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# **Leadership Development in Small Island States: The Case of Seychelles**

**by**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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# Table of contents

	<b>Page</b>
Acknowledgements	v
Declaration	vi
Abstract	vii
Abbreviations used	ix
List of Figures	x
List of Tables	xi
<b>1. Chapter One: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
The theoretical context	2
Leadership development context	6
The national context	12
The policy context	19
Aim and objectives	30
The research questions and explanations	32
Summary	35
<b>2. Chapter Two: Literature Review</b>	<b>37</b>
Introduction	37
<i>Concepts and models of educational leadership</i>	39
Educational Leadership Concepts	39
Educational leadership models	41
<i>Leadership development: rationale, definition and concepts</i>	45
The rationale for leadership development	45
Defining leadership development	49
Leadership development concepts	50
<i>Leadership development: models and approaches</i>	56
Work-based learning	57
Needs analysis and diagnostics	58
Field-Based Internships	60
Problem-based learning	61
Cohort grouping	63
Mentoring	64
Coaching	66
Action learning	67
Portfolio	67
<i>Leadership development: international perspectives</i>	68
Leadership preparation	68
Leadership training	72
Programme content	79
Recruitment and selection	84
Induction	90
Training experiences and impact	92
<i>Leadership development: a critical perspective</i>	95
Leadership concepts, theories and models	95
Leadership development concepts, theories and models	98
Leadership succession	99
Impact of leadership development on school outcomes	100

<i>Leadership development in Small Island developing states</i>	102
Defining Small Island States	103
Characteristics of Small Island States	103
Leadership Succession and Preparation	104
Leadership Selection and Development	105
<i>Leadership development in the Seychelles</i>	107
The Seychelles as a SIDS	107
Concepts of leadership and leadership development	107
Leadership preparation and training	108
Training experiences and impact	111
Leadership succession and selection	112
Summary	113
<b>3. Chapter Three: Methodology</b>	<b>115</b>
Introduction	115
Educational research	116
Research paradigms	118
Broad research approaches	121
Specific research methods and data collection	130
Evaluative research	141
Sampling	141
Instruments design and piloting	144
Research access	148
Insider researcher	148
Ethical issues	150
Validity, reliability and triangulation	152
Summary	156
<b>4. Chapter Four: Ministry of Education Staff Perceptions</b>	<b>157</b>
Introduction	157
<i>Leadership development approaches and practices</i>	158
Identification of leaders	158
Access to leadership preparation	160
Preparation of leaders before appointment	161
Selection and deployment of leaders	163
Induction, mentoring and support of leaders	167
Development of leaders after appointment	169
The nature of preparation and development arrangements	169
<i>Impact of leadership development on leadership practice</i>	170
Ministry of Education expectations and leadership practices	170
The effectiveness of leadership training	174
Observable changes that have taken place in schools	176
Graduate leaders' biggest challenges	178
Anticipated good practices	179
Summary	180
<b>5. Chapter Five: Pilot Survey Findings</b>	<b>182</b>
Introduction	182
Recruitment for leadership training	183
Participants' training experiences	185
Identification for post training roles	191

Impact of leadership development on leadership practice	192
Programme completion and leadership effectiveness	197
On going support and professional development	198
Implications of the pilot study	199
<b>6. Chapter Six: Main Survey Findings</b>	<b>201</b>
Introduction	201
Participants' profile and career progression	201
Recruitment for leadership training	205
Expectations and training experiences	209
Professionalism and leadership	221
Identification for post-training roles	225
Impact of leadership development on leadership practice	226
Programme completion and leadership effectiveness	241
On going support and professional development	243
Summary	245
<b>7. Chapter Seven: St. Catherine Case Study</b>	<b>247</b>
Introduction	247
Background	248
<i>Interviews of role sets</i>	250
Demographic data	251
Perceptions of the senior leader's practices and observable changes	252
Major changes and their impact on school outcomes	264
<i>Shadowing the headteacher</i>	269
The school assembly	271
School meetings	272
Lesson observations and conferencing with teachers	278
Professional development session	281
Contact and interaction with parents, staff and learners	282
<i>Documentary analysis</i>	285
Minutes of meetings	285
Management planner/records and teachers' plan/scheme/records	287
Subject reports	288
SIP three years development plan and evaluation report	289
Summary	294
<b>8. Chapter Eight: Analysis</b>	<b>296</b>
Introduction	296
Approaches to leadership development	296
Recruitment and selection for leadership training	300
Leadership succession and selection	303
Training expectations and experiences	308
Impact of leadership development on leadership practices	311
Impact of leadership development on school outcomes	316
Programme completion and leadership effectiveness	321
On going support and professional development	324
Summary	328

<b>9. Chapter Nine: Conclusion</b>	<b>330</b>
Introduction	330
Overview of main findings	330
Answering the research questions	334
Significance of the study	340
Towards a model for leadership development in SIDS	347
Limitations of the study	350
Recommendations	351
Proposed further research	353
Summary	354
<b>References</b>	<b>356</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>369</b>
Appendix 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d: Interview Schedules	
Appendix 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d: Interview Responses	
Appendix 3a, 3b and 3c: St. Catherine Case Study Observation Sheets	
Appendix 4: St. Catherine Case Study Table 7.15	

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This thesis is entirely my own original work and no part of it has been published previously. Neither has it been submitted for a degree at another university.

## **Abstract**

In common with many other countries including small island developing states (SIDS), the criteria for appointment as a head teacher in the Seychelles were not formalised but, in practice, promotion was based mainly on teaching qualifications and experience, level of commitment shown to education, and contributions made to public life.

Since 2002, educational leadership training has been offered to senior school leaders through a partnership between Seychelles and UK universities but it is not clear whether these qualifications enable head teachers to lead their institutions effectively. In practice, the acquisition of such training is being considered in the selection and appointment of senior school leaders but this is not yet an official policy.

This thesis reports research focused on people in headship and other senior leadership positions in Seychelles who have followed one of these programmes. The research is an evaluation of the leadership development project designed to inform senior ministry officials of its impact. It presents a critical view of leadership development and its impact in a specific context, a SIDS with a centralised education system.

In a survey involving 100% of these trained leaders, the interview responses highlight issues related to the basis of their selection for training and subsequent appointment in post; their training experiences, the extent to which they have been able to put into practice what they have learnt, and how their learning has impacted on their respective school. Responses obtained from senior Ministry officials show how the trained leaders' performance after training is perceived within the Ministry. A case study of a primary school examines in depth observable changes in leadership practices impacting on school outcomes that are attributed to leadership training and development.

The research shows that the Seychelles education system was very successful in preparing its leaders through partnerships with HE education bodies; with more than

90% of senior school leaders (heads and deputy heads) achieving a master's qualification. The findings also show a positive impact in terms of leaders' satisfaction with the course, changes in their knowledge, disposition and skills; changes in their leadership practices and, to some extent, improved school outcomes. The findings revealed a lack of established structures and comprehensive programmes for induction and mentoring of leaders; the lack of formal criteria and procedures for the selection of leaders for training, appointment, promotion and deployment; and limited provision for on-going support and continuous professional development. Central selection prevails with female domination of leadership positions at system and institutional levels.

The significance of this research is mainly in its originality as the only study of leadership development, and its impact on school outcomes, in Seychelles.

## Abbreviations used

<b>ADEA</b>	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
<b>COMESA</b>	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
<b>HoC</b>	Head of Cycle
<b>HoD</b>	Head of Department
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>IGCSE</b>	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>IIEP</b>	International Institute of Education Planning
<b>LMS</b>	Mathematics Lesson Structure
<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>NIE</b>	National Institute of Education
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PEC</b>	Parents Educators Council
<b>PTA</b>	Parents Teachers Association
<b>SACMEQ</b>	Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SBT</b>	School-Based Training
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing States
<b>SIP</b>	School Improvement Programme
<b>SIT</b>	School Improvement Team
<b>SMO</b>	Senior Ministry Officials
<b>SMT</b>	Senior Management Team
<b>TSS</b>	Teachers Scheme of Service

## **List of figures**

Figure 5.1	Skills Development	190
Figure 6.1	Participants' Work Place	202
Figure 6.2	Participants' range of years in service and current work	205
Figure 6.3	Areas in which participants felt they are professionally different	222
Figure 6.4	Participants' Skills Development	224
Figure 6.5	Participants' destination after leadership training	225
Figure 6.6	Participants' responses to indicated provisions	242
Figure 7.1	Comparison of the senior leaders' practices before and after training	264
Figure 7.2	The head teacher's planner for the week	270
Figure 7.3	Percentage of learners' grade score in 2007/8 Continuous assessment	292
Figure 7.4	School National Examination Mathematics mean from 2005 to 2007	293
Figure 9.1	The proposed model of leadership development in Small Island States	348

## List of tables

Table 4.1	Areas of concern	173
Table 5.1	General information about the Pilot Participants	182
Table 5.2	Pilot Participants' Career Path / Progression	183
Table 5.3	Most valuable aspects of the programme	187
Table 5.4	Least valuable aspects of the programme	188
Table 5.5	Most valuable course topics	188
Table 5.6	Strategies and their Intended and actual outcomes	195
Table 6.1	Participants' current leadership posts	203
Table 6.2	Percentage of participants in the various ranges of years in service	204
Table 6.3	Participants perception of selection criteria for leadership training	206
Table 6.4	Participants' Expectations of the MoE	211
Table 6.5	Participants' most valuable aspects of the course	218
Table 6.6	Participants' least valuable aspects of the course	219
Table 6.7	Participants' most valuable course topics	220
Table 6.8	Participants' least valuable course topics	221
Table 6.9	Trained leaders' major challenges after training	226
Table 6.10	Training aspects that were put into practice	227
Table 6.11	The main observable changes that have taken place	228
Table 6.12	SPDT Strategies and their Intended and Actual Outcomes	230
Table 6.13	LM Strategies and their Intended and Actual Outcomes	232

Table 6.14	TL Strategies and their Intended and Actual Outcomes	234
Table 6.15	CE Strategies and their Intended and Actual Outcomes	236
Table 6.16	SI Strategies and their Intended and Actual Outcomes	238
Table 6.17	PI Strategies and their Intended and Actual Outcomes	240
Table 7.1	Participants demographic data	251
Table 7.2	Personal contact and interaction before and after leadership training	253
Table 7.3	Support provision and communication before and After leadership training	254
Table 7.4	Participants' perception of leadership practices and professionalism	257
Table 7.5	Senior leader's relationships with staff, learners and parents	259
Table 7.6	Involvement of others in decision making and school activities	261
Table 7.7	Participants' responses to the impact on school ethos and climate	265
Table 7.8	Participants' responses to the impact on leadership and management	266
Table 7.9	Participants' responses to the impact on teaching and learning	267
Table 7.10	Participants' responses to the impact on parental involvement	268
Table 7.11	Conduct of assemblies before and after training	271
Table 7.12	The main issues discussed and decisions taken in the SIT / SMT Meeting	274
Table 7.13	Main school activities and targeted partners	276
Table 7.14	Evidence of the implementation of targeted activities in SIT and M	286

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

According to Adair (1998) and Bush (2003), the role of school leaders has changed over time, with a radical shift from administering the education system to one of leading and managing it. A lot of research has been carried out and literature published on educational issues such as professional development and training of people with key roles in the management, planning and finance of educational institutions (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Blandford and Squire, 2002; Brundrett, 2001; Jenkins, 1997). According to Milstein et al. (1993) leaders should lead by example and whenever they find themselves in such a position there is the awareness that whatever they say or do are being noted, copied and may be used for and against them, depending on the culture or nature of the environment they find themselves in. This illustrates the fact that leaders hold a lot of responsibility and accountability for the people as well as the institution in which the person works (Davies et al., 1990). Therefore, appropriate training and development strategies need to be established based on a careful analysis and creating the capability to act (ibid).

This chapter explains the context of the research. It highlights the main concepts involved such as school leaders, educational leadership and leadership development. It describes the Seychelles educational system, educational institutions and their management structures, and the main roles of school leaders. It also examines the political context, including various reforms of the Seychelles educational system, the Mission statement of the Ministry of Education, the aspect of quality and leadership development, and the school improvement programme. The chapter concludes by

setting out the aims and objectives of the research as well as the main research questions.

## **The Theoretical Context**

### School leaders and leadership development

Leaders are people who have the capacity to motivate and inspire others to think beyond their current frameworks to what is desirable, necessary and possible (Latchem and Hanna, 2001). In education such leaders are categorized as headteacher, headmaster or headmistress, principals, directors, deputy heads and heads of department, depending on the country or state where they work.

According to Everard and Morris (1985), Adair (1998), and MacBeth and Myers (1999), the art of good leadership is highly prized and demands a keen ability to appraise, understand and inspire both colleagues and subordinates. Milstein et al. (1993), and Latchem and Hanna (2001), stress that the proof of leadership lies not in the words but in the actions, and that everything the leader may do, however casual, will be taken by staff as planned and meaningful. That is why it is unfair, if not immoral, to give a person a leadership job without giving him or her some training for leadership (Adair, 1998). It is unfair on that person, but it is even rougher for those whom he is expected to lead (ibid). Heads require subject degree qualifications, teaching certificates, experience of classroom teaching, expertise in managing people, organizational and communications skills (MacBeth and Myers, 1999).

These are qualities that all stakeholders in education expect from the person leading educational institutions.

Leadership is central to the effective management of educational institutions. Successive HMI reports have identified the quality of leadership as the crucial determinant in creating an ethos which allows a school to operate to maximum effect (Davies et al., 1990; Bush 2008). If the leadership of educational institutions is to be effective then appropriate training and development strategies must be established (Davies, 1989; Bush, 2008). According to Milstein et al. (1993), and Bush (2008), it is imperative that leadership development is integrated at all levels in order to develop effective site-based school management with empowered, professional staff.

#### Educational leadership concepts

Definitions of the concept of leadership are contested as there is little agreement among educators and researchers as to the exact meaning of the term. Bush (2003), states that there is no agreed definition of the concept of leadership. Southworth (1998) points out that, while defining the term, some authors emphasize power and see leaders as authority figures while others regard leadership as organizing and motivating groups to set goals and to accomplish them - "leadership has to do with organizational change, making progress and moving forward" (p.8). According to him, leadership is about behaviour; action oriented and is improving the quality of what we do.

Dublin (1968) saw leadership as “the exercise of authority and the making of decisions” (p.385). Burns (1978) argues that leadership involves a relationship of shared intention or purpose among persons regardless of whether they are power holders or recipients, in the realization of the collective act.

Bush and Glover (2002), Cuban (1988) and Yukl (1994) agree that influence seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership. The influence process is seen as purposeful in that it is intended to lead to specific outcomes.

Some constructs of leadership focus on the need for leadership to be grounded in firm personal and professional values (Bush, 2003). According to Greenfield (1986), “leadership is a willful act where one person attempts to construct the social world of others” (p.142), and believes that leaders will try to commit others to the values that they themselves believe are good.

Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) say that “outstanding leaders have a vision of their schools – a mental picture of a preferred future – which is shared with all in the school community” (p.99). According to Bush (2003), vision is increasingly regarded as an essential component of effective leadership. By motivating people and helping them to identify with task and the goal, leadership attracts and energises people to enroll in a vision of the future (Bennis, 1997).

The vast literature on leadership has generated many models. The main broad ones are: managerial, instructional, transactional, transformational, and participative

(Bush, 2003). These and other models, such as traditional, conventional, contingent, and moral, will be discussed in chapter two.

### Leadership and management

Several authors have sought to differentiate between management and leadership. Bush (2003), states that there is significant overlap in the meanings of the twin concepts of leadership and management. Southworth (1998) believes that both management and leadership involve working with people. According to Nicholson (1989) and Adair (1998), leadership is an essential part of managing and should be seen as the core of the activity of management. Yukl (2002) points to the ongoing debate about the relationship between these terms and the extent to which they are similar or different:

“There is a continuing controversy about the difference between leadership and management. It is obvious that a person can be a leader without being a manager (e.g. an informal leader), and a person can be a manager without leading ... Nobody has proposed that managing and leading are equivalent, but the degree of overlap is a point of sharp disagreement” (p.5).

Cuban (1988) links leadership with change while management is seen as a maintenance activity. He stresses the importance of both,

“By leadership, I mean influencing others in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently they initiate change to reach existing and new goals. ... Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. I prize both managing and leading and attach no special value to either since different settings and times call for varied responses” (Cuban, 1988, p.xx).

Bush (1998) associates leadership with values or purpose while management relates to implementation or technical issues. James and Connolly (2000) view leadership as being concerned with change and influence, relationships and people, strategy, inspiring and motivating, and the creation of meaning – while managing is concerned with stasis authority (usually hierarchical), ensuring correct operations and controlling, monitoring and problem solving. Fidler (1997) believes in a firm distinction between leadership and management. He claims that they have an “intimate connection” and “a great deal of overlap, particularly in respect of motivating people and giving a sense of purpose to the organization” (p.26).

### **Leadership Development Context**

High-quality leadership is widely acknowledged to be one of the most important requirements for successful schools (Bush and Jackson, 2002). However, much less is known about what forms of leadership development produce enhanced leadership that leads to school improvement (Bush and Glover, 2004).

According to Crow (2001), the nature of work is changing significantly in post-industrial society and that this change affects the role of the headteacher. Neill and Lewis (1997) believe that leadership in the post-modern or ‘post-information’ age is characterized by lifelong learning, learning to learn and just-in-time learning. Bush and Glover’s (2004) report shows the impact of culture, philosophical approaches, hierarchical structures and, particularly, technology, on leadership development.

The content of school leadership development programmes has considerable similarities in different countries. Bush and Jackson (2002, p.420-421) identified the following common elements:

- leadership; including vision, mission and transformational leadership
- learning and teaching, or ‘instructional leadership’
- financial management
- management of external relations.

According to Hartle and Thomas (2003), the new models of school leadership, which place greater emphasis on distributed leadership, learner-centred leadership and collaborative leadership, have a significant impact on leadership succession/leadership development practices adopted in schools. In this context, the term leadership succession refers to the development of leadership talent at all levels and, as such, requires more attention and focus by all schools and education authorities.

Given that people are the most important resource in educational organizations, it is a truism to say that appointing senior school leaders is the most important task that managers undertake (Middlewood, 1997). The task itself involves encouraging the ‘best’ people for the job (ibid) but that is not always easy, especially for countries, such as the Seychelles, where the selection criteria are not officially documented and the posts are not advertised.

The OECD (2002) produced a wide-ranging review of leadership development in the public sector, including the UK, the USA, Germany, Sweden, Norway and Mexico.

It points to seven general trends across its member countries:

- developing systematic strategies for leadership development
- setting up new institutions for leadership development
- linking existing management training to leadership development

- defining a competence profile for future leaders
- identifying and selecting potential leaders
- encouraging mentoring and training
- ensuring sustainable leadership development

These seven trends resonate strongly with patterns of leadership development within education, notably in England (Bush and Glover, 2004).

### Leadership development concepts

Leadership development is defined as “expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and process” (Day, 2001, p.582). According to him, leadership development is capacity building:

“Expanded capacity provides for better individual and collective adaptability across a wide range of situations. A leadership development approach is oriented toward building capacity in anticipation of unseen challenges” (p.582).

Crow (2001) links leadership preparation to two forms of socialization, or “learning a new role” (p.2):

- professional; preparing to take an occupational role, such as headteacher
- organizational; focusing on the specific context where the role is being performed

West-Burnham and O’Sullivan (1998) distinguish between “fragmented” in-service training and professional development that is “a balanced and co-ordinated strategy”

(p.5). Leadership development is linked to personal and professional learning:

“The primary criterion for leadership is the ability to learn from experiences in order to enhance ... capability ... If leadership is to be developed in everyone then they have to be helped to process their personal and professional experiences through a value system and in response to others in order to evolve a growing understanding of what it means to be a leader” (ibid, p.24).

According to Pettitt (1999), training should be situated in the context and experiences of the leader and be problem-solving in nature. He advocates mentoring, action-learning projects and reality-based case methods as appropriate training formats for leaders.

Mole (2000) provides a useful distinction between training, education and development:

- the focus of training is the employee's present job
- the focus of education is the employee's future job
- the focus of development is the organization. "Development programmes prepare individuals to move in the new directions that organizational change may require" (p.22).

Lashway (2002) stresses the importance of distributed leadership and presents the following approaches to leadership development:

- cohort programmes where people work with peers
- case studies and problem-based learning
- extended internships (p.4).

Leadership for learning, according to Stoll (2001), requires a learning vision, creating the right emotional learning climate, building an inclusive learning community, and practicing organizational learning.

Bierema (1997) believes that "learning organizations have the advantage of turning their learning upon themselves in an effort to improve their process and structure" (p.38). Hopkins et al. (1997, 2000) argue that school leadership, and therefore leadership development, needs to be differentiated to take account of the different stages of the school improvement journey.

## Approaches to leadership development

There are different methods and approaches to leadership development and in evaluating these programmes one needs to consider the importance of culture and context, as what works well in one context may not translate easily into another (Dimmock, 1996). Some models and approaches are briefly explained below and more detailed information will be provided in chapter two.

### *Field-based internship and problem-based learning*

According to Devita (2005), programme content should be delivered through a variety of methods to meet the needs of adult learners and to allow principals or aspiring principals to apply the curricular content in authentic settings and toward the resolution of real-world problems and dilemmas. He stressed the need to create real and stimulating leadership experiences for participants in preparation programmes who would otherwise lack the experiential base. Field-based internships and problem-based learning exposed participants to situations requiring the application of acquired skills, knowledge, and problem-solving strategies within authentic settings, guided by critical self-reflection (ibid).

### *Work-based learning*

Work-based learning is a significant element of school leaders' development (Bush and Glover, 2004), although according to Handy (1993, p.219) "learning by experience, left to itself, can be a painful and tedious experience". Most leaders in many countries have received no specific preparation for headship (Kandasamy &

Blaton, 2004). They learn ‘on the job’ and by watching others perform the role (Adey, 2000). Lovely (1999) describes a ‘grow your own’, in-house leadership development model in Santa Cruz. This is an apprenticeship model with mentors and apprentices committing to shared outcomes.

#### *Needs analysis and diagnostics*

West-Burnham (1998) stresses the importance of ‘needs analysis and diagnostics’ in determining the nature of leadership development - “needs analysis provides the crucial information to ensure professional learning is appropriate, valid and relevant” (p.99).

#### *Action learning and cohort groups*

Action learning and cohort groups are models that provide a continuous learning and reflection by a ‘set’ of people using an ‘experiential learning cycle’ and show how action learning can contribute to management development through the development of the individual manager and the organization as a whole (McGill and Beaty, 1995; Barnett et al. 2000).

#### *Mentoring and coaching*

The use of mentors in educational administration training programmes has become increasingly popular in recent years (Davis et al. 2005). Bush and Glover (2004) add that mentoring has become increasingly important as a mode of leadership development in many countries, including Australia, England and Wales, Singapore

and the USA. They believe that “mentoring is often highly successful in promoting the development of practicing and aspiring leaders” (p.16). In well-structured mentoring programs, the mentor and mentee make a mutual commitment to work collaboratively and toward the accomplishment of an individually tailored professional development plan (Daresh, 2001). Coaching can be seen as the most effective management approach (Davies, 1996), and it differs from mentoring because it stresses the skills development dimension (Bassett, 2001).

## **The National Context**

### The Seychelles

The republic of Seychelles is a ‘small island developing state’ (SIDS) with a population of 85,000 and a small economy (Cammish, 1984). It is an archipelago of 115 islands with a total land area of 445 square kilometres and is situated in the Indian Ocean east of Africa. There are three main islands; Mahe the largest and where Victoria the capital of Seychelles is situated, Praslin and La Digue (Seychelles in Figures, 2002). The Seychellois people are trilingual and can speak and write in Creole, English and French, the three national languages of the country.

### The education system

The Ministry of Education in the Seychelles provides the foundation of Human Resource Development for the whole nation through the school system. Its mission is to provide a system of education based on quality which will promote the development of each individual - they in turn will contribute towards the

development of the social and economic development of the country (Choppy et al., 2000).

Education in the Seychelles is comprehensive, co-educational and free of charge to all Seychellois children of Crèche, Primary and Secondary school age. The zoning system exists whereby each child of primary school age must attend the school in the family's district of residence, and those of secondary school age in their regions/zones.

In terms of accountability, education is a major beneficiary of government expenditure and in times of stringent spending, the system is required to become more efficient and show that it has clear processes for evaluating outcomes.

#### Administrative structure

Seychelles is characterized by a highly centralized and bureaucratic education system with a common National Curriculum Framework, common textbooks and learning/teaching materials. The Ministry of Education and Youth regulates school activities through the individual headteachers and controls facilities, resources, staffing, and budgetary allocation. The intention is to provide equal opportunities for all and to distribute resources equitably (Leste, 2002).

All governmental educational institutions in the Seychelles falls under two main divisions of the Ministry of Education, each of which is under the direct responsibility of a director general (DG).

(a) The *Schools Division* – consist of two main sections; the non-formal, crèche and primary education section, and the secondary schools section. Both are headed by a director assisted by education coordinators known as professional support providers. They assist schools with development planning, mentoring of Senior Management Team (SMT), conduct professional development training sessions for school leaders, participate in the recommendation for the selection, appointment and placement of school leaders and propose names of those in need of training. There are 25 district primary schools and ten regional secondary schools scattered over the three main largest islands. Praslin, having two primary schools and one secondary school, and La Digue with only one combined school. The primary schools vary in size, the smallest having only one class in each year including the Multigrade school on Silhouette (the fourth most populated island). Appraisal of headteachers is conducted annually by their immediate supervisor at system level.

(b) The *Technical and Further Education Division* - responsible for most post secondary educational institutions and training centres, and tertiary educational programmes conducted locally. There are altogether seven such institutions/centres, which are; School of Advanced Level studies (SALS), Polytechnic Business & Secretarial Programme Area, Polytechnic Visual Arts Programme Area, Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT), Seychelles Agricultural and Horticultural Training Centre (SAHTC), National Institute of Health and Social studies (NIHSS), and the Maritime Training Centre (MTC).

With the opening of the University of Seychelles (UniSey) in 2009 the National Institute of Education (NIE) has been restructured into the new School of Education

in the UniSey's Science Faculty. The school of education is responsible for teacher training.

Approval for the selection (for headship and training), appointment and placement of headteachers, heads and directors of post secondary institutions, is granted by the principal secretary of the Education department and Minister for Education and Human Resources.

#### Management structure and patterns of accountability

In a climate of increased competitiveness and raising expectations from students, parents and the community, there is a corresponding pressure on educational institutions and governments to be more accountable for educational provision and outcomes. All educational institutions in the Seychelles are led by a head teacher, principal or director. In secondary schools, head teachers are assisted by two deputies, one for lower secondary (secondary year one to year three) and one for upper secondary (secondary year four and five), five heads of department (HoD) and two heads of cycle (HoC).

In primary schools, head teachers are assisted by one deputy head in medium and to extra- large schools only; subject coordinators (SC) for cycles one (crèche to primary year 2), two (primary year three and four) and three (primary year four and five). Assistant directors, course leaders and/or heads of programme assist the director in post secondary institutions. The deputies for lower and upper secondary, HoDs, SCs are responsible for curriculum implementation and pastoral care. The HoCs assists

mainly with the implementation of the ‘whole school behaviour management policy. They all constitute the school management team. The administrative assistant in schools takes care of all the non-teaching (known as support) staff, financial and other administrative matters (Barallon et al., 2005, unpublished).

The level of accountability relates directly to the post occupied and the responsibilities attached to it. The headteachers / directors assume overall responsibility for the overall performance of their respective educational institutions, are the main liaison persons and answer directly to their immediate supervisor at system level. Although the Ministry of Education and Human Resources (MoEHR), as the parent Ministry for educational provision in the country, has overall control of all educational matters, accountability is a requirement for all partners and stakeholders in education - holding people accountable for their actions is a shared concern.

#### The functions and standards of headship in the Seychelles

In line with the ‘key areas of headship’ identified for the Seychelles context (Ministry of Education and Youth, 2002), the ‘key functions of headship’ show the Ministry’s expectations of school leaders. The success of the school is critically linked to the ‘leadership’ of the headteacher, so s/he is expected to be in the forefront in establishing positive expectations and standards for the school through the adoption of leadership styles which encourage participation and collaborative decision-making. This can be achieved through working in partnership with members of the management team, staff, pupils, parents and the community at large. To obtain

support and quality assistance from other leaders in the school, it is important that the headteachers encourage and develop the leadership of others.

In terms of ‘strategic planning and school development’, the headteacher is expected to give direction and ensure that the school is managed in such a way so as to support continuous improvement and raise the standards achieved by pupils. As such, he / she need to develop shared vision by articulating and building support for vision among staff, pupils, parents and community. To work as a team to draw up the school development plan and established structures for implementation, monitoring and evaluating the plan against targets set, is regarded as very important.

As the most senior leader, the head is expected to ensure the overall quality of education and the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the school; by establishing and implementing whole school policies for monitoring the curriculum, monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of learning and achievement of all learners.

To support the above, headteachers are expected to achieve the highest standards for teachers and develop their expertise and enthusiasm by establishing and maintaining proper and effective channels of communication, involving them in school activities through delegation of responsibilities and tasks. Identification of staff training needs and the provision of school-based training opportunities promote staff development.

Within the context of national policies and available resources, safe working conditions and learning environments are considered to be of great importance,

alongside the management of school fund and budget, maintaining financial records and the maintenance of infrastructure/furniture.

In order to serve the interests of children and young pupils, and ensure the integral development of all, establishing an effective pastoral system, for the welfare and personal and social development of learners, is a task for the headteacher. S/he is also expected to set up and support learners' representative bodies to encourage the involvement of students in school life.

To act as the learning professional and demonstrate commitment to their own learning and continuous professional development, the headteacher is expected to develop effective links with schools for sharing of good practices, participate and provide input into various committees set up at ministry level to guide educational development.

The establishment of structures for greater involvement of parents in school life, including setting up and ensuring the effective running of Parents' Teachers' Association (PTA), is regarded as necessary in order to engage parental and community commitment to school aims. It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that the community is involved and is up to date with school activities through publicity (Ministry of Education and Youth, 2002).

## **The Policy Context**

### Background

Since its independence in 1976, the Seychelles government has been transforming and expanding its education system while at the same time trying to maintain high quality standards (Carron and Mahshi, 2006). This achievement has been possible due to a strong political commitment to education, which led to three successive reform initiatives in 1978, 1991 and 1998 (ibid). The most recent reform followed the re-introduction of the multi-party system in 1993, when the policy '*Education for a New Society*' was developed (Ministry of Education, 1984).

Whilst it is recognized that significant achievement have been registered through these three fundamental reforms, there is also the realization that very little attention has been paid to the reform process itself and to how the management system has been carrying out these reforms. The need to give greater focus to the reform process, with the emphasis placed on leadership development, is perhaps more pressing now and for the future reform initiatives, given the emphasis on the principles of democracy, openness and transparency called for in the policy document '*Education for a Learning Society*' (Ministry of Education, 2000). This document sets out seven principles: *equity, quality, and accountability, education for empowerment, education for productivity, education for social cohesion and education for global participation.*

It is now generally accepted that the ‘effective’ development of education and training systems depends on the government’s ability to develop a workable process of implementing coherent educational policies and capacity to translate policies into realistic investment and implementation (Carron & Mahshi, 2006).

### The Seychelles education reforms

During the years that followed the takeover by a national government, the dual system inherited from the colonial power was abolished and several measures were taken to extend access to education. It was made free of charge, including free transport from home to school, free provision of text-books and materials and free provision of school meals (Ministry of Education, 1984). At the same time, efforts were made to extend, renovate and rationalize the primary and secondary school network and to expand systematic pre-school education from the age of 3.5 years. Creole was introduced as the language of instruction in the first grades of primary schools and a National Institute of pedagogy (later called the National Institute of Education and now the UniSey’s School of Education) was created in order to reinforce pre and in-service training of teachers. As a result, by the end of the 1990s, the Seychelles had already achieved universal participation in ten year compulsory basic education combined with nearly universal enrolment in two-year pre-primary crèche education and broad access to post-secondary education (Ministry of Education, 1998; Leste, 2002; Carron and Mahshi, 2006).

The reform of 1998 aimed at consolidating what had already been achieved in terms of access and equity, while trying to focus its attention on the improvement of the

quality and relevance of the education services being provided. Although, the reform, guided by ten major goals, has been implemented (Ministry of Education, 2000; Carron and Mahshi, 2006), there are still areas such as accountability and transparency in the sharing of educational information that need due consideration for improvement.

### The quality of the Seychelles education system

Quality improvement has been a priority concern of the 1998 Reform and has led to the implementation of a number of programmes and activities, which have produced good results. These developments include: the renewal of the curriculum; the revision of the examination and testing system, the new impetus given to pre-service and in-service teacher training by the creation of the NIE; the improvement of the working conditions of teachers by the approval of a new Teacher's Scheme of Service (TSS); the introduction of a special training program for school managers; and the introduction and generalization of the School Improvement Programme (SIP). The good results obtained by the primary school sixth grade pupils at the SACMEQ tests (Leste, 2002) and by the secondary five (S5) leavers at the recently adopted IGCSE, as well as the statistics of admission to post secondary institution (Ministry of Education, 2006; 2007) can be served as indicators of the quality of the Seychelles education system. However, educators are also being sensitized to focus strongly on learners that have been and are being 'left behind'. Moreover, there is anticipation that once all school leaders are trained in leadership, the overall performance of educational institutions should improve.

## The School Improvement Programme

The introduction of the school improvement programme was intended to be the driving force behind the quality improvement strategy of the Ministry and the achievements made so far. After a first period of running the programme on a pilot basis, and testing out the best implementation modalities, the programme has been fully integrated in the regular structures of the Ministry. Within the Schools' Division of the Ministry, a cadre of 'Support Providers' is fully operational for both primary and secondary schools, while at institutional level itself appropriate structures have been put in place to monitor the school improvement program, including the creation of a School Improvement Team and the appointment of 'Professional Development' Coordinators (known as Education Coordinators). As a result of this external and internal support system, School Development Planning, which is the device for quality improvement, has now been established throughout the system. Whether such changes have been positively accepted by all school members, and have impacted on schools, are questions that are still unanswered. Although schools have become quite proficient in preparing satisfactory plan documents, with the support of Education Coordinators, they have become increasingly more accustomed to using plans for the monitoring and evaluation purposes (Khosa et al, 2002; Carron & Mahshi, 2006). In that respect, the headteachers' role is considered crucial in ensuring that leaders in their respective schools are being properly led in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation process of their development and action plans, paying particular attention to how activities undertaken are impacting on their school performance. Although training for senior school leaders is taking place, schools leaders taking responsibility for

their own planning (strategically and conscientiously) and implementation of activities, so as to bring about an improvement in students' performance, is not yet evident.

### Communication with schools

Because the Seychelles is a small country, there are good links between the Ministry of Education and its educational institutions. In 2005, there were only 79 educational institutions in the country: 32 crèche, 25 primary schools and 1 special education school, 13 secondary schools (including 3 private schools) and 8 post secondary institutions. These numbers allow for frequent visits to all the schools by Ministry staff (Carron & Mahshi, 2006). Although, direct contacts between Ministry staff and school staff are frequent, most practical problems are not solved quickly. This is because schools are requested to forward their concerns to the Ministry in written form, and the procedures for dealing with them are too bureaucratic. This has the tendency to create frustration between the Ministry and school leaders especially in areas related to student discipline, staff conduct, and parental involvement. Although, a Parents Educators Council (PEC) exists, chaired by the Minister himself to strengthen parental involvement in educational matters, it has yet to fulfill its purpose in bring the community closer to schools and reinforcing parent-teacher relationships (ibid).

To strengthen parental involvement, and reinforce transparency of educational information, The Education Service Bureau (ESB) was established. Its main purpose is to disseminating information to all stakeholders in education and creating

transparency in regards to press release published documents. So far, transparency of educational information is still an area of concern (Carron & Mahshi, 2006).

The introduction of a support system for schools as part of the School Improvement Programme however, has contributed to making relations between the Ministry and schools more intensive and cordial (ibid). The regular contacts with the support providers are appreciated by school management and teaching staff and brought about certain improvement in the communication between the Ministry and schools (Carron & Mahshi, 2006). Although the frequent meetings with senior school leaders at Ministry level have developed a certain amount of mutual trust and confidence in the sharing of information on good practice, and in identifying the type and nature of support that are appropriate for specific schools (Networking Reports, unpublished), some secondary school senior leaders still feel that the support being provided is not adequate (Elizabeth, 2006). These conflicting views provide the researcher with an important area for investigation.

#### Leadership development context

The mission statement of the Seychelles Ministry of Education is to build a coherent and comprehensive system of quality education and training, reflecting shared universal and national values, which will promote the integrated development of the person and empower him or her to participate fully in social and economic development (Ministry of Education and Youth, 2000).

The problem with such an impressive statement is that it may hold true for some people in the education system but not for all headteachers as well as members of the senior and middle management teams in schools. Until recently, the criteria to become a headteacher had not been formalized and promotion was based mainly on; teaching experience, qualifications obtained as a teacher, level of commitment shown to education and contributions made to public life (Leste, 2002). Now training in leadership and management is being considered in the selection and appointment of secondary school heads but there is no written or published document. Being a small island developing state (SIDS), with a population of about eighty thousand, all decision making in educational matters is taken at Ministry level. Implementation takes place through a top-down strongly centralized and bureaucratic model. However, the promotion of such values as 'education for all' and 'education for life-long learning' (Ministry Policy Statement, 2000) have made the government of Seychelles realize that success in teaching and learning will depend on how effective the school leaders are in leading their school towards improvement. Thus training for leaders is being provided (Padiwalla, 1995; Leste, 2000).

Through the impact of globalization, and the fact that the international global market trend was towards the effectiveness of leadership for quality teaching and learning, the Seychelles' Ministry of Education felt the urgent need for change. As a result, in 1992 the Ministry, in partnership with the University of 'Quebec a Trois Riviere' organised a diploma course in 'Educational Administration' through distance education (Padiwalla, 1995). This was carried out over a period of three years for a total of forty headteachers and senior studies coordinators for both primary and secondary schools (ibid). With the inception and full implementation of the school

improvement programme (SIP), the need for more qualified leaders to lead such a programme was of paramount importance. The SIP baseline evaluation study (Khosa et al., 2002) led to strong recommendations in respect of leadership training and development of school leaders. In reaction to these recommendations, the Ministry of Education developed a project for the training of school leaders.

### The leadership training project

One of the core values of the Ministry's policy statement, *Education for a learning Society*, states that in carrying out its mission, the Ministry of Education is committed to

“establishing a system of human resource training and development which produces a strong cadre of leaders and managers in education” (Ministry of Education, 2000, p.6).

In line with this statement, the Seychelles government has invested heavily in a project that forms part of the National Action Plan 2001-2015 (Ministry of Education 2002) for ‘Leadership and Management Training Programmes for School Leaders’.

The goals of this plan are:

- Introduce participants to new management and leadership theories and allow them to reflect critically on current practice
- Equip staff who hold managerial responsibilities with knowledge and skills to succeed as managers in a new competitive and “accountable” educational environment
- Enable practicing and prospective school managers to acquire new skills in development planning, monitoring of teaching and learning and evaluation processes so as to be able to better monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to report effectively on the school's performance to a wide variety of audiences

- Allow participants to study for a recognized degree in educational management which will increase their-confidence and gain them the respect of the schools and communities they serve.

In 2002, five senior school leaders embarked on a one year full time study for a Master of Arts degree in Organisation, Planning and Management in Education with the University of Reading in UK, which they all successfully completed. However, such a small number of trained leaders could not do the job of effectively leading all schools in the Seychelles in achieving excellent outcomes.

The government of the Seychelles, therefore, in line with the project embarked on an ambitious programme to ensure that all school leaders were trained at postgraduate level in areas of management and leadership. In 2003, a proposal was drafted for a partnership to be established between Seychelles National Institute of Education (NIE) and the University of Lincoln in the UK to train up to one hundred school leaders through an MBA in Educational Leadership (Ministry of Education and Youth, 2003). By the end of 2006, two cohorts had completed their MBA training and most of them are currently posted in schools as headteachers, deputy heads and middle managers. Nine out of ten current secondary school heads have gone through the leadership training programme. From 2007, senior leaders' training is being developed in partnership with the University of Warwick and school leaders are working towards an MA in Educational Leadership and Innovation.

Support providers working very closely with schools have noted certain issues which are both positive and negative (Schools Evaluation and Progress Reports; QA Schools' Evaluation Reports; Support Providers' Schools' Report). This raises the concern of what criteria are used for selecting school leaders for training,

appointment and placement, as well as what is being done at ministry level to support the newly qualified graduates.

There is a sound belief among educators that efficient school leadership and good school results are closely if not directly linked (Wee, 1999; Harris, 2004; Church, 2005). The government's acknowledgement that not all school leaders can achieve post graduate certification level is important. To meet the needs of such leaders an Advanced Diploma in Educational Leadership (ADEL) has been launched locally, as a bridging programme for the MBA thus providing school leaders without a first degree to obtain training in educational leadership aspects at a much higher level - i.e. post graduate. To date 79 school leaders have successfully completed the ADEL programme. A total of 72 leaders have successfully completed one of the Master's programmes.

This research is partly an evaluation of the leadership development project, designed to inform the minister and senior officials of its impact. It is appropriate to take stock of the trained leaders' experience of their training, to what extent they have been able to put into practice what they have learnt and how it has impacted on their respective schools.

#### The masters' programmes' aims and content

Participants involved in the research have followed one of three Masters' programmes from different universities in the United Kingdom, namely; Reading, Lincoln and Warwick. The University of Reading Masters in Organisation, Planning

and Management in Education (MA in OPM Ed.) programme's aim is to enable educational professionals from all sectors of Education to interrogate and reflect upon their professional practice and their experience of management, organisation, policy and planning through the utilisation of theories, concepts and practical skills introduced to them in the programme. The programme develops transferable skills and the course content includes organisational change, leading and managing educational change, leadership and management, strategic and development planning, educational policy and finance, quality education and team building (Reading, Institute of Education MA in OPM in Ed. Handbook, 2002).

The University of Lincoln's International MBA in Educational Leadership programme's aim is to improve the quality of leadership and management practices, to develop the strategic capacity of the participants in order for the institution to become competitive in a knowledge-based economy. The course content includes: quality and effectiveness; organisation and change; high performance and teams; international experience; strategic leadership; finance and marketing; and student achievement and leadership study (University of Lincoln International Institute for Education Leadership, MBA in Educational Leadership (International) Seychelles Programme Handbook, 2003).

The University of Warwick's MA in Educational Leadership and Innovation programme's aim is to work with the professional as a reflective practitioner to make strong links between theory and practice, to enable participants to develop their abilities as educational leaders and innovators. The content of the course includes: leading educational change and improvement; creating and sustaining learning

cultures; leading education enquiry; and policy, strategy and resources in education (The University of Warwick, Post graduate Study and Research programmes, Brochure Shaping Futures, 2007).

### The role of the researcher

The researcher's role within the Ministry of Education is that of a support provider to the secondary schools' management and teaching staff. The role entails regular visits to secondary educational institutions; attending school committee meetings, annual educational and co-curricular activities involving learners, parents and school staff; conducting classroom observations, checking records, and assisting with staff professional development sessions at system and institution levels. The supportive nature of the researcher's role serves to build trust, strengthen communication and information sharing on school performance, between system and institution leaders. The researcher's role with the Ministry of Education raises issues that will be discussed in chapter three.

### **Aim and Objectives**

The research focuses on leadership development, notably on people in headship and other senior leadership positions in educational institutions in the Seychelles who have taken one or more of these partnership programmes.

### Aim of the research

The aim of this research is to investigate the various aspects of leadership development in the Seychelles, school leaders' experience of training and the impact of the graduates' practices on the overall improvement of their schools.

### Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the research are to:

- (a) Evaluate the process by which secondary school leaders are identified and recruited for leadership training
- (b) Establish the relationship between recruitment and subsequent appointment in schools or the education system
- (c) Explore the criteria for appointment to headship and other senior leadership positions
- (d) Assess the leaders' perceptions of their training experience
- (e) Assess the impact of the training on leaders' subsequent practices
- (f) Examine the type of support or current professional development made available to new leaders
- (g) Assess the impact of the training on other leaders
- (h) Assess the impact of the training on school outcomes
- (i) Obtain the perspective of senior Ministry staff on the impact of leadership development in schools.

## Research questions and explanations

The main research questions are:

- (1) *What is the process by which school leaders are identified and recruited to take part in the MBA/MA programme in educational leadership?*

According to Nicholson (1989), and Kandasamy and Baton (2004), countries with centralized educational systems never have to take a more crucial decision than when they appoint a head of their school. The quality of school life – its vigour, ethos, effectiveness, sensitivity and motivation – has been shown to depend, to a very substantial degree, upon the quality of that appointment (Jenkins (1997). This question relates to the process used for identifying and recruiting school leaders to take part in the current training programme being offered in the Seychelles. It will serve to clarify the process in terms of the procedures used and formalities that exist, the criteria that are used, the key people involved in the process and their role. (Objectives a, b and c)

- (2) *What are the experiences of the participants taking part in these programmes?*

Here, the important issues to be highlighted are those to do with how the participants feel about the training programmes in terms of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction in meeting their needs and expectations, the quality and standard, enjoyment and fulfillment of being a participant, and the relevance of the content to their role as a senior school leader. The difference in the experiences of participants who have had

specific training before they take up post (pre-service), and those whose training took place while they were in post (in-service), will be significant in terms of the timing for training (career progression) and the acquisition of knowledge and experience prior to and after training. (Objectives d and e)

(3) *What is the process by which participants taking part in these programmes are identified for leadership roles following completion of the programme?*

In line with the concept of succession planning, the procedures adopted in the process of identifying trained participants to undertake leadership roles in schools will be examined. What are the key qualities that are looked for in such leaders, the criteria used and how do they differ from those used for untrained leaders? Issues of advertisement of post, the required qualifications, personal skills and attitudes, the number of candidates required as per the manpower planning quota for present and future posts, will be highlighted. Such information will provide the researcher with an insight into what issues are considered of paramount importance when leaders are being identified for leadership roles following completion of training. (Objectives a, c and d)

(4) *What is the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools?*

The issue of the impact of leadership development on leadership practice is a central aspect of this research. This question will bring to light aspects of leadership training experience, and its influence on leadership practice, and how such practices have impacted in the school so as to bring about improvement. It will serve to examine the

leaders' perception of their training experience and how it has impacted on their current practices. (Objective e)

*(5) To what extent is the effectiveness of school leaders enhanced following successful completion of the programme?*

Given the international evidence on the relationship between effective management and school outcomes, governments and professionals in most countries now recognize the importance of providing specific preparation for principals rather than simply assuming that good teachers will inevitably be equally competent as school leaders (Bush and Jackson, 2002). This question seeks to find out the extent to which trained leaders' practice has enhanced the leadership aspect of other leaders in their school and their own ability to discharge their responsibilities. It will serve to assess the impact of the training on other leaders and on school outcomes. (Objective g and h)

*(6) What arrangements exist for the ongoing support and professional development of graduates from the MBA/MA?*

This question relates to the provision available for ongoing support and professional development of graduates of the current Seychelles programme, at both macro and micro level. The research will examine the support and CPD available to School leaders, including the way they are organized, planned and implemented. The roles of the Schools' Division directors and support providers towards the induction and mentoring of newly graduate leaders will be highlighted as well as other provision

such as school-based training sessions, support through school visits and others.

(Objective f)

(7) *What are the perceptions of senior Ministry officials of the impact of leadership development on leadership practices in schools?*

The Ministry of Education has invested in the development of school leaders in order to improve performance of schools. This question intends to obtain the views of Ministry based personnel whose work is directly related to or influences schools. Such views will give the Ministry's perspective in regard to the actual practices of current heads and senior trained school leaders. It will serve to obtain information on leaders' practices and their impact on educational institutions from a different perspective and will be useful to triangulate against the leaders' experience and perceptions.

### **Summary**

Outstanding leadership has emerged as a key characteristic of outstanding schools. There can no longer be doubt that those seeking quality in education must ensure its presence and that the development of potential leaders must be given priority (Beare et al., 1993). In this chapter, several concepts of leadership were reviewed to provide a context for the discussion of leadership development. Alternative models of leadership development were reviewed, including personalized and contextual learning, career-long learning and distributive leadership learning, and models such as; work-based learning, action learning, mentoring and coaching. The national

context of the research gives an insight into the Seychelles education system, administrative structure, school management structures and patterns of accountability, and functions/standards of headship. This section links directly to the policy context of the research whereby the different reforms of the Seychelles education system are examined in respect of leadership development and the quality of education. The chapter concluded with exposition of the research aims, specific objectives and research questions.

Chapter two is the literature review. This will examine concepts of leadership and leadership development and assess the literature on leadership development with a specific focus on Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as the Seychelles.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of the literature on leadership development. It emphasises the theoretical and empirical aspects of leadership and the development of leaders in the context of education. This is done with a view to establishing the underlying assumptions and knowledge base behind the research questions investigated in this study.

The review discusses the most commonly practiced approaches to leadership training and development. It examines concepts and models of leadership and leadership development, and assesses the literature on leadership development with a specific focus on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including the Seychelles.

A wide range of literature from different countries is presented. As not all published work is of equal value, on issues pertaining to leadership development in education, the ones referred to in this chapter were selected based upon their relevance to this study. Sources focussing on Africa are included because they are especially relevant since Seychelles is nominally part of the African continent, being a member of ADEA, SADEC and SAQMEC. The Asian studies sources are mainly derived from the International Institute of Education Planning (IIEP) and affiliated bodies, both of which have a strong research connection with Seychelles, especially with regards to the education reform evaluation. There is a strong Asian influence on the education system, due to the recruitment of many Asians, notably teachers from India and Sri

Lanka. The review of literature in developed countries recognises that much of the theoretical and empirical literature on leadership development in education emanates from these countries. The UK literature is used extensively mainly because the partnerships established are with UK Universities.

In terms of ‘quality’ criteria, sources were chosen on the basis of their direct relevance to the research questions. Sources directly related to leadership development, for example Bush (2004, 2008) Leithwood et al (2006) and Heck (2003), were regarded as directly relevant to this study. Sources focused mainly on leadership, rather than leadership development, for example Gunter (2006) and Gunter and Forrester (2010), were considered to be less relevant.

The chapter is organised in six sections. The first section briefly considers the concepts and models of educational leadership. The second section addresses the core issues of leadership development; its rationale, definition and concepts. The third section examines the different models and approaches of leadership development, drawing on the work of international researchers and writers. The fourth section discusses the international perspective on leadership development and addresses issues of leadership preparation and training; recruitment and selection; programme completion and leadership effectiveness, on-going support and professional development; training experiences and impact. The fifth section addresses the issues of leadership development in small island developing states (SIDS) and the question of context specificity, while in the sixth section the focus narrows to leadership development in the context of the Seychelles.

## **Concepts and Models of Educational Leadership**

### Educational leadership concepts

In the context of education, it is difficult for authors to agree on what defines the concept of leadership. According to Bush (2003) there is no agreed definition of the concept of leadership while Yukl (2002) sees the definition of leadership as arbitrary and very subjective. He also argues that none of the definitions are correct and that some definitions are more useful than others. However, a central element in many definitions of leadership identified by Bush (2003) is the process of influence.

### *Leadership as influence*

Cuban (1998) refers leadership to people who can influence the motivation and actions of others to achieve certain goals using initiative and risks. Similarly, Yukl (2002, p.3) states that “definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social process whereby intentional influence is exerted ... to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation”. This influence process is an organisational quality that flows through the organisation internal networks (Ogawa and Bossert, 1995) is purposeful as it is intended to lead to specific outcomes although recommended actions that should be sought through this process is not revealed (Bush, 2003).

### *Leadership and values*

Wasserberg (2000) argues that to unite people around key values is the primary role of any leader, while Greenfield and Ribbins (1993) stress that leadership begins with the leaders' character expressed in terms of personal values, self-awareness, emotional and moral capabilities. Similarly, Day, Harris and Hadfield (2002) agree that good leaders are informed by and communicate clear sets of educational and personal values, representing their school's moral purposes. Those leadership interpretations reveal the need for leadership to be grounded in strong personal and professional values (Bush, 2003).

### *Leadership and vision*

The association of leadership and vision is supported by Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989, p.99) who state that "outstanding leaders have a vision for their schools, a mental picture of a preferred future, which is shared with all in the school community". Similarly, Bush (1995) cautions that attention should be given to institutionalising vision if leadership is to be of success. He later reveals that vision is increasingly regarded as an essential component of effective leadership (Bush, 2003). However, a review of the concept of leadership and vision by Foreman (1998) emphasises that it remains a concern. Fullan (1992, p.83) argues that "vision building is a highly sophisticated dynamic process which few organizations can sustain" while Kouzes and Posner (1996) reveal that inspiring a shared vision is the leadership practice with which headteachers felt most uncomfortable. Clear knowledge and understanding of what constitute leadership and management is also a concern among practising school leaders.

## Educational leadership models

In order to understand the different ways a headteacher can lead an organisation, several models of leadership are considered in this section. The discussion begins with Leithwood et al's (1999) six broad models of leadership but other models are also considered. The model of leadership that engages the leader's focus in teaching and learning activities is instructional.

### *Instructional leadership*

This model assumes that the behaviour of teachers engaging in activities which directly affect the growth of learners is the leaders' critical focus for attention (Leithwood et al. 1999). Sheppard (1996) claims that the 'broad' conception of this model involves variables such as school culture which often have important consequences for teacher behaviour. The applicability of the instructional leadership model is enhanced when conceptualised as 'broad' rather than 'narrow' as "it increases in scope for the other leaders to play a role as well as the principal and because it recognizes how social organizations operate" (Southworth, 2002, p.87). Bush and Glover (2002) believe that the focus on teaching and learning is geared towards teachers' behaviour and that the leader's influence is targeted at learners' learning process via teachers.

### *Transformational leadership*

This form of leadership is based on the assumption that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capabilities of organizational members,

higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (Leithwood et al., 1999). They claim that transformational leadership is the model that comes closest to providing a comprehensive approach to leadership although they subsequently state that “transformational leadership practices ought to be considered a necessary but not sufficient part of an effective leader’s repertoire” (2001, p.217), referring also to issues of school context. According to Bush and Glover (2002), transformational leadership describes a particular type of influence process based on increasing the commitment of followers to organizational goals. Leaders seek to engage the support of teachers for their vision of the schools and to enhance their capacities to contribute to goal achievement, and that its focus is on this process rather than on particular types of outcome (ibid).

### *Moral leadership*

The moral leadership model relies on the assumption that leaders’ personal values and ethics is the critical focus of leadership (Bush, 2003) and that authority and influence are derived from defensible conceptions of what is good or right (Leithwood et al., 1999). Sergiovanni’s (1991, p.323) conception of moral leadership is closely related to the transformational model:

“The school must move beyond concern for goals and roles to the task of building purposes into its structure and embodying these purposes in everything that it does with the effect of transforming school members from neutral participants to committed followers. The embodiment of purpose and the development of followership are inescapably moral”.

He believes that ‘administering’ is a ‘moral craft’ and that the moral dimension of leadership is based on “normative rationality ... based on what we believe and what

we consider to be good” (p.326). Bush and Glover claim that, although the moral leadership approach is similar to that of the transformational model, it is grounded in the values and beliefs of leaders. They stressed that the strong values base may be spiritual and provide the school with a clear sense of purpose (ibid).

### *Participative leadership*

This participative model of leadership is also conceptualised as ‘distributive’ as it implies moving away from a “single person” leadership to an approach that values the contribution of others through close collaboration (Bush, 1995). Participative leadership is seen as a normative model firmly grounded in the participation of others as an important factor in increasing school effectiveness with emphasis placed on justifiable democratic principles of the participation (Leithwood et al. 1999, p.12). This model increases the scope for other leaders to play a role other than the principal and recognizes how social organizations operate and assumes that the decision-making processes of the group ought to be the central focus of the group (ibid).

### *Managerial leadership*

This model of leadership places the focus of leaders on functions, tasks and behaviours with the assumption that, if these functions are carried out competently, the work of others in the organization will be facilitated (Hallinger, 1992). This approach relies heavily on the rational behaviour of members within an organisation (ibid), recognising that authority and influence are allocated to formal positions in the organisational hierarchy (Leithwood et al., 1999). It is suggested by Dressler

(2001, p.175) that leadership is a ‘management plus’ approach, stating that “traditionally, the principal’s role has been clearly focused on management responsibilities”, and that “global and societal influences have increased the span of responsibility”.

### *Contingent leadership*

In acknowledging the diverse nature of school contexts and the benefits of adapting leadership approaches depending on different particular situations, this model of leadership provide the solution. Lambert (1995, p.2) states that there is “no single best type” of leadership model. Morgan (1986) and Bush (1995) both claim that leadership requires effective diagnosis of problems followed by adopting the most appropriate response to the situation. Fidler (1997, p.27) argues that “the choice of conceptualisation will depend on the situation and purpose of understanding being sought”. He sees the contingency approach as a “major breakthrough” (p.28) as it relates directly to the context in which leadership is to operate.

### *Transactional leadership*

This model “is leadership in which relationships with teachers are based upon exchange for some valued source” (Miller 2001, p.182). His definition refers to transactional leadership as an exchange process. Bush (2003) links transactional leadership to the political model. He believes that such an exchange is an established political strategy for members of organisations. As heads of organisations possess authority arising from their positions, they also hold power in the form of major rewards like promotion and references (Bush, 2008). Although the exchange may

secure benefits for both parties, a major limitation of this model of leadership is that it does not engage staff beyond the immediate gains arising from the transaction (ibid). As such, the transactional leadership model does not produce long-term commitment to the values and vision being promoted by school leaders in an organisation (Miller, 2001).

### **Leadership Development: Rationale, Definition and Concepts**

In this section, the author examines the rationale for, definitions of, and concepts of leadership development. The significance of leadership development is strongly highlighted in the rationale.

#### The rationale for leadership development

In many countries, across continents, “head teachers are widely perceived to be critically important in achieving school effectiveness and improvement and, as reforms designed to raise standards are introduced, their roles are changing significantly” (Bolam, 2003, p.74). Increasingly, the performance of educational leaders is strongly scrutinised, while they continue to face “wide-ranging expectations from diverse sources” with the firm “belief that their role is critical to achieving and sustaining high quality education” for all learners (Bush et al, 2006, p.2). There is also a growing realisation that headship is a specialist occupation which requires specific preparation and with the recognition that effective preparation and development make a difference, principals are better leaders following specific training (Bush, 2008, 2010).

According to Brundrett et al. (2006, p.90) leadership development is a “strategic necessity” due to the intensification of the principal’s role. In a comparative study of England and New Zealand, they revealed that the “single largest change” in the two countries has been the introduction of site-based management, linked to increasing accountability, making principals “the public face of the school” (ibid). Bush (2008) believes that there are increased demands on school leaders resulting from expectations and accountability pressures from governments, parents, learners and the wider community. He emphasises that the role of school leaders is also expanding as a consequence of devolution in many countries and that leaders should need to be prepared. Watson (2003) reveals that devolution produces increasing complexity and heightened tensions for principals. He stresses that “it leads to the need for the exercise of judgement in particular situations rather than the simple following of rules” (ibid, p.6).

The relationship between high quality school leadership and educational outcomes is well documented. Bush and Jackson (2002) states that high quality leadership is widely acknowledged to be one of the most important requirements for successful schools, although they believe that much less is known about what forms of development produce enhanced leadership that leads to school improvement. The significant change in the nature of work in post-industrial society is strongly affecting the role of the headteacher:

“Work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century emphasises complexity rather than routinization... The dynamic nature of organizations, such as schools, where numerous individuals without close supervision make multiple decisions working directly with children, requires a different kind of leader. The acknowledgement of the changing demographics of schools, the explosion of technology, and the rapid growth and change in knowledge require individuals who can live with ambiguity, work

flexibly, encourage creativity, and handle complexity” (Crow, 2001, p.2).

Huber (2004, p.2) reveals claims made in research on school effectiveness, that “schools classified as successful possess a competent and sound school leadership” and that “failure often correlates with inadequate school leadership” resulting from lack of appropriate preparation and training. Hence, the importance of developing a carefully grounded relationship between leadership obtained through training, school and students’ outcomes, stresses by Hallinger (2003). Taylor et al. (2002) add that “the global changes now occurring demand approaches to leadership education that are profoundly different from those that have served well in the past” (p.366) and that these changes require the revision of the traditional priorities.

Bush and Jackson (2002, p.421) state that the content of leadership development programmes is similar in different countries, and they identify the following commonalities:

- leadership including vision, mission and transformational leadership
- learning and teaching or instructional leadership
- human resource management and professional development
- financial management
- management of external relations.

With the belief among some educational practitioners and researchers that leaders are ‘made not born’, “developing leadership potential is vital for the continuing success of schools and the educational system” (Bush and Glover, 2004, p.4). In attempting to achieve this, “an active leadership development policy” is required for all educational institutions and local educational authorities (ibid, p.4).

Bush et al (2006) say that the need for leadership development is gradually becoming accepted in some countries but they affirm that the training needs to be appropriate in order to meet the individual needs of school leaders. Daresh and Male (2000) comment on a comparative study of beginning school principals in Britain and the United States conducted in the period of 1996 – 1998. They refer to the emotions of newly appointed headteachers by stating that moving into headship for the first time is a ‘culture shock’ and that nothing could prepare them for the “change of perceptions of others or the intensity of the job” (p.95).

In order to prepare leaders to face such challenges, leadership development should be based firmly within the participants’ leadership context, so that practising leaders could use their own schools as the starting point for leadership learning – with the anticipation that leadership development recognises the national and local contexts within which leaders operate (Bush and Glover, 2004).

Crow (2006) argues that the growing evidence of the importance of school leadership for school improvement, student learning, and other outcomes has led to recognition that the preparation and development of school leaders might make a difference to their leadership practices. If then, according to Crow, Lumby and Pashiardis (2008, p.2) “school leaders and leadership are important”, there is a vital need to “be deeply concerned with how leaders learn to do their jobs and, more importantly, how they learn to do them in ways that contribute to these outcomes.

## Defining leadership development

Leadership development is associated with enabling people to lead others (Bush, Briggs and Middlewood, 2006). Bolam (2003) believes leadership development to be an ongoing process of education, training, learning and supportive activities taking place in either external or work-based settings, aimed primarily at promoting the learning and development of professionally appropriate knowledge, skills and values. He further stated that it can “help school leaders to decide on and implement valued changes in their leadership and management behaviour so that they can promote high quality education for their students more effectively, thus achieving an agreed balance between individual, school and national needs” (ibid, p.75).

Bush and Moloi (2008, p.113) stress that “leadership development is often the generic term used to describe any form of preparation or training for leadership”. Such training and preparation activities can take place before or after appointment to senior leadership posts. Leadership development is defined by Day (2001, p.582) as “expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes”. According to him leadership development means capacity building:

“Expanded capacity provides for better individual and collective adaptability across a wide range of situations. A leadership approach is oriented towards building capacity in anticipation of unforeseen challenges” (ibid, p.582).

With increasing emphasis on education as the learning organisation, and on the importance of leadership distributed across the whole institution staff, leadership development is more to do with “enabling people to lead others” and that

development opportunities are tightly “linked to instructional leadership, or leadership for learning, and philosophies that address organisational transformation” (Bush and Glover, 2004, p.3).

There is consensus among researchers that leadership development is broader than programmes of activity or intervention (Brundrett, 2001; Southworth, 2002; Bolam, 2003; Bush and Glover, 2004). Frost and Durrant (2000) believe that leadership development is a process of stimulating learning organisations through fostering of attitudes and empowering of actions.

#### Leadership development concepts

Leadership development activities may be classified using several concepts, many of which have global recognition.

#### *Personalised and contextualised learning*

Crow (2001) associates leadership preparation with two forms of socialisation; professional and organisational. Professional is the preparation of a leader to take on an occupational role while organisational is more linked to the specificity of the context in which the role is performed. Bush and Glover (2004, p.9) describe this as “personalised and contextualised learning”. In line with this concept, West-Burnham and O’Sullivan (1998) relate leadership development to personal and professional learning:

“The primary criterion for leadership is the ability to learn from experiences in order to enhance ... capability ... If leadership is to be developed in everyone then they have to be helped to process their

personal and professional experiences through a value system and in response to others in order to evolve a growing understanding of what it means to be a leader” (p.24).

Pettitt (1999) proposes mentoring, action-learning projects, and reality-based case methods, as appropriate training formats while reaffirming his strong belief that training and learning in the context of middle leaders should be problem-solving in nature and situated in the context and experiences of the leader.

### *Distributed leadership learning*

One of the five critical features of successful schools by Lambert (1998) is distributive or participative leadership, which is an important element of significant consideration for the development of school leaders. She further elaborates that “renewal processes include reflection, dialogue, question posing, inquiry (including use of data), construction of new meaning and knowledge, and action” (ibid, p.18).

Lashway (2002) stresses the importance of distributed leadership in the US and advocates the following approaches to leadership development:

- cohort programmes where people work with peers
- case studies and problem-based learning
- extended internships (p.4).

In relation to the development of middle leaders, Leask and Terrell (1997) stress the importance of developing leaders through staff coaching and mentoring, consultancy, observation and feedback.

### *Leadership for learning*

The leadership development concept of ‘leadership for learning’ is sometimes referred to as ‘learning-centred leadership’, emphasising a significant point in that school leadership is essentially concerned with teaching and learning. According to Hartle and Thomas (2003), with the growing recognition that more attention should be paid to student learning, research indicates that to implement the change in teaching and learning required for improvement, schools need to adopt learning-centred leadership. Due consideration should be taken in leaders’ developmental processes to ensure that they are equipped with necessary knowledge and skills to lead teaching and learning. Southworth (2003) reveal that changes in classroom practices rest upon leaders. He suggested five levels of learning focus for leaders, all of which are significant for leaders’ preparation and training:

- teacher learning
- collaborative group learning
- organisational learning
- leadership learning
- learning networks.

Hartle and Thomas (2003) believe that, by developing leaders’ understanding of these levels of learning; they will be in a position to create the conditions in their schools that will enable the workplace to be a positive, professional learning environment for adults as well as for students.

In a survey of training needs of middle leaders, Bush and Glover (2004) revealed that eight out of the top ten items relate to teaching and learning:

- taking action to address problems in teaching quality and competence
- monitoring and evaluating the work of all staff teaching the subject
- monitoring and evaluating progress of all pupils

- taking action to address problems in pupils progress
- long-term planning for development of the subject
- promoting effective teaching of the subject
- developing assessment, recording and reporting policies and practice
- ongoing development of own teaching methodologies (p.11)

These items confirm the need for school leaders' development to be centred on the concept of 'leadership for learning' as teaching and learning remains the central focus of schools. Similarly in the US, school leaders are expected to have a working knowledge of learning, teaching, curriculum construction and alignment (Bjork, 1993; Cambron-McCabe, 1993; Murphy, 1993).

Stoll (2001, p. 4-5) reveals four imperatives that she feels are required for leadership for learning, which focuses on a vision, emotional climate and inclusive organisational learning. According to Watkins et al (2002, p.6), leaders of learning are likely to be passionate about all aspects of organisational learning, by being at the centre of all learning processes.

A key point from a developmental perspective is that leaders of learning have to enhance their own learning as well as enhancing others' learning, hence the concept of 'leaders as lead learners' (Hartle and Thomas, 2003).

#### The school as a learning organisation

There is an emerging emphasis on the learning organisation (Senge and McLagan, 1993), in institutions and education systems. Hannay and Ross (1999) claim that leadership development is increasingly related to the promotion of collaborative approaches to organisations within which distributed leadership tends to be the

dominant mode of professional organisation. Crowther and Olson (1997) claim that its impact on individual, group and whole-school leaders is that their development opportunities are increasingly linked to leadership for learning, through transformational philosophies.

Bierema (1997, p.38) stipulates that learning organisations tend to “have the advantage of turning their learning upon themselves in an effort to improve their process and structure”. Harris (1999, p.21) believes that for leadership to be effective it is essential that staff are guided and supporting staff, especially those who are encountering difficulties. Davies (1996) is of the opinion that school improvement depends on a different approach to leadership by placing emphasis on coaching not control, and encouraging the dispersal of leadership and management widely within the organisation.

Kenning (2002) added that, in order to fully prepare and equip school leaders for their roles, there is a need to concentrate on the individual growth of leaders and those they are responsible for. He argues that today’s schools are in need of a lead learner with the interests of the learner at heart (ibid). To encourage such qualities, Hartle and Thomas (2003, p.17) affirm that:

“Leaders need an ‘intelligent gaze’, to be able to look at themselves in the mirror of self-awareness and reflect on who they are as people. One way of doing this is for individuals, teams and organisations to embark on a journey of continuous self-discovery, during which individuals move towards the accomplishment of personal mastery and develop the skills to work with and support the development of others”.

They further argue that, by focussing on individual growth, the self-confidence of leaders can be developed and, for this to become a reality, some schools will need

fundamental change, with leaders becoming lead learners actively leading their own development and helping others to grow simultaneously.

It is imperative, therefore, for school leadership development to be differentiated so as to take into account the different stages of the school development journey (Hopkins et al., 1997, 2000).

### Career-long /life-long Learning

The five stages of leadership from emergent to experienced consultant leaders established by the former National College for School Leadership (NCSL) imply a commitment to ‘Career-long / Life-long learning’ (Bush and Glover, 2004). Similarly, Friedman and Philips (2001) stress the importance of ‘continuous professional development’ (CPD):

“Just as life-long learning and the learning society represent a social imperative in a world of rapidly changing knowledge and technology, so CPD must be addressed if professionals are to keep up with these changes” (p.273).

Mole (2000), in distinguishing training, education and the development of personnel in the work force, in respect to career / life-long learning, states that:

- the focus of training is the employee’s present job
- the focus of education is the employee’s future job
- the focus of development is the organisation (p.22).

He stresses that “development programmes prepare individuals to move in the new directions that organisational change may require” (p.22).

Underpinning the NCSL's decisions to develop the Established Leaders Programme for deputy head teachers (Bush and Glover, 2004), James and Whiting (1998, p.361) comment on a survey of 366 deputies conducted in England and Wales:

“There [is] a need for all deputy headteachers to receive professional careers guidance, such as mentoring and involving where appropriate those with comparative experience and frameworks for networking”.

These authors stress that development is ongoing, a process and not an event.

### **Leadership Development: Models and Approaches**

Dimmock (1998) stresses the importance of culture and context in evaluating leadership development programmes, speculating that what works in one context may not translate easily into another. The work of several researchers beyond education shows that there are similarities among the various existing methods and approaches to leadership development, that are applicable to the context of education for the development of school leaders across the different levels of hierarchy (Rajan, 1996; Thomson et al., 2001; Green, 2001; and Sandler, 2002).

In the context of education, literature suggests that the nature and content of leadership programmes around the world is similar to a great extent, “leading to the view that an international curriculum for school leadership development is emerging” (Bush and Glover, 2004, p.4). However, Brundrett (2001) concluded that there were, in effect, two parallel systems operating in England and Wales – in universities and in the nationally funded programmes.

The literature identifies several models and approaches to leadership development. The ones which are most likely to succeed are described in this section.

### Work-based learning

Handy argues that learning by experience alone can be an unpleasant experience but work-based learning is a significant element of school leaders' development (Bush and Glover, 2004). This is supported by Adey (2000) who states that most middle leaders in English secondary schools had not received any specific preparation for the post - that they learn 'on the job' and by watching others perform the role. A similar observation is made by Daresh and Male (2000) following their comparative study of the UK and USA:

“British head teachers do not feel as if they were prepared totally for their posts simply because they had years of experience in roles similar to but not the same as head teachers. American principals report that academic pre-service training does not prepare them completely for their jobs. The issue, therefore, is not one of suggesting that one is prepared either by previous practice or by courses. It is an issue of finding appropriate balance” (p.99).

Bush and Glover (2004, p.14) state that the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) “involves a collaboration between universities and partner-employing authorities in providing a programme that combines academic coursework with work-based learning.” They reveal that both types of learning are demonstrated through a portfolio and supported by a colleague, usually the head, within the participant's school.

Through a survey of 32 local authorities, where interviews were conducted with local coordinators, Murphy et al. (2002) report that the SQH was successful due to its

impact on professional learning and on schools. The majority (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that their work-based learning had indeed moved management and leadership forward and that the impact on schools could be seen. Such self reported findings, however, need to be interpreted with caution.

In describing a 'grow your own' in-house leadership development model in Santa Cruz, Lovely (1999) states that it is an apprenticeship model with mentors and apprentices committing to shared outcomes. He added that the programme operates using mentorship, outreach, coaching and peer support, and firmly believes that the country is "growing the kind of people who will successfully lead our team into the millennium and beyond" (ibid, p.14).

#### Needs analysis and diagnostics

West-Burnham (1998, p.99) states that "needs analysis provides the crucial information to ensure that professional learning is appropriate, valid and relevant". The Leadership Programme for Serving Head teachers (LPSH), previously offered by the NCSL, included a twenty-four hour "feedback and personal assessment to establish development needs for experienced head teachers" (Bush and Glover, 2004, p.15).

The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) adopts a curriculum based around national standards for head teachers (TTA, 1998). According to Male (2001, p.464) they are used to identify the "professional development needs of head teachers". However, the NPQH has been criticised for being below the intellectual

level required for such an important and complex role as headship (Brundrett, 2000; Brundrett et al. 2006; Bush, 2006).

In a survey of headteachers in England, Male (2001) highlights nine skills in which NPQH graduates perceive themselves to be better prepared than other headteachers:

- putting vision into words
- ensuring that all people with an interest in the school are involved in the school mission
- working with under-performing teachers
- using student performance data to plan the curriculum
- conducting a meeting
- forming and working with teams
- assuming responsibility for school management
- organising school administration
- using information technology and other tools in the management process.

In small scale research with participants of the Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP), Gunraj and Rutherford (1999, p.149) report that, although most of them took part in the 'needs analysis', mixed responses were received because head teachers' needs are perceived to be constantly changing through responding to new challenges within their schools; and because of the problems associated with establishing whose needs should be met.

In terms of diagnostics, Bush and Glover (2004, p.15-16) believe that the:

“360-degree feedback is a diagnostic process that has become popular in leadership development programmes, including those presented by NCSL. 360-degree feedback draws on the views of colleagues about the performance and development needs of leaders”.

According to Tornone and London (1998), 360-degree feedback enables individuals to become connected. They believe this is so due to the fact that:

“The complexity of jobs requires that employees have feedback from a variety of constituencies, not just their supervisor, who has traditionally been the source of feedback and performance review” (p.2).

Based on empirical evidence, Alimo-Metcalfe (1998) concludes that 360-degree feedback promotes self-awareness through “a more accurate insight into one’s own leadership behaviour ... related to one’s performance and potential” (p.37).

### Field-based internships

Davis et al (2005) suggests that most adults learn best when they are exposed to situations requiring the application of acquired skills, knowledge, and problem-solving strategies within authentic settings, and when guided by critical reflection. Cross- disciplinary studies on experiential learning show that exposure to concrete elements of real-world practice can increase a leader’s ability to contemplate, analyse and systematically plan strategies for action (Kolb and Boyatzis, 1999).

Kolb and Boyatzis (ibid) present internships as being an example of learning in authentic settings. Daresh (2001) states that strong internships provide candidates with an intense, extended opportunity to grapple with the daily demands of school leaders under the watchful eye of an expert mentor, with reflection tied to theoretical insights through related course work. Similarly, Bush and Chew (1999) state that internships are often linked with mentoring and usually involve aspiring leaders spending time in the mentors’ schools.

Crow (2001) highlights the fact that internships can differ across a range of dimensions, including duration, characteristics of the host school and balance of

outside and inside influences. He affirms that the socialisation process is important and that, in general, the mentor has a strong influence on the mentee (ibid). While other leaders and teachers may help in the process, the success of internships depends strongly on the status accorded to the mentee (Bush and Glover, 2004).

However, Crow (2004) also points to the conservative nature of ‘veteran’ participation in leadership preparation, a popular method in North America where newcomers are being trained by veterans’ headteachers who simply pass on their knowledge and skills of the role, with limited opportunity for innovation and creativity.

#### Problem-based learning

According to Davis et al. (2005), effective pre-service programmes should feature instructional activities and assessments that focus on problems of practice and stimulate effective problem-solving and reflection. Hallinger and McCary (1992) argue that it is not enough for principals simply to have a repertoire of behaviours, as they believe that it is important for principals to know how and when to use them, and the need to carefully monitor their effects on student learning.

Problem based learning (PBL) has been applied to the development of educational leaders by Bridges and Hallinger (1995) in the United States (Huber, 2008). The slogan for PBL, according to Bridges and Hallinger (1995, p.8), is “first the problem, then the content”. According to Huber (2008, p.170), the PBL approach “uses concrete and complex problems experienced in everyday practice by school leaders

as a starting point to involve the learners in a cooperative problem-solving process and to find solutions interactively”.

PBL has been popular in the preparation programmes of school leaders, especially in the United States (Bridges and Hallinger, 1993), because such activities:

- stimulate complex real-world problems and dilemmas
- promote the blending of theoretical and practical knowledge
- improve problem-solving capacity, and
- help enhance candidates’ self-concepts as future school leaders (Davis et al., 2005, p.9).

Davis et al (ibid) stress that by participating in challenging and relevant stimulations, leaders:

“Develop new attitudes and skills, experiment with various leadership roles, and, ideally, practice the discipline of self-reflection. PBL methods provide opportunities for candidates to test newly acquired leadership skills and receive feedback through authentic demonstrations and assessments” (p.10).

However, Bjork and Murphy (2005) criticise the ‘sterile’ nature of leadership preparation in the US by revealing the contrast between active learning potential and the reality of several leadership courses:

“Although convincing theoretical and empirical evidence support the use of active learning including simulations, case studies, practice-based and problem-based learning ... professor-centred rather than student oriented instructional strategies persist” (p. 15).

They add that the majority of courses in the US are delivered using a lecture format that is perceived as being isolated, passive and sterile knowledge acquisition (ibid).

## Cohort grouping

It has become increasingly popular to group school leaders into cohorts (Davis et al., 2005). Those in support of cohort grouping strategies maintain that adult learning is best accomplished when it is part of a socially cohesive activity structure that emphasises shared authority for learning, opportunities for collaboration, and team work in practice-oriented situations (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, and Norris, 2000). The positive effects of cohort structured learning experiences, according to Davis et al. (2005, p.10), include:

- enhanced feelings of group affiliation and acceptance
- social and emotional support
- motivation
- persistence
- group learning, and
- mutual assistance.

Davis et al's research findings suggest that cohorts can help learners build group and individual knowledge, think creatively, and restructure problems from multiple perspectives. Browne-Ferrigno and Muth (2001) speculate that cohorts model the type of team building that is increasingly encouraged among school faculty. There is also evidence, based on research in the US, "that cohorts can foster improved academic learning and programme completion rates among administrative credential candidates" (Davis et al., 2005, p.10).

Leithwood et al. (1996) argue that, because teachers give higher ratings to the leadership practices of principals who participated in cohort training structures, it may be that cohorts not only benefit aspiring and practicing principals but also the staff in the schools they ultimately lead.

## Mentoring

In several countries, including Australia, France, England and Wales, Singapore and the USA, mentoring has become increasingly important as a mode of leadership development (Bush and Glover, 2004; Davis et al., 2005; Huber, 2008). Hobson (2003, p.1) says that the term mentoring is “generally used to refer to a process whereby a more experienced individual seeks to assist someone less experienced”. Typically, mentors are practising leaders within the institution in which the candidate works, although other models are possible (Davis et al., 2005). Daresh (1995, p.8) refers to “the experienced professional, as the mentor, serving as a wise guide to a younger protégé”.

In well structured-mentoring programmes, the mentor and mentee make a mutual commitment to work collaboratively and toward the accomplishment of an individual tailored professional development programme (Daresh, 2001).

Davis et al. (2005, p.10) claim that mentoring relationships should serve to:

“Reduce the distance between a learner’s independent problem-solving performance and his/her potential developmental level achieved through problem solving with guidance from an expert. The primary role of the mentor is to guide the learner in his or her search for strategies to resolve dilemmas, to boost self-confidence, and to construct a broad repertoire of leadership skills”.

Competent mentors perform the above through:

- modelling and coaching
- gradually removing support as the mentee’s competence increases
- questioning and probing to promote self-reflection and problem solving skills
- providing feedback and counsel.

(Lave, 1991).

Bush and Glover (2004), state that mentoring is often highly successful in promoting the development of practising and aspiring leaders. This optimism is shared by Hobson (2003, p.2), who says that “all major studies of formal mentoring programmes for new head teachers have concluded that such mentoring work was effective”. Through effective mentoring, the transition process to headship is accelerated (Pocklington and Weindling, 1996).

Petzko et al. (2002) conducted a survey comprising of 1,400 middle school principals in the USA. They were trained for either secondary or elementary schools and most of them had no specific prior preparation to lead middle schools. They report that, when asked to identify the person who influenced them the most during their first year as principal, 44% mentioned another principal while 22% stated it was a central office administrator. This shows the importance of mentoring in developing leaders.

The model of ‘mentoring’ used in the South African ACE programme however, “falls short of best international practice” where much of the mentors’ work involves groups rather than individuals, with limited involvement of mentees in discussions and determining agenda in “group sessions led by the mentors” (Bush et al. 2011, p.17). In instances which involve mentors working directly with mentees, the relationship is one-sided resulted to the enforcement of a dependency model and fails to develop mentees’ confidence and skills (Bush et al. 2009).

## Coaching

Coaching differs from mentoring because it stresses the dimension of skills development (Bassett, 2001). West and Milan (2001) distinguish between coaching for skills development and performance coaching. Coaching is defined by Kinlaw (1989, p.5) as “a mutual conversation between manager and employee that follows a predictable process and leads to superior performance, commitment to sustained improvement, and positive relationships”.

Oliver and Vincent’s (2000) survey of 60 UK companies shows that the three most effective ways of developing people at work were found to be coaching, work-based assignments and internal training. They stress that, if coaching is done effectively, it does not require major investment in training provision or time away from the work place.

Hartle and Thomas (2003) state that coaching is directly related to work, which removes the problem of how to transfer learning from training courses and other types of development back to the job. In reference to the study by Oliver and Vincent (2000) it was revealed “that the group of people which is least committed to the development of people is the line managers, the very people who many organisations rely on to do coaching” (p.13). In considering its implications for schools, they believe that:

“If leadership development is to be more widespread in all schools, then more effective coaching has to take place within schools ... team leaders need to be effective coaches ... individuals and teams require expert coaching. The scarcity of skilled coaches who are good is a matter that needs to be addressed” (ibid, 2003, p.38).

Davies (1996, p.15) claims that “coaching and supporting can be seen as the most effective management approach”.

### Action learning

Smith (2001, p.35) says that action learning:

“Embodies an approach based on comrades in adversity learning from each other through discriminating questioning, fresh experience and reflective insight. It is a form of learning through experience ... based on the premise that we can only learn about work at work”.

McGill and Beaty’s (1995 p.209) guide to action learning provides for continuous learning and reflection by a ‘set’ of people using an “experiential learning cycle”. They demonstrate how action learning can contribute to management development through the development of the individual manager and the organization as a whole.

### Portfolios

Wolf et al (1997, p.195), define a portfolio for teaching and learning as:

“The structured documentary history of a carefully selected set of coached or mentored accomplishments substantiated by samples of student work, and fully realised only through reflective writing, deliberation, and serious conversation”.

Bush and Glover (2004, p.17) state that “portfolios have a useful role to play in formative evaluation and leadership development”, although there are certain limitations. Peterson et al. (2001) also refer to limitations, arguing that teacher portfolios are difficult to use for judgments because of a lack of uniformity; and that

teachers may not be objective when portfolios are used for summative purposes, particularly those related to career development.

### **Leadership Development: International Perspectives**

This section examines issues related to the development of educational leaders in several countries. The section draws material from several countries and adopts a thematic approach. Areas of leadership development discussed are: leadership preparation, leadership training, programme content, recruitment and selection, induction, training experiences and impact.

#### Leadership preparation

Leadership development in the US consists of both pre-service and in-service preparation with in-service training offered by professional organisations, “collaborative efforts between universities and school districts following initial preparation” (Young and Grogan, 2008, p.305). Baker, Orr and Young (2005) reveal that pre-service leadership preparation is offered by educational institutions through masters, specialist and doctoral programmes; and that a master’s degree in educational administration is a pre-requisite for principals in most states.

To become a principal in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong requires formal certification, controlled, overseen and awarded by the government (Walker, Chen and Qian, 2008). In China and Taiwan, courses and certification processes are decentralised to the district or provincial level through established government

institutions while, in Hong Kong, universities are tendered agents of the state who develop and run programmes for a set timeframe according to government demands (ibid).

The preparation and professional development of educational leaders in the US have been the focus of much criticism and several reforms between 1986 and 2007 (Young, Peterson and Short, 2002), whereby several bodies have examined the nature of leadership and university-based leadership preparation programmes.

Through the release of a set of recommendations by The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEEA) in 1987, the National Policy Board in Educational Administration (NPBEA) was established which later initiated the development of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for the professional practice of school leaders (ibid). According to Young and Grogan (2008, p.306) the ISLLC standards are intended “to provide a clear, organised set of curriculum content and performance standards that could be used to drive the preparation, professional development licensure of principals”.

Australia’s federal structure assigns most of the responsibility for schooling to the six states and two territory governments but the federal government, through the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), provides national cohesion across the various school systems - a system of vocational training, funding for universities, which operate relatively autonomously, and a policy framework linking education to the economy, society and culture of the nation (Huber and Pashiardis,

2008; Anderson et al., 2008). Each state and territory has developed its own system of educational administration within this framework.

In most states of Australia reforms in the field of educational policy took place in the course of the 1990s – central administration was reduced and site-based management was introduced, by which local school communities and school leaders were delegated an increased level of responsibility (Huber and Pashiardis, 2008). They state that “since then, to some extent, individual schools and their leaders have become more accountable” (p.190), and a new conception of leadership, namely ‘School Leaders in Learning Communities’, became operational.

School leadership preparation in Africa is influenced by several factors such as geographical, historical, social, cultural and economic contexts (Otunga et al., 2008). Due to colonisation by different European countries, including France, Britain and Portuguese, such foreign influences have brought about variations in education systems (ibid). Bush and Oduro (2006) state that African principals face a daunting challenge as they often perform their duties in poor conditions such as poorly equipped schools and inadequately trained staff, and without formal leadership training. Mainland African headteachers are often appointed on the basis of a successful record as teachers with an implicit assumption that this provides a sufficient starting point for school leadership (Bush and Oduro 2006). In Ghana, they are often appointed without any form of in-service training or induction, (Amuzu-Kpeglo, 1990).

Leadership preparation in England started in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the local education authorities (LEAs) and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate conducted

practical courses to support school leaders in their job alongside universities offering diploma and Masters courses in educational management (Bolam, 2004). The Education Reform Act (1988) enhanced the scope of leadership and this was followed by the establishment of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) which set up the first national qualification for aspiring heads, the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) in 1997 (ibid).

