Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness: Case Studies of Four School Principals

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study investigated exemplary principals’ role in teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. The study is based on Sheppard's (1996) quantitative research on the transformational role of instructional leadership. Grounded theory was used to understand the leadership practices principals use that are transformational in nature and exemplify the broad definition of instructional leadership. A total of sixteen participants, twelve teachers and four principals, in four rural Jamaican secondary high schools were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Results indicate that when principals employ the broadly defined instructional leadership approach that is collaborative, distributed, and transformational in nature, there is direct effect on teachers’ professional involvement and indirect influence on students’ performance. The results highlight the importance of principals working collaboratively and sharing responsibilities with their teachers and other constituents to improve school culture and student success.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The quality of leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning are the two fundamental determinants of successful schools. These two areas of school effectiveness have been explored repeatedly through continuous reform agendas comprising of changing policies, standards, accountability issues, and technological development in a number of education systems to meet global demands (Bell, Schargel, & Thacker, 2014; Conley, 2003; Firestone & Shippens, 2003; Lambert, 2002; Lee, Hallinger & Walker, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Northouse, 2016). In these studies, as well as others, there is evidence of an increased demand for credible leaders in schools to provide shared and supported vision, leadership and direction, and strong management to meet their learning targets (Hallinger, 2010; Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2011; Murphy, 2005; Senge, 2006; Somech & Wenderow, 2006). Corderio and Cunningham (2013) express a common theme, that if schools are to operate successfully and provide students with the necessary tools to function in a competitive environment, then, principals need to provide exemplary leadership and adhere to standards that will assist in developing and sustaining a supportive school culture. A similar view, as expressed by Cook (2014), is that principals are commissioned to recognize the contributions of teachers and other constituents from the internal environment and create a positive school culture where leadership skills are honed and teamwork nurtured. According to Cook, principals, teachers, and other constituents must collaboratively work together to consistently improve and sustain leadership for continued growth of their schools.
Further studies indicate that principals need to have the requisite competencies in professional conduct, management or administrative duties, understanding classroom practices, as well as an awareness of the cultural, individual, structural, and political influence on their schools (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013; Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Southworth, 2002). By having these set skills, research suggests that principals will be able to support their teachers in executing their core functions and promoting higher standards of achievement among students that will further advance the process of educational transformation (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013; Hallinger, 2011; Hershock, Mason, & Hawkins, 2007; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Sheppard, 1996; Skuladotair, 2011; Southworth, 2002). Within this context, there is increased demand for leaders who are not just fixed on their individual principles and values, but are also cognizant of the complex bureaucratic nature of education. As the leading professional in the school, the principal is seen as a binding source of influence in building positive relationships (Cook, 2014; Dubrin, 2010; Giles, 2007; Sawyer, Scriber, Watson, & Myers, 2005) among teachers to enhance and sustain their commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement (Sheppard, 1996). Understanding the aforementioned core areas that enhance teachers’ professional activities require exploration of teachers’ perceptions and expectations of their principal as administrator and supervisor of the teaching learning process.

**Background of the Study**

Although extensive research has been done to explore the positive and direct effects of transformational and instructional leadership on school improvement, there is
need for more investigation of how principals carry out instructional leadership functions and the extent to which these leadership functions have transformational effects on teachers. Specifically, additional research is needed to determine how school principals’ leadership practices influence teacher commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement that has been linked to improving teachers’ practices and students’ achievement (Blase & Blase, 1998; Marks & Printy, 2003; Sheppard, 1996).

For decades, emphasis has been placed on reforming the public education system with an inescapable focus on the leadership role of school principals (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood, 2003; Sheppard, 1996; Sheppard, Brown, & Dibbon, 2009). This increased emphasis on expanding the role of principals to enhance performance in elementary and high schools has resulted from a constantly growing global mandate to improve students’ achievement (Hallinger, 2011; Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2013). As such, it is dependent on principals to mobilize resources and people to establish positive school climate for the accomplishment of their school goals. In a similar vein of analysis, Hess and Kelly (2005) and Hershock, Mason, and Hawkins (2007) in their insightful compendium of literature suggest that principals play a critical role in fostering meaningful relationships with teachers and other constituents to meet the challenges of transforming their schools. Of note, too, are the efforts of policy makers, school districts, and government bodies who have sought to correct the perceived problem of low performance through rigorous and continuous assessment of principals’ leadership practices to handle the growing management and accountability issues (Barth, 1986; Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger 2011). Such policy initiatives have prompted specialized training opportunities for principals to improve their
leadership skills. These training opportunities for principals include organized workshops to improve their skills in strategic planning and monitoring of school goals and teachers’ and administrators’ professional development. These training opportunities also extend to continuous assessment of students’ academic performance (Peterson, 2002).

Despite the variegated nature of leadership and the scores of leadership approaches used to restructure organizations outside the school context, researchers assert that under the current school reform programs transformational and distributed leadership have commanded more attention among policy makers and stakeholders in education and have been adopted and extended to educational institutions (Bottery, 2001; Hallinger, 2007). Although various images of leadership have been presented as promising over the last two decades in school settings, instructional leadership has remained among the most compelling (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Murphy, 2002; Purkey & Smith, 1983).

Notwithstanding, its continued prominence, the narrow definition of instructional leadership that emphasizes “classroom supervision… and strong directive leadership focused on curriculum and instruction from the principal” (Hallinger, 2003, p. 329) has been largely abandoned in favor of a broader definition of instructional leadership that consists of all the leadership activities that affect student learning (Sheppard, 1996). In spite of the differences in constructs, it is clear that instructional leadership has positive effects on the quality of teacher performance and the success of schools (Hallinger, 2007; Hines, Edmonson, & Moore, 2008).

Other researchers such as Bottery (2001) and Leithwood and Riehl (2003) contend that the transformational leadership approach to management of schools requires the
principal to set direction, motivate people, and restructure the organization. Further studies (Berg & Sleegers, 1996; Pounder, 2006; Rowland, 2008; Woods, Bennett, Harvey, & Wise, 2004) indicate that transformational leaders communicate their values and beliefs, increase group autonomy, encourage distributed leadership, and foster greater commitment to the institution.

Johnson (2004) views distributed transformational leadership as an alternative to the hierarchical model of leadership, which creates a platform for principals to distribute leadership roles among formal and informal leaders and the relationships that are forged. Johnson’s findings led him to argue that principals need to analyze the requisite skills and competencies of teachers and assign them with roles and responsibilities that will allow them to collaborate and share their creativity and innovativeness to improve students’ achievement. His conclusion is that by distributing roles according to constituents’ skill sets, principals are engaged in transformational leadership roles. Consistent with this view are the arguments put forward by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Sheppard (1996, 2015), and Leithwood (1992), all of whom support the concept that principals who practice transformational leadership are also instructional leaders. Leithwood (1992) further recommends that instructional leadership be subsumed under transformational leadership. Gronn (2002) and Spillane (2006) shared a similar position, as their findings on instructional leadership confirm that this leadership approach is also distributed and ought to be examined from the school level, instead of solely focusing attention on the role of the principal.

Blase and Blase (1998), Marks and Printy (2003), and Sheppard (1996) have also concluded that the broad definition of instructional leadership has connection with the
characteristics of transformational leadership. They argue that combining those two theoretical approaches (transformational and instructional leadership) holds considerable promise for enhancing school effectiveness as teachers become more engaged as leaders as a result of their increased commitment, focus on innovation, and professional engagement. These three characteristics of school culture have been intrinsically linked to school improvement and effectiveness (Barth, 1986; Giles, 2007; Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger, 2011; Sawyer, Sribier, Watson & Myers, 2005).

Other research studies have suggested, as well, that the combination of instructional leadership, as broadly defined above, and transformational leadership theories show promise for school improvement (Hallinger, 2003, 2011; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Murphy, 2002; Purkey & Smith, 1983). These researchers contend that principals in their role as transformational leaders provide support to teachers, include them in the decision making process, and motivate them to be innovative in their pedagogies. As such, principals are encouraged to improve their performance in administration, management, teaching and learning.

Purpose of the Study

Although extensive research has been done to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on school improvement, further investigation is needed to assess the effects of this leadership practice on three characteristics of school climate – teacher commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement that has been intrinsically linked to school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the four case studies focus on the characteristics of principals as instructional leaders and their perceptions of how they
influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. This study also seeks to find out more about teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders. Given that the data were collected in Jamaica, findings will be applied to that country and examples are for the most part drawn from the country's educational context.

**Significance of the Study**

Increased school reform programs have resulted in stakeholders in education embarking on continuous research into school administrators’ abilities to govern and manage the core functions of administration and the teaching and learning process (Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1988). Hallinger’s (2003) more recent assessment of instructional leadership looks closely at how principals create a climate of inclusion that will build and sustain school improvement, organize the curriculum and programs to meet the needs of teachers and other constituents, and create an innovative school climate to enhance the teaching and learning process (Donaldson, 2001; Hallinger, 2003; Lambert, 2002). Research pertaining to instructional leadership has largely been centered on elementary schools, but there is insufficient evidence to support (Johnson, 2008; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010) its extensive use in high schools. Hallinger (2005) further argues “the practice of instructional leadership requires substantial adaptation in secondary schools, which are often larger and more complex organizations” (p. 11) and in many instances “teacher contact is delegated to others such as assistant principals and department chairs” (Firestone & Heeriot, 1982, p.53). In building on these perspectives, other researchers (Jackson, 2000; Lambert, 2002; Southworth, 2002) have concluded that
continued research on the core functions of instructional leadership still have merit as it is essential to determine the extent to which principals are able to balance their administrative role while providing opportunities for teachers to develop their teaching practices.

In the context of what some may consider the competing emphasis on transformational and distributed leadership since the mid 1990’s, this study will add empirical weight to the existing research on instructional leadership and help to further define and guide the characteristics of principals’ role and their influence in creating a positive learning environment. The research topic also has significance for teachers, as it may help them further understand their professional growth and the characteristics that influence their professional involvement, commitment, and innovation. It also has significance for educational stakeholders in Jamaica who have recently called for a deeper understanding of how leadership and management in schools intersect with the quality of teaching and learning.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis has eight chapters. Each chapter is organized in themes. Chapter one introduces the study. It provides a detailed overview of the study, the background, significance of the study, and research purpose. Chapter two explores the literature relevant to the research study. This chapter clearly outlines the differing theories of leadership and the definition of key terms used in the study – innovativeness, commitment, and professional involvement. Chapter three chronicles the qualitative methodology and research design used. It outlines the seven research questions guiding
the study, methods used to gather the data and procedures taken to analyze the data. The chapter also includes the time line of the research.

Chapter four provides a description of the study schools. The analysis includes the vision and mission statements and similarities in the study schools’ organizational structure. It further discusses in detail the Christian values underpinning the schools’ success. Chapter five offers an in-depth analysis of leadership and values. The sub-themes include discussion on principals’ and teachers’ understanding of leadership and the study schools’ leadership structure. Also included in this chapter are the teachers’ and principals’ perspective of the leadership approach used in the study schools. These shared views include the principals as distributed, transformational instructional leaders, as well as autocratic, and situational leaders. Particular focus is given to teachers’ perceptions that their principals’ high level of integrity has contributed to the establishment of trust and a positive school climate. The matter of principals creating and maintaining a collaborative work environment to accomplish the varied school programs is discussed at length in addition to the establishment of professional learning communities that appear to increase teachers’ involvement and commitment to their school.

Chapter six has a central theme- leadership and student focus. It delineates the measures that principals and their middle managers take to ensure that students’ success is key to achieving general school success. Emphasis is therefore placed on maintaining a disciplined school environment to facilitate greater teacher commitment and improvement in pedagogical skills. Other featured sub-themes in chapter six include common planning time for teachers to ensure that they extend pedagogical support to each other. Further
details about the availability of professional development for teachers at the internal and external level is also discussed.

Chapter seven delves into the issue of leadership, teachers’ involvement in extra-curricular activities, and evaluation. This chapter addresses how principals’ leadership behaviours impact teachers’ professional involvement and commitment to different school programs. The reward system used to demonstrate appreciation for teachers’ involvement in extra-curricular activities is examined. Findings specific to how these rewards influence teachers’ commitment are also highlighted, as well as steps taken to conduct informal and formal evaluations. Finally, chapter eight presents a summary of the findings. It concludes with discussion concerning the limitations of the study, recommendations, and suggestions for future research.

**The Role of the Researcher**

As a qualitative researcher I am cognizant of the importance of the theoretical underpinnings of this research in giving it soundness. I am also aware of my role in the process of conducting this research as qualitative “research involves interpreting the actions of those who are themselves interpreters” (Scott & Usher, 1996, p. 20). I am equally aware that subjectivity is “key to qualitative research” (Tite, 2010). As such, qualitative researchers must be adept at understanding participants’ perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation. In the process of collecting the data, the qualitative researcher must “have the ability to see the interplay of a qualitative relationship…. This ability is influenced by the researcher’s prior knowledge… history of the situation and its context (Tite, 2002, p. 5). Therefore, as an “instrument” of the research (Marshall &
Rossman, 2006), I find it prudent to introduce myself. I am a former teacher in Jamaica. I have worked in two rural schools at the primary and secondary level. While working at the secondary level, I was afforded the opportunity to work closely with the principal on several committees. I found the experiences valuable and as a consequence, I developed an interest in educational administration.

I gained further insight in the field of leadership and management at the university level when I worked in Japan for three years. The experience highlighted the nature of leadership as collaborative, shared, and inclusive of all constituents. It was during this period that I had an epiphany that I should explore the role of principals in the Jamaican school context in relation to improving students’ performance. With the assistance of my supervisors, I was able to infuse my intended research passion with the current discourse on leadership in schools to develop the topic- *Exemplary Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness: Case Studies of Four School Principals.*
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the literature pertinent to the main leadership approaches used in secondary high schools. The review begins with differing perspectives of leadership and explores the foundation of instructional, transformational, and distributed leadership. It further delves into the narrow and broad definition of instructional leadership and explains that there is still a gap in the literature as it pertains to principals’ role in motivating teachers in being more committed, professionally involved, and innovative in their practices. A detailed analysis of commitment, professional involvement, and innovation is included to highlight that students’ performance is optimal when focus is given to these three characteristics of school culture.

Leadership

Leadership is viewed as an eclectic and dynamic concept that is critical for principals in managing changing school systems. Despite the copious amount of literature on leadership, there is shared understanding that there is not a definitive concept of leadership. Theorists and researchers view leadership through varied lenses. Burns (1978) postulates that in matters of leadership, it is prudent that formal leaders create the platform to motivate, inspire, and include informal leaders in exceeding expectations. Hallinger (2003), in his studies of leadership in schools, concluded that the principal’s responsibilities extend to “managerial, political, instructional, human resource, and symbolic leadership roles in school” (p. 238). Through ongoing review of the concept of
leadership, Hallinger (2010) suggests that leadership is a more bottom up than a top down approach. Therefore, according to him (and other researchers) leadership is influenced by social interaction among constituents within organizations, who are informal leaders (Dubrin, 2010; Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005). Despite the varied perspectives, what undergirds the definition of leadership in school is the ability of principals to set direction (Devos & Bouckenooghe, 2009), develop and motivate people, and redesign the organization to foster trust (Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003). These scholars’ perspectives are mirrored in Cook’s (2014) recent study, which concludes that "teachers and their professional conduct are directly impacted by leadership in their respective schools" (p. 2).

Leadership has been described as a social construct that is also “team oriented, participative, value-based, and humane oriented” (Westrick & Miskel, 2009, p. 131). It also involves increasing teacher efficacy and commitment to influence classroom practice (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Spillane, 2003; Spillane, Hallet & Diamond, 2003; Wiseman, 2005). Towards that purpose, leadership encapsulates mobilizing people and resources towards goal attainment of meeting the demands of a changing environment (Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Reeves, 2006). Southworth (2002) also viewed leadership as dependent on the environment and the cultural context. Consequently, the role of principals as leader and manager is challenging as they are faced with the prospects of working with not only policy makers, but also with varied interest groups. Therefore, they play an integral role in sustaining positive relationships among constituents to meet organizational goals.
With such working dynamics, the issue of learning is intertwined with how leaders and constituents shape their beliefs and actions for positive relationships (Lakomsi, 1995; Leithwood, 1994). Pryor and Pryor (2005) found that since leaders have power over others, they need to be more conscious of using the process of mutual motivation to mobilize, engage, and increase the productive capacities of their constituents. Therefore, teamwork and motivation among administrators and faculty members are key factors in building successful relationships in schools (Pryor & Pryor). These relationships are critical to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Moreover, Leithwood and Rhiel (2003) puts the impact of leadership on student achievement in perspective as they note that "although leadership explains only about three to five percent of the variation in student learning across schools, this effect is actually nearly one-quarter of the effect of all school factors" (p. 3). Essential to establishing relationships in school is ensuring that leaders and their constituents are working as a team of the same or similar direction. This is important as unattainable goals in organizations create rift among staff members who have the proclivity to blame their leaders for their lack of success (Foster & Young, 2004).

According to Bolman and Deal (2002), administrators in education use four frames of leadership: political, human resources, structural, and symbolic. Smith and Peile (2006) contend that principals in their capacity as instructional leaders ought to see the political frame as a natural influence on schools. They claim that the ultimate goal of the principal is to ensure that the school climate is free from unnecessary conflicts as these are hindrances to teachers’ professional involvement, commitment, and innovativeness.
The second frame of leadership, human resources, is an important responsibility of principals (Bolman & Deal, 2002). These scholars noted that without an effective human resources team, school effectiveness will be non-existent as faculty and staff have certain needs that must be fulfilled for them to carry out their functions. Bolman and Deal (2002) conclude that schools as social systems are only productive when the needs of all constituents are met. Therefore, it is contingent on the principals to identify the needs of their teachers and implement policies that will channel a positive course of change in the school environment. Another goal of the human resources frame is to enlist commitment and involvement among teachers. Associated with teachers’ needs are the competencies of principals to exhibit compassion, care, and trust among all concerned. Human resources in schools also assume that when principals create a rewarding and congenial work environment, then, teachers will be motivated to perform at optimal levels (Smith & Piele, 2006).

Bolman and Deal’s (2002) structural frame of leadership emphasizes the vision and goals of the school and the implications that these have on the productive capacity of teachers and administrators. It is centered on the formal system of the school with a clear outline of the roles and responsibilities of teachers and the standards that administrators must set for themselves to achieve school goals. Smith and Piele (2006) note that the characteristics of the structural frame of leadership are synonymous with that of instructional leadership which stresses the importance of effective planning, supervising, communicating, and allocating resources. Finally, Bolman and Deal express the view that leaders who use the symbolic frame of leadership are focused on creating a culture of collaboration. Therefore, great focus is placed on motivating teachers towards
accomplishing their goals and bringing out the best in their students. The symbolic frame of leadership is consistent with aspects of transformational leadership. Characteristics of this leadership frame include, principals and other leaders leading by example, demonstrating respect for the history of the school, and communicating the mission and vision of the school (Bolman & Deal).

**Theories of Leadership and Characteristics of School Culture**

**Instructional Leadership**

The theory of instructional leadership gained prominence in the 1980s, and has been influenced mainly by extensive research that found a correlation between effective schools and principals who focused on making a difference in students’ achievement through teachers’ classroom practice (Coldren & Spillane 2007; Dywer, 1985; Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Instructional leadership is narrowly and broadly defined. The narrow definition is focused on principals supervising teachers’ pedagogies while the broad definition is an extension of the narrow view, by focusing on how well principals and teachers collaboratively work together to execute their core functions (Copland & Knapp, 2006). These functions include: outlining a definitive vision for the school, developing and maintaining structures, and creating a positive school culture that will influence teachers’ commitment to the development of the school through continuous professional development workshops that are aimed at providing new ideas, skills and strategies to enhance teachers’ pedagogies (Hallinger, 2003; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The instructional leadership approach has been used to transform ineffective schools (Dimmock, 2005) and
is regarded as a top down approach to leadership as greater emphasis is placed on the role of the principal to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. Hallinger’s (2010) review of instructional leadership concludes that this is a first order approach to leadership whereby the principal directly influences conditions that affect the curriculum and instruction in the classroom. Barth (1986) and Cuban (1988) also viewed the emphasis of the instructional leadership approach on principals improving their individual school success. Additional findings of instructional leadership indicate that the core functions of principals were aimed at improving the curricular content, teachers’ pedagogies, and the cultural norms of schools (Marks & Printy, 2003). In other word, there was a “strong directive leadership focused on curriculum and instruction from the principal” (Hallinger, 2003, p. 329). Schools as open systems require greater autonomy and collaboration from informal and formal teachers and administrators in order to effect change (Lambert, 2002). Principals who employ the broad view of instructional leadership also support teachers who are able to create activities that will engage the interest of students and empower them to take risks, be critical thinkers, and ascribe to higher achievement. Blase and Blase (1998) suggest that the instructional leadership approach is a combination of supervision, staff and curriculum development. Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinback (1999) postulate that instructional leadership is based on “the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students” (p. 8). They concluded that it is crucial for principals to develop instructional programs that are conducive to student learning and staff professional growth. Yu (2005) also argues that the instructional leadership approach still plays a pivotal role in improving students learning outcomes. However, Hallinger and Heck (1997), Hallinger
and Murphy (1985), and Sheppard (1996) suggest that the effectiveness of instructional leadership is realized when it is viewed as broad instead of narrow because the broad definition encapsulates promoting a culture of collective responsibility among teachers. The broad definition of instructional leadership also speaks to the confluence between teachers’ repertoire of teaching and learning and their professional development. It also expands to the direct and indirect influence of principals on teachers to participate in the decision making process.

Hallinger’s (2007) research data captured the changing emphasis in instructional leadership dynamics. The data revealed that twenty (20) studies examined instructional leadership between 1983-1988; with an increase of 48% on 41 studies during the period of 1989-1994. Then, in 1985-2000, there was a huge decline from 41 to 26 studies regarding instructional leadership beginning in 2001, with an increase from 26 to 29 or 7.32% research studies in instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2007). Leithwood (1992) regards instructional leadership as an “idea that has served many schools well throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s and no longer appears to capture the heart of what school administration will do [to meet the increased workload of the principalship]" (p. 8). Other researchers (Dwyer, 1986; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982) note that during the period of the 1980’s, instructional leadership was perceived as the functions that principals execute to meet school goals without much collaboration with teachers (Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1988).

Blase and Blase’s (1997) findings of instructional leadership mirror the broad definition, which they describe as principals encouraging a culture of collaboration among teachers to improve teaching and learning. Analogous to these research
conclusions, findings by Barth (1986), Cuban (1988), Hallinger (2007), and Hallinger et al. (1996) suggest that although policymakers were fascinated with the concept of improving schools through the principal as instructional leader, they neglected the role of teachers and other constituents in the decision making process. A collaborative school climate enables teachers to foster greater understanding of the curricula, their pedagogies, as well as, teachers’ professional learning. An established school climate also encourages teachers to become more innovative and committed to their profession (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012).

In addition, the research indicated that policy makers did not understand that principals lacked the foundation skills of educational administration and their role in influencing the teaching learning process. Some researchers (Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1988) found that principals were more involved in their managerial roles and were not initiating instructional leadership practices. Despite these growing criticisms, research has shown that the tenets of instructional leadership are still grounded in the roles and responsibilities of principals (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Heck & Hallinger, 2010; Murphy, 2002; Purkey & Smith, 1983).

Having recognized that the role of the principal needs to be adjusted, Heck and Hallinger (1999) identified characteristics of instructional leadership that are grounded in collaborative leadership. These include the principal and constituents working together to establish the mission, vision, and goals of the school, managing instructional programs, and creating a positive and safe school environment. Dimmock (2005) suggests that if principals focus more on students’ achievement through differentiated learning, the quality of teachers’ pedagogies, the design and structure of the
school, leadership and management, and the culture of the school, then there will be
greater involvement of all constituents. Marks and Printy (2003) reassessed the works of
Heck and Hallinger and conceptualized the broadly defined instructional leadership
approach to shared leadership. Over time, these changing views of leadership in
elementary and primary has drawn upon the distributive and transformational leadership
approaches as alternatives to the instructional leadership approach. Sheppard and
Hallinger also suggest that in many instances, the principal is not necessarily the expert in
matters pertinent to instruction. Furthermore, there are principals who perceive their role
as only limited to being a manager and as such, they alienate themselves from the
instructional process.

The literature does not clearly outline the degree to which principals integrate the
different functions of instructional leadership within their existing leadership approach.
Hallinger (2007) deduces that the transformation of elementary and high schools requires
the input of principals to establish clear goals, coordinate and manage the curriculum, and
create a positive school climate for prolonged school improvement. In a similar vein of
critique, Lunenburg & Ornstein (2012) argue that as the chief instructional leader, the
principal is the single most important person to set the school on a path to high academic
performance.

A number of research studies (Hallinger, 2007; Glanz, 2006; Marks & Printy,
2003; Smith, 2009; Southworth, 2002) describe instructional leadership as a combination
of teachers’ professional development, supervision, and curriculum development.
Hallinger (2003) and Hallinger and Murphy (1985) note that instructional leadership is
not only focused on the supervision of the teaching learning process, but extends to its
core functions. These core functions include: framing and communication school goals, coordinating curriculum, monitoring students’ progress, protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, and maintaining high visibility (Sheppard 1996).

Similarly, DeBevoise (1984) echoes Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) regard for instructional leadership as “those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others to promote growth in student” (p. 15). Sheppard (2006) and Murphy (2007) describe instructional leadership as a combination of supervision, developing teachers’ competences, and developing the curriculum. These combined characteristics increase communication between principals, teachers, and other constituents to promote higher performance.

Global policy interest groups emphasize the need for infusion of instructional leadership with the roles and responsibilities of principals to meet the escalated professional standards designed specifically for them. In fact, there is a shift towards increasing accountability standards for principals and teachers. According to Banta and Pike (2012), Enuene and Egwunyenga (2008), Hoy & Miskel (2008), Leithwood (1994, 2007), Leithwood and Riehl (2005) and Ogawa and Bossert (1995) principals are responsible for the supervision of teaching and learning. This leadership function dictates that principals have the requisite competencies in areas of leadership, operations management, coordinating the curriculum and improving teachers’ professional growth.

These researchers further suggest that if principals understand that their role as an instructional leader is to ensure that students’ achievement is their number one priority (Heck, 2005) then, they need to cultivate greater awareness of the changes in their internal and external environment, and adjust their practices to achieve that purpose.
From the research studies (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003), findings confirm the imperativeness of a safe, secure, and positive learning environment for increased teacher collaboration, commitment, instructional practice, and improved professionalism. However, the delivery of content, and students’ assimilation of information are dependent on the quality of teachers’ pedagogical techniques, as well as on a rigorous and engaging curriculum (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005). If principals possess leadership behaviours that are consistent with the broad definition of instructional leadership Sheppard (1996) suggests that they will grow in professional involvement, commitment, and innovation which are necessary leadership competencies for assisting teachers in students’ learning /academic progress. The broad definition also includes transformational and distributed leadership characteristics.

**Transformational Leadership**

As discussions continued about the contributions of instructional leadership in education, the theory of transformational and transactional leadership in the private sector organizations dominated the literature on leadership in the 1980s (Bass, 1995, 1999). The transformational leadership approach was noted to be vision driven and focused on development of employees’ goals. Policy makers, researchers, and other stakeholders in education recognize that the characteristics of transformational leadership could influence the change agenda. Transformational leadership approach gained prominence during the restructuring phase of American schools in the 1990s. During that period, attention was more directed to transforming schools through teachers’ professional conduct, learning communities, and professional development training workshops. These notable images of
restructuring schools developed after many studies were carried out to determine how political and cooperative leaders transformed their systems. Consequently, this leadership approach continues to be the globally accepted approach in educational leadership (Sun & Leithwood, 2015).

Spillane (2006) defines transformational leadership as the ability of administration “to empower others with the purpose of bringing about a major change in the form, nature, and function of some phenomenon” (p. 24). In order for changes to take place, there has to be a transformation of the feelings, attitude, and beliefs of constituents for improved innovation, inclusion and commitment to the organization (Berg & Sleegers, 1996). This leadership approach is also based on the capacity of principals to set direction, restructure the organization, motivate teachers to collaboratively work together to maintain the school’s professional culture (Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1997; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

Educational scholars Adams and Krist (1999) opine that transformational leadership gained favourability among educational stakeholder, parents, and policy makers who demanded better performance among students. Leithwood et al. (1994) regard this evolution in leadership as second order changes because it exemplifies a bottom up approach that is aimed at improving commitment and increasing the principals’ and teachers’ capacity to work beyond expectations. Hallinger (2003) and Sheppard (1996) describe the transformational role of instructional leadership, as broadly defined and do not perceive the power of the principal as top down. Consequently, transformational leaders are more focused on restructuring schools through improvement of school conditions and building relationships to achieve goals. After obtaining
prominence in the 1980s, researchers sought to understand more about its positive impact on school reform.

According to Bass (1999), transformational leadership creates avenues for principals to provide opportunities for constituents to “move beyond immediate self-interests through [principals’ use of/engagement in] idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration” (p. 11). Bass and Riggio (2006) contend that these four components of transformational leadership are critical to motivating and establishing how relationships are built among principals and teachers. These researchers define idealized influence as the appropriate behaviours that leaders demonstrate, which positively influence their constituents to contribute to their organization's development. For example, working together to articulate a clear vision and purpose for the organization. According to Bass and Riggio, transformational leaders are inspirational motivators as they communicate their expectations as well as their commitment to the organization and their constituents while inspiring their constituents to challenge themselves by embracing new experiences and finding solutions to resolve problems. Individualized consideration is central to meeting the needs of constituents, by emphasizing, supporting and meeting individual needs and differences to help them develop their potential. Individualized consideration takes precedence over personal ambition and demonstrates that each individual in the organization is respected.

Finally, Bass and Riggio (2006) conclude that transformational leaders often provide intellectual stimulation by encouraging constituents to be innovative, creative, and to question “assumptions, reframe problems, and approach old situations in new ways” (p. 7). Bass (1999), further contends that findings from the analysis of the
transformational leadership approach in private sector organizations noted more motivated employees work at optimal levels in the face of an uncertain environment. These studies support the view that the fundamental purpose of transformational leadership is the "increased capacity of an organization to continuously improve" (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 17). Scholars of transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio 1999; Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1992) view the transformational leader as creating an environment where there is collaboration among formal leaders and their constituents to generate ideas to meet organizational goals. Therefore, there is less focus on power in the hands of a single leader and more on the premise of building human relationships. The transformational leadership construct emphasizes shared leadership. It moves beyond creating successful schools where student achievement is the ultimate goal, but includes other variables such as, how well teachers are engaged in the process of change. This leadership approach also speaks to teachers’ perceptions of what change is and how to improve schools and students’ involvement in schools.

The seminal works of Burns (1978) elucidate the core functions of transformational leadership in creating a collaborative work environment that appeals to the emotional wellbeing of constituents. Burns views transformational leadership as an expansion of transactional leadership that is intended to establish solutions for social change which is central to the charismatic nature of leaders. During the same period of the early 1990s, Leithwood (1992), through his analysis of leadership, linked Burns’ theory of transformational leadership to the role of principals in schools. Leithwood asserts that transformational leadership “evokes a more appropriate range of practice... [and should be the]... dominant image of school administration, at least during the 90s”
(p. 8). However, it is still deemed an appropriate leadership approach in schools. Burns (2003) expounded on his theory of transformational leadership to include the psychological aspects of constituents. He contends that transformational leaders need to be cognizant of human values and social change. Taking lead from Burns' early work on transformational leadership, other researchers (Alix, 2000; Avolio & Bass, 1988; Spillane, 2005; Leithwood, 2007) note that transformational leadership represents the transcendence of principals’ and constituents’ self–interest and revolves around harnessing the leadership skills of teachers in informal and formal capacities.

Further analysis of the literature reveals that principals who practice a transformational leadership approach in reforming schools are desirous of establishing a cohesive workforce (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). School reform is evident when a professional culture is encouraged; teachers’ development is strengthened; and teachers are given assistance in identifying and solving problems (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013). Bennis and Nanus (1985), Conger and Kanungo (1988), and Kouzes and Posner (1995) claim that transformational leaders need to set direction, clearly outline shared vision and mission statements with emphasis on quality performance, create shared vision that is structured to initiate change and develop people by lending support; and redesigning the organization with clear structures that promote discourse and cooperation among constituents pertinent to school development and planning (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Spillane, 2005). Leithwood (1994) and Leithwood and Sun (2012) in their analysis of transformational leadership conclude that principals need to develop structures and programs that are consistent with their schools’ vision and more clearly developed organizational values among faculty.
Transformational principals need to develop a culture of trust that will empower and improve teachers’ efficacy and commitment to their school. Bennis and Nanus (1985) Conger and Kanungo (1988) and Kouzes and Posner (1995) also capture the views of Bass (1985, 1998) who contends that transformational leadership facilitates open communication among administrators and constituents, which will encourage them to take risks in the midst of developing their leadership capacities. Berg and Sleegers (1996) have also concluded that transformational leadership has fostered risk taking in promoting innovation, inclusion, and conflict management in schools. However, Leithwood (2007) notes that principals in their role as transformational leaders must engage their teachers in transactional leadership activities as well, in order, to execute programs and policies for school improvement. Other studies conducted by Leithwood and Sun (2012) suggest that the transformational leadership theory argues for greater leadership support in motivating teachers to collaboratively achieve set goals (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Goals are often associated with the values that are entrenched in people’s belief systems, which makes it difficult for principals and other school leaders to get adequate support from all teachers to improve students’ achievement (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Leithwood and Sun specify that transformational leadership practices do not predict the behaviours of constituents to influence policy decisions, but instead offers a “partial solution to the problem” (p. 389). Irrespective of the many claims of direct and indirect benefits of transformational leadership, Sun and Leithwood (2012) conclude that
there is limited empirical evidence to indicate any direct effects of transformational leadership on students’ achievement.

Leithwood and Sun (2012) consider modification of teachers’ pedagogies as predictable practices that are “associated with both transformational and instructional leadership” (p. 389). Although both instructional and transformational leadership have distinct differences, research analysts of these two leadership approaches conclude that both leadership approaches use rewards as a means of motivation for constituents’ hard work (Hallinger, 1985, 2010; Leithwood, 1994). Marks and Printy (2003) charge that there are not enough empirical data to illustrate how transformational and instructional leadership complement each other. They contend, however, that when the tenets of transformational and instructional leadership are merged there is stark improvement on the influence on school performance. However, Leithwood and Sun’s analysis of instructional leadership reveal that creating collaborative structures and providing individualized support for teachers are specific transformational leadership characteristics that have significantly contributed to students’ achievement.

**Distributed Leadership**

Distributed leadership is also linked to the broad definition of instructional leadership. This leadership approach gained prominence in the field of educational leadership after Peter Gronn (1995) and James Spillane (2005), (in their separate research), coined the concept of distributed leadership and presented an in–depth theoretical construct of how human resources, skills, and their competencies in specific areas are disbursed to meet school goals. According to the researchers, it is important that
principals assess the requisite skills of their teachers and place employees in positions according to their strengths. Distributed leadership is also considered as a structurally developed approach to leadership that is built around the leader’s ideologies of ‘distributed decision making’ powers (Spillane, 2006).

Distributed leadership is, therefore, the distribution of power among formal and informal leaders with clearly defined roles. It is not only focused on the role of principals and other formal leaders, but extends to informal leaders who are considered partners in the decision making process (Sheppard, Brown, & Dibbon, 2009; Spillane 2005). This leadership approach is also focused on the performance and relationship forged among principals and teachers, and other constituents (Baloglu, 2012; Copland, 2003; Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2004; Spillane, 2006). Accordingly, when constituents merge their expertise to accomplish the vision and goals of their schools, then, school effectiveness is greater than their own individual efforts (Gronn, 2002; Baloglu, 2012; Bierly, Doyle, & Smith, 2016).

