all we got was certificates. (T/02/03-21)

Chris, in his comments, acknowledged the complexity of the issue:

"The Ministry of Education felt they had invested enough money. Millions went into this. They paid McGill and the University of Montreal millions." He said "My Masters cost \$1200 in

Trinidad and Tobago. So, when you look at those millions, I guess MOE felt it wasn't worth it to pay even more money for accreditation (or a Masters)." S26

Asha was more blunt: "Yes. It was horrible ... that you spending ... Government is spending all this money, and at the end of it, there is no certification?" (T/02/01-20)

Summary of Sub-Theme FRAMEWORK (IIIA)

The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) was delivered as part of the Government's reform programme for the restructuring and decentralization of the Ministry of Education. The key objectives of the programme were to train educational leaders to manage this decentralization process and to build leadership capacity. This framework must remain central to any critique of the process or outcomes of TTELP. I shall return to it when we discuss the contentious issue of non-certification and other aspects of the programme which participants criticized.

IIIB. Introduction to Sub-Theme PLANNING

As noted in the review of the literature (Guskey, 1999; Leskiw & Singh 2007), the planning stage of development programmes is critically important. Without proper planning, service providers and their clients risk wasting time and money on training that does not successfully address the problems they face. The first and most critical phase of the planning process is needs assessment, which is designed to identify the problem and specify the kind of development required to resolve it. After the needs of the organization and/or the target population are identified, programme developers can then move on to the design and delivery phases of the programme.

The directors of TTELP made several planning missions to Trinidad and Tobago. These planning missions were designed to identify and meet the needs of the participants first and foremost, but also of the programme in general and stakeholders in particular. For example: “The first planning mission was aimed at finalizing the actual offer of services in terms of content, methodologies, level of effort and scheduling. A second planning mission took place to settle the logistical arrangements necessary for the delivery of the courses.” (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p.7)

IIIB1. Category: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Before proceeding with the design of a training programme, effective trainers know that they must first assess the needs of their clients. An effective needs assessment will clearly identify the problem and provide specific guidelines for the training programme, if training is what is required. The needs assessment phase also provides opportunities for trainers to familiarize themselves with the context and the people involved, information which should inform the design of a highly relevant training programme, customized to meet the specific needs of the target group.

Needs assessments are an integral part of training programmes, not just an option, and training plans that are designed on the basis of findings from a needs assessment initiative have legitimacy. They are effective and useful because of their ability to elucidate a problem and identify appropriate solutions.

In June 2003 the directors of the project, Professors Lynn Butler-Kisber and Manuel Crespo, together with other members of the Consortium and the Associate Director of McGill’s Center for Educational Leadership, Professor Sylvia Sklar, went on a 9-day Design Mission to Trinidad and Tobago. This initial mission included a representative from the International Office

at McGill as well as a Trinidadian educational consultant from Ottawa, Dr. Annette Isaac, a specialist in educational policy and international development “who had helped with some of the project” (T/06/02-3). It was a high-level delegation visiting Trinidad and Tobago to familiarize themselves with the context, meet key stakeholders and carry out a needs assessment for the project. Only after this mission did the Consortium finalize the programme for TTELP (T/06/01-23).

The needs assessment for TTELP was conducted during a 1-day seminar with the 43 participants. In order to get a picture of the needs, interests, expectations and vision of the group, the Consortium carried out a two-part assessment using, firstly, a brainstorming session and secondly, the “Nominal Group Approach” (see Appendix O) to identify and prioritize the major issues confronting educational leaders in Trinidad and Tobago. The Consortium noted in their report that the expectations expressed by participants corresponded to the expected outcomes of standard educational leadership programmes (Consortium McGill University-Université de Montréal 2004, Appendix 3, p. 7).

IIIB1a. Leadership Development Category: Individual Needs

Both in the Survey and in the In-Depth interviews, participants spoke candidly about their expectations from TTELP. They had a keen sense of their own accomplishments and limitations and were clear about how TTELP could enhance their leadership skills. A close look at their expectations, at their perceptions of their needs going into the programme will help us to understand the basis of their evaluations of TTELP.

Participants spoke about their expectations in terms of personal and professional goals and organizational objectives. Survey question 18 asked them to discuss their previous

choice of professional development activities. They responded by listing their expectations and discussing the extent to which they were met by the training programmes they had done. Survey question 23 asked “How would you describe yourself as an educational leader going into TTELP?” Participants expressed satisfaction with their knowledge base as well as eagerness for new knowledge. Some felt that they needed further development of their

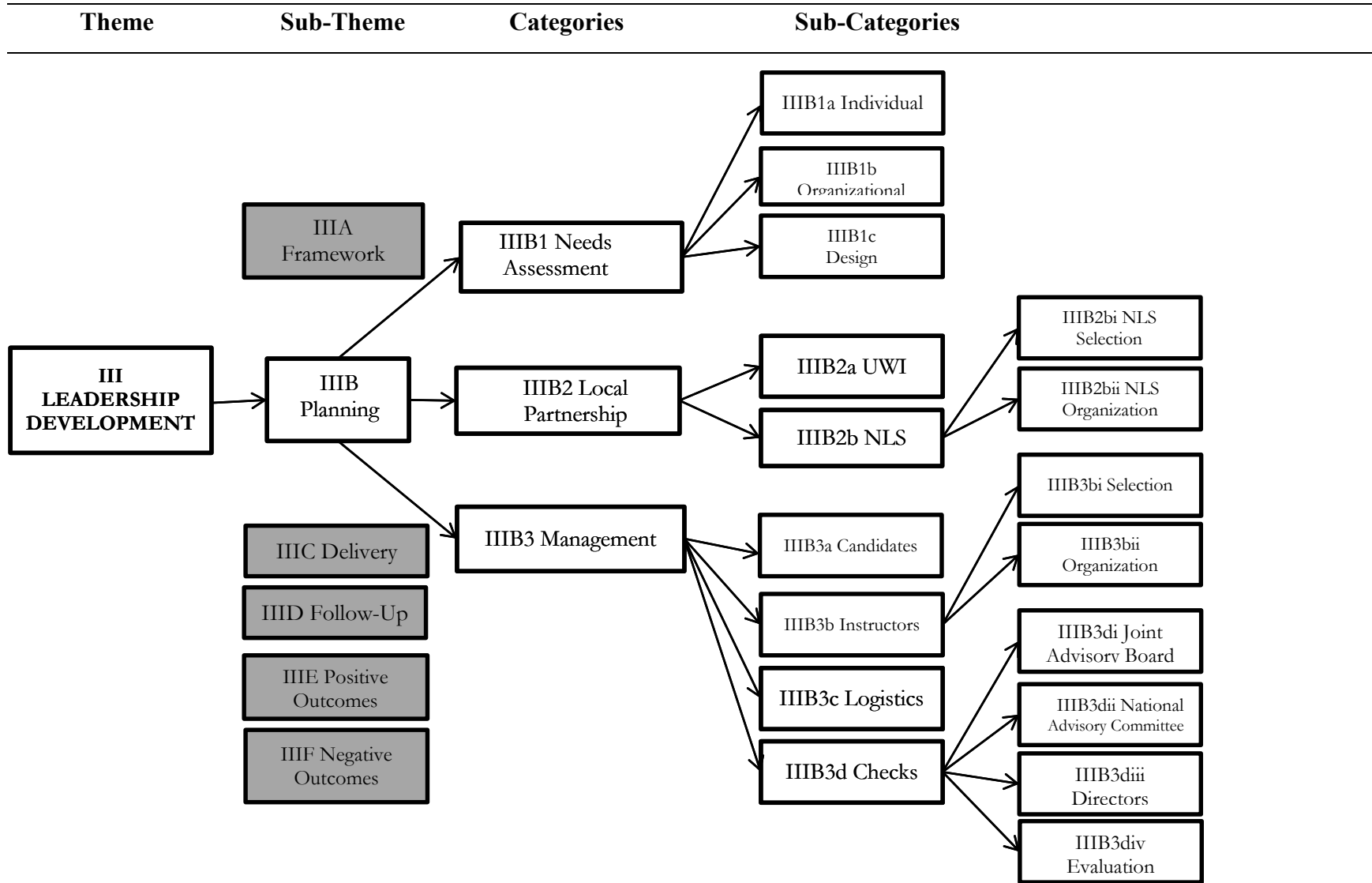


Figure 7. Sub-Theme IIIB: PLANNING. The planning dimension of leadership development with its supporting categories.

leadership skills, while others felt that they simply needed more practice. Their answers to these two questions provide a clear picture of their expectations and needs.

Renukah's long-term goal was "to effectively discharge [her] duties and responsibilities as an educator." In order to achieve this goal, she saw her leadership development needs as being "to develop and augment my skills and knowledge." (S18)

Chris' goal "to be better in [his] profession" (S18) presupposed leadership preparation needs similar to those of Renukah: to master new knowledge and skills and to improve existing skills sets. He described himself, going into the TTELP program as "eager to learn and be able to make good use of that knowledge" (S23). An additional element of his leadership preparation needs, then, was the implementation of new knowledge and skills.

Kathy said that before the programme, she felt in need of further leadership development. "My expectation was that the TTELP would provide such development or enhance the skills already possessed." (S23) Kathy's goals were "to empower [her] staff" and "to move the organization forward" (T/02/06-9). She expected TTELP to equip her with the leadership skills to achieve this:

to enhance whatever skills I already have and develop others that I am in need, to make my job easier and help me lead and whatever skills that a leader needs to carry ... to empower his staff, to move the organization forward, I expected the programme [...] to do that for me, and it has done so, as I said before. (T/02/06-9)

Michelle's stated goals were "personal and professional development" and her leadership preparation needs were "To fill knowledge gaps [and] to gain confidence in these areas that I considered important for personal and professional development." (S18)

When asked to describe herself as an educational leader going into TTELP, Doreen replied that she was “informed but lacking practical experience” (S23). What she needed from the programme, therefore, were opportunities to hone her leadership skills. Doreen’s goal was to acquire all the skills sets required for excellence in teaching and leadership. When asked about her criteria for selecting professional development or leadership development programmes, she replied with the following list: 1) Enhancement of teaching skills, 2) Curriculum development and leadership training and 3) Enhancement of management and leadership skills. (S18)

Asha described herself, going into TTELP as: “very inexperienced - not adequately prepared.” (S23) She said: “the knowledge and experience gained from [previous leadership development] programs contributed immensely to my very successful teaching career. (S18) This goal evidently required the training programmes to facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

Hashim had great expectations after being invited to participate in TTELP. At the time of the interviews, what he construed as the indifference of the Ministry of Education had already crushed those expectations. He said:

I am a Senior Dean and **[one of]** the only Senior Deans in a range of vice-principals and principals ... and of administrators, you see? And I felt, we felt that if you’re going to be trained for this (long), they’re going to be utilizing our skills in the future. Or, in my case, what we’re looking at ... I was at that time probably just 50, and I’m saying, well, if you’re looking, you have all these new schools. We’ve had a problem with getting real administrators in the system. So you **[are]** training me, so I would expect that you would ask me, at some point, to become part of your administrative lineup. [...] That hasn’t

happened. [...] There is a problem in terms of administration and management [at my school], which I know I am capable of now performing in a much ... more effective way than what existed, but I am not being called upon to do anything. So, I consider myself a wasting resource. (T/02/02-7)

Hashim described himself before TTELP as “an unpolished diamond” (S23). This suggests the need for external agency and pressure in order to actualize his full potential. His training needs could, therefore, be considered the strong and sensitive development and nurturing of his leadership skills. His professional goal was “a career path in education leadership and administration.” (S18) His leadership preparation needs were leadership and management skills.

IIIB1b. Leadership Development Category: Organizational Needs

The needs and expectations of the Ministry of Education also had to be met and while the personal and professional growth and success of the participants were key objectives of TTELP, the overall goals of the Ministry of Education were systemic and these subsumed the needs of individual leaders. The Government of the twin-island republic, in the process of restructuring and modernizing the education system there, was focused on the development of administrators who would be able to manage decentralization and build leadership capacity in the system.

The Ministry had been organizing leadership development programs even before TTELP started. Kathy, for example had participated in three previous leadership development programmes, which she described as “initiatives of the Ministry of Education to prepare administrators/supervisors to manage the Decentralization of the Ministry of Education and to build capacity within the schools. (S18)

In discussing her own expectations as a TTELP participant, Kathy constantly returned to the broad goals of the Ministry: “Now the main purpose of the [...] Leadership programme, was ... basically, was to build leadership capacity amongst leaders of Trinidad and Tobago, right? ... to build our capacity and to help us be more effective and efficient leaders.” (T/02/06-1) And again: “My preface to this interview, is that the whole idea behind the leadership is to build capacity amongst the leaders. (T/02/06-9)

While the Ministry of Education was focused on the management of decentralization and building leadership capacity, they also recognized the importance of certification for the TTELP participants. It was one of their key expectation, but it became problematic almost immediately, defied all attempts to resolve it and took on a life of its own. The certification saga became somewhat convoluted over time, but some elements of the plot have been confirmed by multiple sources and deserve to be put on the record: Negotiators for the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education clearly wanted certification for project participants: “Since the beginning, [...] the first meeting that we had with them, with the Ministry officials, they wanted certification” (T/06/01-3). They were, in effect, promised certification. A director of the project reported that “I was called to a meeting and it became apparent to me at the meeting that some things from a former Director of the International Office at McGill had said were fine, were not. He said “Oh, well we can just make the modules for credit” and I said “Well, you can’t.” I mean, to get credit at McGill, you have to have a program, it has to be accepted, people have to be admitted into it.” These initial negotiations were misleading and set the stage for a problem which grew out of all proportion to its significance in educational settings, plagued the project for its entire duration and remained a source of pain, resentment and genuine incomprehension long after it had ended.

At the planning stage, there was not much that the Consortium could do. It is clear that the directorate had not designed the TTELP programme for certification. As one director pointed out: “We said that we would give a certificate in recognition of the work done. This was the project that we submitted for the international bid and we won” (T/06/01-2). The effect of the poor negotiating strategy was to make the Ministry of Education’s request for certification seem sudden and unexpected when in fact, they had brought it to the negotiating table from the outset. That perception is evident in the reaction of the directors: “Once the bid was actually awarded to McGill, suddenly it became apparent that [...] Trinidad and Tobago didn’t want just modules of learning. They wanted actual courses and they wanted it for credit” (T/06/02-2).

The directors of the TTELP Consortium, however, had good reason to be shocked. As I noted above, the winning bid included the certificate of participation and the decision to award such a certificate rather than a diploma or other kind of certificate was taken even before the bid for the project was submitted. From their experience with other projects of this kind, the directors were aware that the criteria for participant selection were often political rather than based on experience or academic background. “So, in [the] Consortium,” the directors explained, “we decided that it would [...] not lead to an official degree” (T/06/01-2).

This was clearly a very unfortunate negotiating error which struck deep into the heart of the project and probably created distrust early on. There is no reason to believe that the McGill negotiator who promised to get the participants certified was being disingenuous. It appears that he had simply not done his homework. But the damage was done and findings from this study show that it could not be undone. As one of the directors lamented in a particularly candid comment: “There was something wrong at the very beginning of what the project was

going to do versus what the people actually needed or wanted. That never got resolved” (T/06/02-33).

IIIB1c. Sub-Category: DESIGN

As I said in the introduction to this theme, the purpose of the needs assessment initiative is to allow programme developers to familiarize themselves with the context and the people involved. An effective needs assessment will identify the primary and secondary needs of programme participants as well as those of the client-organization. This information can then be used to design a highly relevant programme with objectives that correspond to the expressed needs of the participants.

The final design of the programme consisted of 10 formal courses in leadership (see Table 1); seven International Specialist (IS) seminars; a study Mission to Montreal for 20 of the participants; and continuous professional development, concentrated in the intervals between courses and seminars and delivered by the Ministry officials.

Even after the programme started, the directorate remained attuned to the emerging needs of the group, through the *National Advisory Committee* (IIIB3dii) as well as through feedback from instructors. Participants were, in this way, able to make their needs and interests known throughout the programme and the topics for the International Specialist (IS) seminars were based on those emerging needs. When asked what aspects of the programme worked for them, both directors mentioned the IS seminars. Explaining the success of this programme component, one of the directors emphasized “the contextualizing of training, the answer to [participants’] particular needs in the form of seminars” (T/06/01-22).

IIIB2 Category: LOCAL PARTNERSHIP

The *Guiding Principles* (IIIA2a) which informed the Design and Delivery of TTELP emphasized the importance of context and a new approach to learning which reflected a changed relationship, one that was non-hierarchical. Consistent with these principles, the Consortium understood the importance of local partnership: “We thought that the Consortium would be really better if we had a national partner” (T/06/01-2).

The annual reports of TTELP show clearly that the directors expected and were looking forward to working in collaboration with local partners. This theme was repeated in interviews with the directors of the project. Speaking of the Ministry officials, one of the directors said: “The idea was excellent ... and I think having a partnership with people on the ground is really an important principle to follow. [...] To be these foreigners who just do everything is not right” (T/06/02-24). This view was echoed by one of the participants, Kathy, who, in making suggestions for future projects, listed the following two items:

- 1) “Modules to be presented by both local and McGill facilitators”
- 2) “Modules/themes must also focus on the local setting e.g. Educational

Laws/Regulations to be facilitated by local professionals/facilitators” (S29-02/06.)

They had both worked on international leadership development projects before and had clear ideas about building and maintaining local partnerships, but this was no guarantee. Early on in the project, before the end of the first year, the Consortium began to realize that even though they knew the kind of partners they needed and the roles they wanted them to play in the project, even though they had secured candidates that were excellent for the job, “it was hard to

operationalize” (T/06/02-24). I will return to the issue of local partnerships in the *Delivery* section of the results.

IIIB2a LOCAL PARTNERSHIP -University of the West Indies (UWI)

Established in 1948 at the Mona (Jamaica) campus as an overseas college of the University of London, the University of the West Indies became independent in 1962. There are now four campuses in the region: the Mona campus, the Saint Augustine campus (Trinidad), the Cave Hill campus (Barbados) and the Open Campus (Antigua and Barbuda).

McGill University and the Université de Montréal had hoped to have the University of the West Indies as a third partner in the Consortium. They thought that they would be in a stronger position to deliver the leadership development programme with a national partner on the team. Repeated overtures to the University of the West Indies consistently elicited initial affirmative responses which were never followed through. The Consortium discovered after some time that UWI had also entered a bid to deliver the training programme. That bid was won by the McGill-Université de Montréal Consortium and, in the words of one TTELP director, from the very beginning, “because we won it” [there was] “a rampant, latent opposition to our project” (T/06/01-4).

IIIB2b LOCAL PARTNERSHIP: Ministry Officials

IIIB2bi Ministry Officials –Selection.

The two Ministry officials, both Trinidadian educational consultants and experts in leadership were interviewed and selected by the two directors: “On our first visit to Trinidad, [we] spent almost two days interviewing applicants for the Ministry Official positions” (T/06/02-17). “They were people who had a standing, national standing. They were known and appreciated” (T/06/01-15). The Ministry Official whom I interviewed described his role in

TTELP as being “to tweak the course, so that the students would be able to apply the information to the context of Trinidad and Tobago” (T/05/01-2).

IIIB2bii Ministry Officials -Organization

In their role as facilitators and guardians of cultural and contextual sensitivity, the Ministry officials were expected to meet regularly with students between courses. “Their job was to meet with smaller groups, and individuals or dyads” (T/06/02-23), “adapting the theoretical, the courses from the professors, during that period, trying to find applications, responding to particular students or participants’ demands” (T/06/01-11).

This continuous professional development component, this “on-the-ground mentoring” (T/06/02-7) was supposed to take place between modules. It was a great idea, but did not quite work out as the Consortium had intended. Speaking of the Ministry officials, one of the directors said: “The idea was excellent ... and I think having a partnership with people on the ground is really an important principle to follow. [...] To be these foreigners who just do everything is not right” (T/06/02-24). This view was echoed by one of the participants, Kathy, who, in making suggestions for future projects, listed the following two items:

3) “Modules to be presented by both local and McGill facilitators”

4) “Modules/themes must also focus on the local setting e.g. Educational

Laws/Regulations to be facilitated by local professionals/facilitators” (S29-02/06.)

The directors had both worked on international leadership development projects before and had clear ideas about building and maintaining local partnerships, but this was no guarantee. Early on in the project, before the end of the first year, the Consortium began to realize that even though they knew the kind of partners they needed and the roles they wanted them to play in the

project, even though they had secured candidates that were excellent for the job, “it was hard to operationalize” (T/06/02-24). The difficulty of operationalizing the Ministry officials’ role in TTELP was acknowledged by both the Consortium and the Ministry official interviewed for this study. I will return to this issue in the *Delivery* section of these results.

IIIB3 Category: ORGANIZATION.

The third category under the Planning sub-theme is organization. Whereas the planning indicates in general terms what components will make up the entire operation, organization has to do with ordering, balancing and prioritizing, ensuring that everything is in place to support effective delivery. Well-organized operations at times unfold so seamlessly that participants are unaware of the detailed planning that underpins them. A lack of organization, however, is quickly noticed and experienced as an inconvenience. Planning, then, is about executive decisions. It is about concepts and ideas which may look good on paper, but unravel in the throes of implementation. Organization is the conspicuous result of paying greater attention to the realities of the field. The organization category has three sub-categories: *Instructors* (how they were prepared for their role), *Logistics* (what systems were put in place locally to ensure the smooth running of the TTELP operation) and *Supervision* (the Consortium’s strategies for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project). Management of the project in terms of broad programme elements and financial management were dealt with under the *Framework (IIIA)* sub-theme.

IIIB3ai SELECTION of Instructors.