The next major step in leadership development was taken when the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) was established in November 2000 and officially launched by the Prime Minister Tony Blair in 2002 (Bush et al., 2006; Møller and Schratz (2008). At the heart of several of the leadership development programmes are several process-based approaches (Bush and Glover, 2003; Bush et al., 2006):

- Action learning
- Mentoring
- Coaching
- Leadership portfolios
- Problem-based learning.

The College is funded by central government and its ambitious aim is to “provide a single national focus for school leadership development, research and innovation” (NCSL, 2001, p.9). The NCSL is a principal source of advice to government and policy-makers on school leadership issues (Hartle and Thomas, 2003) and “operates a raft of programmes for school leaders at all levels and is now the major sponsor of school leadership research” (Bush, Briggs and Middlewood, 2006, p.190).

In Asia, Singapore is one of the first countries to direct its focus on preparation for principals and is a major centre for leadership development (Bush, 2008). As early as 1984, programmes for prospective principals, such as the Diploma in Educational

Administration, were launched by the Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education (Bush and Chew, 1999). Although replaced by the ‘Leaders in Education’ course, the delivery of the programme and the content of the modules are the main concern (Chong et al. 2003).

### Leadership training

The content and character of leadership training in the US has changed over time from focusing on school management to that of leadership “characterised by shared governance, participatory decision-making and school-based councils to learning focussed leadership” (Young and Grogan, 2008, p.305). The most commonly shared aspect of leadership preparation programmes have been identified by experts in the field as exceptional or innovative (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Jackson and Kelly, 2002; Orr, 2006), and the common programmes components are:

- student selection
- curriculum pedagogy (programme content)
- field-based experiences, and
- partnership (ibid).

In Australia, despite the various leadership training programmes available, the only formal requirements for school leaders are a four year teaching qualification and registration (Anderson et al., 2008). This is an ‘apprenticeship’ model whereby teachers gradually gain experience on-the-job and move up the ranks to principalship (Su, Gamage and Miniberg, 2003). Although higher qualifications in leadership exist, they are not mandatory, however “possession of such qualifications may well enhance applicants’ prospects of gaining and retaining leadership positions” (Anderson et al., 2008, p.436). As a result, those who aspire to leadership positions

often choose to avail themselves of higher degrees and other opportunities offered by various universities (ibid).

Gamage and Ueyama (2004) report that 34% of principals and deputy principals in 130 New South Wales (NSW) schools possess a master's degree in educational administration and management. Gurr, Drysdale and Goode (2007) found that, of a sample of 206 Victorian principals, 44% had a graduate certificate/diploma or masters in educational leadership while 53%, of a sample of 131 Tasmanian principals, are holders of an educational administration qualification. Some specific requirements exist in some sectors, for example in religious systems, and sets of school leadership standards have been developed by school leaders' professional associations (Anderson et al., 2008). New South Wales (NSW) is one of the six federal states of Australia with the largest public school system consisting of 2,200 schools, 750,000 learners and 46,000 teachers (Huber and Pashiardis, 2008). Their concept of 'School Leaders in Learning Communities' is based on seven principles (Dawson, 1999):

- Leaders are responsible for learning
- Leaders model effective learning
- Leaders lead teams
- Leadership is a function of ability, not position in the hierarchy
- Leaders exist throughout the school learning community
- Leaders are creative
- Leaders are ethical.

Huber and Pashiardis (2008) say that, on the basis of this new conception of school leadership, the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) launched a Comprehensive Training and Development Programme, the School Leadership Strategy (SLS) - centrally developed and implemented with support being provided

through local Inter-District School Leadership Groups (ISLGs) and the principal associations. The SLS is underpinned by the NSW DET School Leadership Capacity Framework and the NSW Institute of Teachers' Professional Teaching Standards (Rusch, 2008; Huber and Pashiardis, 2008).

Training of school leaders can occur at different times of their career progression. Specific induction training as a headteacher in Asia is usually not a requirement to occupy such a post, and this is unsurprising as few such training opportunities exist. In Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan, there are no such regular training programmes (Kandasamy and Blaton, 2004). They state that the republic of Korea is an exception as a license is required and training is given under the Teacher Training Section of the Ministry of Education by the Korean Teachers' University and Seoul National University. The training has become more specific; more principals with good track records are appointed to teach and a partnership network has been built between the Ministry of Education, training centres at city and provincial school offices, and training institutes (ibid). In China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, policy and programmes attempt to address different levels of leadership but with certain variations. In China, development policy for leaders targets mainly newly appointed and serving principals, with special provision for experienced principals of elite schools (Walker, Chen and Qian, 2008). The four main bodies involved in the preparation and training of educational leaders in China are:

- The National Academy of Education Administration (NAEA) - responsible for training provincial education bureau officials and other educational leaders across province
- City Level Institutes of Education (CLIE) - train educational leaders under the city governance

- County Level Teacher Training Schools (CLTTS) - responsible for the training of local school leaders
- The National Training Centre for High School Principals (NTCHSP) in Shanghai (Normal University) and the National Training Centre for Primary School Principals (NTCPSP) in Beijing (Normal University) - run programme for national ‘back bone’ principals, selected at various levels from all province and generally considered the best.

(UNDP Research Team, 1997; Feng, 2003; Walker, Chen and Qian, 2008)

According to Walker, Chen and Qian (2008, p.425), Taiwan “concentrates almost exclusively on pre-service principal programmes and gives scant formal attention to serving principals” or aspiring principals.

In Hong Kong, leadership development makes provision for three levels of leadership:

- Aspiring principals (mainly vice principals, department heads and senior teachers) - must attain the ‘Certification for Principalship’ for a period of five year and comply with existing appointment conditions.
- Newly appointed principals (those in the first two years of their principalship) - must participate in designated programmes, engage in relevant continuous professional development (CPD) activities and present an annual professional port folio to their governing boards.
- Serving principals (those with more than two years of experience) - must undertake CPD activities for at least 150 hours for a period of three years, in the areas of structured learning, action learning and service to education and the community.

(Hong Kong Education Department, 2002)

Walker, Chen and Qian (2008, p.425) claim that, in none of the three societies stated above, “is formal leadership development extended to either teacher leaders or mid-level leaders, although in some cases these may be addressed by general teacher development policy”.

Kandasamy and Blaton (2004) reveal that, in the Philippines, a new 'Basic School Management Course' is designed by the National Educational Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) for the induction of master teachers shifting to the administrative track to prepare them for school management. In Sri-Lanka, the Centre for Professional Development in Educational Management (CPDEM) has planned and implemented a special programme since 2002 that has helped to create a pool of prospective principals (ibid).

In Africa, Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997, p.251-252) state that deputy principals and 'good' assistant teachers in Kenya are appointed to the post of school principals without any leadership training, but "good teaching abilities are not necessarily an indication that person appointed will be a capable educational manager". Although Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997) assert that pre-service training of school headteachers or principals in Kenya is not required, serious thought has been given to school leadership preparation and development (Otunga et al., 2008). Kamwa and Lugumba (2001, p.145) add that "principals should have not only excellent academic qualifications but also appropriate experience and outstanding qualities of leadership and imagination"

It has been recognised in Kenya, as well as elsewhere in Africa, that changes within society and within the educational system itself require continuous in-service training and development of staff to enable them acquire appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes for their roles (Lodiaga & Olembo, 1990). In-service training for heads of educational institutions is offered by the Kenya Educational Staff Institute (KESI),

established in 1988 (Otunga et al., 2008). They speculate that, although KESI is mandated for the development of both serving and potential school leaders, in-service training is offered mainly to serving heads and rarely to others.

Herriot et al., (2002, p.514) report on the development of headteacher support groups in Kenya that emerged as part of an in-service training programme for primary schools (PRISM) and seen as 'central to the sustainability of good management in schools'. They state that the networking that is beginning to develop has had a 'rippling effect' across schools and clusters but there is a long way to go in ensuring continued success.

School principals in South Africa have a multifaceted and enormous task of establishing an environment that could lead to effective schooling (Otunga et al., 2008). They add that many of the principals do not have the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to manage their schools effectively and efficiently, and are unable therefore to cope with the numerous changes (ibid). However, the National Association of Secondary school principals (NASSP) helps to train successful school leaders by providing assessment and development programmes designated to meet complex school challenges (Otunga et al., 2000). Bush and Heystek's (2006) research in the Gauteng Province, shows that the universities provide a 'ladder of opportunity' for practicing and aspiring school leaders.

As part of its strategy to improve educational standards, a new threshold qualification for aspiring school principals was introduced by the former South African Department of Education (Bush et al, 2007; Bush et al., 2011). The Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE) course was piloted in six

provinces from 2007-2009, opened to the provincial departments of education nominated serving principals and school management team members including deputy principals (ibid).

According to Bush et al (2011), the ACE is being delivered by universities, through the national Department of Education and the National Management and Leadership Committee's (NMLC) common framework. Five universities, and the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance, were involved in the first pilot cohort, and the course emphasis is on practice-based approach.

Nigeria also has no formalised procedures for developing school leaders (Otunga et al., 2008). Primary heads are held accountable in many areas of school activity, with no formal leadership training, and are all expected to gain knowledge through experience. They highlight that secondary school principals' skills are developed through planned in-service education by the respective Ministry through the organisation of seminars and workshops. However, Nigerian principals learn largely through their own experiences and in schools and interactions with other principals (ibid).

In England, the NCSL aims to provide for school leadership at all levels, with distinct programmes for the five different stages of the school leadership development framework (NCSL, 2005). The framework stages of school leadership identified are:

- emergent leadership - when a teacher takes on management and leadership responsibilities for the first time

- established leadership - experienced leaders, such as assistant and deputy heads, who do not intend to pursue headship
- entry to leadership - a teacher's preparation for and induction into a senior leadership post in the school
- advanced leadership - mature school leaders (after 3-4 years in the role)
- consultant leadership - able and experienced leaders taking on the training, mentoring and coaching of other head teachers. (Hartle and Thomas, 2003)

By putting emphasis on practice and learning through reflection on leaders' experiences, their programmes have been informed by the notion of 'best practice' (Møller and Schratz, 2008). Although the NPQH was introduced in 1997 it became a 'mandatory' requirement for new head teachers in 2004 (Bush et al., 2006), meaning that new heads must have it or promise to acquire it, and is now compulsory from April 2009.

### Programme content

Leadership development can be grouped into the four modes; "knowledge for understanding, knowledge for action, improvement of practice and development of reflexive mode" (Bolam, 1999, p.196). According to Bush (2008), universities' content-led programmes can be considered to be focussed on 'knowledge for understanding'. Although Chin (2003, p.60) acknowledges the 'diversity in the contents and methods of preparation programmes', he stresses the existence of a "general core of knowledge and skills". However, Watson (2003, p.15) argues that skills-based programmes "are more difficult to standardise than those focussing on knowledge and understanding" and yet they have the tendency to be favoured by governments.

Bush and Jackson's (2002) review of school leadership programmes in seven countries on four different continents reveals only modest differences in curriculum outline regardless of culture and context diversity. However, they stress that the learning experiences of participants differ despite similarities in "the content of educational leadership programmes ... leading to a hypothesis that there is an international curriculum for school leadership preparation" (ibid, p. 420). A pertinent question raised by Watson (2003, p.11) is whether training should "be related to the needs of individuals, to those of the school or to the needs of the national system?" Bush (2008, p. 33) believes that "where there is a mandatory or recommended qualification ... it is inevitable that national needs have primacy". He emphasises that "to reassure those recruiting leaders that all graduates have achieved at least threshold competence ... a national qualification requires a measure of consistency" (ibid, p.34).

In the US, standards for leadership programmes as well as research on leadership behaviours that influence school improvement support the need to change and/or re-prioritise the content of many preparation and development programmes (Jackson and Kelly, 2002; Knapp et al., 2003). In programmes that are considered as effective by Jackson and Kelly (2002) in the US; there is a clear, well-defined curriculum that reflects agreement on the relevant knowledge and skills needed for educational leaders in the initial year(s) of headship. This justifies reasons for much emphasis in contemporary leadership preparation programme being placed on:

- School improvement - with courses focused on change, transformational leadership, applied research and data analysis
- Democracy - courses on ethics, collaboration, and distributed leadership

- Social justice - courses focused on issues of diversity and leadership for special needs learners. (Waters et al., 2003; Knapp et al., 2003; Orr, 2006)

Highly coherent programmes offer a logical, often sequential array of course-work, learning activities, and programme structures that links theory and practice, and are framed around the principles of adult learning theory (Davis et al., 2005). Athens (2004) reveals that 40 states in the US have adopted or adapted the ISLLC standards and are currently using it as platforms for programmes and licensure, with many requiring university alignment, and use the standards for programme review and accreditation.

In Canada, aspiring principals must enrol on the ‘Principals’ Qualification Program (PQP) which consists of eight modules, placing emphasis on aspects of ‘change’, management and leadership, among others (Huber and Leithwood, 2004). While French leaders must take the national course upon being selected for the post of deputy principal (Fouquet, 2006), the Finnish leadership training is decentralised (Varri and Alava, 2005) where the university preparation programme goals and content differ from non-university programmes (Bush, 2008). The Norwegian leadership development programmes are provided by universities and modules focus on various aspects of leadership and administration; organisation, school development and evaluation; ICT and learning.

### *Pedagogy*

School leaders as adults need to be involved in “determining their own learning needs” (Bush, 288, p.41). They also need their own motivation for learning by building on the existing knowledge and experience, driven towards self-direction and

becoming autonomous learners (Tusting and Barton, 2006). These points about adult learning emphasis the need for an approach that “allows for differing learning styles within a clear learning and organisational framework ... a consideration of individualised learning” (Bush, 2008, p.42). The needs analysis process is considered to be vital (Bush, 2008) and its importance is in determining the nature of leadership development (West-Burnham, 1998). “Needs analysis provides the crucial information to ensure that professional learning is appropriate, valid and relevant” (ibid, p.99). Another diagnostic process which is popular in leadership development programmes is the 360-degree feedback (Bush, 2008). Drawing on empirical research, Alimo-Metcalfe (1998; p.37) states that 360-degree feedback results in the promotion of self-awareness through “a more accurate insight into one’s own leadership behaviour ... related to one’s own performance and potential”.

The primary modes of teaching in educational leadership preparation programmes in the US are problem-based and case-based teaching methods, which “offer situated learning and an opportunity to experiment with multiple perspectives within a traditional classroom setting” (Young and Grogan 2008, p.308). Several preparatory programmes have incorporated problem-based learning as a means of grounding aspiring leaders in the problems of their field, expanding their problem-framing and problem-solving capabilities, and working collaboratively with others (Bridges, 1992; ibid).

Reflective practice is common in programmes as a means of provoking and challenging students’ presuppositions, grasping of theories that shape behaviour and other frames of leadership development (Osterman, 1995). Mezirow (1991) believes

that learning becomes transformational when facilitated through guided reflection, particularly when it challenges the validity of presumptions rooted in prior learning. Reflection work is an integral part of many programmes with formal reflections frequently incorporated into final portfolios (Young and Grogan, 2008).

According to Davis et al. (2005), literature reveals that programmes are seeking to inculcate habits of reflection and critical analysis that will allow participants to learn from practice. However, this claim is challenged by Bjork and Murphy (2005), comment on the contrast between the potential for active learning and the reality of many leadership courses, where the lecture format persists, leading to isolated and passive knowledge acquisitive.

### *Partnerships*

The need for stronger “clinical training has encouraged a growing number of US universities to collaborate with districts and schools as equal partners in the design, implementation, and assessment of pre-service principal preparation programmes” (Davis et al., 2005, p.11). “District and university collaborations in leadership preparation programmes are increasingly common” involving several colleges and universities (Young and Grogan, 2008, p.309). In such collaborative programmes, practicing administrators are used to:

- mentor administrative interns
- assist university faculty in the assessment of candidates in the field
- participate in university screening and admissions processes
- serve as members of the university’s programme advisory committee
- sometimes teach courses. (Norton, O’Neill, Fry and Hill, 2002)

The nature of the collaborations is more substantive and reciprocal, reflecting leadership needs for local contexts such as student achievement or teacher turnover (Young and Grogan, 2008). However, the conservative nature of 'veteran' participation in leadership preparation, where newcomers are increasingly being trained by veteran headteachers in North America, raises the issue of serial socialisation as not necessarily the most effective method (Crow, 2004). This partnership between 'veterans' and 'new comers', may fail to encourage the development of creativity and innovation.

### Recruitment and selection

Given that people are the most important resource in educational organisations, it is a truism to say that appointing such people is the most important task that managers undertake (Middlewood, 1997). In the task of recruitment and selection, managers may be described as encouraging the best people for the job or task (ibid). According to Kandasamy and Blaton (2004), recruitment can be regarded as comparing the qualifications and experience required to become a headteacher, by identifying the persons in charge of the appointment, and finally by discussing the procedures.

In centralised education systems, selection criteria are developed by senior personnel in the Ministry of Education or related bodies (Bush, 2008). One example is that of Cyprus where an independent body appointed by the president, the Educational Service Commission (ESC), has three criteria when selecting assistant principals and principals:

- Years of service
- Worth and excellence as a teacher

- Other diplomas, degrees or academic credentials

(Pashiardis and Ribbins, 2003, p.14).

However, the only significant differentiation comes from years in service as most Cypriot candidates have similar academic qualifications and are rated as excellent teachers, leading to most secondary principals being appointed when over 50 years and of male origin (ibid).

For aspiring Singaporean principals, successful completion of the 'Leaders in Education' programme is a requirement. Although appointment is not guaranteed, it is a necessary but insufficient criterion for promotion (Bush, 2008). The Ministry of Education is responsible for making appointments and uses "a standardised promotion procedure" (Huber and Gopinathan, 2004, p.225) when making appointments, alongside a "performance appraisal grading system" (Lim, 2005, p.75). It is also in charge of the selection, training and development of school leaders, where "school leaders and the whole leadership team are supervised, guided, supported and assessed regarding their effectiveness by superintendents" (Huber and Pashiardis, 2008, p.188).

There are no formally stated criteria for selection of leaders in Belarus. "The selection is made on the basis of education officers' observation of pedagogical, leadership and other aspects of the candidates' practice in their school" (Zagoumenov and Shalkovich, 2003, p.18). In the Czech Republic, "headteachers are appointed by regional district offices" in agreement with municipalities (Slavikova and Karabec, 2003, p. 48) while in Latvia such appointments require the approval of the Ministry of Education and Science, where local officials control the

initial selection based on “their understanding of what they need for the school” (Berzina, 2003, p.161).

In the absence of formal requirements for leadership qualifications in Africa, administrators and/or communities require alternative criteria for recruiting and selecting principals (Bush and Oduro, 2006), which include:

- length of teaching experience
- candidates’ perceived competence as teachers
- a management qualification which would provide a sound starting point for the appointments process. (ibid).

Appointment of headteachers in public schools is highly centralized in Bangladesh, Malaysia and Sri Lanka while, in Nepal and the Republic of Korea, there is more involvement of the decentralized offices of the Ministry in this decision work (IIEP, 2004). Pakistan, a federal country, allows the provinces to take these decisions, whereas other decisions concerning non-government schools are in the hands of their management committees or boards (ibid). In Ethiopia, teachers elect principals from among the teachers at the school for an initial period of two years. Re-election must be preceded by ‘performance evaluation’ (Tekleselassie, 2002, p.59). This process however, appears to include bureaucratic, democratic and political aspects leading to unpredictable outcomes (ibid).

In order to lead an educational institution in many US states, ‘one must hold a special license or certification that warrants an individual’s expertise to hold an educational leadership position’ (Young and Grogan, 2008, p.305). Certification is usually tied to the completion of graduate level educational leadership courses (ibid).

Filling vacant posts for school leadership positions in Australia has two distinct processes. According to Huber and Pashiardis (2008, p.191), the two processes are:

- to appoint a member of the school leadership team for an interim period the selection is made by a committee within the school
- for a longer period (although recently only ‘merit-based’ selections for limited periods are made) the selection procedure is organised by a panel comprised of different members according to the respective federal state in charge of the organisation.

They reveal that in NSW, recruitment and selection are conducted by a panel consisting of one representative of each of the following bodies: the NSW Teachers Federation, the Director General, and the Education Department (ibid).

#### *The selection process*

Recruitment and selection procedures differ across education systems. To enrol on a typical programme in the US, all potential candidates have to formally apply, applicants are then identified, selected and screened to reflect leadership potential – in some cases an essay is submitted along with a set of recommendations from individuals who can speak of their leadership potential (Young and Grogan, 2008). Candidates’ selection practices in many programmes reflect the programme’s purpose and assumptions about leadership and its development (Orr, 2006). The University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) review (2007) describes the process used by the University of Texas at Austin in assuming that principals must be able to transform schools into educational environments that work for each and every child. As a result, programme faculty select candidates who are excellent teachers and who are in a position to provide evidence of teacher leadership (ibid).

The selection process according to Young and Grogan (2008, p. 307) also involves:

- Evaluating each applicant's portfolio
- Visits each applicant's classroom by a team of observers to assess teaching quality
- A team of observers personally interview the applicant and his/her principal.

They reveal that many leadership development programmes in the US involve applicants being selected as a cohort – with programme assumptions about leadership and adult learning coming into play, that some programmes attempt to identify a mix of students that will support one another's learning and development (ibid).

In NSW, Australia, advertising and marketing for leadership posts is done on a large scale and involve the following:

- all vacant positions are advertised in publications for a period of six to twelve months
- extensive marketing activities are carried out by the ISLGs in disseminating information about the programmes, coordinate the implementation at the local level, facilitate mentoring opportunities and the development of local collegial networks
- use of such networks for recruiting applicants for vacant positions.  
(Huber and Pashiardis, 2008, p.191)

Apart from the so-called 'comprehensive' job profile, applicants are expected to be certified as having taken part in one of the development programmes of school leadership although, as mentioned in the previous sub-section, this is not mandatory as any teaching staff can apply (Anderson et al., 2008; Huber and Pashiardis, 2008).

Within the frame of 'merit-based' selection, the following methods are used:

- Written applications are considered
- References are checked
- External consultant support is used
- Pre-screening and short listing take place
- Panel interview of short listed candidates are carried out (ibid).

In most Asian countries, recruitment and selection procedures emphasize qualifications, years of experience and, in some cases, achievement in a test; however, seniority and qualifications play the most significant role in recruitment (Kandasamy and Blaton, 2004). These authors argue that, while these factors may be effective in the enforcement of hierarchical discipline, they will not necessarily help to improve management to achieve better staff development or classroom practice. The advantage of using these criteria is that they are quite objective. Focussing more on ‘personality traits’ for selection, leads to the problem of how to judge such traits (ibid).

In Africa, the Ghana Education Service (GES) employed two main strategies in the appointment of headteachers:

- appointment through direct posting which involves appointing newly trained teachers to lead schools, especially in the rural areas
- appointment through selection interviews, which is largely associated with the appointment of urban school headteachers.

(Oduro, 2003)

According to Oduro (2003), candidates for interviews are selected through recommendation and the selection is largely influenced by a teacher’s seniority in ‘rank’ and ‘teaching experience. Teaching experience, or acquisition of a professional qualification in teaching, is a necessary condition for one’s appointment to leadership positions in basic and secondary schools in Ghana. Even where political pressures influence the appointment of a headteacher, the appointee must be a trained teacher (ibid). The appointment process is also often influenced by personal considerations, such as gender. Herriot et al. (2002, p.512) reveal:

“A gender dimension in education management in Kenya is a subject that has not attracted many studies. It has been established nevertheless that women are not well represented in senior positions [including] head teachers”.

This is supported by Bush and Heystek’s (2006) research in South Africa which shows that 66% of principals in the Gauteng province are male. Similarly, Oduro and MacBeath (2003) reveal that, in Ghana, women are acutely under-represented in school headship, especially in rural areas, and that this is largely attributed to the cultural context, where women are considered to be weak.

### Induction

Duke (1987, p.261) argues that:

“School leaders do not emerge from training programmes fully prepared and completely effective. Their development is a more involved and incremental process, beginning as early as their own schooling and extending through their first years on the job as leaders. Becoming a school leader is an ongoing process of socialisation”.

Barnett and O’Mahony (2008, p.232) add that the “induction and transition of principals into the profession is of great concern, especially if there are particular events or circumstances that either encourage or discourage capable educators from seeking the position”. Bush (2008) argues that newly appointed principals are in need of professional socialisation and that organisational socialisation is also a requirement due to the challenge of leading in an unfamiliar environment.

Formal induction is a requirement for all leaders after successful completion of training, and upon appointment as principals, in most developed countries but in only a few developing countries. In Finland, Sweden and Belarus there is a planned

programme for newly appointed principals (Gayer, 2003; Johansson, 2003; Zagoumenov and Shalkovich, 2003). In New Zealand, the induction programme is neither compulsory nor a condition of appointment but is rather a representation of “national determination to enhance the quality of leadership in schools” (Brundrett et al. 2006, p.98).

However, there is little evidence of formal induction occurring in almost all African countries where induction and support are usually limited and principals have to adopt a pragmatic approach (Bush and Oduro, 2006). Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen (1997, p.260) stress that:

“Too often, and without consideration, principals in developing countries like Kenya are tossed into the job without pre-service training, without guarantee of in-service training, and without support from their employers”.

They claim that problems experienced by principals are overcome by trial and error, and that there is a need for well-structured induction strategies that will make them effective and efficient educational managers.

In Ghana, it is common practice, especially in rural areas, for head teachers to be left unsupported after appointment, and most head teachers assume their duties with little or no knowledge of their job descriptions (Oduro, 2003). Head teachers tend to depend mainly on experiential learning in carrying out their leadership tasks (Bush and Oduro, 2006).

## Training experiences and impact

### *Training experiences*

A study in Nepal showed that many headteachers feel that the training programmes offered are beneficial in identifying the schools' problems, assessing their needs, monitoring school programmes and motivating students, parents and communities in particular (IIEP, 2004). The training programmes provide ideas on how to observe, monitor and assess teachers' activities and evaluate them (ibid).

In a study of the various factors affecting the impact of leadership training on new female secondary school principals in Hong Kong, compared to similar programmes in England, Wong (2005, p.15) reports that all Hong Kong respondents found the newly appointed principal (NAP) programme "useful in providing them with a support system, which included a databank of information and a professional network with other principals, both new and experienced". He reveals that the knowledge that they were not alone, together with sharing experiences and practice, meant that "the respondents felt more confident and were able to look at their roles with a wider perspective". He concludes that "the NAPs found that the training was essential and had been very useful in enhancing their confidence and in providing some kind of emotional support, though they vary in telling what the impact was" (ibid, p.15).

According to Bush (2008), many evaluations of leadership development activities tend to depend mainly on self-reported data. He refers to the initial study of the impact of the NCSL programme 'Leading from the Middle' (LftM) by Naylor et al.

(2006) as an example. The study participants' responses reveal significant increase in confidence levels after the course and claim that the impact on their teams' effecting on learners' progress had increased greatly contrary to their own confidence which has not improved much (Naylor et al., 2006). A small-scale evaluation of the Scottish Qualification for Headship by Reeves et al. (2001) shows that the majority of participants believed that they are more reflective and evaluative as a result of their experience of the programme.

### *The impact of leadership development*

There is limited discussion in the literature about the impact of leadership development and intended outcomes, and the few sources available tend to focus mainly on student outcomes and school improvement (Bush, 2008). Leithwood et al. (2006, p.4) reveal that "school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning". They argue that leadership explains about 5 to 7 percent of the difference in the learning process of learners and performance achievement across schools, and confirm that:

"There is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership" (Leithwood et al. 2006, p.5)

While there is little empirical evidence on how specific programme components influence leadership behaviours, on-job performance, or student outcomes, there is some promising research seeking to understand the outcomes of preparation (Davis et al., 2005). Valentine (2001) reports that principals in the US who participated in a preparation programme that is concept driven, cohort based, and consisting of a year-long and carefully mentored field-based internship scored higher on the ISLLC

performance assessment test, received higher performance evaluation ratings by supervisors and were perceived by teachers as being more effective in managing their schools.

Heck (2003) uses the twin concepts of professional and organisational socialisation as a lens to examine the impact of leadership preparation. He states that professional socialisation includes formal preparation wherever it occurs and the early phase of professional practice while organisational socialisation involves the process of becoming familiar with the specific content where leadership is practised (ibid). His review of research in one US state reveals that “the socialisation process accounted for about one fourth of the variance in administrative performance” of leaders (Heck, 2003, p.246). In another study of 150 assistant school principals, candidates that have progressed to principalship “had developed a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities” (Heck, 2003, p.247).

Bush (2008, p.118) reveals that “the weaknesses of self-reported data can be addressed through adopting role set analysis” where programme participants’ perception can be triangulated by obtaining the views of those who should be aware of changes in practice. The framework for the evaluation of leadership programme by Leithwood and Levin (2004) also provides a possible basis for evaluating the impact of leadership development on school and student outcome as well as interpretation of data collected. Bush et al’s (2006) evaluation of the impact of the NCSL’s ‘New visions’ programme on school outcomes revealed impact in the following areas of the Leithwood and Levin (2004) model:

- Participant satisfaction
- Changes in knowledge, disposition and skills

- Changes in leadership practices
- Altered classroom conditions
- Improved student outcome.

(Bush, 2008, p.120)

Although the research generated significant evidence of impact from the New Visions experience, Bush et al. (2006, p.197) reveal a “diminishing influence” of the programme as the model moves through each phase and recommended a longer-term evaluation “because leadership effects are likely to take time to impact on student outcomes”.

In an impact study of the South African ACE programme, most candidates claim to have improved their management practice; although self-reported it was sometimes confirmed by their role sets (Bush et al. 2011). They reveal improvement in policy implementation, relationships with educators, increased delegation to other SMT members, enhanced financial management, and conflict management. ACE programme participants also claim “gains in several personal attributes, including enhanced confidence, improved self-control, and better relationships with educators and SMTs” (ibid, p.13).

## **Leadership and Leadership Development: A Critical Perspective**

### Leadership concepts, theories and models

Fitzgerald (2003) critiques the western ethnocentric notions of leadership, stating that “one of the troubling aspects of western leadership theories is the claim that the

functions and features of leadership can be transported and legitimated across homogeneous educational systems” (p.1). She argues that in spite of recent changes in the construct of educational leadership to provide a gender dimension, there persists a lack of acknowledgement of ‘indigenous leaders’ practices and values. According to Fitzgerald (2003), there is a need for theories of educational leadership to take into account indigenous leadership practices. These studies have contested claims by Hodgkinson (1991) and Sergiovanni (1992) that top-down ‘visionary’ leadership was possible and permissible and that issues of social class, gender, race and ethnicity are unproblematic. While these arguments are valid, Fitzgerald (2003) gives insufficient weight to the view that some leadership approaches can be adopted successfully across national boundaries.

Ball (2011) states that “the form and variety of relationships involved in school leadership are changing and proliferating in a somewhat contradictory fashion” (p.50). He affirms that the liberation and celebration of school leaders have been the loci of educational reform over the past 20 years, involving various elements such as the “freedom to manage” and “enhancement of the leadership role which have been central to new public management” and the creation of markets within the public sector (p.50). He further argues that imparting the sensibilities of business into state schools has resulted in forms of ‘entrepreneurial’ leadership, where the leader as the sole transformer of deficient schools uses their vision and charisma to raise standards. This argument arises mainly from the author’s assessment of UK and European contexts and is less relevant to other international settings, including Australia, Africa and Seychelles. It also underestimates the contemporary interest in distributed leadership.

The concept of effective leadership, according to Barker (2001), is derived from “business where there is a long-standing and well-developed belief in the power of leaders to transform the character, performance and profitability of their companies” (p.66). He argues that until the English leadership programme for serving heads (LPSH) began to train leaders to examine and develop their leadership styles, too little attention has been paid to the “paradox that while leaders need to be interested in power and influence, authoritarian styles may reduce motivation and effectiveness” (p.75). This critique appears to be polemical despite being grounded in field research in English comprehensive schools.

According to Hall, Gunter and Bragg (2011), the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services (abbreviated to National College) has presented distributed leadership as an officially sanctioned model of good practice and has developed training materials, and a website, strongly advocating the adoption of this leadership model. They reveal that “those endorsements of and invocations to implement distributed leadership in schools have not gone unchallenged” as there is both scepticism of the possibilities for distributed leadership in schools and a rejection of the accounts of distributed leadership as offered by its proponents (ibid, p.32). These authors are right to challenge the ‘authorised’ nature of distributed leadership. However, although they acknowledge Leithwood et al (2006), they underestimate their evidence that distributed leadership contributes to enhanced school outcomes.

## Leadership development concepts, theories and models

Gunter (2008) argues that the British government wanted a head-teacher who understood and could deliver the new Labour agenda, with the suggestion that postgraduate programmes became sidelined in favour of national training programmes. As NPQH provides the only route to headship, it can be seen as a state licensing process. This is an understandable critique but the author also underestimates the merits of a standardised approach to a national leadership qualification.

According to Ball (2011) another new category of leader, the executive heads, responsible for more than one school and for mentoring a failing school, have emerged in England. These positions have been advertised, and a training course started, with little shared knowledge about this new role, its meaning and how it operates. He reveals that these positions are “related to the development of new routes into leadership based on new forms of loyalty and identity” (p.51). The future leaders programme is co-run by an academy provider, ARK, and draws explicitly on business methods. This is a ‘fast track’ route to headship with an increased experience of classroom and school life, stressing loyalty to the programme and the sponsor’s values rather than to institutions, and “play off career against commitment in new ways” (Ball, 2011, p.51). These arguments relate to specific aspects of provision in the UK with reference to specific European countries, which are not relevant to programmes in other developed and developing countries.

Gunter (2001) argues that, although organising the recruitment and support of middle leaders is a key role for heads, the differing rates of change at subject department level shows the complexity of interplay of personalities and circumstances that contribute to the “variability of performance amongst departments within the same school” (p,110). Barker (2005) argues that the LPSH recognises ‘personal conviction’ as a source of motivation for headteachers but the model does not examine or allow for the particular values and professional philosophy that may shape the priorities and decisions of an individual headteacher. The Hillside case study (Barker, 2003) indicates that, although the leadership programmes (NPQH and LPSH) offered by NCSL are constructive and useful, they are based on a one-dimensional conception of the qualities required to develop and sustain a school community and overestimate the significance of style and motivation. These comments relate to specific national college programmes and they do not have wider significance.

### Leadership succession

Successful transition from one leader to another seems to be a “critical but neglected dimension of sustainable improvement” according to Barker (2006, p.277). He argues that all those concerned with the appointment of school leaders should give more attention to managing their arrival, induction and deployment. Barker (2005) reports a transformation in effectiveness at a school in ‘special measures’ where the test and examination results did not improve. Accounts of micro political manoeuvres between heads and their colleagues suggest that various types of conflict can cause acute difficulty, particularly for new leaders (Ball, 1987).

Leadership succession at all levels is an “underestimated dimension in school improvement that provides an important opportunity to refresh an established culture and mission” (Barker, 2006, p.290). He argues that, although a potentially valuable source of energy and renewal, the process of changing the head can be hazardous and disruptive. Barker’s views pre-date the National College’s succession planning programme, which gave specific attention to leadership transition (Bush, 2011).

#### Impact of leadership development on school outcomes

Barker (2005) explores claims that leaders who have been appropriately trained can motivate teachers and students to achieve challenging targets and transform the prospects of future generations. He tested such claims using the experience of three headteachers in the field and case study evidence was used to examine improvements in school outcomes. His findings revealed that, although ‘turn around’ was achieved quickly, the interpersonal styles adopted by the heads were only part of a leadership repertoire that included beliefs, values, professional knowledge and micro-politics. He reveals that variations in the combination of context, leaders and followers seem to have been more significant than the common elements emphasised by the school improvement literature and national training programmes. He claims that the findings support the suggestion that “intake mix may influence results more than the organisational characteristics shaped by heads” (ibid, p.100), and concludes that while leadership training may improve school climate, a transformation in performance is unlikely. These findings are based on only three case studies and cannot be generalised to the wider population of heads, even in England.

Barker (2005) believes that there is limited empirical evidence that heads have an important impact on learners' performance or that training improves their leadership ability. He further elaborated that documented evidence accounts of verifiable improvement in effectiveness and results are rare. He comments on Hallinger and Heck (1998) review of studies by stating that their "analysis suggests that principal effects are small and require exceptionally sophisticated research designs to detect" (Barker, 2005, p.100). He agrees with Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) that there is almost no available evidence about how principals add value to learners' outcomes. According to him, no statistically significant effects have been found once family educational culture is taken into account. He further argues that the literature of leadership training is equally discouraging for those who expect the NCSL to bring about a transformation in school performance or even to influence schools at all. Barker (2005) and Leithwood et al (2006) agree that school leadership accounts for about 12-20% of between-school variation. However, they differ in their interpretation of these data. Barker feels that this figure is small and that the government should focus on the other 80-88%. Leithwood et al argue that governments can more easily influence school leadership effects and are right to focus on these.

Barker (2005) say that the problematic nature of leadership as a discourse and field of study seems to have defeated efforts to distil the skills, knowledge and competencies of headship and to prepare training programmes to improve job performance. He argues that the dramatic contrast between an optimistic policy agenda that confidently advocates transformational leadership to improve results, and

the mainly pessimistic conclusions of the research literature, indicates the urgent need to investigate the impact of school leaders on motivation and achievement (ibid). As suggested above, more recent research (e.g. Leithwood et al. 2006) challenges such conclusion.

The discussion in this section has been separated from the main body of the literature review. This is because their arguments are mainly focused on one country (England) and some of their work does not relate to leadership development which is the main focus of this research. While it is important to acknowledge such dissenting voices, they do not represent the majority view that developing leaders is beneficial for school learners.

### **Leadership Development in Small Island Developing States**

This section focuses on various aspects of leadership development in small island developing states (SIDS). Literature on leadership development in SIDS is very limited. Although interest in such states emerged around 1960s, literature on educational issues emerged much later (Louisy, 1999, p.xi). Crossley and Holmes (1999, p.3) say that the change occurred because the Commonwealth Secretariat has placed small island states on the agenda. In addition, the 1994 United Nations' Global Conference on Sustainable Development in SIDS led to the Barbados Programme of Action, and the conference recognised SIDS as a coherent international constituency with a particular set of concerns and agendas (Smith, 2006, p.228).

### Defining small island states

The definition of Small Island states is not widely accepted (Crowards, 2002, p.143) as different authors and organisations differ on what is a small island state. Small island states may be defined with respect to land area, total income measured as gross domestic product (GDP), political construct reflected in being a member of the Association of Small Island States - AOSIS (Ballantyne, 1998; ECDPM, 1998), and population size (Armstrong and Read, 2003; UN; Commonwealth; Holmes and Crossley, 2004). However, there is great variation in ascribed population size, including 3 million (Armstrong and Read 2003), 1.5 million (Commonwealth; Holmes and Crossley, 2004) and 1 million (UN).

In this section, the author will focus on those states that meet the UN criterion but excluding the Seychelles, which will be discussed separately. According to Bush, Purvis and Barallon (2008, p.452),

“The one million ceiling includes many Caribbean states, several islands in the Pacific and Indian oceans and the well developed Mediterranean islands of Cyprus and Malta”.

However, apart from population sizes that define such small island states, they also share certain unique characteristics.

### Characteristics of small island states

Among the common characteristics of small island states identified by Bush, Purvis and Barallon (2008, p.453) is economic vulnerability resulting to limited resources and lack of or limited higher education (HE) provision.

Many SIDS do not have their own higher education provision and often experience shortages of natural, financial and human resources, and the expertise to plan and implement leadership development programmes (ibid). Capacity development is seen as “the most critical need” (Binger, 2001, p.1). The difficulty for many SIDS is to provide appropriate development opportunities for school leaders, due to their isolation, limited resources and lack of HE provision.

#### Leadership succession and preparation

Bush, Purvis and Barallon (2008, p.455) say that succession planning “relates to the several processes involved in ensuring a sufficient supply of suitably qualified leaders”. Pashiardis and Ribbins (2003) reveal that Cyprus has adopted an approach leading to the appointment of highly experienced and predominantly male principals.

In most SIDS, there are no formal requirements for head teachers. However, Bezzina (2002) states that, prospective principals in Malta need to hold a diploma in educational administration and management. He reports on a study where the participants found their leadership experience as equal to, or more valuable than their professional development than the training received. In Cyprus, according to Pashiardis and Ribbins (2003), few principals have been engaged in substantial and proactive preparation. Georgiou et al. (2001), claim that principals are not well prepared to face the numerous educational and social challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Although evidence of formal induction in SIDS is limited, Gronn and Ribbins (2003, p.86) report that few principals in Cyprus “found their formal induction to be

satisfactory and soon they had to fall back on better-known examples of previous principals for new role models”.

### Leadership selection and development

The recruitment and selection of school leaders in most SIDS is based on a set of criteria, explicit or implicit, developed by senior officials in the Ministry of Education (MoE) or related bodies (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008). One such example is the Fiji islands, where principals are appointed by the MoE (Cardno and Howse, 2005):

“The principal’s role is unquestionably described as that of educational and professional leader who enhances staff and students performance and also undertakes teaching duties. In addition the principal is the chief executive of the school, is accountable to the Ministry and the board [of Governors], responsible for staff performance and maintaining relationships with staff and with community and required to operate within government policy and legislative requirements” (ibid: p.38).

In Cyprus, Georgiou et al. (2001) stress that staff appointment, textbooks selection, examination setting and curricula development are not under the responsibility of the principals. They claim that “Cypriot principals’ main functions revolve around routine administrative matters” (p.77).

When choosing assistant principals and principals in Cyprus, the Educational Service Commission considers three factors; years of service, worth and excellence as a teacher, and other diplomas, degrees or academic credentials (Pashiardis and Ribbins, 2003, p.15). They confirm that since candidates have about the same academic qualifications, and most are rated as excellent teachers, the main basis of

selection is years of service - hence most secondary school principals are above 50 years of age.

Bush and Oduro (2006) claim that in most developing countries, including SIDS, pre-service preparation is rare and the limited resources are devoted mainly to in-service support. Cardno and Howse's (2004) review of Fijian secondary school principals reveals a wide range of development activities, from university degrees and diplomas to management workshops and on-the-job support of various kinds. Although many opportunities exist, these principals complain about the type of training and the lack of formal programmes. A study in Tonga shows that principals acknowledge the need for skills and competences that supported teaching and learning, with less importance given to effective management skills (Billot, 2003).

Notions of lifelong learning are gaining ground and are increasingly being applied to professional development in SIDS (Crossley and Holmes, 1999) for leaders, teachers and other education professionals.

An appropriate model for SIDS would be one where opportunities for pre-appointment preparation of aspiring leaders exist, with formal induction for newly appointed leaders, consolidated with on-going support and development of practising leaders (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008). Implementing such a model would be challenging for SIDS, unless they can establish partnerships with developed countries (Scott, 2001). As Bush, Purvis and Barallon (2008, p.462) conclude, "good leadership is an essential requirement for successful schools and this is too important to be left to chance".

## **Leadership Development in the Seychelles**

This section focuses entirely on the Seychelles and includes information related to leadership and its development in a specific small island developing state, making use of the limited literature.

### The Seychelles as a SIDS

The Seychelles is marked by its geographical remoteness and a degree of geographical dispersion which is unusually high even for an archipelago (Campling and Rosalie, 2006). These authors believe that the isolation makes the country internationally uncompetitive and, since Seychelles' key trading partners are geographically distant EU countries, the high transport costs both for canned tuna exports and the inflow of European tourists, all act like a hidden tariff on trade. They further state that such vulnerabilities have a significant potential impact on public expenditure, including education. See chapter one for information on population size and geographical location.

### Concepts of leadership and leadership development

The concepts of leadership and leadership development are quite new to the policy-makers of the highly centralized Seychelles education system (SIP Baseline Study, 2002). Placing leadership training of recognized graduate and postgraduate standard high on the agenda of the manpower planning forecast is relatively new (Building Capacity Project, 2002). This is due to recommendations put forward by different

focus groups, participating in various forums, seminars, workshops and conferences at national level, of the importance of having highly trained leaders to lead schools in the Seychelles to meet the demands on education brought about by globalization and global economic reforms (Teachers' Perceptions Survey Report, 2000; SIP Baseline Study, 2002; Teacher Retention Report, 2004).