Gronn (2002) and Spillane (2006) claim that distributed leadership is more than sharing leadership roles but extends to the performance of leaders and relationships forged between formal and informal leaders to execute their respective functions. Through meaningful interaction with each other, administrators, teachers and other constituents are encouraged to be cognizant of the influence and distribution of power and how it is equally distributed to execute their respective functions. Distributed leadership across the school system is affiliated with principals embracing “a culture of collaboration, shared accountability, and continuous improvement” (Curtis, 2013, p. 2) of teachers’ skills.
As the nature of schools illustrate, teachers and administrators are assigned different responsibilities to effectively manage schools, Lashman (2003) states that distributed leadership will improve the roles and responsibilities of principals by increasing their efficiency and school effectiveness. It also extends to improving the competencies of teachers as they learn more about themselves while working to improve the quality of their school. Bennett, Wise, Woods, and Harvey (2003) observe that the primary aim of distributed leadership is to “work through and within relationships, rather than individual action” (p. 3) to achieve school goals. One of the roles of teachers, middle managers, and other constituents is to, therefore, collaboratively work together to support their principals. While providing assistance, teachers are able to participate in the decision making process as well. Copland’s (2003) and Harris’ (2004) views are in tandem with the State Action Education Leadership Projects (SAELP) (The Wallace Foundation, 2013) findings, as they conclude that distributed leadership is a collective form of leadership that encompasses, teachers collaboratively working together in the organization.

Correspondingly, Woods, Bennet, Harvey, and Wise (2004) suggest that distributed leadership can either be transformational or transactional. They further argue that in many instances the characteristics of transformational leadership such as collaborating with constituents require that leaders distribute leadership roles according to their skill set. Elmore (2003) also aptly concludes that, "instructional improvement requires that people with multiple sources of expertise work in concert around a common problem; this distributed expertise leads to distributed leadership" (p.10). In a similar vein of analysis, Gronn (2002), Harris and Spillane (2008), and Sheppard et al. (2009)
suggest that both formal and informal leaders are considered partners in the decision making process with different roles and responsibilities. By sharing the responsibilities among constituents, principals are able to assess their performance in leadership and management as well as teachers’ pedagogical skills (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001).

**Innovativeness**

A number of researchers view innovativeness as the first step towards creating a school climate that is open to shared knowledge of teachers’ expertise in effecting change (Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolly, & Beresford, 2000; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). Damanpour and Evan (1984) define innovativeness as the use of cutting edge ideas, practices, and performance. Other researchers associate its meaning with reforming ancient practice with new technologies or improving traditional practices with modern methods (Stanley, 1992). At the elementary level, innovativeness accounts for framing school goals, communicating school goals, and promoting professional development. At the high school level, the competent behaviours range from lowest to highest include, coordinating the curriculum, protecting instructional time, providing incentives for teachers, and promoting professional development. Innovativeness also refers to the degree to which it is introduced and accepted to meet the needs of schools (Sheppard, 1996). Sheppard’s (1996) research findings, when using Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) instructional leadership practices of principals, indicates 52% and 57% favorability towards innovativeness at the elementary and high school level respectively. Innovation according to Wagner (2012), results from teachers exploring more active learning leaning
outcomes through the level of passion, purpose, and creativity they exhibit during instruction. Wagner further suggests that principals and teachers need to make adjustments to the curriculum to ensure that high school graduates are equipped with the ability to critically think beyond what is stated, show initiative, effectively communicate in both written and oral language, and to identify the profession that they would like to pursue.

Fullan (2002) and other researchers explicitly state that the successful implementation of an innovative school climate is dependent on the ability of the principal at the elementary and high school level to foster healthy, nurturing, and trustworthy relationships among teachers (Bain, Mann, & Pirola-Merlo, 2001; Jung, 2001; Shalley & Gilson, 2004). As a result, Wagner proposes that it behooves teachers to solicit ongoing training opportunities and to improve their pedagogies. He also expressed the view that an important aspect of increasing innovation in schools is parents’ involvement in identifying and nurturing their children’s creativity. The results of Lee, Walker and Bodycott’s (2010) research on pre-service teachers’ perception of principals, suggest that teachers are uninspired by leaders who are not in support of their innovative ideas, which often results in discouragement and unwillingness to adopt to new teaching ideas.

Damanpour and Evans (1984) suggest that during the 1970s much research was conducted to determine how well innovation was communicated within the organization. Empirical data reveal the study of innovation in organizations did not explore the benefits of innovative ideas to the growth and performance of organizations. However, organizations placed much emphasis on technical innovation without exploring other
avenues of innovation such as administrative innovations (Damanpour & Evans).

Technical innovation refers to necessary changes that are made to improve the technical systems of the organization whereas, administrative innovation is pertinent to the social systems of an organization where all employees collaboratively work together to accomplish their goals (Cummings & Srivastva, 1977).

Innovation is described as the degree to which changes are made to the benefit of organizations, and how innovative ideas meet environmental change. Brandusa Prepelita-Raileanu captures the point that there is need for new perspectives in learning from ideas and utilization of new resources utilized to complement the curriculum. Innovativeness is not considered from an individual perspective but from an organizational perspective (for example, how these changes can improve the organization). Damanpour and Evan (1984) highlight the three stages of innovation: initiation, development, and implementation. It is at the point of implementation that an idea is considered an innovation. From the context of schools as organizations, innovative ideas are a part of the transformational process of education as new ideas are needed to enhance teachers' pedagogies. Therefore, innovation from the educational context is not limited to the perimeter of the school environment, but starts from the government, policy makers, and other constituents in education who are cognizant of global changes and are determined to identify the necessary strategies for innovation to improve the quality of leadership, management, and teaching and learning in schools (Damanpour & Evan). There is evidence to suggest that innovation is not only associated with teachers' commitment to the profession, but is affiliated with their involvement in developing the curricula (Carl, 2012).
As nation builders, teachers are considered the integral source of producing an educated society. Although many countries such as Jamaica have struggled with improving young adults’ literacy rate, teachers are still respected and held to the highest standard within their communities. However, as some teachers develop their pedagogies and form meaningful relationships with their colleagues, they are more inclined to resist changes that are being developed to reform the curricula (Oloruntegbe, 2011).

Oloruntegbe (2011) indicates in his findings that 76.8% of teachers in his study were not receptive to improving themselves in the area of technological change as recommended by the teachers’ council.

Several reasons have been proposed for teachers’ resistance to innovation, including Brandusa Prepelita-Raileanu (2010) and Oloruntegbe (2011) argue that as implementers of the curriculum, teachers have first-hand experience of the strategies that work for a diverse group of students with multiple learning styles. It is through teachers’ lenses that adjustments are made to augment their practices, but if they are not provided with adequate orientation about new ideas and development of the curriculum, then, they will be resistant to change. Evidence also suggests that within this new dispensation of technological change, when teachers are entrenched in their old method of teaching, they are unconcerned about being Internet savvy (Oloruntegbe). By limiting themselves to only basic methods of teaching, research suggest that teachers are impeding the process of change as they lack the requisite tools to execute the curriculum to meet increased demand for information and skills (Oloruntegbe, 2011). Wagner’s (2012) research findings highlight a disconnect between the culture of schools and the culture of learning that produces innovative thinkers. He suggests that governments, policy makers, and
other constituents need to take a collaborative approach in developing an innovative culture in high schools.

Innovation is also a bi-product of taking risks, making mistakes, and learning from them. Within that context, principals are encouraged to create an environment that will allow teachers to be open to new ideas (Wagner, 2012). In sum, Wagner surmises that greater urgency is needed in changing the direction of teaching and learning for the 21st century as current practices are outdated. He argues that governments, policy makers, and other stakeholders need to consider reinventing the curriculum and instructional practices instead of engaging in constant reformation of practices that are not being accepted in the education system. Wagner and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2013) conclude that this era of global transformation of the education system has replaced a consumer driven economy with an innovative driven economy. According to their findings, an innovative driven economy is a positive direction towards increasing productivity across nations. Vikas (2012) concludes that emphasis on innovation in education is crucial to sustainable socio-economic development in developing countries. According to Vikas “with the advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) curricula, mode of instruction and teaching – learning methods are undergoing major revision” (p. 116).

**Commitment**

Teachers’ commitment is the relationship that is forged among teachers and the extent to which they are dedicated to their school (Choi & Tang, 2011). Commitment is also considered as an individual’s obligation to constantly collaborate with other
colleagues in an organization (Wasko & Faraj, 2005). As Sheppard (1996) notes, teacher commitment is characterized by “a sense of unity, group spirit, enthusiasm, shared sense of purpose, high morale, and promotion of the school” (p. 14). Committed teachers are enthusiastic, responsible, self-reliant, motivated, and share a positive group spirit (Kushman, 1992). Kushman’s (1992) research indicates that at the heart of school reform is teacher commitment. Commitment is regarded as a “desirable attribute” that teachers have of their profession (Choi & Tang, 2011, p. 46). The term committed teachers is used interchangeably with dedicated and quality teachers (Abd Razak, Darmawan, & Keeves, 2010; Frankenberg, Taylor, & Merseth, 2010). It is also considered to be an instinctive characteristic that teachers should have from their initial stage of employment (Sood & Anand, 2011). Sood and Anand (2011) suggest that if a transformational approach to teaching methods/strategies is implemented during their teacher-training program, then, inexperienced/novice teachers will feel more committed to the profession.

A positive school culture also contributes to teachers’ commitment. Teachers must, however, infuse their passion for the profession with a nuanced understanding of the dynamics of their school culture and their students’ background to effectively manage and support their students (Davies, 2008). As managers of a positive classroom culture, it is imperative that teachers utilize different classroom strategies to maintain discipline and enhance the curriculum to meet their students’ needs (Berliner, 1988; Davies, 2008).

Being attentive to students’ needs is a critical component of teachers’ roles. Many students (for example, in Jamaica) are from low socio-economic background. For the Jamaican students, attendance is often an issue as they seldom attend school. Hamilton (2010) and Reid (2011) indicate that poor attendance in Jamaican schools is
affiliated with socio-economic problems, and as a result, many students perform below an expected standard. Teachers are considered as parents for many students as they are the liaison between the students’ families and administration in ensuring that they are provided with the necessary assistance to attend schools. By extending care towards students outside the perimeter of teaching and learning, teachers are exercising pedagogical thoughtfulness (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). These multiple roles of teachers require that they stay motivated and inspired to execute their varied responsibilities including having parental skills to understand students’ problems beyond the classroom setting (Van Manen, 1999; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Teachers' commitment is also characterized by their involvement in extra-curricular activities and school development programs (Davies, 2008; Decottis & Summers, 1987; Ganser, 2001). Hart and Associates (2010) note that teachers’ commitment to their profession and involvement in extra-curricular activities is linked to job satisfaction, which is critical to organizational success. Their commitment must, however, be assessed based on several contexts including socio economic factors encroaching on their ability to comfortably meet their personal demands, as well as, increased accountability policies that entail a demanding workload to improve students’ performance (Choi & Tang, 2011). In this context, the role of the principal as an instructional leader is critical in ensuring that teachers acquire the relevant support, professional development training, and expertise to handle their daily related extra-curricular involvement. Cheng and Tsui (1996) point to increased rate of teacher turnover across nations when teachers are not committed to the profession. Research (Kanter, 1974; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979) conducted in the 1970s into the commitment of
workers to their organizations illustrated that there is a direct connection to the current literature on teacher commitment.

Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) state that employees’ commitment to the organization is classified as behavioural and attitudinal. Behavioural commitment is associated with employees’ attributes to work beyond their designated tasks to meet the demands of the organization. Characteristics of behavioural commitment are frequent attendance, tenure of employment, and exemplary performance (Pfeffer & Lawler, 1980). Behavioural commitment is also correlated to the teachers’ motivation to learn more through professional development programs that will improve their pedagogies and students’ motivation to learn. Van Eeklin, Vermut, and Boshuizen (2006) propose that if teachers were more open to new ideas to further advance teaching and learning, then, they could reach a wider cross section of students who are willing to learn, but are not provided with appropriate tools to stimulate their interest. Subsequently, it is in the context of emerging knowledge pertinent to teaching and learning that governments, policy makers, and other constituents in education have sought to understand the importance of having a fully committed cohort of teachers employed in schools who will respond to the varied needs of students (Croswell & Elliot, 2004).

On the other hand, attitudinal commitment is affiliated with teachers’ identifying themselves with the values, vision, and mission of their schools, and working toward accomplishing goals to improve their school’s success (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Attitudinal commitment is also used to distinguish between teachers who earnestly work to improve students’ achievement and attitude toward school from others whose personal interest takes precedence over their job. Morgan, Kitching and O’ Leary (2006) cite
relationships and teacher commitment to the profession as factors contributing to the four domains of motivation – classroom level, school level, national level, and global level. At the classroom level, teachers experience a sense of fulfillment when students develop rapport with their peers and engage in dialogue pertinent to their assimilation of information and academic progress. Motivation at the school level is demonstrated through teachers’ involvement in policy decisions, support from administration, provision of resources to support the curricula and students’ learning, and the behaviour and climate of the school.

Changes in educational policies at the national level that are beneficial to development of its citizenry further promote a sense of pride, collegiality, and commitment among members in the profession. This sense of commitment fuels energy, enthusiasm, and a sense of direction of purpose for teachers. Characteristics of committed teachers when observed on the global stage are indications that they are contributing to the development of their country by being facilitators, mentors, parents, and counselors to their students while enable knowledge development. Research evidence further suggests that teachers who are committed to their students and the development of their school will volunteer to participate in activities pertinent to improving students’ achievement and the culture of the school. On the other hand, uncommitted teachers are not inclined to voluntarily perform duties (Choi & Tang, 2009). Choi and Tang (2009) in their assessment of teachers’ commitment conclude that although teachers are dedicated and often psychologically attached to the development of their students, as well as the establishment and maintenance of a positive school climate, they may not be committed to the school due to differences in their personal and school goals.
Additionally, remuneration for teachers has bearing on their commitment to the profession as teachers in developing countries (like Jamaica) are often paid less when compared to teachers in first world nations (Kelly, 2004). With this push to employ more teachers with the requisite skills of teaching English, Mathematics, and the sciences, policy makers in first world countries have sought to recruit teachers by not only offering a competitive salary, but also offering a payment package that is on par with their citizenry. While many researchers (for example, Ingersoll, 2006) have concluded that salary contributes to teachers’ commitment to the profession, others (for example, Williams, 2011) have concluded that there has to be a balanced remuneration package and policies that will build teachers’ capacity and foster leadership.

Meyer and Allen’s (1991) analysis of committed teachers concludes that there are three types of teacher commitment: affective, normative, and continuance. Affective commitment is characterized by teachers having a strong emotional attachment to the teaching learning process, and a connection to their schools, and a sharing of similar values, culture, and goals. When teachers develop feelings of obligation or normative commitment they are afforded professional development training or learning opportunities by their principals, the ministry of education, or from other sources. In some cases, teachers with normative commitment demonstrate loyalty to their school because they believe they have no other option. The overarching supposition of continuance commitment is that teacher commitment is not just a single feature of their dedication to the profession, but is multidimensional and incorporates teachers’ commitment to their students, community, profession, excellence, and professional values (Dave & Rajput, 1998; Day, 2000; Nias, 1981, 1986). Continuance commitment is the
influence of economic stability and relationships with colleagues on teachers’ commitment to stay in the profession. Crosswell, and Elliot (2004) also echo the sentiments that teachers who are usually passionate about their pedagogies are inclined to invest time working outside the classroom, allocate individual time to students with academic and personal issues and inculcate values and skills that will groom them into good citizens with democratic values (Nias, 1981). Additional evidence of teacher commitment is their dedication to strengthening their professional knowledge and participating in professional development workshops (Day, 2000, 2004; Tyree, 1996).

Consistent with the aforementioned discussion of teacher commitment is the role of the principal as instructional leader in promoting quality performance among academic staff members. Richards’ (2003) and Kelly’s (2004) research findings indicate that principals ranked their ability to encourage teachers in improving their practice and enhancing their professional development as their number one responsibility. The researchers also note that principals who have high standards for faculty members, student body, and staff; respect and value teachers as professionals, demonstrate equity, honesty, and high level of trust, and encourage communication among all constituents attract a highly committed faculty focused not only on curricula development, but also establishment of a collaborative relationship and commitment to the profession. Building on the works of Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Sheppard (1996) explains that teachers’ commitment at the elementary and high school level is dependent on the following school principals’ behaviours: communicating school goals, supervision and evaluation, visibility, promoting professional development, and providing incentives for learning. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) have observed that the variable supervision and evaluation
of instruction increases teachers’ commitment, as well. Teachers remain committed to
the profession due to their principals’ leadership support and encouragement to
collaboratively work as a unit and participate in the decision making process. Tschannen-
Moran and Woolfolk (2001) propounds that principals’ notion of self-efficacy is a
contributing factor to teachers’ commitment. When principals show teachers and other
constituents that they are capable of transforming their schools in spite of the many
management challenges they are demonstrating a sense of self efficacy. Tschannen-
Moran and Woodfolk report that principals’ sense of efficacy requires them to evaluate
their performance on the basis of instructional leadership, management, and moral
leadership. Richards (2003) also notes that while principals in his study felt that
encouragement and improvement of their professionalism were their top priority, teachers
felt that when principals ensured that teachers, students, and staff followed standards and
procedures, their level of commitment increased. Teachers also stipulated that their
commitment to their school was dependent on how well their principals provided
emotional support, established clear lines of communication, supported staff and
colleagues, respected and valued them as professionals, developed a positive mentorship
program for new teachers to observe and emulate master teachers, and supported actions
taken by teachers to discipline students (Richard, 2003). Lieu’s (2015) research findings
on the relationship between headmasters and teacher commitment reveal that teachers
were inclined to commit to their profession when principals clearly articulate the school’s
vision and values, and align them with the school’s policy for continued improvement.
Sarok and Jihet (2012) conclude that by having extensive knowledge of teachers’
pedagogy, principals are able to influence teachers’ commitment to the school and desire
to remain in the profession. Findings reported by Hart and Associates (2010) address the relationship between principals conducting internal assessment of novice teachers’ performance during their first few years of employment and teachers’ commitment to the organization.

Varney (2009) and Dubrin (2010) postulate that there are two types of mentorship programs, voluntary (informal) and mandated (formal) that co-workers, managers, or any other employees carry out to providing by support and training to new employees. Dubrin’s (2010) findings on voluntary and mandatory mentorship programs led him to conclude that voluntary mentorship programs are more beneficial to employees than mandated mentorship programs. Conversely, Barlin (2010) argues that mandatory mentorship programs are more structured and appropriate and should be implemented to align teachers with the appropriate instructional skills to meet the demands of their profession and lower teachers’ attrition rates. Both voluntary and involuntary mentorship programs are the catalyst to creating an environment of respect, trust, and teamwork that will foster/bolster a productive and committed workforce, as well as a professional learning environment in their school (Clark, 2010; Cook, 2011; Varney, 2009).

Research findings in the United States suggesting that there is an association between teachers’ commitment and the mentorship programs that principals provide in their schools (Varney, 2009). The purpose of these established programs is to provide novice teachers with the necessary support needed from expert/veteran teachers to make a smooth transition within the first few years of their career. The idea behind such collaboration with new and veteran teachers is to foster professional and personal growth
while ensuring that teachers develop a greater sense of commitment towards their students and school (Varney, 2009). DeCottis and Summers (1987) and Sergiovanni (1992) suggest that when teachers grow in commitment there is less need for principals to provide constant supervision and evaluation of their pedagogies. When principals collaboratively work with their teachers and engage them in teaching and learning through established mentorship programs, teachers have the propensity to stay committed to their students and school. This new orientation towards increasing teachers’ commitment through mentorship programs is integral to improving teachers’ pedagogical skills to meet the challenges of transforming underperforming schools and reducing the attrition rates of teachers (Varney, 2009). It further echoes Meyer and Allen’s (1991) discussion on affective commitment discussed above.

In the context of Jamaica, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has not outlined a compulsory mentorship program for novice teachers to grow in their profession and commitment. Notwithstanding these limitations, principals, vice principals, and teacher leaders have taken the initiative to make this program an integral aspect of transforming their schools. Five years ago, a former classroom teacher, education officer, and principal in Jamaica, Pauletta Chevannes observed that mentorship programs as valuable and contributing to long-standing service in education (Jamaica Information Service (JIS), 2010). She also maintained that with the pervasive problems in the education system, a structured mentorship program is integral to teachers’ commitment as well as to honing their leadership and pedagogical skills. As such, she is supportive of the MoE implementation of “a mentorship programme that facilitates structured interaction
between senior and younger teachers, as well as utilizes former principals and senior teachers who retire from the system (JIS, 2010).

Other research findings (Ingersoll, 2006) suggest that there are indices of teacher commitment, which are associated with passion and emotional involvement for the job. One teacher expressed that a committed teacher is “someone with a love for the job, I think you have to really enjoy the job to do it well” (Crosswell & Elliot, 2004, p. 8). Another teacher also stated that, “the main thing, the biggest thing (about teacher commitment), is an enthusiasm, and an obvious love for the job and the kids” (Elliot & Crosswell, 2001, p. 8). For others, teaching is not lucrative, but is instead a rewarding experience (Elliot & Crosswell, 2001). This level of commitment speaks to the dedication that teachers exhibit towards their profession (Elliot & Crosswell, 2001; Nias, 1981). Committed teachers are likely to influence their school community through their level of professional involvement, fulfillment and commitment to their quality of teaching, the quality of students’ academic performance, and their contribution to a positive school culture (Richard, 2003).

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk (2001) postulate that teacher commitment is aligned with their sense of efficacy. When teachers show that they have the requisite competencies to meet the demands of their responsibilities while offering support to their students who are demotivated and unengaged in classroom activities, they are demonstrating commitment to manage their classrooms and instructional practices. Collective teacher efficacy is characterized by the ability the level of unity and the ability of the principal in the school to instill discipline and sustain instructional practices (Tchanen-Moran & Woolfolk).
Nias (1981) expresses a similar point that dedicated and committed teachers identify with their schools and find their job fulfilling while uncommitted teachers find the profession mundane and time consuming. Tsui and Cheng (1999) opine that other evidences of teachers’ lack of commitment to the profession as including poor work performance, frequent absenteeism, and a negative attitude towards their job.

Hart and Associates (2010), McIntyre (2003), and Quartz and TEP Research Group (2003) expand on the literature of new teachers’ lack of commitment as they note that, in some instances, novice teachers are often not equipped with the skills and tools to execute multiple tasks and are not given the opportunity to get support from mentors (senior teachers) who are armed with experience and competence in their pedagogies to motivate and inspire them to grow in the profession.

Johnston (1990), Ingersoll (2001), and Weiner (2000) related teachers’ lack of commitment to their school to the bureaucratic nature of the organization, abysmal working conditions, lack of collaborative leadership, and incidences of isolation from the external environment. In addition, Tait (2008) identifies stressors that are associated with teachers’ refusal to commit to the teaching profession as including, but not limited to fear of being ridiculed by stalwarts in the profession, insufficient resources, disapproval with their teaching position, and the political nature of the school. Ingersoll (2003) points to a lack of administrative support and lack of discipline and motivation among students as factors impinging on the level of teachers’ commitment. These perspectives are echoed in McIntyre’s (2003) findings from research conducted in several schools in Ontario, Canada which support the view that teacher commitment and attrition rate among young teachers has permeated many jurisdictions often by students’ poor performance, absence
of principal support, and little collegiality from other members of the faculty (Day, 2004). Day (2004) further expounds on the negative repercussions of reform policies as contributing to the degeneration of teachers’ working conditions, thus, creating a downward spiral which results in them feeling demotivated, demoralized, detached from the school community, and in some cases abandoning the teaching profession.

Leithwood (2005 and Quinn (2002) also propose that more initiatives be taken to directly and indirectly impact teachers’ commitment to the organization and students’ learning school. Quartz and TEP Research Group (2003) share a similar view and infer that principals need to provide opportunities for teachers’ learning and development as teaching is reputed to be an isolated profession.

The information also underscores Sheppard’s (1996) findings that instructional leadership moves beyond the notion of classroom practices to improve students’ performance. It also encapsulates the management of people and resources, supervision of teaching, learning, and engaging teachers in the process of strengthening the school climate (Sheppard).

**Professional Involvement**

Teachers’ professional involvement is the professional conduct of teachers in activities such as engaging in shared discussions and interest about their pedagogies, as well as a willingness to learn from each other (Sicliano & Thompson, 2015; Somech & Bogler, 2002). Professional involvement also includes how well teachers embrace teamwork and their commitment and concern for their professional growth and development. Shared knowledge among teaching colleagues is an integral part of
improving their pedagogies as well to increasing students' performance (Sicliano & Thompson, 2015; Somech & Bogler, 2002). Teachers’ professional involvement is also considered as one of the most significant instructional leadership practices at the elementary and high school level (Blase & Blase, 1998). However, professional involvement is not limited to teachers, but should be extended to administrators to enhance their administrative skills especially in areas of instruction, public engagement, and communication with all constituents (Coldren & Spillane, 2007). Continuity of shared ideas is often seen when there is a clear indication that principals value teachers’ ideas and utilize them to improve the success of their schools (Song & Chon, 2012). Other researchers (Moran, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001) further suggest that teachers’ professional involvement is achieved when principals establish a collaborative and trustworthy environment. Such positive work environments motivate teachers to work “beyond the minimum requirements of their positions…to cope with the stress of changing expectations and the demands of accountability being asked of them” (Moran, 2007, pp. 100, 110). This desire to work beyond normal expectations will be reflected in the drive towards students’ success. It is also imperative that principals create opportunities for teachers to become more professionally involved by organizing immediate and continuous professional development workshops to improve practice (Curtis, 2013). When teachers improve their practice and are professionally involved Cordeiro and Cunningham (2013) claim that this will have an indirect influence on students’ performance.

Alternatively, research evidence suggests that principals need to be more cognizant of their leadership practices in the area of supervision and management.
Connected to this view is the narrowly defined definition of instructional leadership in which teachers perceive constant supervision and management of their pedagogies, micromanaging, and encroaching on their professional domain that in some instances deter them from being more involved in different school programs (Giles, 2007; Hallinger, 2007). Alternatively, principals who use the broadly defined instructional leadership approach place greater emphasis on empowering teachers to participate in the decision making process for greater school improvement. Teachers are also afforded the opportunity to attend professional development workshops to improve not only their pedagogical skills, but how they execute their professional responsibilities with probity, efficiency, and dedication to developing students’ skills and competencies (Giles, 2007).

In contrast to the narrow approach to instructional leadership whereby the school principal assumes control over teachers is the broadly defined instructional leadership approach that some argue is more commonly used at the high school level. In this approach, principals share leadership with teachers. By sharing leadership with their constituents, principals encourage their middle managers to collaboratively work with teachers in framing the vision, mission, and goals of their schools, promoting professional development programs, and providing incentives to support teachers’ efforts (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). By expressing authentic interest in teachers’ professional development, there is more scope for inquiry and meaningful discourse about ideas for school reform and growth (Blase & Blase, 2004). Hallinger (2007) and Hallinger and Murphy (1985) suggest that principals who placed much emphasis on teachers’ professional development have been found to be more inclined to gain the support of their teachers. Teacher
support is regarded as one of the first steps taken towards creating a greater sense of community and shared interest within the school (Jones & Jones, 2015). These findings underscore the importance of principals having dialogue with teachers to develop meaningful partnerships that will promote greater collegiality among teachers. Other findings suggest that when principals provide teachers with adequate resources to support their programs, there is an increase in “teacher motivation, efficacy, and reflective behaviour including greater variety in classroom instruction, increases in risk taking, and increases in planning/ preparation” (Blase & Blase, 2000, p. 136). These leadership behaviours help to professionally involve teachers and as Sheppard (1996) notes, the more teachers are professionally involved in their schools the less need for continuous supervision. On the other end of the spectrum, teachers working in schools where many students are from low socio-economic background frequently feel that they were not exposed to the same level of professional development as their counterparts in more affluent areas (Quartz & TEP Research Group, 2003). However, in recent times, professional development and training workshops are requirement for administrators, middle managers and teachers in educational institutions.

Summary

This chapter delineates a review of literature of the different theories of leadership. More specifically, it provides an expansive analysis of the trajectory of instructional leadership, its strengths and limitations, and influence on the emergence and use of transformational and distributed leadership to advance educational reform and improve school success. The analysis of literature further expands on the three
concepts/characteristics of school culture – innovativeness, commitment, and professional involvement that helped to guide this study. Within this framework, the discussion is centred around the measures principals/teachers take in being innovative in their practice, committed to their students and school, and professionally involved in their school.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This research on the exemplary role of principals in teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness grows out of a quantitative study (Sheppard, 1996) exploring the transformational nature of instructional leadership. In the work reported herein, it was used as a framework to examine leadership practices of four principals in Jamaica who have excellent reputations. In particular, the study solicited principal and teacher perceptions of how principals influence teachers’ professional involvement, commitment, and innovation. In contrast to Sheppard’s quantitative methodological approach, I chose a qualitative research design because I wanted to interact with school principals “in their own territory…in their own language, [and] on their own terms” (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 9). Moreover, I wanted to understand these exemplary principals’ “internal reality rather than pure external and independent facts” (Freimuth, 2009, p. 7).

Research Design

I chose qualitative research for this study as it has been “proven particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs, and for informing policy” (Merriam, 2001, p. 41). Tesch (1990) describes qualitative research as “a kind of naturalistic inquiry which assumes that realities are multiple, constructed and holistic” (pp. 40, 51). In qualitative research, it is assumed that the individual researcher will be expressive about his/her experiences to facilitate greater meaning and highlight practices. Qualitative research also “involves interpreting the actions of those who are
themselves interpreters” (Scott & Usher, 1996, p. 20). The interpretation of participants’ actions enables researchers to obtain more knowledge of the study while recognizing that subjectivity is central to qualitative research (Tite, 2010). Flick (2002) notes that it is a herculean task for researchers to remain neutral, as they are the essential ‘instrument’ of collating and understanding data. Qualitative research is further characterized by the different interpretive designs to better understand varied phenomena in the social world. It is also based on investigating the relationships between people, space, and objects to provide for ‘thick descriptions’ of the data (Patton, 2002; Stainback & Stainback, 1988). As such, I found qualitative research useful in carrying out this research because I was able to “make use of, or interpret, [the phenomena] in terms of the meaning [the principals] bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1996, p. 3).

**Research Questions**

The four case studies were conducted in two rural parishes in Jamaica. The selected schools are noted for their excellence in students’ academic achievement and general performance in extra curricula activities. The schools have been ranked in the top twenty schools in Jamaica and were considered the most appropriate venues in which to explore the instructional leadership activities of school principals and how they are perceived by teachers to influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness that has been intrinsically linked to school improvement. The primary research questions guiding this study are as follow:

1. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their commitment to the school?
2. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their professional involvement in the school?

3. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their innovativeness?

4. How do principals define themselves as instructional leaders?

5. How do principals perceive their role in influencing teachers’ commitment?

6. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ professional involvement?

7. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ innovativeness?

In order to conduct this qualitative research, I used a grounded theory and case study design along with qualitative methods to collect and analyze the data. The grounded theory design is a “general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in the data, systematically gathered, and analyzed” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 273). Creswell (2012) notes that this research design is applicable to new researchers as it “offers a step by step, systematic procedure” and provides the opportunity for them to “stay close to the data at all times in the analysis” (p. 443). According to Creswell (2012) when a theory is grounded in the data, it “provides a better explanation than a theory that is borrowed off the shelf” (p. 423). This research design is also suitable for conducting educational research because it is “sensitive to individuals in a setting, and may represent all the complexities actually found in the process” (Creswell, p. 423). It is used to study the interactions of people (such as principals and teachers) as in the case of this research study and the support that they (principals) provide their teachers to effectively manage their schools. Grounded theory is a bottom-up approach which begins with researchers collecting the data, identifying categories, collecting additional information, comparing previous data with new information, and making generalizations after assessing the
findings in each category (Creswell, 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Johnson & Christensen, 2000). The categories in grounded theory are based on fundamental information that the researcher finds in the data to make sense of the process (Creswell).

Creswell (2008, 2012) and Yin (2009) define a case study as a bounded system that explores people, an event, or a process. Understanding these components provides insight into school systems, as schools are considered bounded systems with different components including teachers, students, parents, administration, and other constituents (Creswell). Merriam (2001) posits that the case study design has been “proven particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs, and for informing policy” (p. 41). According to Johnson & Christensen (2000), researchers who utilize a case study design view their cases from an internal and external context.

This study viewed the internal context, as it “examine[d] the organizational climate of the school and the leadership style used by the principal” (Johnson & Christensen, 2000, p. 328). Instead of testing theory, the case study design enabled the researcher to take a holistic approach in understanding more about instructional leadership (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Stake, 2006). Stake (1995) indicates that a case study comprised of multiple cases is regarded as a collective case study. A collective case study allows researchers to develop more in depth understanding as they are able to better “generalize the results from multiple cases than from a single case” (Johnson & Christensen, 2000, p. 329).
Framework

As mentioned above, the framework of this study was adapted from a quantitative study, exploring the transformational nature of instructional leadership (Sheppard, 1996). According to Sheppard (1996), the leadership behaviours of principals have an influence on teachers’ professional involvement, commitment, and innovation. These three school-level characteristics were measured using Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) detailed model of instructional leadership behaviours to analyze teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ competencies as instructional leaders.

Participants Permissions and Ethical Considerations

The nature of qualitative research requires that careful consideration be given to the selection process of participants. In this study, participants were selected from four high schools in two rural parishes in Jamaica. The four principals were selected based on their quality of performance at their respective schools as well as their outstanding performance as principals. I interviewed sixteen participants. These participants include four principals and twelve teacher leaders from the four high schools with an official or unofficial role at the site. The aforementioned sampling is purposeful because the researcher used a combination of case study and grounded theory design which provided the source for the researcher to understand more about “specific concepts with the theory” (e.g., the effects of instructional leadership on school improvement) (Creswell 2008, p. 216). Homogeneous sampling allowed me to study exemplary principals in four schools who have defining characteristics which enabled them to establish a successful pattern in areas of leadership and teaching and learning in their schools.
Three fundamental areas of ethical consideration were taken to conduct this research: informed consent, confidentiality, and the significance of the research. Due to the nature of the study (interviews with human participants), ethics approval was sought from Memorial University Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR). The application process was thorough and submitted documents included a summary of the research, a synopsis of the purpose of the study, and methods of collecting the data as well as other ethical issues. Consequently, ICEHR granted the research proposal full ethical clearance on September 10, 2013.

Prior to seeking ethics approval to conduct this study, I made contact with school principals to determine their willingness to participate in this study if I were to receive the necessary permission from the appropriate authorities. Having received approval from the interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR), I sought the necessary approval from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and the chairperson of each school board. I gave them copies of the interview protocols and permission letters to conduct research in the four schools. Having received permission to conduct the research I met with the principals and presented each person with an approval letter from the ICEHR delineating the purpose of the study and research methodology used. The principals were given a letter of invitation asking for their voluntary support to participate in the study. The invitation letters also requested their assistance in nominating teachers based on their leadership role in their respective schools. The four principals recruited teacher leaders and facilitated the interview process in each school. Creswell (2012) refers to these principals as gatekeepers as they have “an
official...role at the site, provide entrance to the site, help researchers locate people, and assist in the identification of the place to study” (p. 211).