Instructors for TTELP were selected by the two directors. They were chosen from the pool of adjunct professors who teach the off-site leadership courses for the certificate programme. The director described them as: “excellent professionals, often retired and very good

teachers and knowledgeable theoretically” (T/06/02-15). Some professors from the Université de Montréal and McGill University were also selected. In all cases, they had to be English speakers, since English was the language of instruction for TTELP. In addition, they had to have a Ph.D. or vast experience in their area of specialization (T/06/01-13). The candidates’ curriculum vitae were first approved by the directorate of the Consortium and then forwarded to SEMP and MOE in Trinidad and Tobago, as a courtesy, for their information and approval. “We tried to have top, top teachers, people we know we could rely on” (T/06/02-16).

IIIB3aii ORGANIZATION of Instructors.

Instructors had to prepare a course outline, which was submitted to the directors. Once approved by the directors, it was posted on the TTELP website. Copies of the syllabus, together with reading material for the course were also sent to Trinidad and Tobago well in advance of the start date for the course so that the material could be photocopied and distributed to participants (T/06/01-14).

Before leaving for Trinidad and Tobago, instructors and international specialists (IS) were fully briefed about what was to be expected and how they were to proceed with the delivery of their courses. The briefing session included information on:

- the Trinidad and Tobago social, economic, political and educational environment
- the goals of the educational reform underway
- the strategic orientations of MOE and
- the characteristics of the participant population.

(Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 13).

At the briefing session, the incoming instructor got to meet the previous instructor and to look at the Trinidad and Tobago photo library which the Consortium had built up over the duration of the project: “When the new instructor was getting ready, we would bring the old ... the former instructor in, from the most recent module [...] and we would try to share what had gone on” (T/06/02-15).

Once the delivery of the course or seminar was underway, there would be a supervisory mission to Trinidad and Tobago, involving one or both directors of TTELP. Instructors also met with the Ministry officials to keep them in the loop regarding content delivered, participants’ progress and any other emerging issues. The Ministry officials needed this information in order to effectively deliver continuous professional development through mentoring and coaching of the participants. The instructors were required to meet separately with for-credit participants in order to make up the number of hours per course normally required for credit by the Graduate Faculty of McGill University. TTELP courses ran for 36 hours, three hours less than regular McGill graduate courses. The three-hour difference was made up for in these separate sessions with the instructors.

At the end of every course or seminar, students completed a written evaluation very much like those completed by students at McGill. All instructors had to submit student grades and write reports when they returned to Montreal. Outgoing instructors also had a debriefing session with the directors. All pertinent information from the debriefing session, together with the instructor’s report, was made available to subsequent instructors. As one director explained, “we had a briefing session before they [**left**] and a debriefing session when they [**came**] back, so we were always in that process of getting information and transmitting information to the professors” (T/06/01-15).

One professor was even “recycled a couple of times.” This particular instructor was much loved by the participants “and we used him in different capacities and it worked very well” (T/06/02-16). He taught a course in the first year and returned in the second year to conduct a seminar. These return visits in different capacities allowed him to evaluate how the project was unfolding overall and report back to the Consortium.

IIIB3b Logistics.

The logistical needs of TTELP were relatively simple, but critical to the smooth running of the programme: Furnished space for the delivery of instruction and the provision of lunch for participants and instructors during the two-week period for each course or one week for the International Specialist Seminars. Other logistical needs such as accommodation for the instructor and transportation to and from the venue were in line with regular tourist reservations and, therefore, easily organized from Montreal. Accommodation and other subsistence needs for the participants were not the responsibility of the Consortium.

The directorate of the TTELP Consortium, aware of the importance of having this logistical infrastructure in place, had included in their budget lines funds for a Field Office, “for a person on the ground there to do the field managing, who would do the logistics of getting the space and whatever” (T/06/02-22). The first few months of the programme, however, exposed logistical weaknesses which shocked the directorate and led to the closure of the Field Office, which was not doing satisfactorily the job that it was set up to do. The directors both said that logistical problems were one of the major challenges that they faced during the delivery of TTELP.

The directors had visited Trinidad in June 2003. They had arranged to rent space for the very first course from the UWI School of Education, but “about two weeks before, we were told

the space won't be ready" (T/06/02-18). One of the directors flew down to Trinidad to resolve the problem. After meetings with the Deans of Arts and Science and the Head of the School of Education, space was secured. "It wasn't great space. It was in a shopping Centre across from the campus, but we said we're gonna have to do it cause we have nowhere else to go and when the instructor arrived, the space was there but there was no furniture" (T/06/02-18). That first instructor had to spend the first two days of his trip ferrying furniture from various places in order to set up the classroom.

So, there were plans in place to ensure that the logistical needs of TTELP were met, but in the end, some of those plans unravelled, through no fault of the directors, and forced them to adopt contingency plans which were much more expensive than what they had budgeted for. As a result, the first three courses of the programme were held at an unsuitable venue. It was a near fiasco which had the potential to undermine the delivery of the courses and the morale of both instructors and participants. It cost the Consortium valuable budget dollars and was potentially damaging to the Consortium's reputation and relations with the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education.

Although at the time of these glitches, it was business as usual, and the programme moved ahead, undeterred, when participants had the opportunity during the in-depth interviews and online survey to discuss aspects of the programme that they found most and least positive, it became clear that those logistical problems had not gone unnoticed.

Participants were, in general, satisfied with the organization of TTELP. Some of them experienced problems getting to the venue and still more problems at the venue. Renukah, for example, found the programme "extremely well organized" (T/02/09-8), but there were problems with the venue. Renukah said that the first venue, the Crown Plaza hotel, "was fantastic, but it

was expensive, I guess. So, they sent us to [...] the Bureau of Standards Building. The caterer was awful. The food was awful and he was awful. (S29) This criticism was repeated by Chris. When asked to list the least positive aspects of the programme, Chris said “Sometimes it was disorganized and this led to conflicts among participants and blame strewn around” (S26). He returned to the subject when making suggestions for improving the programme if it were to be repeated. His first suggestion was “better organization” (S29). When asked, in the in-depth interview, to be more specific, he listed four issues: “Changes of venue, problems with caterers, things not set up for instructors, lunch not set up for participants.” Asha, too, was unhappy with the changes in venue. In her suggestions, she wrote: “The location should be fixed” (S29).

For some participants, commuting to and from the venue was a major inconvenience. They travelled from all over Trinidad to get to the programme venue and for some, this meant long hours on the road before and after each day’s work. For Kamini, it was a two-hour commute twice a day. For Michelle, a daily commute from Tobago was not practical, so for each module, she had to make arrangements to stay with relatives in Trinidad. Her top two negative things about TTELP had to do with this displacement: “1) Leaving Tobago to travel to Trinidad for an extended period. Totally homesick” and “2) Was sometimes angry and disengaged because I missed the comfort of home. I had no access to computers to do homework since I stayed at in-laws without these necessities” (S26). Unfortunately, wherever the chosen venue was located, there would be participants having to make long trips to get there, given the size of Trinidad and Tobago. Michelle suggested a separate program in Tobago: “It is intensive. Tobago participants should be offered the course in Tobago” (S29).

Renukah found that there were too many changes to the original schedule. In her suggestions for future programmes, she said: “I think they should give us a timetable well in

advance. [...] So, I believe [...] a less flexible schedule would be better, something that's given beforehand, so you'll know where you are, so you'll be able to plan the rest of your life. That was one of the shortcomings (S29).

IIIB3c Category: Organization -> SUPERVISION.

Professional development programmes such as TTELP require careful monitoring. If, for whatever reasons, the programme experiences glitches or begins to go off-course, the administrators responsible for effective and efficient delivery need to be alerted without delay in order to address the problem and get the programme back on track. Having supervisory arrangements in place is critical for ongoing monitoring of programme progress and quality because it increases the likelihood of prompt identification and management of problems. It also enhances accountability and fosters trust in the directorate of the programme. Given the magnitude of TTELP, the high stakes involved and the distance between the client location and the Consortium's home base, having checks built into the programme was a political and organizational imperative.

IIIB3ci Advisory Committees.

There were two advisory committees attached to TTELP: The Montreal-based Joint Advisory Board (JAB) and the National Advisory Committee (NAC), based in Trinidad and Tobago. The composition and broad objectives of these committees were discussed in the Introduction to TTELP in Chapter One of this thesis. As a reminder, the role of the NAC was "to keep the various project stakeholders abreast of what is happening, and to encourage discussion and suggestions about the proposed work" (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 6). The purpose of the Joint Advisory Board (JAB) was "to inform and get advice on inter-university management of the project" (Consortium McGill University &

Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 18). The two advisory committees, which met annually, were a key part of the organizational structure of TTELP (see Figure 1). They did not just rubberstamp whatever the directors proposed. Minutes from the meetings of these committees, which are included in the annual reports show that the meetings were democratic. Issues were raised and discussed and in most cases, consensus was reached.

IIIB3cii Directors.

The directors of TTELP played a key role in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme. As co-directors and, in the case of Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, project administrator of TTELP, they were ultimately accountable for the efficient implementation of the programme. In addition, Dr. Butler-Kisber was director of the Graduate Certificates in Educational Leadership programme at McGill. She explained that “from the point of view of Grad Studies, I had permission to do this programme internationally, but I’m expected to monitor quality control” (T/06/02-25). The directorate would be held accountable for the quality of the programme delivered, so it was in their interest to monitor that delivery closely, to identify weaknesses in the programme and to take steps or recommend actions to minimize them. Since they had designed the programme, the directors knew better than anyone else what it should look like as it moved forward.

As I noted in the section on *Organization of Instructors* (IIIB3aii), the directors met with each instructor for a briefing session before they delivered their courses or seminars in Trinidad and Tobago and held a debriefing session with them when they returned to Montreal. In addition, during almost every course or seminar, one or both of the directors visited Trinidad and Tobago on a supervision mission: “We always had someone going to kind of look at what was happening, not to let it go” (T/06/02-12).

The supervisory missions were an important part of the programmes's ongoing evaluation system. They were carried out by one or both directors "during the delivery of the course or seminar. The mission include[d] in-depth discussions with the scholar or international specialist (IS) on the actual delivery of the course or seminar, on students' commitment and performance, and on any other relevant aspect of the appointee's mandate" (Consortium McGill University and Université de Montréal, 2004, p.14).

IIIB3ciii Evaluation

Formative evaluation was built into TTELP and was used effectively to monitor the overall quality of the programme and the performance of key components. As one director said: "Each activity had an evaluation form" (T/06/01-22). "There was [...] continuous evaluation activity" (T/06/01-23). Data from the multiple checkpoints for formative evaluation of the project were submitted to the directors, who would then make them available to other team members whose performance could be enhanced by these emerging data.

Data from the ongoing evaluation activity in TTELP enhanced the capacity and quality of the directors' supervision. They knew at all times what was going on in their programme. This was especially important because of the geopolitical context. The geographical and cultural distance between the Consortium and its client needed a network of bridges in order to establish and maintain a collaborative partnership.

Summary of ORGANIZATION Category (IIIB3).

TTELP was highly organized. An examination of the organization of the programme in general and the instructors in particular, reveals a refined and effective level of organization. When, however, the locus and more particularly, the players to be organized, were in Trinidad and Tobago, things seemed to become a bit frayed: Logistical problems surrounding TTELP

were numerous and the two human resource issues that the Consortium faced were the Field Manager, who was let go after 6 months and the Ministry officials whose roles were clear enough on paper, but proved difficult to operationalize. This apparent disparity between the Consortium's ability to organize resources from the North versus the persistence of organizational issues in Trinidad and Tobago will be examined more fully in the Discussion section.

IIIB. SUMMARY of Leadership Development Sub-Theme: PLANNING.

TTELP was meticulously planned. The experience and commitment of the directors was evident in their attention to detail. It is not always easy to operationalize planned components of a programme. The unpredictable realities of the field can cause even a well-planned programme to unravel. I shall now look at the delivery of TTELP.

IIIC Leadership Development Sub-Theme: DELIVERY

Introduction

Planning is critical and a well-planned programme should flow smoothly through the delivery stage. It is not always easy, however, to operationalize planned components of a programme. Unexpected circumstances in the field can jeopardize the delivery even of a well-planned programme. Problems at the delivery stage must be resolved as a matter of urgency. Unresolved issues at this stage can jeopardize future components. They can also erode stakeholders' confidence in the service providers and they can have a negative impact on participants' perception and enjoyment of the programme.

Delivery: International (IIIC1a)

The launch of this ambitious international programme took place in an atmosphere already fraught with tension: The potential fiasco surrounding the venue for the first course had

been speedily resolved, but the Consortium was not happy with the increased cost of the alternative venue. That experience had shaken the directors somewhat: “That was our first, you know, step into the country, really, and I thought ... It was almost like the project was gonna fall apart. I didn’t know what we were gonna do because from here, you’re soooo ... helpless” (T/06/02-20). They had already accepted that the University of the West Indies was not interested in a partnership with the Consortium. Instead, they detected “a rampant, latent opposition to our project” (T/06/01-5). As I explained in discussing the *Cost* (IIIA3) of the programme, Dr. Butler-Kisber, who was the project manager, was concerned about the financial aspect of the programme: “from the beginning, I was worried about the budget, so I ran a very tight ship. [...] People disliked it, but I had to” (T/06/02-7).

These tensions, and there were others, may explain why the Ministry official perceived the directors as embroiled in managing the project: “It was a case of management to the end. They had to manage it to the end” (T/05/01-5). He speculated that it may have been because of issues like the certification problem. The reality is that there were emerging issues which kept the directors in a state of heightened concern about the delivery of the programme. Initial tensions, such as those already mentioned, clearly took their toll, but there were other, ongoing tensions which the directors could neither resolve nor ignore.

Being in a different country from the context of delivery made the directors feel helpless sometimes when problems arose, as mentioned earlier. There is no doubt that the distance issue intensified the impact of those problems which were entrenched. Issues such as selection criteria

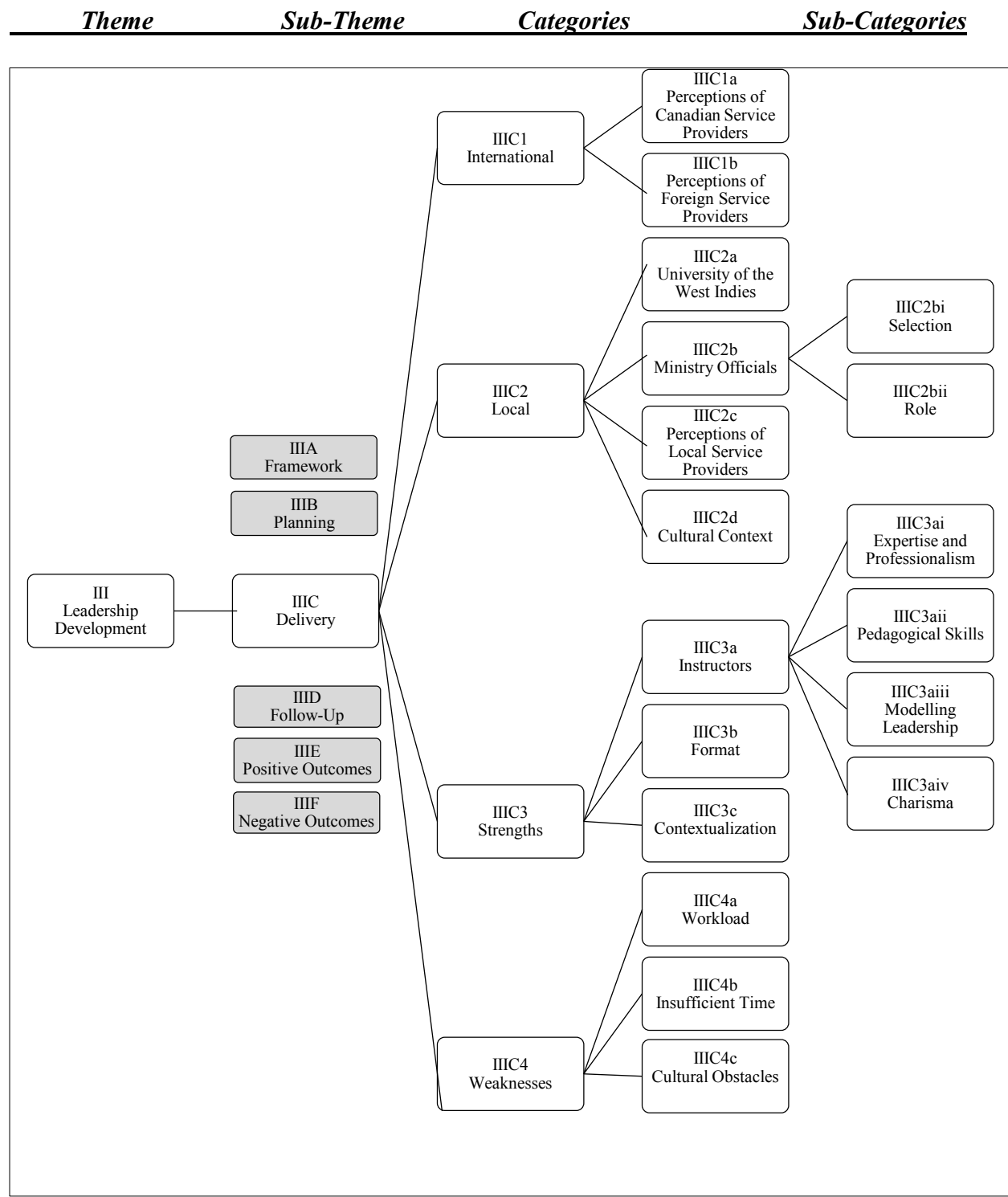


Figure 8. Sub-Theme IIIC: DELIVERY. The delivery dimension of leadership development and the categories which led to its emergence.

and non-certification fell into this category. It was only at the very end of the programme, during the Futures Conference that the directors were able to explain to the participants that these issues were “out of our hands from the beginning” (T/06/02-35). For the entire duration of the project, they were aware that they were being blamed for things that were not under their control, but they did not find the right place or time to explain themselves until the very end. As one director said afterwards: “I found it so hard dealing with sentiments that were kind of negative when it really wasn’t about us, like, there was nothing we could do. That was hard” (T/06/02-37).

Two major ongoing problems that the directors faced were their relationship with the Ministry of Education and the role of the Ministry officials. These will be discussed under the *Local* category which follows.

INTERNATIONAL: Delivery of Instruction (IIIC1b)

The delivery of instruction for TTELP was a major triumph. The instructors were, by all accounts, excellent. They delivered a state-of-the-art leadership development programme which garnered enthusiastic praise from all participants.

The international dimension of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project was a powerful factor in the design and delivery of this program. Participants’ perceptions of the team of international experts were central to its success. The consensus among the group of participants in this study was that the Canadian team of instructors did an outstanding job:

IIIC1bi Perceptions of Foreign Service Providers

Bob described the experience of working with a team of experts from Canada as “refreshing”. Kamini, too, found the team of Canadian instructors impressive and said that she thoroughly enjoyed working with them: “Very, very, very, very enjoyable.” (T/02/03-17) Kamini

also liked the fact that because the courses were intensive, instructors had to push participants to be ready with readings, presentations and assignments. That kind of pressure turned out to be critical to the success of the program, not just because of limited time for each module, but also because the participants, although they were released for the training, were never released from their duties, which still required their daily attention, even when modules were in progress.

Renukah enjoyed working with the Canadian instructors. She found them to be of an “exceedingly high standard” (T/02/09-11) both in leadership expertise and in their professionalism.

Chris, too, enjoyed working with the Canadian instructors. For him, the most positive aspect of TTELP was “Meeting the lecturers who so willingly shared their experiences in education both good and bad.” He said that they helped him to realize how much he valued the profession. He described them as “highly qualified”, “friendly” and “open” but, most importantly, “they came with a wealth of experience. [...] Many of them had been principals. That was key.” “That was a great experience, a great experience. Very down-to-earth people. Very open. I think they were great.” (T/02/08-5)

Kathy described TTELP as “a very wonderful experience” (T/02/06-13). She liked the informal atmosphere and had nothing but positive things to say about the instructors. According to her, the Canadians were excellent: authoritative and effective, without being distant, and by the end of the programme, they had clearly won the hearts of the participants.

Doreen said that she enjoyed working with the team of Canadian instructors. She found them to be “more helpful”, “more approachable and more polite” than instructors she had worked with on previous leadership development programmes.

Asha liked the informal, interactive approach of the instructors. “We were all treated as equals and you had an opportunity to say what you think, even if you disagree” (T/02/01-18).

Hashim had very positive memories of the TTELP instructors. He was happy with both the content and delivery of the programme and said that relations among participants and instructors were good:

There was a very good interaction with us. [...]. Nobody found difficulty in terms of the lecturers. [...] And they made the courses very interesting and very participatory so that you were able to be involved. We broke up into group sessions. [...] I think most everybody would have quite enjoyed the programme. (T/02/02-35)

From the anecdotes that the instructors related about their experiences of leadership in various parts of the world, Bob learned that the problems facing leaders transcend culture:

and there were also several anecdotes of how they did it when they were principals, or superintendents or school supervisors and how others did it successfully, you know. So, I found that to be very refreshing and as well, it also confirmed some of the beliefs that I would have had about leadership (T/02/05-12)

Kamini found the interaction with ideas from another culture to be inspiring. “The exposure was great for us,” she said (T/02/03-17).

Renukah valued the opportunity to work with a team of foreign service providers: “It’s always nice to be exposed to other ... persons other than your countrymen” (T/02/09-11), she said. “These are people who have gone all over the world, from universities everywhere and

done work in other countries. That kind of perspective was something that I really liked about the program. It wasn't insular in any way" (T/02/09-12).

Asha loved the exposure to international players and practices: "They worked in different parts and they brought with them examples from different countries and that was good, because a number of them, they worked not only in Canada, but I think, one of them ... this guy worked in South America?" (T/02/01-20) She felt that in spite of the cultural differences, there was a great deal to be learned from the experiences of the international team: "[...] Your system might be different, [...] but there was so much to learn [...] about how you deal with situations, how you get student engagement" (T/02/01-20).