The introduction of the School Improvement Programme (SIP) in the Seychelles schools in 1995 has led to the expectation that head teachers would shift from administering and managing to that of leading an organisation of change (Ministry of Education, 2000). The shift in management style, however, had not been accompanied by the necessary preparatory programmes to equip school leaders with the necessary skills to perform their duties successfully (Elizabeth, 2006).

#### Leadership preparation and training

In the Seychelles, preparation and training of head teachers "has been slow in keeping pace with the reforms taking place in education for the past decade" (Octave, 2004, p.4). The last formal training for school managers organized by the Ministry of Education before 2002 was the Certificate Course in Administration run by the Quebec University of Trois Rivieres, which dates back to 1992 (Padiwalla, 1995; Leste, 2000).

#### *The Quebec administrative and management course*

The Quebec programme was aimed at introducing new administrative practices in schools, modifying behaviours, improving the organisation and enhancing

participants' job satisfaction (Ministry of Education, 2000). The course was delivered on a part-time basis over a period of three years with the assistance of local coordinators, through an adapted distance education model (ibid).

Altogether, forty staff followed the course but a number of them have since retired or moved to new positions within the Ministry of Education (MoE), leaving the schools with only limited numbers of qualified and competent leaders (Octave, 2004).

This programme consisted of modules on:

- principles of education management
- leadership theories
  
- staff and resource management
- human relationships
- decision-making
- management of pupils and community / home links.

(ibid)

A study carried out for the SIP in small states (Ministry of Education, 2000) raised the issue of continued support for head teachers. The report reveals that the training of head teachers through the partnership with Quebec university did not make provision for continued support of the head teachers, and did not create the enabling conditions to allow headteachers to put into practice what had been learnt (Ministry of Education, 2000). To address these concerns, links with UK universities were established in 2002 by the MoE (Octave, 2004; Elizabeth, 2006).

#### *Partnership with universities in England*

Before 2002, only 19 of the 35 head teachers held a formal qualification in educational administration. Heads of departments and deputy heads, newly created

positions in secondary schools from 1998, had no formal preparation for the job apart from short familiarization and induction courses (SIP Project Proposal, 2002; Building Capacity Project, 2002). The same applies to studies coordinators in the primary schools, a position established in the early 1980s (ibid).

In 2002, five school leaders undertook training at Reading University for a Master of Arts (MA) Degree in Organisation, Planning and Management (OPM) in Education, which they all successfully completed in 2003 (Elizabeth, 2006). In 2003-2004, two more leaders acquired a Master in Business Administration (MBA) in Educational Leadership at Lincoln University (Octave, 2003). With the official launching of the MoE's National Institute of Education (NIE) partnership with Lincoln University in 2004, school leaders have been undergoing leadership training at Master's level locally. From 2007, provision transferred to the University of Warwick with school and system leaders taking the MA in Educational Leadership and Innovation (Ministry of Education, 2009).

#### *Local initiatives*

In line with the needs of international partners, the National Institute of Education (NIE), encouraged by the MoE, initiated the Advanced Diploma in Educational Leadership (ADEL) with consultative input. This is a local upgrading programme for school leaders who do not possess the entry requirement for Master's level training (Octave, 2004; Elizabeth, 2006). Participants of the course obtain support from local tutors who are also lecturers.

## Training experiences and impact

Research on the impact of these courses is limited and rarely focuses on the nature and usefulness of the training offered through the partnership, the trainees' experiences, and subsequent changes in leadership practice in their organisations.

Elizabeth's (2006) study focussed on secondary school heads and revealed that the training impacted positively on the respondents in respect of:

- the development of leadership skills in managing people and delegating responsibilities
- acceptance of change
- coping with change
- devising mechanisms to enhance performance at school
- creating the right climate and teamwork
- involvement of stakeholders in decision-making (p.40-42).

She reports that, although the training has helped the leaders to understand and accept change, in practice it does not work as the school culture is resistant, – as one respondent claims:

“I am struggling to find ways to involve all staff members but still I am encountering resentment to the point that I found myself being dictatorial at times. Perhaps this is the best type of leadership to use when starting in a completely new school” (ibid, p.43).

She also highlighted that there is disagreement between respondents and senior MoE officials regarding the amount of support provided to school leaders. The former feel that support is lacking while the latter state that it is adequate:

“It is adequate but much depends on how the heads make effective use of it” (Elizabeth, 2006, p.53).

Some leaders' lack of assertiveness and a positive attitude, and their inability to manage time, negotiate and listen to staff, are issues to be addressed in the author's study.

### Leadership succession and selection

Before establishing the partnership with international universities in 2002, the majority of head teachers who had typically progressed through the ranks as experienced and enterprising teachers with the perceived qualities for headship, had no specific formal training (Dora, 2002). Occasional in-service workshops were organised but head teachers were generally expected to learn on the job (ibid).

According to the revised Teachers' Scheme of Service in the year 2000, the required qualification for headship is a first degree or higher national diploma, but this has not always applied in practice (Octave, 2004).

With the introduction of MBA/MA leadership training programmes, potential principals are expected to obtain the qualification (Bush, 2005). However, he adds that it is the Ministry who, by acting as 'gate keeper', decides who shall be nominated, in conjunction with the international university. This illustrates the strong centralised control, and the personal knowledge of professionals, in SIDS communities where Ministry personnel know school leaders well and are able "to adopt a 'chess board' approach to leadership succession" (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008, p.456).

One unusual feature of school leadership in the Seychelles is the presence of many more female head teachers than males, in sharp contrast to most other SIDS (Ibid). According to Bush (2005), the dominance of women in most professional settings is reflected in the appointment of principals – where a large majority of teachers and middle leaders are women, as are almost all the senior civil servants in the Ministry of Education. He believes that because most of the potential candidates, and the Ministry selectors, are women, it is not surprising that women dominate headship, with 27 of the 33 schools being led by women (ibid).

While the Seychelles shares several characteristics with other Small Island states that combine to make it difficult to fully develop school leaders, this research explores provision for leadership development in the Seychelles grounded in the realities and specificity of SIDS.

### **Summary**

In securing and sustaining quality education, school management and leadership are regarded as very important (Hopkins, 2001; Harris, 2004). The capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the nature and quality of leadership provided by the head teachers (ibid).

In this chapter, the author has discussed the concepts and models of education leadership to set the scene for understanding leadership development, which is the main focus of the study being investigated. It highlighted the significance of leadership development through its rationale and examines the different aspects of

leaders' development. Drawing on literature and research, this chapter addresses several issues of leadership development such as models and approaches, preparation and training opportunities, selection and recruitment, support and continuous professional development, training experiences and impact, from an international perspective. Leadership development in small island developing states (SIDS) was examined as a prelude to consideration of this issue in the Seychelles one of the smallest island developing state in the world.

In chapter three, there is a discussion of the author's broad research approach, the different methods and instruments used for data collection, explaining and justifying the approach while also considering its limitations.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The investigation of ‘leadership development in the Seychelles’ is being conducted to highlight aspects of school leader development in a small island developing state (SID). The study is guided by seven main research questions:

1. What is the process by which school leaders are identified and recruited to take part in the MBA/MA programme in educational leadership?
2. What are the experiences of the participants taking part in these programmes?
3. What is the process by which participants taking part in these programmes are identified for leadership roles following completion of the programme?
4. What is the impact of the leadership development programme on leadership practice in schools?
5. To what extent is the effectiveness of school leaders enhanced following successful completion of the programme?
6. What arrangements exist for the ongoing support and professional development of graduates from the MBA/MA?
7. What is the perception of senior Ministry of Education officials of the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools?

This chapter examines the research approaches used for investigating ‘leadership development in the Seychelles’. It begins by looking at what constitutes research in educational contexts and explaining and applying the research paradigms. It discusses the author’s broad research approaches and explains the specific research methods that have been used for this study. Sampling and instrument design are discussed and the pilot study is explained. Issues of access are addressed, and the ethical implications of the research are examined. The issues of reliability, validity and triangulation are reviewed, and the chapter concludes with a short summary.

### **Educational Research**

Hitchcock and Hughes (1989), state that research is systematic, critical and self-critical enquiry and that it is characterised by sets of principles and guidelines for procedures. Bassey (1999, p.38) believes that research “aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and wisdom”. Johnson (1994, p.3) adds that research is:

“A focussed and systematic enquiry that goes beyond generally available knowledge to acquire specialised and detailed information, providing a basis for analysis and elucidatory comment on the topic of enquiry”

According to Bassey (1999, p.38), research is a “systematic ... enquiry which aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and wisdom.” Cohen et al. (2000, p.45), however, restrict the use of the term ‘research’ to “those activities aimed at developing a science of behaviour, the word *science* itself implying both normative and interpretive perspectives”. They identify the three main characteristics of research as “systematic and controlled, empirical, and self-correcting”, and point out that the nature of research is “a combination of both experience and reasoning and

must be regarded as the most successful approach to the discovery of truth” (ibid, p.5). The value of educational research is to:

“Enable educators to develop the kind of sound knowledge base that characterises other professions and disciplines; and one that will ensure education a maturity and a sense of progression it at present lacks” (Cohen et al., 2000, p.45).

The planning of the author’s investigation has been done in such way that the criteria stated in the definitions above are met. The enquiry is systematic, controlled, and empirical, produces new knowledge and provides the basis for analysis and conclusions.

As in all research, the element of subjectivity exists (Blaxter et al., 1996). According to Finch (1986, p.95), the dominant tradition of the research-policy relationship, especially in Britain, “sees research as providing objective, factual information which is handed over to policy-makers for their use”. They believe that this approach “embodies a clear distinction between facts and value judgements as two separate activities, which are pursued sequentially.” In conducting this investigation, the author is aware that it is almost impossible to view research as a wholly objective activity and sensitive issues pertaining to leadership development in the Seychelles will be examined within both a narrow and a broad context. Factors that influence research, such as religion, political belief and power relations, personal experience, social positioning and cultural values (Blaxter et al., 1996) are taken into consideration. These factors cannot be wholly objective, so it is difficult for the research to be value free.

## **Research Paradigms**

There are two broad traditions in educational research, which are positivism and interpretivism. These terms overlap with other similar concepts. Positivism may be called ‘quantitative’ while interpretivism is sometimes described as ‘relativism’ or ‘qualitative’.

### Positivism or quantitative research

The principal paradigm affecting educational research is what is popularly referred to as the scientific approach. This approach is essentially quantitative and is based on collection of facts and observable phenomena. Quantitative research is grounded in the positivist tradition (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998).

The main features of the positivist approach are that:

- People are the objects of the educational research
- Only observable phenomenon, not feelings, can be considered valid knowledge
- Knowledge is obtained through the collection of verifiable ‘facts’
- Researchers should be objective or ‘value free’
- Findings should be capable of generalisation beyond the location of the project.

(Adapted from Morrison 2002, p.17-21)

In more simple terms, Bell (1993) believes that quantitative researchers collect facts and study the relationship of one set of facts to another. According to her, they measure, using scientific techniques that are likely to produce quantified and, if possible, generalizable conclusions. One of the criticisms of positivism has been that observation is not value free as the positivists declare, as some of the most important

aspects of human behaviour, such as intentions and feelings, cannot be directly observed (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998). However, Easterby et al. (1991) argue that one of the main strengths of the quantitative approach is that it can provide wide coverage of situations; it can be fast and economical and, particularly when statistics are aggregated from large samples, they can be directly relevant to policy decisions. However, they also see these approaches as rather inflexible and artificial; not very effective in understanding processes or the significance that people attach to actions; not very helpful in generating theories, and because they focus on what is or what has been, they make it hard for policy makers to infer what changes and actions should take place in the future (ibid).

#### Interpretivism or qualitative research

Anderson and Arsenault (1998, p.119) say that interpretive research “is a form of inquiry that explore phenomena in their own natural settings and uses a multi-methods approach to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them”. They believe that qualitative approaches gather information from many sources. The differing opinions, and different methods of collecting, analysing and interpreting data, are put together to produce an intense and rich form of research (ibid). Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p.2) add that:

“Qualitative research is multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”.

Such research undoubtedly involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials such as; case-study, personal experience, introspection, life story,

interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments in individual's lives (ibid).

These statements show that interpretivism focuses on conducting research with people as the subject. Its main features are:

- Research is 'grounded' in people's experience
- People understand events in different ways
- Research focuses on the meaning placed on events by participants
- The emphasis is on words rather than numbers.

(Adapted from Morrison 2002, p.12-21)

Researchers adopting a qualitative perspective are more concerned to understand individuals' perceptions of the world, seek insight rather than statistical analysis, doubt whether social 'facts' exist and question whether a 'scientific' approach can be used when dealing with human beings (Bell, 1993).

Qualitative methods are described as particularly suitable for educational evaluation where justification of the investigation is understanding rather than evidence. According to Hopkins (1989), this is not to imply that qualitative methods are unable to provide proof, but rather to emphasise that evaluation is often more concerned to generate hypotheses about complex social situations rather than to test them.

#### The author's selected approach

The approach chosen for this research is primarily interpretive or qualitative. This is because this study involves people as subjects rather than objects of the research. As Cohen et al. (2000) suggest, it deals with human experience and offers the researcher

an insight into the real dynamics of situations and people. In this enquiry, the subjects (key people) are the senior leaders in educational institutions and senior officials of the Ministry of Education in the Seychelles. However, there are occasions where quantitative techniques were used in relation to the investigation of ‘senior leaders’ practices impact on school outcomes’. As Bell (1993, p.5) states, “there are occasions when qualitative researchers draw on quantitative techniques, and vice versa”. She believes that classifying an approach as quantitative or qualitative does not mean that, once an approach has been selected, the researcher may not move from the methods normally associated with that style. This is because each approach has its strengths and weaknesses and each may be suitable for a particular context (ibid).

### **Broad Research Approaches**

The author adopts two broad approaches for this enquiry; ‘survey’ and ‘case studies’. These are discussed below.

#### Survey research

Survey is one of the two main approaches to educational research. According to Bell (1993, p.10), “the aim of a survey is to obtain information which can be analysed and patterns extracted and comparisons made”. De Vaus (1991) believes that surveys are generally used to ascertain facts and simple opinions, and that the aim is usually to be able to generalise in a valid way. Johnson (1994) defines survey activity as “eliciting equivalent information from an identified population”. She elaborates by stating that ‘equivalent’ “means that the same kind of information is sought from all

respondents and that survey questions are standardised” (ibid, p.14). Bell (1993, p.11) adds that:

“In most cases, a survey will aim to obtain information from a representative selection of the population and from that sample will then be able to present the findings as being representative of the population as a whole”.

She elaborates Johnson’s notion of standardisation by saying that “in surveys, all respondents will be asked the same questions in, as far as possible, the same circumstances” (ibid, p.11).

The author’s research involves a survey dimension in that 100% of the population of trained leaders (MBA/MA course participants) at system level, and in educational institutions, were interviewed, as well as all senior Ministry personnel relevant to this enquiry. These participants were asked the same questions, in more or less the same circumstances - that is in a place of their choice such as their office, for example.

The author’s approach matches the main characteristics of the survey method summarised by Wilson (1984, p.35):

- It requires a sample of respondents to reply to a number of fixed questions under comparable conditions
- It may be administered by an interviewer, as in the author’s research, or involve a printed questionnaire
- The respondents represent a defined population. There may be a 100% sample or census, as in the author’s approach, or only a fraction of the population, or sample, may be included
- A survey sample should be representative of its population so results can be generalised.

According to Cohen and Manion (1994, p.83), the survey is “perhaps the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research”. It is popular because:

“Surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific events. Thus, surveys may vary in their levels of complexity from those which provide simple frequency counts to those which present relational analysis” (Cohen and Manion (1994: 83).

Surveys have some elements of the scientific style such as systematically selecting respondents and seeking data in the same way from each of them - but the survey instrument may influence that which it is seeking to investigate (De Vaus, 1991; Nicols, 1991).

#### *Limitations of survey research*

As with all types of research, the survey approach has several limitations. Because of the standardised approach, surveys do not give the opportunity to explore a topic in depth. Questions must have a clear meaning and responses must be fitted into a limited range. Replies may be simplified and subtler differences between respondents may not be observed. As such the coverage of the topic under investigation tends to be shallow (Wilson, 1984). However, in the author’s research, through good use of interviewing techniques, greater depth was achieved.

As the research is an ‘insider’, some limitations of survey research were eliminated. This was particularly helpful with respondents in need of encouragement, and a sense of rapport with the researcher and the research, in order to provide factual information and opinion on sensitive issues. As surveys often do not have the

flexibility to provide this kind of supportive atmosphere, it is sometimes unsuitable for 'sensitive' issues (Cohen and Manion, 1994). However, this was not the case in the author's research as less 'sensitive' issues to do with leaders' training and professional experience were being discussed.

The author also avoided a flawed sample, unrepresentative of the population, by including a 100% sample, thus eliminating bias which may arise from a low response rate (Hoinville and Jowell, 1984).

#### *Strengths of survey research*

Because the research tool is standardised, it is usually possible to approach a large number of respondents. In the case of the author's research, 47 trained leaders and 100% of the sample population were interviewed to collect a lot of information in quite a short time (in a total time of approximately 47 hours – 1 hour each interview). This provides breadth of coverage of the topic under investigation. As an 'insider' researcher, for whom visiting schools and being in contact with leaders is part of her everyday duties, conducting the survey was also at low cost compared with other approaches (Bell, 1993). However, the researcher did find interviewing some colleagues an uncomfortable experience for both parties and quickly came to realise that, as an 'insider', she has to live with her mistakes after completing the research (Bell, 1987). Furthermore, the close contact with the institution and colleagues made objectivity difficult to attain and the constant feeling that the respondents are telling the researcher what she wants to hear rather than their own 'beliefs' (ibid).

Surveys also typically produce a large amount of information, which can be compared to provide a wealth of description. It may be possible also to go beyond description to look for patterns in the data. This might mean that survey findings do not simply describe what has happened but also provide explanations about why it happened (Johnson, 1994). As such, this proved to be a valuable research approach for the author's enquiry.

### Case study research

Case study is the second broad approach used in educational research. It takes the school itself, or sub-units or programmes within it, as the 'case' and examines this unit with a view to increasing understanding of the phenomenon and, in some cases, to generalising it to a wider population of schools (Bush, 2002). The author's research includes one case study of a head teacher of a primary school. The case study approach is particularly appropriate for individual researchers because it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem or concern to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale (Bell, 1993). The particular focus of the author's research case study is changes in the senior leader's practices and their impact on school and pupil outcomes during before and after leadership training.

According to Nisbet and Watt (1984), case study research approach involves systematic collection of evidence and is not simply an example or an anecdote. Adelman et al. (1984, p.94) describe case study as "an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus an enquiry around an instance". The main members of the 'family' are interviews, observation and

documentary analysis. To Bell (1993) they are; observes, questions and studies, while Bassey (1999, p.81) refers to these methods as; asking questions, observing events and reading documents. All three methods are used in this study, and are examined in detail in the next section.

These statements are supported by Johnson (1994, p.20), who defines case study as:

“An enquiry which uses multiple sources of evidence. It investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”

Bell (1993, p.8) believes a case study to be “much more than a story about or a description of an event or a state”. She confirms that, as in all research, “evidence is collected systematically, the relationship between variables is studied and the study is methodically planned” and that “case study is concerned principally with the interaction of factors and events” (ibid, p.8). Nisbet and Watt (1980, p.5) add that “sometimes it is only by taking a practical instance that we can obtain a full picture of this interaction”. Though Bell (1993) claims that observation and interviews are most frequently used in case study, as is the case in the author’s research, no method is excluded - as methods of collecting information are selected according to their appropriateness for the task.

Cohen and Manion (1994, p.106-107) define case study:

“Case study research typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit – a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community. The purpose of such an observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life of the unit with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which that unit belongs”.

This statement reflects the intentions of the author's research, where the headteacher is the primary 'unit of analysis' and the students, staff and school constitute the life cycle of the unit, as actions taken by the senior leader in the school do have a direct effect on those within the school as a community. Yin's (1994, p.137) definition of the 'unit of analysis' reinforces the author's intention:

“An individual person is the case being studied, and the individual is the primary unit of analysis. Information about each relevant individual would be collected and several such individuals or 'case' might be included in a multiple case study”.

The author's research involves one case study of a headteacher of a primary school.

#### *Limitations of case study research*

Case study research is criticised because it does not match the survey approach in terms of generalisation. According to Adelman et al. (1984, p.95), although generalisation may be possible, “during the conduct of the study the description of the case will increasingly emphasise its uniqueness”. Bassey (1999) confirms this view by stating that case studies do not provide the potential for statistical generalisation, which is more valid than his notion of 'fuzzy' generalisation. Critics point to the fact that generalisation is not usually possible and question the value of the study of single events (Bell, 1993; Cohen et al. 2000). A case study may focus on a unique institution, which is not relatable to other phenomena. This is more likely with a single case study design although individual cases within multiple case studies may also be unique (Bassey, 2002). In the author's research, where leaders are trained in the same way, and are leading educational institutions with similar variables, there is a good prospect that findings will be relatable. Johnson (1994,

p.23) argues that “selection of case study sites and phenomena [are] crucial for the usefulness of the study for a wider audience”.

According to Johnson (1994, p.22), lack of scientific rigour “is the chief criticism levelled at the case study approach”. As “there is no ‘book of rules’ for the design of a case study”; it is understandable that “each must depend on the nature of the phenomenon investigated, and the particular circumstances in which it occurs”.

Particularly where a single researcher is gathering all the information, selection is inevitable (Cohen et al. 2000). Although the researcher selects the area for study, and decides which materials to present in the final report, it is difficult to cross-check information and so there is a danger of distorting the findings (Bell, 1993; Bassey, 2002).

#### *Strengths of case study research*

Bell (1993, p.7) argues that the great strength of the case study method is that it allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation and to identify the various interactive processes at work – as “these processes may remain hidden in a large-scale survey but may be crucial to the success or failure of systems or organisations”. The data collected are strong in reality as schools are real institutions, which provide a rich context for research (Adelman et al., 1984) - as in the case of the author’s research. Adelman et al. (1984) add that case studies recognise the complexity of ‘truth’ and allow for alternative interpretations; produce rich and vivid descriptions of events; are a ‘step to action’ as they may be used to promote change; and that findings are accessible to the reader.

Nisbet and Watt (1984, p.76) state that case study “is particularly suited to the individual researcher” and that it can complement the survey approach. They believe that:

“A large-scale survey can be followed up by case studies, to test out conclusions by examining specific instances. Alternatively, for opening up a new problem where it is difficult to formulate hypotheses the case study may precede a survey, to identify key issues” (ibid, p.77).

Bell (1993, p.8) supports this view by stating that “case studies may be carried out to follow up and to put flesh on the bones of a survey”. She also argues that “they can precede a survey and be used as a means of identifying key issues which merit further investigation”. These factors influenced the author’s decision to adopt both survey and case study approaches - to provide breadth of coverage through survey and depth of coverage through case study.

Bassey (1981, p.85) stresses the reliability of case study research:

“An important criterion for judging the merit of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher working in a similar situation to relate his decision making to that described in the case study. The reliability of a case study is more important than its generalisability”.

Although Bassey (1999) later argues that the potential for ‘fuzzy’ generalisation exists in case study research, the statement above highlights the importance of reliability and reinforces the author’s choice of adopting the case study research approach for this particular investigation. Bassey (2002) adds that, if case studies are systematically and critically carried out, aimed at the improvement of education, are reliable, and by publication of the findings they extend the boundaries of existing knowledge, they are then valid forms of educational research. A successful study

will provide the readers with a three-dimensional picture and will illustrate relationships, micro-political issues and patterns of influence in a particular context (Bell, 1993; Cohen et al. 2000). This is what the author's research attempts to do.

### **Specific Research Methods and Data Collection**

Once the design of the research has been determined, and the broad approaches decided, the selection of the specific methods or tools to be used is of great importance. In the author's enquiry, the main methods selected are interviews, observation including shadowing, and documentary analysis. These methods are examined in this section.

#### Interviews

Interviewing is one of the main research techniques and it provides a flexible way of gathering data to answer research questions or to respond to hypotheses (Wragg, 2002). According to Johnson (1994, p.43):

“Any interview is a social encounter between two people, but any social encounter is not an interview. Interviews have a particular focus and purpose. They are initiated by the interviewer, with a view to gathering certain information from the person being interviewed”.

This method of collecting information has been used instead of a questionnaire approach because the nature of the research requires participants to express themselves at greater length. The sample is small enough to allow a 100 per cent response rate through interviews. According to Cohen et al. (2000), the process is initiated by the interviewer who seeks to obtain information from the person being

interviewed. Kvale (1996) believes that the interview is more economical than other methods as it allows the interviewee to report on a wide range of situations and enables the interviewer to find out what cannot be seen or heard, such as the reasons behind their actions and also their feelings. Cohen et al (2000) add that the interview enables the interviewer to gather data through direct verbal interaction with the subjects, in this case the trained leaders on issues related to their training experience and leadership practices. Wragg (2002, p.144) comments that interviews are a “fruitful source of information when skilfully handled either as the sole means of enquiry or in conjunction with observations, documentary analysis or questionnaires”.

There are three main types of interview; structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

#### *Structured interviews*

Structured interviews are like a questionnaire except that they are administered by the interviewer, usually expressed in an interview schedule and requiring careful design (Cohen et al., 2000). As with questionnaires, the schedule should be piloted and answers are expected to be limited in scope (ibid). According to Johnson (1994), the principle underpinning a structured interview is consistency, through the application of a standardised stimulus to the respondent, with the interviewer recording the response. The structured interview is not being used in the author’s research as it provides the interviewer with very little scope to deviate from the set pattern of questions (Bell, 1993; Johnson, 1994). Wragg (2002) believes that there is

no reason to use a structured interview unless face-to-face questioning really is superior to a questionnaire, which in most cases it is not.

#### *Semi-structured interviews*

A semi-structured interview (see appendix 1b) was used to gather information from the respondents – that is trained leaders. Although structured interviews also use an interview schedule, a semi-structured approach offers more scope for participants to express themselves at greater length without rambling (Cohen et al., 2000). There is less emphasis on a standardised response with the schedule being adapted to the personality and circumstances of the person being interviewed (Bell, 1993).

This type of interview method was used to obtain the perceptions of senior Ministry officials on the performance of trained school leaders, and for the case study, where school teachers, management members and parents were interviewed to obtain their perceptions about the practices of the senior leader and how she/he has impacted on her/his respective school outcomes (See Appendix 1a, c and d). Although a schedule was used to facilitate comparisons, the researcher encouraged participants to go beyond the schedule to explain issues, as appropriate.

In conducting the interviews, the interviewer gained knowledge of the trained leaders' experience of their training and how the training has influenced their leadership practices, as well as the impact of such practices. It has also provided the interviewer with a better understanding of how senior school leaders are selected for training, for appointment and deployment, and of other related issues of induction and mentoring based on insights from officials and senior leaders.

### *Unstructured interviews*

Unstructured interviews may be called 'specialised interviews' because they are usually tailored to the particular circumstances of the respondent rather than being standardised (Johnson, 1994). They are often used for in-depth enquiry and such interviews "roam freely and require great skill. They are often used by researchers working in the interpretive paradigm" (Wragg, 2002, p.149).

Nisbet and Watt (1984, p.82), who regard the interview as 'the basic research instrument' in case study research, stress that it is much more loosely structured than the survey interview, "allowing each person to respond in his [sic] unique way". Bassey (1999, p.81) emphasises the importance of the 'social skills of the interviewer in relating sensitively to the respondent" who according to him "may not have previously given deep thought to the issue and may actually be constructing his [sic] position during the interview". As an 'insider' researcher, the author believes in the importance of, and has practiced, such social skills throughout the interview process.

However, interviews also have certain disadvantages. According to Bell (1993, p.91), "they are time-consuming, highly subjective and there is always the danger of bias". Wragg (2002) warns that, although this method is a natural means of communication and enquiry, in practice it is riddled with numerous hazards that could render the data worthless. This is where methodological triangulation is crucial to check the validity and reliability of the data collected.

### *Conducting the interviews*

Prior to conducting interviews, the researcher has made sure that the participants understood the purpose of the interview and that they have given ‘informed consent’ to taking part in the research. Before the interviews, the participants were advised that all their responses would be regarded as confidential and, as far as possible, with anonymity. The researcher is aware that such a claim is difficult to achieve in a small system like the Seychelles but the reassurance helped to build the confidence of participants. They were given the choice of place and time of interview and discussions took place between the interviewer and interviewee in an appropriate place (ventilated, pleasant and quiet) so that the latter could feel relaxed with no interruptions.

### *Recording the interviews*

The two options for recording interview responses are either to tape the whole interview or to make notes throughout the interview session (Cohen et al. 2000; Wragg, 2002). The latter is the chosen option for the author’s research, for two main reasons. Firstly, to reassure the participants that the information they are giving is very important for the research by providing them with undivided attention (ibid) – noting that the presence of a tape may prevent them from speaking freely as the recording device is powerful evidence of the respondents’ identity. This was seen as a major concern since ‘other people’ can access it and can identify their voice, no matter how careful the interviewer is in securing it – thus making it more difficult to achieve anonymity for all participants. Secondly, to take note of only specific relevant information through constructive probing, so as to facilitate the compilation

of data, ensured that discussion was kept within the scope of the broad research questions.

Since all interview responses were handwritten, it was important for detailed notes to be prepared as soon as possible after the interview so that the account is contemporaneous (Merriam, 1988; Cohen et al. 2000). All subjects were interviewed face to face and only irrelevant discussions were omitted in the detailed notes. The use of the templates facilitated the processes mentioned above and made computerised data entry less tedious. The interview responses/records (See Appendix 2a, b, c, and d) were returned to the participants for their approval and/or amendments.

In using only semi-structured interviews, the researcher has been able to explore and develop an understanding of the topics relevant to her research questions, through explanation and validation.

### Observation

Observation may be the basic tool in classroom research and can also be significant for studies of management issues, for example in observing meetings (Bell, 1993; Cohen et al., 2000). Instead of, or as well as, asking questions, the researcher can obtain direct evidence about the phenomenon by watching and recording events. Johnson (1994) says that observation is an everyday activity but it becomes a research tool when it serves a formulated research purpose, is planned systematically, and is recorded systematically.

Structured observation involves developing a research instrument while unstructured observation, like unstructured interviews, is most useful when the researcher is unfamiliar with the phenomenon being researched (Bush, 2002). According to Simpson and Tuson (1995), Foster (1996) and Bush (2002), a structured observation instrument can be divided into time units and, in the case of an observation matrix; expected issues can be indicated on a framework.

In the author's case study, the trained leader's activities were observed through shadowing, including school-based staff professional development that is conducted after normal school hours, and their other responsibilities, such as conducting meetings and lesson observations. The observation was recorded on a matrix template identical to that of the school leader's weekly planner (See chapter 7: Figure 7.2). The researcher spent one whole week (five working days) in the school to shadow the headteacher from the time she arrived to when she departed. The one week period was selected for the researcher to observe how meetings are conducted and issues that are on the agenda for discussion; how the senior leader relates to and interacts with staff, learners and parents; organises and carries out daily activities as per her weekly planner; evidence of application of new strategies, and the school working atmosphere. After the one week immersion in the school shadowing the headteacher, there were follow-up visits to conduct the interviews.

Observers may be 'participant', that is they take part in the event, or 'non-participant' that is they simply observe but do not contribute (Moyle, 2002). The researcher, as a 'non-participant', took note of major events, observed the school

atmosphere, climate and ethos, and the responses of members of the school community to any changes that have taken place (ibid).

#### *Strengths of observation*

The researcher has chosen the observation method on the basis of its strengths. According to Foster (1996) and Cohen et al. (2000), observation can provide detailed information about aspects of school life, which could not be produced by other methods - it avoids relying on what participants and others say about their schools in interviews. Where evaluative judgements are required, it is usually inappropriate to rely on participants' views as they may lack the expertise to make normative judgements (ibid). Other advantages of observation over participants' accounts is that observers may be able to 'see' what participants cannot, and that it can give information on those members of the school community who are unable or unwilling to take part in interviews (Simpson and Tuson, 1995, Cohen et al. 2000). This worked well for the author during the shadowing period. While observing the head teacher's actions, the author was also able to observe the dynamics of the school as a learning organisation.

#### *Limitations of observation*

The limitations of observation as a method of gathering data became apparent when observing the behaviour of the participants in the case study schools. Being an 'insider researcher' exacerbated the problem because some participants simply do not feel comfortable being observed by someone they know, especially one based at the Ministry of Education, although the purpose of such observation was made clear

to all. Foster (1996, p.13) states that “it may be impossible to observe the behaviour” of those “of interest”, as one is not quite certain that such behaviour is genuine. Members of the school community may consciously or unconsciously change the way they behave because they are being observed, thus making observational accounts of their behaviour inaccurate representations of their ‘usual’ behaviour (Simpson and Tuscon, 1995; Foster, 1996; Moyles, 2002).

Bassey points to the potential pitfalls of observation and to the skills required by the researcher:

“The actors know that they are being watched. Some behave as though there were no outsider present, some are on edge throughout, some ‘play to the gallery’ and some forget. The personal skills of the researcher are important in terms of putting the actors at their ease and her [sic] cognitive skills are important in selecting and noting significant aspects of the event” (Bassey, 1999, p.88).

Although observation can be time consuming, costly and a difficult skill, it does provide an alternative perspective for some types of research and is a useful way of cross checking information based on participants’ perceptions and beliefs. Observation was not costly for the author but she did find it to be a very hectic and engaging experience as it involves the simultaneous application of several difficult skills to do with observing, communicating, and recording, and hands on interaction with participants.

### Documentary analysis

The other method used in this research is documentary analysis. Documentary evidence was used to support data collected through interviews and observations.

Documents differ from other research methods in that they exist independently of the research and have been developed for a different purpose (Bush, 2002). The researcher, however, needed to establish what documents exist, their location in the case study schools and the Ministry, the purpose of the documents and whether or not they are available for the research. Johnson (1994, p.23) suggests that documentary research may provide “another perspective on an area of qualitative study”. In the author’s research, documents were particularly valuable in showing the intentions or planned activities of the trained senior school leader of the case study school in the Seychelles.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) describe documents as mainly written texts, which relate to some aspects of the social world. Documentary analysis is a useful tool for collecting new data because the researcher knows the purpose of the research and is aware of what data are to be extracted from the documents (Cohen et al. 2000).

Documentary analysis can be divided into external and internal criticism. According to Bell (1993) and Cohen et al. (2000), external criticism aims to discover whether the document is both authentic and genuine, whereas internal criticism is concerned with subjecting the contents of a document to rigorous analysis, and is more appropriate to small educational scale research projects. They argue that it is important to examine documents critically in terms of their purpose and content, the nature of the author, the circumstances of their production, whether they are complete or incomplete, in order to ascertain if their main characteristic is fact or bias. In the author’s case study, the selected documents present internal criticism (subject evaluation and action plan evaluation reports) and external criticism

(national subject examination reports) to be analysed. This provided the author with evidence of authenticity and objectivity to ascertain the validity of reported school outcomes.

*Documents selected for the author's study*

In this study, the documents used to triangulate with the interview responses from the trained leaders and Ministry officials, and the observations, are:

- The senior leaders' job descriptions, which have been derived from the Ministry's document on 'Key Functions of Headship' that detail the Ministry's expectations of school leaders. This was used as a guide in constructing the observation matrix for the case study research.
- The Ministry's Schools Division checklist for 'Mentoring and Appraising Headteachers'. This was useful in ascertaining the type of support provided to senior leaders in school, the leaders' knowledge of this support, and whether it was beneficial to them as leaders in assisting their work, and what impact it has had on their practice and their school outcomes. Such documents were consulted and information used to triangulate with the response from survey participants and the MoE senior officials. It also helped to inform the design of the interview schedule.
- Students' academic records, including results of secondary five school leavers' International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) of the Cambridge International Examination (CIE). These were used as a reference only to ascertain changes in students' performance (leaders' self report) by way of a standard common examination.
- Case study school's Progress Report compiled by Ministry officials (mainly support providers such as Education coordinators) on a termly basis, commenting on the specific school's focus for the term.
- Case study school's Primary Year Six annual National Examinations Reports compiled by Ministry officials of the Assessment and Testing Section.
- The case study senior leader's School Development and Action Plans and, in particular, their term and annual progress reports based on the implementation of their plans especially the planned activities for the key areas of teaching and learning. The school's annual subject evaluation reports. These serve to ascertain the leadership role of the headteacher in leading the school towards its vision and broad aims through the achievement of the targets set from the school priorities.

- Case study role sets' participants' planner and relevant records (mainly teachers and management staff - independent of the research).
- Documents displayed at case study school's level as evidence of new initiatives and interventions that are being implemented under the leadership of the headteacher. These could be school policies, strategies in place, committees and bodies' portfolios or terms of reference and planned activities, etc. as support for teaching and learning.

These documents were selected on the basis of their authenticity and originality, clarity and legibility, criteria stated by Scott (1990) and supported by Cortazzi (2002). Information from these documents was analysed in relation to the key focus and purpose of the study. Relevant information was then extracted and checked against the aims and broad research questions of the investigation.

### Evaluative Research

The research project adopts a methodology that fall within the emerging framework of systematic evaluative research as a phenomenon across the social sciences, that has been evident in recent years (Clarke and Dawson, 1999; Rossi et al, 2004). It draws especially on the influential work of Pawson and Tilley (1997). However, the present research goes beyond a purely evaluative approach, in that it sought to address the series of broad aims set out in chapter one.

### **Sampling**

The quality of research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been employed (Morrison, 1993; Cohen et al., 2000). These authors argue

that sampling is preceded by defining the population on which the research will focus, and that the researcher must ensure that the sample represents the whole population. The sample chosen for the author's survey includes all trained leaders in education at the time of the enquiry - a total of 47 respondents, a 100% sample. As the population of trained participants is quite small, it was possible to interview all of them.

### Probability and non-probability sampling

There are two main methods of sampling; probability sampling and non-probability sampling. According to Cohen et al. (2000), in a probability sample, the chances of members of the wider population being selected for the sample are known, whereas in a non-probability sample the chances of members of the wider population being selected for the sample are unknown. They claim that two types of probability sample exist - they are the random and the stratified samples.

According to Bush (2002), interview research usually requires a choice of participants. This may involve random sampling but often there is an element of stratification to allow different groups to be represented. There was a 100% sample for the survey and the case study was sampled purposively. To facilitate analysis of data obtained from interview responses, the trained leaders were placed into two groups:

- Institution based - those in primary, secondary and post secondary schools
- System based - those based at the Ministry of Education and whose work relates to, and influences schools.  
(Both groups = total 47 participants i.e. 100% sample population).

This stratification did not affect sampling but was valuable for the analysis. For the case study, the participants to be interviewed were sampled purposively to meet certain criteria. The researcher made sure that staffs at different levels within the school were included through role sets of teachers, management team member, and parents. The number of selected participants is quite significant compared to the overall number of staff in the selected school. The sample size chosen for the case study interviewees was quite small to facilitate the manipulation of data, analyse the responses in the shortest time possible, and at the same time obtain valid information.

#### Sample selection criteria

The sample was chosen to highlight aspects of school leaders' development in a small island developing state (SID). The participants for the survey research were chosen using the following criteria:

- MA and MBA participants for the years 2002 – 2006, in an attempt to evaluate the training they have received.

For the case study research, the criteria for the selection of the school were:

- A primary or secondary school situated on the main island (Mahé)
- The head being a trained leader possessing an MBA degree in Educational Leadership
- The head has been in the same school before and after leadership training
- The head's post training period in the school is three years or more

The participants selected for interviews were:

- Teachers who have been in the school during the head's pre and post training periods

- Management team members who have been in the school during the head's pre and post training periods
- Parents who have had children in the school during the head's pre and post training periods

These criteria have been chosen on the basis that it is likely that heads in post for a significant time will have a greater prospect of making an impact than those who have been appointed more recently. The before and after training perspective is significant for the researcher to ascertain changes in the leader's practices that could be attributed to leadership training.

As there was only one primary school, and no secondary schools, that met the criteria for the case study school, only one school was examined. While the survey provides breadth, the case study is intended to provide depth and explanatory power to the enquiry.

In order to obtain the Ministry's perspective of leadership practices and impact on school outcomes, purposive sampling was employed where senior officials of the Ministry of Education were selected. They include policy and decision makers, and support providers who are working closely with schools.

### **Instrument Design and Piloting**

The most important steps that researchers can take to increase reliability are the meticulous design of research instruments, and piloting the instruments, preferably

with participants with similar or the same characteristics as the main sample (Bush, 2002). These two steps were respected in the conduct of this research.

### Instrument design

#### *Interviews*

The interview schedule was designed in a manner that is flexible to ensure full participation of all respondents, and kept within the time frame of one hour per participant for the survey research approach. The interview questions for the survey main sample, and that of the MoE senior officials, were formulated with care to ensure that the questions reflect the purpose of the research and focus on the main research questions. They were phrased in a neutral way to avoid 'leading' questions (See Appendix 1a and b). For the case study participants, the interview questions were few, less structured, broad and open-ended to instil encouragement for them to talk freely and at length (see appendix 1c and d).

#### *Observation*

Observation is also a major method of data collection in the case study research. The structured observation instruments used were a checklist with items (based on the interview responses of case study participants - issues related to stated practices and impacts on school outcomes) to record the activities of the head. The instruments were divided into time units and the matrix structure contained blank spaces to enable emerging themes to be recorded on the framework (Bassey, 1999). The time intervals started when the head reached the school and ended when she left for home.

This facilitated the researcher's systematic recording of the head teacher's activities in the form of structured field notes within a framework (Foster, 1996). The observation matrix for meetings is quite similar except that it contains quadrants for recording interactions of the head with other school members, including parents. As the instruments used were not pre-structured schedules to gather data, such checklist and matrix designs enabled the researcher, through the writing of field notes, to make the decisions at the time the events occurred and in the course of data processing (Simpson and Tuson, 1995).

#### *Documentary analysis*

For documentary analysis, a checklist of items was used for recording relevant information extracted from the school and Ministry documents. Based on the interview responses of case study participants, items related to stated practices and impacts on school outcomes were listed down in the form of a checklist – documents (see sections on documents used) were analysed to extract information based on the stated items, sources and the frequency of occurrence. Such a design was found to be valuable in the case study research approach in showing the intentions of the policy or of the school leaders (Scott, 1990).

#### Piloting

Oppenheim (1992), Morrison (1993), and Wilson and McLean (1994), state that piloting serves to check clarity of interview questions, eliminate ambiguities or difficulties in wording; and gain feedback on the validity of the question items, the operationalization of the constructs and the purpose of the research. They also

believe that piloting serves to try out the coding system for data analysis. Bush (2002) adds that the pilot is a trial run for the instrument and should be undertaken with people who are eligible to take part in the main study. Johnson (1994) adds that these people should form part of the research population but not necessarily part of the main sample. She believes that the pilot findings are used to improve and amend questions for interviews before the schedule is used with the main sample.

In the author's research, the interview schedule for the survey approach was piloted. This piloting exercise was conducted in order to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questions. The recipients of the pilot study were senior leaders in educational institutions and Ministry of Education with a postgraduate degree in education, and have covered modules that are similar to the MA/MBA programmes such as 'organisational change and innovations', 'leadership and management', 'finance', curriculum evaluation and managing people' as part of their training programme.