In keeping with the ICEHR policy the safety and protection of each individual participant in the study were of vital importance. As such, I gave each participant (principals and participating teachers) at each school a consent form. The principals and teachers were asked to sign the individual consent forms (one for the principals and one for the teachers) indicating their agreement to voluntarily participate in the study. The letter of consent detailed the purpose of the research and its relevance to the completion of the researcher’s Master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. The consent forms also included the title of the research, a confidentiality statement regarding the non-disclosure of the schools, parishes, participants’ identity, security of the data, the research questions, and the method used to collect the data. The method included the use of semi-structured interview questions designed specifically for teachers and principals who were audiotape recorded. To protect participants’ anonymity, I excluded any reference to the schools’ and participants’ names in the study. Instead, I gave the schools and participants pseudonyms. As such, I named each school as School A, School B, School C, and School D. I also allocated pseudonyms to Principals and Teachers in each school. I referred to teachers as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, and Teacher D. Similar to the teachers’ pseudonyms, I named the principals as Principal A, Principal B, Principal C, and Principals D. Participants were also informed about the limitation of their anonymity in their individual consent form. I further informed them that their interviews would be individually completed to assure them of their privacy. I also briefed
them of the small sample size used in each school and the possibility that they (participants) may have discussions among themselves about the interviews.

Additionally, I informed participants that field notes would be taken during the interview. I also reminded them that they have the right to decline the interview or participation in the research without it impacting their relationship with the researcher, the four high schools, or Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada. Finally, I gave all participants the assurance that the collected data and transcripts will be kept private and confidential and will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. I further informed them that the names of the schools, parishes, and names of the participants are to be excluded from any publications and presentations. As well, I provided all participants with the name, address, telephone, and contact information of the appropriate officials at Memorial University for further verification.

**Time Line**

I conducted this research over a two-week period. On December 11-13, 2013, I interviewed three participants as schools were on public holidays (Christmas break). The other thirteen interviews commenced on January 9, 2014 and ended January 14, 2014.

**Data Sources, Collection and Analysis**

This study used four case study schools and the data were obtained using semi-structured individual interviews, which were conducted with the principals and teachers from four high schools. Principals and teachers willing to participate in the research were given an individual consent form to sign. The consent form included a brief synopsis of
the research including the research questions and the use of a semi-structured interview to gather the data. The twelve teachers were informed that after each interview the data would be immediately transcribed. Interviews were conducted in the privacy of their respective school/office, or other private spaces and were audio taped for ease of transcription. During the interview I took field notes.

**Interview**

Given that “the product of qualitative research is richly descriptive” (Merriam, 2009, p. 16), interviews take into account knowledge “that people take for granted” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 6). In this context, interview is considered the channel through which multiple viewpoints of participants are obtained (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This method of collecting data is, indeed, ideally used in qualitative research, as the researcher is able to steer the type of information received from multiple participants that she would not have otherwise been able to get from just observing behaviours. In addition, it helps in the recording of impressions and generates detailed personal information (Charmaz, 2008; Creswell, 2012). According to Burgess (1984), interviews enable researchers to access past and current events as well as permissible circumstances that were previously inaccessible. Merriam (1998, 2001) posits that interviews allow researchers to gather data without resorting to tactics. It also provides more clarity of participants’ experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). I employed semi-structured interviews to garner more in depth knowledge of participants’ perceptions and behaviour to prevent limitations of the inquiry (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The semi-structured interview approach to data gathering is also flexible and provides scope for discovering and expounding on information that participants want to discuss, but might be excluded
from the research questions. I ensured that attention was given to the following components of an interview: the content that includes the key issues, the scripting which includes asking clear pertinent questions, and organizing the questions in a logical order (Lecompte & Preissle, 1993).

Prior to conducting the interview, I informed all participants that each interview would be tape-recorded, transcribed, and allocated appropriate codes. I used semi-structured and opened ended interviews to garner more in-depth knowledge of participants’ perceptions and behaviour to prevent limitations of the inquiry (Fontana & Frey, 2000). I also structured follow-up questions based on the responses received from each participant. The estimated time with the four principals was approximately sixty minutes each and the time with the twelve teacher participants was approximately fifty minutes each.

Field notes, highly regarded as an excellent medium for documenting information in qualitative research (Lofland & Lofland, 1984), were taken during the interview and were “both descriptive and analytical” (Tite, 2010) of participants’ initial ideas. These notes allowed me to articulate the general mood of those interviewed (such as enthusiasm, etc.). The field notes further assisted with the formation of themes, and helped to determine if information gleaned from participants was relevant to the research questions (Dana & Yendol–Silva, 2003; Tite, 2010). Moreover, I requested supplementary printed material openly available in the school and used them to clarify information from the interviews (i.e., professional development schedules, curriculum planning events). As well, I incorporated the views of a popular radio program, Nationwide News at Five in Jamaica (Hughes, 2014) which covers different educational topics of interest. I listened
to over ten different radio interviews conducted with principals, members of parliament, teachers and students and brought the ideas from their discussion to my analysis.

**Related Documents:** Attached to this document are the permission letters, letters of consent, and interview protocols. See Appendices A - K.

**Data Analysis**

I used the questions that frame my research to analyze the different sources of data: interviews, field notes (pages of documented information), and documents. There was immediate transcription of the data after each interview. I scrutinized the field notes to accurately analyze and develop a coding system from the emerging data. This process was an important step, as coding the data required rigorous comparison and contrasting different segments of the data for “overlaps and redundancy” before categorizing them (Creswell, 2008, p. 251). I analyzed the data in the same order in which it was collected using Stake’s (1995, 2005) four stage guidelines to code the data. These stages included: using categorical aggregation to identify regularities, and merging similar patterns; forming specific themes; identifying inconsistencies in the original findings through repeated interpretation of the data; and establishing patterns in responses. I also used Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) systematic approach to prearrange the categories and to connect the findings. Three steps were used to code the data: open, axial, and selective. By subjecting the data to open coding, the collected information was segmented, labeled and initial categories and subcategories were formed according to similar characteristics and features. I, then, used axial coding to organize the data in a different way through thorough examination of specific conditions. The intervening conditions were then
analyzed to determine the circumstances that affected the actions/interacting strategies and the consequences of using those strategies. The final stage of analyzing the data was done using selective coding. I then assessed how each category in the axial coding is interrelated and wrote an explanation based on those findings. The next step was to triangulate the different sources of the data by analyzing the field notes and documents to provide rich description (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

**Credibility and Trustworthiness Feature**

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) suggest that the credibility of qualitative research is dependent on the accuracy of the research. They further outline that it is important to illustrate that the articulated research findings are aligned with the data and that these findings are valid. By conducting an in–depth review of the literature on the narrow and broad definition of instructional leadership, I was able to establish credibility and confirmability in this research. I also studied other leadership approaches (transformational and distributed leadership) that have been used in business organizations and successfully employed in schools. In doing so, I establish that the characteristics of transformational leadership are associated with the broad definition of instructional leadership. I also analyzed relevant school documents I received from the principals such as the organizational structure, mission, and vision statements and used them to help determine whether a bottom up or top down approach to leadership is used in the schools. Finally, I summarized the findings and used the literature and interview results to make suggestions.
In addressing the validity of the study, I ensured that I focused on Cohen et al. (2011) perspectives that qualitative research is dependent on the depth and scope of the findings. They also note that while case studies "may not have the external checks and balances that other forms of research enjoy or require, nevertheless they still abide by the canons of validity" (p. 295). Therefore, I employed triangulation. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), triangulation is the process of using multiple sources of data to address a subject matter. By utilizing interviews, field notes, and document analysis, the research has detailed description based on participants’ information. I further ensured that I thoroughly assessed the field notes, as well as the documents and interviews to determine if they were congruent. It must also be noted that the study provides descriptions of the role of the principals as instructional leaders and how they directly and indirectly influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Additionally, the validity of a qualitative research is also dependent on the researcher being aware of how her biases and subjectivities influence the research (Cohen, et al., 2011).
CHAPTER FOUR
THE CONTEXT

This chapter provides context and an overview of four successful rural high schools in Jamaica. The chapter begins with a summary of the study schools and students’ performance in the Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) examinations. The chapter also provides an analysis of the organizational structure of all four schools with details relevant to the roles and responsibilities of school boards, principals and senior teachers in Jamaican high schools. The chapter ends with the role of Christian principles in schools and how such values influence the establishment of positive school culture.

Summary of Schools

Jamaican children begin their studies in high school at the age of twelve, which “can be undertaken in traditional or other secondary level institutions” (Knight & Rapley, 2007). Most of the traditional high schools were built under the auspices of the church, and are still affiliated with Christian values, but they still fall under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education (MoE). There are one hundred and sixty-four (164) high schools in Jamaica. This total includes one hundred and forty-eight (148) secondary high, twelve (12) technical high and two (2) agricultural high schools (Jamaica, 2012). Although many top performing traditional high schools are located in the urban areas, there are schools in the rural areas that are performing at extremely high levels as well (Hughes, 2014).

The research for this study was conducted in four publicly reported exemplary schools (School A, School B, School C, and School D) in two parishes in rural Jamaica.
They are among the top schools in the country according to national rankings. The success of each school is influenced not only by the quality of leadership, management, and teaching and learning, but also by the values and involvement of constituents in their community. Brief mention of each principal’s perception of his/her school is included in the summary of each school. Their responses are based on the sub-question – *How long have you been a principal at this school?* And the follow up question – *What are some of the issues you identified when you became the principal? And how have you been able to create change with the assistance of your teachers?*

**School A**

Established in 1876, School A is a co-educational secondary high school. The school is known for its excellence in national and regional CSEC examinations and continues to maintain its position as one of Jamaica’s outstanding schools. For example, the recent CSEC result indicated that a student at School A was Jamaica’s top performing student (Gilchrist, 2014). School A has also been named the only rural school within its parish to win national school competitions such as, the School Challenge Quiz in Jamaica. The school has a cohort of 1300 students with an average class size of twenty-five. The principal explained that at the upper level (Grades 10-11), students select subjects in which they intend to specialize; therefore, the population for each class declines. However, the principal indicates that in the lower level classes (Grades 7-9) there is an estimated ratio of forty-five students to one teacher (45:1). Principal A opines that a class size of 25 to one teacher is appropriate as this promotes effective teaching and learning. As a matter of fact, he suggests that as a result of increased class size, the
school’s average in English declined from 90.8% in 2011 to 72.9% in 2012. In the same period, the cohort of students was not as successful in Mathematics as only 47.2% passed in 2011 and 33.9% in 2012. Although, School A had established its reputation as one of the parish’s best traditional high schools, prior to the current principal’s incumbency the school’s reputation was starting to decline. According to Principal A, there was an exodus of students transferring to other traditional schools in urban areas. He further explained that this huge migration of students was owed to changes in the value system of some students, socio-economic factors, and decline in the school’s image. Principal A shared that his method of transformation was to remind students of an era where past students were high academic achievers who wanted to be a part of the transformation process of Jamaica. Notwithstanding students’ decline in the core subjects – English and mathematics, the school has seen improvement over the past two years (2014), and beyond, with students receiving national and regional awards for their performance in their national and regional Caribbean Secondary Education Certification (CSEC) examinations. For example, the recent CSEC result indicated that a student at School A was Jamaica’s top performing student (Gilchrist, 2014).

School B

Nestled in rural Jamaica, School B serves a diverse population of one thousand three hundred and fifty (1350) students. Since opening its doors in 2004, the school has made strides in increasing its population. Most of the students are from middle and lower income families, but despite their socio-economic background they have been able to exceed expectations and have continued to do well in the English and Mathematics CSEC
examinations. Principal B shared that the majority of the students are academically challenged, which made it difficult to attract other students to the school during the first few years. She further noted that at one point, “the [leaders within the MOE] had to actually ask people to send their students to the school.” However, in recent times the school has been “bombarded with many requests.” School B has been reputed as an outstanding school. Principal B felt that such an accomplishment is based on the standards she set for all members the school community. As a consequence of its success, the school has gained resounding recognition and support from the Ministry of Education, members of the community, parents, and other constituents. In fact, the principal has received national awards for leadership and management.

**School C**

School C is an all-girls government owned school that has been established since 1891. The school is recognized for its discipline, civic awareness, and high academic achievement. With a complement of 750 students and 36 teachers, the student teacher ratio is 21:1 (National Education Inspectorate, 2011). On average the attendance rate is 94%. The National Education Inspectorate (NEI) reports that leadership at this school is “firm and decisive” (p. 6) and teachers’ support of students’ learning is exceptionally high. The NEI further contends that students’ academic performance in CSEC Examination in English and Mathematics are usually exceptionally high and above the national and regional average. These results are a manifestation of the curriculum and enhancement programs that are implemented at the school (National Education Inspectorate, 2011). In 2008, School C received Jamaica’s top awards in CSEC
Mathematics examination. Additionally, students have continued to advance in English as their average pass rate in 2008 was 91.4% and was improved by 4% in 2009, reaching 97.5% in 2010. Students were also able to improve in Mathematics as the average score in the subject moved from 88.1% in 2011 to 95.2% in 2012 (MoE, 2012). Moreover, the latest report from the MoE has indicated that the school has been ranked sixth out of the top twenty schools in Jamaica (MoE, 2015). Similarly, the Ministry of Education (2012) reports that in 2011, 95.2% of the students at School C were successful in passing the CSEC English examination. In 2012, the students showed a slight improvement as 96.2% obtained a pass in the subject (English).

**School D**

School D is an Anglican boarding school for girls that was established in 1906. With a population of approximately 950 students and 41 teachers, the student teacher ratio is 24:1. The cohort of students is from a mixed socio-economic background across the island and also includes a minority of non-Jamaicans. Partnering with local business and community organizations, School D receives substantial support in areas of scholarships and donations to enhance students’ programs and holistic development (NEI, 2011; Principal D). Teachers collaboratively organize extra curricula activities for students to enhance their personal development. By implementing different clubs and societies such as Art Club, Tourism Action Club, Drama, Environmental, Mathematics, Spanish Quiz, Scientific, and Cultural organization (UNESCO), students are able to develop discipline in academic and other skill programs. Practical programs at this school include: rearing sheep, chicken, and fish. Programs of this magnitude have played
an integral role in maintaining a high level of discipline with only minimal incidences of infraction. These programs coupled with the quality of teaching and learning, and leadership at School D is indicative of students’ overall achievement. This level of support is highlighted in the school’s rich cultural heritage, which is showcased in its annual Eisteddfod\(^1\). Additionally, School D has continued to participate in national events such as the ‘All Together Sing’ choir competition and Bob Marley’s Song Arrangement Competition and was placed fourth and first respectively (NEI, 2011).

The continued success of these four study schools is based on the established programs and emphasis on discipline that are designed to increase students’ academic performance and involvement in extra-curricular activities. These programs vary according to the support that principals and teachers receive from their constituents in each school. With focus on increasing students’ average in their CSEC examinations, attention is given to the quality of leadership, teaching, and learning in meeting the needs of all students.

**Organizational Structure of Schools**

All four schools have similar organizational structures. The Ministry of Education (MOE) is the governing body responsible for the management and administration of public education in Jamaica (Jamaica, 2014). Therefore, the MOE is ultimately in charge of developing policies, programs and proposals, and providing resources for schools and other agencies to enhance the education system and students’ performance.

\(^1\) Eisteddfod is a celebration of music, dance, art, and literature in Jamaican secondary schools.
Notwithstanding the significant role of the MOE, the school board plays an important role as well.

Public secondary school boards are either denominational or trust, or government owned. Denominational or trust school boards are comprised of a maximum of nineteen appointed persons, while the government owned schools are comprised of no more than fifteen persons. The study schools comprise three denominational or trust (School A, School C, and School D) and one government owned school (School B). The Ministry of Education appoints all members of the board. At the head of these different boards is the principal, followed by nominated members. These seven nominated members for the denominational or trust secondary schools are nominated by the trust or the denomination and one other member who is nominated by the National Council for Education (NCE). However, the government owned schools have four nominated members that include the chairperson who is nominated by the NCE. These denominational or trust and government owned schools have seven elected members comprised of a member from the academic, administrative or clerical staff, and ancillary staff. The other members include a representative from the student council, Past Students’ Association, Parent Teachers’ Association and a recognized local community group. Finally, school boards have three nominated co-opted members who are elected by the board for their requisite competencies. In order for meetings to be called, there has to be seven members including the chairman and the vice chairman. The tenure for each board member is three years.

The duties and responsibilities of school boards include managing the professional conduct and operation of the schools and ensuring that protocol is followed as outlined by
the Ministry of Education in areas of financial management. In addition, the board of governors is tasked with the responsibilities of submitting pertinent documents (statements, reports, forms) affiliated with maintaining proper school conduct, as well as ensuring that the accounts of the school are audited by the Ministry's approved auditor. School boards are also charged with the responsibility of consulting with principals in matters associated with the hiring of academic staff, bursar, ancillary staff, secretary-accountants and any other affiliated administrative staff. However, school boards do not “have ultimate control of who is hired” (Jamaica Task Force of Educational reform, 2004, p. 70). School boards are also in charge of discipline in matters associated with staff and teachers, promotion, demotion, and suspension from their duties.

According to the Minister of Education (MoE), school boards are established to “raise the bar of leadership in the quality of leadership they provide to schools …with the objective of producing viable citizens” (Earle, 2014). However, in recent times, the MoE has called for a reformation of the role and responsibilities of school boards. The current roles and responsibilities of board chairperson include, but are not limited to, collaboratively working with principals and middle managers to strengthen stakeholders’ participation, to improve students’ performance, and to hold principals accountable for the objectives and targets outlined in the School Development Plan. Dr. Hale, a Jamaican professor, in her interview on Nationwide, a radio talk show, disclosed that poor performance in schools is associated with poor leadership (Hughes, 2014). However, she contends that school boards need to utilize their core functions and understand that it is the board that runs the school, the ministry audits and monitors the schools for them to keep in line with the regulations and policies that they apply, but in terms of the running of the school, it is the board.
Dr. Hale further mentioned that many leaders in schools are not sure of their role in schools and as such they rely heavily on the MoE to procure resources for their institution. Senator Reid, a noted educator, former advisor to the MoE and current Minister of Education, also expressed the view that if school boards are performing at substandard level and without quality leadership at the local level, then, there will be problems. He also suggests that transformation of the education system cannot be a mandated policy from the MoE, but should be a result of individualized school development plans within each school (Hughes, 2014).

Reporting directly to the Board of Governors is the Principal who is the Chief Accounting Officer of the school and is ultimately responsible for meeting standards outlined by the MoE. These standards are as follows: promoting the success of the school through a shared and supported vision of learning with all constituents, creating and maintaining an environment that engages in continuous professional growth, and implementing instructional programs for increased student performance. In addition, the principal is charged with the duty of not only being a financial administrator, but creating a safe, efficient and effective learning environment, strengthening stakeholders’ participation, and demonstrating an understanding of the social, economic, legal, and cultural context (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013).

Executing the aforementioned duties require assistance from the principal’s middle managers. According to the Education Regulations Act (1980), vice principals (VPs) must execute administrative and supervision duties assigned by the principal. These duties and responsibilities include teaching, acting in the capacity of the principal
in their (principals’) absence. Therefore, VPs are given different administrative and instructional duties. With the assistance of the principal, the VPs work with the bursar and academic staff in areas of finance and instructional leadership. The principal and vice principals collaborate on the appointment of Heads of Department (HOD) who are directly responsible for the supervising and monitoring of lesson plans within their department as well as managing resources and staff, and communicating changes in policies and procedures. Throughout this study, the findings will illustrate how leadership is structured in the schools to accomplish goals. They will further showcase the channels that the principals in the study school take or do not take in motivating their teachers to remain committed, professionally involved, and innovative in their practice.

**Schools Grounded on Christian Values**

Part of the Jamaican culture is its core Christian principles which are taught in schools. For decades the education system in Jamaica has been in keeping with the values and morals which have been imparted to students in devotional exercises in the mornings within schools across the island. The success of each school (School A, School B, School C, and School D) is influenced not only by the quality of leadership, management, and instruction, but the Christian values that principals, middle managers, and teachers demonstrate and use as a point of reference for students to embrace in their overall discipline, personal development, and academic achievement. Christian values also influence principals’ decisions in matters pertinent to school development and the policies that are implemented to increase teachers’ commitment to students and school. According to the chairman of the National Council on Education in Jamaica, Dr. Simon
Clarke, schools need to implement policies that will expose students to a holistic development where what it means to be human are fulfilled. These components include the physical, the mental, and the spiritual faculties. Dr. Simon Clark further stipulates that spiritual development is important for students to understand and become more sensitive to the side of life that they cannot see because "we [a]re made up of different components – the physical, the mind, and the spiritual" (Hughes, 2014). The tenets of education depict that we are, “learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, learning to live together” (Tomlinson, 2014, para. 4). As such, Jamaican principals ensure that students are guided in matters concerning discipline, manners, and overall performance in academic and co-curricular activities. Principals and their staff also demonstrate Christian behaviours for their teachers and students to emulate. Jacqueline Hoshing-Clarke, the chair of the Department of Teacher Education at Northern Caribbean University and the chairman of the National Council on Education supports this focus on Christian values in Jamaican schools as she is an advocate for students’ spiritual development in education (Tomlinson, 2014). She believes education is more than just accomplishing a certificate or a degree, it is an integral part of changing the character and behaviour of people. She also notes that

the Christian component of education makes it so unique, because we take it from the point of view that all humans were created by God…It helps the teacher in training to understand that each child is made in God's image. [Therefore], they must show the child the purpose for which he was placed here.

The focus on Christian values is also used as a source of inspiration for principals to make leadership decisions. For example, the principals in the study schools indicated that their individual decisions to assume leadership positions resulted from their personal
religious beliefs. Two of the four principals (Principal B and Principal C) expressed the view that their appointment to the post as head of administration was through the divine calling of Christ. Both principals provided a detailed account of the spiritual journey that led to their decision in taking on the role of principal at their school. According to them, they placed great emphasis on the values and morals of Christian principles and continue to do so in strengthening relationships with their teachers and student body.

These principles were reinforced throughout the interview sessions as the four principals and twelve teachers made mention of the importance of the values of love, kindness, respect for others and self in building a positive school culture. Students who deviate from the principles and standards set by the schools receive different forms of punishment based on the infraction. Teachers are also guided by their Christian principles to participate in the decision making process and school programs to improve their pedagogies. These principles are not only limited to the four schools, but are consistent in other Jamaican high schools as well (Tomlinson, 2014).

**Summary**

This chapter provides context for the study. It outlines in detail the strength of each of the study schools. With a similar organizational structure, the board of governors, principals, and other formal leaders in Jamaican schools must collaboratively work together to make decisions that are in the best interest of their teachers and students. These schools place great emphasis on Christian principles that the principals and teachers use to reinforce discipline, and improve students’ academic performance. Linked to this focus on Christian values are the school boards that are chaired by pastors.
The ensuing chapters 5-7 include the study’s findings and discussions about the role that principals play in teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness.
CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION – LEADERSHIP AND VALUES

This chapter gives an overview of the leadership and values in the four study schools. The chapter begins with the principals’ and teachers’ understanding of leadership and the different leadership approaches used in each school. Next, the chapter addresses teachers’ perception of their principals as distributed, transformational instructional, autocratic, and situational leaders. In addition, the chapter provides a detailed analysis of the importance of principals demonstrating high levels of integrity and trust in promoting positive school climate. Incorporated in this chapter are the principals’ collaborative leadership behaviours and involvement in different school programs. The chapter concludes with a detailed account of principals’ involvement in establishing a professional learning community. Here, the partnerships forged with parents and other constituents to successfully implement and maintain school programs are outlined as contributing factors to enhancing teachers’ innovative capacities, professional involvement, and leadership skills. They are also considered key to increasing teachers’ commitment to their students’ and school success.

Thirteen sub-questions were posed to the four principals and twelve teachers. These questions were used to obtain a detailed understanding of how the principals’ instructional leadership behaviours contribute to their teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. These questions are infused throughout the report of data findings.
Principals’ and Teachers’ Understanding of Leadership

The leadership approach used within schools set precedence for the quality of performance among teachers, students, and other members of staff. Analysis of the data collected for this study indicates that the principals understand their staff and connect with them, and have grasped the concept of leadership and management. The principals’ perceptions of leadership are based on their answers to the questions – How do you see yourself as a leader? How do you fulfill your role? The teachers’ perceptions of leadership is in response to the question – What are your perceptions of your principals’ leadership style? And what are some of the outstanding leadership characteristics of your principal?

In assessing the different types of leadership approaches used in the study schools, principals and teachers defined leadership from their personal experiences and understanding of the term. It would appear that they have mixed views of the term that are consistent with the actions and behaviours leaders engage in while executing their leadership and management duties. Although they did not point to specific duties, the sixteen participants used specific terms that are associated with the interdependence of formal and informal leaders sharing the leadership roles and collaboratively working together to achieve set targets. These perceptions are also in keeping with the tenets of transformational and distributed leadership approaches. Other noted views are relevant to the leadership behaviours underpinning instructional leadership (narrowly and broadly defined) whereby teachers see the principal as largely responsible for the supervision and management of teachers, curriculum development and planning, and students’ academic performance.
The examples cited from the data include Principal B’s definition of leadership as being based on the “whole matter of organizational goals, teachers’ performance, students’ achievement, and everything else becomes a fluid entity.” Leadership is also conceptualized as “an amalgamation of all the different types of leadership” (Principal C, School C). Principal C also indicated that while she takes her leadership role seriously, she is aware that it is “multifaceted as…you have to be different things to many persons. [Moreover], everybody looks to the principal, so the principal must come up with solutions for everything.” However, the principal believes that 

\[ \text{technically...that should not be the case because you are ...working together, but everything ultimately has to lay at the principal’s feet. You don’t do everything, but at the end of the day you are responsible for all aspects of the organization.} \]

Teacher B (School C) shared a similar perspective of leadership as the interdependence of all constituents working together to achieve set targets that will maximise the overall success of the school. These perspectives of leadership are synonymous with Hoy and Miskel’s (2008) and Leithwood’s (2005) suggestion that leadership is not confined to those in formal roles, but expands to informal leaders within the organization. In addition, Principal D suggests that the management of schools is based on how well principals and their leaders are able to manage their “system... teachers... and students.” Collectively the principals argue that in managing schools, a high level of standard and quality service must be displayed that will not only influence the students and teachers to do their best, but to operate in such a way, that others would want to emulate their behaviour. In their engagement with defining the term leadership, the principals placed much emphasis on teachers’ commitment to the success and support of different school programs. The overall picture painted by the principals’ and teachers’ shared
perspectives is that leadership is team orientated and include all constituents’ active involvement in executing core leadership functions (Hallinger, 2003, 2005; Leithwood, 1994, 2003; Marks & Printy, 2003; Westrick & Miske, 2009).

It is also evident from the data findings that the context in which these principals operate, years of experience, and commitment to their school have influenced their perceptions of their own leadership approach. For instance, Principal A and Principal C who are past students of their school and have been head of administration for almost five years and cite this experience as one of the reasons that has influenced how they lead. On the other hand, Principal B and Principal D have had ten to twelve years of respective service to their school and attribute aspects of their present leadership approach to their former experiences working at other institutions. These different experiences provide contrasting views among principals of different leadership approaches that they use in executing their duties to improve and maintain their school success.

These principals engage with transformational, distributed, instructional, autocratic, and situational leadership in managing and leading their schools. Despite the differing approaches used, the four principals in the study schools noted that their school success is driven by the support they receive from their teachers, auxiliary staff, students, and external constituents to support their school programs. It is also evident from the data that the principals have encouraged and endeavoured to create a reputable and positive school environment that is goal oriented and focused on their schools’ vision and mission. Evidence of principals’ quality of and approach to leadership and management will be discussed in the ensuing sections throughout the chapter with focus on the teachers’ and
principals’ perspectives. Tied to the principals’ leadership behaviours are the vision and mission of the study.

**Vision and Mission of the Schools**

Gorton and Alston (2012) contend that as the primary leader of the school, it is incumbent upon the principal to have a clear vision and achievable targets that must be communicated to the constituents. Similarly, Leithwood and Jantz (2005) opine that having a school vision is an essential component of school leadership. Developing the shared vision is, however, only the first step and if appropriate measures are not taken to ensure that the goals of the organization are achieved, it will have little impact (Richardson, Flora, & Bathon, 2013). As evidenced in this research study, it appears that all principals have their personal visions for their schools and have liaised with their middle managers, teachers, students, and other constituents to structure a shared vision and mission statement (Perkasky, 1998). Three of the four principals stated that it is equally important that individual members of the organization, including formal leaders, have their own vision to complement that of the organization. The twelve teacher participants confirmed this shared perspective that their principals engage them in discussions about their personal ideas to improve the school and how they can collectively work towards accomplishing those desired outcomes. This process is evidence of the broad definition of instructional leadership because despite the different context in which these principals operate, they collaboratively work with their teachers, parents, students, and other constituents in sharing ideas before articulating the vision and mission statement of their school. For example, Principal C explained that after her
appointment as principal, she had to take a collective approach in working with all her teachers to structure the school’s vision and mission statement. She outlined that the school’s vision is not based on only her views, but is inclusive of everyone involved. As such, she had to ask different committees to contribute their ideas as well as have discussions with the academic staff during staff meetings about the vision of the school. The data evidence provided is as Leithwood and Jantz (2005), Leithwood and Riehl (2003) and Perkasky (1998) contend that leaders need to collaboratively work with their constituents in structuring and achieving the vision of their schools.

Implied in the study findings were also the leadership behaviours principals have taken to ensure that all constituents including teachers, parents, and students are included in the decision making process. By engaging in such leadership practice, it appears that all sixteen participants (4 principals and 12 teachers) understand the importance of school leaders ensuring that the vision and mission statements move beyond mere articulation of ideas towards taking meaningful actions. It is through their deliberate actions of working together that the findings highlight a common theme of the vision and mission of their school are student centered and oriented towards holistic development.

This comprehensive approach to building students' success is specific to academics, extra-curricular activities, moral principles, and leadership skills. A documented copy of two of the four schools vision and mission statement highlight this student centered focus. As an illustration, the articulated vision of School A is to have “A student centered, empowering, performance driven and holistic learning experience that prepares students to become leaders in an increasingly complex world and global society.” Principal A credits his teachers for their input in structuring the vision
statement, which is used to pen the school’s mission statement. The school’s mission statement is “To create a community of empowered learners in an atmosphere of mutual respect, and trust where students are inspired and challenged holistically to learn, grow, and accomplish academic, social and vocational goals.” Principal A and teachers at School A also made mention that the renewal of the vision and mission of their school was a collaborative effort among members of the faculty, administration, and other constituents. This process of engagement from the principal’s perspective is important for continuous transformation of the school. It is also reflective of the leadership structure implemented at the school which is discussed in more details in the ensuing section.

**Leadership Structure**

The four principals shared similar views in their response to the question- *How is your administrative/leadership team structured to provide leadership in the school?* These principals acknowledged that their individual schools function on deployment of specific roles to their middle managers who have the responsibility of supervising other teachers. Teachers in informal capacities are also assigned responsibilities to assist with accomplishing set goals. Given the specific duties assigned to formal and informal leaders, the principals have demonstrated leadership behaviours that are consistent with transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership. The common thread running through the evidence provided is the principals’ relentless efforts to adopt an inclusive leadership structure despite the MoE’s specified responsibilities of principals vice principals (VPs), senior teachers and school boards. As such, the differences in student
population, school size and number of employees present variants in the data findings in terms of the roles and responsibilities of middle managers.

Of the four principals, only one principal (Principal A) provided a detailed document outlining the roles and responsibilities of VPs and senior teachers. Although the responsibilities are in agreement with the Ministry of Education (MoE), the leadership structure at this school is developed to ensure that teachers are active participants in the decision making process. Principal A noted that the school has two vice-principals and he is “responsible for the general school operation and instructional leadership.” Principal A also outlined that although the two VP collaborate on matters of organizing teacher professional development program, they have distinct duties as outlined in their job descriptions. He explained that the two VPs report directly to him, however their roles and responsibilities are different. One is assigned the responsibility of academic affairs of the school, and the other is in charge of finance and operations. These two VPs, then, collaboratively work with heads of departments and senior teachers to accomplish the core goals of the school.

The VP’s responsibility for academic affairs and student affairs services is focused on administrative duties as well as the supervision of the institution with emphasis on instructional leadership. Other duties and responsibilities include executing instructional leadership duties such as supervising teaching and learning at the upper school (Grades 10-11); supporting administration, ancillary, and academic staff; coordinating and reviewing the curriculum as delineated by the Curriculum and Assessment Unit; organizing programs for staff to improve their skills; ensuring that an environment of excellence is maintained where members of staff feel committed to the
institution and coordinating events and programs for the school such as prize giving, and
graduation ceremonies. This VP is also in charge of making provisions for substitute
teachers to be assigned to classes during the absences of regular classroom teachers;
collaborating with teachers to create an academic system-wide strategy for the school,
and supervising heads of department in accordance with Regulation 44 of the Education
Act of 1980 by ensuring that they execute their duties. Such duties of the VP include
providing current information and reports on teachers’ pedagogical skills and conducting
regular supervision of the students and faculty attendance and registration.

In the absence of the principal, this VP manages the institution and executes the
functions of the principal accordingly. Duties and responsibilities assigned to this VP are
somewhat consistent with Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) instructional leadership
functions such as managing instructional program, supervising and evaluating instruction,
and coordinating the curriculum. By delegating and sharing majority of the instructional
leadership duties to his VP, Principal A appears to be engaging in a broadly defined
instructional leadership approach which Marks and Printy (2003) and Sheppard (1996,
2015) describe as principals recognizing that school success is dependent on teachers’
contribution to matters pertinent to curriculum development, instruction, and evaluation.

The vice principal for Finance and Operations in School A collaboratively works
with the principal to provide administrative and financial oversight. This VP is also in
charge of assessment of other duties include: contracting compliance, procurement and
managing the school’s infrastructure as well as the financial database. Also, the VP is
responsible for training members of staff in management and compliance as well as
raising funds for the school’s development projects. By collaborating with members of
the faculty on income – generating projects including managing the canteen, the farm, and other business ventures within the school, the VP is able to create economic stability through increased revenue for the school.

The other three principals also shared that while they comply with the MoE’s guidelines and board of governors’ policies, they ensure that all teachers and other constituents are involved in the leadership and management of the school. For instance, Principal B explained that although the VP and Heads of Departments (HODs) are assigned different roles and responsibilities, she ensures that all stakeholders including a student leader, academic staff, and a representative of the administrative staff are privy to the changes in policies and programs. Representatives from each of the above mentioned groups are given the opportunity to participate in discussions pertinent to school development.

Overall, the examples of the leadership structure established in the study schools point to the principals’ nuanced understanding of their role in building a positive school culture where teachers are professionally involved and committed to the differing programs designed to improve student and school success. This aspect of the data findings is reflective of Dimmock (2005), Hallinger's (2003), and Sheppard's (1996) discussion on the broadly defined transformational role of instructional leadership. Further details of how the principals in the study schools employ different approach to achieve their school goals will be discussed in the ensuing section. The findings discussed here are based on teachers’ and principals’ response to the questions – How would you describe your principal? What are your perceptions of your principals’ leadership style? What are some of the outstanding leadership characteristics of your
principal? How has your role as a leader helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning at this school?

Principals’ Leadership Approaches: Teachers’ and Principals’ Perspectives

Principals and Distributed Leadership

Specific to the roles and responsibilities of the formal and informal teacher leaders is the participants’ understanding of distributed leadership. As evidenced from the data findings of the study schools’ leadership structure, all the principals employed a distributed leadership approach to get the teachers involved in the development of their school. This finding is associated with the definition of distributed leadership as “the flow of activities in which a set of organizational members find themselves enmeshed (Gronn, 2000, p. 331). In all four schools the principals ensure that heads of department, vice principals, grade supervisors, and other members of the academic staff share in the leadership responsibilities (Spillane, 2001). It is also evident that the four principals take a different approach to deploy different responsibilities to teachers according to their requisite competencies and interests.