Hashim felt that the use of international instructors was more beneficial than the use of a local team of experts because it allowed for greater exposure to different ideas, a process he called "cross-pollination." (T/02/02-36).

IIIC1bii Perceptions of Local Service Providers

Renukah was confident in the quality of local experts "because we have some exceedingly good presenters here and people are very knowledgeable" (T/02/09-12), but she clearly felt that there was the risk that a locally-run programme might become insular. She said that she really liked the fact that TTELP "wasn't insular in any way" (T/02/09-12).

Chris felt that a local team would have been less engaging. When asked if he felt that TTELP would have been different if it had been run by a local team, he replied: "Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Definitely. Definitely it would have been different. I think people would have **(missed a hell of a lot of classes)**. (T/02/08-6)"

Kathy felt that a team of instructors from Trinidad and Tobago would have been “more academic,” “more formal” (T/02/06-15) and probably more “exam-oriented”. She, nonetheless, suggested that the modules should be delivered by both local and international experts (S29).

Doreen found the team of Canadian instructors “more helpful”, “more approachable and more polite” than instructors she had worked with on previous leadership development programmes. She found that “the locals were more formal. Definitely.” (T/02/07-18)

Asha said that a “Trinidad program by Trinidadians [**would**] be the old school, the top-down approach”. (T/02/01-19)

While Hashim noted with satisfaction the inclusion of local experts in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project, he felt strongly that exposure to an international team of instructors was more beneficial to the participant because it was more likely to broaden their ideas and their vision (T/02/02-38).

Delivery: LOCAL (IHC2)

The local end of the delivery of TTELP was more problematic. The UWI after initially agreeing to be a part of the instructional team, backed out at the last minute, leaving the Directorate to find replacement professors. Overall, the Consortium admitted that they found it difficult to get a straight answer from people in Trinidad and Tobago. They found them unhelpful:

“We had no help with that. In fact, that was one of my big problems because no one was helpful” (T/06/02-6).

Now, I don’t know that it was on purpose, but there was certainly ... we weren’t getting the help that we thought we would get” (T/06/02-19).

Under these conditions, it was impossible to build the truly collaborative partnerships so vital in international projects such as TTELP.

III C2a MINISTRY OFFICIALS

The Ministry Officials were problematic because they were to play an integral role in the Consortium's objectives and the directors could not find a way to get their share of the delivery of the programme to work. Part of the problem was the slice-through format which brought together officials from all departments of the Ministry of Education and made it difficult for the Ministry officials to deal with the resulting variation. That does not satisfactorily account, in the eyes of the Consortium, for the failure to establish and maintain the level of mentoring and coaching which the Consortium had pledged to deliver.

Although their inclusion in the project was a great idea, it did not achieve the intended objectives. Several reasons were advanced for the failure of the Ministry officials' role:

- The Ministry officials were extremely busy consultants.
- TTELP could offer them only a daily honorarium of US\$500 and not their regular consultancy fees.
- Communication between the Consortium and Ministry officials was not smooth: The official who was interviewed for this study, for example, reported that he was invited to attend some modules and not others.
- Overall, not much effort was made to maximize their role: They needed to be more than just on-call, low key and peripheral.
- Both directors and Ministry officials expressed disappointment.

- Participants rarely mentioned Ministry officials, for praise or for criticism.

TTELP included local input in the form of a Field Manager in Trinidad and a Montreal-based project coordinator, but they needed a partner with a high profile nationally, someone with social and political clout. The lack of a local partner was, perhaps, the critical flaw in TTELP. The Ministry officials, an ingenious addition to the TTELP team, never exercised their full capacity or fully applied their scholarship to the emerging needs of the participants in a systematic way. This resulted in a scaffolding vacuum and repeated breaks in what was conceived as a continuous leadership development programme.

IIIC3 Category: STRENGTHS

Participants reported at every opportunity that they thoroughly enjoyed TTELP. Three aspects of the delivery particularly impressed them: the instructors, the design and the acknowledgement of local culture and context.

IIIC3a Sub-Category: INSTRUCTORS

Participants spoke of the course instructors in glowing terms. They were very impressed by their expertise and professionalism and felt honoured that scholars of the highest calibre had been chosen to deliver the courses on leadership. They were struck, too, by the fact that, in spite of their evident scholarship, vast experience, distinguished careers and public profile, they were warm, caring and open-minded people with whom they could have a pleasant conversation and a good laugh. Their admiration and respect were based on four attributes:

Expertise and Professionalism – IIIC3ai

They were revered as experts and respected as professionals. Selected for their expertise and international profile, they were a major success, applauded by every participant for their

scholarship, their professionalism and their personal qualities. There is no doubt that they had a positive impact on the leadership practice of participants.

Bob mentioned the “well-prepared and knowledgeable instructors” as one of the most positive aspects of the programme. He described the experience of working with a team of experts from Canada as “refreshing”. From the anecdotes that the instructors related about their experiences of leadership in various parts of the world, he learned that the problems facing leaders transcend culture:

and there were also several anecdotes of how they did it when they were principals, or superintendents or school supervisors and how others did it successfully, you know. So, I found that to be very refreshing and as well, it also confirmed some of the beliefs that I would have had about leadership (T/02/05-12)

Kamini said that the knowledge base of the participants was solid, so that the knowledge was not new to them, but the instructors refined it and honed the practice of it. (T/02/03-18)

Renukah had high praise for the instructors: “We had some of the best lecturers, because they were extremely knowledgeable. She found them to be of an “exceedingly high standard” (T/02/09-11) both in leadership expertise and in their professionalism.

Chris said that they were “highly qualified”, but, most importantly, “they came with a wealth of experience. [...] Many of them had been principals. That was key” (T/02/08-5).

Pedagogical Skills – IIC3aii

Bob found that the instructors' discourse on leadership underlined their view that the core issues in leadership transcend culture:

Well, certainly, it was refreshing. [...] In their presentations, they would give anecdotes of ... principals working in schools and the problems they would have had and it's similar to what we have down here, and there were also several anecdotes of how they did it when they were principals, or superintendents or school supervisors and how others did it successfully, you know. So, I found that to be very refreshing (T/02/05-11).

Kamini said that they were "very effective in their presentations." (T/02/03-17)

Renukah found the programme "extremely well organized" and the classes "interactive" and "interesting". She described the instructors as: "People who knew their work, their job and who did the presentations with such ease and expertise, I would say. They were well-prepared and went about it in a very professional way." (T/02/09-11)

Kathy had nothing but positive things to say about the instructors. She liked the informal atmosphere and the emphasis on the practical.

Asha liked the informal, interactive approach of the instructors. "We were all treated as equals and you had an opportunity to say what you think, even if you disagree" (T/02/01-18). She also enjoyed the emphasis on problem-based learning anchored in real situations: "We [...] did demonstrations and things like that. It was very interactive and people did real things, you know, put themselves in real situations. How are you going to handle it? and that is what I liked about the course" (T/02/01-17).

Modelling Leadership - IIC3aiii

Kamini, for her part, admitted that she had internalized some of the instructors' "modes" and had been using them in her training sessions: "Several of the modes of the presenters are now incorporated in my presentations when I am required to conduct training."

Asha was clearly impressed with the harmony between the leadership models being recommended as effective and the leadership practice of the experts who were recommending them: "With the Canadian style of leadership, [...] what their view on leadership was, is how they carried themselves [...] It was leadership in action. It is participatory leadership." (T/02/01-18)

Charisma – IIC3aiv

They were praised for their communication skills and their ability to capture and maintain the interest of participants. Two years after the end of the programme, the memories of their excellence, their humanity and their charm seemed to live on in the minds of the participants.

Kamini said that she thoroughly enjoyed working with the team of Canadian experts. She found the interaction with ideas from another culture to be inspiring and the instructors themselves were impressive, not only because of their expertise in the field of leadership, but as teachers and individuals: "Very, very, very, very enjoyable. The exposure was great for us ." (T/02/03-17)

Renukah said that they "were able to communicate very effectively with us and to elicit [...] the kind of enthusiasm that was needed in a program like that."

For Chris, the most positive aspect of TTELP was “Meeting the lecturers who so willingly shared their experiences in education both good and bad.” He said that they helped him to realize how much he valued the profession. “It was a great experience, a great experience. Very down-to-earth people. Very open. I think they were great.” (T/02/08-5)

Kathy, too, enjoyed working with the team of instructors from Canada. She described it as “a very wonderful experience” (T/02/06-13). Even though the instructors were experts in their field, she found them to be open to different ideas, supportive and very approachable.

They were so very, very learned. They knew their stuff and at the same time they were very friendly [...] always amenable to whatever sort of contributions we had to make. [...] They were not stuffy. [...] They were very open and caring. (T/02/06-13). [...] They always listened to what everyone had to say (T/02/06-14).

Doreen said that she enjoyed working with the team of Canadian instructors. She found them to be “more helpful”, “more approachable and more polite” than instructors she had worked with on previous leadership development programmes.

Hashim had very positive memories of the TTELP instructors. He was happy with both the content and delivery of the programme and said that relations among participants and instructors were good:

Theirs was a very good interaction with us. [...]. Nobody found difficulty in terms of the lecturers. [...] And they made the courses very interesting and very participatory so that you were able to be involved. We broke up into group sessions. [...] I think most everybody would have quite enjoyed the programme. (T/02/02-35)

Summary of Strengths

The international dimension of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project was a powerful factor in the design and delivery of this program. Participants' perceptions of the team of international experts were central to its success. The consensus among the group of participants in this study was that the Canadian team of instructors did an outstanding job.

Delivery: WEAKNESSES (IIC4)

Perceptions of weaknesses in delivery revealed dramatic differences between the participants and the directorate and this is perhaps not surprising, given the different objectives and levels of responsibility of the two groups.

Workload and Insufficient Time

The participants complained about the heavy *Workload* (IIC4a) and *Insufficient Time* (IIC4b) to do all that was required of them as participants while fulfilling their obligations as principals. The directors were sympathetic but not to the point of considering changing anything to placate future participants. They felt that the heavy workload was inevitable under the circumstances in order to ensure a quality programme. While they understood the resulting stress, they pointed out that their experience with principals in Montreal and internationally, who also have the responsibilities of being full time principals while doing the courses, showed that it can be done.

Delivery Sub-Theme: Weaknesses

The directors of the Consortium, while pleased overall with the delivery of the programme, recognized its shortcomings and discussed them openly. I will now look at the problems reported by the directors.

Technology

Technology was a problem which seriously affected communication between the directors and the participants. Email was a huge problem, with messages going unanswered for days and sometimes longer. There is simply not the same cultural attitude nor technological infrastructure for email as in North America, so it proved not to be a reliable means of communicating with people in Trinidad and Tobago.

Non-Attendance

A serious problem during the delivery of TTELP was the high incidence of participants having to miss classes, quite often because they were called to meetings at the Ministry of Education. The Consortium tried to get the message across, through the SEMP Coordinating Unit that this was unacceptable, but they were powerless to change things and in the end there were participants who had missed as much as 85% of the courses.

Local Partnership

For the entire duration of the project, the relationship between the Consortium and the major Trinidad players in TTELP was weak: The directors simply did not manage to forge strong alliances with the Ministry of Education, the UWI or the Ministry officials.

IIIC4a. Leadership Development Delivery -Weaknesses: WORKLOAD

In data from the online survey, complaints about the heavy workload, lack of time and logistical problems together outnumbered complaints about non-certification. There was consensus among participants that the workload was unreasonable, that, with their full-time jobs as principals, vice-principals, etc. to attend to, they simply could not be expected to find the time needed for preparation, assignments and class time, too. They had endured the heavy TTELP workload in addition to the already heavy responsibilities of their jobs and at the end of it all, they had received a certificate of participation. They may have suffered in silence for the duration of the programme, but by the time of the interviews, a sense of outrage was evident in some of their comments.

For most of the participants, there was no way to do justice to their dual roles as educational administrators and TTELP trainees. They had to make choices, to prioritize, simply because they didn't have the time to meet the demands of both roles. Bob admitted to having attended only 15% of TTELP courses "because of pressures of work activities" (S26). In the interview, he explained how repeated clashes between TTELP modules and workshops in his area of responsibility within the Ministry forced him to miss the greater part of the programme:

I think I attended the first session ... the first two sessions and they were excellent ... and I think when the third one came about, we were involved in getting ready for some workshops and those workshops were in my area, you know, at the institutionalization of school-based management, so I really could not attend, you know [...] and then it happened repeatedly, you see, and even I myself, I kinda lost interest in it ... because I had missed so much already, so I really felt that, you know, I really didn't benefit as much as I should have [...] (S26).

Kamini had the same experience of overload. For her, this was the least positive aspect of the programme: “Having to cope with the timing of the modules (assignments) and the activities which required you to be at your workplace. There were no concessions granted. In addition one was required to participate in all modules/assignments and be in attendance” (S26).

Doreen listed the “time factor” as one of the negative aspects of TTELP. In a brief comment that said much, she wrote “quantity of material too much for allotted time” (S26).

Survey question #29 asked participants “What suggestions (if any) would you have if this program were to be repeated?” Of the 62 units of data generated by this question, 24 were related to the workload issue, 10 had to do with organization and 17 were about certification. We knew that non-certification was a huge issue for the participants. These data suggest that organization caused even more concern than the certificate of participation.

Bob, who missed 85% of classes due to clashes with workshops organized by his department, suggested ways of supporting participants by providing appropriate substitution so as to ensure that trainees can participate fully in the programme.

It has to do with getting everyone on board, the supervisors of the attendees, and letting them make that commitment, you know, writing to them directly about the attendance ... and ensuring that they provide the adequate support ... ok? ... that the person who is attending the course can go there, can be there, can do what has to be done, [...] So, even if it means the supervisor indicating that prior planning has to be done by the officer who is going on training, [...] a plan of action is put in place” (S29).

Kamini, too, felt that something needed to be done to allow participants to devote themselves fully to their programme. She suggested a sabbatical period for the duration of the programme.

Chris suggested improvements in organization and communication: “Better organization and upfront information on time, effort required and certification to be expected” (S29).

Kathy suggested that the format of the programme could be improved by making it continuous for one or two years” (S26). She also favoured a sabbatical period for trainees: “Participants should be given the necessary time off to read for a Diploma or Degree (one/two years). Ministry should send replacement staff to school” (S29).

Doreen suggested “more time for modules and presentation of papers” (S29) and Asha felt that the organizational problems would be reduced if “some courses could be done online” (S29).

IIID Sub-Theme FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES: Introduction

No follow-up activities were built into the design of TTELP. By follow-up activity, I mean mentoring, coaching and other developmental relationships that provide opportunities for emerging leaders to practice their skills and receive feedback from more experienced leaders. These kinds of activities were not organized. Participants found that after the programme ended, they returned to their respective positions in the Trinidad and Tobago education system and were expected to get on with the business of implementing what they had learned without being prompted or prodded.

The Ministry official interviewed for this study said that follow-up activities are “not very common in the Caribbean. People don’t really follow up a program. [...] That’s not normally done. So I think that’s a weakness” (T/05/01-20). The official reflected that organizing follow-up activities “in Caribbean countries where institutions are very separated, and people [...] work maybe too much, that could be difficult” (T/05/01-16). He considered follow-up work important and useful: He had found, in his own consultancy, that “work[ing] with people on the ground” was an effective way of eroding the hidden resistance to change that some senior administrators might feel. It brought them to the point where “they can see this style helps” even if “it may not help in the short term” (T/05/01-14).

This scholar also felt that useful follow-up activities could be organized by the participants themselves. He spoke of having met one of the participants sometime after the end of TTELP and she had told him that participants had met and talked. He found this very encouraging. He said: “That kind of, you know, professional fellowship can be useful because it allows people to exchange views and [...] as they begin to apply the information, they can challenge themselves and challenge others, but those systems have to be put in place” (T/05/01-19). Two participants reported undertaking activities which fall into this category:

Michelle said “I observed and participated in mostly school based professional development activities in those areas. I organised for teachers with the expertise to assist their peers-and principal at sessions and to do further one on one at times convenient to individuals - and principal” (S19).

Doreen, who agreed that follow-up activities are very important, listed the kinds of follow-up activities she had engaged in as: “Knowledge shared with peers at staff meetings” and “Skills implemented in school practices.” (S19).

In the experience of most of the participants, however, organized follow-up activities were unheard of. When asked about this, Chris said “Follow-up? That **[doesn’t]** exist in Trinidad.” The only examples of follow-up activity came from the two school supervisors: The Department of School Supervision had a leadership preparation programme which was ongoing and systemic. Kamini explained that training for prospective supervisors consisted of a series of “intense training” programmes, most of them lasting for two weeks, after which, they would go to their district and work under the supervision of a senior supervisor. This cognitive apprenticeship model ensured that new knowledge and skills were readily integrated into the leadership practice of new school supervisors under the mentorship of senior colleagues. It is, therefore, not surprising that the school supervisors who participated in this study reported satisfaction with the level of follow-up activity after previous leadership training activities in the Department of School Supervision.

Those participants who were not school supervisors, however, returned to their jobs after TTELP ended and continued to implement what they had learned from the programme, but without any mentoring or coaching. Some of them bristled at the perceived neglect. Hashim said that there had been no follow-up activities of any kind since the end of the programme: “There is none. There is none. Since the programme ended in 2006, that was amen. Amen. And therefore, you know, we feel, we feel cheated. We feel as though that was a waste of two and a half years of our lives, because nothing has happened (T/02/02-8)

The benefits of follow-up activities were all too clear to the participants: Bob, for example, noted that “The follow-up actions were both necessary and rewarding”; Kamini said “They strengthened your skills for improved performance” and Doreen said that follow-up activity was “important if meaningful change is to occur” (S19). This awareness served to

intensify their displeasure and, in most cases, the target of that displeasure was the Ministry of Education.

Bob reported that TTELP had follow-up activities built into the programme: “Follow-up sessions were held by TTELP to reinforce concepts presented in prior sessions (S19).

Kamini said that “Follow-up activities were mainly performing the relevant tasks. They strengthened your skills for improved performance” (S19). In the case of school supervisors, this really is the case because as new school supervisors in Trinidad and Tobago carry out their post training activities, they are accompanied and mentored by senior supervisors. “You go to your district as a School Supervisor I and you report to a School Supervisor II. You are not on your own. [Follow-up activities are] built in. While you [are] doing the task, you are being evaluated [at the same] time” (S19).

When asked, however, about follow-up activities after TTELP, she reported that the participants dropped off the government’s radar: “Nobody. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. It’s done. We have our certificates and it’s there on our file. No mention, nowhere, no ... We did a report and that was about all. That’s gone ... into the archives!” (T/02/03-19).

Chris revealed that participants had asked TTELP leaders “to make sure afterwards that there was some continuity, with professionals coming out to oversee monitor implementation” (S19).

Asha, too, was very disappointed at the absence of follow-up activities. She said:

I don’t think the Ministry Research Department has ever looked back [...] Nobody in the Ministry is doing a follow-up on these people who did the course and [...] how what they

learned is being translated into school success. Nobody ... there are no systems in place to monitor how well people have performed (T/02/01-20).

Asha noted that some participants had retired and others had reverted to their former practices. She felt that an important opportunity had been missed: “People did the course, many of them have retired. Some ... that was it for them and they did it [...] while the course was going on and they’re done with it” (T/02/01-20). Asha puts the blame squarely on the Ministry of Education: “Nobody cares. In this country, the Ministry doesn’t care about that. They spend money on that and that’s it, and there are a few of their friends who’ll get some top jobs and that’s it. The rest of us, we are out in the wilderness” (T/02/01-27).

Chris lamented the absence of organized follow-up activity and his comments suggest that the Consortium, rather than the Ministry of Education, was to blame: “Dissatisfied totally. There was no follow-up. There was no follow-up. There is nothing that exists to tell me that there is a follow-up. In fact, we thought that [...] McGill University was a thing of the past until you called.” (T/02/08-6)

Some participants, including some of those who were critical of the failure to organize follow-up activities, identified the culture of the Ministry of Education as a key factor in the perception of neglect and inaction after the end of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. Kamini explained this as follows:

The culture of our Ministry: If somebody drives an initiative ... like the person who was at the helm of this initiative at that time, is not even in the organization any more. Right? So, that remains there. [...] Yes. That remains there. That person is no longer there. So,

someone else comes and they will drive another initiative and that is what happened.

(T/02/03-20)

If the political culture dictated that a project would lose its way if the project director left the Ministry, there was another aspect of the culture of the Ministry which seemed to preclude the formal organization of follow-up activities: Some participants noted and even endorsed the Ministry's apparent position that employees sent on a training programme know that they are expected to return to their posts and implement what they have learned. The suggestion that follow-up activities were necessary, or even desirable, seemed almost preposterous from this perspective. The Ministry would not act as a kindergarten for senior educational leaders whose initiative, conscientiousness and responsibility had already been developed and recognized for years.

Bob said that there had been no organized follow-up activity. The Ministry of Education, he said, expected participants to go back to their schools and implement what they had learned. They expected them to continue the discussions about issues in educational leadership which they had been having during TTELP. They expected them to continue learning about leadership and improving their leadership practice.

People were expected to implement what was done. [...] They would expect that people would kind of talk because my colleague who attended the programme, too, she and I would talk, would have continued to talk on our own and [...] focus on the elements of what we learned, you know, in our operations at our unit. [...] we also shared the learnings with our supervisor and other colleagues and so on at our unit. (T/02/05-13)

Bob also mentioned the 360 degree pilot project, which was providing feedback and coaching to senior administrators in the Ministry of Education, as part of the Government's focus on leadership development and public service reform. He felt that a look at the bigger picture would show that the Ministry was, in fact, giving a great deal of support to leaders in training.

Kathy said that there was no organized follow-up activity at any point. She felt that the Ministry assumed, quite rightly, that participants would implement what they had learned.

I felt we went back and we ... just because of what we learned, we went back there and we utilized it, and Ministry expects that [...] we have school-based management teams, which I guess they would expect us to form, but they would never come in to monitor what was actually taught or learned from the leadership project (T/02/06-17).