The five pilot participants from primary, secondary and post secondary institutions, and from the Ministry of Education, have all followed a one year master's programme but they obtained their degrees outside the Reading and MoE/Lincoln partnership, so were not part of the main sample of 47 trained participants. Although the interview questions were drafted with the MA/MBA participants in mind, the pilot participants found no difficulty in understanding the questions and could relate to, and answer, all of them. This is reflected in their responses. Although during the pilot exercise, the researcher found out that it took more than one hour for some pilot participants to complete the interview schedule, there was no need for amendments.

However, reading the pilot report it was evident that some responses relate to specific content within the pilot participants' training programme.

### **Research Access**

In order for any investigation to yield data for analysis, the researcher needs to obtain access to participants and research sites. According to Bush (2002), negotiating access to carry out research in schools or educational systems is an essential part of the planning process and should not be taken for granted. He believes that approval to undertake the research should always be sought from the 'gate keeper' who is probably the person in charge of the institution or system. Bell (1987, p.42) adds that:

“No researcher can demand access to an institution, an organisation or to materials. People will be doing you a favour if they agree to help, and will be expected to give and what they will make of the information they provide”.

For the author's research, approval was sought and received from the Ministry of Education, through the Principal Secretary for Education. Survey and case study participants' approval for interviews and observations were sought verbally and through phone calls. Approval for access to subjects and documents was quick and easily granted - an advantage of being an 'insider' researcher.

### Insider research

Insider research occurs where people conduct research in educational contexts with which they are already familiar, as a former or present member of staff (Bell, 1987).

The 'insider' has a past, current and expected future role in the organisation, which bring aspects of organisational history, working relationships and personal alliances into play in the research process (Smyth and Holian, 1999). Staff of the Ministry of Education (institutions and system based) know each other well and are in contact with one another for work purposes. In small education systems, such as the Seychelles, 'insider' research is inevitable. The researcher is an 'insider' because she was previously a teacher, middle manager, deputy head and headteacher in Seychelles secondary schools, and is currently a senior official in the Ministry of Education providing support to secondary school leaders. In conducting the investigation as an 'insider', the author paid particular attention to:

- The participants' responses to the interview questions and body language - since she is already known to them, her presence may influence the way they respond to her in the research role
- The way she phrased the questions and interpreted their responses so as to avoid making assumptions consciously or unconsciously, which may make it difficult to conduct objective research
- Adhering to the confidentiality of information given and anonymity of the participants
- Cross-checking gathered information to ensure that it is free of errors or misrepresentation.
- The representativeness of the documents analysed
- Because the end product of the research will be published and under public scrutiny, she needs to be confident in resuming a normal professional relationship with colleagues once the research has been completed.

(Adapted from Bell, 1987; Smyth and Holian, 1999; and Rabbitt, 2006).

Whilst doing research in one's own organisation can potentially deliver enormous benefits, in terms of learning and improvement of organisational practices, access to information, as well as offering a unique perspective because of the knowledge of the culture, history and actors involved – there is also the issue of credibility (Smyth

and Holian, 1999). Those measures stated above were found necessary as the ability to conduct credible insider-research involves an explicit awareness of the possible effects of perceived bias on data collection and analysis as well as ethical issues related to the anonymity of the organisation and individual participants (ibid).

During the research period, the researcher reduced the potential influence of her Ministry of Education role as a support provider by adopting several practical strategies. These were done to ensure the confidentiality of information shared and increase her impartiality as an insider-researcher. The specific actions taken were; non-participation in decision-making on the selection of secondary school leaders for headship; non-participation in discussions on school leaders' appraisal performance; being a passive observer in leaders' meetings at system level, and maintaining neutrality in forums involving information sharing with leaders on their school outcomes. The researcher's role is with secondary school leaders only and she has no hierarchical relationship with primary schools.

### **Ethical Issues**

Any research project that delves into the thoughts, experiences and practice of individuals raises a number of ethical issues concerning the appropriateness of the research methods, the interpretation of data, and the confidentiality of findings. In the process, the researcher is deciding what is significant in the perspective of others (Calderhead and Shorrocks, 1997). Therefore, the issue of confidentiality must be addressed and the participants must be made to feel secure and trusting towards the researcher, in order to retrieve valid responses from them (ibid). This is crucial in the

present study as the researcher is an insider whose current post involves close working relationship with schools through coordinating and providing support to staff, especially senior leaders.

Cohen et al. (2000, p.58) refer to ethics as:

Individual and communal codes of conduct based upon adherence to a set of principles which may be explicit and codified or implicit and which may be abstract and impersonal or concrete and personnel.

Busher (2003, p.74) adds that:

Research for the dignity and privacy of participants is often translated into the common practice, urged by various codes of conduct for researchers in education.

In the author's research, the respondents were fully briefed about the purpose of the study and were assured that their names and the information provided would be treated with the strictest confidentiality. The importance of having the given information reported in a general and supportive manner was to provide anonymity as far as possible, as well as to eliminate or minimise any bias. This was explained to the participants.

The nature of the interview questions were such that they required the participants, as far as possible, to respond quite 'genuinely' to issues directly related to their personal experience. Questions were discussed with the supervisor before piloting and data collection in order to obtain appropriate and accurate responses. Care was taken to ensure that those questions were clear and simple to facilitate participants' understanding. Such precautions are advocated by Oppenheim (1992), and by Cohen et al. (2000), but, as noted earlier, genuine responses cannot be assumed.

While conducting observation, the researcher paid particular attention to her behaviour in meetings, classrooms, and even in informal group interactions, in order to reduce the perceived level of threat to the participants (Simpson and Tuson, 1995). This was done through identifying and noting participants' uneasiness or discomfort and sometimes not writing anything in their presence – as the act of writing reinforced the idea of being 'watched' (ibid).

### **Validity, Reliability and Triangulation**

Although research methods are determined largely by the aims and context of the research, the researcher should also have regard to quality criteria. In assessing the authenticity and quality of educational research, one questions the reliability and validity of the data (Bush, 2002). The concepts of validity, reliability and triangulation are three complex terms originally developed for use in positivist research (ibid). According to Brock-Utne (1996, p.612), however:

“The questions of validity and reliability within research are just as important within qualitative as within quantitative methods though they may have to be treated somewhat differently.”

#### Validity

Cohen et al. (2000) state that validity is considered important for effective research, based on the view that it is essentially a demonstration that a particular instrument in fact measures what it purports to measure. They add that, particularly in qualitative data research, it might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher. Bell (1987, p.51) defines it as:

“Validity ... tells us whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe. If an item is unreliable, then it must also lack validity, but a reliable item is not necessarily also valid. It could produce the same or similar responses on all occasions, but not be measuring what it is supposed to measure.”

In the author’s research, the main method of collecting data was through interviews. The main potential source of invalidity was interview bias. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), the main sources of bias are the characteristics of the interviewer and the respondents, and the substantive content of the questions. In the author’s research, care was taken in formulating the questions and in conducting the interview, to minimise such potential bias.

### Reliability

Reliability relates to the probability that repeating a research procedure or method would produce identical or similar results (Bush, 2002). According to Bogdan and Bilken (1992), reliability is concerned with precision and accuracy. In qualitative research, reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, meaning a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage (ibid). Bell (1987, p.50-51) defines it as:

“Reliability is the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions ... A factual question which may produce one type of answer on one occasion but different answer on another is ... unreliable.”

Similarly, Yin (1994, p.144) notes that “[reliability demonstrates] that the operations of a study can be repeated, with the same results”. Reliability therefore provides a

degree of confidence that replicating the process would ensure consistency (Bush, 2002).

The documents selected for analysis were authentic, comprehensible and representative to increase validity and reliability. The reliability of the interviews was addressed mainly through instrument design and piloting. For observation, the researcher noted certain concerns in regards to the reliability of the data collected. That is because one cannot ascertain that the participants' actions are accurate representations of their 'usual' behaviour (Simpson and Tuscon, 1995; Foster, 1996; Moyles, 2002). That is why the researcher had to rely on her personal and cognitive skills to select and note only significant aspects of the event (Bassey, 1999; Cohen et al. 2000), keeping in mind that information gathered will be triangulated with data obtained through other methods.

### Triangulation

In this study, various methods of collecting data were used, the selection of which was guided by the needs of the research. As the enquiry deals with human behaviour, by involving the perceptions, experiences and practices of people, triangulation is of paramount importance for credibility of the information gathered, especially in case study research. According to Cohen et al. (2000, p.112):

“Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour ... [it] is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research”

Bush (2002, p.18) explains that triangulation means “comparing many sources of evidence in order to determine the accuracy of information or phenomenon ... as a means of cross-checking data to establish validity”.

The two main types of triangulation are methodological (using several methods to explore the same issue and respondent (asking the same questions of many different participants). Due to their importance in increasing the validity of the data collected, both methods were used in this research enquiry.

In the author’s survey research, triangulation was ensured:

- By asking similar (in some instances the same) questions to senior ministry officials, school staff and senior leaders on issues to do with leadership practices and impact on school outcomes.
- On issues of leadership selection for training and subsequent appointment, on-going professional development and support for newly appointed leaders, questions were very similar for both senior ministry officials and school leaders.

For the case study research approach, responses were further triangulated with data collected through observation of the school leaders in action and through analysis of school and Ministry documents. Respondent triangulation was achieved asking similar questions to different groups of participants within the case study school.

This approach was found to be particularly useful for the case study research, where senior ministry officials, school staff and leaders were asked the same or very similar questions and more than one method of gathering data was employed, i.e. observation and documentary analysis to triangulate the interview responses.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, various issues relating to the nature of the research design, the selected broad approaches, and specific methods of data collection, were examined in the context of this research enquiry, drawing on the research methods literature. The discussion shows that there are many alternative ways of collecting data for educational research and that choice of methods was guided by the needs of the research rather than the preferences of the researcher. The design was in accordance with the purpose and focus of the enquiry – above all to provide answers to the main research questions. Although qualitative research provides the potential for in-depth investigation leading to data that are rich and varied, through case study research, the researcher sought to ensure reliability and validity, partly through achieving breadth in the survey and depth through case studies. Although somewhat challenged by the constraints presented through being an ‘insider’, the researcher was able to reflect on links between theory and practice, understand meaning and the significance and impact of constructions of meaning, and understand the data’s relevance to practice (Smyth and Holian, 1999).

The next chapter presents the findings from interviews with Ministry of Education officials.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION STAFF PERCEPTIONS**

#### **Introduction**

Seychelles is characterized by a highly centralized and bureaucratic education system, whereby the Ministry of Education (MoE) has overall control of all educational matters. Education is a major beneficiary of government expenditure and the MoE provides the foundation of Human Resource Development for the whole nation. It regulates school activities through the individual head teachers and controls facilities, resources, staffing, and budgetary allocations. Given its central role, the perceptions of MoE staff are of particular significance.

The small scale of the Seychelles education system makes it possible to obtain important information and perceptions from a small number of key people in the Ministry. This has facilitated the enquiry process as only a few people are involved in school leadership, and leadership development issues. Therefore, only four people were purposively selected to answer questions related to leadership development approaches and practice, while an additional four were interviewed to comment on the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools.

The participants interviewed are designated as M1 to M8. They were all asked the same questions to provide the prospect of respondent triangulation.

## **Leadership Development Approaches and Practices**

The questions in this section were addressed to participants M1-M4 only and are structured according to the main sub-issues as follows:

- Identification of leaders
- Access to leadership preparation
- Preparation of leaders before appointment (pre-service)
- Selection and deployment of leaders
- Induction, mentoring and support of leaders
- Development of leaders after appointment (in-service)
- The nature of the preparation and development arrangements

Given the centralised nature of the Seychelles education system, it was not surprising that there were strong similarities in the responses of the participants. As a consequence, the discussion below is of a general nature supported by quotations where appropriate. The middle leaders mentioned in the text are the heads of department (HoD) for secondary and subject coordinator (SC) for primary, while the senior leaders are the deputies (only at secondary level) and head teachers.

### Identification of leaders

To identify people capable of leading educational institutions, or to assist in leading such institutions, is an important responsibility. In the Seychelles, it is the Senior Management Team (SMT) of the Ministry of Education (MoE) that plays this role in respect of middle and senior leaders. The SMT comprises the director general (DG) in charge of each division in the Ministry, the principal secretary (PS) and the Minister of Education himself. The DGs work very closely with the directors responsible for each section within their division. Detailed information on the different divisions in the MoE is given in chapter one.

According to the respondents, leaders in education are identified for senior posts, including principalship, based on:

- Performance appraisal
- Recommendation from immediate supervisor
- Academic qualifications
- Years of experience.

In terms of performance appraisal and recommendation from immediate supervisor, for middle leaders it is their respective deputy and head teacher who process the information but approval has to be sought from the SMT of the MoE. In other words, although heads carry out appraisals and make recommendations, it is the SMT of the MoE which makes the final decision. For head teachers, the whole process is undertaken by the MoE SMT and it is the Minister who makes the final decision.

According to one respondent, this is because:

“Headship is considered a very important and honourable post that requires serious consideration, and such decisions should be taken by someone of great integrity” (M1).

Although performance appraisal has been mentioned as a criterion for identification, in practice this has not always been the case as two respondents mentioned that there are instances whereby leaders have been identified before the appraisal performance review has taken place. Performance based on competency as a qualified teacher is considered very important for the post of middle leaders. This is an important factor for identification, and competency means whether the person displays leadership qualities in their current post. The person who recommends or nominates leaders for middle and senior posts uses the terms of reference/job description of the aspired post and consults with internal (schools) and external partners (MoE) on the suitability of the candidate identified. It is not always clear who in the school is in a position to comment on headship candidates, although this may be the head teacher

where the deputy of the school has been identified. The problem with the process, according to the respondents, is a lack of consistency in the approach.

#### Access to leadership preparation

There are several criteria that are used to determine access to leadership preparation in the Seychelles. According to the respondents, the current ones are:

- The years of experience as a head, deputy or subject leaders
- Currently hold a senior leadership position
- Academic qualifications (entry requirement)
- Show evidence of leadership qualities in current post (potential for leadership)
- Interest shown by potential candidate

In addition to the above, two respondents believe that recommendations from the SMT of the MoE, based on the perceived aptitude of the person, is another criterion. One respondent said that requests from Ministry officials, such as directors responsible for schools, are also considered. In terms of academic qualifications, potential candidates should possess at least a Bachelors Degree in Education (B.Ed), a Diploma in Management and Administration (Quebec) or the ADEL (Advanced Diploma in Educational Leadership), awarded by the University of Seychelles. However, there are candidates who have been accepted for leadership training without any of these academic qualifications. This shows that years of experience in a leadership post, evidence of leadership qualities in the current post, and candidates' level of interest, are considered very important. Although none of the respondents mentioned 'appraisal performance', 'evidence of leadership qualities' may imply that existing documentation on individuals' performance is consulted.

### Preparation of leaders before appointment

In terms of pre-service opportunities to prepare leaders, there is no official, formal training programme in place to prepare potential leaders. According to the respondents, there are currently;

- A series of short training sessions
- Workshops
- School-based professional development.

Training sessions are conducted by Education Coordinators both in-house (on request), as well as at the Ministry, for qualified teachers and Professional Development Facilitators (PDFs). Workshops are carried out at school and national level by facilitators working with schools and the Ministry. Whether those who participate will be future leaders at middle or senior level is not certain. One respondent said that:

“Aspirant leaders can apply for short courses through international co-operation with Malaysia, Japan and other countries” (M1).

Whether those courses really prepare participants for leadership positions, through the development of leadership skills, is also not known. Two respondents believe that the school-based professional development sessions, which are mandatory in all schools, and the mentorship programme for middle leaders in primary schools through understudy of more experienced middle leaders, provide pre-service opportunities to prepare leaders, as does their own personal professional development:

“Experience has shown that there are qualified teachers who have been promoted to middle leaders’ positions and have even climbed higher up the hierarchy ladder due to improvement in performance after following those training sessions and participating in workshops. I can name several, including a current head teacher” (M3).

“On the job training experience obtained through the delegation of duties to experience and competent senior or young and newly qualified enthusiastic teachers provides in-house opportunities” (M4).

These statements emphasize the point that opportunities, although limited, do exist to prepare potential leaders.

According to the respondents, other local opportunities exist on a more formal and larger scale but not under the umbrella of the MoE. Such opportunities are for individuals who wish to follow a course in leadership and management with the Seychelles Institute of Management (SIM). This Institute provides training for local leaders and managers for government and private businesses. A respondent believes that potential leaders in education can participate privately but need to seek release from the MoE in order to attend. Whether anyone has actually done this is not clear.

According to two participants, potential leaders can access international programmes through the internet websites of various tertiary educational institutions, although they believe this has to be done on a private and personal level on-line at home or other internet outlets. An exchange programme for teachers also exists through the Swedish-Seychelles Fellowship Association, and there are opportunities to develop leadership skills through such activities. One respondent mentioned that the MoE is in favour of strengthening such opportunities through the future establishment of formal preparatory programme such as the current Warwick Master’s programme which is conducted locally through a partnership between the National Institute of Education (NIE) and Warwick University.

## Selection and deployment of leaders

To select and deploy leaders involves pre-knowledge of the person in terms of attitude, aptitude and other talents displayed that will enable the person to be an effective leader. This requires a set of criteria to facilitate selection and deployment as well as clear processes and procedures.

### *Selection*

According to the respondents, the criteria for selection of leaders are:

- Performance appraisal
- Recommendation from immediate supervisor
- Years of experience as a qualified teacher
- The years of experience as a head, deputy or subject leaders
- Currently hold a senior leadership position
- Academic qualifications (entry requirement)
- Show evidence of leadership qualities in current post (potential for leadership)
- Interest shown by potential candidate
- Commitment displayed in current post

However, the respondents say that those selection criteria have never been formalized. The current practice, according to two respondents, is that a suitable candidate should meet all the criteria stated above and the MoE favours having formal guidelines in the future with those criteria being mandatory. In terms of academic qualifications for senior leaders, training in leadership is soon to become the norm.

The respondents confirm that, in the Seychelles, leadership posts are not advertised or published and recruitment is done internally. They say that this is because there

are very few potential candidates and the belief that those are already in the system. Although none of the respondents state that the potential candidate has to be of local origin, this is the case in practice. As one respondent voiced out:

“We need people from within, who know the system well through experience of working for the MoE, who share our vision and values. Such posts are reserved only for qualified locals and naturalized expatriates” (M1).

The statistics for senior leaders in schools show that they are all of Seychelles nationality, which suggests that there is no consideration for foreigners, regardless of their experience in working in the system and academic qualifications. There are currently only two expatriates occupying the post of head of department.

#### *The selection process*

Once a potential candidate has been identified, the ‘nomination’ is made by the immediate supervisor. In the case of middle leaders, this is by the SMT of educational institutions, and for senior leaders it is done by Ministry officials. Where a candidate applies for the post, which seldom happens, the immediate supervisor is consulted. This is followed by a ‘short meeting’ (interaction) between candidate and immediate supervisor. If the former is shown to be suitable (based on the selection criteria), and meets the entry requirements of the post, ‘recommendations’ are made from the latter and ‘approval’ is sought from the SMT of the MoE. Although one respondent stated that candidates undergo an interview to check for suitability, the others suggest that the interaction is more of a consultative nature.

Upon approval by the SMT of the MoE, a short ‘induction meeting’ is conducted by Ministry officials, where the roles and responsibilities that go with the post (job

description) are discussed. This is followed by ‘confirmation in post’ by the Ministry of Administration and Manpower (MAM) after a series of administrative procedures between the two ministries.

### *Deployment*

The respondents say that the criteria for deployment of leaders are:

- System needs: vacancies / post availability / replacement (in case of someone undergoing training)
- Request for transfer
- Place of residence
- Shift due to long time serving in a particular educational institution
- Performance: aptitude, attitude in current educational institution
- Promotion and demotion
- School climate and competency of the person

According to two respondents, the actual practice in respect of performance is that a senior leader who is performing well in a small school can be given the chance to lead a larger school through nomination and recommendations from the immediate supervisor. This is also true for senior leaders who are not performing well in a large school and may be posted to a smaller one. The same applies for ‘school climate and competency’. According to one respondent:

“Promoting a leader in the same school is not a good practice, as the person encounters difficulties in leading and mentoring colleagues, whom they have established a prior relationship at the same level. This causes a weakness for the school management team” (M3).

Three respondents believe that, for deployment of senior leaders, one future criterion will be ‘completion of one School Development Planning (SDP) cycle’, which is three years. A contract for headship is being developed and, once in place, the

performance of headteachers at the end of each contract term could be another possible criterion.

### *Deployment processes*

The respondents say that deployment processes are quite straightforward. They start with the ‘identification of the candidate’ to be deployed. He/she is called to attend a ‘consultative meeting’ with the immediate supervisor, whereby reasons for deployment are discussed as well as other related issues. If agreed, approval is sought and deployment takes effect. If not, negotiation takes place involving Ministry officials.

In terms of a request for transfer, two respondents made it clear that very few candidates submit written application although more may make verbal requests to the SMT of their school. Whichever way, approval is sought and a short meeting is organized at Ministry level to discuss reasons for transfer. According to a respondent:

“Request for transfer can be made by either the candidate or the head teacher for a candidate whereby he or she is not satisfied with work performance or attitude towards work. Such a request should be made official through the performance appraisal” (M2).

However, according to two respondents, there have been instances where head teachers have unofficially requested the transfer of middle leaders without stating it in their appraisal, and this has the tendency to create misunderstanding between Ministry officials and middle leaders in schools, especially when the candidate is reluctant to be transferred.

There are no formal documents that state clearly the criteria and processes for selection and deployment of school leaders, but one respondent revealed that the MoE is thinking seriously of developing such criteria in the future.

### Induction, mentoring and support of leaders

#### *Induction and mentoring*

The respondents say that this is an area of weakness because these processes have not been properly established in all educational institutions or in the Ministry, and a programme for all leaders is not yet fully in place. They recognise that it is important to ensure that trained leaders are supported to attract them to remain in post.

However, respondents claimed that induction does take place, both formally and informally, at school level for middle leaders in some schools, as there are schools that already have their policy, and a short programme, in place in respect of induction and mentoring. For senior leaders, informal induction is carried out partially at Ministry level, where the expectations and responsibilities attached to the post (job description) are discussed.

Two respondents stated that an induction programme exists at section level for primary middle leaders only. This programme, although not formally established on a national scale, is being practiced, and involves a series of meetings with Ministry officials which take place in the first year for newly appointed middle leaders. This is followed by shadowing an experienced leader for three days. A mentor is appointed

for each new middle leader and the mentoring programme activities are discussed and agreed upon by both mentor and mentee in a short meeting with Ministry officials. The same practice is being considered at national level for newly appointed senior leaders, especially headteachers, to be mentored by more experienced heads or by Education Coordinators, who are ex-heads and currently based at the Ministry.

#### *Support for school leaders*

Although, at national level, there are no formally established programmes for induction and mentoring, respondents say that a support programme for leaders is in place and is being implemented by the education coordinators and directors. This takes the form of consultative meetings and conferencing at Ministry level and follow up is done at school level, as well as through school-based professional development sessions and school visits. Such visits to both primary and secondary schools are conducted in groups or teams and on an individual basis by section directors, education coordinators and the director general (schools), with a programme of planned activities sent to each school at the beginning of each term.

The respondents note that one-to-one support is also given to newly-appointed senior leaders on request and voluntarily in cases where the candidate is encountering difficulties in the discharge of their responsibilities. There is also networking organized at zone levels, where sharing of good practice by more experienced senior leaders takes place to benefit other leaders.

### Development of leaders after appointment

According to the respondents, this is done in partnership with international higher education institutions, currently Warwick University, in collaboration with the National Institute of Education (NIE). Warwick conducts in-service training for senior leaders in education for an MA in Educational Leadership. They note that some 58 senior leaders have been trained at postgraduate level, with 12 more undergoing training, and that nearly all senior leaders in secondary schools have been through the training programme (apart from those in acting posts).

For leaders who do not meet the entry requirements to join the Master's programme, the Advanced Diploma in Educational Leadership (ADEL), a local upgrading programme, has been designed. Most participants have joined the master's programme with provision made for the remaining senior leaders to be enrolled. According to two respondents, there is a future plan for NIE to train all middle leaders to prepare them for future senior leadership posts. The respondents feel that this shows that the government of Seychelles is committed to the training of leaders with the expectation that they will be able to transform educational institutions into real learning communities.

### The nature of the preparation and development arrangements

The preparation and development arrangements in the Seychelles are two-fold. The formal training programme, according to the respondents, is dependent on 'policy borrowing' from other education systems. However, the content has been adapted

somewhat to suit the local context. The local advanced diploma is customized to the specific context of the Seychelles, although the content of the international programme was considered. However, with recent changes in education systems worldwide bringing about more challenges to leaders, the Seychelles has adapted its practices in line with international trends on the selection and training of leaders. As such, current practices are more dependent on ‘policy borrowing’ from other educational systems than on the Seychelles’ context.

### **Impact of Leadership Development on Leadership Practice in Schools**

In this section, the respondents share their perception of the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools. The information obtained is categorized under the following themes:

- MoE expectations and leadership practices
- Effectiveness of leadership training
- Observable changes that have taken place in schools
- Graduate leaders’ biggest challenges
- Anticipated good practices

#### MoE’s expectations and leadership practices

The respondents were asked to state specific areas of satisfaction where their expectations have been met and areas of concern where their expectations have not been met, based on their perceptions of trained leaders’ current practices.

### *Areas of satisfaction*

There is agreement amongst the respondents that leadership development has had a positive personal and professional impact on school leaders in several respects:

#### Leaders' Status

Most participants stated that the trained leaders are qualified in the sense that they possess a master's degree in educational leadership. This has boosted their self esteem and their feeling of importance at the level of the school, MoE and community, and they have pride in themselves. As one respondent stated:

“The qualification has given status to school leaders and they are empowered to deliver what is expected of them” (M4).

According to another leader “they are all qualified with an internationally well recognised degree, and I am personally proud of having our school leaders trained and performing” (M5).

#### Knowledge acquisition

The majority of respondents felt that the leaders have acquired knowledge in the different areas of school leadership and management. They know leadership concepts, models and theories. Such vast knowledge has made the leaders more confident of their abilities and more assertive, especially in voicing their concerns and opinions in regards to changes. According to a respondent:

“They possess the knowledge and have the ability to initiate. However, about five graduates only are initiating more ideas and strategies in their respective schools for improvement in school performance” (M6).

There is agreement among the respondents that empowerment of other leaders in the school by trained leaders is very slow and very few are attempting to do this.

#### Skills development

The majority of respondents mentioned that leaders are delegating responsibilities to other leaders, with noticeable improvement in record keeping and documentation at school level. Although leaders' self evaluation of their performance is not well done, there is agreement among the respondents that most school leaders are more reflective in their practices and in the sharing of best practices. Half of the respondents mentioned that leaders have acquired mentoring skills, as guidelines for mentoring and induction are being developed at secondary level. The majority of respondents believe that the school budget and school fund are now managed better by school leaders.

#### Attitudes and school ethos

The respondents state that the majority of leaders create a welcoming atmosphere for visitors to their schools, especially MoE personnel, and that good interaction with staff, parents and students exists.

“Although there could be more understanding and less arrogance on the part of a few leaders, there is an attempt on the part of most leaders to create a more caring and understanding atmosphere at some schools”  
(M3).

The majority of respondents agree that there is more involvement of students, staff and parents in school activities, including fund-raising. However, such involvement

is apparent in some schools, but not others, especially in terms of information sharing and involvement in decision-making.

*Areas of concern*

There is a high degree of agreement among respondents in regards to their concern about the leaders’ current practices, but one participant has a different view. Table 4.1 shows the participants responses in terms of areas of concern.

Areas	No. of Participant
Empowerment of staff	7
Taking the lead and being pro-active	6
Communication	5
Staff and student welfare	4

*Table 4.1: Areas of concern*

In regards to staff empowerment by trained leaders, the majority of participants felt that this is strongly lacking for middle leaders and teaching staff. They believe that there should be more school-based training and professional development sessions for staff. In taking the lead and being more pro-active in their respective work place, two participants stated:

“Most leaders are still internalising everything they have learnt and still very slow to put into practice what they have learnt. As such, taking the lead in new initiatives is very slow” (M1).

“Leaders lack autonomy in taking the lead, they are not pro-active enough in the implementation of new ideas as they are being questioned thus they are scared of taking risks and of committing themselves” (M3).

In respect of communication, five participants felt that some leaders tend to be arrogant when communicating with parents, staff and students. This may be due to

enhanced self esteem, assertiveness and status after successful completion of training. They believe such attitudes to be detrimental to establishing strong ties and mutual understanding with all partners in education.

Half of the participants interviewed shared the concern that there are trained leaders who are having difficulty understanding the needs of their staff and students. In terms of the latter, they believe that school leaders find it difficult to interpret students' behaviour and to see the underlying needs and causes of the problem. One participant stated:

“Appreciation of staff and students' effort is lacking, and some leaders are unable to meet the expectation of the community in dealing with the negative forces entering the school such as drugs” (M7).

The participants believe that there is a need for some leaders to be more supportive to their staff, students and parents. However, one participant has a different view, stating that:

“They are all performing and leading their school, they are pro-active in trying to find solutions and are not passive like before the MBA/MA training as they now do not simply accept everything, they question, challenge ideas and bring suggestions on educational issues” (M5).

### The effectiveness of leadership training

Seven of the eight respondents believe that the leadership training programme has enabled leaders to lead their institutions more effectively than before their training. They perceived leaders' enhanced effectiveness in the following areas, although they cautioned that improvement is still needed:

- Teaching and learning
- Development and action planning
- Parental involvement and community links.

### *Teaching and learning*

Respondents stated that, through leadership training, monitoring of teaching and learning in schools has improved, involving all leaders, although follow up is not always consistent in some schools. They agree to a certain extent that strategies are being used to improve students' performance in some schools, with the use of tools to observe classes, analyse and present data, critically evaluate their findings, and share good practices among members within schools and between schools. Pupils and teachers are in closer contact than before, and support is given to pupils in need. Student performance has improved in some schools while it has been maintained in others.

### *Development and action planning*

Respondent say that the quality of record keeping has improved. Formulating school vision and mission are more realistic, and there has been an improvement in devising and implementing their plans, although auditing at school level is still a concern, with assistance still being sought from support providers at MoE. Professional development (PD) sessions are done regularly in all schools although impact in the classroom is slow.

### *Parental involvement and community links*

Most respondents say that there has been remarkable improvement in that more schools are involving parents in school activities, and strengthening links with the community through regular contact such as meetings, parent-teacher- association

(PTA) activities, open days, assemblies and awards presentation ceremonies. More schools are practising an ‘open door’ policy to bring more parents closer to the school, and turn out of parents at school activities has increased remarkably.

#### Observable changes that have taken place in schools

The respondents stated that there have been several changes since head teachers undertook the leadership training programme. They are listed as follows:

- Sharing of good practices
- Documentation
- School ethos
- Instructional leadership practices.

#### *Sharing of good practices*

The participants interviewed stated that sharing of good practices among trained leaders, both at system and institution levels, has increased. They agree that, although most activities are initiated at system level, leaders are more willing to participate in forums with some leaders initiating networking activities in their zones whereby sharing of achievements, challenges and good practices take place. They believe that there is a positive response from leaders to serve on committees at MoE level and willingness to pilot or implement projects initiated by the MoE.

#### *Documentation*

The senior MoE officials claimed that there is a noticeable improvement in the quality of documentation at system and institution levels. They stated that leaders are more conscious of the type of documents they need to keep and that presentation of

school reports is of a higher standard with well documented information kept and maintained at institution level. Such improvement in documentation at institution level has filtered down to teachers where the standard and quality of records are higher.

### *School ethos*

According to the participants, there is improvement in school ethos with more schools advocating 'the welcoming school' approach whereby much emphasis is being placed on school infrastructure to make it more attractive and conducive for teaching and learning to take place. They believe that, although the upkeep of some classrooms is not always up to standard, the school environment in general is clean and tidy, and that calmness and tranquillity prevail in most institutions.

### *Instructional leadership practices*

The participants affirm that leaders seek advice whenever necessary in regards to decision taking. They claim that more leaders are actively involved in the monitoring of curriculum implementation through classroom visits and conducting purposeful lesson observations. Participants stated that leaders conduct regular meetings as a forum for information sharing, discussion and decision making but questioned whether shared decisions are made or taken.

## Graduate leaders' biggest challenges

There are certain aspects of leadership that trained leaders have not been able to practice. According to the respondents, leaders face the following major challenges:

- Critical reflection and self evaluation
- Coping with social ills
- Implementing strategies for improvement

### *Critical reflection and self evaluation*

The respondents stressed that leaders have yet to critically reflect and evaluate their performance in leading their institutions, and to sustain good practices. Some participants believe that such critical reflection is hindered by some graduate leaders' own ego, and that there is the need for some of them to change their way of thinking, to adjust and adapt their perception of things in relation to the reality of the environment they are in. There is agreement among respondents that leaders' critical reflection is geared more towards 'what the MoE is doing for them and their school' rather than 'what they are doing in their school and for their school'

### *Coping with social ills*

With the increase in students' misbehaviour in some institutions, some respondents commented that certain leaders are not able to cope well with the changes in society, in terms of the social ills such as drugs, alcohol abuse and negative behaviour infiltrating schools. They believe that, because some leaders fail to take the necessary measures to understand the underlying causes for such behaviour or addiction,

actions taken by some institutional leaders aggravate the situation. As one participant expressed:

“Leaders need to do more supportive work with students with misbehaviour and to be more innovative in dealing with such students” (M7).

### *Implementing strategies for improvement*

Senior MoE officials felt that it is a challenge for some leaders to implement strategies for change in the improvement of their school by putting into practice what they have learnt. They believe that, although school ethos has greatly improved in most schools, few schools can adopt others’ strategies to bring about improvement. However, participants expressed that the main challenge for some leaders is to implement strategies to bring about more positive changes in the performance of teacher and students. As one participant commented:

“The biggest challenge is to be accountable for the performance of their school; being trained leaders they feel that they will always remain in post regardless of how well or badly they are leading their school” (M3).

Another respondent felt that “leaders are expected to be visionary with a clear vision of what and where they want their school to be” (M2).

### Anticipated good practices

Respondents referred to several ‘good’ practices that they would have liked to see or had anticipated from graduate leaders. One revealed that “as a leader, one needs to continuously search for and initiate new ideas and strategies to strengthen relationships with all partners” (M7). The respondents felt strongly that there should be more involvement of students in decision making at primary school level since

some secondary schools have started to do this. They agree that leaders need to be able to conceptualise and carry out small projects within their schools and zones, and initiate more strategies to cope better with students' misbehaviour and poor attitudes towards learning.

Especially for those with more than three years in post after training, there is the need to practise distributed leadership on a larger scale and to audit their plans better. As one respondent stated, “they should dare to be different and adopt a more comprehensive approach to teaching and learning, a turn around” (M8). According to one respondent:

“My expectation of them is to go out into the community, to break that barrier and bring the community closer through the PTA. I have yet to see them doing that, getting more involved at community level to debate on educational issues that concerns parents, community and schools, and to get the chance to clear out any misconceptions or wrong perceptions of how their school is being led and how the community can help especially now with all the social ills coming into schools such as drugs, alcohol and negative attitudes” (M5).

However, 50% of the respondents are hopeful that the new contract for head teachers will make them more accountable in regards to their performance as the most senior leader of their institution.

## **Summary**

This chapter presents the senior MoE officials' perception of several key issues related to the development of leaders in the Seychelles and the impact of graduate leaders' practices. Important perceptions have been highlighted in regards to recruitment and selection of leaders for training, and their subsequent deployment.

The criteria identified by the MoE staff rely heavily on participants' experience and qualifications, are not officially published and advertising of posts is not an official practice.

There is acknowledgement that some changes in trained leaders' practices have impacted positively on their work place, especially in terms of sharing good practices, staff and parental involvement, development planning, monitoring of teaching and learning, school ethos and documentation. However, more was expected of them in relation to effective communication with partners in education, staff empowerment through PD and school-based training, as well as student welfare in connection with the current social ills.

The next chapter presents the findings from the pilot survey.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PILOT SURVEY FINDINGS

#### Introduction

The interview questions for the survey sample were piloted with five participants who meet the pilot criteria, which are:

- A master's degree (MA, MBA or M.Ed) in Education
- Course sponsored by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and of only one year duration
- Occupying a leadership post in either primary, secondary or post secondary institutions or system-based (at the MoE);
- The course content includes areas of leadership and management, research skills, change and innovations (similar to that of the MA/MBA programme).

The aim of the pilot study was to check the clarity and nature of the questions in bringing out the intended information from respondents based on the expectations of the main broad research questions. The findings for this pilot report are categorised under the different themes of the main broad research questions. Table 5.1 provides general information about the pilot participants.

Work Place	Post title	Qualification	Gender	Pseudonym
System level	Director	Master's degree	Male	Leader A
Educational institution	Director	Master's degree	Male	Leader B
Educational institution	Headteacher	Master's degree	Male	Leader C
Educational institution	Deputy headteacher	Master's degree	Female	Leader D
Educational institution	Headteacher	Master's degree	Female	Leader E

*Table 5.1: General information about the pilot participants*

Table 5.2 shows that participants who taught initially in primary schools accumulated far more years in teaching posts than those from secondary schools, before selection and recruitment for training and subsequent promotion. The headteacher who spent 13 years as a teacher before being promoted to be a studies coordinator did so in a school comprising both primary and secondary students.

<b>Post Occupied</b>	<b>Years in Post</b>	<b>Post Occupied</b>	<b>Years in Post</b>
<b>Leader A</b>		<b>Leader B</b>	
NYS* Teacher	6	Secondary Teacher	4
Head of Department	2	Head of Subject	2
Ass.Coord. Education	2	Lecturer	3
Director	8	Course leader	5
<b>Leader D</b>		Head of Faculty	3
Primary Teacher	19	Assistant Director	2
Head of Department	2	Director	4
Deputy headteacher	1		
<b>Leader E</b>		<b>Leader C</b>	
Primary Teacher	21	Secondary Teacher	13
Studies Coordinator	4	Studies Coordinator	1
Education Coordinator	5	Deputy headteacher	5
Headteacher	4	Headteacher	5

*Table 5.2: Pilot participants' career path / progression*

### **Recruitment for Leadership Training**

There were three questions within this broad theme and they were based on the participants' perceptions of:

- Their selection for the training
- The process they went through in order to be enrolled on the programme
- The MoE's criteria for selecting leaders for leadership training.

### Selection for training

All participants believe that they were selected for training based on two or more of the following criteria:

- A senior management team (SMT) member in a school (2)
- Academic qualifications (4)
- Teaching experience / years in the service (4)
- Expertise in specialised area (2)
- Display of leadership qualities (4)
- Recommendation based on performance and aptitude (4)

According to one participant:

“If I was recommended that was probably due to my background, knowledge ... and expertise ... In line with the 1998/9 reform in education ... there maybe was the need for better organisation and coordination of schools’ ... at central level” (Leader A).

### Selection process

Four participants went through similar identification and recruitment processes in order to enrolment on the training programme. They were first contacted by a senior official of the MoE by way of a letter (2) and a brief meeting (4). This was followed by completion of application forms as part of the administrative process for enrolment with the university in question – and on acceptance started the training. One participant went through a lengthy, well planned and organised induction process in preparation for training and to take up post as a teacher trainer lecturer after completion of the training programme abroad.

He stated that:

“After I was interviewed by the person in charge ... I had an induction meeting ... followed BY an induction programme for a term ... the university to be enrolled and administrative procedures involving the filling of forms” (Leader B).

## Perceptions of MoE's selection criteria

Leader B believes that one most important criterion of the Ministry for the selection of leaders for leadership training is “an individual that the MoE can trust and competent to implement ‘the’ Ministry policies”. He joins the others in stating other criteria that they feel are employed by the MoE:

- Candidate potential to develop leadership abilities with training over time - based on supervisor's observation and appraisal (4)
- Personal request (2)
- Leadership qualities displayed (4)
- Previous performance and experience (3)

One participant, however, stated that he has no idea about MoE criteria:

“The actual practice of the MoE has given me the impression that there are no clear guidelines or policy with regards to the selection of leaders for leadership training” (Leader A).

None of the participants mentioned academic qualification as a selection criterion employed by MoE.

## **Participants' Training Experiences**

In this section, the researcher wanted to find out the participants:

- Expectations of the Ministry in regards to their training
- Awareness and knowledge of the MoE expectations (if any) of them while in the programme and after completion
- Expectations of the programme
- Experience of the programme
- Perceptions of professional difference and leadership
- Skills' development.

### Expectations of the Ministry

Three participants believed that the MoE expected them to gain the maximum out of the training in terms of knowledge and skills once enrolled on the programme, and to empower their colleagues by sharing the acquired knowledge and skills, through the facilitation of in-house and centrally coordinated training. The one participant who was interviewed and inducted prior to enrolment on the programme knew that the MoE expected him to be empowered in areas of educational studies and educational change so as to lead the educational studies once graduated. Another participant however, was not aware of the MoE's expectations once enrolled as well as after completion of the programme. His response was:

“I have no idea, since the MoE did not know what I was studying nor what I have studied ..., but upon returning expected me to lead ... a section ... following the launching of the National Curriculum Framework” (Leader A).

Their expectations of the MoE once enrolled varied. Two participants expected to be fully supported financially and emotionally through regular contacts, while two of them simply expected the MoE to make clear the purpose of the training. One participant expected to become a teacher trainer after completion but was put in the same post and promoted to headship one year later. The same thing happened to two others who expected to be promoted straight after the course. One participant simply expected to be told what he had to do. Another participant strongly expected the MoE to honour their decision of providing him with the post of leadership in the training of teachers in educational studies, and to transfer him from secondary to post secondary.

### Ministry's expectations

Four participants were not aware of the Ministry's expectations of them prior to enrolment for training as they were not made clear to them even during training. However, one participant was inducted and shadowed another non-local professor for a period of one term after completion and prior to taking up the leadership post.

### Expectations of the programme

All participants expected the programme to empower them to administer and lead an educational institution (4) or a section in the MoE (1) more effectively.

### Experience of the programme

The participants expressed their experience of the training programme in terms of several aspects. Table 5.3 shows participants' responses on the most valuable aspects of the programme.

<b>Most Appreciated</b>	<b>Reason for Appreciation</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
Able to select module to study	The availability of choices	4
Units selected were relevant	Based on school context	3
	Linked well together	2
Research project	Opportunity to design, research and carry out a project	4
Library facilities	Time for self professional development in areas of interest	3
Seminars	Able to attend and conducted by prominent researchers	4
Lectures	Most reflective and of high standard	5

*Table 5.3: Most valuable aspects of the programme*

Table 5.4 shows their responses on the least valuable aspects of the programme.

<b>Disliked the most</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
None	Choice in selecting the module	3
Module on measurement	The tutor's teaching was not up to expectation	1
Module on Educational Planning in SIDS	Suitable for MoE officials and not really for school personnel	1

*Table 5.4: Least valuable aspects of the programme*

Table 5.5 shows their responses on the most valuable course topics.

<b>Most Relevant</b>	<b>Reason given</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
School Autonomy	Involved decision making as a leader	3
Finance	Included element of strategic planning and budget forecasting	2
	Importance of devolution from central to self-managing schools	1
Educational change and innovations	Related to aspect of leadership at all levels within an educational institution	4
Measurement	Linked well with other areas and relevant to my work	1
Leading & Managing people	Empower one to understand self and others- important issues for leaders	4
<b>Most Challenging</b>		
Curriculum evaluation	Involved various theories and models - one needs to master all	1
Research Methods	Compulsory unit - very demanding	2
Programme Evaluation	Very academic- involved various theories and critical analysis review	1
Advance Seminars	Involved writing/commenting/criticising/reflecting during presentations.	2

*Table 5.5: Most valuable course topics*

Tables 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 show that participants' training programmes comprised similar modules and units regardless of the fact that some studied in Australia and others in the UK. Four out of five participants found modules on 'Educational

change and innovations’ and ‘Leading and managing people’ to be the most relevant. This is because they could relate issues to that of the local context based on their experiences as school practitioners and leaders. Similarly, four participants appreciated research projects, seminars and choice of modules. Although all participants appreciated the lectures, one participant found ‘measurement’, perceived as the most relevant in terms of content, the most disliked because the tutor’s ability to teach the module was not of the expected standard.