Evidence of the principals distributed leadership approach is the establishment of committees to engage teachers in team building exercises for continuous improvement of their school. These committees are aimed at promoting shared ideas (Curtis, 2013) among formal and informal teacher leaders that are specific to developing, implementing, and improving school programs, supporting teachers’ pedagogies and strengthening teachers’ work relationships (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006). The teachers in all four
schools cited multiple examples of committees that their principals ensured were distributed among formal and informal leaders.

As a consequence, each teacher shares the responsibilities and is held accountable for his or her performance. Consistent with Curtis’ (2013) arguments on distributed leadership, the principals in this study identifying their constituents’ (teachers, ancillary, and administrative staff) requisite skills and provided them with the opportunity to utilize them in different areas of school development. For instance, the teachers at School B indicated that their principal has the requisite skills in identifying teachers’ skills, providing the support to harness those skills and placing them in areas that they will perform well.

In fact, each school has its own policy regarding committee involvement. For instance, the principals and their teachers at School A and School C developed school improvement and assessment committees respectively. Principal A and teachers at School A indicated that all members of staff (informal and informal teachers) are required to sit on the school improvement committee. This mandatory appointment of teachers (informal) on this committee was a way of ensuring that they were all actively included in the process. On each committee, heads of departments (HODs) and year group supervisors with similar interests and skills join different school development committees where they work with junior teachers to think of innovative ways to further enhance the school’s success. The principal expressed the view that the rationale behind this mandatory requirement is to ensure that all teachers have an input in the school’s development plan so that they can develop a sense of ownership for the school. This mandatory policy points to the inclusionary approach of transformational leadership
where leaders enable development of their constituents’ leadership capacities and utilize their ideas in the development of the school (Hallinger, 2003; Murphy & Shipman, 2003). Notwithstanding the increased workload of implementing different programs, a teacher at School A contends that committees are advantageous, as they empower teachers to be a part of the decision making process which contributes to increased staff morale. As well, the principal, middle managers, and other teachers established the curriculum assessment committee at School C to supervise and monitor teachers’ pedagogies. According to Principal C and the teachers, members of the curriculum assessment committee meet once weekly with the goal of understanding how they can improve their pedagogies to meet their students’ needs.

In addition, information gleaned from the study’s data revealed that all schools have a staff development committee, which organizes different events to reward teachers for their efforts. The events organized for teachers include a teacher’s day dinner, staff trip, and birthday celebrations. As head of their school, the principals recognize the importance of encouraging these social events among members of staff. In one school (School B) staff socials are organized and held “on a monthly basis” (Teacher B). During these events, the principal and other members of staff dress in school props and entertain the students. The teachers perceive the establishment of these committees as evidence of the principals setting the platform for academic staff to grow in commitment, be professionally involved and innovative, as they work together in generating ideas for the development of the schools.

In addition to the established committees, principals in the study schools include all constituents in the decision making process. As such, parents, students, teachers
(formal and informal leaders) are interdependent on each other’s skills (Young, 2004) to strengthen the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching and learning. This level of collaboration among administration and teachers is also a characteristic of distributed leadership as teachers work together to meet the demands and goals of the organization (Hallinger, 2010; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood, 1994; Sheppard, 1996). It is also linked to, what is seemingly, a high degree of teacher growth in professional involvement, commitment, and innovation (Sheppard, 1996).

Alternatively, some teachers believe that too many committee meetings are time consuming. For example, Teacher C at School A indicated that the school climate is such that teachers work assiduously to improve the quality of student achievement. While this perspective is based on teachers from the upper school voicing their concern about the limited time spent on preparing students (Grades 10-11) for external examinations, Teacher A and Teacher C noted that an assessment of scheduled meetings can be done to prevent the constant interruption of class time. This finding is not an indication that all teachers are lacking interest in their work, but an indication that some of them would, perhaps, like to balance their commitment to their students and school.

These mixed perceptions of teachers’ involvement in committees emphasizes the importance of collective teacher efficacy, where “the perception of teachers in a school is that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students’ performance (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000, P. 480). It further highlights that constituents are dependent on each other’s skills to strengthen their schools as they work towards solving problems and achieving set goals (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013). These goals
can be achieved if there is consistency with developing the curriculum and other school programs (Gronn, 2002; Sheppard, 1996; Spillane, 2006).

**Principals as Transformational Instructional Leaders**

Another common theme expressed among teachers in the study schools is that their principals demonstrate a transformational leadership approach. Transformational leadership is a bottom up approach in which focus is given to shared leadership and “developing the organization’s capacity to innovate” (Hallinger, 2003, p. 330). In this sense, there is less focus on bureaucracy and more on shared leadership where teachers (informal and formal) and other constituents share different roles and responsibilities with their principals. Teachers and other constituents are also included in the decision making process to meet their school goals and to establish an innovative climate (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Moolenaar, Daly & Sleegers, 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003). Transformational leadership is also distributed in practice, as formal and informal leaders develop a shared vision with a strong focus on commitment to effect change (Hallinger, 2003, 2005). This shared vision is usually clearly articulated and incorporated in school development plans. The tenets of transformational leadership also incorporate formal and informal leaders having a clear mission statement of their school. As a result, the vision and mission statement should be reflective of the long and short goals aimed at transforming the quality of students’ performance through improved instruction. Hence, the leadership is both transformational and instructional. The key tenets of transformational instructional leadership include principals and middle managers engaging teachers in the decision making process in matters associated with policy development and implementation, embracing values of trust, integrity, and honesty, and creating a supportive school culture

Transformational instructional leaders exhibit leadership behaviours that are aimed at motivating constituents to work towards achieving their goals. Principals who embrace this leadership approach demonstrate leadership behaviours that are consistent with working with their middle managers in articulating a clear vision and mission for their school, providing individualized support to their teachers (Bayler, 2012; Geijsel, Sleegers, Leithwood & Janzt, 2003; Leithwood & Jantz, 2000), and engaging teachers in the collaborative decision making process to improve their school and student success (Murphy & Shipman, 2003; Leithwood & Jantz, 2006). They are also noted for their keen interest in promoting professional development among teachers to improve their pedagogies. Building trust among teachers and other constituents is another leadership behaviour of transformational leaders (Murphy & Shipman, 2003). Establishing a climate of trust among teachers, parents, principals, middle managers, and other constituents is dependent on not only creating honest and open communication, but giving teachers the autonomy to make decisions that are in keeping with the school’s vision (Nemanich & Keller, 2007). The ensuing section details specific behaviours principals exhibit that are consistent with the transformational instructional leadership approach.

At School A, teachers expressed the view that Principal A shares the leadership responsibilities with all constituents to establish desired change in the school. These changes include improving the school’s ambiance, quality of teaching and learning, co-curricular activities, students’ decorum, and discipline. The data findings also indicate that Principal A considers himself a transformational leader. In citing different examples
of how he fulfills this role, the principal indicates that he harnesses the leadership capacities of his teachers and values their contribution to the school’s development. Teachers confirmed this perception as they expressed the view that the principal is open to their ideas if they are consistent with the school’s vision and development program. The principal is viewed as collaborative, as he engages all his teachers in the decision making process. This perspective suggests that Principal A may have predetermined goals that he would like to achieve and as such, could be perceived as selecting policies that will fit with those criteria. Principal A’s perceived transformational leadership approach is also seen as a catalyst for increasing innovation and improvement of pedagogical skills among teachers. Another perception of the principal’s transformational leadership approach is that he assists with guiding teachers in organizing programs and implementing policies. Principal A also takes responsibility for the success and failure of the school. The aforementioned perceptions of the principal’s characteristics are commensurable with Leithwood and Jantz’s (2000, 2006) argument that transformational leaders provide individualized support, set high academic standards, and endeavor to inspire their constituents to be creative. By extending support and encouraging teachers to be more efficient in accomplishing their tasks, teachers are perceived to be highly motivated to take risks, and to become more effective instructors. These noted qualities of Principal A are also consistent with Alix’s (2000), Avolio and Bass’ (1988), and Leithwood’s (2007) observations that transformational leaders work with their constituents to improve the standards and performance of their schools. As a consequence, there is focus on establishing a collaborative work environment to assist
with resolving problems, improving teachers’ pedagogical skills, generating ideas for change, and strengthening teachers’ commitment to students and school.

At School B, Principal B is noted for her collaborative approach to leadership. According to the teachers, Principal B liaises with not only her internal constituents (teachers, parents, students), but she also extends those relationships to other schools and organizations that support children’s safety, and the police. Her collaborative approach is to build the capacity of her staff through delegation of duties to teachers with the requisite competencies. By engaging all staff members in being active leaders, the teachers consider the principal a collaborative and transformational leader. Principal B also explained that although other principals may see their leadership role as CEOs who are confined to an office and handle issues through delegation and documentation, she embraces the concept of collaboration and teamwork. Teacher A at School B notes that the principal’s transformational leadership role is constant as she always “gets other staff involved. So it is not that [we] are always in the classroom, but she is always coaching… [for example], she allows us to run the staff meeting.” This bottom up approach to leadership focuses on providing individualized support by taking into consideration the personal and professional goals of staff and community members. By engaging teachers in this process of decision making, teachers and principal believe that there is greater impact on teachers developing a sense of commitment to their school. They further indicated that through their collaborative efforts teachers are also involved in policy decisions as they work toward establishing a positive school climate (Cordiero & Cunningham, 2013). These findings are consistent with Leithwood’s (1992, 1994) and
Leithwood and Sun’s (2012) argument that transformational leaders promote shared leadership to advance their school’s general performance.

In paving the path of transformation, Principal B has been resolute and unswerving in her commitment to have consistency in the performance of teachers, administration, ancillary staff, and student body. This determination to have all constituents working towards achieving the school goals is perceived by teachers to have ignited unity, increased performance, and a desire to do well in spite of any existing challenges. As Teacher B indicated, the principal is

the person who impacts the environment, rather than the environment impacting on her…and I think that is transformational. I think that [happens] when you get into the environment and you impact it and [you] have that influence on the environment rather than the environment influencing you. And, the truth is, I think that is where the challenge lies with a lot of leaders, whereby you get into the environment that is so toxic or challenging and it begins to pull you down, but somehow, she has been able to pull the environment [up] rather than it pulling her down.

Teacher B’s above perception of his principal’s determination to improve the environment mirrors Bass and Riggio’s (2006) perspective that transformational leaders provide positive changes in their environment. This teacher’s view is consistent with Leithwood Jantz and Steinbach’s (1999) assertion that transformational leaders work toward “increasing the capacity of an organization to continuously improve” (p. 17) the performance of their constituents. Related to these researchers’ conception of transformational leadership is Principal’s B’s commitment to improving the performance of students. As such, the principal has sought to capitalize on teachers’ pedagogical skills, as well as the skills of other constituents. Moreover, Principal B has an avid interest in keeping up with global trends and ensuring that steps are taken to procure
resources to better improve the delivery of instruction. Principal B has also demonstrated that she is cognizant of the changes in perspective of leadership and instructional practices. Resonant with this teacher’s perception of Principal B’s transformational leadership approach is Leithwood and Sun’s (2012) argument that transformational leaders do not predict their constituents’ behaviours, instead they provide “partial solutions to the problem” (p. 389). These aforementioned perspectives mirror Hallinger’s (2003) and Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) research findings that a core function of principals as instructional leader is to coordinate the curriculum as well as monitor students’ progress.

Additionally, Principal B’s leadership behaviours indicate that she is supportive of different projects and programs and has communicated to the staff that the culture of the school is designed to ensure that a collective approach is taken. This approach to leadership parallels with Blase and Blase’s (1999), Marks and Printy’s (2003), and Sergiovanni’s (1995, 2009) conclusion that the core functions of the school principal are multidimensional and extend beyond classroom supervision to a more inclusive approach, where teachers support the projects, programs, and policies of the school. Implementation of programs in the school are not considered individual tasks, but the school’s, where everybody collaborates to complete them. Principal B also explained that the level of commitment of teachers at the school is such that there is this “type of synergy we have established…you do not get up and …not want to come to work…never, and I have a great staff. I can’t tell you [that I have] a perfect staff, but a great staff.”

The high commitment at the school is also represented in the principal’s active engagement in weekly face-to-face department meetings. The purpose of such meetings
is to inquire about students’ performance and to determine if teachers are faced with any imminent challenges in matters concerning the curriculum and their pedagogies. This attention to teachers’ strengths and weaknesses, as well as their ideas, may suggest that the principal is demonstrating characteristics consistent with a hierarchical leadership approach. However, it can also be interpreted as the principal extending support and guidance to teachers. It is perhaps the extent to which the principal uses a hierarchical approach in her daily practice that will make the difference in her perceived transformational leadership approach. Such focus on teachers’ pedagogies illustrates that principals have an indirect influence on students’ general performance (Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Leithwood, Patten & Jantzi, 2010). It further speaks to the broad conceptualization of transformational instructional leadership where the principal extends support and guidance to all teachers regardless of their formal or informal leadership capacities (Printy, Marks & Bowers, 2009). Leadership in this school appears to be transformational, as the principal engages teachers and other constituents in discussions regarding goal achievement (Gronn, 1995; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Principal C demonstrates a similar collaborative leadership approach through her practice of constantly consulting with her middle managers and teachers about different programs and policies that are applicable to the development of the school. As well, she appears to share a common view with Principal A and B in that she does not “believe that everything should be dependent on the principal…and that the school should still function” in her absence or in the event that something happens to her. Like Principal A who feels ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the school, Principal C considers any failure in school programs and policies a reflection of her leadership
performance. As such, she endeavors to hone the leadership skills of her staff and student body. The teachers at School C expressed the view that the principal is transformational in her approach because she is receptive to and supportive of their ideas once they are in line with the school’s goals.

Principal C in her response to how she sees herself as a leader, explained that she is driven by her passion for the job and desire to see her teachers and students do well. She also suggests that there is a correlation between a leader’s passion and his or her ability to collaboratively work with the teachers and other constituents toward general school success. Although the principal is the head of the school, she perceives her teachers as equal partners in managing the school. As such, the teachers are of the view that their principal’s transformational leadership behaviours contribute to their commitment and innovative capacity.

Principal D’s transformational instructional leadership approach is perceived as somewhat similar to the principals of the other three schools as she is recognized for her abilities in sharing ideas and working with all members of staff including academic, ancillary, and administrative. She is also recognized as a respected, strong, and consistent leader who endeavors to empower her staff to take on formal leadership roles to effect positive changes instead of making the principalship about herself. For example, Principal D is recognized as a leader who “is not focused on being in charge, [but] more on empowering [her staff] to grow and develop to their full potential” (Teacher B). Similarly, Teacher A identifies the principal as a leader who seeks to transform the ethos of the school, staff, and students through “positive change [such as] professional development…of the staff” (Teacher A). These teachers’ perceptions of the principal’s
leadership characteristics are consistent with Burns (1978), Alix’s (2000), Avolio and Bass’ (1988), Spillane’s (2005), and Leithwood (1993, 2007) assertions that transformational leadership transcends principals’ personal interests and focuses more on developing teachers’ pedagogical and leadership skills (idealized influence). It further speaks to a specific aspect of transformational leadership (inspirational motivation) where greater trust, values and performance are promoted when leaders encourage and promote quality performance from constituents (Halliner & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Sheppard, 1996). The study’s data also revealed that the principal’s use of a transformational instructional leadership approach is based on her charismatic personality which is viewed as friendly, personable, and perceptive. These perceptions of the principal’s charismatic personality are congruent with Hallinger’s (2003) observation that “instructional leaders lead from a combination of expertise and charisma” (p. 332).

Principal D has also focused on improving standards in matters concerning equity in the promotion to formal leadership roles among academic staff. The teachers noted that promotion at the school is not based on teachers’ years of service (Phipps, 2014) or loyalty to the principal. Instead, teachers’ promotion to formal leadership roles such as “senior teacher positions [is not] confine[d]… to persons who are in middle management positions, but Junior teachers [are invited to be a part of the process]” (Principal D). Their promotion is dependent on their abilities to execute their core functions, improve their professional growth, and willingness to contribute to their students’ and school development. It is also “based on their involvement in school life, … how cooperative they are [and] the teamwork quality they display” (Teacher B). This teacher further expressed the view that by using teachers’ requisite competence and commitment as a
measure for promotion it increases their motivation and commitment to their students and school. This example is also evidence of idealized influence, as the principal sets high moral standards for her staff (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Popper, Mayseless & Castenovo, 2000).

Other aspects of idealized influence identified in the data findings is human values. Human values are innate beliefs that people develop, which influence their behaviour, attitude, and ideas. Their behaviour is then translated into supportive actions which positively influence their organizational culture (Koruku & Aktamis, 2012). Given the above mentioned support that principals extend to their teachers one principal, in particular, explained that “human values play a part in being a good leader” (Principal C). Principal B also noted how she ensures that all teachers feel welcome as part of an extended family, instead of just workers executing their core functions. Teachers confirmed that this human values emphasis of their principals is a motivating factor, enabling them to feel valued and more connected to their school. The teachers further mentioned that their principals are always seeking ways to meet the needs of their constituents. Such support speaks to Leithwood and Jantzi’s (2000) assertion that when transformational leaders demonstrate characteristics of idealized influence they are usually supportive, caring, and committed to increase teachers’ morale. This data finding is, as noted earlier, an indication that the established relationships between principals and their teachers have direct and indirect influence on teacher commitment, which influences students’ performance (Ross & Gray, 2006; Sheppard, 1996).

The data findings presented highlight that teachers and principals in the study schools perceive transformational leadership from a contextual stance. Their perceptions
of this leadership approach are consistent with behaviours they consider as evidence in their (principal) ability to challenge and motivate their middle managers, teachers, students, and parents. Additionally, teachers’ and principals’ echo similar views that inclusion of everyone in the decision making process is critical to establishing clear guidelines to enhance the school development programs. Collaboration between principals and teachers is ongoing at each school and serves to generate ideas about different programs and policies that will enable achievement of the goals of their respective schools and increase students’ success. These findings illustrate that there is a “shared sense of purpose in the school” (Hallinger, 2007, p. 4) as principals accommodate teachers’ ideas to strengthen their school success. In this sense, there is evidence of common commitment (among formal and informal leaders) because of the interconnectedness with other dimensions of transformational leadership and principals’ democratic principles. Evidence of common commitment include principals’ abilities to share leadership among teachers and students. Findings in the study schools further suggest that principals and teachers perceive transformational leaders as requiring and encouraging quality performance from their academic and administrative staff (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). The examples of the principals’ leadership characteristics, as previously mentioned, also suggest that they have direct and indirect influence on teachers’ efficacy and commitment, which have positive impact on students’ and overall school’s success (Bennis & Nance, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Sheppard, 1996, 2015).

It must be noted that while there is evidence of the broad definition of instructional leadership (consistent with transformational instructional leadership) where
leadership is shared in the four schools, principals also employ a top down (first order) approach in matters relating to students’ and teachers’ needs (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger, 2010). In such a situation, goals are designed from the top of the organization where ideas and policies are coordinated and planned to control how staff and other constituents execute their tasks (Hallinger, 2010). In this regard, these principals are perceived to have direct influence on conditions that affect curriculum development and the quality of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2010).

Other evidence from the study data reveals that all principals exhibit personable behaviours such as being personable and friendly with students, academic and administrative staff, parents and other constituents. This leadership behaviour is synonymous with leaders providing inspirational motivation through their display of optimism and enthusiasm to inspire their teachers and other constituents (Leithwood & Janzti, 2000). The data findings further confirm Neumerski’s (2013) and Printy, Marks, and Bowers’ (2009) observations that transformational and instructional leadership (broad definition) characteristics are interconnected on the premise that leadership is not confined to the principal, but extends to all constituents. If these behaviours are practiced consistently, then leadership in schools becomes less hierarchical with less need for the principals to monitor teachers’ pedagogical strengths and needs and formal leaders operate as agents of transformation for all constituents regardless of their role (Castanheira & Costa, 2011). Data findings suggest that the principals in the study have an interest in working collaboratively to resolve problems that will be in the best interest of their school. It would also appear that despite the changing nature of their job,
Principals have a vested interest in keeping their teachers engaged, motivated, committed, professionally involved, and innovative.

**Principals as Autocratic Leaders**

The data findings in this study also suggest that collaboration in all matters pertinent to school development is not always possible among principals and teachers. Instead, there are instances in which all four principals contend that they must make decisions that they believe are in the best interest of the school. The principals also conclude that at times the varied personalities in the organizations prevent them from coming to a consensus about important matters. As such, there are instances in which they have to be decisive. From the teachers’ point of view their principals use of autocratic leadership is necessary and not a deterrent to their commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. For example, a teacher at School C suggests that Principal C’s leadership approach is “more of a 21st century leader…[as] she has her time when she will dictate and says she wants that it is a part of the job…[but] it is not overpowering” (Teacher B). Principal C expressed a similar view as she notes that she does not consider her leadership approach autocratic, but thinks that there are times when you need to be autocratic about things…as everybody will not agree on the same things, and every idea cannot be used, but in terms of building the organization and getting ideas, then, there has to be collaboration…and allowing teachers to make suggestions.

Although teachers are included in the decision making process, some teachers believe that there are instances in which more consultation is necessary before making decision. Teacher A at School C made the point that there are times “when certain things happen
and then we are just hearing about it and …if we had an input then, things would probably be better.” This perspective that decisions are made without teachers’ input is perhaps implying that the principal does not practice inclusivity all the time. These findings suggest a narrow approach to instructional leadership which some of the principals use at different intervals in their work. In this instance, while the principals use a collaborative and democratic approach to promote a positive school climate, they are also apt to use a top down leadership approach that is reflective of the narrow definition of instructional leadership, instead of engaging teachers in the collective process of decision making (Hallinger & Heck, 1997; Sheppard, 1996). The use of autocratic leadership prevents teachers from sharing leadership in the school and honing their leadership capacities (Harris, 2013; Wood & Gronn, 2009). As a consequence, some teachers were drawn to the idea that in many cases they were able to identify situational leadership behaviours in their principal.

**Principals as Situational Leaders**

The data findings also reveal that due to the nature of schools as social systems, the workload of principals, and demands from parents, teachers, and other constituents, principals employ different leadership approaches to address varied problems. The findings suggest that two of the four school principals (in School A and School B) use situational leadership approach to address different problems. Teachers in these two schools perceive that their principals from time to time use different leadership approaches to respond to different problems. Some of the leadership approaches they were able to identify include autocratic, collaborative, and laissez-faire. For example,
participants at School C indicated that because the school accommodates students who live on campus, the principal and her staff always encounter different crises that require on the spot decisions (70% of the time) often involving an autocratic approach. However, these teachers were apt to believe that their principals’ leadership behaviours were predominantly collaborative and inclusive which inspired them to become more professionally involved, committed, and innovative. These findings suggest principals’ leadership is situational and based on a combination of their leadership behaviours and styles (Blanchard, Zigarmi & Zigarmi, 1987; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982; Yukl, 1998). Regardless of the leadership approach and related behaviours used by principals, a positive school climate built on integrity and trust is prevalent across situations.

**Integrity, Trust, and School Climate**

Trust and integrity were two recurring leadership characteristics that teachers perceived to have a positive impact on school climate. These two interdependent leadership characteristics are evidenced in the principals’ use of distributed and transformational leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2010) and Mine (2014) suggest that principals are able to establish a positive school climate when they lead with integrity and trust. According to Dubrin (2010), trust in school is developed when principals are competent in their leadership roles and are open to new ideas and changes that are beneficial to their school’s development (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Teachers in the study schools perceived principals’ competencies and openness as enhancing their commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. For instance, the teachers at School B expressed the view that their principal is a confidant
leader and through her example and espoused principles, there is improvement in their professionalism, as well as commitment to their students and school. This characteristic is similar among the other principals, as Teacher B at School A described her principal “as a leader with integrity.” She also noted that by having this characteristic (integrity) “everything else comes into place…the trust… [and] the respect.” Similarly, teachers at School C view their principal as a person with integrity and someone with whom they can communicate about professional and personal matters. These teachers’ views relate directly to Kouzes and Posner’s (2010) argument that integrity are intimately bound up with exemplary leadership. Connected to this view is Kouzes and Posner’s (1995) suggestion that integrity and trust are associated with transformational leaders who model good behaviours to inspire their constituents to stay committed, innovative, and professionally involved in their practices.

Having received the teachers’ perceptions that their principals lead with integrity and trust, the researcher asked principals if their teachers and constituents trusted them. In response to this question, the principals demonstrated humility in stating that they “believe” that their teachers trusted them, based on the relationships established at their school. Principal D’s answer illustrates this: “If there is no trust you cannot work together and there would not be anything called success.” This view is supported in the literature which suggests that after establishing an environment of trust, principals can directly and indirectly influence teachers’ commitment, their innovative capacities, and strengthen their professional involvement (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). The findings further reveal that despite the established hierarchical lines of communications with principals, middle managers, and teachers in the study schools, principals’ integrity
and trust promote open and flexible communication that facilitates dialogue about teachers’ professional and personal growth. For example, Principal A and Principal B made particular mention that they ensure teachers can openly discuss pedagogical issues at any time during the day. Teachers felt that during those moments of making pedagogical inquiries, their principals would ask specific questions about their classroom management, students’ performance, and participation in class. A collaborative approach is then taken to finding solutions to resolve the issues. Teachers perceived this open communication as integral to the success of principals, middle managers, and teachers collaboratively working together to accomplish the three dimensions of instructional leadership (defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and developing the school learning climate) (Hallinger, 2003; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

**Collaboration and Principal’s Involvement in the School**

The findings in this research suggest that the principals of the study schools collaboratively work with their constituents to implement school programs that increase and maintain their schools’ success. Therefore, the successful implementation of the varied school programs is dependent on the partnerships principals and their constituents forged and measures taken to accomplish school goals. The findings for each study school support this conclusion.

At School A, collaboration among all members of staff is considered an integral part of achieving school goals (Teacher A). According to the teachers, Principal A is an inclusive and collaborative leader who consults with all teachers and other stakeholders and utilizes their ideas where suited in the school development plan. While a
transformational and distributed approach is taken to complete projects, Principal A, as well as the other three principals, are in constant dialogue with teachers about the process. In response to my prompts for elaboration and clarification about whether principals’ involvement is evidence of micromanaging, Teacher C at School A stated that although the principal, will of course, want to see the finished product of projects, he often asks for feedback throughout the process and gives teachers the autonomy to make decisions. Other findings in the study indicate that all the principals recognize that constant supervision of teachers’ meetings is unnecessary, because they have the requisite skills in executing their respective functions.

Connected to each principal’s autonomous approach in supporting teachers’ pedagogies is their personal involvement in allocating resources and affording teachers the opportunity to engage in training to develop their craft. For instance, the teachers at School A expressed the view that Principal A is competent at consistently seeking out new methodologies, sourcing theories, and best practices and sharing them with teachers to enhance their professional life. The teachers consider the principal’s involvement in their professional development beneficial to advancing/strengthening innovative methods to further enhance their pedagogical practice. Principal A’s support for his teachers’ pedagogies speaks to transformational leadership behaviour, specifically as it pertains to providing individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) to “make students’ achievement a top goal” (Heck, 2010, p. 10). The collaborative environment established at this school also suggests that Principal A is engaging in instructional leadership processes such as decision making, group process, and communication (Murphy, Hallinger, Weil & Mitman, 1983) with his middle managers in
order to promote teachers’ professional development in “a climate of high expectations, and a school culture focused on innovation and improvement of teaching and learning” (Hallinger 2007 p. 4). Hallinger (2007) argues that these leadership behaviours are evidence of instructional and transformational leadership.

Analysis of School B’s data findings also indicates that the principal’s approach to managing the affairs of the school is centered on consistent collaboration with all constituents. At the beginning or ending of each academic school year the principal organizes a retreat with representatives of all stakeholders. These retreats focused on evaluation, modification, and innovation include a student representative, teachers, a member of the administrative team, and a representative of the ancillary staff. During this phase of assessment, the principal along with stakeholders examine each program and... applaud the successes, ... identify what is it that...needs to modified...and if there [is] anything [that]...needs to be abandon[ed] [or be] ... introduce[d] (Principal B) to improve programs for the next school year. The teachers confirm that while shared ideas are taken into consideration, the principal and middle managers only give consideration to a few ideas that are consistent with the school’s vision and mission. These scheduled retreats at School B also facilitate collaboration among teachers as they are encouraged to brainstorm ideas for their action plan to improve students’ academic performance. Action plans are in keeping with teachers assigned job description of specific steps that they intend to take to enhance their pedagogies. This process of decision making further suggests that the study principals do not operate under the premise that they can single handedly manage and lead their schools, rather their actions indicate that they need assistance from their formal and informal leaders.
In addition to managing the affairs of the school, Principal B takes on instructional roles in teachers’ absences. The principal is also recognized for her engagement with teachers in matters of “strategic planning or looking at [the] strengths and weaknesses” of the curriculum to improve students’ performance (Teacher B). The feedback provided includes suggestions for teachers to get involved in different projects and programs, but Teacher B ensures that teachers feel comfortable with these suggestions. This direct involvement and support of the teaching learning process by the principal is voluntary and is seen as entrenched in her commitment and personal vision of making students the top priority. The teachers perceive this leadership behaviour as positive in enhancing their innovative capacities as they are constantly seeking new ways to deliver instruction. They also believe that Principal B’s direct involvement in assisting students to prepare for their Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) exam is evidence that she is monitoring students’ instructional time as well as their progress (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Sheppard, 1996). By taking on instructional roles, the principal is highlighting one of Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins’ (2008) claims of successful leadership behaviours of school leaders who seek to improve students’ performance, motivate teachers and increase their commitment to their students and school.

With her commitment to working extended hours to assist with students’ academic development, the teachers expressed the view that they too are motivated to work beyond their designated hours to prepare innovative lessons for their students. These leadership behaviours are also congruent with the transformational leadership characteristics of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulations as teachers are
motivated to collaboratively think of innovative ways to improve their pedagogies (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

In addition to executing their instructional leadership duties, the principals in the study schools work collectively with their teachers to organize events. The teachers explained that while their principals are not the organizers of events, their involvement in these activities highlight that they are leading by example. For instance, Teacher B at School D explains that the principal is not the person to say to teachers “do this” and you look around and she is doing something different. She will be doing it too as she has the proclivity to immerse herself in the task like anybody else...She will get out the work shoes and participate as it is a team building exercise. It is not, “I stand here and you work” approach.

Principals’ collaborative approaches and involvement in different programs are also an acknowledgment that they are aware of the need to infuse hierarchical leadership with collaborative and shared leadership behaviours (Printy, Marks, & Bowers, 2009). The principal’s role is recognized as multifaceted and complex and that it behooves principals to collaboratively work with teachers to implement programs and policies (Bredeson, 2013; Neumerski, 2013; Sheppard, 1996). Linked to the previous point is Towsend, Acker-Hocevar, Ballenger, and Place’s (2013) analysis of instructional leadership revealed that the principal is the ultimate source of making decisions and creating, while the teacher is, in fact, key to creating change. These researchers further suggest that successful schools are established and maintained when principals harness the leadership capacities of their teachers and constituents. As a result, teachers develop a greater sense of commitment to their students and school. This level of commitment is also translated
into improving their innovation and increasing their professional involvement in different school programs and activities.

**Professional Learning Community**

Associated with the principals’ and teachers’ perceptions of collaboration in their school is the evidence of a professional learning community. The term professional learning community (PLC) gained prominence in the early 1990s within organizational theory literature (Cuban, 1992; McMahon, 1999). In consonance with the purpose of the present study, the implementation of an active PLC is indicative of schools having a clear vision and establishing a positive school environment where all teachers and administrators are motivated to engage in constant professional development to improve their skills and utilize them to the benefit of their students. The teachers in this study attribute their commitment, professional involvement, and innovation to their schools’ PLC. PLCs are, however, not easily established as “such a culture change will not occur without strong leadership…which is essential for long term success” (Sheppard, Brown & Dibbon, 2009, p. 11).

Dibbon (2000) discusses the three levels of PLC. Level one PLC is considered the initiation stage with schools having multiple priorities. At this level, the goals and objectives of the institution are not reflective in the school’s vision. As well, there is a lack of synergy between faculty, administration, and other staff. Interpersonal conflicts among constituents and decisions being made solely by the principal are characteristics of this level. As noted in the preceding theme, Collaboration and Principal’s Involvement in the School, some of the principals in this study sometimes made unilateral decisions and
suggestions without the input of teachers. Despite those noted limitations, the case studies reveal that all four schools embrace elements of PLCs, which is connected to Dibbon’s second level of PLC.

This second stage of PLC is evident in the implementation of a clear and shared vision and mission statement in the schools. However, as mentioned previously, only two schools in this study have a clearly documented vision statement. Dibbon’s (2000) second stage of PLC connects more clearly with the findings of my study which suggested that all four schools promoted positive learning and a stable environment through continuous collaboration with teachers, parents, and other professional organizations. Creation of spaces for shared leadership roles was facilitated by the study principals (Gronn, 2002; Sheppard, Brown & Dibbon, 2009; Spillane, 2006). The study findings also suggest that teachers are given different responsibilities based on their requisite skills and involvement in their school’s development plan. By honing a culture of shared leadership, teachers and administrators are better able to focus on areas impacting students’ learning, while improving their pedagogies, and implementing best practices (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013; Dibbon, 2000; Leclerc, 2012). This level of inclusion and partnership among teachers and their principals are perceived as a contributing factor to teachers’ commitment to achieving their schools’ goals. It further highlights and confirms teachers’ perception that shared leadership and collaboration with their colleagues, parents, and other educational stakeholders contribute to an innovative culture which they have sought to establish.

As a consequence, the principals’ establishment of a PLC can be perceived as evidence of a second order effect, as they believe that they have created conditions to
motivate teachers to work with parents and other constituents toward the improvement of the school without giving teachers specific directions for second-order effects (Sheppard, Brown, & Dibbon, 2009). Teachers noted that they feel connected to their school and as such, they are always seeking ways to improve their pedagogies and by extension student achievement. Notwithstanding the efforts of the principals and teachers in each school to liaise with parents, business organizations, and other external educational stakeholders, it must be noted that while engaged in collaboration to improve their pedagogies some teachers and principal were not aware of the term PLC and did not understand their role in establishing and sustaining a PLC. In fact, like the findings of Roy and Hord (2006) some teachers and principals did not perceive that PLCs contribute to teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, or innovation. The researcher introduced and explained the term PLC to them.

As the researcher discussed with participants the role of constituents working together to build and maintain a PLC, it became apparent to them that time was an essential factor. Associated with this point is Sheppard et al.’s (2009) argument that PLCs require continuous effort and management of the school's plant, increased training for teachers and other members of staff, as well as ongoing support for professional development. Resonant with Sheppard et al.’s (2009) views are Roy and Hord’s (2006) conclusion that when teachers work in an effective PLC environment they are more knowledgeable of their pedagogical skills and are committed to improving their profession. Similarly, the findings speak to Hallinger’s (2010) argument that when there is a clear relationship with the community and school there will be greater commitment among members of staff.
Another indicator that the schools in the study are functioning as PLCs is the constant assessment of curricular programs to improve students’ academic performance. As evidence from the data findings, two principals explained that their students were very weak in mathematics and upon taking office their first step was to identify the issues that were affecting their performance and implement measures to correct them including extended professional development training opportunities for teachers and employment of mathematics specialists to help improve teachers’ proficiency in the subject.

Obtaining support from parents and other constituents in the external environment is also an important aspect of the study principals liaising with teacher leaders and other constituents to establish a functional PLC. Through their principals’ engagement to help them improve their pedagogies and establish relationships with constituents, teachers shared that they felt a deeper sense of commitment to students and organization. Resonant with this perspective is Reilly’s (2015) argument that only when “principals give up being the expert [and] give the work back to the people who are truly responsible for making it happen in the classroom…will the change bring about school wide achievement” (p. 46).