It is interesting to note that she views follow-up activity as both unnecessary at their level and inconsistent with the culture of the Ministry of Education.

You know, even while we were on the course, it was just that group. There was no one there to really monitor to see if, you know, we were doing what we were supposed to do. [...] I don't think we need anybody to ask us to do certain things. [...] We supposed now to take whatever we have learned and take it back to our respective work areas and make it work for us. (T/02/06-20)

Kamini was quick to acknowledge the absence of any kind of organized follow-up activity, but saw that as no excuse for failing to implement newly acquired knowledge and skills:

but you would have received the training, you use it to your advantage in your position.

[...] We are working. Yes we are. We are. On our own. On our own. Because just how I

was able to open my vistas and understand things differently, I gather the same thing happened to them and they are functioning successfully. (T/02/03-20)

Summary of Sub-Theme IID Follow-Up

Follow-up activities are not prioritized by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education. When training programmes end and participants go back to their respective posts, there is no attempt to monitor their performance for implementation of new knowledge and skills. The Ministry's approach, according to several participants, was informed not by indifference or inertia, but by confidence in the professionalism of the participants themselves. The Ministry was confident that participants knew what was expected of them and that they would return to their institutions and deliver on those expectations.

III E Introduction to Leadership Development Sub-Theme –POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Participants reported massive gains in knowledge and skills from the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. Even in areas where their prior knowledge was extensive, the programme enhanced their existing knowledge, offering new perspectives on old concepts and showing participants that core issues and problems in educational leadership are universal. Participants also discovered that the new knowledge and skills they were acquiring from the programme could be implemented straightaway. This wealth of new knowledge and skills was being incorporated into their leadership practice from day one, often with dramatic effectiveness. This infused them with confidence and enthusiasm. They felt empowered and began to see themselves increasingly as visionary leaders at the dawn of a major new paradigm.

III E1 Positive Outcomes: Affect

Gains in the affective domain were as pronounced as those in the cognitive domain. Renukah, in replying to the survey question about the most positive aspects of TTELP said: "I

was really very appreciative of the fact that it gave me the kind of professionalism that I needed. It gave me the ... maybe, self-esteem. [...] I didn't feel nervous about things." (S25)

For Chris, the most positive aspect of the course was the realization, through his interactions with the instructors, that he loved his profession: "Meeting the lecturers who so willingly shared their experiences in education both good and bad and letting me realize more [how much] I value this profession." (S25) Chris came out of the program with a new confidence in his leadership skills. He said in the interview: "I think I'm a very good leader. I motivate people a lot. That's how I get them to do a lot of things. They try to live up to their potential and I think that is because of the [Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project]" (T/02/08-5).

Kathy could not hide her enthusiasm for the programme. She just repeated: "I really enjoyed it, I really enjoyed it" (T/02/06-11).

Asked about the most positive aspects of TTELP, Michelle said "learning among peers- appreciated the collegiality. I have made some lasting friendships. Have received valuable assistance from colleagues." (S25) Describing herself as an educational leader coming out of TTELP, she said: "I felt empowered." (S25)

Doreen, too, spoke of the wonderful relationships forged during the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project: "Excellent lecturer /participant relationships." (S25) Again, at the end of the survey, in the "Other Comments" box, she wrote "The friendships /relationships developed were priceless."

Describing herself as an educational leader coming out of the program, Asha said: I was more confident - I felt more knowledgeable. (S25) Indeed, Asha's renewed enthusiasm and

confidence was evident even to colleagues of hers. One of the teachers we interviewed about Asha had noted the change in her principal. She said “Whatever she does now, to me, it has grown. In fact, she’s more confident in what she’s doing now.” (T/03/01-5)

III E2b Positive Outcomes –New Knowledge and Skills

Participants discussed the impact of the programme on their leadership development primarily in terms of new knowledge and skills. They rated knowledge gains, both quantitative and qualitative, as the most significant outcome of the programme.

In answering Question 24 of the survey (How would you describe yourself as an educational leader coming out of the TTELP program?), they reported that they were more knowledgeable and better equipped as leaders in education. Knowledge gains were reported in a variety of domains, including leadership theories, pedagogical knowledge and philosophical assumptions. Leadership skills which were acquired or enhanced through TTELP included communication, teambuilding, planning and problem solving and interpersonal relations.

III E2bi Interpersonal Relations.

Interpersonal relations were emphasized as a key area of leadership practice. Several participants punctuated their comments on the subject with the favourite mantra of one of the instructors: “relationships, relationships, relationships.” They understood clearly that not even the deepest understanding of complex leadership concepts nor the possession of every other leadership skill, could compensate for a poor grasp of interpersonal relations.

Bob said that he went into the TTELP with strong interpersonal skills, but by the end of the programme, he was even more convinced that relationships are “a critical element in an organization, you know, having people get along.” (T/02/05-4)

Kamini mentioned three aspects of the programme as having had an impact on her leadership practices. Two of the three had to do with relationships: firstly the programme's focus on "the importance of relationships within the organization" and secondly, the "validation and celebration of employees' contributions at any level of the organization." Kamini also spoke of the need for positive feedback: "and people like validation.[...] No matter how small I may have contributed, let me know that I have improved. And we tend not to, you know, we tend not to recognize those small steps to improvement." (T/02/03-13) She reported that she had become more people-oriented without changing her views on the importance of results.

TTELP also helped Kamini to understand the importance of looking at the issues underlying unsatisfactory performance. She learned, for example, that the performance of those under her supervision was more likely to improve if understood and addressed in the context of the whole person: "I kind of empathize, because we tend to just want to look at everybody in the system working as cogs in a wheel. [...] but then you have to remember that you are dealing with people who may have their own issues." (T/02/03-12)

Renukah found that her interpersonal skills improved noticeably as a result of TTELP. She reported that TTELP helped her "to do the job effectively. [...] You know, handling people takes a special kind of skill" (T/02/09-6). Even before the programme had ended, Renukah was able to handle people with a new-found professional ease.

Chris said that he came out of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project with a whole new skills set. Relationship-building was one of the skills that he mentioned proudly. As a direct result of his participation in TTELP, he realized that "building relationships is the key" to effective leadership (T/02/08-1). He said "I think I'm a very good leader. I

motivate people a lot. That's how I get them to do a lot of things. They try to live up to their potential and I think that [...] is because of the programme.” (T/02/08-5)

Kathy discovered that the key to effective interpersonal relations in any organization is knowing, respecting and liking the people you are leading:

I also learned how to mobilize the people in the organization, how to get them to get things done [...] in that you praise them, you recognize their strengths, you give them tasks that they can perform, you support them and you help along the way and that is [...] something that I really put into practice (T/02/06-5).

She also learned from the experienced, wise and pragmatic TTELP instructors that there is no strategy that guarantees the cooperation or support of every staff member:

Now, remember, you won't have 100%. You won't have 100% because one thing we learned is that you can't water the stones. [...] You can't water stones, so those who are stones will remain there, but you work on those who can make a difference to the organization (T/02/06-5).

Michelle liked the collegial framework of the programme. She found “the focus on sharing information” particularly valuable and said that she now encourages her staff to cultivate the habit. She said “I have made some lasting friendships. Have received valuable assistance from colleagues.”

Doreen fully endorsed TTELP's emphasis on the centrality of good interpersonal relations in organizations: “Leadership must be able to motivate and to encourage [...] for the good of the school. [...] Whether you are the cleaner, whether you are the cafeteria lady, whoever you are, I think you're due to be treated with a certain amount of respect” (T/02/07-16).

Asha said: “That program has helped me tremendously, in terms of being a good leader, and to lead and get the kind of results, get the kind of cooperation. It helped me also in terms of understanding people, dealing with people, how to approach them, how to get the job done.”

Asha took to heart the new knowledge she obtained from TTELP and embarked on a programme of mobilizing support not just among students and teachers, but among parents and the larger community beyond the walls of the school. She also accepted the fact that getting full support from your staff is not guaranteed, however effective your interpersonal skills may be:

And it’s working and it is working. I’m telling you that with this program, building relationships, getting to understand people [...] How do you understand people and how do you get people to perform the best? That has helped me, understanding members of staff[...] and I started to realize ... listen, you will never get 100% on board ... but if I get 90% ... let me work with what I have ... you know, because there will always be somebody ... who will say “No. I not doing that. That is not a good idea.” You will always have dissent. So, don’t wait to get everybody on board. Just move. And I have been doing that (T/02/01-5).

When asked how his work in TTELP had interfaced with his professional needs, Hashim replied: “It gave me the tools to better interface with my fellow staffers. [It] increased my capacity as a senior, mature staff member capable of aiding and assisting younger teachers and students (S22).

III E2bii Team building

Kamini learned from TTELP that participatory decision-making is an effective conflict reduction strategy. As a result of this new knowledge, she adopted a more participatory approach to leadership.

Kathy learned and incorporated into her leadership practice “the importance of team building and distribut[ed] leadership.” “To realize the vision”, she explained “there must be a team approach with a shared vision.” She said that she also learned “how to build leadership capacity within the school.”

Throughout her career, Kathy had been an autocratic leader. She felt very strongly, before participating in TTELP, that this approach was the most effective and efficient: “If you want to get the job done, [...] tell them that they have to do it and you get it done.” (T/02/06-2) After joining TTELP, it did not take long for her to realize the importance of democratic leadership for motivating and developing teachers. Early on in the program, therefore, Kathy made a conscious effort to change her autocratic approach by focussing on team work, on participatory leadership, so that teachers would be empowered as they became active participants in the decision-making process.

Kathy learned that you can mobilize people, by “put[ting] them to work in teams. In staff meetings, you let their voices be heard, you know, and **(in their turn)**, the parents at parents’ meeting, you have parent consultation and you try to engage the parents in school, [...] and in turn, they will engage their children. You work through them for their children.” (T/02/06-5)

Hashim said that one of the most important skills that he acquired through TTELP was the skill of delegation, of distributing leadership:

one of the first things was about time management and the delegating. We are able to delegate responsibility to others, subordinates and we’re able, then, to do a lot more with

your day than if you had this one-manism ... Onemanship, trying to do Jack-of-all-trades kind of thing (T/02/02-10).

III E2biii Communication

Kathy was also able to improve her communication skills through TTELP. She learned that there is major communicative power not just in speaking, but in listening and in doing. The leader must, therefore, be aware that s/he is always communicating, even when s/he is silent and even when the chosen course of action is to do nothing.

and we learned that your communication has to do with not only the thought, mental thought, but your actions as well, you know? ... and how you speak with people and the actions you use could really demotivate your workers. This was very, very helpful the section on oral presentation, you know. (T/02/06-4)

Hashim said that the importance of communication was emphasized throughout the programme. Participants were taught strategies for improving their communication skills, not just in the area of interpersonal relationships, but in the broader context of asserting their influence as leaders, for example, making a case for proposed innovations and networking at all levels of the education system. The programme underlined the value of communication skills in ensuring collective responsibility and facilitating collaboration among teachers and administrators in the realization of improved student outcomes.

III E2biv Planning

Bob said, in response to the survey questions, that TTELP provided “great insights into the preparation of work/action plans.” He explained that “one of the **(areas)** that it essentially clarified and helped is in the measurement [...] of achieving your goals. How do you know that

goals are achieved? And how will you write and define goals beforehand in terms of [...] measurable objectives.” (S22) He said that the programme and project planning aspects of TTELP were critical to his development as a leader in education. The new knowledge he gained about “creating work plans which include success criteria, an often disregarded feature” (S27) enhanced his leadership practice by filling a void which had concerned him increasingly.

In the in-depth interview, Bob again underlined how much he had learned about programme planning, monitoring and evaluation. The TTELP module on Planning and Evaluation led him to a realization of the importance of detailed planning and the need to monitor a programme as it unfolds. He learned, too, how to measure programme effectiveness and customer satisfaction. These measures, he discovered, had to be built into the programme at the design stage and not just formulated during or after the programme.

Kathy, too, found the module on Planning and Evaluation very useful. She learned how to “design a strategic plan which guides the activities of the school towards goal accomplishment.” (S27)

At the top of Asha’s catalogue of new knowledge and skills was the strategic plan. Before TTELP, she did not know what a strategic plan was: “That program helped me to understand that a strategic plan is absolutely necessary before you want to move a school forward as an administrator, [...] you need to plan, you must have a vision, a mission, which is what you will use to formulate your plan.” (T/02/01-2)

III E2bv Conflict Resolution

Kamini, a school supervisor, attached high importance to conflict resolution skills. One of the key things that she learned from TTELP was the power of participatory decision-making as a strategy for conflict reduction.

Chris said that he came out of TTELP with a whole new skills set. Among those skills, he listed conflict resolution (T/02/08-1).

Conflict resolution was among the many new skills that Asha had learned from TTELP and was using to improve her leadership practice. She said “They teach you conflict resolution, so that it helps you to understand that, listen, we could have a win-win situation, but you have to negotiate (T/02/01-11)”

III E2bvi Reflection

Another skill that Kamini developed through TTELP was that of becoming a reflective leader. She explained the value of developing metacognitive awareness: “how you are coming across as the leader when you are trying to get reform, [your] approach to it. Is it that you are engaging people, or are you dictating to people?” (T/02/03-12) She referred to these as “crucial issues that I have recognized.”

Kathy said that the new knowledge she acquired from TTELP empowered her to reflect on her own leadership style. That leadership style, for many years before TTELP, had been authoritarian. The process of changing from authoritarian to democratic leader involved a great deal of reflection. Kathy reported that the module on case studies helped her to become a reflective practitioner. She became critical of the processes of leadership and management: “And we have to reflect on our actions and in reflecting, we have to be able to say, Ok, maybe this is

what we should have done, maybe we should have allowed this, you know, so we become critical of our actions (T/02/06-3).

Kathy's willingness to reflect critically on her actions had a positive impact on her staff: "When your subordinates' see that, ok, we are not too big, then, to own up to a mistake or own up to an error, they say "All right." They will accept it and they will move on." (T/02/06-3)

Hashim said that he was encouraged by TTELP to reflect on what he was learning, on new knowledge such as current issues in leadership theory and practice and to implement them in his leadership practice.

III E2bvii Problem Solving

Chris said that he came out of the TTELP with a whole new skills set, including problem-solving skills, generally" (T/02/08-1).

III E3 Positive Outcomes: Knowledge and Skills Enhancement

For some participants, there were areas of the programme's content which were already familiar to them, because they had either done graduate degrees in educational administration or participated in previous leadership development programmes organized by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education. In spite of this, they found the TTELP modules useful and reported improvements in understanding and welcomed opportunities to practice and enhance existing skills.

Bob said that his interpersonal skills were strong going into the programme, but he reported that they were further strengthened by the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. His conflict resolution skills, too, were noticeably enhanced and he came out of the programme with a heightened awareness of the importance of interpersonal relations in

organizations: “I’m more (**convinced**) that that is a critical element in an organization, you know, having people get along.” (T/02/05-4)

Kamini said, in response to Question 24 of the survey (How would you describe yourself as an educational leader coming out of the TTELP program?) that “there were some grey areas [...] in my leadership in terms of communication and the andragogy, dealing with the adults as opposed to dealing with children [and] there was the aspect of policy development.” These areas were strengthened over the course of the programme. She reported a deeper understanding of issues in educational leadership and management. As an example, she spoke of her “ability to assess organizational behavior on a broad scale as well as the determining factors which influence individuals in the organization.”

Renukah said that the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project greatly enhanced her leadership skills and increased her knowledge. She said that her interpersonal skills had improved as a result of TTELP. The programme had helped her “to be able to deal with people” (T/02/09-6) and, with a staff of 150 under her command, this made a big difference in her leadership practice. Communication, in particular, was noticeably improved, resulting in a more open and student-friendly environment: “We have an open door policy, you know, people come in, [...] they’re allowed to ask questions and whatever and I feel people are freer to say what they want and ask for what they want, to make life here a bit better, a lot better for the students.” (T/02/09-2).

Doreen found that what she had learned from the earlier programme was reinforced and enhanced by the knowledge and skills acquired from TTELP. She evolved from a vice-principal who, before TTELP, was “informed, but lacking practical experience” to one who graduated

from the programme “much better informed with enhanced leadership skill.” She said that TTELP “provided reinforcement **[and]** enhancement of existing management and leadership skills necessary for school improvement.”

Asha acquired a wealth of new knowledge and skills from the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. It was clear to her that the programme had taken her knowledge base and leadership skills to a higher level: “If I should go back to when I just started to where I am now, I’m telling you I have improved. [...] I feel that I’m a better administrator now than I was five years ago.” (T/02/01-12)

Asha reported improvements in communication, in interpersonal relations and specifically in her listening skills: “I am a good listener now, because sometimes, you know, you just have to listen to people.” (T/02/01-29)

Another related and important area where Asha found that the training enhanced her leadership practice was in teambuilding:

The whole question of team work, the whole question of relationships, building relationships, not only with members of staff, but the community and again, getting all the stakeholders involved. That I see as crucial and this course helped me to see that. (T/02/01-4)

One very significant team that Asha was able to build as a direct result of TTELP, was the middle management team at her school. She said: “What we have also done too, we have created a middle management team within the school, with the Heads of Department and the Deans [...] We meet with them very often. That, too, came out [...] of that programme.” (T/02/01-7) Since the creation of that middle management team, Asha said: “Communication is better. We are better able to monitor ... and the division of labour [...] So, we have a more

collaborative work environment, and that was one of the things that the TTELP course encouraged us to do.” (T/02/01-11)

Asha found that her leadership skills had improved significantly: “I’m telling you I have improved.” (T/02/01-12) “I have grown [...] as a leader.” (T/02/01-25) “It was a wonderful program. I can say over and over again, it has made me a better leader.” (T/02/01-20)

Hashim also reported enhancement of existing knowledge and skills. Using a familiar metaphor, he describes himself as “an unpolished diamond” before the programme. Coming out of TTELP, he describes his transformation into a “20 carat precious stone, ready and willing to be an active change agent.”

Hashim said “It gave me the tools to better interface with my fellow staffers. Increased my capacity as a senior, mature staff member capable of aiding and assisting younger teachers and students. He described himself as “more an instructional leader now, with increased objectivity, increased listening capacity.” He also noted improvements in time management, written communication and reflective writing. His enhanced communication skills, he found, made him “more convincing”.

In Asha’s case, we have the perceptions of three teachers working under her which support her own perceptions of enhanced leadership skills. Charice, one of those teachers, saw marked improvements in Asha’s leadership practice and asserted that “her involvement, of course, in the leadership programme has definitely affected her” (T/03/01-6). Charice spoke of a principal who, though already warm and caring before TTELP, had intensified those qualities as a result of her participation in the programme. She would spend as much time as it took with teachers and students alike, as she sought to understand them, help them to resolve their

problems and support their personal growth: “She takes her time to spend with all her teachers. She never will say “Ok I’m too busy right now.” She’s always there. “Come in and chat with me.” That’s the sort of person I like about her” (T/03/01-2).

Another teacher working under Asha, whom I shall call Gina, was also struck by Asha’s improved interpersonal relations: “I have noticed a change in her attitude towards teachers ... She’s more open, as well as with the students [...] More open and she really is now more accessible, I think, more understanding to the students” (T/03/02-3). Troubled students seemed to have a special place in her heart, as Asha would meet with them and take the opportunity afterwards to reassure them that “any time **[they]** wanted to talk to her, the door was open, just to come and to talk to her” (T/03/02-4).

The third teacher from Asha’s school, Natalie, had always rated Asha highly as a leader. Even before TTELP, she considered her a charismatic leader: “Excellent communication skills” and “excellent conflict-resolution skills” (T/03/03-3). Even so, Natalie reported further enhancement of Asha’s leadership skills. She said that Asha always deals with students “in a very diplomatic way.” In addition, she is an excellent motivator, so that “they don’t feel as though they’re being overburdened when she asks them because she has that particular manner. I believe all of that may have come out of recent studies perhaps, but she interacts well with them and they look forward to **[interacting with her]**” (T/03/03-5).

In conclusion, there was agreement among the participants that the program had brought about a transformation in their understanding of leadership issues and in the practice of leadership. The new knowledge and skills that they had acquired were the keys to a new paradigm, one that emphasized visionary leadership, distributed leadership and the need for capacity building. In areas where participants’ knowledge base was already substantial, they

were pleased, and in some cases reassured, to have existing knowledge and skills enhanced by the programme.

III E4 Positive Outcomes: Knowledge and Skills Implementation

The question of implementation is evidently central to the evaluation of a leadership development programme such as TTELP. A key indicator of programme success is the extent to which new knowledge and skills are incorporated into the leadership models of participants and implemented in their leadership practice. The implementation issue addresses one of this study's principal research questions: Are the new knowledge and skills acquired by participants in TTELP being used in their leadership practice?

Whether the subject was conflict resolution, strategic planning or the art and science of empathy, the practical focus of the programme meant that new knowledge could be applied immediately to the improvement of their leadership practice. This made a strong, positive impression on the participants. In the in-depth interviews, where they were asked specifically about implementation, participants spoke excitedly about a wide range of new ideas and approaches which they were able to implement from day one.

Kamini was pleased to have been able to implement a lot of what she had learned from TTELP. Apart from the improved relationships with colleagues which her newly acquired communication strategies produced, she was able to apply the new knowledge and skills she had acquired to the training of new principals under her supervision. As an example, she related a story of successful conflict resolution involving an old-school principal and a teacher who had challenged a directive from the principal, apparently on practical grounds, but which the principal had interpreted as a challenge to his/ her authority. Drawing on the skills she had honed

in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project, Kamini was able to look critically at her initial impression that the teacher must be a troublemaker: “Now, your original feeling is that the teacher is a troublemaker, cause you[’re] thinking about the pupils and that the school is being disrupted [...]” (T/02/03-7)

As a result of this more reflective approach, she was able to understand the thinking behind the behaviour of both parties. Her intervention resolved the problem and, to her great satisfaction, was instrumental in guiding the principal towards a more flexible, less autocratic approach to leadership.