### Perceptions of professional difference and leadership

All the participants felt that they are different professionally after completing the one year training programme, in the following ways:

- The ability to put in application some of the different theories and models learnt (4)
- More mature / knowledgeable as a leader (3)
- Better equipped with tools / strategies to work with and convince others so as to make schools move forward (2)
- Better understand differences between roles of managers and leaders (3)
- Have become a better leader and team member - a better listener and more tolerant to criticisms (3)
- Management background has made me more reflective on managing people, their involvement and valuing their contribution. (2).

They all believe they are better leaders in terms of; their ability to manage people (3), micro politics - giving students a voice in the school (2), can initiate and instigate change within an educational institution (2), and set a good example through interaction with others. According to one participant:

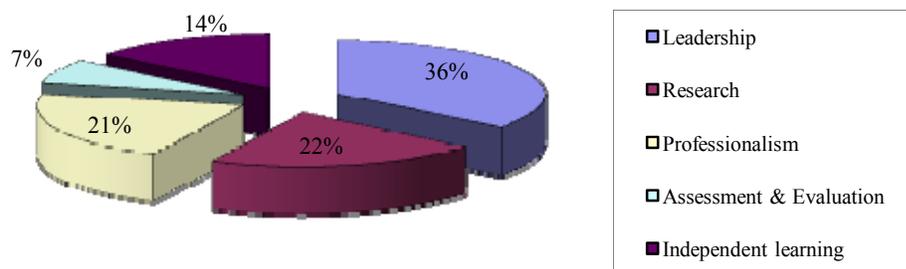
“In forum, meetings and group discussion, I am more receptive to criticism, more tolerant of others’ criticisms and see them as pointers for improvement and not for the sake of argument – this has encouraged others to be more open and tolerant” (Leader B).

Another participant has:

“Established a better relationship and culture of working together as a team with distributive leadership for more autonomous and voluntary involvement of both students and teachers” (Leader C).

### Skills development

The participants all felt that they have all developed certain skills (See Figure 5.1).



*Figure 5.1: Skills development*

According to the participants, professional skills are the way they interact with others and how they go about doing their work. As one participant put it;

“I have a weekly and daily plan, so I know exactly what needs to be done the next day. I make it a must to inform my deputies what my plans are ... I make sure that I arrive on time and greet all those present” (Leader C).

The majority of participants believed they have developed leadership skills from the training programme, and that professionalism is also part of leadership.

## **Identification for Post-Training Roles**

The researcher wanted to know the basis by which the participants were identified for their leadership roles after completion of the programme, and the process they went through to reach their leadership post.

The criteria mentioned were as follows:

- Successful completion of the training programme (3)
- The nature of the training and skills of evaluation acquired (1)
- Outstanding performance in the training (1)

One participant felt that, since he was groomed prior to enrolment in the training programme, it is normal for him to be given the post expected on successful completion of the course. He further stated that:

“I went through an induction process ... and was given responsibilities with a leadership role on a gradual basis for the course of four years” (Leader B).

The others went through a different process before their appointment. Among them, two participants took part in a short ‘tête à tête’ meeting whereby they discussed and were convinced to take up the leadership post, while the other two attended a more formal meeting with their immediate supervisor, were introduced to others and later placed in their leadership post at the MoE.

This indicates a lack of clear guidelines and processes in place on the part of the MoE for leadership selection, recruitment for training and subsequent appointment in post.

## **Impact of Leadership Development on Leadership Practice**

The intention here was for the participants to voice the:

- major challenges as a leader after completion of the training programme
- aspects of the training they have been able to put into practice
- observable changes that have taken place
- strategies they have been able to employ, and their outcomes.

### Major challenges

Here, there are both similarities and differences in the participants' views. One participant stated that there is not much difficulty in leading others due to training in behaviour management but to lead by example was and still is very challenging. Others felt that putting into practice what they have learnt in the training was their biggest challenge. According to one participant:

“I was too eager to put things learnt into practice but was not able to do so ... that was my biggest challenge” (Leader C).

Another participant believed that the challenge was to change the mindset of others with regards to assessment in general and access to resources:

“Resource access is difficult due to too many bureaucratic procedures one has to go through in order to procure it” (Leader A).

### Aspects of training put into practice

The participants felt that they have been able to put into practice the following aspects of the training programme course content:

- Established a culture of multiple leaders by encouraging others to take up leadership responsibilities through empowerment (3)
- Reinforced collaborative / team work (4)
- Used various models for curriculum evaluation (1)

- Implemented models of initiating change (2)
- Brought change at policy level in being able to influence certain decisions made at MoE level (2)
- Used model approach to item analysis in evaluating students' academic performance (1)
- Designed instruments and analysis items (1)
- Created opportunity for more involvement of staff, students and parents in school activities (3).

This list shows that distributive leadership, team-work and the involvement of stakeholders in education are the main aspects claimed to have been put into practice by participants.

#### Observable changes that have taken place

As a result of these modified practices, the participants expressed the following as observable changes that have taken place:

- Staff members are more receptive to carry out delegated duties (3)
- There is better team spirit and teachers are more receptive to criticism - reduction in staff conflict (3)
- Through listening and involvement of students in school activities, the number of students in clubs has increased and fights have decreased (3)
- More active students' bodies – hence a bigger voice in the running of the school (2)
- Members within the section take initiative and try out ideas freely - a good working relationship prevails (1)
- Observed changes in teachers' perception of their view of the 'way to assess pupils' (1)
- Increase in the turn out of parents at school meetings to discuss examination issues show that they recognised the importance of their involvement (2).
- Teachers and middle leaders are displaying the leadership attributes through putting into practice strategies learnt such as carrying out tasks they have initiated (2)

This list shows that improvement in school ethos, changes in teachers' perceptions, and increased participation of learners and parents in school activities are the participants' claimed main areas of observable changes that have taken place. As these claims are self-reported, they should be interpreted with caution.

#### Strategies employed and outcomes

In regards to the impact of their practices, the participants were asked to list all the strategies they have been able to employ under various focus areas. A distinction is made between intended and actual outcomes (see table 5.6).

Focus: Staff Professional / Strategies	Development and Institution / Intended/Expected outcomes	Section - Based Training / Actual outcomes/comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce plans and target for all staff and empower them to plan tasks.</li> <li>• Delegation of duties and debriefing.</li> <li>• Conducted periodical training of staff and teachers in item analysis and development of instruments for evaluation.</li> <li>• Networked with other schools in the region and facilitated in-house training.</li> <li>• Organised and facilitated training sessions for middle leaders.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for staff self development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of all staff in the implementation of the section aims and priorities.</li> <li>• More autonomy and involvement of staff in decision-making.</li> <li>• Empowered staff and teachers to effectively and confidently evaluate students performance within schools and nationally.</li> <li>• Learn from experiences of others through sharing of good practices – improve staff performance and improvement in students’ performance.</li> <li>• More leaders empowered to facilitate in-house sessions for teachers.</li> <li>• A culture of self learning and improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff are involved and plan section task better</li> <li>• More staff are involved in decision making but some still rely on the SMT to initiate change.</li> <li>• Target number of staff to be empowered not met due to limitation of resources. Empowered still not confident enough to carry out effective evaluation.</li> <li>• Slow improvement in teacher and student’s performance training given not impacting in the classroom practices.</li> <li>• Few empowered leaders feel confident to conduct session for teachers. Few staff involved, due to laziness to improve</li> </ul>
Focus: Institution / Section	Vision and Mission / Climate	and Ethos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value staff contribution and reward good performance.</li> <li>• More dialogue between management and staff.</li> <li>• Whole Section/Institution approach to capacity building.</li> <li>• Involved all staff in formulating the school vision and mission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate of collaborative learning and multiple leaders</li> <li>• A calm and conducive environment for teaching and learning.</li> <li>• All staff trained to post graduate level</li> <li>• Stronger sense of belonging and team spirit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative learning climate - multiple leaders only teaching staff</li> <li>• A good atmosphere prevails however difficult students stressed out management and staff.</li> <li>• Only around 50% staff trained due to lack of resources and funding.</li> <li>• Good team spirit and more staff involvement in school life.</li> </ul>
Focus: Students’ Involvement	and Participation in School life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage students to set up committees and empower them lead and conduct meeting.</li> <li>• Set up students’ council.</li> <li>• Encourages students to take part in ECA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More active participation of students in school life - have effective committees with their own office bearers, targets and termly calendar of activities.</li> <li>• A stronger student voice in the running of the institution.</li> <li>• Increased in club activities at school level for development of others skills in students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More organised students’ bodies but more boys are actively involved – still few involvement of girls in sport related activities.</li> <li>• Difficulty in meeting the demands of the council discourages students.</li> <li>• Increased in the number of clubs but less students’ participation after school hours.</li> </ul>
Focus : Parental Involvement	and Community Links	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information to parents in subject choices at secondary level.</li> <li>• Invite various agencies to conduct sessions with staff, parents and students.</li> <li>• Involved more PTA in teaching and learning issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parents informed on the different subjects being offered at school.</li> <li>• More knowledge sharing and change in practices in regards to living values / behaviour.</li> <li>• Increased in parental involvement in school life – thus improvement in students’ behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parents know the subject choices since all students have to fill in a form with their consent.</li> <li>• Stake holders are more aware but change in practice is slow.</li> <li>• More parents are involved but still difficult to reach those who need support.</li> </ul>
Others		
Strategies	Intended/Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes/comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower staff in curriculum evaluation.</li> <li>• Assist schools more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforced the competency based approach (CBA).</li> <li>• Better evaluation of tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBA reinforced with better implementation</li> <li>• Improvement in quality</li> </ul>

Table 5.6: Strategies and their intended and actual outcomes

Table 5.6 shows various strategies claimed by the participants. Their responses revealed strategies implemented and impact on schools' outcomes categorised under the following main themes:

- Professional development and training
- Leadership and management
- Climate and ethos
- Students' involvement
- Parental involvement and community link

Strategies implemented for professional development and training highlight intended outcomes in teaching and learning and staff empowerment through self learning. Although impact in classroom is slow, slight improvement in learners' performance and teacher confidence to facilitate sessions and self learning are reported. Leadership and management strategies implemented have resulted in shared decision-making among leaders and staff, with shared vision and mission. Conducive environment, good team spirit and sense of belonging are actual outcomes of strategies implemented for climate and ethos. More club activities, improvement in parental involvement in school life, and awareness of school issues which have impacting positively on learners' behaviour, are other claimed outcomes revealed through implementation of strategies by pilot participants.

The main themes from the pilot participants' responses were found crucial as a guide to compile and categorise responses of participants from the main survey (see chapter six).

## **Programme Completion and Leadership Effectiveness**

The participants were asked to comment on the support that was made available to them in order to facilitate smooth transition to their leadership post, the type of induction process they went through prior to deployment, and whether they were mentored.

According to one participant:

“I was given two experienced colleagues to shadow, worked closely with both of them and did joint planning, as I was transferred from a secondary school to a post secondary institution” (Leader B).

Others felt there was no such support except that they were placed in familiar surroundings (previous institutions) prior to deployment to a leadership post (4). One participant made clear that he had to sort out things for himself but added that his immediate supervisor “supports my decision and argument for smooth running of the section and in the appointments of new posts to staff the section” (Leader A).

Three participants stated that they went through an informal induction by way of a brief ‘tête à tête’ meeting with immediate supervisors, but was not mentored. One participant was inducted while another one was neither inducted nor mentored. This shows that the one participant who was inducted prior to training and deployment was probably a special case while the others went through the normal practice of the MoE with no clear programme of induction and mentoring in place.

## Ongoing Support and Professional Development

The researcher wanted to establish whether the participants have knowledge of the existence of any structures and processes at Ministry level for the ongoing support and professional development of graduate leaders.

The participants were unanimous in stating that there are no such structures and processes at Ministry level. However, they felt that the MoE employs different strategies to develop, but not necessarily support, graduate leaders. The mentioned strategies are:

- Network and linkage with other organisations, although funding is lacking for successful development to take place (2)
- Create opportunities to attend and participate in conferences, forums, workshop and committees both locally and internationally whereby their expertise is exploited, shared, valued and in some way consolidated (3)
- Participation in a large scale project (1)
- If opportunities arise one can be sent for short specialised training abroad (2).

Since all the participants referred to the lack of MoE structures or processes for supporting graduate leaders, they could not identify the nature of the support they received. However, on probing, three participants stated that:

“The Ministry provided me with the necessary resources on request in order to implement the school action plans and related projects - I suppose this is their way of providing support” (Leader C).

“Reassurance and teamwork by Schools Division staff for writing and carrying out evaluation projects” (Leader B).

“Through regular school visits by Education Coordinators and meetings where we share our concerns and they provide emotional support and advice” (Leader D).

The participants stated that they have attended workshops and educational conferences both locally and internationally (3), followed an MA course through distant mode (1), took part in an intensive training in the theory and practice of educational assessments at macro level (1). The responses above show that professional development opportunities exist for graduate leaders since four out of five participants have participated in one of the above mentioned activities.

### **Implications of the Pilot Study**

All the pilot study participants stated that the questions are clear, although some needed them to reflect and think deeper into their training and existing opportunities. Although there is no need to rephrase any question for main study participants, the researcher was made aware of specific areas where probing techniques need to be applied. These became evident when asking participants questions related to changes in their practices, strategies implemented in their work place and actual outcomes (impact). In regards to the question enquiring on strategies employed by participants and their outcomes, Table 5.6 reveals that some claimed strategies and outcomes are repetitions of previous responses as some of the participants found it difficult to categorise the strategies under the different focus, while the researcher found it time consuming to wait for and transcribe responses. Because of this question, four participants took more than an hour to complete the interview. The main amendment was to simply ask the participants to list major strategies that they have employed, and the intended and actual outcomes, to establish whether there has been an impact.

Through the piloting exercise, the researcher was made aware of better time management, questions that need emphasising, and linkages with other questions. The pilot study also serves as an important tool for formulation of themes and categorisation of responses for the main survey and thus facilitates the process of compilation and presentation of data for chapter six.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **MAIN SURVEY FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the responses to the survey of four cohorts of participants who have been through leadership training as part of the Ministry of Education (MoE) leadership development project. A total of 45 participants were interviewed, 100% of the trained leaders currently residing in the Seychelles. The survey findings obtained are presented and analysed using a thematic approach. The participants' responses from all four cohorts are summarised and presented in a generalised manner as differences in opinion among cohorts were minimal. Where this is not the case, the particular respondent or cohort group is identified through direct quotes.

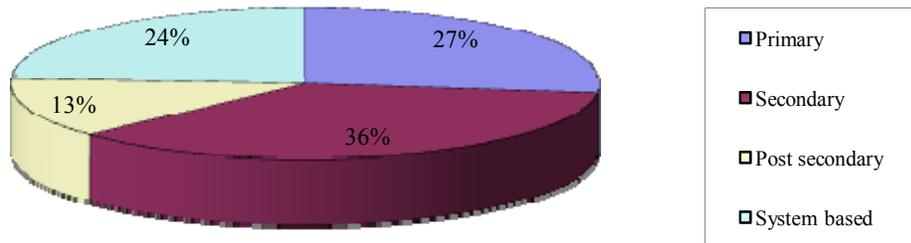
#### **Participants' Profile and Career Progression**

##### Demographic data

The great majority (80%) of the participants are female. This is because, unlike most countries, there are more women leaders in Seychelles than men. Their ages range from 30- 60 years; with 24% in the age range of 30-40 years, 47% in the range of 40-50 years and 29% in the range of 50-60 years. This shows that nearly half of the trained leaders are in the age range of 40-50 years.

### Work place and post title

Currently, out of the 44 survey participants who work for the Ministry of Education (MoE), 76% are institution based. Figure 6.1 shows the percentages of participants working for the MoE, at different institutions and in the wider system. The largest group (36%) is at secondary level and the smallest group (13%) at post-secondary level. Although the target group for leadership training is practicing leaders at institutional level, almost a quarter (24%) are system based. Only one participant is working at Community level outside the MoE. The fact that so many trained leaders are still in education may be due to the ‘bonding agreement’ that they all need to sign upon successful enrolment, which commits them to work for the MoE for a period of five years.



*Figure 6.1: Participants' work place*

The participants interviewed are occupying several leadership posts, as illustrated in table 6.1. The majority (62%) are in senior leadership positions at institution level either as heads or deputies.

Leadership Posts	Percentage
Headteacher of primary schools	27
Headteacher of secondary schools	18
Deputy headteacher in secondary schools	16
Middle leaders at institution level	13
Middle leaders at system level	13
Senior leader at system level	09
Head of post secondary institutions	02
District administrator	02

*Table 6.1: Participants' current leadership posts*

The 13% of participants holding the post of middle leaders at institution level are either heads of department (HoD) in secondary schools, or heads of section or curriculum coordinators in post secondary institutions, as there were no primary schools' subject coordinators in the cohorts. The 13% occupying the post of middle leaders at system level are education coordinators for primary and secondary schools, or work in the research or quality assurance sections. The nine percent in senior leadership positions at system level are either director general, directors or assistant directors.

### Career progression

The majority of participants (65%) have career progression from school teacher to middle manager (HoD or studies coordinator) and on to headship in primary or secondary schools and, in some cases, to senior posts in the MoE. Almost a quarter (24%) were qualified as primary teachers but were deployed to teach at secondary level and climbed the ladder from middle leader to headship, with 7% at post secondary institutions. One third (33%) started their career as qualified secondary

school teachers, were promoted to heads of department and/or to more senior leadership positions such as deputies, then to headteachers at institutions level with a few at the system level. Only one person (2%) has remained at post-secondary level throughout their career.

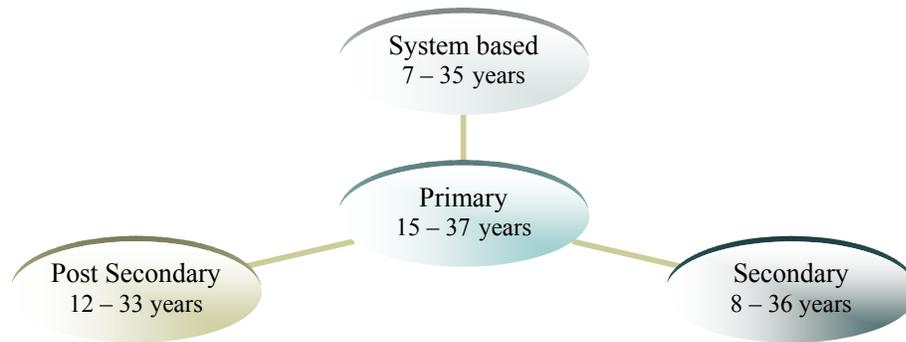
Table 6.2 shows that the lowest range of years in service is 5-10 and the highest 36-40, with the range extending from 7 to 37 years.

Range of years in service	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
% of participants	4.4	15.6	13.3	17.8	28.9	13.3	6.7

*Table 6.2: Percentage of participants in the various ranges of years in service*

The participant with the least experience (7 years) is currently system based, although has previous experience in a secondary school. The next most inexperienced participant (8 years) is headteacher of a secondary school.

Figure 6.2 shows that there are participants with up to 37 years of service in schools, with a minimum of 15 years experience at primary level.



*Figure 6.2: Participants' range of years in service and current work*

Figure 6.2 shows that the least experienced participants who started their teaching career at secondary level have progressed quickly to senior positions. It also shows that leaders at primary level are the most experienced. This seems to explain the 65% majority of participants who started their teaching career at primary level, although it is probably because there are more primary teachers in the system and that many secondary teachers are expatriates.

### **Recruitment for Leadership Training**

All survey participants believe that their selection for leadership training was based on two or more of the criteria being displayed in table 6.3 below, with the exception of one participant who had no idea why he was selected.

Selection Criteria	%
Personal interest	29
A practicing senior leader	89
Academic qualification	58
Teaching and/or leadership experience	53
Display of leadership qualities and competences	49
Dedication and commitment to education	13
Appraisal performance and target	38
Recommendation from immediate supervisor	16
Active involvement in activities at MoE and national level	11

*Table 6.3: Participants perception of selection criteria for leadership training*

Table 6.3 shows that a large majority (89%) of participants believe that they were selected on the basis that they are practicing senior leaders, either as a headteacher or deputy head; middle leaders such as studies/subject coordinators or HoDs; education coordinator or director at the MoE. The fact that they were occupying such posts at the time of selection confirms that the leadership training was in-service.

More than half the participants (53%) identified their teaching and/or leadership experience as a factor in their selection, while previous academic qualifications, such as a bachelor's degree in education, a Quebec Certificate in Educational Administration and Management, or an Advanced Diploma in Educational Leadership (ADEL), were mentioned by 58%:

“I was already in a leadership position as headteacher and needed training since I was not properly trained when I took up headship” (Cohort 3).

“Nobody trained in leadership at my school. Mostly all those already in leadership position were approaching retirement age” (Cohort 2).

“I was already in a senior leader post as headteacher in a primary school ... in post for ten years without proper training” (Cohort 1).

“I lacked skills and knowledge in leadership concepts although I have experience ... and I successfully completed ADEL” (Cohort 4).

Only 29% of the participants expressed interest in pursuing leadership training through personal request either verbally or through an official letter to their superiors within the MoE. Other important criteria mentioned were ‘display of leadership qualities and competences’ (49%) and ‘appraisal performance and target’ (38%). Few participants voiced that they were selected on the basis of recommendations from immediate supervisors (16%), their dedication and commitment to education (13%) and active involvement in activities organised at MoE and at national level (11%).

#### Participants’ perceptions of the Ministry’s selection criteria

The MoE criteria for identification of leaders for training are not clear to the participants. Those interviewed gave their perception of the MoE criteria for identifying and selecting individuals for leadership training based on their own observation of selected members from the different cohort groups. The main responses are as follows:

- Practising senior leaders – 84%
- Years of experience / in-service – 56%
- Academic qualification - 42%
- Display of leadership qualities and potential – 31%

The participants expressed reservations about these criteria, based on the current practices of the MoE:

“I am not sure of the MoE selection criteria in terms of academic qualification, whether it is a 1<sup>st</sup> degree or ADEL, but I do know of teachers who have been enrolled as mature students with no 1<sup>st</sup> degree or ADEL, while others have been declined the chance to participate” (Cohort 4).

“Those already in a leadership position, although with exceptions. Qualification or experience I am doubtful whether they are considered as criteria for leadership training based on the MoE current practice of selection” (Cohort 2).

“The MoE has no set criteria; their senior officials just pick and choose those already in leadership positions mainly, and possibly experience” (Cohort 3).

The inconsistency gives rise to participant speculation that hidden criteria for selection exist, hence the mention of ‘personal affiliation’ by 18% of participants surveyed. This term is used to describe the level of connection and established relationships between employees and senior MoE officials. Such connections or relationships, as work colleagues or past students, lead to a suspicion of favouritism in the selection process.

#### Selection and recruitment processes

All participants went through a similar process of recruitment. This involved contact with senior MoE officials either on a one to one basis or in small groups to be informed of their selection followed by a short meeting and filling of forms. Only two participants from cohort two claim that interviews were conducted prior to their enrolment on the training programme. All the participants went through the formalities of filling application forms and obtaining references.

Most (86%) participants were inducted prior to the training. The induction programme comprised:

- A group meeting with programme coordinator and senior ministry officials
- Assignment practice to check literature search ability, reading and writing skills
- Training session on the use of computer and internet facilities
- Briefing session with lecturers on the training programme and course content.

A few participants either attended only the group meeting or missed the induction altogether, with two joining the programme after it started.

Cohort 1 participants, who constitute 9% of those surveyed, went through a different selection process. This is because they were a select group of senior leaders, who were chosen by higher senior MoE officials to pursue leadership training outside the country. They met on regular basis as a group after being officially informed of their selection, and liaised directly with their allocated university in UK for on-line enrolment, accommodation and research school attachment. Prior to departure, the group met with the selector for a final official meeting.

### **Expectations and Training Experiences**

The surveyed participants were asked to comment on their expectations of the MoE, and MoE expectations of them, upon enrolment and upon completion of the training programme, their expectations of the training programme, and their training experiences.

## Participants' perceptions of the Ministry's expectations

### *Upon enrolment*

Once enrolled in the programme, the great majority (91%) of participants stated that the Ministry expected them to study hard, successfully complete the course and gain the maximum out of the training programme. Almost half (42%) added that Ministry expectations included knowledge acquisition and skills development. Two participants (4.4%) stated that, since they fought hard to be accepted on the course, the MoE did not expect anything from them. Two participants expressed the MoE's expectations of them in terms of the quality of assignments and completion of tasks.

“The MoE expected me to study hard and adapt as quickly as possible to the course content and standard ... that I do the assignments well and produce a dissertation of high quality” (Cohort 4).

“To complete all assignments and maintain links with the School Improvement Programme” (Cohort 1).

### *Upon completion*

Upon completion of the training, 91% of participants stated that the MoE expected them to go back to their institutions and to put into practice what they had learned so as to bring about positive change. To achieve this, the participants were expected to:

- Share knowledge and expertise with others - 44%
- To be more reflective and analyse things better - 40%
- To make a difference in terms of student performance - 27%
- To share experience and empower others – 24%
- To lead the improvement of the school - 24%
- To carry out research project in line with new developments in education – 22%
- To be more pro-active, innovative and independent - 16%
- To discharge their responsibilities in a more professional manner – 13%
- To better support schools – 13%

Most participants gave more than two expectations of the MoE with 44% stating that the MoE expected them to share their expertise and knowledge acquired in the training with others in their work place, while 40% mentioned being more reflective and better able to analyse things (40%).

### Expectations of the Ministry of Education

#### *Upon enrolment*

Table 6.4 shows the surveyed participants' expectations of the MoE upon enrolment in the training programme and upon completion.

Expectations upon enrolment	%	Expectations upon completion	%
Financial Support	49	Promotion or retention in post	49
Pedagogical support	42	On-going support and continuous professional development	42
Professional and Emotional support	33	Salary increase and/or recognition	40
Access for research purposes	11	Autonomy to bring about change	13
None	09	None	4

*Table 6.4: Participants' expectations of the MoE*

Table 6.4 shows that the participants' expectations of the MoE, once enrolled on the programme, related to support of various kinds, provision of learning facilities and access. Financial support was expressed in terms of payment for printing and photocopying facilities, and international experience programme expenses. They also complained that they did not retain the allowance that goes with the post title,

although they kept their basic salary, while participants on a lower salary due to their qualifications were at a disadvantage compared to their colleagues.

Pedagogical support expectations were to do with learning facilities and resources, where participants voiced their concerns in terms of availability, efficiency and access. The concerns were expressed mainly for internet access to communicate with lecturers, university correspondence and literature search, and lack of textbooks / journals as well as study / working space initially.

Professional and emotional support were shared in the context of isolation from MoE activities, within the National Institute of Education (NIE), especially for Cohort 2 participants (the first group to be trained locally), lack of current information and regular contact with senior MoE officials to discuss personal issues of concern related to studies:

“Professional and pedagogical support in terms of IT facilities, internet access, journals and textbooks ...financial support with international experience programme, printing and photocopying, and to maintain the close link with the Ministry for emotional support, invitation to official functions and activities, circulars memos for information of changes taking place” (Cohort 2).

“To keep links with the system and in continuous contact for continuous support with MoE” (Cohort 2)

“I expected the MoE to follow closely my progress in the course, to keep close contact through regular meeting with senior officials to discuss difficulties such as resource availability” (Cohort 4).

Access for research purposes were mainly to do with facilitation of access to carry out research in schools or at system level by the MoE, and in obtaining official documents from both institution and system levels. According to some participants,

such access was not always easy even in instances whereby approval has been granted by MoE.

Four participants (9%), however, stated that they did not expect anything more than what they were already given. The majority were grateful to have been accepted on the course on a full time basis while retaining their basic salary. A minority also felt that, since they fought hard to be given such an opportunity, it was pointless expecting more.

#### *Upon completion*

Table 6.4 shows that almost half (49%) of the surveyed participants expected either to be promoted or to retain their post upon completion of training. Promotion was stated mainly by those who were deputies or studies coordinators whereas retaining their previous post was more for practising headteachers or directors.

On-going support and continuous professional development were mentioned by 42% of participants. These points included the MoE creating enabling conditions to make it easier for trained leaders to put into practice what they have learnt and in providing further refresher courses. Close monitoring and mentoring were also mentioned alongside regular contact with MoE officials to share with other graduates, their achievements and the limitations in putting into practice what was learned through training:

“To continuously support me in putting into practice what I have learnt in the programme and to work collaboratively with me to bring about positive change in my school” (Cohort 3).

“To better understand me and support my initiatives, and to value my ability as an empowered head” (Cohort 2).

“As a graduate group meet with Senior MoE officials to discuss and plan what areas learnt to put into practice and support expected or needed from MoE” (Cohort 3).

The 40% of participants who expected a salary increase linked this to incentives or recognition. This recognition was stated in terms of a certificate, award or letter of congratulation for successful completion of the Master’s programme from the MoE, since it was ‘hard work’. This was felt most strongly by secondary, post secondary and system-based participants as they failed to receive any increase in salary as their current basic salary was already above the entry point of basic salary for a master’s graduate.

A minority (13%) of participants expected a certain degree of autonomy to implement changes they see as appropriate for their institutions or section at system level:

“Recognition that I have been trained and give me the opportunity to use the knowledge gained in a more independent manner” (Cohort 2).

“To be provided with the scope and support to undertake the task of really bringing about change. MoE to be open to receive new initiatives, new changes, and it seems MoE is not prepared to receive trained leaders and the kind of change they are empowered to bring about at institution and system levels as it is hard to let go of the existing strong control” (Cohort 1).

“To be given the chance to be free enough, to have the autonomy to put into practice what I have learnt” (Cohort 3).

Other expectations of the MoE stated by participants are:

“To read the completed dissertation and to take into consideration the stated recommendations” (Cohort 3).

“Change brought about in schools is in line with the Ministry’s principles and goals of education” (Cohort 1).

“To empower middle leaders to be more pro-active and independent in their thinking and practice” (Cohort 3).

#### Awareness of the Ministry’s expectations

52% of the participants were clearly aware of the MoE expectations of them prior to enrolment on the programme. They stated that such expectations were made clear to them during the initial induction group meeting and a few also received direct communications by senior MoE officials on a one to one basis. Almost half (44%) were not aware of the MoE’s expectations and claimed that the so-called expectations stated in the group meeting were group expectations and were not easy for individuals to relate to. The remaining 4% of participants were not clear about expectations.

#### Expectations of the training programme

Most participants gave more than one expectation of the training programme and they were expressed in terms of:

- Empowerment in knowledge acquisition and skills development - 87%
- Academic standards and level of difficulty - 36%
- Status and building of self confidence - 11%
- Relevance to the Seychelles context - 9%

A majority (87%) of participants expected the training programme to empower them with the necessary knowledge of leadership in the context of education, and the skills to lead their institutions more effectively. They believed that the acquired knowledge and skills would enable them to empower others and improve on their performance as a leader through better decision making and research:

“Having been a headteacher for 7 years, everything was done by trial and error. So, through the leadership training programme I expected to gain the necessary knowledge and skills in leadership and management” (Cohort 2).

“The opportunity to gain knowledge, new skills to better lead the school and empower others, to do research, learn how to go about carrying out a research and get to know about researches which have been carried out elsewhere so as for me to improve on my leadership skills” (Cohort 3).

“To empower me to stand on my own two feet and take proper decisions, reflect more on decisions taken and to better make decisions” (Cohort 2).

More than a third (36%) of participants expected the training programme to be of a high academic standard with a level of difficulty of a post-graduate course. A few participants found the level to be higher than expected:

“The content level of the programme modules to be of the required high standard” (Cohort 1).

“To be a challenge and at the level of a post-graduate course” (Cohort 4).

“My expectation of the programme was not to be of that high level, in terms of academic standard, especially with the nature of the assignments” (Cohort 3).

Some participants (11%) expected the leadership training course to build on their self confidence and status since it is an internationally recognized programme:

“To not only empower me to be a better school leader but also to improve my status in the eye of the MoE, community and school staff” (Cohort 2).

“I expected it to empower me and build up my confidence in relation to headship roles” (Cohort 4).

Although in terms of course pedagogy, the participants were able to relate global issues to that of the local context, 9% of them expected it to be more geared towards the specificity of small islands developing states (SIDS):

“To take into account our specificity of a small island developing state, the context, education system, economic, limitations and remoteness” (Cohort 1).

“Actually, I thought it would be well versed with different school issues through very intensive lectures but some important issues like budget, discipline management, etc. were mentioned on lightly and not specific to the context of the Seychelles as a SIDS” (Cohort 4).

### Training experiences

The participants shared their experiences of the training programme in terms of the:

- Most valuable aspects of the course
- Least valuable aspects of the course
- Most valuable course topics
- Least valuable course topics.

In respect of all four areas of training experience, there were minimal differences in opinion among the four cohorts regardless of whether they studied abroad or locally.

### *Most valuable aspects of the course*

In terms of training experience, table 6.5 shows what the participants perceived as the most valuable aspects of the training programme.

Most valuable	%	Common reason given
Modules on leadership	42	Covered a wide aspect of educational leadership, provide the opportunity for constant reflection on one's practices.
International Experience Programme	33	Vast amount of resources and library facilities. Being able to see in practice some of the theories learnt.
Group discussion and sharing of experience	31	Objective and reflective, enhance professional growth, discussion very enriching and comparative.
Research aspect of the course	29	Collecting data is very enriching; the information gathered is beneficial for future recommendation.
Relationship/interactions with lecturers	29	Helped build my self esteem and confidence, warm & friendly atmosphere, treated us like professionals.
Independent study	18	The opportunity to work and study on my own, the ability to plan and organise my work.
Leadership Journal	16	Felt free to express how one felt, it was authentic and reflects the real me, helped me to discover and see myself grow professionally.
Level of thinking and critical analysis	13	The opportunity to read widely and to critique what has been written, the thinking and reflection in analysing issues in education.

*Table 6.5: Participants' most valuable aspects of the course*

Table 6.5 shows that more than 30% of participants mentioned the value of modules on leadership, international experience programme, and group discussion and sharing of experience. The research aspects, and interaction with lecturers, are considered as most valuable by 29% of the surveyed participants. This is because they valued the acquired knowledge on leadership; the practical aspect of theories learnt through the exchange, the objectivity of the group discussions, and the friendly and supportive attitude of the lecturers.

*Least valuable aspects of the course*

The least valuable aspects of the programme are listed in table 6.6:

Least valuable	%	Common reason given
Work load	29	Too demanding in terms of number, nature and quality of assignments, deadlines to meet, amount of reading and researching
Space, facilities and resources	24	Limited, lacking in higher education provision, lacking in terms of quality and reliability.
Access to literature document	18	Major constraint initially, unable to obtain due to so-called confidentiality issue.
None	18	Everything in the course was most appreciated.
Financial aspect	16	Cost related to printing, photocopying and the international experience programme expenses.
Individual attitudes	16	Competitiveness, not welcoming, reluctance to share resources and assist others in difficulty.
Contact with tutors	11	Lack of regular one to one contact.
Certain modules	11	Too global, too advanced and technical, lack specificity of small islands developing states and local relevance.
Local empirical evidence	09	Scarce, lacking in certain areas such as in finance and marketing.
Research study school	04	Too intensive, demanding mathematically in terms of prior knowledge and skills.

*Table 6.6: Participants' least valuable aspects of the course*

Table 6.6 shows ten aspects of the course that participants perceived as the least valuable. Workload is a least valuable aspect of the course mainly for participants of cohort 2 and 3 while the research study school was an issue for cohort 1. Space, facilities and resources (24%), access to literature documents (18%) and financial aspects (16%) are perceived as least valuable aspects by mainly cohort 2 and 3. This is because most of these aspects were major concerns initially, but improved gradually across cohort groups. Almost a fifth (18%) of surveyed participants, however, stated that none of the aspects of the programme were 'least valuable'.

#### *The most valuable course topics*

The most valuable course topics of the programme are displayed in table 6.7.

Most valuable topics	%	Common reason given
Leadership	38	The concept and differences between leadership and management, the different models of leadership needed to meet challenges, the changing role of head teachers.
Research	24	Empowered me with the means and ways to investigate teaching and learning in schools
Strategic and Development planning	22	What school leaders need to aspire in terms of forward planning and long term vision, how to plan, what to consider when planning for the future and on a longer term basis. The relevance to school improvement and development planning in schools.
High performance and teams	20	All aspects are very much applicable to the local context, staff appraisal, building effective teams.
Organisations and change	16	Putting theories learnt into the context of own country, the comparative aspects of it
Managing people	16	The roles and responsibilities of middle leaders, helped me to understand people's attitude better
Quality and effectiveness	13	Strong aspects of teaching and learning, several components I could explore in depth with certain aspects of the job I was performing
Marketing	11	Empowered me on how to sell my school, community involvement, understood how to market schools, motivate parents and strategies to get them involved.
Finance and budgeting	04	Can relate certain issues to the local context, familiar areas although could have given us scope of proper management of school budget.

*Table 6.7: Participants' most valuable course topics*

Table 6.7 shows that leadership is a popular topic for 38% of participants across the four cohort groups, as they could relate their experience to the different concepts and models learnt. Research (24%), strategic and development planning (22%), and high performance and teams (20%) are most valuable course topics in terms of relevance. Although strategic planning was very challenging for most participants, along with finance and budgeting (04%), very few participants found the latter relevant (see below).

*The least valuable course topics*

Table 6.8 shows the least valuable course topics.

Least valuable topics	%	Common reason given
Finance and budgeting	44	Lacks specificity and local empirical evidence.
Marketing	24	Concept somewhat new, lack of experience and local empirical data
Strategic planning	22	Concept somewhat new, more used to development planning, very challenging and demanding, complicated to understand terms used and concept.
Education Policy in a globalised world	04	Involved so many new terms, concepts and models which are difficult to understand initially, the way it was taught made it more complicated, the level was too macro with so much political aspects.
None	02	All course topics were valuable and relevant.

*Table 6.8: Participants' least valuable course topics*

The majority of participants (44%) mentioned finance and budgeting as the least valuable course topics due to lack of specificity of issues to small islands developing states (SIDS), the context of a highly centralised education system, and local empirical evidence. Marketing (24%) and strategic planning (22%) were topics that were new to the participants and which they found to be very challenging as they could not relate to some of the terms and concept taught due to lack of experience and local empirical evidence. A small number (4%) of cohort 1 participants found education policy to be most challenging and terms used to be somewhat abstract and complicated, hence could not relate to it and did not see the relevance initially.

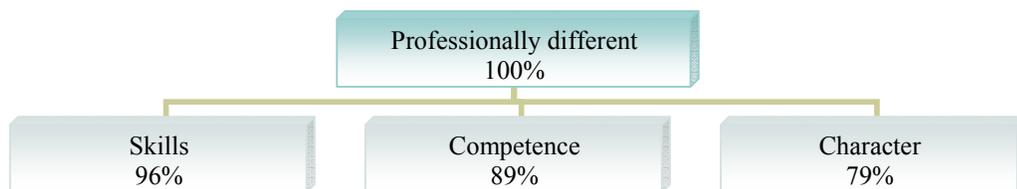
### **Professionalism and Leadership**

Following the participants' training experience, the researcher wanted to know whether they feel that they are different professionally, and are now better leaders. All participants stated that they are professionally different and that they are also better leaders. Since information gathered is based on leaders' self-reporting, what is

presented may be highly subjective and not necessarily supported by, or based on evidence.

### Professionally different

Terms used by participants to express their professional change are grouped under the three areas expected of professionals. Figure 6.3 shows the percentage of participants who stated ways in which they are professionally different after the training.



*Figure 6.3: Areas in which participants felt they are professionally different*

Figure 6.3 shows that all participants claimed that they are different professionally.

The majority mentioned more than one of the areas illustrated in figure 6.4:

“I am more knowledgeable, skilful and confident than before. I am more assertive and better at planning and organising things. I keep to my vision and establish the right working atmosphere at the school” (Cohort 2).

“I treat teachers as individuals rather than object. I am more humane in my approach and dealings with staff. I delegate duties and empower others to do task independently” (Cohort 1).

“I am more skilful and empowered with new knowledge, ideas to initiate new things and new strategies” (Cohort 4).

“It took me some time to see how I have grown professionally. I am competent in things that I do as a leader as I am now better at doing them due to previous experience and more skilful after training. I am more people oriented, more assertive and open to criticisms” (Cohort 3).

### Leadership

The intention here was to obtain information on whether the surveyed participants feel that they are better leaders after completion of training. All participants claimed that they are better leaders but this finding needs to be interpreted cautiously because it is based on self-reporting. Their reasons for these claims are shown below:

- Communication and understanding others – 51%
- Building trust and effective teams – 47%
- Delegation of duties – 36%
- Involvement of others in decision-making and school activities – 33%
- Vision building and planning – 27%
- Staff empowerment – 27%

Several participants stated more than one of the items listed above. Most (51%) claimed that they are better leaders in terms of their understanding of others and better communication with staff, parents and students:

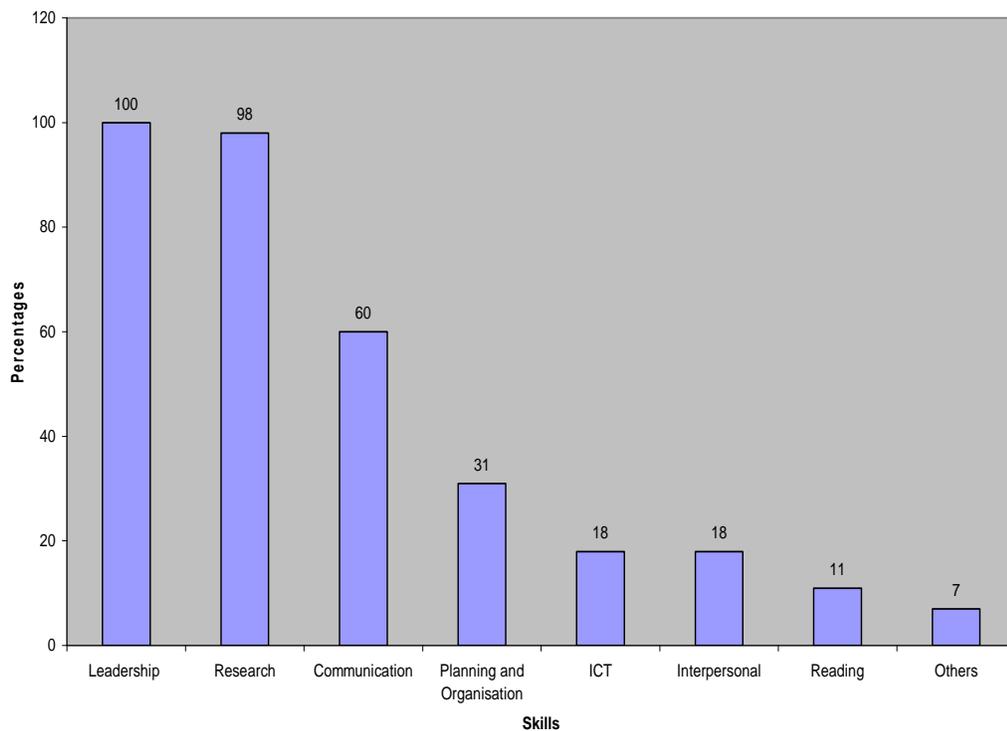
“I listen a bit more now and I feel I am more influential in getting people to work together towards a common vision, especially the management team to rally towards one common goal. I use the participatory leadership style to get people involved in decision-making and school activities” (Cohort 4).