My data findings suggest that all four principals have established characteristics of level three PLC as they collaboratively work with teachers, parents, and business organizations to improve the quality of student performance. It is through these collaborative efforts that principals and teachers have been able to build a community of support including increased parental involvement. A ripple effect ensued as accountability for students’ success was no longer limited to the Ministry of Education, but extended to parents as well. Hughes (2014) also recognized the importance of
parental engagement in students’ achievements and suggested that Jamaican teachers’ commitment to their students will improve when parents demand a higher standards of performance. He also urges principals to find innovative ways of including parents in the decision making process, as Jamaica will “have better schools if … [parents] are actively involved in their children’s education.” Similar to Samms- Vaughan and Tortello’s (2014) research, principals and teachers at the four study schools have taken different steps to create positive relationships with parents. These measures highlight the principal’s role as an instructional leader and its influence on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. For example, teachers’ perceived that Principal A’s leadership at School A has received resounding support from parents as he “has an open school policy…where parents have easy access to him…to share information…that their children will come home with” (Teacher A). As for Principal A, he believes that when parents express interest in their children’s wellbeing, students are more apt to maintain discipline in their academic and social life. He also explained that the majority of the parents with children at School A are from the middle class and their demands for greater success is owed to their value for education. He noted, however, that parents from lower socio-economic families do not make similar demands. Principal A described partnership with parents as perhaps one of the contributing factors to teachers having an avid interest to become more professionally involved in different school programs. He also suggested that parents’ demands for better performance contributes to teachers’ commitment to improve their pedagogies, as they are continuously seeking innovative ways to meet the needs of students. This noted perception is linked to Sheppard and Dibbon’s (2011) and Sheppard’s (1996) argument that when principals
share leadership with constituents (formal and informal teacher leaders, parents, and members of the community) they are able to harness the leadership capacities of all participants.

Alternatively, there are principals who must work twice as hard to convince parents that their contribution to school programs will not only motivate their children, but be a source of encouragement to teachers. Encouragement in this context refers to teachers collaboratively working with their colleagues, parents, and students to design programs to meet students’ individual needs. In providing context, Principal B at School B disclosed that getting the parents involved in the development of the school programs and their children’s achievement has been “an uphill battle, because for about four-five years that was a serious challenge for us, and probably still is, but we have been able to reduce that somewhat.” Her strategy has been to establish relationships with members of the community. In so doing, the guidance council department and teachers in School B organize a community tour at the beginning of each school year for principals and teachers to relate more to students’ challenges and lived experiences. It is also a way for the principal and teachers to build trust and communication between the community and school. These leadership behaviours at School B correspond with Furman’s (2012) and Rigby’s (2014) argument that instructional leadership (broadly defined) is critical in promoting equitable school environments where student achievement is top priority.

Principal and teachers have also partnered with the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to organize parent policing and other programs to combat tardiness and improve students’ performance. According to the teachers, such shared leadership behaviours have contributed to their commitment and dedication to their profession. Their
perception is in keeping with Barth (1990) and Lambert’s (2002) conclusion that transformational leaders must establish relationships with their constituents through common goals that will benefit the organizations. The data findings also suggest that established professional learning communities (PLCs) facilitate development of teachers’ leadership capacities (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster & Cobb, 1995; Ozdemir & Kihc, 2015; Reilly, 2015). As well, these noted study findings are closely linked to inclusive leadership, which is considered transformational (Furman, 2012), as the principals in conjunction with their teachers have sought to employ innovative ways to foster change in their schools for all students. The data findings are also consistent with Ryan’s (2006) perspective that leadership in schools must be inclusive of all constituents in “developing critical consciousness, nurturing dialogue, … classroom practice, adopting inclusive decisions, and policymaking strategies, and incorporating whole school approaches” (p. 9).

Summary

In summation, this chapter provides a detailed review of distributed, transformational, instructional, autocratic, and situational leadership through the principals’ and teachers’ lenses. Evidence of these leadership approaches is found in all four schools. However, each principal executes his or her functions in different ways while ensuring that a positive school climate is built on the foundation of integrity and trust. Other areas of focus in this chapter include how principals collaborate with their staffs in organizing and implementing programs to improve their school’s success. Through established committees, teachers in each school have been able to hone their
leadership skills and contribute to their school development plan. This emphasis on shared ideas and collaboration is further utilized to establish professional learning communities in each school which are inclusive of parents and other constituents in the external environment. Accordingly, all principal and teacher participants – work with their students, parents, and other external social agencies to maintain the vision and mission of their school. The overarching conclusion from the principals and teachers in this chapter is that they view good school administration (combination of instructional, transformational and distributed leadership) as having a positive influence on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation.
CHAPTER SIX
LEADERSHIP AND STUDENT FOCUS

This chapter details the collaborative leadership approach that principals employ to ensure that teachers (formal and informal) leadership skills are honed to facilitate better student outcomes. The chapter, therefore, begins with principals’ involvement in establishing a student centered environment. Attention is given to the support that principals and their middle managers provide teachers to ensure that discipline is maintained in schools to ensure that teachers remain motivated and committed to their profession. Focus is then given to the established common planning time among teachers in their respective departments to improve students’ performance in their Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) examinations. The chapter then delves into the varied professional development workshops organized at the internal and external level to harness teachers’ leadership capacities and their pedagogical skills. Finally, the chapter concludes with information pertinent to curricula programs used to enhance students’ learning.

Student Centered Environment

As mentioned above, the core of the study schools vision is the establishment of a student centered environment. The evidence of this student centered environment that will be presented below is in response to the stipulated sub-questions posed to principals - *How involved are you in monitoring students’ performance?* and the follow-up question about the vision and mission of the school. The findings indicate that the four principals extend mandatory support to teachers in areas of curriculum development and planning.
and resource allocation to enhance their pedagogical skills; thus demonstrating that students’ interests, safety, and learning takes precedence over all other matters. As a result, the data findings suggest that teachers’ professional conduct, involvement in school programs, innovation, and commitment to students’ learning are central to each school’s success. Data findings are also related to the teachers’ and principals’ views in their responses to the sub-question – *How has your principal influenced your commitment to the school? Is your principal supportive of teaching practices and ideas? What are some of the factors that have contributed to teachers’ commitment?* Their answers reiterated the aforementioned leadership behaviours that are distributed, transformational and instructional (broadly defined) which principals engage in, as discussed in chapter five. In providing context, Teacher B at School A expressed the view that Principal A includes his teachers in decisions pertinent to “students’ needs, students’ input, and the needs assessment of the school.” Teachers in the study schools also mentioned that their principals’ emphasis on building trust, mutual respect, and direct focus on honing their pedagogical skills contributed to their commitment to their students’ and school’s success. Other examples illustrated in the data are the innovative programs and policies that Principal B, the guidance and counselling department (GCD), and teachers have instituted at School B to understand and meet students’ needs. With such focus on students as the main priority, the GCD in collaboration with the principal conducted surveys to evaluate the needs assessment program. As one of the lead teachers expressed, all the school’s “programs are really informed from data, but most of the things come from the needs assessment program” (Teacher B, School B) which also assist them in making decisions about areas in the curriculum that they need to prioritize for students.
Other areas of focus include students’ attendance, academic performance, and their general health and wellbeing. Such investigative measures provide evidence of the GCD, principal, and teachers exhibiting "a positive intention to take some action" (Sanagorski & Monaghan, 2013, p. 1) to improve students’ academic and non–scholastic activities. Principal B cited this collaborative engagement as not only contributing to students’ success, but also allowing partnering with teachers, and providing them the space to think of innovative ways to deliver instruction. These expressed perceptions of principals’ leadership behaviours are consistent with the transformational instructional leadership practices where principals also focus on reforming the school’s culture by empowering and supporting teachers to work beyond the requisite expectations to improve students’ learning (Bredeson, 2013; Hallinger 2005; Hallinger & Huber, 2012; Sheppard, 1996; 2015). Researchers including Leithwood (1994) argue that principals’ transformational leadership behaviours have indirect effects on students’ motivation, discipline, school involvement, and academic performance. This aspect of the data findings further speaks to Mowday, Steers and Porter’s (1979), and Eeklin, Vermut and Boshuizen’s (2006) concept of behavioural commitment in which teacher leaders are seemingly committed to being open to new ideas and will work beyond their normal tasks to improve their students’ performance. Also, it may be associated with Meyer and Allen’s (1991) and Werf’s (2014) concept of affective commitment where teachers are intrinsically committed to working with their principal, and colleagues through shared values, goals and mutual understanding to improve their pedagogies.
Improving Discipline

The principals in the study schools also consider improving discipline as an important aspect of enhancing and maintaining students’ success. This theme emerged from the data findings when I asked the four principals the question – *How involved are you in monitoring students’ performance?* Each principal expressed the view that indiscipline is a deterrent to the quality of teaching and learning as this has implications for teachers’ instructional time (Luiselli, Putman, Handler & Feinberg, 2005). They also observed that it compromises teachers’ innovative capacities and involvement in differing programs. This shared view among school principals regarding the importance of discipline is consistent with Luiselli, Putman, Handler, and Feinberg’s (2005) assertion that student indiscipline has a negative impact on the school environment and subsequent student success. Persistent indiscipline among students also has implications specific to Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) second dimension of instructional leadership – *Managing the Instructional Program.* Principals are therefore mandated to put measures in place that are specific to monitoring students’ discipline and academic progress. As such, principals have engaged in shared and collaborative leadership to improve students’ discipline (Marks & Printy, 2003).

As evident in the data findings, all four principals also use communication as the main medium of disciplining students. Principals of the four schools also encourage their teachers to use a similar approach of communicating with students to better understand the factors negatively impacting their behaviours. In particular, Principal A and Principal B use communication as the primary source of discipline in their school. According to them, students’ indiscipline must be addressed differently, especially given the existing
influences such as peer pressure and socio-economic challenges. For example, Principal A indicated that before he became the principal at School A, there was a drastic decline in students’ academic performance and discipline. Specifically, there existed indiscipline among the cohort of male students who failed to follow the school’s policies and as a consequence were performing below acceptable standard. Teachers at School A noted that during that period of increased infractions, they experimented with multiple teaching methods, but students’ academic performance remained below acceptable standards. Similarly, Principal B explained that one of her primary roles is ensuring that the students are aware of their role in society and their positive attributes. A teacher shared that Principal B communicates with the students with respect and explains things to them so that they understand the consequences for any infraction that they may have committed. Such simple, yet practical, measures appear to benefit the school in terms of maintaining a high level of discipline despite its location in a low socio-economic community. These two principals have, therefore, been focused on inspiring students through consistent reminders about their purpose and the importance of setting high standards for themselves. Indeed, it would appear from the data findings and general observation of the school climate that there is improvement in students’ attitude towards school and education. Principal A and Principal B also encourage teachers to engage in active discussions with students about the issues impacting their behaviours as this will facilitate a relationship built on trust and honesty. In their communication with students, teachers are encouraged to relate to students the ramifications of breaching school rules.

Teachers in these two schools believe that their principals’ professional conduct inspires them to emulate their best practices. The teachers are also of the view that a
disciplined school environment enhances their capacity to become more professionally involved and committed to different tasks beyond classroom instruction. These data findings are in keeping with Hallinger’s (2010) and Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) conception that a positive school climate is created when attention is given to monitoring students’ progress, protecting instructional time, and having high expectations of constituents.

Comparably, the principals and teachers at School C and School D take a collaborative and shared leadership approach in developing and implementing structured disciplinary policies to enforce discipline among their students. Although these two schools are reputed for their students’ exceptional academic performance and discipline, the principals are deeply involved in finding solutions to improve students’ discipline. One such policy at School C established since 2009 requires that students who commit an infraction must wear a white dress as a form of discipline. A similar style is used in School D and is applicable for students who live on campus. The principals and teachers emphasized that discipline in boarding, in the form of daily structured prep or study time for students to complete their assignments, has greatly influenced their academic achievement. The responsibility for the discipline of students at these two schools is not restricted to the teachers, guidance counsellors, principals and vice principals, but include elected student leaders who act as liaisons between the student body and administration.

The principals and teachers further suggest that students’ discipline is associated with their inclusion and active participation in different school programs to keep students motivated. Evidence of students’ involvement in different projects is reflective of the role of the instructional leaders to collaborate with their constituents to achieve school goals.
(Marks & Printy, 2003; Sheppard, 1996). For example, Principal C and her teachers involved students in the process of rebranding the school’s motto. The process included initial discussions with teachers, then an extended opportunity for the students to compete in groups to create an acronym depicting the school’s vision and mission. As a result, students competed against each other and the successful group designed the acronym HATS (High Achievers Throughout all Seasons) and were awarded a trophy for their efforts. With this new mantra to transform the school programs, the principal and middle managers have continued to employ different strategies to improve discipline and sustain students’ performance. Consistent with the above strategies to inspire students is Richard’s (2004) and Kelly’s (2004) observation that teachers develop a greater sense of commitment to their job when their principal promote consistency and high standards of student performance. This collaborative approach in turn motivate students to remain focused is also perhaps linked to the principal establishing an inclusive work environment grounded on trust (Day & Sammons, 2013; Choi & Tang, 2009). Again, these inclusive strategies have had some influence on teachers’ commitment as they are apt to remain motivated and inspired to work with their principal, students, colleagues and other constituents to maintain the school’s success (Dubrin, 2010; Ingersoll, 2006). These measures are also indicative of the broad definition of instructional leadership where leadership is not inherently in the hands of the principals, but is shared among formal and informal teachers, as well as students and other constituents to improve school success (Hallinger, 2005, 2011; Marks & Printy, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1995; Sheppard, 1996).

Based on these notable leadership behaviours, teachers in the four study schools believe that their principals demonstrate exemplary practice particularly with respect to
discipline and have influenced their commitment to their students and school. Teachers positive perceptions may be conceived from principal sharing the leadership responsibilities relevant to the broad definition of instructional leadership (Bredeson, 2013); thus having a direct and an indirect impact on the teachers’ and students’ performance (Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Hallinger, 2005; Hoy & Hoy, 2013; Leithwood, Patten & Jantzi, 2010). The findings also suggest that teachers are supportive of the disciplinary programs, and work in conjunction with the principal to support students’ success (Brandusa, Prepeltia-Raileanu, 2010; Wagner, 2012). The implemented programs are also in consonance with Banta and Pike’s (2012) Sheppard’s (1996) findings that principals who employ the broad definition of instructional leadership are apt to foster a professional culture which influences teachers’ commitment, innovation, and professional involvement.

**Teachers’ Common Planning Time**

Other data findings reveal that the four principals are supportive of their teachers collaboratively working together in their departments to improve their pedagogical skills and utilizing innovative ways to deliver student focused instruction. The purpose of these common planning time sessions is to encourage consistency in pedagogies among teachers in formal and informal positions in their respective departments to improve students’ performance in the Caribbean secondary school exams (CSEC). As such, teachers engage in discussions about the planning and structuring of lessons to meet the needs of students, in particular those with challenges. This collaborative approach taken to strengthen teachers’ pedagogies is evidence of senior teachers, heads of departments,
and beginning teachers engaging in instructional leadership behaviours to coordinate the curriculum and transformational leadership behaviours to accomplish their shared school goals (Hallinger, 2007). Teachers in tenured positions are also encouraged to mentor novice teachers to improve their pedagogies to facilitate differentiated learning.

While all the teachers in the study schools collaboratively work together to plan activities for their lesson, only School B has an established common planning time. Teacher B at School B postulated that lessons are based on the affective domain, which focuses more on students demonstrating their understanding of the courses. As such, the “lessons are very student centered, skilled based, and very interactive” (Principal B).

Such organized common planning time is an indication of the existing level of support and collaboration in the school, which may have strengthened teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovation. Principal B further stresses that one of the roles of teachers is to improve their pedagogical skills and notes that while she extends support to accommodate her teachers’ success, she is consistent in her discussions with them that if you are a good teacher, you will teach. A better teacher will teach Mathematics, but the excellent teacher will teach John, which is the child you are teaching…if you are an excellent teacher, you will get the underperformers to perform, because students learn in spite of [their limitations], or because of [their innate ability to perform]. So, when you get the high flyers (high performers) they will learn in spite of the teacher…and even if you are a weak teacher they are going to learn, but the weak ones, they learn because of you. So you have to know where you stand.

With that established understanding, Principal B believes that her teachers are willing to think of innovative ways to meet the needs of their students. This principal’s expressed view is in response to these two research questions – What are some of the factors that have contributed to teachers’ commitment? What has your role been to motivate
teachers? Do you think it makes a difference? Her views suggest that she understands the importance of not only establishing a trusting and healthy working relationship with teachers, but also to giving teachers the autonomy to articulate creative ideas to improve students’ achievement. These highlighted characteristics are in keeping with Cordeiro and Cunningham’s (2013), Leithwood’s (1994; 2007), Leithwood and Sun’s (2012), Mark and Printy’s (2003) and Spillane’s (2005) argument that transformational leaders seek to increase teachers’ capacity to accomplish the school’s vision of increasing students’ performance and maintaining the standard of success.

When the question of established common planning time was posed to participants at the other three schools, the teachers and principals indicated that they have committees and department meetings instead of established common planning. As an illustration, the principal at School C asked her teachers to collaboratively work together to establish a technology and assessment committee to generate ideas to facilitate differentiated learning among students. This committee is also tasked with the responsibility of conducting research to better understand students’ learning styles and interests so as to generate ideas (methods and resources) that are current and relevant to the curriculum and students’ needs. Principal D at School D also encourages her teachers to collaboratively find innovative ways to incorporate technology in their lessons. The teachers at School D consider their principal’s interest and enthusiasm for technology a major source of inspiration for them to include technology in the delivery of their lessons. They further postulate that the principal’s interest in promoting innovation within and across departments has increased their commitment to improving their students’ academic performance.
The aforementioned data findings suggest that teachers’ attitude towards the profession and improvement in their pedagogies are linked to the principals’ transformational instructional leadership behaviours particularly their recognition of the importance of planning time for teachers. The design and purpose of these committees is evidence of a distributed leadership approach. The sharing of responsibilities to establish a positive school environment (Halverson & Clifford, 2013) suggest that teachers are committed to the task of enhancing and maintaining their school’s reputation and success. It is further evidence of teachers’ professional involvement in different programs, and their openness to finding new and innovative ways of improving their pedagogies (Sheppard, 1996, 2015). This data finding can also be interpreted as the teachers and principal having mutual trust and respect for each other, which helps to create an environment where all constituents are collectively working towards achieving the goals of the organization. Analogous to this perception is Balyer’s (2012), Bennis and Nanus’ (1985), Kouzes and Posner’s, (1995), Leithwood, Steinbach and Jantzi’s (2002), Leithwood and Sun's (2012), and Sheppard's (1996) view that when principals as transformational leaders create a collaborative work environment and a culture of trust, then there is a greater level of commitment among teachers.

Common planning time, formally and informally structured, also facilitates interdisciplinary learning among teachers in different departments. Principal B shared that the vision behind teachers collaboratively working together in their departments is not only to accommodate collaborative thinking and generation of ideas, but also to share their innovative ideas. Teachers are asked to produce an innovative idea during their common planning time meetings that will be beneficial to the entire staff during monthly
staff meetings. Based on the ideas presented, the successful teacher receives the Principal’s “You deserve a hug award” which is the principal’s way of motivating teachers to remain committed and consistent in developing new programs to meet the needs of the students. The three teacher leaders at School B observed, as well, that one of the school’s most recent innovative ideas is having each department publish in an area of interest specifically in a Caribbean Secondary School Examination Council (CSEC) subject. Prior to structuring this program, each department assesses the CSEC programs and identifies areas that have been successfully delivered. Included in the program are sample questions and answers to assist students. Although this idea is unique to School B, the principals and teachers in the other three study schools are in constant engagement with their teachers to ensure that they are always finding new and innovative instructional materials to enhance curricular outcomes. In some instances, teachers in their department draw on the expertise of their colleagues to assist them in teaching specific topics. This culture of collaboration at the school has helped to enhance the innovative capacities of not only members of the academic staff, but the student body. The presented data findings appear to correspond with Halverson and Clifford's (2013) idea of the distributed instructional leadership model, which places emphasis on the approach school leaders take to ensure that teachers are given the autonomy and resources to work together to accomplish their academic mission. This practice of sharing best practices, appropriating resources, and using research to find new and innovative ways to achieve their academic mission is evidence of instructional leadership practices throughout the study schools to maintain high standards of performance among their teachers which have indirect and
direct influence on students’ performance (Cuban, 1984; Hallinger, 2005; Purkey & Smith, 1983).

**Professional Development for Teachers**

Associated with teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovation are the professional development opportunities afforded to them to improve their pedagogies. Professional development workshops also provide avenues for teachers to improve learning in management and leadership, as “principals and teachers both play a part in forging an effective leadership relationship” in building school success (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 374). Developing teachers’ leadership skills interconnects with the broadly defined concept of instructional leadership. Research supporting the broad definition of instructional leadership affirms that it is more transformational, shared and collaborative and not confined to only formal leaders in the school (Cordeiro & Cunningham, 2013; Hallinger 2005, 2010; Marks & Printy, 2003; Sheppard, 1996, 2015). These researchers and others (Dibbon & Hoy, 2014; Philippa, 2015) also suggest that the collaborative and shared leadership approach taken in managing schools contribute to teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovation.

In Jamaica, there is call for more professional development training for teachers. Senator Reid, a noted educator, former senator, and present Minister of Education, supported the 2014 executive national education inspectorate (NEI) report that teachers need to engage in more formal leadership and management training to create more successful schools (Hughes, 2014). This suggestion is based on the report findings indicating that out of the 129 schools inspected, only 8% (including the study schools) are
performing well in areas of leadership and management (Hughes, 2014). Hughes (2014) further elaborated that only 3% of the inspected schools were given a ‘good’ rating in the area of teaching in support of student learning. What these figures are indicating is that there is need for more training in leadership and management and teaching and learning in Jamaican schools. Senator Reid also mentioned that the Ministry of Education (MoE), in its bid to transform the nation’s education system, has embarked on a process of upgrading principals, middle managers, and teachers’ performance. Moreover, in recent times educators and policy makers have sought to increase the quality of training among teachers before appointing them as senior teachers. This new mandate to improve principals’ and teachers’ skills in areas of management, leadership, and teaching has resulted in organized mandatory national training day workshops for teachers and has increased the number of professional development workshops for them which holds promise for increasing teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation (Hughes).

The data findings from the present study are in response to the question posed to the four principals – *What is your involvement in teachers’ professional involvement? How do you as a principal influence it? What are some of the factors that have contributed to teachers’ commitment?* The findings are also based on teachers’ responses to the questions – *How has your principal influenced your commitment to the school?* And support previous research regarding the need for teachers to participate in more professional development training. All the principals in the study school demonstrated that they understand the importance of professional development training for their teachers and have taken the necessary steps to collaboratively work and share the
responsibilities with their middle managers to organize internal sessions at their school. Teachers are also given the opportunity to attend external professional development training sessions that are organized by the MoE as well as other affiliated organizations. The principals in this study had similar responses about the need for professional development training for teachers. For examples, Principal A at School A confirmed the former Senator Reid’s commentaries regarding the MoE’s role in training teachers. He noted that in recent times “the ministry seems to be organizing many workshops [as well as] the Jamaica Teaching council.” In addition to the mandated professional development trainings, it is now imperative that all principals complete courses in areas of management, finance, and other administrative duties at the University of the West Indies (Buckley, 2015). Principal C also shared that the MoE “now has a national training day, which has been increased to three professional development workshops for principals and teachers.” Principals in the study schools further contend that these workshops are critical to meeting global and changing trends in technology and pedagogies; thus having an impact on not only enhancing teachers’ innovativeness (Moolenaar, Daly & Sleegers, 2010), but also their commitment. Teachers in the study schools also indicate that they believe it is important for them to have the requisite knowledge and skill set to use new and innovative methods of imparting instruction, because students have different interests and methods of assimilating information. According to Teacher B (School C), innovation in education is an integral part of the change agenda, as student focus is more entrenched in current advances in technology including social media which makes it more difficult for teachers to perform at the same level they were at decades ago. Consistent with this teacher’s insight about improving
their innovative capacities is Coldren and Spillane’s (2007) argument that if teachers change their approach to teaching and embrace collective responsibility for learning, then, they will be more open to adapting teaching practices that will meet the needs of the students while also creating a deeper sense of efficacy in delivering instruction.

Teachers in the study schools were also asked to answer the questions - *In the past two years what professional development opportunities or teacher training programs have you been involved in to improve your skills? And how have these workshops influenced your innovative capacities?* In their responses, teachers noted that they have attended a number of internal and external workshops, as their principals ensure that they are aware of programs and extend those opportunities for teachers to develop their pedagogical and leadership skills. They further expressed the view that these workshops have had an influence on their commitment to their students and school, as well as enhancing their innovative capacities. Concurring with the influence of professional development on teachers’ commitment and innovation is Chan and Mak’s (2014) charge that despite teachers’ being afforded professional development training, its success is dependent on the individual teacher’s sustained commitment to utilize the learnt best practices to improve their pedagogies. Linnansaari-Rajani et al. (2015) observed as well teachers’ a relationship between professional development training at the internal and external level and their behavioural commitment which is characterized by their attendance, exemplary performance, and number of workshops attended.
Internal Professional Development Workshops

My findings further indicated that principals and their middle managers organize internal professional development workshops where teachers and external facilitators conduct workshops at the schools. This finding is in response to the posed question of whether professional development workshops are done internally at the school by teachers, or if the school employed persons from the external environment. Teacher A at School A shared that these professional days are usually spearheaded by teachers upon the recommendation of the principal. Teacher A’s perspective illuminates an underlying possibility that teachers’ involvement in facilitating professional development is dependent on the principal’s decision. Another plausible assumption is that some teachers may not get the opportunity to be facilitators at all or will get to participate at different points. Despite the prospects of either outcome, it is evident that Principal A has a structured and deliberate way of affording teachers the opportunity to showcase their requisite skill set which is evidence of shared leadership (Carpenter, 2015; Hofman & Dijikstra, 2010). Interconnected with these researchers’ claim is Principal A’s view that he has confidence in the requisite qualifications and skills of his teachers to conduct workshops at the school. Teachers who, therefore, have been doing their master’s degree in areas of curriculum development get the opportunity to share their innovative practice which may inspire them to be more committed to their students and professionally involved in school programs. Principal A also confirms that teachers’ participation in professional development training is aimed at empowering and motivating them to accomplish more for themselves when leadership opportunities become available. The teachers shared a similar perspective as their principals regarding how participation in
these internal activities enabled them to hone their leadership capacities to become more professionally involved and to take on formal leadership roles. These teachers perceived of their principals’ leadership behaviours as consistent with leaders making a “proactive attempt to ensure the continuity of leadership by cultivating talent from within the organization through planned development activities” (Rothwell, 2010, p. 12). Internal professional development is also evidence of the broad definition of instructional leadership in which principals, teachers, and other educational stakeholders become partners in the development of teachers’ leadership and management skills “to fit the needs of the school and its environment” (Hallinger, 2005, p. 9).

Similarly, Teacher A at School D suggests that principals and their management team have recognized that “it is not only the students you try to develop, but the staff.” Expressing a similar perspective is Teacher B at School B, who articulates that “if teachers are serious about [their] profession, [they] will want to do everything in [their] power to enhance and improve on what [they] already have.” Based on these teachers’ responses it is evident that their principals’ initiative to harness and showcase their skills has positively impacted their commitment to be involved professionally, while learning new and innovative ways to enhance their pedagogies. With teachers having skills sets in conducting professional development workshops, it is commendable that principal have taken the necessary actions as proposed by DeBevoice (1980) and Hallinger and Murphy (1985) to delegate responsibilities to them according to their requisite competences.

As well, teachers in response to a follow up question about their colleagues’ interest in and support of internal professional development workshops facilitated by other members of staff responded positively. As a teacher at School A confirmed the teachers
at the school “are interested in their own professional development so they will take advantage [of the opportunity]” (Teacher B). Through their collaborative efforts within and across their departments, teachers at School A have taken immeasurable steps to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of students at the lower school, instead of contracting external specialists. Reform of the school curriculum at the lower school is a result of Principal A and his instructional leaders (vice principals) organizing a curriculum development workshop to assist teachers in understanding the importance of streamlining the curriculum to adequately prepare students to meet government standard[s]ized examination at the lower level. These testimonials are indicators that teachers are open to not only developing but also sharing their professional capacities and expertise. By engaging teachers in this level of shared and collaborative leadership, they are more apt to grow in their commitment, while exploring new ways to enhance their pedagogical skills (Sheppard, 1996). It is also evident that capacity building is not limited to those in formal capacities, but is expanded to informal teachers by providing them opportunities to structure their departmental and personal action plans. This evidence from the study schools supports Sheppard’s (1996, 2015) research finding that principals who consciously employ the broad definition of instructional leadership seek to hone informal and formal teachers’ leadership capacities and enhance morale.

Notwithstanding these teachers' perceived commitment to their students and general school success, some teachers expressed the view that more can be done to motivate them. For example, a teacher at School A suggests that Principal A could promote more teachers to facilitate professional development workshops within the school. The teacher explains that there are many teachers with years of experiences and competence in their
respective fields who could do to facilitate training workshops with their colleagues. The aforementioned findings commensurate with Choi and Tang’s (2009) suggestion that principals need to create opportunities for their teachers during the first five years of their career to boost their confidence and commitment.

Another important and interesting data finding in the study schools is in addition to principals’ and teachers’ engagement with and commitment to facilitating and encouraging professional development workshops, School B and School D have their workshops structured in their calendar of events. In sharing her perception of how she influences her teachers' commitment to the school and their professional involvement in other areas of school development, Principal B postulates that she ensures that she assists them in being better educators by getting them involved in administrative duties and the decision making process. One such initiative of Principal B and her middle management team is uncommon among the other three schools has been to ensure that teachers in formal and informal capacity chair monthly staff meetings. While these meetings are mandatory, teachers are afforded the opportunity to indicate their availability and are given the necessary support prior to the meeting. According to Principal B, she usually meets with the teacher and middle manager a few days before the meeting to discuss specific areas that need to be included on the agenda. Teachers are also offered further guidance and encouragement in preparing for the staff meeting. Principal B indicates that this is an important aspect of grooming her teachers to be managers. She provided the following snap shot of the meeting as she stated:

I go in and I take my seat, and they carry on the meeting and if they are talking about something [that require my input], they might say, ‘Principal B would probably like to say something more on this,’ then, I will speak. I make sure that I
am there from the beginning, because there is a little section there for trail blazers award and ‘you deserve a hug segment’ and I do that because I want to.

When asked if she felt comfortable making such a decision, Principal B stated:

I am confident in my own skill not to feel intimidated or threatened by people, because I am always encouraging them to get qualified and to even be more qualified than I am. I love bright people and I love people who are good at what they do.

By creating a culture of success and shared leadership, it appears that Principal B’s leadership behaviours influence her teachers' commitment and professional involvement in the different school programs. Teachers related that they find this level of participation in administrative duties inclusive and oriented toward harnessing and promoting the development of their leadership skills. These perceptions of the principal's influence on building their leadership skills is an indication that Principal B has qualities of an instructional leader who leads "from a combination of expertise and charisma" (Hallinger 2005, p. 5), which has transformational effects on teachers' commitment, professional involvement, and innovation (Sheppard, 1996). Congruous with this data finding is Broin's (2015) observation that principals employ five actions to harness teachers' leadership capacities. These include identifying teachers' readiness to lead, distributing leadership school wide, providing high quality leadership training, setting teacher leader goals for growth and result, and allocating school resources for teacher leadership.

In addition to affording teachers the opportunity to chair monthly staff meetings, Principal B is described as a leader who “encourages professional development at all levels” (Teacher C). These professional development programs include all teachers receiving a scheduled date to facilitate professional development workshops during monthly staff meetings. According to Principal B, she along with her middle management team collaboratively developed
a scheduled plan for all academic staff to share their pedagogical expertise in monthly staff meetings. In fifteen minute presentations teachers highlight an area that they may feel competent in or maybe struggling with and at the end of each presentation their colleagues provide constructive feedback about areas that they can improve. These professional development programs at School B have motivated teachers to enrol in management courses to enhance their profession. As an illustration, Teacher B at School B conveys that as a result of him taking on additional responsibilities at the school he has made the decision to complete courses in “supervisory management… event management … and …computer related courses.” Teacher B’s motivation to improve his leadership skills, is evidence of affective commitment as he considers himself a valuable asset to the school (Meyers & Allen, 1991; Meyers et al., 2002). By extending teachers the opportunity to chair meetings and share their best practices principals are demonstrating instructional and transformational leadership behaviours associated with providing professional development opportunities and intellectual stimulation to advance their personal and professional growth (Hallinger, 2007). The findings further illustrate aspects of the broadly defined instructional leadership behaviour in which the principal distributes leadership among all teachers instead of taking on all the responsibilities (Sheppard, 2015). The findings are also consistent with Marks and Printy’s (2003) research findings that principals who demonstrate above average of transformational leadership and shared instructional leadership with their teachers are considered partners in the leadership process as they take on leadership responsibilities beyond the confines of the classroom. In this respect, teachers are also considered instructional leaders (Marks & Printy, 2003).

Having recognized that Principal B encourages her teachers to chair monthly staff meetings, I asked Principal C and Principal D if they would employ this best practice in
their school. For the most part, the principals seemed enthused about the idea, but did not see it as an immediate and urgent best practice to implement in their school. Principal C responded that she is only open to her senior staff conducting these meetings, while Principal D indicated she will give it some consideration, but that at present all staff meetings are only chaired by her and in her absence her middle managers conduct the meetings. Principal D further outlined that she has instead given different teachers the opportunity to act as grade supervisors of a minimum of five teachers. Grade supervisors are responsible for organizing "meetings with teachers, supervis[ing] their staff, and plan[ning] activities for the year groups” (Principal D). Principal D’s approach to chairing staff meetings may suggest that the principal is following the MoE’s standardized policy that only middle managers, specifically the vice principals are responsible for the managing the school in the principal’s absence (Aljoe et al., 2001).

A similar yet slightly different approach is taken at School D where the principal and senior teachers identify “different staff members to make presentations about different [topics]” within a structured mandatory fifteen-minute time frame for all teachers to participate. This initiative is fairly new, as it has been in place since 2012. Principal D explained that junior teachers and senior teachers are partners in the organization process of these workshops; thus, having “a positive impact on teaching and learning.” When asked how these workshops influenced teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovation, Principal D expressed the view that teachers look forward to the workshops, which have fostered more collaboration and commitment to improving their pedagogies. Principal D noted that based on the positive feedback she has received from teachers; it appears that teachers enjoy their colleagues’ presentations
and indicate that the professional development segment in the monthly staff meetings is an opportunity for teachers to lead and demonstrate their competencies in their area of specialization.

Notwithstanding the fact that Principal D encourages collaboration among teachers, she also recognizes that one of her roles as an instructional leader and classroom teacher is to ensure that teachers remain motivated. In this context, Principal D organizes certified e-learning training sessions to assist teachers in using technology to impact their lessons. In following up with these certified sessions, the principal and her management team organize sessions for teachers to facilitate technological development workshops. Teachers from different departments prepare and "conduct a lesson using technology during monthly staff meetings to increase their confidence in [information technology] IT” (Principal D). Principal D further explains that this component of the IT professional training program was designed for the purpose of teachers using these skill sets in their Action Plans, or otherwise known to the staff as the Teachers’ Action Plan (TAP). The principal believes that teachers competence in using technology to teach is critical and she must ensure that the school is moving in the direction of global changes (Principal D). These examples suggest that Principal D recognizes the importance of encouraging teachers to strengthen their innovative skills to improve their pedagogies. She is also aware of the importance of teachers' professional involvement in building school success and providing space to remain committed to their profession.