I looked at everybody, all the players: What is happening with the children? What is happening with parents? What impact it would have on the teacher? Belittling him at that point in time? and really, what signal are you sending to the other members of your staff? Are you an autocrat? ... and being able to look at it from that wider view, I was able to channel him into changing his behaviour at that particular point in time. (T/02/03-7)

Renukah said that the timing of the programme, coming as it did almost immediately after her previous two leadership development programmes, was perfect because it allowed her “to implement what [**she**] was learning.” (T/02/09-5).

TTELP helped Renukah to see the importance of distributed leadership and forced her to address what she saw as its main limitation: She still found it difficult to trust that other people would get the job done.

but you know, I mean, you learn in delegation that you must trust people and, you know, leave them to their own devices and so on, but one of the things I have proven to myself over and over ... that you never do something like that. Yes, you give them ... They

choose what they want ... to do, so, you know, you throw it out “This has to be done.”

“Who will do what?” but you always have monitoring and evaluation, always, always, always, is bottom line. I mean, you trust people, yes, but ... (T/02/09-4)

She came out of the programme convinced that effective organizational leadership needs to be distributed and she was able to create a middle management team, which facilitated effective leadership.

Renukah used the training she received from TTELP to gradually implement changes in the culture of the school. Before her arrival, there had been a laissez-faire attitude, which she found unacceptable. She gave the example of a graduation ceremony which “started an hour late ... practically. Students were walking in and out, they were eating and drinking, and I couldn’t believe it. Gradually I said “Well, this will not do” (T/02/09-4).

Incrementally, over a series of smaller events, Renukah was able to put in place a more efficient system for managing school events. She described the results of her efforts for the first major event under her leadership:

Oh, everybody did everything. You know, everybody did all they were supposed to do [...] but I kept constantly checking to see: Is that done? Is that done? Is that done? You know what I mean? So, I coordinated it, really. It was run like ... to me really like clockwork (T/02/09-5). ..

Chris’ major feat of implementation was to create a management team at his school. His newly adopted democratic approach to leadership gave more power to his teachers and created a more collaborative work environment: “Over the last 3 years, I’ve built a competent management team. They actually run the school. I’m just here to oversee and give advice [...]

That's working wonders. They're so empowered now. But I just always tell them "Please keep me in the loop [...]" (T/02/08-3)

Even before TTELP finished, Kathy had sat down with the management team at her school and drawn up a five-year strategic plan which reflected her vision for the school. She has since revisited and revised that plan in consultation with team members.

For Doreen, several aspects of the programme provided new knowledge and skills which she was able to implement and which enhanced her leadership practice. The module on Planning and Evaluation was particularly useful. She was able to use new knowledge from that module to sit down with her management team and draw up a strategic plan for her school. The programme's emphasis on team-building showed her how to "encourage staff to work together as teams" and the teaching on "reflection and journal keeping" became a part of her leadership practice.

Asha reported that her newly acquired knowledge and skills were readily implemented in her leadership practice: "as a new administrator I was able to use the various strategies introduced to us in motivating teachers to perform - through strategic planning, mentoring and coaching, clinical supervision. Actually, it gave me an opportunity to put into practice immediately what was learnt, [for example,] I had a better understanding on how to create a Strategic Plan" after the [module on Planning and Evaluation].

Through the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project, Asha learned a great deal about reflection, communication and relationships. She said that she was able to cultivate her emotional intelligence and to implement skills of empathy and listening skills to great effect: "What I started to do is to put into practice some of the things, like listening well, trying to

analyze “what is she telling me?”, “what is she not telling me?” you know, and the whole question of empathizing with people and the emotional intelligence ...”

Asha’s enhanced communication skills extended well beyond interpersonal exchanges. For example, she needed to approach the Ministry of Education about getting an IT technician for her school. “I wrote up a proposal [in one of the TTELP classes],” she recalled, “and [...] the lecturer [...] said it was excellent.” Asha described this exercise as “very real” and noted that the proposal she wrote was “used later on for a computer technician for our school.”

Later in the programme, when Asha realized all the unused resources she had at her disposal in the form of parents, alumni and other friends of the school, she launched a communication campaign which resulted in parents volunteering to help in the school: “So what I’m doing ... We’re taking them now, the parents who are willing to volunteer and we’re asking them to help supervise the different areas. Come and spend two hours.” (T/02/01-4)

Asha was clearly pleased with the changes that she had implemented. They had created “a more collaborative work environment, and that was one of the things that the TTELP course encouraged us to do” (T/02/01-3).

The three teachers we interviewed all noticed these changes. When asked specifically what Asha was doing differently as a result of her participation in TTELP, they all singled out her already strong interpersonal skills, reporting, as we saw earlier, that she was now spending more time listening to teachers and students and trying to help them solve their problems.

When asked about the middle management team which Asha had created, Charice said that it was necessary for the efficient management of the school and was already making a difference. She emphasized the fact that by distributing leadership in the school, the management

team was facilitating leadership development among teachers as well: “it means that even though we see her as our immediate leader, she has passed on some of the responsibilities to us and [...] it has allowed us to grow as leaders as well.” (T/03/01-3) Gina said that the school “has become more organized” (T/03/02-3). as a result of the middle management team. While Natalie saw the advantages of the management team for the smooth running of the school, she also experienced it as another bureaucratic hurdle: “sometimes it takes a bit longer when you have a hierarchy to move through, you know, because you go to one level and you’re waiting for it to go to another level” (T/03/03-2). Her comments suggest that the management team was still developing and that decisions were still being routinely referred to higher authorities for action.

After completing the leadership development programme, Hashim had been eager to get things done, to make a difference in the system. He had independently undertaken projects which demonstrated his vision and leadership: securing funding for a Summer school programme, trying to organize a conference, successfully organizing a meeting of school board reps in his district and drafting and submitting a status report on the newly introduced School Boards. He said “These are [...] positive things that we have done and we’ve been able to achieve without direction from above.” (T/02/02-39)

Hashim adopted distributed leadership strategies as soon as he returned from TTELP. This new approach has enabled him to assist with the professional development of colleagues while building and enhancing interpersonal relations with them: “It [...] it has given me the opportunity to look at fellow colleagues and to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses (T/02/02-10).”

In conclusion, from the earliest stages of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project, there was evidence of implementation, as participants returned to their

schools between modules with new ideas for distributing leadership, building leadership capacity, creating strategic plans, becoming reflective practitioners etc. On both the theoretical and practical levels, participants said that they learned, in every module, things that informed their leadership practice. They were able to go back to their schools with this new knowledge and implement it immediately. They were learning and growing and leading all at once and their excitement was palpable during the interviews, even though by then the project had already ended.

III E5 Impact of TTELP on Teachers

The three teachers we interviewed all worked under Asha and they all felt that the positive changes which were manifest in the leadership practice of Asha were having a positive impact on them as teachers. As we saw above, both Charice and Gina found that Asha was more open to teachers and more sensitive to their needs as a result of TTELP. Natalie considered Asha an outstanding leader: “She’s really, really an excellent leader and a people person, I would say. You know, it’s easy to go to [Asha] if you have any issue bothering you. As a teacher, we know her, you know. I feel very comfortable in her presence, which to me is a very important quality for any leader to have. So, there is no issue that I, personally, feel I can’t go to her and discuss as a teacher in my school system there” (T/03/03-7).

Charice found that since participating in TTELP, Asha had become an effective model of educational leadership. She observed Asha closely, determined to learn from her and to emulate her leadership strategies. She once referred a student from her class to Asha and listened as Asha told the student:

You know you must recognize your parents. They want what is best for you and she

(Asha) turned the thing on both sides, and when I now discipline students, I tell myself

“this is the pattern.” You cannot really take a side as a leader. You have to hear both sides of their story ... and how she (Asha) goes and her questioning skills, excellent skills ... and I try to copy that, would you believe? (T/03/01-4).

Charice makes the point that Asha’s leadership practice has become such a part of her life that she doesn’t seem to see it as a job anymore: “She’s an excellent model. I think she doesn’t see it as a job [...] She lives what she believes in” (T/03/01-4).

Gina, too, had the experience of watching Asha deal with a student who was prone to self-injury. She marvelled at the straightforward approach of Asha and seemed stunned as that strategy appeared to work right before her eyes: “[**Asha**] was very very good in the sense that she talked about it and [**about**] her experiences and, you know “Fine ... that people do go through these things” and it was an eye-opener, because I sat there and I really [...] did think that it helped the child as well” (T/03/02-4). In this way, Asha was providing excellent opportunities for informal learning. Gina learned how to deal with troubled kids, she was able to observe best practices and so see immediately the positive impact they had on the child.

III E6 Impact of TTELP on Students

As we saw above, all three of the teachers in this study noted that Asha seemed to be more open with students after TTELP. They said that she spent more time with them, empathized with them and, as a result, understood them better. We asked these teachers in what ways they felt that the project had impacted the students and their perceptions were quite positive.

Charice reminded us that Asha wanted the best for her students and was committed to finding the source of their problems. She was persuaded that if Asha “can (**access**) that source, then get some of these students to perform, you know, well in their school,” (T/03/01-5) that would be a measure of the successful impact of TTELP on students. In the long term, she said: “I think it

will make a difference. Any leader who could, who would actually spend time with students and be empathetic with them, I feel there will be changes taking place in these students' [...] academic lives and non-academic lives" (T/03/01-5).

Jennifer did not think that TTELP could have a positive effect on academic outcomes. She did, however, feel that having a caring, committed principal should have a positive impact on affective outcomes: "I suppose in the sense that they know that there's someone at the top who cares for them [...] you know, they feel a little freer, (**more positive**) you know. Probably in that respect, yes" (T/03/02-5).

Natalie painted a picture of Asha as a charismatic leader who knows how to motivate her followers and who brings out the best in student leaders:

She helps to bring out the best in most of our student leaders that we have because she interacts closely with our Head Girl and deputy Head Girl, so she's always ... they're always really under her guidance. I'm head of a Prefect system which is the administrative system and one of their duties as administration prefects would be to report to [**Asha**] every morning to find out what she needs assistance with and, you know, she would always deal with them in a very diplomatic way. She knows how to get them going to do all different tasks and all of that and they don't feel as though they're being overburdened when she asks them because she has that particular manner. I believe all of that may have come out of recent studies perhaps, but she interacts well with them and they look forward to going (T/03/03-5).

III E Summary of Leadership Development Sub-Theme: Positive Outcomes

Participant s reported massive gains in knowledge from the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project. They were delighted at the quantity and quality of knowledge

and skills acquired and even more so at the ease with which it was being implemented in their schools. They also spoke of the positive impact this had on their self-esteem: They were now more confident. They felt more empowered.

IIIF Leadership Development Sub-Theme: Negative Outcomes

Question 26 of the survey asked participants to identify the least positive aspects of the TTELP programme. Answers to this question yielded 77 units of data, almost half of which were about the problem of certification.

Bob regretted that “pressures of work activities” as a school supervisor meant that he “attended just about 15% of the programme.” During the subsequent in-depth interview, he explained how this happened: “When the third [course] came about, we were involved in getting ready for some workshops and those workshops were in my area, so I really could not attend [the course], [...] and then it happened repeatedly, you see? and even I myself, I kind of lost interest in it ... because I had missed so much already, so I [...] really didn’t benefit as much as I should have.”

Kamini was disappointed that “the Masters degree was not bestowed.” She said “Yes, the knowledge gained was invaluable but the reward for the extra effort was denied.” She found it difficult to juggle the demands of the project with her responsibilities as a school supervisor: “Having to cope with the timing of the modules (assignments) and the activities which required you to be at your workplace.” There were “no concessions granted” she said. The Ministry continued to make the same demands of participants as they had done before the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project started.

For Renukah, the visit to Montreal, for which fewer than half of the participants were selected, was a negative experience. “I believe there was a kind of a bias in the selection of persons to go to Canada. [...] We couldn’t understand. So, we felt very much [...] slighted. We felt that there was no equity in the selection, and we felt that all they had been preaching about, when it came to practice, it didn’t happen, no.” She also said that the catering at the Bureau of Standards Building was bad: “The caterer was awful. The food was awful and he was awful.”

Chris said that the program was sometimes disorganized, which “led to conflicts among participants and blame strewn around.” Specifically, he spoke of changes of venue, problems with caterers, lunch not being set up for participants, and things not being set up for instructors. Chris said “at the end it seemed many were upset over certification received rather than valuing the experiences gained.” When, however, the subject was brought up during the in-depth interviews, Chris showed more understanding of his colleagues’ disappointment, while repeating that it really didn’t matter to him because he already had a Masters. “They wanted certification. Instead they got this thing with University of Montreal and McGill’s name on it, but as far as they’re concerned it is worth nothing. They can’t use it for professional advancement. Even to get credit, it is worth nothing. It’s no use.” He gave this account of attempts to resolve the problem: There was so much pain after the program that they brought in some people from [University4] to see if they could get accreditation. They set up meetings and courses twice, but then it died, it just petered out. It didn’t work.” The real problem, according to Chris, was financial: “The Ministry of Education felt they had invested enough money. [...] Millions went into this. They paid McGill and the University of Montreal millions. My Masters cost \$1200 in Trinidad and Tobago. So, when you look at those millions, I guess The Ministry of Education felt it wasn’t worth it to pay even more money for accreditation or a Masters.”

Kathy said that the format of the program was problematic given the framework set up by the Ministry. She felt that it “should have been continuous for one or two years, at the end of which participants would have obtained a Diploma or a Degree - additional professional qualification.”

Participants had to get to the courses from all over Trinidad and Tobago. For some, that meant significant trips and time away from their families and schools. Michelle had to stay with relatives who lived closer to the venue for every course and that had a negative effect on her attitude. In her own words, she was “totally homesick. Was sometimes angry and disengaged because I missed the comfort of home I had no access to computers to do homework since I stayed at in-laws without these necessities.” She also said that she “felt cheated” because she heard that two participants were awarded degrees whereas the rest of the group was awarded certificates.

Doreen said that the “lack of certification” was a negative factor. She also felt that the “quantity of material [was] too much for [the] allotted time.”

Asha bemoaned the fact that there was no certification “After all the enthusiasm and hard work we were NOT given certification. Whoever was responsible for negotiation did us an injustice” (her emphasis). Returning to the subject of certification in the in-depth interview, Asha again expressed her disappointment, helplessness and frustration at not being able to secure a Masters in Educational Leadership on the basis of the work done for the programme, even if it meant doing extra work:

My only regret and I regret this deeply is that we were not able to do at least, you know, some project or some portfolio, something that would have given us the Masters in that,

so that I could see, you know, for my own self-esteem, for my own confidence, for my own ... [...] I have absolutely nothing to show for it. (T/02/01-27).

Another negative aspect of the programme for Asha was the organization of the visit to Montreal. She said that “the criteria for the selection of participants to visit Montreal were extremely biased and based on people’s friendship and perceived political affiliation.”¹⁶

Hashim regretted that there was “no official accreditation or award given upon completion which could be used for professional career enhancement.” He also said that “participants have not remained in current contact” and that the Ministry of Education “has NOT made any use of US and the skills we acquired” (his emphasis).

IIIF Summary of Leadership Development Sub-Theme: Negative Outcomes

On the negative side, seven out of eight subjects were displeased at what seemed to them a mismatch between the amount of work they did in the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project and the lack of professional certification. The certificate of participation which was awarded at the end of the programme seemed, in the eyes of all participants, to be of no worth. Participants were profoundly upset by the failure to secure certification and they chose strong words to express their displeasure, words like “cheated”, “denied”, “injustice” and referring to the certificate of participation as “this thing”. The pain and protest, it must be noted, were sufficiently strong and serious for the Trinidad Ministry of Education to bring in another University in an attempt to resolve the problem. Unfortunately, this attempt failed as well. Participants went into the programme believing that they would be awarded a post-graduate degree or at the very least a diploma or certificate in leadership. Neither the Consortium nor the

¹⁶ In May of 2005, 20 participants from the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project paid a 10-day visit to Montreal. They were selected by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education. Asha was not selected.

Ministry of Education was on the same page as the participants. The Ministry apparently supported higher level certification as long as there was no extra cost, the Consortium was prepared to upgrade the certification, but it would be costly (international student tuition rates for the 43 participants). The participants wanted certification at any cost. Their preference was for a Master's degree, but 50% of those surveyed would accept a diploma or credits that could be used internationally for advanced standing in graduate programmes or for Summer courses.

The heavy course load and the limited time available for the extra demands of readings, reflections, assignments and projects by administrators who were expected, at the same time, to be fully engaged in their substantive posts was another frequently mentioned problem. With competing demands on their time and energy from the Ministry of Education, from their own schools and units, and from TTELP, it was usually the programme that was neglected.

The visit to Montreal was a source of dissatisfaction for those participants who were not selected to go. The criteria appeared to them to be political, although the official line was that it was based on grades. As Renukah said pointedly "We couldn't understand. [...] We felt that there was no equity in the selection, and we felt that all they had been preaching about, when it came to practice, it didn't happen."

Finally, there were no organized follow-up activities after the programme ended. This, together with the lack of certification, suggested to some participants that the training they had received was not valued by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education.

Summary of Programme Outcomes

In conclusion, there can be no question about the impact of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project on the administrators who participated in this study. The

catalogue of gains in new knowledge and skills is extensive and impressive. The design of the project garnered more praise than criticism across the 30 survey questions. The slice-through approach, for example, was a state-of-the-art feature which participants rated highly. The visit to Montreal was essentially a practicum with a fun theme which was also cutting edge and needed only more participants and a more transparent selection process to be outstanding.

It is clear that participants found that there was unnecessary mystery surrounding the selection process for both the programme and the visit to Montreal. The issue of certification, too, could have been dealt with in a more transparent and proactive manner. That would have precluded or, at the very least, minimized, the perception of ambivalence on the part of the Ministry of Education which, unfortunately, persisted long after the end of the programme.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This qualitative study sought to investigate the impact of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) on the professional lives of the principals and vice-principals who participated in it. Specifically, the study examined the quality and volume of new knowledge and skills acquired from the project and the extent to which these new acquisitions were implemented at participants' schools.

TTELP was an internationally funded project which was one of many such leadership development initiatives designed as part of the Trinidad and Tobago Government's programme of restructuring and modernization of their education system. The broad objective of the programme was to develop a cadre of administrators who would be able to manage decentralization and build leadership capacity and sustainability in the Trinidad and Tobago education system.

The results of this study indicate that participants acquired an impressive body of new knowledge and skills from TTELP. They spoke about gains from the programme with infectious delight: They came out of the programme more knowledgeable and better equipped as leaders in education. They came out with a plan and knew where to find the tools and how to build the team to implement it. In possession of a new and trusted set of leadership skills, they exuded confidence. They felt empowered. One participant described himself going into TTELP as "an unpolished diamond" (S23). He emerged from that programme transformed: a "20 carat precious stone, ready and willing to be an active change agent" (S24).

Participants were forceful and precise about the new knowledge they had acquired: Knowledge about leadership theories and leadership models, about issues in leadership and best practices in educational leadership. They spoke too about the set of leadership skills which they

had acquired through TTELP. It was a catalogue of skills that included a dream team of core skills from the armoury of any effective leader: interpersonal relations, teambuilding, communication, planning, conflict resolution, reflection and problem solving.

Participants were thrilled, too, at the ease with which their new knowledge and skills were being implemented. From the earliest days of the programme, they found that they could incorporate these new strategies and skills almost seamlessly into their leadership practice. These changes were quite dramatic for many of the participants and boosted their self-esteem. They had discovered that leadership is empowering and wanted to share that sense of empowerment with the teams of deans, heads and teachers working with them.

These findings provide support for the feasibility of internationally funded and delivered projects such as TTELP. In many respects, it was a textbook Leadership Development programme:

- A needs assessment was done before the course was designed.
- The course content covered all major types of leadership, theories of leadership and issues in leadership practice.
- Participants were given regular opportunities to practice their leadership skills.
- The instructors were of a very high calibre and with vast experience.
- Their pedagogical approach was constructivist.
- There was a sustained attempt to translate leadership issues into culturally sensitive formats for the participants.

There were, however, several areas of the programme that caused concern. It must be emphasized here that many of the shortcomings of the programme resulted from issues and circumstances which were clearly beyond the control of the consortium. It should be made clear,

too, that the focus of this evaluation is not on finding fault or assigning blame, but on identifying areas that could be more effectively delivered in the future through a leadership programme such as TTELP.

Leskiw and Singh's six factors for effective leadership development

In order to identify these areas, we used as our framework a set of recommendations for programme developers based on those made by Leskiw and Singh (2007). Leskiw and Singh reviewed the literature on best practices in leadership development and found that six factors were vital for effective leadership development: needs assessment, the selection of a suitable audience, designing an appropriate infrastructure, designing and implementing an entire learning system, an evaluation system and actions to reward success and address deficiencies. We will now review TTELP under each of these headings.

1. Needs Assessment

Leskiw and Singh (2007) recommend that “organizational leaders involved with successful leadership development programs begin with a thorough needs assessment” (p. 447). As we noted in our discussion of the *Planning* sub-theme (IIIB), the Consortium did visit Trinidad before the launch of TTELP and did a needs assessment (IIIB2) in consultation with the Ministry of Education. Given the consensus among participants interviewed for this study, that the programme did meet their needs as mid-level and senior leaders in education, we can assume that the needs assessment informed the design of a successful learning system for the programme.

This still leaves unanswered the question of why it was not clear, after the needs assessment, that the participants expected some form of certification in leadership rather than the

certificate of participation which they were awarded at the end of the programme. This question is far more complex than it at first appears.