“In the strategic leadership aspect, my future thinking and helicopter view of seeing things, in translating vision into strategies and getting others to do the same. Transformational leadership aspect to empower others and delegate” (Cohort 3).

“I feel I am a better leader, in terms of my communication and understanding of others. I can help my staff to develop further. I am approachable and others confide in me” (Cohort 2).

## Skills development

Participants were asked whether any skills development had taken place during the training. All participants stated that they have developed certain skills. Figure 6.4 shows the different skills that the participants claimed they have developed through leadership training.



*Figure 6.4: Participants' skills development*

Figure 6.4 shows that all participants claim to have developed skills while 98% mentioned research skills:

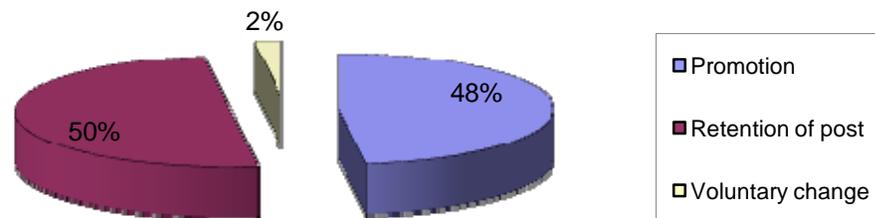
“I have developed skills mainly in leadership, research and ICT as well as reading and writing. I did not like reading and writing as I was never interested in it but now I cannot see any magazine or newspaper without wanting to and reading it” (Cohort 3).

“I have developed leadership, research, organisation and planning skills. Communication also as I am now more positively assertive in terms of valuing opinions” (Cohort 2).

Interpersonal skills (18%) are described in terms of participants’ ability to resolve conflict among staff, parents and students, and negotiate better in difficult situations. The other category includes tutoring and mentoring, unit writing and delivery.

### Identification for Post-Training Roles

The leadership training programme started off as an in-service programme, initially targeting practising senior leaders in educational institutions and the wider system. Following training, some participants were promoted to a more senior leadership post, while others retained their existing position. Figure 6.5 shows their destination after leadership training.



*Figure 6.5: Participants' destination after leadership training*

The 48% of participants who changed post after training believe that their identification for promotion was based mainly on the following criteria:

- Successful completion of the training programme.
- Deployment of other senior leaders to attend leadership training so there were vacancies to be filled
- Experience as a senior leader

- Leadership qualities displayed and commitment

A few participants did not complete the training successfully but were promoted on the basis that they would eventually graduate. One person (2%) requested a voluntary change in post from a senior to a middle leadership position for medical reasons.

### **Impact of Leadership Development on Leadership Practice**

This section is very important as it touches the heart of the investigation, examining changes in practices resulting from leadership training and development. This issue is examined using four themes:

- Major challenges
- Aspects of the training that were put into practice
- Observable changes that have taken place
- Specific strategies that have been employed and the outcomes.

#### Major challenges

Participants were asked to voice their major challenges as a leader after training (see table 6.9).

Major challenges	%
Putting into practice what has been learnt	56
Persuading others to see and do things differently / change of mindset	31
Sustaining good practices and maintaining standards	20
Expectations of others and accountability	18
Leading by example	05

*Table 6.9: Trained leaders' major challenges after training*

Table 6.9 shows that putting into practice what has been learnt was a major challenge for 56% of participants. They argue that this is because they operate in a highly centralized system of educational control with limited autonomy to fully implement what they see best for their school or section. They also mentioned limited support from the centre in enabling them to perform at their highest ability. Almost a third (31%) of participants found difficulty in selling their ideas to others and persuading others to think and see things differently. Expectations of parents, staff and MoE officials on them to bring about immediate positive changes, and to be accountable for them, was a big challenge for 18% of participants, while 20% found difficulty in sustaining good practices and maintaining standards due to constant staff shortages and deployment.

Aspects of the training that were put into practice

Most participants were able to put into practice two or more aspects of the training programme course content (See table 6.10).

Aspects of the training	%
Delegation of duties and involvement of staff in decision making - distributive leadership	56
Empowerment of staff in school-based training - transformational leadership	38
Monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom visits and records check - instructional leadership	24
Involvement of parents and students in school activities, decisions, through committees and bodies - participatory leadership	44
Market their school through sharing of experiences, knowledge, achievement and good practices; through networking, in meetings and open days; newsletter publication, and participation in forums.	16

*Table 6.10: Training aspects that were put into practice*

Table 6.10 presents five aspects of the training that the participants claimed they have been able to put into practice. Those aspects are examined in more detail in the section on ‘specific strategies employed and outcomes’. Other aspects mentioned are; sharing of knowledge and experience acquired through tutoring, module writing and facilitating sessions; conceptualizing and implementing small projects at MoE level involving school leaders.

Observable changes that have taken place

As a result of these modified practices, the participants claimed several observable changes that have taken place in their work place (see table 6.11). As data presented are based on self-reporting, there may be an element of subjectivity in these findings.

Main observable changes	%
More team planning and collaborative work at system and institution level, thus tasks get done	62
More staff, parents and students involvement in institution activities, sharing of information and decisions taken at system and institution levels	56
School leaders are more open to discussion, criticisms and assertive enough to question decisions taken at MoE level	36
Noticeable improvement in; school ethos, cleanliness of institution environment, noise level, attractiveness of compound and buildings	33
Improvement in teachers’ work out put, attendance and punctuality	31

*Table 6.11: The main observable changes that have taken place*

Table 6.11 presents five changes that the participants claim in their work place. Those changes are examined in the section on ‘specific strategies employed and outcomes’. Other observable changes mentioned are; fewer conflicts among staff, students and with parents; and improvement noticed in students’ performance in certain subject areas.

### Specific strategies employed and outcomes

The participants were asked to list all the strategies that they have been able to employ and their outcomes. Their responses are shown below:

- Climate and ethos - 75%
- Parental involvement - 67%
- Teaching and learning - 62%
- Leadership and management - 49 %
- Students' involvement - 40%
- Staff professional development and training - 22%

In terms of the outcomes of the specific strategies implemented, a distinction is made between intended and actual outcomes, as impact is measured and recorded in terms of the latter.

#### *Staff professional development and training (SPDT)*

The different specific strategies categorized under staff professional development and training, implemented by 22% of participants, are presented alongside their intended and actual outcomes in table 6.12.

The responses in table 6.12 are mainly from participants at system level in their capacity as support providers to schools, some of which were previously and recently working at institution level. Those strategies were initiated by system level participants. The activities mentioned were conducted at system level, and in schools, facilitated by support providers with the assistance of school leaders on certain occasion. However, about one third of trained leaders mentioned that they

provided staff professional development in their schools; their responses are also incorporated in table 6.12.

The system level participants claimed that the stated strategies have been implemented as a means of improving the quality of support to schools through empowerment of leaders at various levels so as to empower others in their respective schools. This was mainly for differentiated instruction and assessment, which were concepts somewhat new to the majority of leaders.

Strategies	Intended outcomes	Actual outcomes
Conduct training sessions on: - Exams item writing	All teachers to better administer examinations.	Better exam papers are made by teachers.
- P6*1 Transition	Target schools to maintain transition activities.	Although most schools are maintaining activities, S1*2 students' behaviour is still a concern in some schools.
- Differentiated instructions and assessment	All schools to empower their teachers and information to filter within schools with implementation.	Although SBT is taking place in schools it is not impacting in the classrooms.
- Monitoring Induction and Mentoring	All leaders to be involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning, inducting and mentoring of teachers. Proper monitoring of teaching and learning happening in schools.	There is great improvement in the monitoring of TL. In most school mentoring is taking place although without a proper programme.
- Accountability	A structure in place for headteachers' accountability.	Structure in place but not all HT are using it.
- Target setting and planning	For all headteachers (HT) to plan and set targets.	All have their targets and most have a planner.
- Classroom and behaviour management	Better teacher-student relationships, increase in teacher motivation and satisfaction.	Noticeable improvement in teacher-student relationships. Slow increase in teacher motivation and satisfaction.
Trained middle leaders on leadership issues.	To empower middle leaders to lead better.	Some schools are finding it difficult to implement what they have learnt.
Networking sessions & activities conducted	Sharing of good practices among schools and within schools to be maintained.	Good practices are being shared but with MoE initiating it.

\*<sup>1</sup> P6 represents primary year six, pupils in the last year of primary education.

\*<sup>2</sup> S1 represents secondary year one, students in the first year of secondary education.

*Table 6.12: SPDT strategies and their intended and actual outcomes*

Improvements in teaching and learning, in terms of students' outcomes, are not clearly spelt out in the intended outcomes. System level participants are of the opinion that they have an indirect role in influencing schools to implement strategies that will bring about improvement in students' performance. However, the actual outcomes claimed highlight noticeable improvements in the quality of examination papers produced, monitoring of teaching and learning, teacher-student relationships, and the sharing of good practices within and among schools.

#### *Leadership and management (LM)*

Specific strategies categorized under leadership and management, implemented by 49% of participants, are presented alongside their intended and actual outcomes in Table 6.13. The majority of strategies stated have been implemented by institution-based participants occupying a senior leadership post.

Strategies	Intended outcomes	Actual outcomes
Revised induction and mentoring procedures.	Induction procedures updated in school handbook. All new staff inducted and new ones mentored.	Although all staff are inducted, not all new ones are properly mentored.
Conduct performance review of staff on a termly basis. Use of management meetings for task sharing and team planning.	More staff being accountable for their duties and responsibilities. Tasks done even in the absence of others so as not to affect students' performance.	Experience staff readily gets tasks done, new ones are slow to keep up initially - need constant monitoring and mentoring.
Involvement of non-teaching staff in target setting for self appraisal.	Non-teaching staff to set their own target and to self evaluate their performance	Concerns are being discussed and non-teaching staff is better recognized and happier.
Involvement of staff in decision making and in identifying needs.	Members to speak freely criticise and bring forth suggestions. Team spirit strengthened.	Freedom of speech exists. Consultative decisions are taken and made.
Regular consultation and self evaluation of staff.	Improvement in quality of work.	Quality of work has improved greatly.
Production of an induction booklet.	To provide school information to new staff.	Booklet in use and appreciated by new staff.
Sessions on differentiated instruction and mentoring.	Teachers empowered on differentiation and mentoring.	Differentiation is being implemented and mentoring is taking place schools.
Draw up a policy for teaching and learning.	To bring out teachers' awareness of what is expected of them and work in line with the policy. All teachers to set their targets and that for students.	Policy in place and is being used to guide teaching and learning. All teachers have curricular targets for their classes.
Delegate duties to middle leaders.	Distributed leadership practice in the school.	In the absence of the head, any management member can take the lead.
Introduce action planning in clubs and committees.	All clubs and committees to have an action plan, better focus and priorities activities to implement.	Action planning is taking place at club and committee levels.
Work on an information booklet for parents.	For all parents to gain the right information about the functions of the school.	Book completed and impact yet to be seen.

*Table 6.13: LM strategies and their intended and actual outcomes*

A closer look at the stated strategies shows strong elements of distributed and participatory leadership, with a certain degree of transformational leadership being displayed. This is evident in trying to get everyone on board through staff involvement and participation in planning, decision-making, production of booklets, formulating policies, reviewing school procedures and delegation of duties.

The actual outcomes claimed include good level of communication and recognition of support staff, improvement in staff induction, leadership and shared decision. Since the majority of strategies displayed in table 6.13 were mentioned by several participants, the impact has been claimed in more than one school. Although the majority of participants claimed that they initiated such strategies, others acknowledged MoE interference in what schools want to implement, and the imposition of what the MoE wants schools to implement.

#### *Teaching and learning (TL)*

The different specific strategies categorized under teaching and learning, claimed by 62% of the participants, are presented alongside their intended and actual outcomes in table 6.14.

Strategies	Intended outcomes	Actual outcomes
Informal discussions on aspects of teaching and learning.	To promote subject leadership in departments. (Specialist areas).	There is no hierarchy in the department as any member can initiate a meeting.
Systematic revision of modules being taught and assessments given.	Re-teaching and re-testing to take place with students' needs in mind.	Most teachers are attempting re-teaching. All exam results are analysed but not all assessments.
Communicate reflective practices on the needs of learner performance.	Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.	Improvement noticed in some schools more than others
Sharing of experiences at class level. Conduct peer observation and peer teaching.	For teachers to learn from each other especially where weaknesses are identified, and to improve cooperation among them.	Good cooperation exists among teachers in sharing of knowledge and better team work observed in most cases. Pupils are more active and appreciative in lessons.
Adopt the investigative approach to evaluate students' performance.	Staff sensitised on the identified underlying causes of high performance in P1 and P2 yet not sustained in P3.	Main underlying causes identified in P1 and P2. Intervention strategies implemented in P1 and P2.
Use newly acquired techniques for the teaching of reading. Set up a specialized reading room for crèche to P2.	Improvement in students' ability to read. Young learners to develop the love for reading.	Teaching of reading is being practice but slow improvement observed in students.
Differentiated instruction	Students' individual needs being met.	In implementation stage, improvement is slow.
Observation of classes on a regular basis.	All middle leaders to observe and support their teachers on classroom management and meeting students' needs. Exercise books properly maintained by students and work mark and signed by teachers. Improvement in teacher punctuality.	Improvement observed in the maintenance of students' exercise books. Teachers' marking and signing of students work are more up to date. Teachers are more punctual to classes and more lessons start on time.
Team planning and team work.	More accountability to students' learning and better team spirit.	Not 100% but improvement is noticeable.
Obtain parents' signature and comments for home work given to students.	That all students do their home work, parents know the kind of home work given, better monitor and support their child. To develop independent learning in students.	Fewer students are not doing home work, there is forgery of parents signature since exercise book not signed is not accepted. Parents have shown appreciation for the kind of homework given.

Table 6.14: TL Strategies and their intended and actual outcomes

Among the various strategies stated in table 6.14, more emphasis is placed on the teacher than the students. It is the belief of school leaders that the pathway for students' improvement in performance is through their teachers. The responses in table 6.14 were obtained from senior leaders who are mainly involved in school curriculum issues.

Impact is shown through the 'actual outcomes' where participants claimed that there is a noticeable improvement in; examination analysis, teacher cooperation and team work, maintenance of exercise books and marking of students' work, teacher punctuality to classes and the monitoring of home-work. Impact on students' performance is perceived to be slow, and takes time.

#### *Climate and ethos (CE)*

The specific strategies that 75% of surveyed participants claimed they were able to implement under the category of climate and ethos, are presented alongside their intended and actual outcomes in table 6.15.

Strategies	Intended outcomes	Actual outcomes
Revisit school vision and mission.	A more realistic school vision and mission.	Amended vision and mission statements are more direct and realistic.
Maintain an open door policy for staff to discuss, initiate, take decisions and share good practices.	More staff involvement in activities. Increase in staff initiations and feeling of belonging.	Feeling of belonging exists and is felt. More staff sharing of their experience and good practices.
Use more community work as corrective measures for students' misbehaviour.	Students' suspension. To develop students' self belonging, learn and motivate them to do things for the school.	Less students' suspension and less vandalism observed. More students come forward to inform of misbehaviours and vandalism by peers.
Organised termly social activities for staff.	To show appreciation to staff and motivate them.	Attendance of staff is more in such activities.
Visible presence of senior leaders in the school all times.	Presence to be felt at all times, improvement in students' behaviour and reduce internal truancy.	Reduction in truancy at school level. Less deviant incidents from students.
Conduct regular meetings with students' level wise.	Sharing of information on student performance and behaviour so as for them to improve on both.	Students are better informed and more aware of school expectations.
Organise block supervision.	Better monitor students' movement during class hours to reduce internal truancy.	Internal truancy greatly reduced in schools.
Put up a suggestion box.	Confidential issues being brought to the attention of school management. Build trust. Staff, parents and students feel protected.	More confidential issues are being brought to the attention of school leaders. Students are more trusting.
Regular reward and praise by management.	Instill good behaviour in students and recognized students' effort.	On going, with more students receiving praises and written notes as rewards.
Promote Living Values Based School through development of values, attitudes and school mission. Paint murals on school walls depicting good moral values.	Staff and students showing more respect for self, others and school properties. Display living values in their everyday life. Increase staff and students participation in school activities. Lively school environment.	Noticeable improvement in students' behaviour. More greeting among staff and students. Reduction in vandalism. Students dress more appropriately. More posters, murals being produced by students and teachers in most schools.
Setting up of a school disciplinary committee.	To better monitor and curb misbehaviours.	School atmosphere is calm and conducive.

*Table 6.15: CE strategies and their intended and actual outcomes*

Several surveyed participants at system and institution levels mentioned one or more of the strategies stated in table 6.15. These strategies were implemented in an attempt to improve the climate and ethos of the section or institution in which they work. This is especially so in the areas of vision and mission, open door policy for staff discussion and sharing, sense of belonging and participation in activities. These are highlighted in the actual outcomes which participants claimed they have witnessed.

Other actual outcomes stated are; improvement in students behaviour and attitude, staff attitude and involvement, management awareness of school issues, and school environment and atmosphere in terms of liveliness and calmness.

#### *Students' involvement (SI)*

Specific strategies implemented by the surveyed participants categorized under leadership and management, are presented alongside their intended and actual outcomes in table 6.16.

Strategies	Intended outcomes	Actual outcomes
Revive environmental committee. Revive wildlife committee.	Create more opportunity for more students to be actively involved in school activities.	More students are involved in school activities.
Open door policy for students.	Build trust and bring them closer to school personnel to share issues of concerns.	More concerns raised by prefects are brought forth and are promptly dealt with by management.
Introduce prefect bodies and buddies. Empower them to be 'spoke persons'.	Active involvement of prefects in bringing forth class concerns and issues.	SMT is more aware of issues affecting students' learning.
Establish regular contact with prefects on an individual basis.	Involvement of students in school decisions and information sharing.	Students feel they belong and willingly bring forth concerns.
Sustain House system, with students as house leaders.	Develop leadership skills in students.	More students are displaying leadership qualities.
Set up students' living values committee.	Promote living values and act as role models.	More issues are tackled by students and brought to the attention of school management.
Set up a students' action team in the school.	Increase students' active involvement in school supervision during breaks.	More students actively involved in school activities.
Set up of student body and peer leaders.	Improvement in students' participation in activities. More involvement in general behaviour and attitudes.	Decrease in bullying cases, fights and vandalism.
Students' networking among schools and within schools.	More sense of belonging. More sharing of good practices among students. Empower students with skills to better support others.	Students empowered are given the opportunity to train and support others.
Introduce student representatives on school committees.	Involve students in decision making, develop leadership skills and feeling of belonging.	Several committees with students' representatives in the some schools. Issues raised are acted upon.

*Table 6.16: SI strategies and their intended and actual outcomes*

The strategies stated in table 6.16 are not all newly implemented by some participants, as they confirmed that, in some cases, existing students' committees and bodies already in place were either revived, re-organised and re-examined in a different light after their training. Others saw the need to have in place certain structures for students and devoted much effort to setting them up.

The actual outcomes claimed show more students involvement in after school activities, active participation of prefects and students bodies in information sharing and decision making, more interaction observed between management and students, reduction in cases of vandalism and misbehaviours, emergence of student leaders, and students' voices being heard in those schools where there is student representation on school committees.

#### *Parental involvement (PI)*

The different specific strategies implemented by the surveyed participants categorized under teaching and learning, are presented alongside their intended and actual outcomes in table 6.17.

Strategies	Intended outcomes	Actual outcomes
Conduct regular meetings with parents.	Regular sharing of students' performance and behaviour.	Increased turnout of parents in conferences, meetings and other activities.
Maintain an open door policy for parents.	Build trust and bring parents closer to school to share issues that concerns them. Maximum participation in decision-making / activities.	There is more dialogue between parents and schools. More involvement of parents in school life.
Conduct frequent conferencing with parents and students.	More collaboration between teachers and parents. Better support and understand causes for misbehaviour.	More teachers understand underlying causes for misbehaviour and work better with students.
Place parents in house system.	Maximum participation from parents and better monitor their involvement.	Better cooperation and support of parents in the implementation of school initiatives.
Conduct sessions with parents.	Involve more parents in school initiatives for better support.	Increase in parents' participation and better understanding between the two parties.
Set up and maintain a school fathers' committee.	More fathers encouraged to play a more active role in their child's learning.	Increased active participation of fathers in school life.
Presence of parent on School Improvement Team (SIT).	Participation and active involvement of parents in school development activities.	A parent member already on the SIT in few schools.
PTA in reading project for special needs.	More awareness of existing structures in school and to follow the proper channel.	Parents are involved with reading project
Sensitisation of parents on the roles of head of year. Involve parents in block supervision during PD.	More involvement of willing parents and to enhance work partnership and parental cooperation.	Most parents are aware and willing to see others for their concerns rather than senior management. Parents feel useful and much appreciated.

*Table 6.17: PI strategies and their intended and actual outcomes*

Getting parents to be more involved in school activities has not always been an easy task as the ones most needed usually do not turn up for meetings or conferences, according to the participants. Upon completion of training, however, some participants felt the need to strengthen the link with parents and the community as they have come to view parents as one of their partners in education.

Although some of the strategies implemented were not new to some participants, the conditions created and approach used to facilitate implementation were:

“Invite parents in the classroom to bring them closer to school and play an active role in the learning of their child and not feel left out. Initially turn out of parents visiting classes was good then closely phasing out ... need to be revive” (Cohort 1).

“To get all parents on board, a search is conducted for contact with parents who are more at a disadvantage and rarely come to school. Actually now, turn out of parents is good since most of them are now coming to visit” (Cohort 2).

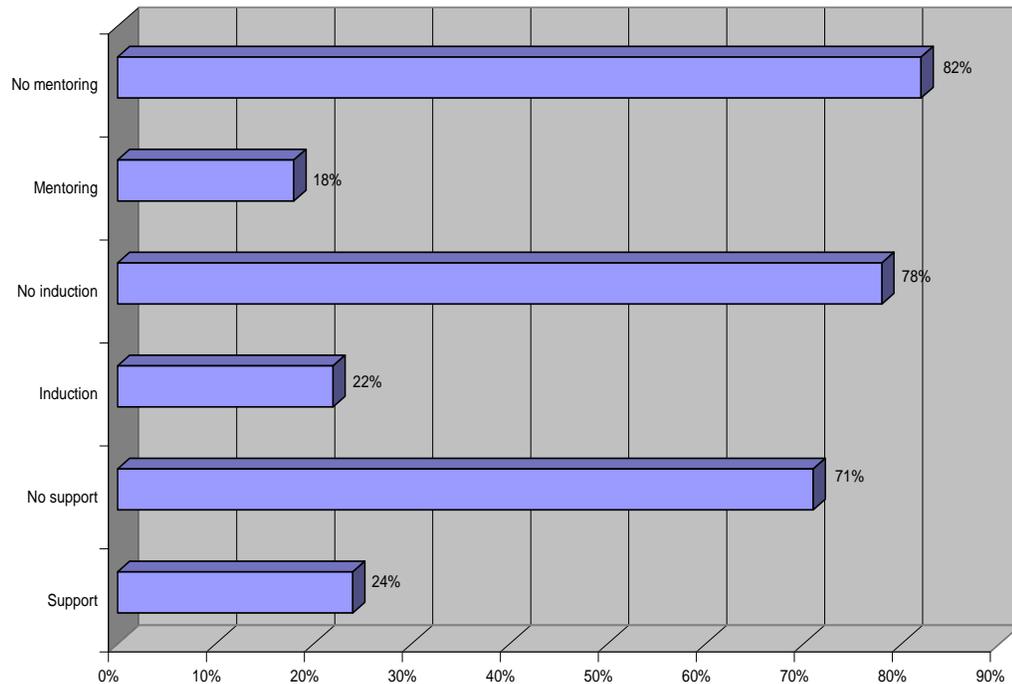
Impact, in terms of actual outcomes claimed in table 6.17, shows increased turnout of parents in school activities such as meetings, conferencing and open days; more dialogue taking place between parents and some school leaders, with supposedly better understanding of students underlying causes of misbehaviours, slightly better collaboration, and involvement of more fathers in school life.

### **Programme Completion and Leadership Effectiveness**

The participants were asked to comment on the support that was made available to them in order to facilitate smooth transition to their leadership post, the type of induction process they went through prior to deployment and whether they were mentored.

#### Provision for smooth transition

Figure 6.6 presents the surveyed participants' responses on this issue:



*Figure 6.6: Percentages of participants' responses to indicated provisions*

Figure 6.6 show that only 24% of participants stated that they received some kind of support. They mentioned regular visits by Education coordinators, and meetings with senior MoE officials, where they received advice and backing for their initiatives, staff listened to their concerns and offered advice accordingly. Almost three quarters (71%) of participants claimed that they received none, most of whom were those who retained their post and remained in the same workplace after training.

#### Induction and mentoring

Among the 22% indicated in figure 6.6, who acknowledged being inducted prior to deployment, only 7% stated that they actually followed an induction programme;

others were partly and informally inducted. Among the 18% who stated that they were mentored, only 4% acknowledged that they followed a programme. The majority of participants (78%) claimed that they were not inducted and 82% that they were not mentored. This highlights an area of weakness in the education system, with no proper induction and mentoring programmes in place, and lack of appropriate support for enhancing the effectiveness of senior school leaders.

### **Ongoing Support and Professional Development**

The researcher wanted to establish whether the participants have knowledge of any structures and processes at Ministry level for the ongoing support and continuous professional development of graduate leaders.

#### Ongoing support

Few participants acknowledged the existence of structures at MoE level that provide ongoing support. Only 20% of participants mentioned that Education coordinators and section directors regularly visit them and conduct training and networking sessions. However, these are not considered as supportive structures by a majority (80%) of the participants, who claimed that there is no established support structure at MoE level, and that those visits and sessions are mainly strategies employed by MoE to show that ongoing support is being provided to leaders at institution level, even if this is not really true. This was mainly reported by leaders of primary and secondary schools but was also a concern for some post secondary institutions.

Other forms of support mentioned were the zone 3 decentralization pilot project which, if officially approved, will become a support structure; consultative meeting with immediate supervisor, staff and colleagues, donations from parents, parish priest, district administrator and parents-teachers-associations (PTAs).

### Professional development

Organised training and networking do not necessarily develop them professionally - as for trained leaders these sessions are mainly repetitions of things already learnt. However, the majority believes that several strategies are employed by the MoE to develop them, although more trained leaders could have been involved. The following were mentioned:

- Create opportunities to participate and present research findings in workshops forums and conferences where your expertise is exploited, shared, valued and in some way consolidated. At national level – 40% International level – 11%
- Involvement in committees and working groups at MoE level to conceptualise projects, write policy guidelines, handbooks and evaluate projects – 29%
- Participate in projects and pilot research projects at MoE and school level – 24%
- Exchange, study visits and short training courses internationally – 24%
- Tutor leaders enrolled in the training programme and facilitate training sessions for leaders – 20%
- Network and linkage with other organisations locally and abroad - 13%
- Research studies at post graduate level – 4%

Although several strategies are mentioned above, some participants have been involved in more than two activities, whereas others have experienced none. More than a quarter (29%) of surveyed participants stated that they have not undertaken, or been involved in, any kind of professional development activities after leadership training.

### **Summary**

This chapter describes aspects of leadership development in the Seychelles, based on the participants' responses. Important issues have been highlighted in regards to recruitment and selection of leaders for training, which illustrate the absence of clear guidelines for selection procedures and the absence of an official list of criteria for identifying leaders for training and subsequent appointment. The expectations of the MoE, and the participants while in training and after completion, and post-training appointment, reveals some miscommunication between participants and senior MoE officials of what they were expected to do upon enrolment and after completion of training.

Much emphasis was placed on participants' experience of training, aspects of training implemented, strategies employed and actual outcomes. Although the information presented on those issues is self-reporting, it nevertheless provides quantitative and qualitative data on the nature of the participants' experience in relation to the training obtained, changes in leadership practices and the impact of strategies implemented. The majority of participants feel that they have had an enriching experience on the training programme. Most leaders claimed they have

tried to practice and implement the strategies, resulting in improvement in several areas, including school-based training for professional development, mainly by system participants, parental and students' involvement, and curriculum implementation by institution leaders.

In terms of leadership effectiveness after completion of training, and provision for ongoing support and continuous professional development, the survey has highlighted several weaknesses; including lack of a comprehensive national programme for induction and mentoring of leaders, for continuous professional development and on-going support.

The next chapter provides an in-depth view of change in leadership practices and outcomes, including 'before and after perspectives', based on a single case study.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **ST. CATHERINE CASE STUDY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reports the findings of a case study of one school, and the practices of its senior leader. The purpose of this study is to give depth to the overall study of leadership development in the Seychelles. This case study provides a perspective on one senior leader's practices and the impact such practices have had on the overall performance of the institution.

The institution has been sampled purposively, based on the following criteria:

- The senior leader has been through the leadership training programme and is an MBA or MA graduate
- The headteacher has been in the school before and after leadership training in the capacity of the senior leader
- The headteacher has been back in the school following training, for more than three years
- In the author's survey, the senior leader claimed several innovative strategies that have been implemented at institution level.

To obtain in-depth information, the researcher spent one week at the case study school. During this field work period, the researcher carried out the following activities:

- Interviews of role sets:
  1. School management team (SMT) - 2 members.
  2. Teachers - 3
  3. Parents including the Parents-Teachers-Association (PTA) chairperson- 3

- Shadowing of the headteacher and observation of activities
- Analysis of documents, including minutes of meetings, school improvement plans, evaluation reports, management and teachers' records.
- Interview with the headteacher

The SMT and teacher interviewees were purposively sampled based on the criterion that they must have been a full time teacher and/or leader in the school before and after the senior leader's training. In the case of parents, they must have had children in the school before and after the senior leader's training. The data gathered from all these sources have been compiled to produce the case study report.

## **Background**

St. Catherine School was officially opened in 1927. Its infrastructure is old but well maintained. It is a primary school that caters for children aged 3½ to 12 years. It is considered a small school in term of the population of its learners and staff. The school is situated close to the main road, a police station, a health centre, a church and the sea. As part of the school's main administrative building, there is a specialized room occupied by qualified dental nurses from the local health authority, offering school dental services to all learners. The senior leader of the school pursued leadership training after being the headteacher for three years. Following successful completion, s/he was deployed to the same school, and is still occupying the same post. At the time of the case study enquiry, the headteacher had four years experience as a trained leader.

### Population and statistics

The institution currently has 40 staff of whom four are males and 36 are females. There are 32 teaching staff, including the senior leader, and eight non-teaching staff. Most of the teaching staff (29) are women with only three men. The school has 226 learners, of whom 109 are girls and 117 boys. The teacher to learner ratio is approximately 1:8 as the special needs coordinator, the cycle one (crèche to year two) coordinator, subject coordinators and the headteacher are not permanent classroom teachers and thus do not appear on the school master timetable. However, when the need arises, they assist with teaching.

There are 12 classes and four specialist rooms; a library, a computer room and two technology and enterprise rooms. There are also two administrative offices (the head teacher's and the administrative officer's), a room for all subject coordinators, including the special needs coordinator, a staffroom, a dining room, a tuck shop and several wash rooms with toilets.

### Mission and vision

The mission of St. Catherine School is “to promote professionalism where everyone is concerned with teaching and learning. In order to achieve this, the school will promote collaborative work with parents and community, support and guidance to all concern” (School Development Plans 2006 – 2008, p.2). The vision is “to work as a team in a good atmosphere thus becoming a welcoming school where everyone aims for the best” (ibid). St. Catherine school will be a school where:

- Parents work collaboratively with the school
- Pupils, staff and the community support each other
- Parents are involved in their children's learning
- Learners demonstrate a sense of responsibility and respect
- Learners of all ability groups are catered for
- Teachers, parents and pupils have a sense of belonging to the school.

The sections that follow present the findings of activities from the field work at St. Catherine's school. They are presented in the following order:

- Interviews of role sets
- Observation through shadowing
- Documentary analysis

### **Interviews of Role Sets**

This section reports on interviews conducted with participants of the three different role sets; teachers, parents and management members, and that of the headteacher.

The rationale for the conduct of interviews was to:

- Obtain the perception of participants on the senior leader's practices before and after leadership training.
- Present 'before and after' perspectives of the main outcomes (impact) in terms of observable changes that have taken place in the school related to changes in the practices of the senior leader.
- Triangulate participants' responses with that of the senior leader's survey interview response (incorporated in chapter 6) specifically to claims made in relation to; being a better leader and professionally different, changes in leadership practices, strategies implemented, and impact in terms of school outcomes.

The findings obtained are presented and analysed using a thematic approach. The participants' responses from all three role sets are summarised and presented in a generalised manner as per role set responses. Where opinions among role sets differ greatly, the particular role set response is presented through direct quotes. In such

quotes, teachers are represented with the letter T, parents with the letter P and management with the letter M.

### Demographic data

In terms of gender, 89% of participants from the three role sets are female and only 11% are male (representing only 1 male). All the interviewed teachers and managers are female. Table 7.1 gives detailed information about the participants' demographic data from all three role sets.

Demographic data	Role Sets		
	Teachers	Parents	Management
Gender	(3) female	(2) female (1) male	(3) female
Qualification	(2) Diploma (1) Certificate	--	(2) Diploma (1) MA
Classes taught	(1) year 2,3 & 4 (1) year 4,5 & 6 (1) year 3,4,5 & 6	--	(3) year 5 & 6
Classes currently teaching	(1) year 3 (1) year 4 (1) year 5 & 6	--	(2) year 5 & 6 (1) any level
Range of years in service	13 - 41	--	08 - 26
Range of years spent at the school	13 - 31	--	08 - 16
Total No. of children:	--	06	--
• Past learners		03	
• Current learners		03	
Learners' year level	--	Year 6	--
Parental / School affiliation and responsibility	--	PTA chairperson Ex-PTA member Ex-school labourer	Subject Coordinators and Senior leader
Acquaintance with senior leader (as HT)	(3) 8½ yrs	(2) 8½ yrs (1) 5 yrs	(3) 8½ yrs

*Table 7.1: Participants demographic data*

The data presented in table 7.1 indicate that all instructional staff interviewed are qualified and highly experienced, teaching different year levels and having responsibility for various school related issues. Participants from the parents' role set are familiar with the school staff, environment and school structure, as their children are both past and current learners. The majority of respondents from all three role sets have known the headteacher of St. Catherine's school since she was appointed to this post eight years ago.

#### Perceptions of the senior leader's practices and observable changes

The participants from all three role sets were asked to comment on how they perceive the senior leader's practices before and after completion of leadership training. Their responses are presented under the following themes:

- Personal contact and interaction
- Support and communication
- Leadership and professionalism
- Relationships with staff, learners and parents
- Involvement of staff, learners and parents
- Others

#### *Personal contact and interaction*

Table 7.2 shows the role sets participants' responses in regards to personal contact, meaning the opportunity to meet on a one to one basis, and interact with the senior leader.

Personal contact	Before leadership training	After leadership training
Parents' role set	Quite often when the need arise (1). Not very often only when the need arises (2)	Much more often and when the need arises
Teachers' role set	Rarely and mainly for appraisal and conferencing on classes observed which was very minimal	Apart from appraisal and conferencing on lessons observed, there is more frequent contact at any given time to discuss pedagogical or personal issues
Management role set	Only for appraisal and not so often, mainly for appraisal and whenever the need arises to discuss a personal or professional problem or concern, was mainly office based	More often and more or less in groups apart from appraisal, conferencing after lesson observations' and team planning, to discuss a personal or professional problem, pupils' issues and to give feedback from parent's consultation
Interaction		
Parents' role set	Less frequent	More frequent
Teachers' role set	Interacts quite well although less frequent as staff were less at ease and reluctant to approach her	Interacts more, is more approachable, laughs, jokes more and visits classes often
Management role set	Interacts well, although with some staff, organised social activities although staff was reluctant to participate	More professional, friendly and better interaction with all staff as they feel at ease

*Table 7.2: Personal contact and interaction before and after leadership training*

Table 7.2 shows that, before the senior leader's leadership training, there were limited personal contacts on a one to one basis with parents, teachers and management staff, and interaction was less frequent with parents and teachers, as compared to after training. Participants' responses show that such personal contacts increased with more interaction to discuss issues other than appraisal and lesson observation, as there were observable changes in the approach used that facilitated more interaction and personal contacts. The senior leader stated that:

“Before I interacted well with some staff only, organised social activities and I being the centre of everything ... after training I became more professional and friendly hence increased interaction with all staff” (M3).

*Support and communication*

Table 7.3 shows the role sets participants' responses in regards to personal support received and communication with the senior leader.

Support	Before leadership training	After leadership training
Parents' role set	Conferencing, counselling financial and social	Same as before and more assistance given with child welfare / health wise and education
Teachers' role set	Assistance and some willingness to view schemes and give feedback, advice and tips for improvement although not much	More support, provide feedback on classes observed in conferencing, suggests strategies for improvement, mentor, provide resources and maintain an open door policy for individual personal and professional support and assistance
Management role set	Emotional, professional and personal with resources, visit classes and gives feedback and assistance with pupils' cases, conferencing and misbehaviours (2) Mainly professional and personal with advice, resources, and checking of schemes (1)	Same and more frequent with resources, assistance with classroom management; in addition give advice on strategies to improve teaching and manage classes, reminding and oversee SC's work; check records, schemes, and work plan, mentoring and team planning, counselling of individual and pastoral issues (2) Same as before but more frequent both emotional and pedagogical support, conduct lesson observation often, conferencing and on one to one basis consultation (1)
Communication		
Parents' role set	Communicates well and listens	Communicates more and better, is more open, approachable, friendly and listen more
Teachers' role set	Less receptive and not so open with others (1) Less diplomatic in both the approach and words used (2)	More open and considerate. Gives word of encouragement in conferencing and relieves work pressure (2) Speaking is more polished, nicely and more diplomatic with a more friendly approach (1)
Management role set	Few conflicts, abrupt and authoritative, would not negotiate as only her decision stands (1) Abrupt, not receptive and can easily put someone off, not approachable to the majority of staff, authoritative and controls everything (2)	Seeks advice and others' opinions, listen more to staff, more open to suggestions, receptive and approachable (1) Good communication skills, body language and facial expression portrays a caring and positive attitude and encourages one to voice out opinion in conferencing and meetings, receptive to advice and accepts criticisms (2)

*Table 7.3: Support provision and communication before and after leadership training*

Table 7.3 shows that there have been slight changes in the nature of support provided to parents. In addition to counselling and conferences, emphasis has been placed on healthy eating. According to a parent:

“Much support in ensuring that children develop a healthy eating habit, whereby the tuck shop is monitored, children lunch boxes are checked, and the school provides for those without snacks or lunch. There is much communication with parents in regards to the quality of snacks or lunch that learners take to school” (P2).

Although all parents interviewed stated that the senior leaders communicated well and listened to them, they acknowledged that there has been observable improvement in the approach used, openness and friendliness after training.

Following training, the teachers interviewed felt that there has been much improvement in the support provided in terms of feedback on instructional practices, provision of resources and mentoring. The support is much more appreciated as there has been great improvement in communication between the senior leader and teachers, as illustrated in table 7.3.

Like the teachers, respondents from the management role set mentioned changes in the way support was provided and the nature of the support. They claim that the senior leader’s communication has changed tremendously, as illustrated below:

“Before she was authoritative and domineering, not easy to change her mind ... after big difference in approach in addressing staff, more friendly and open, more receptive to advice and accept others opinion” (T2).

“It is as if a new person has emerged from the leadership training” (M1).

The views expressed above echo those of the senior leader who stated that:

“There was not much communication with staff as I tended to do everything by myself. There were conflicts and confrontations among management and staff, as I was somehow authoritarian in getting things done” (M3).

Following leadership training:

“I came to realize the purpose of good communication as through the training I acquired the knowledge and skills to influence others positively in order to get things done. I became more humanistic in my approach, value others contribution, lead by example and more reflective in my thinking. I also listen more and I am more receptive to criticism and advice” (M3).

#### *Leadership and professionalism*

The role set participants' gave their perceptions of the senior leader's practices as a leader, and as a professional, before and after training. Their responses are presented in table 7.4 under the following elements of leadership and professionalism; skills display, competence, knowledge and character.

Skills	Before leadership training	After leadership training
Parents' role set	Counselling and conferencing	Communication, counselling and conferencing much improved
Teachers' role set	Planning and organisation but less apparent.	Planning, organisation, conferencing and leadership.
Management role set	Organisation, planning and communication - with less tact and authoritative	Leadership, management, communication, organizing, planning, marketing and research
<b>Competence</b>		
Parents' role set	Getting parents involved in school activities	Informing and involving parents in school decisions and activities
Teachers' role set	Planning and organizing activities	Leading and managing staff, effective communication, building trust and team spirit.
Management role set	Writing of reports and mobilizing staff in organised activities	Delegate of duties, involvement of staff in teaching and learning, record keeping and staff empowerment
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Parents' role set	Portrays sound knowledge of the school programme	Same and more knowledgeable in areas of parental involvement
Teachers' role set	Knowledgeable in subjects being taught but less focused	More knowledgeable and focused in all subject areas, counselling, mentoring and leadership.
Management role set	Knowledgeable in subject areas but less so in issues of leadership and management	More knowledgeable in all aspect of the school curriculum, leadership and management
<b>Character</b>		
Parents' role set	Active and motivated	Same as before and more friendly
Teachers' role set	Active and convincing	Convincing and mobilizing staff
Management role set	Active, motivating and convincing	Active, motivating, mobilizing, convincing others and influential

*Table 7.4: Participants' perception of leadership practices and professionalism*

Although there is only limited evidence of progression in some of the categories stated in table 7.4, teachers and management participants recognized changes that have taken place mainly in regards to their senior leader's skills and competence. This serves to illustrate that, following training, the senior leader is different professionally and a better leader. In support of this claim, three participants stated:

“Before, although quite good in planning and organization, the skills were less apparent, after training, however, showed good planning, organisation and leadership skills whereby she will praise good work and offer advice where in doubts” (T1).

“Before authoritative and assertiveness, not much involved in PD and SIP. Afterwards very good communication, positively assertive, share responsibilities and much involved in PD and SIP” (M1).

“There was lack of professionalism in the way things were being done and organised, not involved in SIP planning before training, after which she became more professional in approach, better organised, communicates better and takes leading role in SIP” (M2).

The parents commented on differences in the senior leader’s skills in communication, counselling and conferencing, recognized personal knowledge in curriculum matters, and, through more involvement in school decisions and activities after training, noticed that the senior leader has remained active and motivated.

#### *Relationships with staff, learners and parents*

The intention here was to obtain information on the participants’ perceptions of the relationships that existed between the senior leader and school staff, learners and parents, before and after training, to ascertain whether there has been an improvement. Their responses are presented in table 7.5.