Such leadership participation among teachers in their respective schools is evidence of a collaborative work environment. The data findings are evidence that the principals in the study schools engage in distributed leadership practices by allowing all
their teachers, in formal and informal capacities, to engage in the leadership process (Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003; Neumerski, 2013; Printy, Marks & Bowers, 2009; Sheppard, 1996; Spillane, 2006). Hallinger (2005) observes as well that school leadership is a “mutual influence process” in which both the principal and teachers share the leadership roles (p. 234). In this sense, researchers such as Southworth (2002) and Marks and Printy (2003) have sought to change the term “instructional leadership” to “shared instructional leadership”.

The principals in the study schools also engage in practices to strengthen teachers’ professional involvement and leadership skills by providing opportunities for performance development. For instance, Principal B and Principal C as well as their management team promote and organize joint professional development workshop with other schools. According to Principal B, teachers who present at these sessions often demonstrate how to use innovative best practices to enhance their specialized areas. Principal C also posits that her teachers are encouraged to facilitate and share their best practices at other schools. For example, Teacher B at School C is a motivational speaker and a facilitator of CSEC workshops for over sixteen years, as well as a marker for this exam. Her experiences have given her insight into different methodologies that are effective in preparing students for their external exams. By having this role as consultant, the teacher is able to readily identify what she refers to as the “gap in how new teachers teach [especially those] who are just coming from Teachers’ college” (Teacher B). As a former student and teacher at this school, Principal C is aware of this teacher’s contribution to the school’s success and utilizes her skill sets and expertise to assist other teachers in specific areas of curriculum development.
Principal C also encourages teachers to provide suggestions about different areas of their profession that feel are in need of improvement. The principal then helps teachers to organize relevant seminars across schools to meet those needs. By extending opportunities for teachers to utilize their pedagogical skills to assist other teachers, principals are demonstrating support of their professional and leadership growth as well as being “the leader of instructional leaders” (Glickman, 1989, p.6) as “shared instructional leadership will not develop unless it is intentionally sought and fostered” (Marks & Printy, p. 392). Teachers’ involvement in these professional development seminars in other schools may also have direct influence on their commitment to their job, innovative capacities, and professional involvement (Day & Sammons, 2013; Hallinger, 2005; Marks & Printy, 2003; Sheppard 1996). This finding in the study illustrates a connection to Marks and Printy’s (2003) and Sheppard’s (1996) research findings that when principals work towards cultivating teachers’ leadership capacities there are improvements in the three noted characteristics of school culture. In addition, the facilitation of professional development workshops at other high schools is not limited to the teachers, but Principal C also engages in similar practices.

Professional development workshops go beyond to improving instruction in the classroom, by extending to improving teachers’ personal growth. Specific steps taken to improve teachers' personal growth are unique to School C, as Principal C and her team of teacher leaders have taken the lead to organize psychological professional development workshop with a professional psychologist to educate teachers about the importance of recognizing their strengths and weaknesses. Principal C has recognized the importance of strengthening teachers’ interpersonal skills, as she noted that there are instances in which
“persons do not necessarily understand themselves, and if [they] do not understand [themselves], then it passes on to the students.” Principal C further explains that when teachers demonstrate poor judgment in behaviour, students observe those characteristics and take on emotions of “dislike” towards their teachers. She also shared that the psychological workshop was “fruitful…because a lot of persons started to [assess their behaviours and have been] try[ing] to be more effective, because if they are not psychologically strong, then, they would not be able to help the students.” Taking on such an initiative is an indication that the principal is seemingly transforming the mindset of her staff. This is also an illustration of individualized support that Leithwood and Sun (2012) and Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) emphasize in their study as one of the roles of principals as transformational leaders. Principal C’s rationale for engaging her academic staff in professional development is described that after a few months into the role as principal

the senior managers’ [performance] need[ed] to be strengthened. So in October [the school] had a national training day and [she] seized the opportunity to train or retrain them so that they know the role of the principal and the role they play…[As such] more people understand their role and now they are marking the registers with more alacrity.

What Principal C’s views suggest is that senior managers in their formal capacity were underperforming because they lacked the understanding of their roles, but have since shown improvement in their leadership responsibilities. The measures this principal has taken are evidence of her awareness that the responsibilities of leading and managing the school is also dependent on her constituents’ strengths. This data finding correlates with Cordiero and Cunningham's (2013) and Neumerski’s (2013) observation that if principals operate as the only leader in their schools, then, they will not be able to achieve the
mandated standards to improve their schools’ success. By looking beyond the normative practices of enhancing teachers’ pedagogies, this principal is positioning her teachers to think of new and creative ways to execute their practice. It is further suggesting that as teachers’ appear to accept the internal professional development training that are aimed at strengthening their pedagogies and leadership skills their commitment to their school and students and professional involvement in different school programs will perhaps increase to benefit the school. As a result, their principals can be considered transformational instructional leaders because they engage teachers in the process of developing programs to advance their professional development (Sheppard, 1996).

Other professional development workshops conducted at School C include managing finance, learning how to cope in the changing economy, and understanding and structuring action plans. These workshops are normally conducted by resource persons (Deputy Chief Education Officer) from the external environment including professionals from the MoE. Considering teachers' positive attitude towards their professional development training, it is therefore evident that their principal’s leadership behaviours may have positively influenced their growth in their professional involvement, innovation, and commitment to their students and school (Sheppard, 1996). Evidence from the data findings also suggest that the principals have been able to obtain greater support from their teachers, because of the collaborative, community spirit, and shared interest that has been established among all constituents (Hallinger & Hauber, 2012; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger, 2007, Leithwood & Sun, 2012). As a result, teachers perceive these professional development workshops, at the internal and external level beneficial to their career.
External Professional Development Workshops

The principals, vice principals, and teachers also attend external professional development workshops. The Ministry of Education (MoE) organizes and facilitates these external professional development training day workshops that are specific to improving their leadership and management skills. These workshops also provide the space for principals, vice principals and teachers to build networks with their colleagues, share new ideas, and identify programs to improve their teaching performance and students’ achievement as discussed in greater detail below.

These increased numbers of professional development workshops organized by the MoE perhaps serve as a motivational factor for principals and middle managers to remain committed to improving their functions as their roles increasingly change (Pollock, Hauseman & Wang, 2014). As a result, teachers in informal and formal leadership capacities are given the support they need to attend professional development workshops in order to not only harness their leadership and pedagogical skills, but to enhance their school’s success (Day & Sammons, 2013). For instance, Teacher A at School A explained that Principal A’s vision of having an organized and brilliant staff is paramount and as such,

when it comes to academic development, he believes in people always learning new things…as he would personally seek out programs, short term programs, anything, even degrees, any type of experience that teachers can get... and send it by email to you. For example, during his research, the principal found available workshops for Information Technology teachers to attend. Subsequently, teachers were informed of the opportunity and a teacher attended. In addition, the school has been involved in Spanish exchange programs.

This insight into Principal A’s belief of professional development is an indication that he is supportive of teachers improving their professional competencies (Hallinger, 2010;
Leithwood, 1992, 2005). According to Hallinger (2010) when principals use a shared and collaborative leadership approach the potential for sustainable school development is greater. Teacher A at School C expressed a similar view about Principal C encouraging her staff and seeking different professional development workshops relevant to their area of expertise to attend. This teacher also mentioned that Principals C is “always looking for [different external opportunities] that will help the teachers or the girls. … [Therefore] when she receives correspondence, she… photocop[ies] it and say, ‘Here I think you should go and try to do this.’” For instance, Teacher A (School C) has attended workshops that are organized by the MoE and the Foreign Language Teachers Association of Jamaica. According to the teachers, these sessions assist participants in obtaining additional opportunities for studying and improving in specific areas of their profession. When teachers were asked if they attended workshops to improve innovation in their classroom and the extent to which the workshops enhanced their commitment, professional involvement, and innovation, all teachers indicated that attendance at these workshops enhanced the aforementioned characteristics. However, Teacher C at School A suggested that teachers level of commitment, professional involvement, and innovation vary according to the individual. For instance, this teacher (Teacher C) shared that she stands resolute in her mission to understand more about current instructional ideas to assist her students. She has attended technology workshops and received training in downloading information on Youtube and other e–learning strategies. While technology workshops were a daunting experience for her, she finds it refreshing that her students are constantly challenged and engaged. These noted findings are perhaps indication of teachers’ acceptance of their principals’ leadership behaviours that have shown to
increase their commitment, innovation, and professional involvement. The findings are also possibly confirmation of Sheppard's (1996) claim that instructional “leadership behaviours that have been accepted as appropriate by teachers in effective schools are more likely to gain support of teachers and, therefore, be transformational” (p. 31). Sheppard’s conclusion is specifically applicable to principals in the study schools who sought and affording teachers opportunities to attend varying professional development workshops in order to improve different areas of their own colleagues’ professional responsibilities.

Despite the noted benefits of external professional development programs, a teacher in this study is of the view that there are instances in which the MoE could instead send the information “whether [through] power point or whatever and say, ‘ok principals, this is the basic outline of what we want you to do. Could you go through it with your staff, instead of calling us to go [through it]?’” (Teacher C, School A). This aforementioned view is not necessarily a reflection that the teacher is not committed to the students and school, but is possibly linked to his responsibilities as one of the senior teachers in charge of disseminating his specific instructional leadership functions with efficiency and effectiveness. It is also possible that the teacher may have a strong perception that his colleagues are not only committed to their school’s success, but have the competencies to conduct the MoE’s mandated professional development workshops internally. In this case, it can be presumed that there is evidence of shared leadership and an orientation towards consensus building in making decisions to achieve school goals. Principals are therefore demonstrating transformational leadership behaviours specifically *idealized influence* and shared instructional leadership with teachers who not only share
similar values but are oriented towards building a consensus in achieving their school goals (Hallinger & Lu, 2014; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). Finally, given the noted findings of teachers’ interest, involvement, and commitment to participate in internal and external professional development workshops in the study schools, there is seemingly some form of compatibility with Sheppard’s (1996) research findings that promoting professional development is the most important leadership behaviour approved by teachers.

**Curriculum Planning and Development and Enhancement Programs**

Related to the exceptional performance of the study schools are the varied curriculum and enhancement programs offered. All secondary schools in Jamaica use the Reform of Secondary School Program (ROSE) for students in Grades 7-9 to enhance the Caribbean Secondary Examination Certificate (CSEC) (Grades 10-11) curriculum. These are policy initiative programs that the Ministry of Education (MoE) has taken to ensure that all secondary schools are following a common guideline to assist students in their national external exams. In an effort to establish academic stability, heads of departments (HoDs), teachers, and support staff, organize meetings to assess, plan, and revise their pedagogies to effectively execute the curricula outcomes. At the individual school level, all departments in the study schools are required to submit a syllabus outlining the plans for the school year, while teachers structure their individual action plans outlining the objectives and steps taken to improve students’ achievement. This approach to organizing their programs is executed through a variety of courses (technical and vocational skills courses) and programs to meet the needs of their students. Such
emphasis on curriculum planning and development promotes collaboration among teachers in their department and is recognized as principals including teachers in the decision making process about changes that will affect their pedagogies and characteristics of the broadly defined instructional leadership. Teachers involvement in the process may possibly contribute to their professional involvement, innovation, and commitment. The departmental curriculum planning appears to be consistent with Hallinger’s (2003; 2005), Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985), and Sheppard’s (1996) conclusion that instructional leaders assist with coordinating and developing the curriculum.

School A, when compared to the other three schools offers thirty–one subjects. The number of subjects offered is owed mainly to the school’s vision of empowering students with the requisite skills to apply their knowledge to become future leaders in a complex changing environment that will “transform the nation out of its indebtedness” (Principal A). Such perspective resonates within Jamaica because it highlights the current socio–economic problems in Jamaica and the need for teachers to remain committed to improving their pedagogical skills to meet the students’ academic needs (World Bank, 2015). Therefore, more technical and vocational programs have been implemented as part of the core curricula program (Mcintosh, 2014). Examples of the courses offered at the school are music, visual arts, mechanical engineering, electrical, and home economics. Students taking these vocational subjects are given the opportunity to sit for these exams at the CSEC level. The principal further notes that his long term objective is to collaborate with the Human Employment and Resource Training Agency (HEART Trust/ NTA of Jamaica), a licensed organization that was established in 1982, to manage
the development and delivery of Technical and Vocational Training in Jamaica. By partnering with HEART, students will be afforded the opportunity to not only take the subject at the CSEC level, but to also receive a certificate from this recognized institution (Teacher C). According to Principal A, it is crucial that teachers understand the curriculum to effectively facilitate these core vocational areas. As such, he uses his best practices as a former teacher and instructional leader to train his staff in understanding aspects of the curriculum (Teacher B). During these training sessions, Principal A encourages all members of the academic staff to communicate with students about their career goals and the subjects that they need to take to achieve those goals. Principal A’s approach appears to be in keeping with Hallinger and Lu’s (2014), Nanus’ (1992), Sheppard and Brown’s (2000), and Sheppard’s (1996) assertion that shared vision among principals and their constituents increases teachers’ commitment, willingness, and ability to work above and beyond their normal expectations to improve their school’s performance.

Similar to School A, all stakeholders, including senior teachers and heads of department, a student, a parent, an administrative staff, guidance counsellor and Principal of School B are involved in the planning and structuring of the curriculum. During these meetings, the principal engages in the discussions and make suggestions, which the teachers perceive as supportive of the “various changes initiated by [them] and recommended by [them]” (Teacher C, School B). The principal also attends weekly department meetings where she provides guidance if necessary. In response to the principal’s involvement in these meetings, teachers expressed the view that her attendance is infrequent and not indicative of micro-managing. Instead, they consider it a
part of her leadership role in which she is more focused on empowering teachers to
remain committed to their professional growth and student success.

The principal and teachers at School B structure the school’s academic program in
2011 to include a mandatory and practical Caribbean Secondary Examination Council
(CSEC) subject for all Grade 11 students. This vision for the students' and school’s
success has surpassed the recent policy initiative announced by the MoE that schools
should include practical vocational areas in their programs (Mcintouch, 2014). Similar to
School A’s focus on training students to meet the needs of the Jamaican economy,
Principal B and her management team are constantly assessing the National Council on
Technical Vocational Education and Training (NCTIVET) in order for students to get
training and sit for the CSEC examinations at the same time they sit for their other exams.
In preparing the students for both exams, the principal and members of the faculty
analyze the CSEC and NCTVET syllabus for areas of commonality and include aspects
of the curriculum that are not included. For example, students who have signed up to sit
for the food and nutrition examination in CSEC are given food preparation training
from NCTIVET. In addition, the principal extends openings for students to receive a
certificate from the NCTIVET unit. Principal B notes that this approach is necessary
because it is better for the students to attain/earn the certificate from these training
institutions so that they can have the option of using it when needed. Expansion of
students’ exams to other external bodies (NCTIVET and HEART) is similar to School
A’s vision in preparing students for the future employment. Commensurate with these
noted measures to enhance students’ learning at School B is the shared vision of Principal
B and her middle managers as they work together with teachers to ensure that their
students’ needs, school context, and overarching school vision are intertwined. This collaborative approach taken to develop the school’s curricular programs demonstrate the principal’s intent to increase students’ success and to foster an inclusive work environment where teachers are committed, professionally involved and innovative in their practice (Sheppard, 1996). The findings further illustrate a connection with Mathieu and Zajac’s (1990) and Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolonytsky’s (2002) argument that shared and collaborative leadership contribute to teachers’ affective commitment to exceed normal work expectations that will benefit their students’ and school’s success.

Similar to School A and School B, School C offers a variety of subjects (twenty-two) including the sciences, business, social sciences, as well as technical and vocational subjects. This figure is an increase in the number of subjects that School C has offered over the past three years (since 2011). School C also has a curriculum planning and development committee comprised of form teachers, principal, vice principal and senior teachers who are responsible for structuring the curriculum. The committee meets on a yearly basis to plan and structure a pool system comprised of subjects from which students will choose at the Grade nine (9) and Grade ten (10) level. Teacher B at School C disclosed that Principal C is a member of the committee and is often involved in the planning and development of the curriculum. However, she plays more of a supportive role for teachers when they need an opinion about an area that requires her expertise in modifying and improving the syllabus. This shared and collaborative leadership behaviour may be an indication that the principal understands the importance of allowing
teachers to work independently without her input; thus demonstrating that she trusts their judgment (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Leithwood & Sun, 2012).

Contrastingly, School D operates without an established curriculum planning and development committee. Despite that difference, all stakeholders including the principal and teachers are involved in planning the curriculum to determine societal and students’ needs. Teacher C explained that Principal D is technologically savvy and engages in constant research to find out whether “ideas or concepts are workable or if they can be incorporated in the curriculum.” As a result, teachers are encouraged to use more technology in the delivery of their lessons and to make their lessons more student focused. Unfortunately, some teachers have shown resistance to this idea and have expressed concerns that the use of e–learning in the classroom poses the risk of distractions as students are often using social media such as Facebook during sessions. Despite these concerns, Principal D has continued to encourage teachers to use technology in the delivery of their professional development training sessions.

When asked if teachers collaborated in their departments to make adjustments to the curriculum and plan their syllabus, Teacher A (School D) said that the head of department (HoD), and teachers collaborate as a staff and “look at the curriculum...go back to the department…work with [the ideas] and the department heads would [liaise with teachers]… to decide how best…they can enhance the learning of students.”

Having completed that assessment,

suggestions are taken to the senior staff meeting, and at the senior staff meeting level, the HoD…presents his or her ideas… [which are then taken to the board or...[in other instances] the principal might suggest that the ideas…be implemented (Teacher A).
This process is an indication that communication is an integral part of developing the curriculum. It is also representative of the principle of transformational leadership where formal leaders – the principal and middle managers collaborate with informal leaders and use their ideas in formulating school policies and programs to improve students’ performance (Leithwood, Patten & Jantzi, 2010; Leithwood, 2001). In this sense, it is evident that the principal is perhaps translating the school’s vision into practice (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008; Sergiovanni, 1990) to improve the curricular programs for increased student success (Day & Sammons, 2013; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Hallinger & Huber, 2012; Leithwood, 1994).

Summary

Findings from this chapter yield answers pertinent to the principal’s role as a transformational instructional leader in enhancing their teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. These data findings illustrate the collaborative and shared leadership strategies that principals and their middle managers employ to ensure that they have direct and indirect influence on students’ learning outcomes. Central to students’ performance and involvement in the different programs offered are the principals’ ability to collaboratively work together with all teachers in establishing goals and setting directions to improve conditions for better quality of teaching and learning. The role of the principal in maintaining a disciplined cohort of students is recognized as a leadership behaviour that is crucial to teachers' commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. Attention is also given to the role that the principal and teacher leaders play in organizing formal and informal common planning time in
departments to strengthen their pedagogical and leadership skills. This chapter reinforces measures taken by the four principals and twelve teachers in the study school to ensure shared leadership among all teachers in order to achieve students’ academic outcomes.
CHAPTER SEVEN
LEADERSHIP: POLICIES AND EVALUATION

This chapter addresses principals’ leadership behaviours and their influence on teachers’ involvement in policy development and their evaluation process. The chapter, therefore, begins with a synopsis of the process taken to structure the schools’ development plan. Specific attention is given to the collaborative efforts among teachers and the importance of teachers’ commitment to their students and school. It also includes teachers' and principals' involvement in extra-curricular activities and the rewards and incentives that teachers receive for their efforts in improving students’ performance. Encapsulated in this section are the positive and negative implications that the specific rewards may have on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Focus is then given to the process principals and their middle managers take in executing teachers’ informal and formal evaluations. The chapter then concludes with the benefits of these evaluations on teachers’ professional development.

School Improvement Plan

With the MoE’s focus on measuring success, there is a mandatory five-year revision and adjustment period to determine the success and failures of previous school improvement plans. As a result, the principals and their middle managers must meet the standards and guidelines of the Ministry of Education (MoE) in developing their school development plans. The school development plan looks at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, improving infrastructure development to expand sections of the school and other core curricula programs to improve students’ success. These plans are
designed to meet the vision and mission of the schools. In analyzing the school development plan document, it is evident that teachers and middle managers at the study schools collaboratively work together to structure this document. The findings from the document support the principals’ responses to the question – *How has your role as a leader helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning at this school?* For example, the principals expressed the view that their engagement with teachers in shared, distributed, collaborative leadership behaviours generated ideas to successfully implement their school development plan. They further noted that they require that their middle managers and teachers to discuss and analyze specific sections of the school development plan to ensure that they are in keeping with students’ needs. This collaborative approach serves to strengthen and develop teachers’ commitment to their students and school, professional involvement in different programs, and innovation to improve their pedagogical skills. This conclusion stems from teachers’ feedback and understanding of the questions – *What are some of the outstanding leadership characteristics of your principal? How has your principal influenced your commitment to the school?*

The findings in this section underscore the process that the schools have taken to design their school development plan. Here, I present findings specific to School A and School C as they provided more detailed information about their school development plan when compared to the other two schools (School B and School D). In particular, participants at School A explained in detail the steps taken to include teachers in the process of planning and modifying the school development plan. According to the teachers at School A, they are required to write their personal and departmental action
plans. These plans are designed to “meet and satisfy the goals of the institution” (Teacher A), which assist with the structuring of the school improvement plan. Information gleaned from the data findings indicate that before compiling the school development plan, Principal A has a staff meeting, and, then directs teachers to collaborate within their departments to generate ideas. Having submitted the ideas for the school development plan, the vice principals assess and identify similarities within each department. The analyzed draft is then presented to the principal who then makes a comprehensive copy. Such a process is evidence of distributed and transformational instructional leadership (Sheppard, 1996, 2015), as responsibilities are shared among middle managers and teachers so they collaboratively work together from the bottom up to articulate their planned program to support the curriculum (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). This finding also suggests that teachers’ involvement in the process may be an indication of their affective and continuous commitment to improving their pedagogies and professional involvement in matters concerning the development of school programs to strengthen their students’ performance (Day, 2000, 2004; Meyer & Allen, 1991).

In reference to the school’s infrastructural development, Principal A indicated that one of his main priorities is to improve the infrastructure and layout of the school. The principal explained that he has embraced the ideas of all constituents in creating an elaborate expansion of the cafeteria, improving the administrative offices, as well as developing other sections of the school. This vision has already been manifested in the overall ambiance of the school. Teacher A, having taught at the school for twenty years, noted that “since [the principal] has been here, four years going on five now…he has really proven himself to move the school forward…. The physical improvement of the
plant is the greatest I have seen since he has come.” When asked how the school will be able to offset the cost for the proposed infrastructural development, Principal A said that there are companies, community organizations, as well as past students that will support the school’s vision, as “people follow success.” He further pointed out that a part of his role as manager is to liaise with constituents to procure resources to develop the school. He is reliant on his academic staff to remain committed to the school’s vision, as well as to support the varied initiatives to offset expenses that will incur in development of the school. Consistent with this finding is Kelley and Salisbury’s (2013) and Neumerski’s (2013) assertion that principals need their teachers support to meet the different school demands. When principals receive support from their teachers, research suggests that they (teachers) will develop a greater sense of commitment to their school (Sheppard, Brown, & Dibbon, 2009).

Similarly, Principal C and the teachers at School C note that one of the school’s core visions is to increase the student population so that more students can complete the Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) examinations in the Science courses. This expressed view is aligned with the National Education Inspectorate’s (2011) report that School C needs to improve its infrastructure, for example the science labs, to better facilitate students’ learning. As a result, the principal and teachers are positive that the school’s success will be maintained, as students are currently achieving 90% averages and full scores (100%) without a proper science lab. To date, the school has not been able to acquire the support to reconstruct its labs (Hughes, 2016). Despite this limitation, the principal and teachers have been able to maintain its place as one of Jamaica’s top secondary school (Hughes, 2016). The school’s success is evidence of
teachers’ using innovative means of teaching science courses without the use of proper labs as well as their commitment to their students’ learning and school success.

**Teachers’ Commitment to Students and School**

Teacher commitment is a critical factor in meeting changing educational reforms as it positively impacts on teachers’ desire to participate in cooperative, reflective, and critical practice (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). In responding specifically to the research questions – *How has your principal influenced your commitment to the school?* the teachers revealed that their principals, middle managers, and other formal leaders have implemented different programs and policies that have influenced their commitment to their students or school or to both (Sood & Anand, 2011; Usha & Sasikumar, 2007). They also revealed that these programs are congruent with the Ministry of Education’s (MoE) standards and are ideally suited to motivate them in being committed to their students and school (Kushman, 1992; Leithwood, 2013; Sood & Anand, 2011). When asked to clarify the difference between their commitment to their students and school, the teachers expressed the view that they can be committed to their students and not to the organization, or to the organization and not to the students. They also presented variation in their perception of their principal’s influence on their commitment. These perceptions form part of a cluster of teachers’ personal and professional goals and their capacity to accomplish them with the guidance and support from their principals and middle managers (Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2001). For example, teachers at School A expressed the view that they have worked with other principals throughout the years, and can attest that principal A is always seeking to implement new programs and policies designed to
support and improve their quality of teaching and learning. In addition, they believe that majority of the teachers have an emotional connection to their school and innate desire to see their students succeed (Yu, Leithwood & Jantzi, 2001). Nonetheless, the teachers attribute aspects of their commitment to the principal’s honesty and openness to not only listen to their idea but to be persistent in motivating and empowering teachers to perform at their best. For instance, Principal A will say to teachers ‘you are doing this right, however, you need to improve on this’ (Teacher B, School A). Teachers at School A also associate their commitment to the positive and collaborative learning environment that has been established for teachers to develop their pedagogical skills (Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2001). It appears that the principal’s approach to leadership as reported by teachers is consistent with what Yu, Leithwood, and Jantz (2001) describe as a transformational leader who liaises with their middle managers and other constituents in creating opportunities for teachers to accomplish their personal and professional goals.

Principal A’s leadership behaviours are also consistent with teachers’ perspectives of their principal at School B. According to them, Principal B “motivate[s] [teachers] to do more than they originally intended and often even more than [the principal perhaps] thought possible” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 3). This leadership behaviour is transformational in nature and is seemingly entrenched in the school’s vision and mission statements and the school’s culture. Teacher B at School B expressed the view that the vision and mission of the school are so designed that he has to be committed to the students and the school. In furthering his explanation of his continuous commitment to the students and school, Teacher B explained the view that the student focused approach established at the school enables teachers to understand that “there is a thin line between
the students and the school, because the students are seen as the school.” This teachers’ perception relates to Yu et al.’s (2001) conclusion that “when visions are value laden, they lead to unconditional commitment; they also provide compelling purposes for continual professional growth” (p. 373). What this teacher’s view suggests is that there is much focus on “building a collaborative culture, creating and maintaining shared decision-making structures and processes, and building relationships with parents and the wider community” (Yu et al., 2001, p. 373). As a result, there seems to be greater sense of community, values, and appreciation for teachers’ hard work.

Equally important, the teachers at School B also attribute their commitment and school’s success to their principal’s enthusiasm and commitment to including them in the management and leadership of the school. By associating their commitment with their principal’s exemplary behaviours, Teacher A (School B) opined that their principal’s collaborative efforts have inspired them to voluntarily support their colleagues. Significant to these teachers’ perceptions is the shared perspective that students’ success is evident when principals seek to directly improve school conditions, which has indirect effect on students’ outcome (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Sheppard, 1996; Leithwood, 1994; Yu et al., 2001). The teachers further explained that their commitment has grown based on the example and standards which Principal B has set for them, as her outstanding work ethics and innovative programs have surpassed the required standard of the MoE. Aligned with this principal’s observed leadership behaviours are Leithwood’s (1994) and Leithwood and Sun’s (2012) view that when principals exemplify positive leadership behaviours, then teachers will perhaps not only grow in commitment, but will enhance their “beliefs about their own capacities… [and] sense of self-efficacy” (p. 374). When
asked how she keeps her staff motivated and committed to their students and organization, Principal B stated that she is always thinking of innovative ways to include the teachers in the development of the school. This approach to leadership supports the findings of DeBevoise (1984), Hallinger (2005), and Sheppard (1996) that instructional leadership (broadly defined) involves the different actions that principals take to promote growth among teachers and students.

Other findings from the study point to a strong connection between the school climate and principals’ ability to not only support teachers’ growth and development, but also their commitment. As an illustration, Principal C at School C noted that the school is reputed as one of the top schools within the region and as a result, teachers are keener on maintaining the standard of excellence at the school. Being a teacher herself and former student, the principal contends that from her perspective, commitment is derived from the personal satisfaction of improving students’ performance and maintaining standards that were set by former principals. In that case, it appears that this principal understands the different dimensions of transformational leadership. Specifically, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration are utilized by the principal to develop individual teachers’ “capacities to higher levels, [which encourage them] to be innovative and creative” (Yu et al., 2001).

Comparatively, Principal D stipulated that as a teacher and the principal at School D her role is to “inspire…encourage…and motivate” her teachers through shared leadership decisions. Such qualities have also inspired teachers to remain, grow, and develop their craft as they stay committed to their students and school and to work beyond their mandated duties. Principal D also acknowledged that teachers are
committed to their students and school as they often “say that they are overwhelmed, but… committed to the students.” These perception of the principal’s leadership approach appears to be an indication of her embracing the transformational role of instructional leadership in which she shares leadership and collaborates with her staff in setting goals to improve student success (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Sheppard, 1996).

Additionally, the data findings suggest that the teacher’s commitment is also dependent on his or her personality and character. As evidenced from the data findings, some teachers experience a greater sense of commitment when they are given rewards for their efforts (extrinsic), while others have an inherent tendency to do well in spite of the challenges that they encounter with the job. Their commitment to their school is dependent on the programs and policies that are implemented to increase their success (Cranston, 2012). Cranston also suggests that teachers’ commitment to their school and students is intrinsically linked to their core beliefs of maximizing their students’ potential while helping to build their school image. This researcher’s findings confirm the principals’ responses to the questions - What are some of the factors that have contributed to teachers’ commitment? What has your role been to motivate teachers? Do you think it makes a difference? According to them, the majority of their teachers have remained committed to their students and school, despite their increased workload, contribution to co-curricular activities, and school development programs. The principals in the study schools are also of the view that the majority of their teachers have excellent work ethics which is seemingly a reflection of their intrinsic motivation and innate passion to maintain their school’s success. For example, Principal C notes that majority of the teachers at her school are “intrinsically motivated and they do not want to be off track
from the tradition of excellence.” The principals also suggest that teachers are more committed to their tasks when they include them in the decision making process to improve students’ and general school success (Hallinger, 2005, 2010; Sheppard 1996; Sheppard, Brown & Dibbon, 2009). The principals also believe that their continued contribution to teaching and their fervor for the profession have contributed to their teachers’ commitment to their students and school. Principal C provides context relevant to the aforementioned point as she expressed the view that one of her aims as a teacher and principal is “never to have a student failing…it is all about the students.” According to this principal, when she became principal she was teaching two Grade 11 classes and entering students for the Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) exams. She laments that at the time “a girl got a range three and…it was a pass, and I do not think I did any less and one of the girls failed my exam.” According to this principal, students have the potential to achieve a 100% pass in their subjects and as such, she feels disappointed when their achievement is marginal. This innate passion for her students’ success is channeled towards assisting her staff to utilize their skill set and personality in the delivery of lessons. This principal as well as the others indicated that one of their main contributions to teachers’ commitment is ensuring that their teachers collaboratively work together to share their teaching ideas in their department (as discussed above in chapter 6).

In capturing teachers’ response to the specific question - How has your principal influenced your commitment to the school?, they expressed the view that their principals and middle managers provided guidance and incorporated their ideas in making decisions pertinent to school development programs, and involved them in facilitating and
participating in professional development workshops, as well as assisting students with extra-curricular activities. Corresponding with these teachers’ views are Printy, Marks and Bowers’ (2009) and Sheppard’s (1996, 2015) claim that when principals provide clear direction and support for their teachers (informal and formal), their leadership capacities will be enhanced, which will indirectly impact on students’ academic performance and involvement in extra-curricular activities. The teachers in this study further indicate that their dedication to their profession is conceivably connected to their principals’ establishing a positive and collaborative work climate (Hallinger, 2005; Leithwood & Sun, 2012) that seeks to enhance their commitment to their students and school (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). Then dedication is also associated with their principals having the requisite competence to build their professional involvement in managing their school, and harnessing their innovative capacities to become better facilitators of increased student achievement (Sheppard, 1996). Parallel with the principals’ views, the teachers associate their commitment to their students and school with their innate passion for the profession and their dedication to go the extra mile for their students and school. This passion for the job is expressed among all participants in particular among those who have taught at their school for over three decades and are involved in different school programs. In this sense, teachers’ commitment to their school may be affiliated with their intrinsic motivation to assist their students, or their sense of obligation to the profession (normative commitment) (Meyer & Allen, 1991). It is also possibly linked to job security (continuance commitment) (Meyer & Allen, 1991), especially during this period of the country’s anemic economic climate (Persaud, 2013).
Supporting the aforementioned point Teacher C at School B expressed the view that her passion for the teaching profession is associated with her belief that teaching is a gift, an art and we have to embrace it… I do not think that money can pay teachers…those who are committed… have a mission and a vision to come alive and realize, because we know that in every organization and profession you have delinquent [teachers]…but I think if [teachers] are serious about their profession they will want to see growth and change…[In fact] teaching is a calling and if [a teacher is] not called then [he/she] should not be in the classroom, because [they] are going to be giving of [themselves] sacrificially… it calls for more than just being in the classroom. It goes beyond that point.

These data findings suggest that teachers who enter the profession without a true desire to teach and improve their pedagogical skills are inclined to underperform. The data findings further suggest that when teachers, principals, and middle managers collaborate there is greater cohesiveness and synergy in organizing and implementing programs and policies to increase and maintain the schools’ image of discipline and academic success.

Other data findings reveal that despite the lack of motivation among a few teachers in the study schools, the principals and teachers, for the most part, have established a culture of academic optimism (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; 2013). This is evident in teachers’ confidence and commitment to different programs that are aimed at improving students’ holistic development. Such programs include the teachers’ involvement and commitment to enhance students’ academic achievement and involvement in extracurricular activities as well (Handford & Leithwood, 2013).

**Extra - Curricular Activities**

**Teachers’ Involvement**

With all the schools offering a variety of clubs and societies for students, teachers’ guidance and involvement in these extra-curricular activities have served to increase their school
success. To that effect, teachers in these study schools work tirelessly to balance their professional and personal life to ensure that students learn through their active involvement in extra-curricular activities. These data findings are derived from the teachers’ answers to the question- *How involved are you in extra curricula activities?* The teachers in the present study are also of the view that extra-curricular activities have become a huge part of meeting students’ needs, reinforcing discipline, and building their schools’ culture. For instance, School A has developed a holistic program with at least seven uniform groups as well as a “range of clubs to develop [student] leadership” (Principal A). Principal A considers students’ participation in the 4H Clubs, basketball, volleyball, cricket, and other sports activities as the catalyst to building school spirit and obtaining national recognition. Teacher A also explained that extra curricula activities also help to hone students’ leadership skills which contributes to their time management skills and their general holistic development.

Ten of the twelve teachers explained that their principals’ work ethic, commitment to duties, and involvement in extra-curricular activities have contributed to their personal commitment to student extra-curricular activities and school. The other two teachers indicated that while their principals have contributed to students’ holistic development, they are intrinsically motivated to extend their service outside normal working hours to assist students. By taking on the role of a supervisor for their respective clubs, members of teaching staff have developed greater commitment to the multifaceted aspects of their job. Therefore, the success of these extra-curricular programs is dependent on teachers’ attitudinal commitment, because of their invested time and efforts in working beyond their classroom duties to assist students (Crosswell & Elliot, 2004).
Principals’ Involvement

Critical to teachers’ involvement in these extra-curricular activities is the role of the principal in keeping them motivated and committed. According to the teacher leaders in the study schools, their principals provide the necessary resources for all teachers to actively engage students in their assigned clubs. Both principals and teachers believe that when teachers are provided with the required supplies to manage their respective clubs, they will feel less encumbered and can function with greater alacrity and effectiveness. This perspective is tied to the inability of many students to offset the cost for their meals or any other expenses affiliated with their program. This finding is one of the many indicators of the principals’ contribution to their teachers’ professional involvement in extra-curricular undertakings/activities.