From the very beginning of discussions about the programme, the certification issue was raised and became problematic. The Ministry of Education wanted to have certificates awarded, but was not interested in paying the additional, large sum of money that such certification would require. The Consortium, on the other hand, was willing to support the Ministry's demand and even tried to negotiate favourable tuition fees for the group, but McGill could not accommodate their request, and so the Consortium had no control over the issue. International fees for the group of 43, at approximately CDN \$10,000 per student, would have cost CDN \$430,000 per year. With a budget of just under CDN \$1 million for the entire project, the Consortium could not cover the tuition fees that certification by McGill would have needed. Understandably, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago was not interested in finding an additional CDN \$1 million for diplomas or Master's degrees in Educational Leadership, which could be obtained from the University of the West Indies with the same course content at a fraction of the price.

On the basis of what we have learned about the discussions, the Consortium did not have the power to secure certification for the group. The question of why McGill University was not interested in making any kind of concession in terms of a fee waiver or reduction is an interesting one, but not particularly meaningful after the fact. The University, the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education and the Consortium all had compelling and practical financial reasons for the positions they took on the matter of certification. It has been suggested that some of the candidates may have been willing to pay their own tuition fees for certification by McGill,

but that the Ministry of Education, did not offer them that option. Some answers have emerged, therefore, but some questions still remain unanswered.

In conclusion, the needs assessment which the Consortium carried out did inform the delivery of a strong and successful programme of instruction. The failure to secure certification was a source of great disappointment, pain and anger for participants. We will return to the question of certification when we discuss the cultural context.

2. The Selection of a Suitable Audience

We have already noted, in our discussion of results under the heading of *Candidate Selection* (IIIB1), that the Consortium had no input whatever in the selection of candidates. They, therefore, had no control over entry behaviours (IIIB2a). The Ministry's criteria for selection were never made public. Participants asked repeatedly about the basis for their selection, but never received answers. Leskiw and Singh (2007) noted contrasting, but complementary trends in many high performance organizations. Audience selection, they found, usually meant "the identification of high potential employees" for further development. They also found increasing support for the notion of leadership at all levels of an organization, with some organizations opening up their leadership development programmes to all staff. Leskiw and Singh advise that candidate selection should be "objective and thorough [...] guided by clear and objective criteria and should be more than a nomination from a manager" (p. 450).

The slice-through approach which was used by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education in their selection of participants for TTELP produced a very heterogeneous group. This was both a blessing and a burden for the delivery of the programme: The resulting group of participants represented the entire spectrum of leaders in education. It was a unique opportunity

for them to get to know one another. Principals, vice-principals and other school-based participants loved this feature.

The burdensome aspect of this was a group with so much variation on so many levels that it was impossible to meet their leadership needs in any single sitting. Clearly, more can be delivered, in less time, with a more homogeneous group. The slice-through approach, however, has become increasingly popular in training programmes. This different audience requires a different kind of delivery and it seems reasonable to expect with this level of variation, that programme developers might have different objectives, putting more emphasis, for example, on issues such as developing a collaborative work environment, and less on covering content.

3a. Designing an Appropriate Infrastructure Part I: Organizational Culture

This recommendation will be interpreted and discussed on two different levels: Firstly, as the authors intended, where “The essential infrastructure needed to support these initiatives means leadership development is embedded in the culture and there is ongoing support and involvement from senior management” (Leskiw and Singh, 2007, p. 451).

The recommendation to cultivate an organizational culture which supports leadership development highlights the radical shift in leadership development theory and practice, which resulted in the creation of a new paradigm. Leading theorists and practitioners in the field agree that effective leadership development is ongoing and systemic (Fullan, 2001; Guskey, 1999). These two key features of the new paradigm cannot be created or sustained without the involvement of leaders in the organization.

The Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Education had embarked on a rolling programme of staggered and overlapping leadership development initiatives well before TTELP started. There had been a British Council programme, as well as a University of the West Indies M.Ed.

programme delivered within the framework of the Trinidad and Tobago Government's Secondary Education Modernization Programme (SEMP). Since the end of TTELP, there have been more leadership development programmes, including at least one multi-year, internationally funded project.

Creating an organizational culture where the commitment to ongoing leadership development is embedded is not quick and easy work. It is also significantly more challenging for a foreign service provider, because it requires time to understand a foreign culture, understand a political culture and to build the trust that would cement a genuinely collaborative partnership. The foundation for that kind of organizational culture had presumably been laid by the Ministry of Education long before TTELP started. It is not possible, however, to say to what extent without speaking to Ministry representatives.

Hashim clearly did not feel that such an infrastructure was in place. He said: "There is need for a much wider application or sensitization in order for this whole thing to work, otherwise, in other words, you have trained us ... but the system itself has not undergone any sort of shift or change [...] and therefore, we are in a vacuum. We are the piggies in the middle" (T/02/02-30). On the basis of the series of interviews conducted for this study with senior administrators, it is, however, clear that they were fully aware of the Ministry's restructuring program and the training needs that it entailed. It was also clear that they wholeheartedly supported the leadership development programme undertaken by the Ministry of Education.

Leskiw and Singh (2007), to return to their recommendation, assert that "It is absolutely imperative to have the right structure and systems in place in order to successfully implement and manage a leadership development program (p. 451). It seems that appropriate structures and systems were in place. The Consortium was not able, however, to build the level of collaboration

with local partners which would have given them access to those structures and systems and allowed them to have an impact on the organizational culture of the Ministry of Education.

3b. Designing an Appropriate Infrastructure Part II: Logistics

For the second interpretation of this recommendation, we will use the definition of infrastructure as: “The basic facilities, services, and installations needed for the efficient functioning of [the programme]” (Retrieved online, 3 April 2012). This interpretation will allow us to examine an important aspect of TTELP in light of its international context and the stated concerns of participants.

We will now examine the logistical infrastructure of TTELP. The Directors of the Consortium made several visits to Trinidad and Tobago both before and during the programme in order to ensure that an appropriate infrastructure was in place for TTELP. It was never going to be as straightforward as if the programme were being delivered in the same country as the service providers. All of the infrastructural problems which occurred were discussed under the *Organization* (IIIB3) and *Logistics* (IIIB3a) headings of the results chapter.

Some of the problems that arose were clearly unpredictable, especially after the Consortium felt that it had put everything in place for a smooth delivery of the programme. The very first module, for example, was to be delivered at a venue for which all arrangements had been made in advance. When the instructor arrived, however, he found an empty space and had to organize the placing of furniture. This kind of occurrence led to complaints from participants. One of the principals, Chris, complained about a lack of organization. When asked, in the in-depth interview, to be more specific, he listed four issues: “Changes of venue, problems with caterers, things not set up for instructors, lunch not set up for participants” (S26).

Needless to say, these are issues that must be addressed in the planning stages of a programme, especially one that is in another country, with a different culture. For the first year of the project, there was a Trinidad-based Field Manager whose job was specifically to look after infrastructural issues, but she was let go after the first year. After that, everything was organized from Montreal, where there was a TTELP Project Coordinator working under the supervision of Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber and in collaboration with both directors of the project, the other director being Dr. Manuel Crespo from the Université de Montréal.

There was another serious problem which might be considered infrastructural: All participants interviewed for this study complained that they did not have enough time to satisfactorily complete the work that needed to be done for TTELP. Participants' concerns were discussed under the *Workload* heading (IIIB3b). The real issue is that they were at the same time full time principals, vice-principals and in other leadership positions while also doing intensive courses in leadership with the same weight of readings, presentations and assignments that full-time students would have. One participant admitted to missing 85% of TTELP courses because commitments at work that could not be delegated or missed, clashed with TTELP.

This situation is not one over which the consortium had any control, but it is a cautionary tale that programme developers need to note well. It is critical to find out as much as possible about participants during the needs assessment phase, including the conditions under which they will be constrained while participating in programmes such as TTELP. Service providers need to ask these questions so as to avoid unpleasant surprises after the launch of the programme and to give themselves the option of negotiating better conditions for their participants if necessary.

4. Designing and Implementing an Entire Learning System

Leskiw and Singh (2007) recommend the design and implementation of a complete learning system “comprising of formal training, as well as action-learning activities, that provide the opportunity to apply and improve the application of the new learning” (p. 453).

There can be no doubt that the learning system designed by the Consortium was state-of-the-art. They had a team of fine scholars with vast experience in educational leadership and cutting edge pedagogical skills. They provided a well-scaffolded constructivist framework for the participants who enjoyed formal training events interspersed with opportunities for informal learning and countless opportunities to consolidate the new knowledge and practice the new skills they were acquiring.

Participants were ecstatic in their praise for the course content and the instructors. Over the course of the programme, they saw their leadership practices and in some cases their leadership personas transformed by the new knowledge and skills they were acquiring through TTELP. Participants’ positive evaluations of the TTELP learning system are discussed in detail under the sub-theme *Positive Outcomes* (IIIE) and the categories *International* (IIIC1) and *Strengths* (IIIC3).

5. An Evaluation System

Programme evaluations are critical and should be built into the design of the programme (Guskey, 1999; Reitzug, 2002). The fifth recommendation from Leskiw and Singh (2007) is an evaluation system: “Best practice organizations are committed to evaluating the effectiveness of their leadership development efforts” (p. 457).

As we noted when we discussed the delivery (IIIC) of the programme, TTELP was designed with multiple checkpoints for formative evaluation. Let us look again at two key

examples of this: Firstly, returning instructors submitted reports on their stint in Trinidad and Tobago to the directors of the project. Copies of these reports were made available to incoming instructors. In addition, returning and incoming instructors met and the baton was passed on during this debriefing, which was also attended by the directors.

Secondly, one of the instructors, Dr. Ted Wall made several visits to Trinidad and Tobago. He taught the very first module and then returned in a liaison role which allowed him to evaluate how the project was unfolding overall and report back to the Consortium.

Formative evaluation is an important feature of any training programme and there is no doubt that TTELP administrators and instructors alike were able to keep the delivery of content at an outstanding level because of feedback from these built-in formative evaluations. A more detailed discussion of these features can be found under the sub-theme *Delivery* (IIC).

While the formative evaluation components of TTELP were well designed and effective, there was no provision for summative evaluation in the design of the programme. Annual reports were written and a final report submitted, but there has been no summative evaluation of the programme. The Ministry official I interviewed asserted that programmes are not evaluated in the Caribbean. “It’s not common in the Caribbean to do programs and to follow up or to monitor, or to look at the impact, but that is true for all programmes” (T/05/01-19). It is, regrettably, true that most organizations do not carry out summative evaluations, a bad practice that is not restricted to the Caribbean.

Summative evaluations are not optional and they are more than the sum of formative evaluations. They provide information that is critically important for both programme developers and stakeholders, and which formative evaluations quite simply cannot deliver:

- Summative evaluations examine the definitive impact and quality of a programme, not just during the delivery period, but after the programme and over time. They answer the big questions: What difference did the programme make? Were the time and money of participants and organizations well spent? How has it improved student outcomes? How can gains from the programme be sustained?
- They identify features of the programme that were effective and those that worked less well. We know, from the literature, that leadership development is ongoing, that it is about lifelong learning. Programme developers need to demonstrate their own understanding of that by showing that they are not moving along by trial and error, but have learned from successive programme evaluations and that each initiative builds on the previous ones to deliver a more complete and effective programme.
- Summative evaluations inform stakeholders of the extent to which a programme achieved its stated objectives. At a time when money for research and development is limited and tightly controlled in most organizations, stakeholders need compelling reasons to invest in training programmes and they need evidence of programme quality and returns on investment in order to decide whether to renew or terminate.
- This may seem anecdotal, but summative evaluations have a way of showing up, anyway, after training programmes have ended, because the human mind is hard wired for summative evaluation. Programme developers who are tempted to neglect summative evaluations should be wary, for it is always better to be judged by your own carefully gathered evidence than by fragments of evidence gathered with political or cultural bias. Stakeholders will have a sense of whether the programme worked or not. They will have

done a mental evaluation of the programme and it may not be based solely on the evidence.

For all these reasons, summative evaluations must be carried out by programme developers. The evaluation system that was built into TTELP was outstanding as far as it went, but it did not go far enough in that it did not include a summative evaluation of the programme.

6. Actions to Reward Success and Address Deficiencies

Leskiw and Singh's (2007) sixth recommendation is "actions to reward success and address deficiencies." The authors state that "Rewarding participants' success through some form of graduation or public recognition is critical for effective leadership development" p. 459. These actions are tied to feedback from the evaluation system.

There was indeed a graduation ceremony in Trinidad for the graduates of TTELP at the end of the programme. It was at this ceremony that they were presented with their certificates of participation. These certificates were not seen by the participants as an appropriate reward, so the graduation ceremony lacked meaning for them. It was not the symbol of success and public recognition generally associated with such ceremonies and was never mentioned by any of the participants in the survey or during the interviews. Participant's response to the certificate of participation was discussed under the *Non-Certification* (IIIF1) heading of the results section.

As we noted in the discussion of the certification issue, the Consortium did not have the authority to certify participants nor the budget to cover the cost of certification by McGill. There was simply no budget for rewards of any kind and this is something that service providers need to be pro-active about. They need to be very clear about all the programme elements that need to be covered by their budget before they submit it, because once the budget is allocated, there is usually no margin to cover additional expenses for participants.

The participants did not get the kind of certification they were expecting, but according to several participants, most TTELP graduates had been promoted within two years of the conclusion of the programme. It may be assumed that these promotions were based on the new knowledge and skills acquired during TTELP, but we have no confirmation of this from the Ministry of Education and no way of establishing a link between these promotions and TTELP.

Kamini, a school supervisor, who discussed the promotions said: “Most of the people who went on that course, across the Ministry [...] have all been promoted.” (T/02/03-10)

“People moved on, but I would not say that it was because of the course that we moved on. [...] It wasn’t because of the course, but we were able to use the course now in our new positions. We were poised for those positions eventually, in the long run, but everybody has moved on, more than likely. (T/02/03-19)

Renukah, a school principal, was more confident about the link between these promotions and TTELP. She said “but what is really heartening about this McGill programme is that many of the participants have been promoted [...] to really top managerial positions in our field. When [...] I look around and I hear of [...] where [...] my colleagues, my peers in this programme are, they’ve ALL been given promotions. So, it means something went really well with the programme.” (T/02/09-13)

Leskiw and Singh (2007) give the example of managers at IBM being “rewarded through promotion and opportunity” for demonstrating “an ability to build leadership capability” (p. 459). This is feasible when the company has its own leadership development programme. In the case of TTELP, it would mean having a team of local experts on the ground in the long term, and the Consortium had neither the budget nor the desire to organize that.

The second half of this recommendation is about actions to address deficiencies. “It is also important to ensure an ongoing commitment to improvement. [...] The key success factor here is the company’s ability and willingness to modify their practices based on this feedback” (p. 459). The insistence on carrying out an evaluation of leadership development programmes is meaningless if the resulting identification of strengths and weaknesses is not used to improve the design and delivery of future programmes. Since the consortium did not carry out a summative evaluation of TTELP, it is not possible to say how they would address programme deficiencies for a similar programme in the future. It is clear that the formative evaluations which were built into TTELP were used to address deficiencies in the delivery of the programme on a continuous basis.

Leskiw and Singh’s (2007) recommendations provided a useful framework for evaluating key components of TTELP. The design of TTELP was evidently based on findings from current research on characteristics of effective leadership development programmes and consideration was clearly given to the context. As we have noted above, the context itself presented many unexpected challenges to the consortium. In addition, the budget imposed many unwelcome restraints. In spite of these very real challenges and constraints, the competence of the consortium shone through.

Limitations

Although findings from this single case study show the overwhelmingly positive outcomes that can result from an internationally delivered Leadership Development programme, it does have several limitations:

Firstly, project participants were selected by the Ministry of Education in Trinidad and Tobago. Selection criteria were never disclosed, in spite of repeated requests from the

participants. This seems to warrant some caution in the interpretation of results. Participants views on the selection process are discussed in the Results section, under the *Candidate Selection* heading (IIIB1).

Secondly, the sample used for this study was reduced by a series of obstacles that made contact with the participants extremely difficult. As I described in the Methods section, permission to interview the 15 participants from the Ministry of Education was not granted. Of the remaining 28 participants, I could secure no contact information for twelve. This reduced the participant pool to sixteen. Of those sixteen, two had to withdraw for health reasons and another three never went to the Survey Monkey website to do the survey. In the end, then, I was able to recruit nine TTELP participants for the study. My sample included four of the six principals and two of the 11 vice-principals who had participated in TTELP. There is no doubt that a larger sample would have provided richer data. Moreover, the views of the Ministry of Education group would have enriched the study and perhaps elucidated some of the unanswered questions about candidate selection, certification and the Ministry's evaluation of the project.

Thirdly, the ultimate test of any educational intervention is the effect that it has on student outcomes. This study does not look at secondary students in Trinidad and Tobago. Its assessment of the project as an educational enterprise is, therefore, incomplete. Observations of and interviews with the students would have required substantially more time and funding, two limited resources during the collection of data for this study.

Fourthly, the "slice-through" approach used to establish the group brought together a cross section of leaders in education. As Hashim said, "It brought us in a one-and-one relationship with the full hierarchy" (T/02/02-24). This sampling approach has evident advantages, which were also discussed under the *Candidate Selection* heading (IIIB1). However,

given the hierarchical nature of the sample, and in spite of their obvious professionalism, it would be naïve not to consider the possibility that some participants in subordinate positions in the hierarchy may feel that it is wiser to give politically correct answers to questions that strike them as sensitive.

Fifthly, data from three teachers working under one of the participating principals were not very representative, firstly because the sample was too small and, more importantly, because these teachers were selected by one principal, increasing the likelihood that their responses could be biased. Since access to teachers was determined by the principal, there was no way of resolving this problem or securing access to students in the short term. This section was included, however, because it was part of the original research plan.

Finally, the literature shows that meaningful and sustainable leadership development is about change over time (Fullan, 2001; Guskey, 1999). It is ongoing and systemic. The best research design would, therefore, be a longitudinal one, which would chart the impact of the training throughout the Trinidad and Tobago educational system over time. Time constraints prevented the use of that design for this study.

Implications for Future Research

This research is based on a single case study. More programmes and different kinds of programmes need to be evaluated. In particular, more cross-cultural leadership development programmes need to be investigated, given their increasing popularity and the lack of empirical statements about their success in building sustainable leadership capacity. We also need more research which will lead to empirical statements about the extent to which leadership is context-free. Building on such statements, researchers will be able to address related issues such as

which (if any) best practices work in all contexts and what adjustments can be made in cases where the practice is context-specific.

Another area where more research needs to be undertaken, is in classrooms where principals and teachers have participated in programmes like TTELP. Most of the leadership development research has looked at participants' outcomes and perceptions. There is a need for data from research in classrooms which shed light on how student outcomes are impacted by leadership development programmes.

Future research, whether in classrooms or corporate settings, should aim to examine the impact of leadership development over time. There is growing consensus in the field that leadership development must be ongoing if it is to be effective (Guskey, 1999; Reitzug, 2002). Longitudinal studies are needed to track the impact of this phenomenon over time. Pre- and post-programme data from self- or others' perceptions of participants' leadership development are another useful source of information about change over time.

Researchers could also carry out observations and interviews to assess specific performance indicators. Repeated over time, this kind of mixed methods research would shed optimal light on the process of leadership development itself and on elements of the process of becoming an effective leader which is still somewhat shrouded in mystery. Findings from this kind of diagnostic research would empower programme developers to identify weak areas and design modules that help emerging leaders to build on their strengths and improve their weaknesses.

Effective leadership development is systemic (Fullan, 1997; Leskiw and Singh, 2007). Future research must, therefore, focus less on the individual leader and more on the context of leadership. It is in the leader's interactions with the culture of the organization that development

takes place. This is the view of leading theorists and practitioners in the field of leadership development. It is also consistent with the assumptions of our theoretical framework, which is Communities of Practice. It is, therefore, critical for future research to use social or organizational interaction as the unit of analysis because that, according to Lave & Wenger (1991) is where learning takes place.

Implications for Practice

Programme developers in the field of leadership development know that shortcomings in the programme, even though they may be beyond their control, can be costly. In the high stakes world of leadership development, stakeholders want to know that the programme achieved its stated objectives, that it made a difference to the quality and capacity of leadership in the organization. They want to see evidence that the new leadership development order is sustainable. High stakes decisions will be based on these criteria: Programmes will be allowed to continue, be renewed or be cancelled. Programme developers must learn and learn quickly from flaws in previous programmes. Although there is good empirical evidence about best practices in leadership development, there is no formula that works for all contexts of leadership development. Programme developers must, therefore, be attuned to emerging trends and needs and adapt the designs of their programmes accordingly. In the case of internationally delivered programmes, they need to be even more sensitive to the potentially different needs of the overseas context and especially the politics and the culture in which leadership development is embedded there.

One of the problems that we discussed in this study was a budget that began to shrink almost immediately because it was signed in US dollars, but paid in Canadian currency and the Canadian dollar continued to gain in strength against the US dollar throughout the duration of the

programme. Clearly, not all contingencies can be covered by programme developers, nor indeed by funding agencies. In the case of TTELP, there was, in fact, a 2% contingency cover included in the budget. It simply wasn't enough and the Consortium reported a loss of 15% because of the unexpected rise of the Canadian dollar.

Even before the strengthening of the Canadian dollar had eroded a significant chunk of the budget, however, it was insufficient to cover reasonable remuneration for the National Lead Scholars. They could only be offered a fraction of their normal consultancy fees for an investment of time and sharing of expertise which constituted consultancy work. This is an important constraint for reasons which will become clearer when we discuss the issue of culture later in this section.

It is not of interest here to itemize the other services and items which a bigger budget could have provided, nor to speculate about the impact they might have had on TTELP. The lesson to be learned is that once the budget is signed, service providers' hands are tied. It is, therefore, critically important to itemize and assess the financial needs of the programme and to budget realistically for them. An optimal budget will require input from the entire team of programme developers and the draft budget should be reviewed by an accountant or an expert in the field, or both. Some of these issues were discussed in the results section under the *Cost* (IIIA2) heading.