Principals in the study schools are also directly involved in student extra curricula activities. For instance, Principal C and Principal D have sought to transform aspects of their school programs to introduce new clubs despite their lack of facility to train students. The initiatives these principals have taken include partnering with other organizations to obtain venues for training and soliciting sponsorship to provide teachers with the necessary resources for their assigned clubs. These principals’ involvement in improving their school programs assist with strengthening their individual school culture, which provides a platform for more external involvement from community, parents, and other educational stakeholders (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). By collaborating with their constituents to support their students, these principals are demonstrating leadership behaviours that have transformational effects on teachers. As a consequence, teachers appear to be more professionally involved and innovative in their practices as they “hold high expectations for students” (Leithwood & Sun, 2012, p. 400). In fact, Leithwood and
Sun (2012) regard this leadership practice as “people-developing practices,” (p. 405) in which administrators and teachers forge meaningful relationships, which influence teachers’ commitment and job satisfaction.

Also, Principal D has introduced different programs such as the performing arts at the school. According to the teachers in this school, Principal D introduced the new programs such as the “performing arts … to get the students and the staff [involved in this area].” Prior to the implementation of this program, the principal consulted with teachers, students, and parents to determine if they would be receptive of this new initiative. Through their shared ideas, the principal obtained the support of her constituents and since then it has been a success. This principal’s involvement and the process taken to establish this new club illustrate a combined use of an instructional and transformational leadership approach to expand the school’s curriculum. Specifically, these leadership behaviours are congruent with the broad definition of instructional leadership in which principals work beyond normal expectations to ensure that measures are taken to assist students from working poor families to achieve their goals and increase student achievement (Rigby, 2013). In this context, the principal as the head of the institution is perhaps also highlighting evidence of distributed leadership by engaging teachers in the process (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006).

While teachers’ and students’ involvement in extra curricula activities is voluntary in three of the four school, their involvement in clubs and societies at School B is mandatory. According to Principal B, students are time tabled for their extra curricula activities, which essentially makes it part of their contact session. On Tuesday, grades seven and eight have their clubs in the third session while grade nine through to grade
eleven meet in their clubs every Thursday. When asked if teachers are committed to their tasks, Principal B notes that teachers must attend their assigned clubs as the program is designed for students’ holistic development. Although her approach to leadership appears to be somewhat bureaucratic and hierarchical in how she manages contact sessions, it is evident that she wants to ensure that students’ holistic development takes precedence over all other matters (Hallinger, 2005). These above mentioned extra curricula activities are also in keeping with the broad definition of instructional leadership that speaks of coordinating the curriculum (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Sheppard, 1996).

Teachers in this study also explained that although they are involved in different activities in their school, their principals are a source of encouragement and motivation. One teacher at School B mentioned that there are moments when she feels overwhelmed with work, and the principal will identify that there is an issue and offer words of wisdom to help guide their personal vision. For example, Teacher A noted that Principal B will encourage them that they “can do it…this is your season to shine … and even if you have doubts before... just by going to her you feel better.” This principal’s inspirational words reflect Leithwood and Janzti’s (2006), Leithwood and Louis’ (2012), Sheppard and Dibbon (2011), and Sheppard’s (1996, 2015) observation that principals who encourage their teachers to take risks, to become more professionally involved, and explore different innovative strategies to enhance students’ learning are more committed to their students and school success.

Although all the study schools have specific clubs in common, the principals and teachers at School C and School D have established the Tourism Action Club. This club was established to encourage students to participate in different activities that are aligned
with the MoE’s policies. The success of this club is dependent on the teachers’ commitment to working beyond their required work hours to assist students in strategizing ideas and implementing activities that will promote their schools, communities, and country’s success. In addition, three of the four study schools have implemented the Mathematics and Science clubs to assist students in specific areas of the curriculum that will improve their performance in the CSEC examinations, as well as internal (among their peers) and external (with other schools) competitions. The time teachers invest in these academic clubs points to their commitment to their students’ and schools’ success.

**Implications of Teachers’ Involvement in Extra-curricular Activities**

Despite these principals’ and teachers’ involvement in enhancing professional development programs in their schools, three teachers in the study schools expressed the view that commitment to multiple extra-curricular programs can be a daunting process. For example, Teacher C at School C explained that “the expectation being asked of [teachers to work beyond school hours is excessive at times, and is often too much for] only one teacher to handle in addition to teaching and managing their class.” This teacher’s perception is possibly an indication that some teachers are experiencing normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) as they may take on additional workload out of mere obligation instead of having a deep passion.

Conversely, there are teachers who believe that their commitment to additional school programs is not directly linked to the principal’s actions (as mentioned earlier), but is based on their personal conviction and vision of assisting their students. A pertinent
example is the work of Teacher B at School C, a stalwart in education, who has an intrinsic passion to assist her students in their academic and personal life. Her personal unwavering commitment to education and nation building is mirrored in her thirty-one years of service and involvement in the school’s development programs. These programs include organizing a charity and “providing scholarships for needy students” (Teacher B). Accordingly, Teacher B has forged relationships with past students and other constituents in obtaining resources to assist current students. In addition, she is the coordinator for the Baptist Church group, coordinator for the environmental club, inter student Christian school fellowship, and for speech and drama clubs. This level of attitudinal and continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) is perhaps directly related to the autonomy that she is given as a formal leader in the school. Her involvement in these different initiatives are contributing factors to her continued commitment and passion to enable more equitable outcomes for students. This teacher’s leadership practices also highlight Sheppard, Brown, and Dibbon’s (2009) claim that school leadership is not limited to the principal and other formal leaders, but is inclusive of teachers in informal leadership. Linked to these teachers’ participation in extra curricula activities is perhaps their collective efficacy (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Hylemon, 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004), mutual trust in each other (Hanford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004), and academic optimism (Hoy & Miskel, 2013), which have positively influenced their commitment to their students beyond academic development (Nir, 2005) and school (Kushman, 1992).
Rewards and Incentives

Rewards and incentives for Teachers’ Performance

Notwithstanding some teachers’ innate desire to remain committed to their students’ and schools’ success, other teachers in this study believe that it is important for administrators to show their appreciation for their hard work and commitment. The teachers who shared this view responded to the sub-question – *What are some of the incentives your principal or vice principal have used to reward teachers for their hard work?* In this section, I merged the teachers’ responses with the principals’ answers to the sub-question – *How do you show your appreciations for your teachers’ work?* In my analysis of these separate data findings, teachers’ acknowledged that they receive tangible and intangible rewards from their principals, school boards, and other stakeholders for their hard work and commitment to improve their pedagogical skills and innovation in teaching students without the requisite resources. These tangible and intangible rewards are appropriate given each school's available resources. Examples of the rewards include principals and their middle managers organizing social events and supporting and commending teachers. Organized social events are planned through each school’s established social events committee. This committee ensures that programs and events serve the purpose of motivating teachers to remain committed to improving students’ performance. For instance, at School B, the social events committee organizes monthly or bi-monthly staff social events (staff concerts). In addition, Principal B has sought ways to motivate and inspire her teachers through constant reassurance to remain committed to improving their students' academic success. This principal's approach corresponds with Handford and Leithwood's (2013) and Leithwood and Sun’s (2012)
claim that one of the roles of the principal is to support their teachers’ professional development. Supporting these researchers’ argument are Sheppard’s (1996, 2015) findings that teachers grow in commitment and professional involvement when their principal not only includes them in the decision making process, but seeks to harness and support the development of their leadership and pedagogical skills.

Principal A at School A also takes a somewhat similar approach in motivating his teachers to remain committed to their students and school. Teacher B at School A postulated that Principal A values his staff’s ideas and input and as such, he understands the importance of keeping them motivated. Expanding on her perception of Principal A, Teacher B expressed the shared sentiment of other teachers that the principal engages in leadership activities to inspire and mobilize teachers to improve their pedagogical skills and professionalism. This teacher further drew upon her previous teaching experience at another school and expressed the view that Principal A is a leader who seeks to empower his staff when compared to her former principal who considered teachers' remuneration as sufficient for them to remain committed to their students and school. In furthering her example, she noted that “if teachers are not motivated, then the children are not going to learn and they have to be the epicenter of this earthquake” (Teacher B). As a result, teachers are recognized for their commitment to students' achievement and general school effectiveness during official school ceremonies and monthly staff meetings. These teachers’ views suggest that the principal leadership behaviours may have contributed to teachers’ commitment.

Alternatively, there are teachers in the study schools who believe that their principals’ and middle managers’ verbal acknowledgement is insufficient. As a result,
these teachers consider their principals use of tangible rewards an important part of acknowledging their hard work. Specifically, the principal, middle managers and school board at each school have taken a different approach in rewarding teachers for their efforts. These rewards are often simple gestures such as: impromptu trips to another city to have a treat of ice cream or the school board sending written commendations for teachers’ hard work and efforts. In particular, Principal B at School B and her middle managers have partnered with educational stakeholders from the external environment in demonstrating their appreciation for teachers. According to Principal B, the school has benefactors that work with the teachers…[As such], a teacher of the year gets a weekend at an all-inclusive hotel. The first runner up gets a dinner for two at a hotel (all-inclusive) … [and] the second runner up often receives a day pass at a resort with a trophy.

These awards are presented to teachers at the school’s annual prize giving ceremony. Highlighting teachers’ performance in a public space among parents, students, board members, and other educational stakeholders perhaps has an influence on teachers’ commitment and professional involvement. Connected to these rewards is Bass’ (1996) suggestion that leaders who exemplify transformational leadership behaviours use reward as a tool to motivate their constituents.

Another tangible reward aimed at improving these three characteristics of school climate (commitment, innovation, and professional involvement) includes monetary rewards. To be specific, Principal A and Principal B at School A and School B, respectively, have partnered with their Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and respective school boards to reward teachers based on their pedagogical skills and subsequent student academic achievement. This reward is aimed at enhancing teachers’
continuous commitment (Meyers & Allen, 1991), as they collaboratively work towards increasing and maintaining the school’s high standard of excellence.

Criteria for Tangible Rewards

As evidenced from the findings, teachers are awarded tangible rewards for their hard work and students’ academic success. Specific to School A and School B, teachers are encouraged to improve and maintain students’ performance and average in their CSEC examinations to be qualified for a monetary reward. Both principals at these two schools expressed the view that the monetary reward has been used to motivate teachers to remain committed and innovative in their pedagogies especially given the challenges (as mentioned in chapter four) that their schools have encountered. The teachers also expressed their approval of the required standards and the monetary reward associated with strengthening their innovative capacities and commitment to their students’ academic success. The teachers’ acceptance of their principals’ use of tangible and intangible rewards to increase their commitment and innovation is congruent with Sheppard’s (1996) research findings that “leadership behaviours that have been accepted as appropriate by teachers in effective schools are more likely to gain support of teachers and, therefore, be transformational” (p. 7). This leadership behaviour also falls under Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) third dimension of instructional leadership – Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate, which includes the principal having high expectations and standards from his teachers and providing them with the required incentives to enhance their commitment and innovation. This dimension is, however, broader in scope as it requires that the principal employ strategies that are congruent with not only his
school context (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; 2002), but with a school climate established on
grounds of “innovation and improvement of teaching and learning” (Hallinger, 2005, p.
13). Further support of this example is the principal indicating that he understands the
importance of working with and through teachers to indirectly influence students’ success
(Hallinger, 2005; 2007; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Sheppard, 1996).

This understanding that incentives contribute to teachers’ commitment,
professional involvement, and innovation is not limited to the principal, but the Ministry
of Education is aware of existing challenges in improving student achievement in schools.
Consequently, the MoE has partnered with business organizations to reward teachers for
their outstanding contribution to their school and community. This award is based on the
recommendation of the principal for the Lascoe Teachers Award competition. Principal
B and Principal C noted that a teacher in one of their schools received this award, which
further highlighted the school’s success.

The principal and her middle management team at School D provide other forms
of tangible rewards to boost teachers’ performance. According to Principal D, she
recognizes the hard work of her staff and has taken the initiative to provide incentives for
teachers who have been consistently working hard. She had to however present a
proposal to the school board about procurement of tablets for teachers whose pedagogies
have contributed to their students’ continued success. Principal D noted that the context
in which this proposal was issued to the school board was for them to have an
“understanding of where the school is going and the change that is needed.” The principal
further expressed the view that the school has been able to get their (school board’s)
support in matters concerning motivating, supporting, and developing teachers’
commitment to improve their innovativeness. In addition to the incentives that principals, school boards, and middle managers use to reward their teachers, they also plan events for the annual Teacher’s Day celebration. Although the organization and planning of this event is different in each school, the principals, school boards, and teachers share the common bond that teachers must be rewarded without any personal contribution to the day’s event. In cases where the school board is unable to offset the expenditure for teachers, the principals solicit support from hotel managers or partner with other business organizations to accommodate teachers for the evening. Principal A at School A notes that he takes this collaborative approach to assisting teachers because he understands their needs and the importance of keeping them motivated. This appreciation for teachers’ hard work is also an indication that these four exemplary principals are not primarily focused on supervising the teaching learning process, but that they have an invested interest in their teachers’ wellbeing and professional development. It is also evident that they use tangible and intangible rewards as tools to enhance teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. These principals’ use of tangible and intangible rewards is congruent with Hallinger’s (2007) comparative analysis of instructional and transformational leadership models which stipulates that both leadership approaches include the use the reward to motivate teachers and that such rewards “are aligned with the mission of the school (p. 4). Furthermore, Hallinger’s conclusion has relevance to the study schools’ student centered mission and vision statements.
Negative Implications of Tangible Rewards

Notwithstanding the benefits of boosting teachers’ morale with tangible and intangible rewards, a few teachers in the study schools highlight the associated negative implications of compensating teachers for their efforts in enhancing students’ performance in their Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) exams. This conclusion is based on teachers’ response to the following question about the implications of monetary rewards and the extent to which it has created division among faculty members. Of the four schools, teachers at School A indicated that incentivising teachers with monetary rewards has compromised some of the teachers’ ethical standards and adherence to policy. For instance, senior teachers have had to intervene on behalf of students who were not recommended to sit for their CSEC exams, because their teachers perceived their low average would lower the average required for them to receive the $25,000.00. To ensure that students were given “fair chance in spite of the incentive” (Teacher A, School A), the middle management team reminded teachers of the MoE’s policy that students with a 40% in any subject must sit for the exams. Consistent with this finding is the importance of principals distributing leadership among teachers who are able to address problems without too much consultation from the principal. Another teacher voiced his concerns that the incentive creates division among teachers and may give the impression that being passionate and consistent about their profession to improve students’ performance is secondary to receiving the award.

Teachers responses at School B responses to the follow-up question differed somewhat to expressed views of teachers at School A. According to Teacher B at School B, the incentive has not created any division that they are aware of because the
“competition [for the monetary reward] is not among the teachers, but it is really on the baseline that is set.” This baseline is in the policy that the incentive is given to all teachers who are able to meet the stipulated standard, rather than being given to the first teacher who meets the goal. According to Teacher B, “if it was [given based on the first teacher who meets the goal], then it would be problematic, because persons would be almost maligned and trying to hold back persons.” What these data findings suggest is that the principal, teachers, parent teachers’ association (PTA), and board may have discussed the benefits and negative implications of the incentive. In this sense, there is obvious proactive steps taken by the principal and other constituents to ensure that the noted incentive assists with reinforcing their commitment to their students and school (Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Leithwood & Louis, 2012). The significance of the use of contingent reward, in these secondary schools, to increase teachers’ commitment and the subsequent mixed views respond to Sheppard’s (1996) research finding that Providing Incentives for Teachers plays a more influential role in teachers’ innovativeness at the elementary level. It would, therefore, appear that while some of the teachers in the study schools are intrinsically motivated to work beyond their mandated responsibilities, there are others who accept this policy. This finding further demonstrates consistency with Sheppard’s (1996) research conclusion that teachers’ professional involvement also contributes to their self-motivation which reduces the use of incentives as they work beyond their mandated responsibilities to increase their school’s performance. This finding therefore, suggests that some teachers consider this leadership behaviour as an important measure taken to increase their commitment to students’ achievement as they appear to have accepted their principals’ leadership behaviours (Sergiovanni, 1995).
Evaluation of Teachers’ Performance

The evaluation process in Jamaican secondary schools involves the principals and their middle managers carrying out assessment of teachers’ performance at different intervals within the school year. This process of assessing teachers’ pedagogical skills and involvement in the school’s programs is a part of the Ministry of Education’s (MoE) mandate for schools to submit their progress report outlining the performance of their teachers and students. As such, all high schools carry out formal and informal evaluation (internally) at different periods during the school year. Conversely, the MoE conducts external evaluations within the schools at scheduled dates to determine if teachers are following standards. These mandatory evaluation of teachers’ pedagogies relate to Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985) second dimension of instructional leadership – Managing the Instructional Program which places emphasis on the principal’s involvement in supervising and evaluating instruction. It is also narrowly (instructional leadership) defined as the principal is seen as the primary instructional leader (Cuban, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985) who reports teachers’ progress to the MoE.

In assessing the teachers’ evaluation process, the data findings from the study schools reveal that each principal’s interpretation of instructional leadership is seemingly influenced by their personal understanding of the concept, leadership qualities, and their respective school context. Despite this difference, they all seem to understand the importance of appointing responsibilities to their middle managers (head of department, vice principals, and year group supervisors) to carry out formal and informal evaluations. This collaborative leadership approach appears to be evident in their organizational structure, as each principal plays more of an indirect role in the evaluation processes of
teachers in their respective school. By delegating supervisory duties to their middle managers, principals are demonstrating instructional leadership behaviours that are broadly defined (Marks & Printy, 2003; Sheppard, 1996, 2015). However, the two newly appointed principals (Principal A and Principal C) outlined in greater details (than Principal B and Principal D) their process of evaluating teachers’ requisite competencies before conducting formal and informal evaluations at their school.

**Evaluation of Teachers’ Competencies**

In analyzing the evaluation process of School A, Principal A and Teacher A expressed a similar view that the principal’s mandate has always been to understand each member of staff. One of his main duties as the newly appointed principal at the school was to analyze his teachers’ qualifications, competencies, and responsibilities at the school. In his assessment, Principal A recognized that some senior teachers were working in excess of what is required of their position. In correcting this problem, the principal communicated his findings to the board of governors who then agreed with his recommendation for the MoE to upgrade senior teachers to a higher level. For example, teachers performing at a senior level one were promoted to a level two senior teacher position. This redeployment of teachers’ responsibilities resulted in the principals making adjustments to the school’s organizational structure with middle managers and vice principals playing a direct role in teachers’ evaluation. Teachers believe that their principal’s decision to review and make their responsibilities commensurate with the position demonstrated an interest in their professional wellbeing. Many teachers also felt valued and appreciated. This data finding reflects the teachers’ answers to the question –
To what extent is your principal involved in the supervision and evaluation of teachers?

Teachers at School A further stated that Principal A plays more of an indirect role as he appoints specific duties required for his teachers to execute. These duties include evaluating teachers’ performance, marking lesson plans, and completing other tasks associated with their position. In their responses to the question about the extent to which their principal micromanages their core functions and responsibilities, Teacher A expressed the view that Principal A does not carry out his role in such a way that you “feel like somebody is breathing over your shoulders.” Instead, teachers are given the autonomy to make decisions, which motivates them to stay committed to their students and school. Teacher A explains how she ensures that she executes her functions with alacrity and efficiency and then provides the principal with the necessary feedback.

Similar to Teacher A’s expressed view is Principal A’s perspective that he does not see his role as just a leader who facilitates change in the school, but who also establishes a school climate that will inspire teachers and motivate students to perform at the highest standard. Consistent with these findings is Cuban’s (1984), Hallinger and Murphy’s (1986), Hallinger’s (2005) and Sheppard’s (1996) claim that an established collaborative environment where leadership is shared among principals, teachers, middle managers and other constituents improves students’ success. Parallel with these researchers’ claim is Lambert’s (2002) conclusion that “the days of the lone instructional leader are over…[because] one administrator can[not] serve as the instructional leader for the entire school without the substantial participation of other educators” (p. 37). Lambert’s claim is in consonance with Rice’s (2010) conclusion that “the principal’s job
is complex and multidimensional, and the effectiveness of principals depends, in part, on…how they allocate their time across daily responsibilities” (p. 2).

Principal C developed a similar practice of assessing her teachers’ roles and responsibilities. She explained that the formal leaders in the school needed assistance in areas of management and leadership, especially as it related to them carrying out the role of supervising teachers’ pedagogies. Principal C noted that her middle management team needed to learn more specifics about “how things ought to be done and how to help others in their department.” As a result, she “impressed upon [her senior] teachers that they need to engage in best practices in their departments” to improve their pedagogies. Given the steps taken to understand her middle management’s abilities to execute their core functions, it appears that Principal C has some knowledge about the broad view of instructional leadership. To be specific, Principal C is modelling behaviours that are collaborative and distributed in practice (Hallinger, 2005; Sheppard, 1996, 2015) which perhaps have an influence on teachers’ commitment (Handford & Leithwood, 2013) to become more professionally involved in their school, and innovative in their pedagogies (Sheppard, 1996). By including middle managers and other teachers in the decision making process principals are better able to carry out their functions while middle managers and the vice principals are able to assist with teachers’ evaluation.

**Informal and Formal Evaluation**

While informal evaluations are ongoing and provide a snap shot of what teachers have been doing throughout the school year, formal evaluations help to determine teachers’ growth, professionalism, and students’ achievement. Informal and formal
evaluations are also designed to assess teachers’ action plans and to determine how well they have been able to accomplish their personal and professional goals. One of the primary roles and responsibilities of the principals as outlined by the Ministry of Education (MoE) is to ensure that teachers’ pedagogies are reflective of the curriculum and students’ achievement. With such focus on students’ achievement, teachers are cognizant of their role in creating a student centered learning environment which makes them accountable for the successes and failures of their students. As a result, there is more focus on innovation and emerging trends in education and how teachers structure their lessons to facilitate differentiated learning.

During the interview sessions with teachers, I asked the question – *To what extent is your principal involved in the supervision and evaluation of teachers?* In their responses, all twelve teachers provided a similar response (as noted above) that their principal, vice principal, grade supervisors, and heads of department conduct ‘walk throughs’ or informal evaluations for a few minutes to assess the teaching learning process. Attention is usually given to the overall delivery of the lesson, use of technology and students’ engagement. These data findings, among others, in the study schools reveal that although there exist similarities in how each principal structure his/her program to include responsibilities for vice principals, senior teachers, and grade supervisors, there are differences in the organization of teacher evaluation programs to meet the needs of their staff and student body. As an illustration, all the principals in the study schools assign their vice principals, heads of department, and grade supervisors the responsibility of supervising novice teachers and executing informal and formal evaluations. All the principals with the exception of Principal B take the simplistic approach to informal
evaluation. By taking this approach to evaluating teachers’ pedagogies, it appears that Principal A, Principal C, and Principal D collaborative leadership behaviour is not primarily oriented towards using the narrow definition of instructional leadership, as they do not have a checklist indicating the expectations of teachers during their instruction.

Unfortunately, teacher participants are of the view that their colleagues consider the frequency of these informal evaluations threatening to their profession. In correcting this negative perception of informal evaluations, the formal teacher leaders and their principals have sought to reassure teachers that evaluations are intended to support their pedagogical skills and professional growth. For example, Principal B at School B explained that she does not “walk into a class to intimidate or give persons the impression that if [they] are not performing, [the evaluation]… is going to be punitive.” Teacher A at School A expressed a similar view that “evaluations are not aimed at ridiculing teachers, but…at offering suggestions and then providing alternatives.” Other participants in this study such as Teacher A at School A further mentioned that informal evaluations are one of the ways for administration to observe the “true mettle of a teacher.” These teachers’ concluded perceptions of informal evaluation are related to the leadership practices employed and the organizational structure established in the study schools. Of the four principals, Principal A and Principal B have created an organizational structure that is uniquely different in *Managing the Instructional Program* of the school (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). At School A, Principal A plays more of an indirect role in teachers’ evaluation as he delegates this responsibility to his two vice principals who work with their grade supervisors and head of departments in carrying out random/informal and
formal evaluations. Depending on what they identify, the vice principal or head of department “provide[s] alternatives, set up staff development [workshops] and…inform [teachers] to facilitate workshops” (Teacher A, School A). A similar approach is taken at School C after completion of teachers’ informal evaluation in which Principal C collaborates with the head of departments in organizing simulated teaching to help with strengthening teachers’ pedagogies.

Principal B, in contrast, is more deeply involved in the informal and formal evaluation process, particularly at the beginning of the school term in September. She disclosed in greater detail that this approach used at the start of the school year is necessary because “most of her staff are young and require support” to enhance their commitment to students and school (Rowan, 1990; Moolenar, Sleegers, & Daly, 2012; Moolenar, 2012). She, therefore, considers the evaluation process as clinical and aimed at boosting morale, empowering teachers, and creating a culture of commitment (Moolenar, 2012). Empowerment of teachers is recognized as the common goal among the teacher leaders and their principals in the study schools. As such, they discuss specific areas that will need improvement. Feedback for the most part is oral, however Principal B provides teachers with a carbonized written document indicating the areas that each teacher needs to strengthen and the plan of action that they need to take to improve their pedagogies. Having identified the areas that teachers need to address to strengthen their pedagogies, Principal B assigns them to a mentor to help guide them over a period of one year. The principal, however, indicated that if after teachers receive feedback and training from their supervisors and mentors, and 75% of their students are still struggling, the principal organizes a meeting with the teacher to discuss their future
employment with the school. By attaching a penalty of discontinued employment to this mentorship program, the principal sets expectations for each teacher to ensure they are engaging in formative assessments during their instructional time. When asked if she has ever reached the point of recommending to the chairman of the board that a teacher should be relieved of his or her duties, she indicated that it has never reached that point, as she always inquires what she, as an “administrator, can do to help” to improve students’ performance. She further noted that she keeps a record on file of the discussion held with the teacher so that she can do further assessment of the teacher’s performance in the ensuing term. Principal B’s method of supporting her teachers highlights mixed perspectives of the narrow and broad definition of instructional leadership. This approach is seemingly necessary, because of the school’s location and established purpose of supporting a low socio–economic community. Affirming the previous point is Hallinger and Heck’s (1996) and Mulford and Silins’ (2003) argument that the context in which a school principal operates affects his or her choice of instructional leadership (narrow or broad). Lastly, it is also possible that Principal B’s support for her teachers’ pedagogies may create a sense of obligation for them to perform above normal expectations. This finding is in contrast to Hallinger's (2005) suggestion that “principals’ effects on classroom instruction operate through the school’s culture and by modeling rather than through direct supervision and evaluation of teaching” (p. 230). Synonymous with Hallinger’s point is Leithwood and Sun’s (2012) and Leithwood’s (1994) argument that principals who exemplify transformational leadership behaviours often demonstrate high expectations for their teachers and provide individualized support when needed. Principals in the study schools who delegate the responsibilities to their middle
management team and allow them to make decisions in matters of evaluation, are demonstrating characteristics of shared instructional leadership (Marks & Printy, 2003). Shared instructional leadership “involves the active collaboration of principal and teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Within this model, principals seek out the ideas, insights, and expertise of teachers in these areas and work with teachers for school improvement” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 371).

These principals' involvement in the supervision and evaluation of teachers extend to monitoring and ensuring that vice principals and the head of each department supervise and evaluate teachers' lesson plans. All twelve teachers shared that this form of assessment is the standard method of supervision that is done weekly to ensure that teachers are adhering to the standards of the curriculum and including innovative methods to facilitate students’ needs. After reading each teacher’s lesson plan, supervisors are required to make recommendations and then indicate that they have reviewed them in a specific log book. The principal then reviews the log book to ensure that heads of department and teachers are executing their respective duties. While the above mentioned process is somewhat similar to the other three study schools, Principal B (as mentioned earlier) appears to be more deeply involved in the general supervision of teachers. According to the teachers at School B, Principal B and her senior staff (senior teachers, vice principal, head of department) organize “PoW WoW” meetings every Monday morning to assess events of the previous week, and what they would like to get accomplished for the current week. While this practice of supervising teachers is micromanaging in nature, Teacher B considers this level of assessment as an important step to assist teachers in preparing for their formal evaluation. This is suggesting that in
his capacity as a formal leader, Teacher B may have a narrow view of instructional leadership where “the underlying conceptualization assumes that schools would improve if principals… monitor progress, and align teaching and learning activities to achieve the desired academic outcomes” (Hallinger, 2005, p. 231).

While informal evaluations are conducted frequently throughout the school year, formal evaluations occur three times each year in the study schools. As the chief accounting officer, principals are held accountable for the success or failure of their schools (Hughes, 2014). Although it is mandatory for all principals to ensure that all faculty members undergo formal evaluation, in many instances, greater focus is given to novice or new teachers. Formal evaluations are continuous and require more rigor and intensity for teachers to perform at their best. They are carried out with the principal, middle managers, and a colleague of the teacher’s choosing. According to Teacher A at School A, “new teachers are evaluated twice by the head of department and two other persons…. [This] could be the principal and the HoD and one person selected by the teacher and member of the department.” This collaborative approach to supervising teachers and providing the necessary feedback serves to enhance their continuous commitment as they work towards improving students’ performance (Morgan, Kitching, & O’Leary, 2006). However, “a teacher highly dedicated to student affairs, … may be regarded as committed when her or his attitude towards students is assessed” (Choi & Tan, 2011, p. 47), but may not be committed to the school (Choi & Tan, 2011; Nayir, 2012). Similar to informal evaluations, teachers in the study schools are given objective assessment despite the relationships that they have established with their principal and middle managers. Teachers are also given the opportunity to discuss sections of their
formal evaluations before signing off on the document.

Of the four principals in the study schools, Principal D is interested in getting students’ involved in the process of teachers’ evaluation. According to Principal D, she has suggested to teaching staff that in the foreseeable future she would like the students to also evaluate their performance. The principal was asked to explain how the teachers felt about that suggestion and indicated that she received mixed perspectives, as some believe that students will be given too much power and may not be objective. She further expressed the view that while these teachers’ concerns are valid and their view are taken into consideration, they will be “going that route...where students are going to evaluate [teachers],” as their perspectives about their teachers’ pedagogies will allow for greater accountability. Unfortunately, this idea is not taken from a transformational leadership perspective, but instead it appears to be consistent with the narrow view of instructional leadership and lacks democratic approach. Supportive of this previous point is Wahab, Faud, Ismail, and Majid’s (2014) conception that “there [is] a significant relationship between the level of [principals’] transformational leadership practiced and the teachers’ job satisfaction and commitment” (p. 46).

When asked to explain how informal and formal teacher evaluations impact commitment to their profession, teachers’ responses were mostly positive, as ten of the twelve teachers felt that evaluations help to improve their general performance. These teachers further suggest that they felt inspired to remain committed to supporting teachers’ pedagogies (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger, 2005; 2010) because the general teacher population has shown improvements in their pedagogies. The other two teachers (as mentioned above) are, however, of the view that their principal needs to
improve the process by getting more involved because “if there is an issue, then the principal will point it out to them” (Teacher B, School C). These teachers’ view about informal evaluation is symbolic of the culture of high expectations at the school and the demand for continuous commitment (Meyers & Allen, 1991) to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Their shared perception of informal evaluation further suggests that they perhaps view the principal as the ultimate instructional leader in creating a culture of success (Ali, Jan, Ali, & Tariq, 2014; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012). This is in contrast to Horng and Loeb’s (2010) research findings indicating that improvements in student achievement… and positive teacher and parent assessments of the school’s instructional climate are more likely to have principals who are strong organizational managers than are schools with principals who spend more of their time observing classrooms or directly coaching teachers (p. 67).

These researchers shared perspective alludes to Sheppard's (1996, 2015) findings that principals who view instructional leadership from the broad view are more focused on sharing leadership with teachers whose views about their leadership behaviours are highly regarded.

**Summary**

The main point of discussion in this chapter is the influence of leadership on the three characteristics of school climate – teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. Specifically, the central focus on the role of leadership in shaping policy development provides context relating to principals’ leadership behaviours that are collaborative, distributed, transformational, and instructional. An in-depth analysis of the varied strategies principals and their middle managers use to inspire teachers is also
outlined. Details of teachers’ commitment through the principals’ and teachers’ lenses are chronicled with emphasis on shared leadership. Subsequent data findings include teachers’ professional involvement in core curricular programs as well as extra-curricular at their respective school. The discussion then ensued with the nature and benefits of tangible and intangible rewards used to enhance teachers’ commitment to their students and school, professional involvement, and innovation in their pedagogies. Further described in this chapter are the study school principals use of instructional leadership and transformational leadership to evaluate teachers’ performance. Particular attention is given to teachers’ involvement in the process taken to execute informal and formal evaluations and how such evaluations positively impact the three aforementioned characteristics of school climate.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

This research study explored the instructional leadership behaviours of four secondary school principals in rural Jamaica to understand their influence on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovation. It examines the perceptions that four (4) principals and twelve (12) teachers have of the leadership behaviours used in each school, in particular the transformational nature of instructional leadership. These noted perceptions are highlighted in the research findings. I, therefore, use this chapter to seat the purpose of the study, discuss the study findings, delineate the limitations of the study, and provide pertinent recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Study

In this research, I sought to obtain a deeper understanding of Sheppard’s (1996) quantitative research study on the principal’s role in teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. The basis of this inquiry is to examine the effects of instructional leadership on school improvement in four rural Jamaican secondary schools; specifically, the effects of leadership practice on the above mentioned three characteristics of school climate (teachers’ commitment professional involvement, and innovation). Despite the different context in which the four principals in the study schools operate and carry out their instructional leadership duties there appears to be a similar leadership structure with a strong focus on shared, collaborative, and distributed leadership. The study findings reveal, as well, that teachers in formal and informal capacities are included in the decision making process which influences their perception
of their principals’ instructional leadership behaviours that they perceive to be transformational.

I employed a qualitative methodological approach with case study and grounded theory design to explore teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ leadership behaviours as instructional leaders. I used semi-structured interviews as my primary research method to collect the data findings. During the interviews, I used field notes to capture the main points participants discussed to support my recorded interviews. Available documents were also reviewed, which when combined with the interviews and field notes provided in-depth and substantive information with respect to teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ instructional leadership. In this section I provide a brief synopsis of the major findings in relation to the seven research questions that guided this study: 1. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their commitment to the school? 2. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their professional involvement in the school? 3. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their innovativeness? 4. How do principals define themselves as instructional leaders? 5. How do principals perceive their role in influencing teachers’ commitment? 6. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ professional involvement? 7. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ innovativeness? To respond to these seven research questions, I used thirteen sub-questions (for each group) to interview sixteen participants – four principals (a male and three females) and twelve teachers (four males and twelve females) in four rural Jamaican secondary schools. All the principal and teacher participants were of differing age groups and had varying years of experience working at their respective school. These differences yielded a plethora of data findings with regards to how their principal leadership
behaviours influence their commitment to their students and school, their professional involvement in school programs, and of their innovative capacity to improve their pedagogies. The concluding section below will highlight these findings with specific attention to how all three characteristics of school culture overlap.