Another important lesson for practitioners from this study is the importance of doing a thorough needs assessment before designing the programme. This was emphasized during our discussion of *Needs Assessments* (IIIB2), and *Expectations* (IIIB2b). Programme developers need to go into needs assessments with questions of their own. Questions, for example, about

candidate selection, which is a legitimate concern for programme developers. They should, therefore, be bold enough to ask to be included on the candidate selection committee.

Another issue which plagued TTELP from beginning to end and which might have been resolved at this level is the issue of *Non-Certification* (IIIF1). Service providers and the organizations they are serving need to be on the same page on important issues such as this. It is important for programme developers to find out what kind of certification (if any) the organization is expecting. If their expectations would require more money or selection of candidates with a specific profile, this needs to be made clear in writing and a written response should be retained for the programme's records. Service providers need to be in a position to tell participants at the launch of the programme what kind of certification will be awarded to successful candidates at the end of it.

Time was another issue that concerned all participants. There just was never enough time to do all the things that as principals or vice-principals as well as TTELP trainees, they needed to do. This problem was fully discussed in the results chapter under the headings of *Organization* (IIIB3) and *Workload* (IIIB3b). The lesson to be learned here by service providers is that participants in leadership development programmes such as TTELP want to know how much time they will need to invest in the training. This is particularly important in cases like TTELP where participants were not released from their substantive posts in order to maximize their gains from the programme. Service providers need to meet with senior management in the organization and ask questions about the cumulative workload of incoming participants. They need to have a clear sense of what is practical, given the demands of the programme they developed and they need to be prepared to negotiate a better arrangement for participants if the

default arrangement is likely to be so stressful as to make it difficult for participants to enjoy the programme and derive maximum benefit from it.

The fourth important lesson for practitioners to learn from this study is the importance of building both formative and summative evaluations into the programme. This was discussed at some length above when we looked at TTELP through the lens of Leskiw and Singh's (2007) framework. Critical and insightful programme evaluations can drive improvements in programme development that guarantee excellence. The consequences of overlooking this important feature can be disastrous for both participants and programme developers. The benefits include improved delivery of content, the achievement of stated programme goals, power and persuasion in negotiations with stakeholders and opportunities for service providers to learn from the shortcomings of previous programmes and to design improved programmes every time.

A fifth broad area with serious implications for practice is the re-conceptualization of the leadership development construct as ongoing. All major researchers in the field now view leadership development as ongoing (Fullan, 2003; Guskey, 1999). It is simply not something that can be meaningfully and effectively addressed by a one-shot training event (Fulmer, 1997; Reitzug, 2002).

In order to facilitate ongoing development, service providers need to design programmes which deliver new knowledge and skills at a rate which allows enough time for participants to integrate and implement them before moving on to the next level. Intervals between training modules should provide opportunities for reflection and ongoing practice. Ongoing leadership development requires ongoing support from follow-up activities. The importance of follow-up activities is that they combine opportunities for continued practice and reflection with opportunities for feedback from more knowledgeable colleagues.

Leskiw and Singh (2007) state that “developmental relationships are now emerging as a key component of an effective learning system” (p. 455). This is consistent with the assumptions of our theoretical framework, communities of practice, where the community is “a living curriculum for the apprentice” (Wenger, 2007), and where learning takes place not in the mind of the apprentice, but through participatory interactions between the individual and the community. The two most common forms of developmental relationships are coaching and mentoring. Leskiw and Singh define mentoring as “a committed, long-term relationship in which a more seasoned person supports the development of a more junior person” (p. 455). They explain that “Coaching involves practical, goal-focused forms of one-on-one learning and, ideally, behavior change” (p. 455). It should be noted that while the focus of most empirically based leadership development programmes is now on the team “the developmental relationships are often targeted to the specific needs of individuals” (p. 455).

One of the survey questions for this study was about follow-up activities and it elicited some interesting responses. These were discussed under the *Follow-Up* (IID) heading. For some of the participants, follow-up activities were not only non-existent, but non-essential. This view is inconsistent with the theoretical framework used in this study. Indeed, we saw in our discussion of communities of practice that the level of support or scaffolding required by emerging leaders varies along the developmental journey from novice to expertise. While some more senior leaders may seem capable of negotiating their way along the path to greater expertise without structured support, it is dangerous to assume that all leaders can develop without some form of scaffolding.

The Ministry official gave us examples of what can happen when leaders drift off and develop according to their own understandings. He spoke of senior administrators in the Trinidad

and Tobago education system who had, in this way, developed their own sense of what leadership entails over a period of 20-25 years in educational leadership. They had cultivated what was described as a “strong”, “cut-throat” approach to leadership (T/05/01-12) and they would resist all attempts to change them. The Ministry official summed up their thinking as follows:

So if I feel that well, you need people to be strong and cut people’s throat (which is common). These two people come and tell me “Well, you know, you have to be empowering, and so and so and so.” There is going to be resistance after, but you’re not going to see it (T/05/01-12).

This is leadership development that is not ongoing. It is not going anywhere. It has stalled. This can happen all too easily if ongoing follow-up activities are not prioritized.

Leadership development is critically important because leaders shape organizations and organizations shape the world we live in. There is a real danger that without proper mentoring and coaching, leaders will not achieve optimal development. In order to create a cadre of effective leaders in organizations with an ongoing commitment to leadership development, we need to have standards in the domain. A key role of the community is that of creator and guardian of standards. Follow-up activities effectively frame interactions between emerging leaders and the community of leaders.

When apprentice leaders drift away from the community, either through their own willful actions or because of inertia in the system, it blocks the flow of legitimate knowledge generated through interactions with the community. This compromises the developmental process by creating an epistemic vacuum which the runaway apprentice can then fill with his/her own favourite thoughts. Follow-up activities help to bind the community together by ensuring

continuity of interactions and the alignment of participants with the standards of the domain. They are, therefore, a critical feature of leadership development programmes.

The re-conceptualization of the leadership development construct as ongoing means that programme developers now need to include in their designs adequate time for reflection and continued practice, with opportunities for scaffolding and feedback from more experienced leaders. A second and equally important aspect of this re-conceptualization, is that leadership development is now viewed as systemic. This also has serious implications for practitioners in the field.

A systemic view of leadership development translates into a central focus on the organization rather than on individual leaders. It is critical, therefore, for programme developers to develop a good understanding of the organizations they serve, especially so in the case of Foreign Service providers. An assessment of organizational needs must be done as a priority. Only then will they be able to design programmes that target for improvement the knowledge and skills needed by emerging leaders in order to achieve organizational goals.

A systemic view of leadership development also requires that service providers work with CEO's and senior management at embedding leadership development into the organization. According to Leskiw and Singh (2007), this is achieved "through relationships based on trust and respect that are translated into the culture and structure of the organization (p. 451). The entire organizational system needs to be supportive of leadership development in order for it to be successful at this level. Leskiw and Singh note that "Leaders develop their potential the most when they are allowed to grow and implement their ideas or learning without encumbrances from the organization itself; rather, leadership development is enhanced when social networks within the organization facilitate individual and collective growth and development" (p. 451).

There is a natural tendency to view leadership development as the responsibility of the staff development person or department. This can lead to a perception of leadership development initiatives as an interruption rather than an integral part of the life of an organization. For this reason it is important to embed leadership development into the organizational system. Failure to do so will jeopardize the supportive infrastructure without which leadership development cannot become truly systemic.

Embedding leadership development within organizations is, therefore, crucial for effective, systemic leadership development. Not surprisingly, system-wide changes of this nature require the active, ongoing support of senior leaders. As Wellins and Byham (2001; cited in Leskiw and Singh, 2007) assert: “In order to embed leadership development into the organization’s culture, structure and systems, and for it to be truly accepted, it is absolutely imperative that it come from the top management of the organization” (p. 453). In some of the best practice companies reviewed by Leskiw and Singh, senior managers were even involved in the delivery of the programme, “show[ing] ongoing commitment and attention to the process” (p. 453). The goal is an organizational culture that assumes ownership and accepts accountability across departments and across the hierarchy for the development of leadership throughout its ranks.

Finally, a systemic approach to leadership has implications for evaluation. When the broad goals of leadership development programmes are organizational, evaluations must change to reflect that. Individual outcomes become less important as programme developers seek to assess systemic change through the analysis of organizational processes. Assessment of outcomes at the organizational level usually involves the solution of real-world problems by participants and the analysis of systemic indicators to evaluate whether the organization is now

functioning more efficiently, whether they are getting better returns for their investments and whether leadership capacity is being built.

A final implication for practice is that the role of programme developers needs to change in order to be consistent with a leadership development construct that is ongoing and systemic. In order to serve the goal of ongoing leadership development, trainers must themselves make a long-term commitment to the organization. If they are to design programmes that seek change over time, carry out evaluations to find evidence of such change and provide timely and focussed coaching and mentoring, they will need to have an ongoing relationship with the organization, either as a retained programme developer or as a full time member of the organization's human resources department. It is no longer as simple as choosing a well-known speaker or training team, flying them in for a couple of days, or even a couple of weeks and then flying them back out.

Implications for North-South Cooperation on Leadership Development

The relationship between the consortium and its counterparts in Trinidad and Tobago was complicated by communication breakdowns, incomprehension, pockets of hostility and a perceived duplicity which made it difficult to read intentions or anticipate reactions. The Ministry official who was interviewed for this study was careful to point out that these issues arise with local service providers, as well. Foreign service providers are, however, less familiar with the cultural and political landscape and may, therefore, have difficulties decoding the goings on and deciding on the best response.

A recurring theme in the findings is the “two faces” (T/05/01-13) of some people or the “two discourses” (T/06/01-4). It usually refers to a categorical “no” masquerading as polite acquiescence. Another layer of potentially inscrutable signs and sayings obscuring the dialogue

is the phenomenon of small-island supremacy because, as the Ministry official asserts: “[People] in a small society are not powerless” (T/05/01-26). So, a deceptively simple framework: bright colours and smiling faces fronting a seemingly simplistic culture of openness, contentment and fun-in-the-sun may be the calm and placid eye of the hurricane. “A person wears many hats” said the Ministry official (T/05/01-25). “It’s much more complex than it seems because of the multi hats in a small society” (T/05/01-26). When I asked how TTELP had been assessed in Trinidad and Tobago, he replied “It’s not as simple as that” (T/05/01-26). Nothing is simple here. People wear many hats and alliances can be deadly to those who are not allies. “Smallness is interesting” (T/05/01-26).

It is evident that the Consortium was thoughtful and thorough in designing the programme for TTELP and that sensitivity to the cultural context was one of the guiding principles informing the design. Delivery and design are, however, rarely faithful reflections of each other and in the unpredictable reality of the research field, unexpected events and attitudes are contingencies that even the most proactive and creative programme developers cannot always anticipate or navigate.

As early as the first meeting of the National Advisory Committee¹⁷ in January 2004, questions were raised about the extent to which the content of the courses was being adapted to the local context. Both the student representatives on the committee and the Director of Human Resources in the Ministry expressed concern that there had not been adequate adaptation of the content to the context of Trinidad and Tobago (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, p. 3). Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber pointed out that much of this adaptation would, in

¹⁷ The National Advisory Committee consisted of Trinidad nationals as well as the two directors of the project. It included the two National Lead Scholars and two of the participants. Feedback from meetings of the National Advisory Committee provided the Consortium with valuable information about how the project was unfolding and how the participants were responding to it.

fact, be carried out by the Ministry officials and Dr. Manuel Crespo added that “this disconnect may not be solved in the short-term, since it is an ongoing process” (Consortium McGill University & Université de Montréal, 2004, Appendix 4, pp. 3-4).

The Ministry officials were responsible for mentoring and coaching the participants between courses. Their partnership with the Consortium was critical to the achievement of contextual relevance. Both directors conceded in their interviews that the role of the Ministry officials was one of the more problematic and ultimately less successful aspects of TTELP. The idea was an ingenious one, but it was not operationalized the way the Consortium intended. This is discussed at greater length in the Results section under the heading of *Ministry Officials* (IIC2).

Findings from this study suggest that many doors that would have needed to be open were closed to the consortium. It would probably have taken the presence on the Canadian team of a local partner to succeed in getting some of them opened. The consortium did have local input in the form of a Field Manager in Trinidad and a Montreal-based project coordinator, but they needed a partner with a high profile nationally, a partner with social and political clout. The consortium did try to get senior academics from the University of the West Indies on board, but initial indications that they were interested and would participate never translated into actual attendance or participation.

The Ministry officials, an ingenious addition to the TTELP team, never got to exercise their full capacity or to fully apply their scholarship to the emerging needs of the participants in a systematic way. This resulted in a scaffolding vacuum and repeated breaks in what was intended to be a continuous supporting role for leadership development.

The Ministry official was clear that “working with the local service provider in a truly collaborative framework” would have been an improvement for TTELP. He gives a clear picture of the benefits to be derived from this level of collaboration: “[...] but networking, that kind of true collaborative operation would probably have a greater effect, because, you know, you will have the quality, the variety and then you would have the sustainability” (T/05/01-24).

Their role in the programme was clear enough on paper, but in reality, it became murky early on. The Ministry official we interviewed, when asked whether one of them would have been present for every class, replied: “No. That was maybe a shortcoming. Now, in some modules, we were there and we came, we were invited. Some modules, the communication broke down. [...] Well of course, they wouldn’t have been able to pay for that” (T/05/01-8). We discussed problems related to the budget above and suggested that full consultancy fees for the Ministry officials should have been a part of the budget.

The Ministry officials had accepted reduced fees, but we see here that there is an added layer of uncertainty: They are not invited to some courses and interpret this as a consequence of the budgetary restrictions. It is clear from this passage that the situation had created some uneasiness in what needed to be a strong partnership. The Ministry officials were in a powerful position to be critical of TTELP. They were local experts in leadership, with a strong national profile and connections to political power and privilege. They also had credibility.

As we noted above, programme developers need to understand the host culture in order to deliver a leadership development programme which improves the leadership skills of participants, secures the support of senior managers, shapes the culture of the organization and facilitates the building of sustainable leadership capacity. When the service provider is from outside the culture, this means that they must first develop a collaborative relationship with local

partners. This is one of the recommendations from Leskiw and Singh's (2007) review of the literature on best practices in leadership. Collaboration is built on trust and the development of trust takes time. Whereas, for example, there was a letter of understanding and a history of collaboration framing the McGill-Université de Montréal partnership, no such framework existed between the University of the West Indies and McGill or the Université de Montréal.

There was, however, another framework in place which complicated the relationship between the consortium and local partners. That framework was one of competition, because a team from the University of the West Indies had also bid for the contract to deliver the leadership development programme that we now know as TTELP. They lost to the consortium and that loss seems to have jeopardized any potential for collaboration. The Ministry official refers cryptically to "the competition" and "the alliances" (T/05/01-26). A director puts it bluntly. From the very beginning, "because we won it ... [there] was an opposition ... a rampant, latent opposition to our project" (T/06/01-5).

The consortium's attempt to get a partner from the University of the West Indies (UWI) on their team might have worked under normal circumstances, but the anger and bitterness which lingered after the McGill-Université de Montréal win made UWI a reluctant partner. They were being asked to support rival service providers from another country just months after losing to them. Their reluctance, under these circumstances, is understandable.

There were, however, other bridge-building options available to the Consortium. They could, for example, have undertaken a pilot project with a small group of educational leaders from Trinidad and Tobago. This would, no doubt, have provided a foretaste of some of the political and other issues they had to deal with. It would also have extended their circle of connections and potential partners in Trinidad and Tobago. Another possible way of opening

doors for the Consortium would have been to offer a free workshop or seminar. This would have provided invaluable opportunities to interface with senior managers in the Ministry, forging alliances, building bridges and deepening their understanding of the culture while collecting useful data and making an unpaid contribution to the country.

This study revealed that a number of problems that the TTELP consortium faced were the result of culturally informed thinking or actions on the part of the Trinidad and Tobago partners, which the consortium did not always understand and for which they had no script. The implications of this for service providers planning to work internationally are firstly that it is crucial to build a framework for collaboration with local partners. This is something to think about and begin to work on even before the first contract is signed. If the contract is won and there are no local partners for collaboration, service providers will need to make every effort to attract high quality local partners such as academic and corporate leaders.

If these efforts are not successful, they should try to build bridges to local partners. The lesson to be learned from this study is that it is imperative for foreign service providers going into international development projects to find local partners to collaborate with them. A joint venture of this kind not only paves the way for a smoother interface with the local culture, but is good for public relations and an excellent opportunity to build a team for future projects.

There is no doubt that international leadership development programmes like TTELP can be very successful. The massive gains in new knowledge and skills and the excitement of the participants even after the end of the programme, speak for themselves. So, too, do the genuine respect and affection for the instructors which light up the narrative whenever participants speak about them.

Original Contributions of this Study

This study makes original contributions to the knowledge base in leadership development in four areas by shedding light on the relationship between certain process variables and programme outcomes. Firstly, this study provides evidence of a relationship between leadership development that is ongoing and systemic and the implementation of best practices in educational leadership. We saw that some administrators had evolved over the years into “cut-throat” leaders. Others were so set in their ways that there was a fear, voiced by the Ministry official and echoed by other participants that they would resist change, even if, for the duration of the programme, they appeared to embrace it. Findings from this study emphasize the fact that in the absence of systemic, ongoing leadership preparation, there is a risk of leaders acquiring ‘leadership skills’ by trial and error and holding on to leadership practices which may be erroneous and harmful to the development of their organization. Effective leadership development must be capable of standardizing and optimizing leadership practices. It must, therefore, transcend the individual and the short term. This is why leadership development is now routinely operationalized as systemic and ongoing.

Secondly, findings from this study underlined the fact that leadership development is about change over time. Change in educational leadership is neither simple, nor rapid. It takes time for the value of change to be appreciated by the rank and file of an organization. Deeply entrenched beliefs and long held practices must be replaced with new behaviours and new responses to both old and new problems. In this study we see the Trinidad and Tobago education sector in the throes of change. Systemic change requires a review and restructuring of organizational processes and this takes time, even under optimal conditions. Under adverse conditions or with even minimal challenges, we can expect the process to take even longer. This

is important information for those who are interested in evaluating the impact of leadership development programmes because, in order to capture changes in leadership practice that occurred as a result of leadership programmes, assessments must allow enough time for meaningful change to occur and to be observable and measurable.

Thirdly, this study showed how pervasive politics can be in government funded or mandated programmes such as TTELP. We saw that there was no escape from the pervasive presence of politics. We saw how bureaucracy and a lack of transparency affected participants and created obstacles for the consortium: The Ministry official acknowledged the encroachment of politics in professional lives. He hinted at wrongdoing in a comment about the “administrative and legal obstacles” which affected the consortium’s ability to get the job done (T/05/01-24). He said rather bluntly “The system is not very transparent” (T/05/01-17). He spoke frankly, too, about the power of political alliances and the resulting political reality that, given a framework of competition, someone with the right connections could easily shut down a project (T/05/01-26).

Politics, then, is a context variable that programme developers and service providers in international development programmes cannot afford to ignore. They must be sensitive to the political context and be proactive about potential problems. They need, in effect, to prepare themselves for what could turn out to be an uneasy relationship.

Fourthly, this study contributed to the knowledge base in leadership development by extending it to the developing world. Not many studies have focussed on leadership development in the Caribbean where leadership is still, generally, hierarchical and leadership development activities are typically one-shot. Those preparing to embark on, design or evaluate such programmes in the global South can gain insights from this study into the status quo of leadership development in the region.

This study paved the way for future international leadership development programmes by elucidating potential political flashpoints and other context and process variables which need to be considered from the earliest stages of programme development. The light shed on areas of potential misunderstanding or conflict and suggestions for anticipating and resolving them constitute a practical and important contribution to the field of leadership development.

Conclusions

Effective leadership will always be in demand. Wherever individuals come together as communities – in families, in schools, at work - leadership skills are required to move people along from the comfort of the mundane to the quest for excellence. The growing tendency in best practice organizations to open up leadership development programmes to the rank and file of employees rather than just to a select group of “high potential” leaders (Leskiw & Singh, 2007) is more than just a passing trend. It is a recognition of the fact that leadership skills are at the heart of the human endeavour.

We have noted in this study that leadership development without structure and without standards can lead to destructive kinds and patterns of leadership. It was Hashim who mentioned the tale of the liberation crab and lamented its continued relevance to the behaviour of some of his colleagues in educational leadership: “The one crab is going to the top of the barrel to liberate the rest of the crabs, but [the] rest of the crabs in the barrel don’t want him to go over the rim for nothing, because he might leave them in the barrel after” (T/02/02-34).

Leadership development programmes have a critical role to play in the building of effective and successful communities of practice. We saw in the literature review and through the perceptions of TTELP participants that leaders must have a vision for their communities and must get their followers to buy into that vision. Failure to do so increases the likelihood of a

crabs-in-the-barrel work environment. Team building and the development of trust are critical leadership skills. Deploy them among the crabs in that barrel and the story line must change.

It is evident from the stories we have heard from participants that the McGill University-Université de Montréal consortium had an important package to deliver to a community that needed it and went into Trinidad and Tobago with a team and a game plan which were, by the standards of the field, excellent. It is evident, too, that they walked into something of a minefield: Firstly, the competition to deliver the leadership development programme that we now know as TTELP was won by the consortium. They only found out later that a team from the University of the West Indies was also in the competition. The UWI's loss to the McGill-Université de Montréal consortium seems to have caused some bitterness and soured relations between the two parties. Secondly, the political context was not one that facilitated things for the consortium and there is a connection between the political issue and the fallout from the competition.

The Ministry official, for example, felt that TTELP had “achieved some of the objectives. I think it did. I think it did.” He then goes on to say “By the way, not everybody here believes that. That’s another political side, and you’re not picking that up either. There would be competition between the institutions and there would be, you know, [...] this is a foreign service provider. Why (did they) get so much? [...] That is not a program that is suitable for that. That was basically [...] all over the political landscape as well” (T/05/01-23).

Thirdly, the consortium had no local partners. This intensified the impact of the political and professional hostility described above and compromised TTELP's ability to achieve sustainable objectives. The Ministry official suggested that the consortium did indeed have the package but faced formidable opposition along the lines of delivery: “maybe McGill-Montreal

had the capacity to work effectively, but of course, administrative and legal obstacles ...”

(T/05/01-24). Details of the problems related to securing local partners and the implications for the programme and for practice in general were discussed above under the heading *Implications for North-South Cooperation on Leadership Development*.

There were several problems which caused concern to participants and the consortium alike. To be fair to all parties involved, not all of these problems were foreseeable or even under the control of the consortium. Not all of them were under the control of the government of Trinidad and Tobago. These are the realities of the field and lessons have been learned. The challenge now is to incorporate those lessons into future leadership development programmes which will build on the achievements of TTELP and other such programmes to improve delivery, build sustainable leadership capacity and forge the kind of professional partnerships which the field clearly needs.

In conclusion, then, the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project achieved most of its objectives and the consensus among the participants I interviewed for this study was that it was an outstanding leadership development programme. The legacy of TTELP is best captured by the improved leadership skills of the participants and the degree of implementation evident in their leadership practice. The participants reported a dramatic change in their leadership practice from day one. They were more knowledgeable, more confident, more motivated. They felt empowered and they were clear about how that power should be deployed and distributed. They were on a mission. They had a clear vision, a transformational mandate, and it would take a whole team to realize it. The new knowledge and skills that they had acquired were the keys to a new paradigm, one that emphasized visionary leadership, collaboration and the need to build sustainable leadership capacity.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Pilot Interview Questions

Section 1

1. Would you like to tell me a bit about how you got into teaching?
2. Tell me about your current position.

Section 2

3. Tell me a bit about your own professional development experiences.
4. To what extent have they helped?
5. What do you think about TTELP? Universities in another country sending down experts to deliver intensive courses in leadership. How does that strike you?
6. How do you think these leadership development programmes affect the students, affect the schools in terms of the students, in terms of learning?
7. How appropriate for Trinidad and Tobago is an international leadership development model like TTELP?

Post Interview Questions:

- How did this conversation go for you?
- Do you have any advice on things that I should or should not do to make it better for the principals I'm going to be interviewing?

Appendix B

Transcription Protocol

Timestamp	(3:35)
Words or phrases that cannot be deciphered ¹⁸	(xxxxxxx xxxxxx)
Garbled speech	[detention? the tension?]
Overlapping speech	*(Overlapping)
Word fragments	princi
Participant coughs, sighs, sneezes	(coughs), (sigh), (sneeze)
Participant speaks slowly	<slow> I was shocked </slow>
Word is spelt out	<spel> p i e </spel>
Spoken while laughing	<@> when I arrived </@>
Speaker laughs	@ @ @ @ @ @ @
All parties laugh	*(Laughter)
Names coded to ensure anonymity	[place1] [first name2]

¹⁸ Each set of x's denotes a word (but each x does NOT denote a syllable) that cannot be deciphered.

Appendix C**Online Survey Questions****TTELP Professional Development Survey****Consent**

1. Do you agree to participate in this research under the terms described above (i.e. in the consent form which was sent earlier by email)?

Yes ☐No ☐

2. Do you give permission for your interviews to be audio-taped and used in the contexts described above without being attributed to you?

Yes ☐No ☐

3. Name:

4. Date:

Section 1: Background Information

1. Name:

2. School :
(or Department within Ministry of Education)

3. Current position :

4. Number of years in current position:

5. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

6. Age: 35-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 51-55 ☐ 56-60 ☐ 61-65 ☐

7. Number of years teaching (or supervising):

8. Class level(s) at which you teach/taught (if applicable):

9. Subject area(s) you teach/taught (if applicable):

10. At what age were you first appointed as a principal or supervisor (if applicable)?

30-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐
46-50 ☐ 51-55 ☐ 56-60 ☐ 61-65 ☐

11. At what age were you first appointed as a vice-principal (if applicable)?

30-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐
46-50 ☐ 51-55 ☐ 56-60 ☐ 61-65 ☐

12. What position did you hold before the promotion?

- ☐ teacher in the same school
 - ☐ teacher in a different school
 - ☐ vice-principal in the same school
 - ☐ vice-principal in a different school
 - ☐ Other (Explain)
-

Section 2: Previous Professional Development Experience

1. List three (3) of your previous professional development experiences. For each one, describe the format (how it was organized).

2. Explain why you chose those three professional development experiences.
3. What kinds of follow-up activities (if any) were organized after these professional development sessions, or undertaken by you on an independent basis? How would you describe the relevance of such follow-up activities?
4. How have subsequent evaluations of your performance contributed to your development as a vice-principal, principal or supervisor?

Section 3: The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP)

1. How did you become a participant in the TTELP program?
2. How did your work in the TTELP program interface with your professional needs (or not)? Explain, giving examples:
3. How would you describe yourself as an educational leader going into the TTELP program?
4. How would you describe yourself as an educational leader coming out of the TTELP program?
5. What were the most positive aspects of the TTELP program, and why?

6. What were the least positive aspects of the TTELP program, and why?
7. What aspects, if any, of the TTELP program had an impact on your leadership practices? Explain and give example(s).
8. If the TTELP program had no impact on your leadership practices, explain why you think this was so.
9. What suggestions (if any) would you have if this program were to be repeated?

Section 4: Final Comments

1. How would you define a good educational leader?
2. Other Comments:
3. Are you willing to participate in follow-up interviews on the telephone (at the cost of the researcher)?
Yes ☐ No ☐
4. If yes, please provide the following information: (Please give your full email address, for example firstname.lastname@domain.com OR nickname@mail.ca)

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Appendix D

A Participant's Replies (on the phone) to Survey Questions 23 and 24

***INTERVIEWER:** How would you describe yourself as an educational leader going into the TTELP program?

***RESPONDENT:** I'd had some training through the British Council program, through the 1-year SEMP program, plus my practical had put into practice what I was learning. It was the perfect case for it, actually, to implement what I was learning. However, when I did the McGill program, I thought that it really put me on the cutting edge, you know, to be able to deal with people and to do the job effectively because it gave me a kind of a professionalism and a kind of ... it's the ease with which I would be able to deal with situations, problems, with innovations. I found that extremely helpful. **(In fact, in my ... in this job)** it really... it was like a piece of cake. The training I've had, all the different topics that we did and so on ... Very, very ... My growth and development and my training and ... all the expertise really helped me to ... to be able to handle people, to look at things in perspective, to pick out what was ... to prioritize and pick out the things that are more important, to be able to handle people. You know, handling people takes a special kind of skill. Everything is interwoven, so to speak. So that when I came to this job, which is an extremely complex job, because you're handling the staff, you're interfacing with staff, you're interfacing with students, you have to know what is best for the students and you're interfacing with the bosses, that's the Ministry of Education, and of course with the community, with the parents, you know ... it really was excellent training for a job like mine.

***INTERVIEWER:** But before it, as you said, you had this training, so you wouldn't really ... how would you describe your status in terms of an educational leader before the course, because you already had so much knowledge.

***RESPONDENT:** Well, it was there, but because that program was not as intensive, those programs ... were not as intensive as this one. This one was over a period of two years and every two months, I believe, we had a module of like 7 days. So this was extremely intense and it gave us an opportunity to actually put ourselves into this managerial position. You know, we had to do the role playing and we had to do the reading and the papers. Not that we didn't do it in the other one, but more intensive long as we did. So it made me, really, more knowledge, far more knowledgeable.

Appendix E

Participants' Replies to Survey Question 23

23. Describe yourself as an educational leader going into TTELP.

	<i>PRINCIPALS</i>	<i>CODING</i>
0109	I'd had some training through the British Council program, through the 1-year SEMP program, plus my practical had put into practice what I was learning.[...] // Well, [the knowledge, the skills were] there, but because those programs ... were not as intensive as this one.	<p>Previous PD Had improved L skills</p> <p>Kn & skills there, but less active.</p>
0108	Eager to learn // and be able to make good use of that knowledge	<p>Eager to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn • apply new Kn.
0106	I needed further/additional training in Management/Administration. // My expectation was that the TTELP would provide such training or enhance the skills already possessed.	<p>Needed further training in Ed.Admin</p> <p>Expectation that TTELP: - Would provide that OR - Enhance existing skills</p>
0104	As a vice principal I engaged in passive support of principal	Passive support of principal

	<i>VICE-PRINCIPALS</i>	
0107	Informed // but lacking practical experience	Knowledge there, but not applied.
0101	I was very inexperienced // - not adequately prepared.	Inexperienced Under-prepared
	<i>SUPERVISORS</i>	
0105	Forward thinking // and people oriented.	Progressive People oriented
0103	Willing to learn.	Willing to learn
	<i>TEACHER</i>	
0102	An unpolished diamond.	Unpolished diamond

Appendix F

Participants' Replies to Survey Question 24

4. Describe yourself as an educational leader coming out of TTLP.

	<i>PRINCIPALS</i>	<i>CODING</i>
0109	Far more knowledgeable. // It really put me on the cutting edge.	Far more knowledgeable On Cutting edge (ANKn)
0108	Better equipped to lead // and more to let others lead ie ability to motivate others and EMPOWER them to do a better job. // [From Transcript:] Better equipped with a whole new skills set. // Better relationships, better listener. Listens and empathizes with teachers. "My door is always open."	Improved L skills: New skills set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships • Motivate • Empower
0106	Better equipped // and re-tooled // to manage the day by day running of a school. // I am now a visionary leader, shaping the Vision and sharing it with colleagues.	- Improved L Skills (Quan & Qualitative) - Visionary leader
0104	I became motivated as a change agent and tried to engage the principal in discussing innovative practices. // My	Change agent Motivated Discuss with principal Conceptual change Empowered

	philosophical assumptions were revised. // I felt empowered.	
	<i>VICE-PRINCIPALS</i>	
0107	Much better informed // with enhanced leadership skill.	Enhanced L skills More knowledgeable
0101	I was more confident //- I felt more knowledgeable, // realized that I could not do every thing // and as a team it is important to know the strengths of all your subordinates so that I could maximize their talents.	Increased knowledge Increased confidence Recognized value of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed L • team-building
	<i>SUPERVISORS</i>	
0105	Focussed on results. // <p>From Transcript: *RESPONDENT: Yeah. Well, yes, yes, but it doesn't mean, it doesn't take away my focus on consideration for people. // I think I came out more balanced. // So, while the focus, initially, was on consideration for people, you know, // I came out of it, maintaining that focus on people, but having that growth and development in the area of, you know, getting results. (11:07)</p>	Results-oriented Still people-oriented More balanced Focus on people shifted To accommodate focus on results
0103	Prepared for enhanced performance. // <p>From Transcript: There were areas that I had ... There were some grey areas in my performan- ... in my leadership, in terms of, ok, communication. // Ok, and the andragogy, dealing with the adults as opposed to dealing with children. // We looked at ... there was the aspect of policy development, and I understood going through that course how policy is formulated and how it dictates the</p>	Enhanced L skills Weak areas strengthened <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication 2. Andragogy 3. Policy development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formulation - Drives performance

	pace of your work and at (16:21 and at boss on which) level. // It's not normally on the ground, but it's from the state as a ... a, you know ... and, therefore, you have to look now not only at your system, but the other systems around you to understand why you are doing what in your system.	- Systemic perspective
	<i>TEACHER</i>	
0102	20 caret precious stone // ready and willing to be an active change agent	Active change agent

Appendix G

Themes and Categories from the Pilot Interview

Themes and Categories from the Pilot Interview

- Professional Development (PD) [2 sub-themes]
 - In-Service:
 - Pre-Service:
- Leadership (L) [4 sub-themes -> 4 categories -> 4 sub- categories]
 - Importance of Leaders (LI)
 - Leadership Evaluation (LE)
 - Evaluation of Principals (EP)
 - Leadership Style (LS):
 - Leadership Challenges (LC):
 - Bureaucracy (B):
 - MOE Meetings:
 - Policy-practice gap:
 - Incomprehensible decisions:
 - Late Promotion:
 - Complexity:
 - Variation among Schools:
- Leadership Development (LD): [4 sub-themes -> 7 categories]
 - Status Quo:
 - Rationale:
 - Impact:

- Difficulty of Evaluation:
- Negative:
- Positive:
- International:
 - Perceptions about Canada:
 - Perceptions about Foreign Service Providers:
 - Perceptions about T&T:
 - Rationale:

Appendix H

In-Depth Interview Questions

1. What new knowledge and skills did you acquire from the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project and how did you use it in your leadership practice? (Give me one or two examples where you were able to deal with a situation in a different and more effective way because of what you were learning from the program.)

2. To what extent would you say that your teachers and students benefitted from the change in your approach? Did your teachers ever comment on this?

3. Tell me about your view of educational leadership. To what extent did it change as a result of your participation in the programme?

4. What was it like for you working with a team of experts from Canada?

5. To what extent were you satisfied with follow-up activities after the program ended?

Appendix I

Colour Coding Scheme

Leadership	Yellow highlight
Leadership Challenges	Light Orange font
Leadership Challenges -> Politics	Blue-Grey font
Leadership Style	Lavender font
Leadership -> Personal Characteristics	Yellow font on Black highlight
Leadership Development -> General	Violet font
Leadership Development -> Cost of TTELP	Pink font
Leadership Development -> Evaluation	Violet font in coding column
Leadership Development -> Follow-Up	Blue highlight
Leadership Development -> Impact -> Positive	Turquoise highlight
Leadership Development -> Impact -> Negative	Turquoise font
Leadership Development -> International	Green highlight
Pre-TTELP <u>& Pre-Service</u>	Pink highlight
Professional Development	Grey highlight (25%)
Management	Bright green font
Political correctness / social acceptability	Dark Green highlight
Metaphors	Red highlight in coding column
Limitations	Dark Green highlight in coding column
Advice	Blue font
Outliers	Red highlight

Appendix J**Interview Questions for National Lead Scholar**

1. Tell me about your role in TTELP.
2. Could you tell me a bit about the leadership issues in education in Trinidad and Tobago or the Caribbean generally? Are there particular issues that kind of jump out at you that you think would have impacted the way TTELP unfolded?
3. Although it seems to be evolving, there seemed to be a perception that leadership in the Caribbean was more hierarchical, whereas this Canadian team saw it more as facilitating. Would you comment on that?
4. Overall, do you think that the programme was effective?
5. What are your thoughts on the lack of follow up and is there anything that you would suggest?
6. I think the overall objective of this programme was to build leadership capacity in Trinidad and Tobago. How would you rate the success of TTELP?
7. If you had to advise a team coming down to do something similar to this in Trinidad and Tobago, having seen how this programme unfolded, what kind of advice would you give, what would you tell them?

8. In terms of the process, the framework, the logistics of TTELP, is there anything that you would say was really good and you would advise someone to include, or things that you think just didn't work in terms of the programme?

Appendix K

Interview Questions for Teachers

Teachers' Interview Questions

Section 1

Name:

School:

Position:

1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. How long have you been in your current position?

Section 2

3. Tell me about your experience of professional development.
4. What is your perception of a good educational leader?

Section 3

Your principal, Mrs. X, was a participant on the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership project.

5. What changes have you noticed as a result of that participation? What is she doing differently now, compared to what she did before TTELP?
6. Mrs. X talked about a middle management team that she put in place after joining TTELP. Has that team made a difference?
7. How has her participation in TTELP impacted your practice as a teacher?

8. How do you see these changes making a difference for students, academically or in any other way?

Appendix L

Interview Questions for Directors

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TTELP DIRECTORS

- How did the consortium come to be involved in TTELP? (I have general information about restructuring the educational system in Trinidad and Tobago.)
- Tell me about the principles that guided you in the design and delivery of TTELP.
- How did the directors interface with each other?
- Tell me about your background in leadership development.
- Tell me about the selection of the course instructors, how they were organized and how information was passed from one instructor to the next.
- Tell me about the selection of the National Lead Scholars and their role in TTELP.
- Participants found that the TTELP workload was very heavy, given that they were still expected to carry out their duties as principals etc. To what extent do you consider this a legitimate issue and what proposals would you make for dealing with it in future projects of this kind?

- Certification (or the lack of it) was a major issue for the majority of the participants I interviewed. How was the appropriate level of certification determined?
- What aspects of the project worked well for you?
- What aspects of the project worked less well for you?
- What were your plans and/or recommendations for follow-up activities after the programme ended?
- What kind of evaluation was envisaged for the programme?
- To what extent do you think that your objective of capacity building was achieved?
- What kind of input did you have (if any) in decisions about the initial selection of participants for TTELP and for the Montreal visit?
- What would you do differently if you were to run this kind of programme again in Trinidad and Tobago?

Appendix M

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM (Principals, Vice-principals and Teachers)

Dear Colleague,

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled “*Participants’ Perceptions of the Impact of a Leadership Development Program on their Professional Lives: The Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project.*”

I am a PhD student in the department of Educational and Counselling Psychology of the Faculty of Education at McGill University. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a PhD in Educational Psychology. It is being conducted under the supervision of Professor Michael Hoover and Professor Lynn Butler-Kisber. You may contact my supervisors at (514) 398-1607 and (514) 398-2252 respectively.

The purpose of this research project is to discover principals’ perceptions of the impact of the Trinidad and Tobago Educational Leadership Project (TTELP) on their professional lives and on their students. Research of this type is important because educational authorities and funding agencies need to know before investing in such programs whether they would be appropriate for a particular context. After the program, they need to know whether the time and money spent are justified by the quality of emerging leaders and the impact of the program on student achievement.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you were one of the participating principals or vice-principals in TTELP. If you agree, your participation will consist of the completion of an email survey and one or two telephone interviews. The total time commitment for each participant will be 1-2 hours. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Your participation should give you valuable insights into the phenomenon of leadership development, how it is effectively promoted and what constitutes evidence of its implementation. It is also an opportunity for continued reflection on the project, and reflection is an important part of the professional development process. The resulting knowledge base, enriched by your perspective, will provide a valuable framework for professional development practitioners and researchers.

The results of this study will be shared at scholarly meetings, in published articles and in my doctoral thesis. Your anonymity and the confidentiality of the data will be protected. Your name will not be used in any of the reports describing the results of this study. The interviews will be audiotaped to facilitate analysis. Tapes and transcripts of interviews will be identified by a code number only and not by your name. Only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to the data which will be kept in a secure location at McGill University. After the study is completed, tapes, transcripts and questionnaires will be destroyed.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may refuse to answer certain questions and may withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. If you do withdraw from the study, data that has been collected from you will not be used, but will be shredded and discarded. All costs of the research will be assumed by the researcher.

If you are willing to participate in this research, please sign and return the consent form at the bottom of this letter. You will also need to provide me with your email address and telephone number so that I can contact you to set up appointments. If you have any further questions about the study, you may contact me directly by telephone (514) 398-4914 or email: margaret.williams@mail.mcgill.ca.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

Sincerely,

Margaret Williams

Please detach and return in the self-addressed envelope

CONSENT FORM

I have read the description of the research project and hereby agree to participate. I am aware that the results will be used for research purposes only, that my identity will remain confidential, and that I can withdraw at any time, if I so wish.

Name of Participant

Signature *Date*

I hereby give permission for interviews with me to be audio-taped and for the use of direct quotes from the interview to be used in the contexts described above without being attributed to me.

Name of Participant

Signature *Date*

Name of Researcher

Signature *Date*

A copy of this consent form will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher

Appendix N

Needs Assessment

Preliminary Proposal for the Educational Leadership Programme

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT VISION/NEEDS

What vision/expectations do you have for the Leadership Training Programme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and implement projects • Develop effective leadership skills • Motivate stakeholders, personnel, families and community • Manage human and physical resources • Transfer learning into action
What tools and strategies do you hope to acquire/develop?
<p style="text-align: center;">Most cited tools and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-solving • Team building • Change management • Human resources management (conflict management, time management, negotiations, labour relations, personnel development) • Financial management • Communications & interpersonal skills • Decision-making • Motivation/mobilization • Evaluation and assessment <p>Ancillary tools and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking • Project planning & implementation • Strategic planning • Curriculum development & implementation • Knowledge of legal framework
What conditions do you feel are necessary for the Leadership Training Programme to contribute to the goals of the Secondary Education Modernization Programme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to programme • Ability to handle logistics of work and study (time needed and availability of resources) • Trainers must have in-depth knowledge of social, cultural & educational contexts • Networking possibilities • Succession planning • Supportive environment & support systems • Opportunity to implement learning skills

Preliminary Proposal for the Educational Leadership Programme

TABLE 3
MAPPING OF ISSUES: NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

Phase 1: Identifying issues																																	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dealing with bureaucracy in school system 2. Archaic legislation 3. Knowledge of the people in the school board 4. Lack of communication and inefficient management systems 5. Insufficient access to resources 6. Poor performance of students--lack of discipline 7. Parental and community involvement 8. Communication and clear stipulation of policy 9. Making a school a healthy, quality school eg., professionalization of teachers 10. Organizational change within the context of available resources 11. Strategic planning 12. Professional and personal development 13. Community relations 14. Managing change 15. Empowering key personnel 16. Dealing with conflicting management styles 																																	
Phase 2: Prioritizing issues																																	
<p>Tabulation of issues with corresponding top three votes</p> <table> <tr> <th>Issues</th><th>Votes</th></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr> <td>6</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr> <td>14</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr> <td>12</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>8</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>9</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>16</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>15</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>13</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>0</td></tr> </table>		Issues	Votes	4	22	6	17	14	13	2	8	12	8	5	6	10	5	11	3	8	3	9	2	1	2	16	2	15	0	13	0	3	0
Issues	Votes																																
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16	2																																
15	0																																
13	0																																
3	0																																
Phase 3: Reaching consensus																																	
<p>Confirmation of most important priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication and insufficient management system • Poor performance of students--lack of discipline • Managing change • Professional and personal development • Archaic legislation 																																	