Study Conclusions

The findings in this study reveal that principals who adopt a transformational instructional leadership approach that is distributed, collaborative, and shared are better able to influence their teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. Notwithstanding the differences and similarities in leadership characters, it would appear that the teachers in the study schools have high regard for and acceptance of their principals’ leadership behaviours. Overall, the findings in this study reveal that the teachers perceive their principals as inclusive, open to different ideas, and appreciative of their hard work. These perceptions illuminate the ripple effect of good school governance as the principals’ leadership behaviours have been shown to have indirect and direct influence on students’ academic performance and participation in extra-curricular activities. Principals and teachers articulated the following understanding of leadership and the specific leadership behaviours that have significance for teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation. Three major themes emerged from the data findings – Leadership and Values, Leadership and Student Focus, and Leadership: Policies and Evaluation. Each theme has specific sub-themes that are relevant to the research purpose and questions.
Specific to research questions one and five (How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their commitment to the school? How do principals perceive their role in influencing teachers’ commitment?), the teachers in the study schools had mixed, yet similar, views regarding their principals’ role in their commitment to their school. Each principal also shared their teachers’ perspectives with regards to the different leadership behaviours that influence their commitment. Overall, the data findings reveal that the majority of the teacher participants connect their commitment and sense of ownership of their school with their principals’ ability to collaboratively work with all teachers (in informal and formal capacities) and other constituents to develop and execute programs that are in tandem with the school’s mission and vision. Connected to their principals’ contribution to their commitment are the transformational, distributed, shared, and collaborative leadership approaches used in each school. Supporting this conclusion are the principals’ and teachers’ conceptualization of leadership which are congruous with the broadly defined instructional leadership behaviours. Nonetheless, the context and conditions in which these principals operate often dictate that they be decisive and make unilateral decisions that teachers conceive as autocratic and situational. The principals, however, suggest that such leadership behaviours do not conflict with their ability to motivate teachers to remain committed to their students and school.

Teacher participants further explained that their principals share the leadership responsibilities, collaborate with teachers in matters concerning school development, and establish a positive school climate that fosters relationships built on trust and leader integrity (Kouzes & Posner, 2010; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). With emphasis on school effectiveness, the principals and middle managers have developed their school’s
organizational structure that is consistent with the Ministry of Education’s recommendations. This organizational structure is similarly designed in all the study schools in which the principals marshal all their resources, including all teachers, to facilitate ease of managing different aspects of their school development programs. Other leadership behaviours that the teachers in the study schools consider as positive influence on their commitment include principals’ direct involvement in taking on instructional (teaching) roles in addition to their core duties. Similarly, the principals indicated that their direct involvement in the teaching learning process and extra-curricular activities seem to have a positive influence on their teachers’ commitment. The teachers in the study schools also connect their commitment to their students and school to different opportunities their principals afford all teachers (working in formal and informal capacities) in making decisions and sharing ideas with regards to developing localized policies – school development plans, school programs, and the vision and mission statements. As mentioned earlier, the principals and teachers in the study schools conceive these leadership behaviours as collaborative, shared, and distributed which are congruous with the broadly defined instructional leadership approach that is transformational in nature (Printy, Marks, & Bowers, 2009; Sheppard, 1996, 2015).

Relating to these leadership behaviours are varying degrees of commitment that teachers appear to have, as well. These include affective, attitudinal, normative, continuous, and behavioural commitment. Teachers demonstration of affective and attitudinal commitment are evidenced in their intrinsic motivation to work beyond their required time to increase students’ performance in academics and extra-curricular activities (Meyer & Allen, 1991). These two types of commitment are also evident in the support
for their school’s vision and mission (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Despite their innate passion to do their work, two teachers indicated that with over three decades of teaching experience at the same school, there are times when they develop obligatory feelings or normative commitment. Such feelings do not adversely impact their performance as they are seemingly temporary when they occur in different phases of their life. Nonetheless, they do find their principals’ shared leadership behaviours as contributing to their continuous commitment to their students and school (Dave & Rajput, 1998: Day, 2000; Nias, 1981, 1986. The continuous commitment displayed among teachers is in keeping with their principals’ central focus on building relationships with students, teachers, parents, and other constituents from the internal and external environment. The principals also believe that the use of tangible and intangible rewards contribute to teachers’ commitment, especially among teachers who appear to have normative commitment to their profession. Finally, teachers’ behavioural commitment is related to their professional growth and motivation to participate in varying professional development programs to improve their pedagogical and leadership skills.

The findings also present an overlap of the three characteristics of school culture as observed in teachers’ commitment to be professionally involved in different extra-curricular activities. Evidence of teachers’ professional involvement is discussed in more detail as they relate to teachers’ and principals’ answers to research questions two (How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their professional involvement in the school?) and six (How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ professional involvement?). Again, teachers and principals associate professional involvement with the broadly defined instructional leadership approach that is shared, collaborative, distributed, and
transformational in nature. The findings articulated throughout the chapters 5-7 point to
the steps principals and their middle managers take to ensure that all teachers participate
in different school programs. In particular, the principals and middle managers in the
study schools have sought to establish a disciplinary committee and guidelines to reduce
infractions that principals and teachers conceive to have a negative impact on the teaching
learning process. The principals stress that indiscipline not only impacts teachers’
pedagogies, but it serves as a demotivating factor for those who seek to remain committed
and innovative. Indiscipline is also seen as a deterrent to student success, especially
given the vision and mission statements that are student centered. The general consensus
among teachers is that increased discipline has made their work easier and as such they
have developed, over time, a greater sense of commitment. The findings further illustrate
that the principals and their middles managers ensure that teachers are involved in the
process of establishing and maintaining planning committees. This is done to facilitate
equal opportunities for all teachers in making decisions to positively impact their student
and school success.

The principals in the study schools also observe that the success of teachers’
participation in varying professional development training workshops, at the internal and
external level, is dependent on their behavioural commitment (level of motivation or
interest in attending available workshops). They further recognized that teachers’
participation in these professional development training programs have a positive
influence on their professional involvement and innovation. Specifically, the majority of
teachers and principals in the study schools believe that internal professional development
training programs encourage teachers to become professionally involved as they have
shown keen interest in not only participating, but also being facilitators to share their best practices with their colleagues. In sharing these leadership responsibilities, principals and middle managers seek teachers’ input in getting recommendations about specific areas of training they would like to receive. Teachers also explain that in many instances their principals and middle managers extend individualized support, a key characteristic of transformational leadership, to assist teachers in preparing for their presentation. An example illustrated in the findings is Principal D’s personal interest in facilitating information technology professional development sessions to assist teachers in this area. This principal believes that these sessions have proven to be successful in motivating teachers to become more professionally involved as well as to use technology to enhance their pedagogies.

An interesting data finding that is specific to School B is the mandatory chairing of monthly staff meetings in which all teachers must participate each month. Principal B’s purpose for requiring teachers’ mandatory input in monthly staff meetings is to further strengthen their confidence, leadership skills, and professional involvement. Principals in the other three schools appear to follow the Ministry of Education’s (MoE) guidelines to use their immediate middle managers (vice principals, senior teachers) to chair staff meetings. Notwithstanding the focus on sharing the leadership roles in facilitating professional development programs, there are teachers (specific to School A) who believe that their principal (Principal A) needs to afford more teachers the opportunity to participate in these internal professional development programs.

The principals and teacher leaders in the study schools also consider external professional development training programs important to expanding teachers’ leadership
skills, especially in matters related to executing their functions with alacrity and effectiveness. The findings suggest that all four principals extend external professional development opportunities to their teachers to enhance their professional involvement, innovation, and leadership skills in specific areas related to management and pedagogical development. In short, all principals in the study schools observe that inclusive, shared, and distributed leadership behaviours encourage teachers to be professionally involved and committed to developing their school which as noted by several researchers have indirect and direct effects on students’ performance (Bredeson, 2013; Hallinger 2005; Hallinger & Huber, 2012; Leithwood, 1994; Sheppard, 1996; 2015).

Further analysis provides evidence relating to research questions three (How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their innovativeness?) and seven (How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ innovativeness?). This evidence indicates that the teachers and principals in the study schools have recognized the benefits of teachers collaboratively working together in their departments and committees (curriculum planning and development) to develop new and innovative methods to strengthen their curriculum. These committees and department meetings are evident in three schools (School A, C, and D), while the other school (School B) has an established common planning time. The committees are comprised of teachers working in informal and formal capacities to promote collegiality and support. The principals in extending support to their teachers’ pedagogies ensure that they are given the autonomy to work in their departments to plan the curriculum and weekly lessons. Principals also ensure that teachers receive ample resources to complement their lesson plans. Despite the autonomy teachers receive in planning the curriculum and their lessons, Principal B appears to be
“hip-deep” into the process as she often attends these meetings. Ideas compiled in these meetings are then communicated to the principals who then work with their middle managers and the school board to approve the necessary plans. The following section focuses on research question four (*How do principals define themselves as instructional leaders?*) with details relating to their understanding of themselves as instructional leaders.

Principals in the study schools have, for the most part, sought to collaboratively work with teachers in executing instructional leadership duties that are transformational in nature. For example, all principals have sought to use an inclusionary, shared, and collaborated model of leadership in the articulation of their school vision, commitment to achieve their school goals, and emphasis on trust and integrity to build positive school culture. This finding is similar to Day, Gu and Sammons’ (2016) research findings that principals who use both transformational and instructional leadership to enhance their schools’ success are consistently “buil[ding] the leadership capacities of colleagues through the progressive distribution of responsibilities and accountability, as levels of trust [are] built and reinforced” (p. 251). The findings further suggest that principals collaboratively work with their middle managers to support and motivate their teachers to successfully execute their pedagogies, remain committed to the goals of the organization, and to develop a higher sense of purpose. Principals and their middle managers also collaboratively work together to ensure that teachers participate in different professional development programs and actively contribute to curriculum development programs during common planning time and committee meetings. Principals consider their attention to teachers needs and use of tangible and intangible rewards as motivating tools
to increase teachers’ commitment to their students and school. Overall, these data findings suggest that despite the differences in context, the principals share and distribute the leadership responsibilities with all their teachers. While two of the principals (Principal B and Principal D) are seemingly directly involved in a number of school programs, all the principals perceive themselves as collaborative, and transformational leaders. In capturing the principals’ perceptions of instructional leadership it is evident that they understand that the successful execution of their duties is dependent on the support they receive from their all their teachers, parents, students, and other constituents.

In matters pertaining to the evaluation of teachers’ performance, the principals in the study schools use the transformational and instructional leadership (broadly defined) approach to conduct formal and informal evaluations. This finding also provides context with regard to the distributive and collaborative leadership approach principals take to ensure that their middle manager, grade supervisors, and senior teachers are included in the process of conducting informal and formal supervisions. After completing these evaluations, the principal and middle managers in each school offer advice to teachers about areas in their pedagogy in need of improvement. This noted process represents the principals’ understanding of instructional leadership and reinforces the point that success is not an elusive goal in schools, but is achieved through collaboration with parents, teachers, students, members from the business community, and other constituents. Finally, the findings reveal that despite the differences and similarities in the four principals’ leadership characteristics, they all display leadership behaviours that are consistent with Sheppard’s (1996) conclusion that principals who employ
transformational instructional leadership positively influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovation.

**Limitations of the Study**

There are limitations to the study’s qualitative research that must be noted. First, my personal experiences as a former teacher in Jamaica and my positionality as a researcher in educational administration helped to guide this research. My personal experiences may have created some form of subjectivity or bias. The research is further subjected to bias because of the “rich, thick descriptions [of the data]” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 15). My values and beliefs may also affect the process of coding and interpreting the data. Second, the foundation of the research is based on Sheppard’s (1996) quantitative research on the transformational role of instructional leadership. Third, by using the qualitative research method, the research is further subjected to bias as the tenets of qualitative research illustrates that relationships can be forged between the participant and researcher during the interview process, which may pose a problem with validating the data (Lecompte, & Preissle, 1993). Specifically, my relationship with two of the principals (my former teacher and colleague) may have shaped how I understand the data, as I felt comfortable and deeply connected with them during the interview. I also felt that they were more open and relaxed in providing confidential information. Additionally, during the interview process, I had to prompt two participants as they were not knowledgeable about the different leadership approaches used in the school. On both occasions, I asked the participants to describe the leadership approach that their principals employ at their respective schools. The participants then asked me to give examples of
what these leadership approaches are and their characteristics. At that point, I provided a brief overview of transformational, distributed, and instructional leadership. After providing the information, teachers were able to respond to the question. Despite the above noted limitations, I believe that the findings can be associated with other schools with similar environment in Jamaica and other countries. Finally, the time taken to conduct this research was also another limitation, as the large amount of data required rigorous and thorough analysis.

**Recommendation**

The findings reveal various areas of school leadership that need improvement. The principals, in articulating their definition of leadership, identified areas of their leadership roles that required improvement. Specifically, two principals (Principal C and Principal D) note that although they collaboratively work with their teachers, there is still more that they can do to facilitate greater professional involvement among teachers. Consideration should, therefore, be given to continuous professional development training at the internal and external level. At the internal level, heads of departments need to be adequately trained to hone their leadership skills with respect to executing their core duties. Although the principals indicated that heads of departments attend external professional development training, perhaps the Ministry of Education (MoE) needs to facilitate training for them when adjustments are made to mandatory standards and policies.

It is further recommended that leadership courses be infused in the teacher education programs given that at least one teacher participant in all four schools did not
have a conceptual understanding of the different leadership approaches used.

Consideration for leadership courses is necessary for understanding the characteristics of the different leadership approaches used in schools and will also benefit teachers who are interested in being more professionally involved in different school programs such as extra-curricular activities and other formal leadership roles. Their understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of the principalship may further contribute to their preparation and transition from the role of teacher to senior teacher, head of department, vice principal, and even the principalship.

The final recommendation is for the MoE to extend greater support to principals operating with limited resources. The procurement of resources to support school programs is the principal’s responsibility as mandated in the MoE policy (Jamaica, 2009). This responsibility generates problems for principals working in rural schools where accessibility to business organizations and alumni support is often limited (CaPRI, 2014). It is, therefore, important that the MoE identify schools lacking in resources and provide additional support. This will enable principals to balance their time as the instructional leaders (broadly defined) and managers of their school.

**Future Research**

At the heart of school reform in Jamaica is the central focus on the principal to increase school success. School success in Jamaican secondary schools is associated with students’ academic and extra-curricular performance, irrespective of the context and conditions in which principals operate. The findings of this study can be expanded to understand how principals are able to influence teachers’ commitment, professional
involvement, and innovation when faced with extreme socio-economic problems in urban and inner-city schools. This is an important issue for future research especially given varied programs external to the Ministry of Education’s (MoE) policies that principals (such as Principal B) must implement and maintain (for example, partnering with social services, parents, and business organizations) to improve discipline and procurement of resources for school improvement programs.

Future research is also necessary to explore the role of heads of department to better support principals in executing their managerial and leadership responsibilities. Findings from this research may help to determine if roles and responsibilities of heads of departments change according to student population size, school context, and the location. The findings may also help to determine if principals and their middle managers are consistently seeking new ways to keep their teachers committed to their school and students. The varied strategies employed to motivate teachers (for example, partnerships with constituents and incentives) suggest that there exists disparity in teacher commitment. Finally, this study raises questions about the principal’s workload and how these vary according to the context in which each principal operates. It is therefore important to explore the impact of principal’s work on their mental health and wellbeing as they indicated they often feel overwhelmed and encumbered with stress.
Summary

This chapter sought to summarize the main findings in this study. Details of the findings unfolded through a synopsis of the research problems and research questions that guided the study. The principals’ and teachers’ responses to the research questions were then summarized. The chapter ended with recommendations and areas that can be explored for future research.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Principal’s Informed Consent Form

Title: Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

Researcher
Annette Rosemarie Walker
Memorial University of Newfoundland
MUN email address: arw570@mun.ca
Telephone: (709) 740-7805

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness: Case Studies of Four School Principals

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study at any time. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process.

Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Annette Walker, if you have any questions about the study or for more information not included here before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction: As part of my Master’s thesis, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Jean Brown and Dr. Bruce Sheppard. I am currently enrolled in the Faculty of Education in Educational Leadership Studies at Memorial University.

Purpose of study: Although extensive research has been done to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on school improvement, more investigation is needed on how principals influence school climate, in particular teacher commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement that has been intrinsically linked to school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the study will focus on the characteristics of principals as instructional leaders and their perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Another purpose of this
study is to find out more about teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders.

**What you will do in this study:** Your participation in this case study will require you to participate in a semi structured individual interview in the privacy of your office or other private spaces. During the interview field notes will be taken to complement the data. In addition supplementary printed material openly available may be requested in order to clarify information from the interviews (i.e., professional development schedules, curriculum planning etc.). There will be no requests for confidential personnel files or any sensitive information.

**Length of time:** The estimated time for the interview is approximately 60 minutes to allow the researcher to ask follow up questions.

**Withdrawal from the study:** Your participation in this study is voluntary and as such, if you decide to withdraw from the research during the data collection process, you are within your right to do so. Your information will not be included in the study and will be destroyed.

**Possible benefits:** The research topic and findings will be beneficial to principals and teachers who will be able to understand more about their professional growth and the characteristics that influences their professional involvement, commitment, and innovativeness.

**Possible Risks:** The research will pose minimum risk to participants. This is a study of exemplary schools, and it is assumed that the principals are effective leaders. The principals and teachers will be asked to identify positive contributions principals make to teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. There will be no questions raised regarding incompetence or ineffectiveness.

**Confidentiality and Storage of Data:** All information will be treated as confidential and as such, your initials, address, and other information collected during the interview will not be included in the findings. I will ensure that there is no unauthorized access to the data, including field notes, audio tapes, and other pertinent information. Since a nomination system will be used to recruit teacher leaders, principals will be knowledgeable of participants’ names, and will facilitate the interview process. However, no harm is perceived by principals having this information. The collected data and information will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. In addition, the collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.
Anonymity: In order to protect participants’ anonymity, the research will ensure that the audio taped interviews are collected, labeled, and immediately transcribed. The field notes will be compiled and used to complement the interviews. Although the findings will be reported in the thesis and any other publications, I will ensure that references to the schools and participants’ names are not mentioned and that pseudonyms are used (Teacher A, B, C) to protect the identity of participants, the schools, and the school boards, and parishes that are in keeping with Jamaican laws. Due to the small sample size, it may not be possible to have total anonymity as the possibility exists that participants may have discourse about the interview. The researcher will ensure that participants are cognizant of the limitations of their anonymity in their individual consent form. Participants will also be informed that all interviews will be individually done to assure them of their privacy. All collected data will be kept confidential. The researcher will also ensure that the names of the schools, parishes, and names of the participants are excluded from reports or any presentations. Electronic data will be stored and password protected. At the end of five years electronic files will be destroyed.

Recording of Data: The interview will be audio- taped solely to allow the researcher to have detailed and precise information while transcribing.

Reporting of Results: The data collected will be used in my thesis research as part of the requirement for my Masters of Educational Leadership program.

Sharing of Results with Participants: Your school will be given a final report of the research findings. The researcher intends to schedule a time to extend appreciation to all participants for their time at the school. If time permits, participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the findings.

Questions: You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Annette Walker.
Email: Annette Walker Email: arw570@mun.ca / annette.walker6@gmail.com
Bruce Sheppard Email: bsheppar@mun.ca and Jean Brown Email: jbrown@mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent
Your signature on this form means that:
- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
• You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
• You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study during the data collection process, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
• You understand that any data collected from you up to the point of your withdrawal will be destroyed.

If you sign this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

**Your signature:** I have read and understood what this study is about and appreciate the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation at any time.

☐ I agree to be audio-recorded during the interview
☐ I do not agree to be audio-recorded during the interview/focus group
☐ I agree to the use of quotations but do not want my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

______________________________  ______________________________
Signature of participant  Date

**Researcher’s Signature:** I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

______________________________  ______________________________
Signature of Principal Investigator  Date
Appendix B - Teacher’s Informed Consent Form

Title: Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

Researcher
Annette Rosemarie Walker
Memorial University of Newfoundland
MUN email address: arw570@mun.ca
Telephone: (709) 740-7805

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness: Case Studies of Four School Principals

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study at any time prior to the completion of the Master’s thesis. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Annette Walker, if you have any questions about the study or for more information not included here before you consent. It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction: As part of my Master’s thesis, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Jean Brown and Dr. Bruce Sheppard. I am currently enrolled in the Faculty of Education in Educational Leadership Studies at Memorial University.

Purpose of study: Although extensive research has been done to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on school improvement, more investigation is needed on how principals influence school climate, in particular teacher commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement that has been intrinsically linked to school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the study will focus on the characteristics of principals as instructional leaders and their perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Another purpose of this
study is to find out more about teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders.

**What you will do in this study:** Your participation in this case study will require you to participate in a semi-structured individual interview in the privacy of your office or other private spaces. During the interview, field notes will be taken to complement the data. In addition, supplementary printed material openly available in the school may be requested in order to clarify information from the interviews (i.e., professional development schedules, curriculum planning events). There will be no requests for confidential personnel files or any sensitive information.

**Length of Time:** The estimated time for the interview is approximately 30 to 50 minutes to allow the researcher to conduct the interview and to ask the participant follow up questions.

**Withdrawal from the Study:** Your participation in this study is voluntary and as such, if you decide to withdraw from the research during the data collection process, you are within your right to do so. Your information will not be included in the study and will be destroyed.

**Possible Benefits:** The research topic and findings will be beneficial to principals and teachers who will be able to understand more about their professional growth and the characteristics that influences their professional involvement, commitment, and innovativeness.

**Possible Risks:** The research will pose minimum risk to participants. This is a study of exemplary schools, and it is assumed that the principals are effective leaders. The principals and teachers will be asked to identify positive contributions principals make to teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. There will be no questions raised regarding incompetence or ineffectiveness.

**Confidentiality and Storage of Data:** All information will be treated as confidential and as such, your initials, address, and other information collected during the interview will not be included in the findings. I will ensure that there is minimal risk of people gaining access to the data, including field notes, audio tapes, and other pertinent information. Since a nomination system will be used to recruit teacher leaders, principals will be knowledgeable of participants’ names, and will facilitate the interview process. However, no harm is perceived by principals having this information. The collected data and information will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. In addition, the collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on
Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

**Anonymity:** In order to protect participants’ anonymity, the research will ensure that the audio taped interviews are collected, labeled, and immediately transcribed. The field notes will be compiled and used to complement the interviews. Although the findings will be reported in the thesis and any other publications, I will ensure that references to the school and participants’ names are not mentioned in the field notes and that pseudonyms are used (Teacher A, B, C, and D) to protect the identity of participants, the school, the school board, and parish that are in keeping with Jamaican laws. Due to the small sample size, it may not be possible to have total anonymity as the possibility exists that participants themselves may have discourse about the interview. The researcher will ensure that participants are cognizant of the limitations of their anonymity in their individual consent form. Participants will also be informed that all interviews will be individually done to assure them of their privacy. All collected data will be kept confidential and will be known only to the researcher. The researcher will also ensure that the name of the schools, parishes, and names of the participants are excluded from reports or any presentations. Electronic data will be stored and password protected. At the end of five years electronic files will be destroyed.

**Recording of Data:** The interview will be audio-taped solely to allow the researcher to have detailed and precise information while transcribing.

**Reporting of Results:** The data collected will be used in my thesis research as part of the requirement for my Masters of Educational Leadership program.

**Sharing of Results with Participants:** Your school will be given a final report of the research findings. The researcher intends to schedule a time to extend appreciation to all participants for their time at the school. If time permits, participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the findings.

**Questions:** You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact Annette Walker Email: arw570@mun.ca / annette.walker6@gmail.com Bruce Sheppard Email: bsheppar@mun.ca and Jean Brown Email: jbrown@mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

**Consent:** Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
• You have been able to ask questions about this study.
• You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
• You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
• You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study during the data collection process, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
• You understand that any data collected from you up to the point of your withdrawal will be destroyed.

If you sign this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

**Your signature:**
I have read and understood what this study is about and appreciate the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation at any time.
☐ I agree to be audio-recorded during the interview
☐ I do not agree to be audio-recorded during the interview/focus group
☐ I agree to the use of quotations but do not want my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

__________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature of participant                        Date

**Researcher’s Signature:** I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

__________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Principal Investigator              Date
Appendix C - Letter of Invitation

Principal

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

June, 2013.

Dear Principal/Vice Principal:

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am conducting a thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also extending an invitation for you to participate in the research. I would also appreciate your assistance in nominating teachers based on their leadership roles in the school. Invitations will be sent to three of these teachers asking them to participate in the study. This will make a total of a principal and three teachers to be interviewed in your school.

Although extensive research has been done to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on school improvement, more investigation is needed on how principals influence school climate, in particular teacher commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement that has been intrinsically linked to school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the study will focus on the characteristics of principals as instructional leaders and their perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Another purpose of this study is to find out more about teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders. Principals and a sample of teachers will be interviewed, to answer the following research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their commitment to the school?
2. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their professional involvement in the school?
3. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their innovativeness?
4. How do principals define themselves as instructional leaders?
5. How do principals perceive their role in influencing teachers’ commitment?
6. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ professional involvement?
7. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ innovativeness?

The study will consist of interviews. The interview will be the major source of collecting the data and will take place at your school/office at your convenience. The duration of the interview is expected to last for one session which is approximately 60 minutes during the date of _______________ 2014. During this time, I will be asking you questions and taking notes. You will also be asked to indicate your consent for the interview to be audio taped. After the interview is completed, I will immediately transcribe the data.

Information from the interview will be kept confidential and will only be read by the researcher and supervisors. After approval of the thesis is granted the notes and audio taped information will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. In addition, the collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. In order to protect your anonymity, you will be given a pseudonym to replace your real name and will be used throughout the thesis.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study without prejudice during the data collection process. Additionally, you are welcome to ask questions for the duration of your participation in this research. Your school will be given a final report of the research findings. The researcher intends to schedule a time to extend appreciation to all participants for their time at the school. If time permits, participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the findings.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709) - 864-2861.

If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Annette Walker. Email: Annette Walker Email: arw570@mun.ca / annette.walker6@gmail.com
Bruce Sheppard Email: bsheppar@mun.ca and Jean Brown Email: jbrown@mun.ca

Sincerely,

Annette Walker
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Participant’s Agreement

I am aware that my participation is voluntary. I understand the purpose of this research and if for any reason, at any time, I wish to end the interview, I may do so without having to give an explanation.

The researcher has detailed all aspects of my involvement in the research. I am aware that by giving my consent to participate in the interview that it will be audio taped and field notes will be taken. Furthermore, I have been given a copy of this consent form that I may retain for my own reference.

If I have questions about this research study, I am able to contact the student researcher Annette Walker at arw570@mun.ca or her supervisors Dr. Jean Brown and Dr. Bruce Sheppard at jbrown@mun.ca and bsheppar@mun.ca respectively.

I have read the above form and consent to participate in the interview.

Date: ______________________

Participant Signature: ______________________
Appendix D- Letter of Invitation

Teacher
Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

June, 2013.

Dear Teacher/Head Teacher:

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am conducting a thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also extending an invitation for you to participate in the research.

Although extensive research has been done to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on school improvement, more investigation is needed on how principals influence school climate, in particular teacher commitment, innovativeness, and professional involvement that has been intrinsically linked to school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the study will focus on the characteristics of principals as instructional leaders and their perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Another purpose of this study is to find out more about teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders. Principals and a sample of teachers will be interviewed, to answer the following research questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their commitment to the school?
2. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their professional involvement in the school?
3. How do teachers perceive the principal’s role in their innovativeness?
4. How do principals define themselves as instructional leaders?
5. How do principals perceive their role in influencing teachers’ commitment?
6. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ professional involvement?
7. How do principals perceive their role in teachers’ innovativeness?
The study will consist of interviews. The interview will be the major source of the collecting the data and will take place at your school/office at your convenience. The duration of the interview is expected to last for one session which is approximately 30 to 50 minutes during the date of ___________ 2014. During this time, I will be asking you questions and taking notes. You will be asked to indicate your consent for the interview to be audio taped. After the interview, I will immediately transcribe the data.

Information from the interview will be kept confidential and will only be read by the researcher and supervisors. After approval of the thesis is granted the notes and audio taped information will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at Faculty of Education at Memorial University. In addition, the collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. In order to protect your anonymity, you will be given a pseudonym to replace your real name. The pseudonym will be used throughout the thesis.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from the study without prejudice during the data collection process. You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in this research. Additionally, your school will be given a final report of the research findings. The researcher intends to schedule a time to extend appreciation to all participants for their time at the school. If time permits, participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions about the findings.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709) - 864-2861.

If you would like more information about this study, please contact: Annette Walker

Email: Annette Walker Email: arw570@mun.ca / annette.walker6@gmail.com

Bruce Sheppard Email: bsheppar@mun.ca and Jean Brown Email: jbrown@mun.ca

Sincerely,

Annette Walker (Ms.)
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Participant’s Agreement

I am aware that my participation is voluntary. I understand the purpose of this research and if for any reason, at any time, I wish to end the interview, I may do so without having to give an explanation.

The researcher has detailed all aspects of my involvement in the research. I am aware that by giving my consent to participate in the interview that it will be audio taped and field notes will be taken. Furthermore, I have been given a copy of this consent form that I may retain for my own reference.

If I have questions about this research study, I am able to contact the student researcher Annette Walker at arw570@mun.ca or her supervisors Dr. Jean Brown and Dr. Bruce Sheppard at jbrown@mun.ca and bsheppar@mun.ca respectively.

I have read the above form and consent to participate in the interview.

Date: ______________________

Participant Signature: ____________________________
Appendix E- Letter of Approval, School A School Board

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

June, 2013.

To: Reverend Everald Galeraith, Chairman of School A School Board

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am seeking permission to conduct my thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also requesting your approval to conduct interviews with the principal and three teachers at School A.

The four case studies will focus on understanding the relationship between principal leadership and teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. I will use seven research questions to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on three characteristics of schools and their effects on school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the case studies will focus on teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders and principals’ perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (see attached copy of proposal for ethics review).

Participants will be asked for permission for the interviews to be audio taped and field notes taken. All the information from the interview will be strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the faculty of education at Memorial University. The collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709) - 864-2861.

Sincerely,

Annette Walker
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Appendix F- Letter of Approval, School B High School Board

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

June, 2013.

To: Reverend Carl F. Clarke, Chairman of School B School Board

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am seeking permission to conduct my thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also requesting your approval to conduct interviews with the principal and three teachers at School B.

The four case studies will focus on understanding the relationship between principal leadership and teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. I will use seven research questions to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on three characteristics of schools and their effects on school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the case studies will focus on teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders and principals’ perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (see attached copy of proposal for ethics review).

Participants will be asked for permission for the interviews to be audio taped and field notes taken. All the information from the interview will be strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the faculty of education at Memorial University. The collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709)- 864-2861.

Sincerely,

Annette Walker
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Appendix G- Letter of Approval, School C School Board

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

June, 2013.

To: Mr. Aston Rowe, Chairman of School C School Board

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am seeking permission to conduct my thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also requesting your approval to conduct interviews with the principal and three teachers at School C.

The four case studies will focus on understanding the relationship between principal leadership and teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. I will use seven research questions to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on three characteristics of schools and their effects on school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the case studies will focus on teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders and principals’ perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (see attached copy of proposal for ethics review).

Participants will be asked for permission for the interviews to be audio taped and field notes taken. All the information from the interview will be strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the faculty of education at Memorial University. The collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709)- 864-2861.

Sincerely,

Annette Walker
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Appendix H- Letter of Approval, School D School Board

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

June, 2013.

To: Reverend Howard Gregory, Chairman of School D

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am seeking permission to conduct my thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also requesting your approval to conduct interviews with the principal and three teachers at School D.

The four case studies will focus on understanding the relationship between principal leadership and teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. I will use seven research questions to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on three characteristics of schools and their effects on school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the case studies will focus on teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders and principals’ perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (see attached copy of proposal for ethics review).

Participants will be asked for permission for the interviews to be audio taped and field notes taken. All the information from the interview will be strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the faculty of education at Memorial University. The collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709)- 864-2861.

Sincerely,

Annette Walker
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Appendix I – Letter of Approval, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Jamaica

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

September, 2013.

To: Mrs. Elaine Foster-Allen, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education

My name is Annette Walker and I am a student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada. I am seeking permission to conduct my thesis research to complete my master’s degree in Educational Leadership Studies. This letter serves to introduce the research and is also requesting your approval to conduct interviews with the principal and three teachers at School A, School B, School C, and School D in Regions three and four of the Ministry of Education.

The four case studies will focus on understanding the relationship between principal leadership and teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. I will use seven research questions to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on three characteristics of schools and their effects on school improvement. To achieve this purpose, the case studies will focus on teachers’ perceptions of their principals’ characteristics as instructional leaders and principals’ perceptions of how they influence teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (see attached copy of proposal for ethics review).

Participants will be asked for permission for the interviews to be audio taped and field notes taken. All the information from the interview will be strictly confidential and will be kept in a safe and secured locked cabinet in the principal researcher’s office at the faculty of education at Memorial University. The collected data will be retained for a minimum of five years as required by Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. After the duration of five years, all relevant information including the audiotapes will be destroyed.

The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone (709)-864-2861.

Sincerely,
Annette Walker
Graduate Student
Memorial University
St. John’s, NL, Canada
arw570@mun.ca
Appendix J- Interview Protocol

Principals’ Interview Protocol

Exemplary School Principals’ Role in Teachers’ Commitment, Professional Involvement, and Innovativeness
Case Studies of Four School Principals

Interview Time with Principal: _____________________________________________

Location of Interview: ____________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

Introduction:

➢ I am a master student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada.
   
   I am conducting a study for my thesis on exemplary school principals’ role on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovativeness.

➢ The purpose of this study is to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Another purpose of this study is to understand teachers’ perceptions of their principal as instructional leader.

➢ The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. Your written consent is needed to continue this interview (please see Consent Form). The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and with your permission it will be audio recorded. The recording of the interview will allow for greater accuracy and ease of data collection. Please read and sign the consent form.
Role of the Principal as Instructional Leader

1. How do you see yourself as a leader? How do you fulfill your role?

2. How is your administrative/leadership team structured to provide leadership in the school?

3. How has your role as a leader helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning at this school?

4. What is your involvement in teachers’ professional involvement? How do you as a principal influence it?

5. How involved are you in monitoring students’ performance?

6. What are some of the factors that have contributed to teachers’ commitment?

7. What has your role been to motivate teachers? Do you think it makes a difference?

8. How do you show your appreciations for your teachers’ work?

9. How involved are you teachers in the structuring of school goals?

Personal Questions

10. How long have you been a principal at this school?

11. If all these policies were not in place what would you focus on? Do you think there are areas that you could improve as head of administration?

12. What are some of the things that you do to get to know your teachers?

13. Is there anything you have not said that you would like to add?
Appendix K – Interview Protocol

Teachers’ Interview Protocol

Exemplary school principals’ role in teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovativeness: Case studies of four school principals

Interview Time with Principal: __________________________________________

Location of Interview: _________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

Introduction:

➢ I am a master student at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, Canada.

   I am conducting a study for my thesis on exemplary school principals’ role on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement and innovativeness.

➢ The purpose of this study is to explore the positive effects of instructional leadership on teachers’ commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness. Another purpose of this study is to understand teachers’ perceptions of their principal as instructional leader.

➢ The proposal for this research study has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. Your written consent is needed to continue this interview (please see Consent Form). The interview will take approximately 30 minutes and with your permission it will be audio recorded. The recording of the interview will allow for greater accuracy and ease of data collection. Please read and sign the consent form.
Leadership Competencies of Principals

1. How would you describe your principal?

2. What are your perceptions of your principals’ leadership style?

3. What are some of the outstanding leadership characteristics of your principal?

4. How has your principal influenced your commitment to the school?

5. How involved are you in extra curricula activities?

6. How engaged if your principal with members of the faculty?

7. Is your principal supportive of teaching practices and ideas?

8. What are some of the incentives have your principal/vice principal used to reward teachers for their hard work?

9. To what extent is your principal involved in the supervision and evaluation of teachers?

10. To what extent is your principal involved curriculum planning and development?

Personal Questions

11. How would you describe your principal’s leadership practices

12. In the past two years what professional development opportunities or teacher training programs have you been involved in to improve your skills?

13. Is there anything you have not said that you would like to add?