Staff	Before leadership training	After leadership training
Parents' role set	Quiet close to staff and maintained a good rapport with most staff.	Same as before but more friendly and understanding, monitors compound and staff well.
Teachers' role set	Although less visible on school ground, and tone of voice more strict, maintained a good rapport with most staff	Maintains very good rapport with all staff. Build team spirit and brings staff closer together. Is more visible, open, understanding, gentle and encouraging.
Management role set	Good relationship with some staff. Most staff did not feel at ease and not involved in decision making	Very good rapport with all staff, maintains an open door policy for staff, is more open, friendly and seeks others' opinions
<b>Learners</b>		
Parents' role set	Serious and firm, quite diplomatic in approach and maintained a good rapport	Even better rapport, communicates more with them, good news notes are given to pupils to take home and monitors them well.
Teachers' role set	Although authoritative in approach, maintained a good rapport	More open and interacts well with them. Frequent visit to classes and learners are free to communicate their concerns with her. More approachable, more trusting and learners do not hesitate to speak out.
Management role set	Maintained a close relationship with them although not much interaction as more time was spent in the office	Monitors their progress better and keep close contact with them through an open door policy. Interacts more, builds trust, and learners feel more at ease as they are free to come to her at any time.
<b>Parents</b>		
Parents' role set	Although friendly, ready to listen and approachable, not much so to the majority of parents as there were negative criticisms from parents about school's lack of support for them	More communication, good understanding and shares more information with parents through school notes and phone calls, seeks parents' opinion and approval before implementing new strategies.
Teachers' role set	Communicates well to some parents only. To others more severe and not very approachable	Communicates even better and acts as mediator between parent and staff for issues of concerns. Parents willingly come to seek help as they now feel more welcome
Management role set	Less parental involvement and interaction	Very supportive, maintains an open door policy for parents, interacts well and involved them more in school activities, seek their approval and opinion in regards to decisions

*Table 7.5: Senior leader's relationships with staff, learners and parents*

Table 7.5 shows that there have been significant changes in the relationships that existed between the senior leader and other stakeholders, following training. Participants from all role sets offered similar responses, which shows that they all recognized progressive change in the attitudes and practices of the senior leader since she completed leadership training. These changes relate to; presence, communication, interaction, monitoring and involvement of others.

*Involvement of staff, learners and parents*

This is an area where the senior leader claimed changes in her practice, to maximize the involvement of others. The intention here is to ascertain the validity of this claim. The participants from all three role sets were asked to comment on their involvement in decision making and activities for staff, learners and parents organised by the school, adopting a 'before and after' perspective. Their responses are presented in table 7.6.

Decision making	Before	After
Parents' role set	Not at all	Well informed and consulted on mostly all school matters
Teachers' role set	Not much say and involvement	Well informed of school issues and have an input in decisions concerning staff and school in general
Management role set	Not much say and involvement	Much more involved in mostly all decisions taken with lots of consultation
<b>Staff activities</b>		
Parents' role set	Not much involved	More so in relation to teaching and learning, and teachers' day
Teachers' role set	Much involved but more in social activities	Very much involved and very good staff turn out in activities more geared towards staff professional development for teaching and learning mainly, not much social activities
Management role set	Less involvement with only willing ones involved	More involved than before in all aspect from the planning and organisation stages to implementation
<b>Parental activities</b>		
Parents' role set	PTA activities and any organised school activities	Same as before with more involvement in pedagogical activities
Teachers' role set	Involvement mainly in social activities	Much more involved but mainly in pedagogical activities such as parents' classroom observation, open days and subject sessions once a term
Management role set	Less involvement and mainly in social activities	Much involvement in Fathers' Day, parents' classroom observation, meetings and subject sessions at cycle level. Limited social activities
<b>Learners' activities</b>		
Parents' role set	Limited involvement	Much involved, mainly in fundraising activities and children's day
Teachers' role set	Much involvement	Much more involvement in mainly pedagogical activities such as 'reading partner', 'promotional reading', outdoor and library week activities, and ECA
Management role set	Limited involvement	More involvement, Mathematics committee involves pupils, shares ideas and promotional reading

*Table 7.6: Involvement of others in decision making and school activities*

Table 7.6 shows certain similarities in the responses of participants regardless of their role set, in regards to their involvement in decision making and school activities. The changes that have taken place in terms of organised activities, and involvement of others in school's decisions, after the senior leader's training, appear to be remarkable.

In relation to decision making, a participant stated:

“I am very much and fully involved compared to before, in mostly all decisions taken, except in terms of budgeting school issues” (M2).

The statement and responses in table 7.6 are supported by the senior leader who acknowledged that:

“There was not much involvement of others in decision making before as I had the tendency to take full control...now staff and parents are much more involved with lots of consultation and forums for discussions, as through leadership training I have come to value others' opinions, views and contribution” (M3).

In connection with the involvement of stakeholders, participants stated:

“Now there are less social activities due to more emphasis being placed on teaching and learning” (T3).

“Even more so as I have been involved in fathers' day activity, grass cutting for school beautification activity, parents meetings and open days, whereby there has been increased turn out of parents” (P1).

In terms of whether the organised school activities for parents are adequate, the participants were unanimous in stating that this is satisfactory only in respect of pedagogical activities. They expressed that social activities to bring staff and parents closer together are still lacking.

### *Other practices*

Based on personal observation and interaction with the senior leader, the participants commented on practices that were evident before, but not after, training and those that were not evident before, but are now apparent.

As parental involvement in school decisions and activities increased after the senior leader completed training, parents were reluctant to comment on the contrast of specific practices for fear of being unfair in their judgment. Responses of participants from the teachers and management role sets are presented in figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 shows commonalities in the responses of participants of the two role sets. Participants from the management role set were more able to comment on the evident practices before training as compared to afterwards since the majority of them were part of the management team then. Involvement of others in decision making and activities, leadership knowledge, skills and attitudes, and whole school focus on teaching and learning, are the most apparent perceived changes that took place after leadership training.

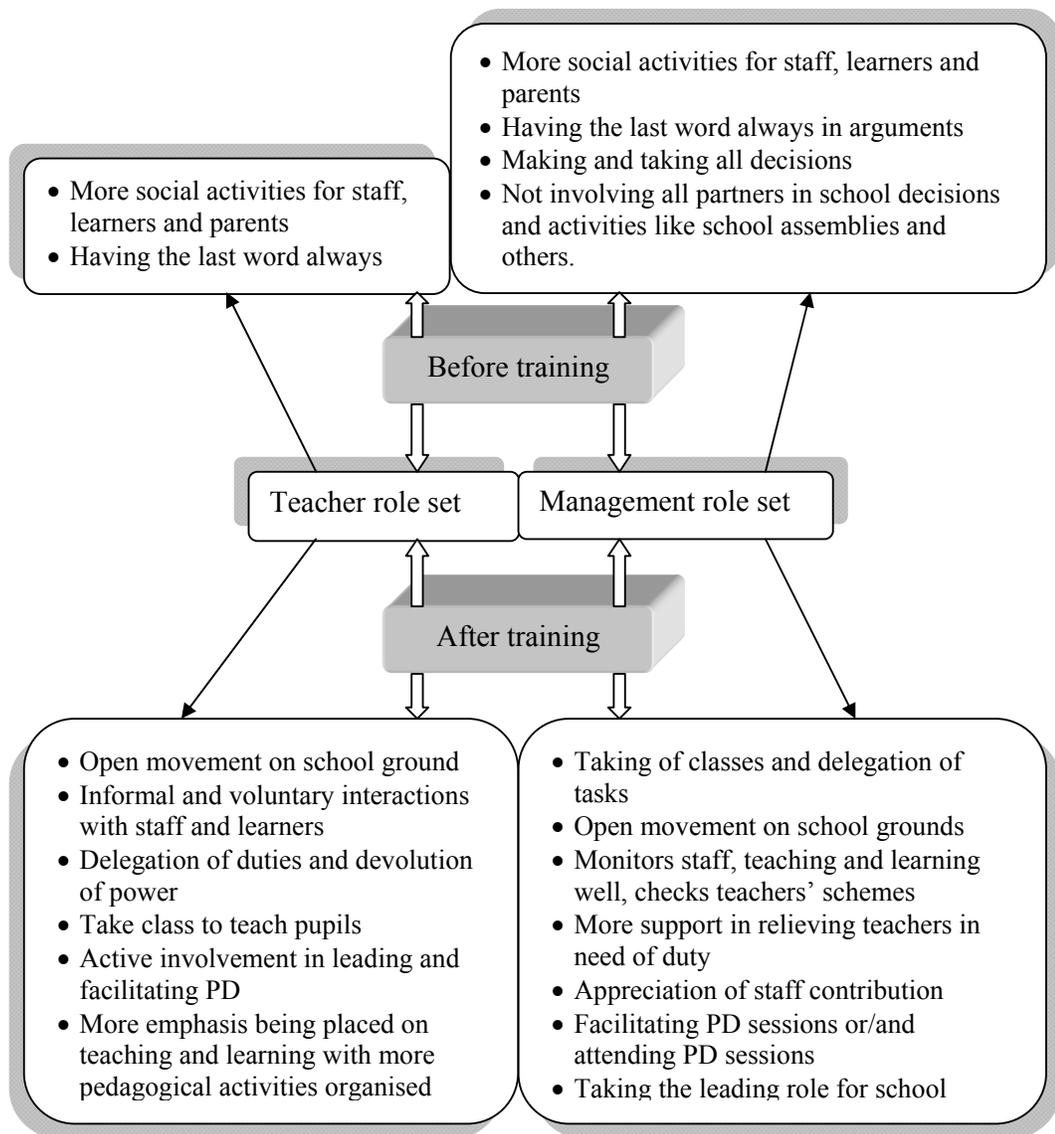


Figure 7.1: Comparison of the senior leaders' practices before and after training

Major changes and their impact on school outcomes

Although the previous section has presented findings on changes in practices, and participants' perceptions of these changes, the intention of this section is to assess the impact of specific major changes that have taken place after training, which

participants from the three role sets attributed to the senior leader’s leadership training. The purpose of this is to establish consistency among participants’ perceptions of reported issues related to changes in practices and outcomes linked to the current school mission and vision. The participants’ responses are presented under the following categories of school improvement:

- School ethos and climate
- Leadership and management
- Teaching and learning
- Parental involvement

The areas whereby participants did not feel able to comment are indicated in the tables by a double dash (--).

*School ethos and climate*

Table 7.7 shows participants’ responses about the impact of the changes in leadership practices related to school ethos and climate.

Actual outcomes / Impact	(P)	(T)	(M)
School atmosphere is more conducive to teaching and learning, quiet and friendly	3	3	3
Cleanliness, beautification and tidiness of classrooms	--	2	--
Strong team work and good team spirit	--	3	3
Good and frequent communication with all partners	3	3	3
More and frequent sharing of information to partners	3	3	3
Good collaboration and understanding among all partners	3	3	3
No confrontation or conflicts among learners, staff, management and parents	2	2	2
Increase in participation of learners in activities at national level (extra and co-curricular)	2	2	2
Improvement in pupils’ behaviour with hardly any recorded cases of vandalism, bullying and fights	3	3	3

*Table 7.7: Participants’ responses to the impact on school ethos and climate*

Table 7.7 shows alignment with the school vision, with all participants being unanimous in their responses in regards to improvements in communication, information sharing, collaboration and understanding among all partners, pupils' behaviour, team spirit and team work, all resulting in a school atmosphere which is more conducive for teaching and learning to take place. However, there were differences in participants' opinion in the areas of; confrontation and conflicts among learners, staff, management and parents; classroom maintenance, and learners' participation in activities at national level. The senior leader said that some of the strategies have been acquired through the master's module on 'managing people', and self discovery through the process of critical and personal reflection that was part of the requirement to keep a 'professional growth journal'.

#### *Leadership and management*

Table 7.8 shows participants' responses on the impact of the changes in leadership practices related to issues of leadership and management.

Actual outcomes / Impact	(P)	(T)	(M)
Whole school awareness and support of school vision	2	2	3
More professional development sessions organised in line with school needs	--	2	2
Increase in teachers' personal need and urge to upgrade themselves for professional growth	--	2	2
More support given to teachers for improvement through team planning and mentoring	--	3	3
Appreciation of staff effort, more good and positive feedback given rather than negative	--	3	3
More involvement of staff in decision making and school activities	--	3	3
Improvement in the monitoring of teaching and learning by management through lessons' observation	2	3	3

*Table 7.8: Participants' responses to the impact on leadership and management*

Table 7.8 shows that there is strong agreement among participants about the impact in areas of professional development meeting school needs, teachers’ personal professional development, whole school support to school vision, teacher support through mentoring and team planning, involvement of staff in decisions taken, and appreciation of staff effort. According to the senior leader, it was the modules on ‘high performance and teams’, and ‘leadership concepts and models’, in leadership training that empowered her to strengthen teaching and learning, and emphasis was thus placed on the use of strategies for monitoring, teacher support and professional development, and involvement in decision making.

*Teaching and learning*

Table 7.9 shows participants’ responses to the impact of the changes in leadership practices related to teaching and learning.

Actual outcomes / Impact	(P)	(T)	(M)
Whole school focus/geared towards teaching and learning with the involvement of all partners	2	3	3
Improvement in instructional practices of teachers in meeting learners’ needs	2	2	2
Improvement in teacher performance with re-teaching and re-testing taking place at all cycle levels	2	3	3
More learners being rewarded for good conduct and performance	3	3	3
Teachers are more motivated	2	2	2
Learners are more motivated	3	3	3
Improvement in the quality and standard of school examinations prepared	2	2	2
Improvement in academic performance of learners in mostly all subject areas at school level	3	3	3
Improvement in academic performance of learners at national level	2	3	3
Improvement in the nature and quality of records kept	--	2	2

*Table 7.9: Participants’ responses to the impact on teaching and learning*

The impact on teaching and learning stated in table 7.9 corresponds greatly with the school mission. There is strong agreement among participants of the three role sets of impact in areas of improvement in; teachers’ instructional practices, quality and standard of school examinations, nature and quality of records kept, in addition to learners being rewarded for good conduct and performance, and increases in teacher and learner motivation. While participants claim that these changes have contributed to overall improvement in the academic performance of learners, the senior leader attributed them to acquired knowledge on ‘high performance and teams’, a master’s module which she regarded as particularly valuable.

*Parental involvement*

Table 7.10 shows participants’ responses to the impact of the changes in leadership practices related to parental involvement.

Actual outcomes / Impact	(P)	(T)	(M)
More feeling of belonging by parents due to the sustained open door policy for school visits	3	3	3
Parents are better informed of school initiatives, learners experience and progression	3	3	3
Increase in participation and involvement of parents in school activities with more turn out of fathers	3	3	3
More involvement of parents in decisions taken	3	2	3
Better understanding of and support school initiatives by majority of parents	2	2	2

*Table 7.10: Participants’ responses to the impact on parental involvement*

Table 7.10 reveals that there is consensus in participants' responses about the impact in the area of parental involvement. These were expressed by all participants of the three role sets, in terms of; feeling of belonging on the part of most parents as they are welcome to visit at any day or time, better informed about learners' performance, and increase in participation and involvement in school activities, with more participation of fathers. There were slight disagreements, however, in respect of:

- Whether or not there is more involvement of parents in decision-making.
- Whether or not there is better understanding of, and support for, school initiatives by the majority of parents.

### **Shadowing the Headteacher**

During the field work period (one week), the author shadowed the headteacher. The activities observed at the school were those scheduled on the senior leader's plan for the week (See Figure 7.2). Through shadowing, it was observed that most of the planned activities were carried out. Planned activities that were not carried out were replaced by unplanned ones.

The purpose of the shadowing was to obtain authentic information on the current practices of the senior leader so as to triangulate the findings with the documentary analysis and the interview responses.

Day	Morning session	After break session	Afternoon session	Remarks
Monday	Assembly Briefing with researcher Classroom visit: - Crèche	School Improvement Team (SIT) and Management Team (MT) meeting	<i>Contacted schools for networking</i> <i>Brief meeting with leaders</i>	Supervision: - Lunch - Learners boarding buses
Tuesday	Meet with social worker and any parents. <i>Taught a year 6 class 2 (teacher on networking)</i>	<b>Meet with AO:</b> <b>-School meal list</b> <b>-School budget</b> <i>Saw 3 parents for 'needed funds' and 2 teachers individually</i>	<b>Observation of year 4 and 6 Social sciences class</b> <i>Attended a funeral service</i>	
Wednesday	Lesson observation -Year 4 Soc. St. -Year 3 Soc. St.	Lesson observation - Year 5 Soc. St.	Conferencing with teachers of classes observed	PTA Meeting at 4:30 pm
Thursday	Management Team	Meeting for Planning	See learners off after school hours (Supervision)	Professional Development session (1:30-3:30pm)
Friday	<b>Observation of year 5 classes</b> <i>Attended an official Launching Ceremony</i>	Interview with researcher and debriefing meeting	<b>Conferencing with year 5 teachers</b> <i>Attended an official function at district level</i>	

**Key:** Normal font - planned activities that were carried out  
 Italic font – activities not planned that were carried out  
 Bold italic font – planned activities that were not carried out

Figure 7.2: The head teacher's planner for the week

Figure 7.2 shows the activities that took place during the observations. These activities can be classified as:

- School assembly
- School meetings
- Lesson observations and conferencing with teachers
- Professional development session
- Contact and interaction with parents, staff and learners

### The school assembly

This is a weekly event that takes place every Monday morning before the official start of lessons. Only one school assembly was observed which took place outside the building, near the edge of the playing field, where there was maximum shade.

It was apparent from observation that the responsibility for conducting the school assembly is that of the management team, comprising the headteacher and subject coordinators. Before the headteacher (HT) of the school took part in the leadership training programme, it was the HT's duty to conduct the school assembly. After successful completion of the training it has become a delegated task whereby it is the responsibility of each member of the school management team (SMT) to plan, organise and conduct the school assembly on a rotational basis. The Language coordinator led the assembly on the day observed by the researcher, in the presence of all learners from crèche to primary year six and all school staff including the headteacher. According to management role set participants' comments, what was being observed in the assembly differed from the practice before 2004. Their comments on the way the assembly was conducted before and after 2004 are presented in table 7.11.

Before training	After training
HT as the main facilitator	Rotate among members of SMT to facilitate
Mainly prayers and songs	Minimal prayers and song
Reflection on occasion	Frequent reflection on events and living values
Seldom praise and reward learners	Rewards and praises for learners in every assembly
Less involvement of learners	More involvement of learners
Less involvement of staff	More involvement of staff
Less sharing of information	More sharing of information

*Table 7.11: Conduct of assemblies before and after training*

The researcher observed, that, apart from prayers, songs, moral and religious reflections, which, according to management participants, was the normal practice, the names of all learners who have received 'positive notes' to take home the previous week were called out for them to come forward to be praised and applauded by the congregation. Learners whose behaviour and performance had shown remarkable improvement were also presented for praise and applause. Classes were also praised by management for good behaviour and performance. Information conveyed by various members of staff related to the previous week, as well as forthcoming events and activities for the week.

While attending the assembly, the HT remained among other learners and staff throughout, just like any other teacher. It was observed that learners and staff were very pleased with what was being said and a pleasant atmosphere prevailed during the assembly.

#### School meetings

Two formal meetings took place as planned; the joint SIT and SMT meeting, and the Parents-Teachers-Association (PTA), which took place after school hours. Both were observed by the researcher. Two informal meetings also took place as planned, and were observed; a management team planning meeting and a meeting with a district social worker.

*Formal meeting: SIT and SMT*

The meeting took place inside the staff room, the largest room in the school, apart from the dining room. The school SIT comprises the HT, the four subject coordinators, three cycle representatives, The Professional Development Facilitator (PDF), a support representative (from non-teaching staff), a crèche representative and the special needs coordinator. The Management, which comprises the HT and the subject coordinators, are all members of the SIT.

The tasks of chairing and taking minutes are both done on a rotational basis among the staff members. As for that particular meeting, the HT's role was mainly to go through the minutes since she was responsible for taking the minutes in the previous meeting. The chair was the language coordinator, and minutes were taken by the mathematics and sciences coordinator. This shows clear delegation of duties and shared responsibility among members present.

It was clear that all members knew what was expected of them, in terms of issues they needed to report and discuss, based on matters arising and the meeting agenda. Table 7.12 illustrates those issues.

Focus areas	Information shared /discussed	Decisions made / taken
Teaching and Learning (TL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validation of exam papers</li> <li>• Phonics – reading project</li> <li>• Peer observation and team teaching (feedback)</li> <li>• Preparation of exam papers by teachers being a concern</li> </ul>	<p>Target setting and Deadlines</p> <p>To book computers for teachers to prepare exams</p>
Management and Leadership (ML)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners’ misbehaviours – strategies for improvement</li> <li>• Staff lateness</li> <li>• Healthy eating – needy cases</li> </ul>	<p>Actions to be taken: Teachers organising learners before movement, sitting arrangement and peer support.</p>
Professional Development (PD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Networking (feedback from PDF and subject coordinators)</li> <li>• Team planning (feedback from cycle representatives)</li> <li>• Curriculum training</li> <li>• Professional growth</li> </ul>	<p>To follow up in PD session.</p> <p>More practical aspects for implementation.</p> <p>Awaiting further information.</p> <p>Agreed on theme for the week</p>
School Improvement Programme (SIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive notes for learners</li> <li>• Re-teaching and re-testing (feedback by chair)</li> <li>• Record keeping - time consuming</li> <li>• Induction and mentoring</li> </ul>	<p>Maintain records of learners receiving positive notes.</p> <p>Reflect and focus on usefulness of records kept.</p> <p>Mentoring check-list designed for new members</p>

*Table 7.12: The main issues discussed and decisions taken in the SIT / SMT Meeting*

The researcher noted that there was a good communication flow among members. Decisions were taken based on common agreement where members’ opinions were sought. Apart from the secretary (the one taking the minutes) noting down what was being shared, the HT recorded specific information as evidence for the SIP action plan targets, such as the weekly statistics of:

- Learners obtaining positive notes to take home in the different subject areas – last week it was 10 learners, mainly for Mathematics
- The practice of team planning, team teaching and peer observation at cycle and subject level
- Networking activities among schools for professional development
- Re-teaching and re-testing at cycle level

Activities listed above are planned for implementation on a weekly basis. The Head's role is to ensure that planned activities are implemented through an agreed set of deadlines, constant reminders, team monitoring and support. Other information shared included reminders and forthcoming school activities.

*Formal meeting: PTA*

The PTA meeting took place after school hours, in the school's staff room, and lasted from 4:30 pm to 5:40 pm. The school PTA comprises 14 members; nine parents, four cycle representatives and the HT. Attendance for that day was six parents, the cycle representatives and the HT, making a total of 11 members.

As this meeting was the first for the year, there were only two main points on the agenda; the PTA calendar of activities, and the schedule of meetings for the year. Although the PTA chairperson-elect is a parent, it was the HT who took the lead in the meeting. This practice was appreciated by all those present, including the chairperson, who showed passive reluctance in getting the meeting started. There was more participation from the parents than the teachers.

The meeting started with a warm welcome and presentation of the PTA members followed by the HT sharing the school calendar of activities. The main school activities and targeted partners to be involved are represented in table 7.13.

School Activities	Partners targeted
Health and Safety	Learners, staff and parents
Reading partners – ‘choose a partner and read’	Learners
Language experience and team planning	Teachers
Curriculum training on specific concepts	Parents
Promotional reading	Learners
Subject forum - TL achievements and concerns	Teachers and parents
Teacher networking and curriculum training	Teachers with other schools
Classroom observations	Parents
Tsunami drill	Learners and staff
National Children’s Day - School celebration	Learners (involvement of PTA)
National Teachers’ Day - School celebration	Teachers (involvement of PTA)
Examinations (dates for term 1 given)	Learners

*Table 7.13: Main school activities and targeted partners*

Emphasis was placed on the role of the PTA in two activities shown in table 7.13. Members being lead by the PTA chairperson discussed at length and agreed on a sport-related activity to raise funds for the school and school activities that needed their involvement, to construct the PTA’s calendar of activities. The agreed fund raising activity was scheduled for the end of May with the involvement of parents, learners and staff.

The HT shared additional information on:

- Camping organised at national level for primary year six learners’, with only three learners not willing to participate
- Primary year six 2008 national examination results, where there has been a slight decrease in the performance of Mathematics compared to continual improvement for the past three years.

The PTA chairperson raised a concern in regards to the school compound where she has noticed that, on several occasions, the school rubbish bins have fallen over after school, and also some broken fences, which she regards as an eyesore. Decisions on how to remedy the situation were discussed and agreed upon. There was also mention of a compassionate gesture being made on behalf of the PTA to a parent

suffering a loss in the family. The meeting adjourned, with a few parent members remaining behind to discuss more personal issues with the HT.

*Informal meeting: Management Team planning*

The HT and subject coordinators (including the special needs coordinator) met in the HT's office mainly for the purpose of team planning. This is done together, as it is one of the HT's duties to undertake the responsibility of the subject coordinator for Social Sciences.

This meeting is for team planning at management level where issues to do with teaching and learning, such as re-teaching and re-testing, team teaching and peer observation for teachers within the different cycle level and in the different subject areas, are discussed. The purpose is for the leaders to plan together for specific lessons to be observed, follow up on schemes checked, and teachers identified in need of additional pedagogical support.

An important purpose of the team planning is to schedule networking activities with other schools and to consider the purpose of the activities. Such activities are well planned in terms of who will network with which schools and when. As the school is so small, the number of staff taking part in such activities needs careful timing, to ensure that the target of involving all staff involved in teaching is met whilst not affecting teaching and learning in the school.

The meeting also presents an opportunity to review deadlines and set new ones as well as decisions to be taken in regard to issues discussed above. All SMT members had an equal opportunity to contribute to the discussion and to bring forth ideas and

suggestions. This was done in an informal, cordial and collegial manner. The SMT meeting, which started around mid morning, went on until the lunch break.

#### *Informal meeting with social worker and parent*

The district social worker, who has been working with parents and learners from the school, met with the headteacher and a parent. The purpose of the consultation was to discuss issues at home which are affecting the performance of two learners in the schools.

It was observed that the HT led the discussion and raised several issues, brought forward by teachers, as possible indications that the two learners were not having enough rest or not having a balanced diet at home. Such observation mentioned were; constant tiredness, lethargy, paleness of the skin and lack of concentration, all of which have contributed towards their underperformance in most subjects.

It was obvious from the conversation between the three partners (social worker, HT and the parent) that previous consultations have been held. There was evidence of mutual confidence and trust between the parent and the school, as the parent explained what was actually happening at home. The meeting ended with decisions made on issues to consider for improvement at home, and follow up actions to be done by the social worker through home visits, and the school through systematic monitoring and support of the two learners.

#### Lesson observations and conferencing with teachers

Three lesson observations were conducted by the senior leader, in classes of year four, three and five, all of which were being taught by female teachers. Of the three

lessons observed, only two lessons involved shadowing the senior leader. These two lesson observations are recorded on observation sheets 1 and 2 (See Appendix 3a and b). In order to observe whether the presence of the HT had an influence on the delivery of lessons, and on learners' involvement, both classes were visited a second time by the researcher in the absence of the HT. As the observation of the two lessons mentioned above was planned by the HT and the respective teachers, a third class was picked for spontaneous observation by the researcher alone (See observation sheet 3 in Appendix 3c). The purpose of this additional observation was to ascertain changes in the instructional practices of teachers through motivational learning activities taking place in the school, and to check claims made by interviewed participants in relation to classroom practices during their senior leader's post training period.

#### *Reflection on lessons observed*

It is evident from the three lesson observations that there was good planning and preparation on the part of the teachers. This supports the self-reported claims of interviewed participants on observable improvement in teachers' lesson planning and preparation. This is possibly due to the practice of team planning by management and teachers as, according to responses of participants from all three role sets, the senior leader places strong emphasis on the instructional practices of teachers, so as to improve teaching and learning. There was not much difference in the way all three lessons were conducted, as their classroom activities were challenging, interesting and motivating to pupils of all abilities. This could be observed by the active participation of all learners, who managed to complete all given tasks. The interactions between teachers and learners were excellent, with praise and mutual

respect. Good time management, and conducive classroom environments, were observed.

Observation of the two classes that were previously observed by the researcher and senior leader, and later re-visited by the researcher alone, revealed that there were no differences in the behaviour of teachers and learners in the presence and absence of the senior leader. The manner in which the teachers performed their tasks portrayed confidence and ease, which could be related to teachers' knowledge and their experience of being observed, due to the frequent practice of peer observation and monitoring strategies employed by the management team (See tables 7.8 and 7.9). Such strategies, which interviewed participants claimed were not being practiced before (See figure 7.1), have been reinforced by the senior leader who attributes this to knowledge and skills acquisition from the masters' modules on 'high performance and teams', and 'leadership concepts and models', where emphasis was placed on the leadership aspects of monitoring, support and evaluation of teaching and learning.

#### *Reflections on conferencing*

During conferencing, as depicted in figure 7.2, which took place in the senior leader's office, teachers of years 3 and 4 had the opportunity to comment freely and openly on their teaching, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. Although there was much discussion on areas that needed improvement, especially with year 3, and in identifying the type of support needed, there was praise and encouragement to acknowledge the teachers' effort. Both statements relate strongly to changes in the attitude of the senior leader after training, as previously she was

less receptive and appreciative (See tables 7.2 and 7.3). It was significant to note the feelings of satisfaction and appreciation from the teachers, when congratulated.

Comments from the teachers during conferencing revealed changes in how conferences were conducted before, with limited contact and interaction, mainly criticising faults with minimal suggested strategies for improvement. In the past, teachers did not look forward to this practice according to the senior leader, but they have come to value it due to the change in the nature, depth and quality of feedback being given during post training period (See table 7.3).

Although there was a slight feeling of apprehension on the part of one teacher at the start of the conferencing, through the various suggested strategies and advice given by the senior leader, it ended in mutual agreement and in a friendly and professional manner. The senior leader attributed such changes in approach used for conferencing to modules studied in training on ‘quality education’, ‘investigating education’, and the reflective thinking associated with keeping the ‘professional growth leadership journal’, notably in respect of leadership styles, and teacher and learner performance. The feedback focussed on teachers’ personal reflections on their lessons; praise, recognition and improvement in practices, and together they identified areas for support with much appreciation of teachers’ effort and innovations.

#### Professional development session

This is an important session where, on one day each week, while learners leave earlier than usual, staff remain for professional development purposes (See figure

7.2). Although the content of the session has limited direct relevance to the HT's training, an important observation was made in regards to her active participation in facilitating the sharing of the networking activities, a practice that was not done during the pre-training period, according to interviewees (See figure 7.1).

The nature of networking activities carried out by school staff corresponds very well with what is presented in the analysed documents (See table 7.14), showing that the school places much emphasis on the sharing of good practices and reflective learning through networking with other schools. According to the HT, the importance attached to the implementation of such strategies became clear to her during the MBA course. Such practices, along with shared decision-making and delegation of duties, were observed during this particular session.

#### Contact and interaction with parents, staff and learners

Apart from the meetings, lesson observation, conferencing, PD session and assembly, the senior leader interacted with parents, staff and learners every day of the field work week (See figure 7.2). This was mainly through supervision duties, teaching, classroom visits, touring and on an individual basis.

#### *Contact and interaction with parents*

During the field work period, it was observed that the senior leader held individual meetings with eight parents who came voluntarily for; school assistance through 'dedicated funds' (4), children related issues (2), teacher related issues (1) and other social issues (1). In addition, parents who came to collect learners during class for

appointments elsewhere (6), and after class hours (on average 60+ daily), took the opportunity to exchange greetings and obtain feedback on issues of importance to them. Several parents, who also came to bring money, snacks and/or lunch for learners during school hours, spoke briefly to the senior leader whenever she was around and during touring. It was apparent that parents look forward to visual contact and interaction with the senior leader and the feeling was mutual. There was also much contact and interaction between those parents, teachers and support staff.

#### *Contact and interaction with staff*

The observation showed that, whenever the senior leader was not otherwise occupied, staff would come to her office for personal as well as school related issues. Apart from the two teachers who met her officially in the office during class hours, several teachers and support staff were in contact and interacted with the senior leader on an individual basis. This was more apparent during touring, after classroom visits and while on supervision duties. Although all staff appeared very busy at all times, and even during their break, with supervision, correction of learners' work and preparation of materials, the atmosphere was always pleasant. Although the staffroom was empty for most of the time, except for meetings and PD, teachers took time to interact with support staff, management and learners whenever possible, in the school playground, under the verandas of classes, administrative offices, specialist rooms, and the dining room, on a daily basis.

The observations above support claims made by interviewed participants in relation to observable changes that have taken place in their school through changes in

leadership practices (See table 7.7 and figure 7.1) with possible attribution to their senior leader's training, and their impact on the school's climate and ethos.

#### *Contact and interaction with learners*

It was significant to observe how learners were in constant contact and interaction with the senior leader whenever she was around. Although this was more apparent during lunch, break and after class supervisions, several learners of different age groups would voluntarily come to the HT's office to greet her or offer a complaint or comment. The fact that most staff, including the senior leader, spent their lunch break in the dining room together with learners has helped to develop the awareness of healthy eating through monitoring and interaction with learners (see development plan targets in documentary analysis section). The way learners interacted with management and staff portrayed confidence, trust, care and protection. During the field work, there was not a single case of conflict, vandalism or fights among either learners or staff.

Such observations support claims made by the senior leader in the 'main survey' on the impact of change in practices, attributed to training, related to school ethos. They also confirm observable changes in the senior leaders' approach, attitude and relationship established with learners and staff alike, which interviewed participants claimed were not productive before (See table 7.5, figures 7.1 and 7.2).

## **Documentary Analysis**

Several documents were analysed and are reported in this section to triangulate with the observations and the interview responses. They are mainly:

- Minutes of meetings
- Management planner/records and teachers' schemes/records
- Subject reports
- SIP 3 year development plan and evaluation report.

### Minutes of meetings

The researcher analysed minutes of the SIT and management meetings, as it was apparent during observations that these were the two forums that document all school activities. A total of 22 minutes of management (M) meetings and 65 minutes of SIT meetings were analysed. As pre-leadership training minutes of meetings were not available, all those analysed were from the past four years. More SIT minutes were analysed, because the implementation and progression of all targeted school activities are systematically recorded, as SMT members are part of the SIT. The management meeting is the main forum for team planning.

Both the SIT and management minutes show evidence of targeted activities being implemented (see table 7.14). Such activities are numbered 1 to 5 according to the frequency of occurrence in reported progress of implementation. A content analysis was carried out to achieve the ranking, 1 being the highest and 5 the lowest.

No.	Recorded activities implemented	SIT	M
1	Team planning (teachers/M.) Networking Mathematics activities Professional development sessions (teachers/M) Professional growth session (staff) Checking of records Information sharing/Feedback/decision making and taking	√ √ √ √ √ √ √	√ √ √ √ √ √ √
2	Peer observation (teachers) Re-teaching and re-testing (teachers) Positive notes given (learners) Monitoring of MLS, home-work, assessment (M) Differentiated instruction Lesson observation (M.) Healthy eating (learners/parents)	√ √ √ √ √ √ √	√ √ √ √ √ √ √
3	Mentoring Assessments and Examinations analysis / sharing Curriculum cycle forum for different subjects (teachers/parents) Shared reading activities (teachers/learners) Promotional reading (teachers//learners)	√ √ √ √ √	√ √ √  
4	Induction Lesson observation (parents) Training sessions (teachers/M.)	 √ √	√  
5	Reflection on management practices (learners) Transition / visits (P6 learners) Prize giving / reward (learners) Parenting session Safety	    √	√ √ √ √ 

Key: MLS stands for Mathematics Lesson Structure, and M stands for Management

*Table 7.14: Evidence of the implementation of targeted activities in SIT and M*

More than half (14) out of 27 activities recorded from the two different minutes of meetings are numbered 1 and 2 (highest occurrence). This indicates the level of importance that the school attached to the systematic implementation of such activities, as opposed to those numbered 3-5. This corresponds well with the interviewees' and senior leader responses in regards to instructional practices of teachers, monitoring strategies and empowerment.

### Management planner/records and teachers' plans/schemes/records

A sample of the management planner/records and teachers' schemes, selectively chosen from members of staff who have been in the school before and after the senior leader's training, were analysed. The planners (3) showed evidence of the implementation of certain strategies for monitoring, and supporting teaching and learning. These were; team planning, checking of lesson plans/schemes, conduct of lesson observation and conferencing, report writing and analysis of results, as well as consultation with parents and their involvement in school activities. The management records showed good planning, monitoring and record keeping, and team work through meetings, professional growth and PD sessions, and networking.

Teachers' schemes (6) showed reported improvement in the way schemes and lesson plans were done compared to the past, in terms of the different aims and objectives, lesson delivery activities, lesson evaluation strategies and post evaluation. In all the schemes analysed, there was evidence of re-teaching and re-testing, some differentiated activities, and reflections. Plans and records showed evidence of team planning, peer observation, item analysis, learners' home-work activities, and hardly any reported misbehaviours on the part of learners.

These documents illustrate shared duties, responsibilities, decision making and taking, and staff empowerment, as evidence of the practice of distributive, instructional and transformational leadership styles, which the HT attributed to the master's training programme. Such evidence also supports strong claims made by the

HT in the ‘main survey’ (chapter six) in reference to strategies implemented in her school, attributed to leadership training, and actual school outcomes.

### Subject reports

The school produces a subject report which is shared with school staff, parents and the MoE every term. Each report is presented in the order of monitoring teaching of the subject and monitoring structures, support provided through the various established structures, and a report on each subject, both academic and non-academic. This report structure is different from the pre-training period in terms of sequence of events, nature of content and quality of presentation. The HT attributes improvements in record keeping to acquisition of skills through research assignments produced and school based professional development sessions conducted.

While analysing the subject reports (9), it was found that most of what has been reported on is similar to that of the development plan evaluation report, in terms of the monitoring and support structures in place. However, detailed information is presented on each subject in terms of year level grades for assessments and examinations, and comparing boys’ and girls’ performance. One major difference, compared to the pre-training period, and through the influence of the senior leader, according to the interviewed participants, is in ensuring that school performance is properly analysed, recorded and reported to partners, including the MoE.

The subject reports showed evidence of improvement in learners’ performance in most academic subjects for the past three years. Where this was not the case, results

showed that learners' performance had been maintained. In cases where there has been a slight decrease in a particular termly assessment, there was an increase in the following term or year – which shows overall maintenance of the school's academic standard.

This recorded progress relates to what has been reported by interview participants on the changing role of the senior leader after training in personally monitoring aspects of teaching and learning for accountability purpose. Through delegation of duties, involvement of others in decision making, conferencing, professional growth sessions and school based training, the HT influenced and developed teachers' research abilities and reflective thinking.

### SIP 3 year development plan and evaluation report

#### *3 year development plan*

According to the latest three year school development plan, the targets for teaching and learning showed emphasis being placed on improving the effectiveness and quality of instructional practices, including:

- Lesson delivery, plans and schemes of teachers, showing the implementation of activities which cater for learners' different ability groups in Mathematics, with documentary evidence of collaborative planning.
- Learners' assessment results showing understanding of conceptual knowledge, and examination results showing improvement in Mathematics attainment.

The targets and success criteria stated above link to the MoE's national targets to bring about improvement in the performance of Mathematics, which is a national

concern. Although the main focus was on Mathematics, the school worked towards improving learners' performance in other subject areas by incorporating several strategies such as re-teaching and re-testing, peer observation and team planning, while reinforcing the monitoring of teaching and learning by management, mainly through the senior leader checking records and observing lessons.

In the area of support and guidance, the school targeted the development of healthy eating habits in learners, with the intention of:

- Raising awareness among learners of the importance of breakfast as a meal.
- 75% of learners taking their lunch and 65% eating a healthy lunch.

Although some of the foci were initiated by the MoE, the senior leader ensured that they were incorporated in the plan only if they appear as concerns in the school's audit report, which is an integral part of the evaluation report.

#### *Evaluation report of the three year development plan*

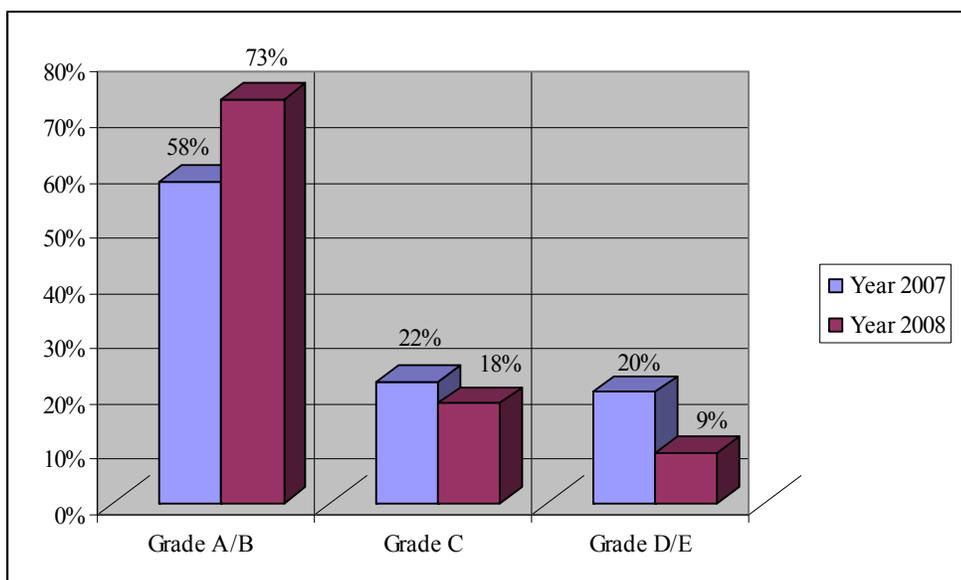
The evaluation report is an important official document produced by the school at the end of every cycle of the three year SIP development plan. The document highlights areas of strengths and weaknesses as per the school development plan's priorities and targets, which are shared with all partners. According to the evaluation report of the most recent three year school development plan, considerable improvement has been achieved in the area of teaching and learning, with evidence of progression in the performance of both teachers and learners throughout the three years. Such progression is in accordance with the stated intended outcomes for the teaching and learning targets.

In the area of teaching, continuous improvement was recorded in:

- The implementation of Mathematics Lesson Structure (MLS), where 79% of lessons checked in 2008, compared to 46% in 2006, have all the components effectively planned, representing a 33% improvement.
- Effective implementation of MLS by 65% of teachers in 2008 compared to 29% in 2006, an improvement of 36%.
- 89% of lessons in 2008, compared to 46% in 2006, indicated effective use of learning tasks that catered for the different ability groups, a remarkable improvement of 43%.
- Collaborative planning, where a total of 103 team planning sessions were carried out by teachers across all cycle levels in 2008, compared to only 21 in 2006.

As the above are internal judgments, there exists an element of subjectivity. However, the SIP three year development plan, the evaluation report and school subject reports, are official documents submitted to the MoE and may be challenged by MoE officials.

In the area of learning, the first intended outcome was based on assessment results, showing learners' understanding of conceptual knowledge. Figure 7.3 shows the school performance in terms of the difference in the percentage of learners scoring grade A, B, C, and D/E for continuous assessment in 2007 and 2008.

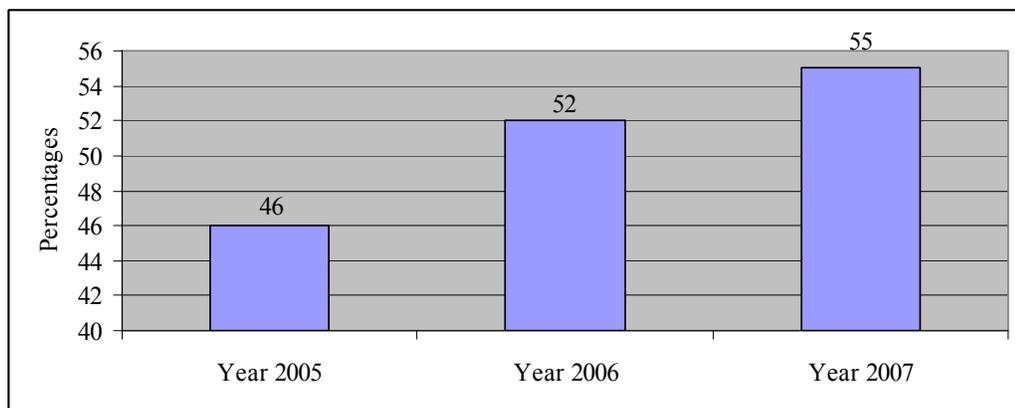


*Figure 7.3: Percentage of learners' grade score in 2007/8 continuous assessment*

Figure 7.3 indicates that, for internal continuous assessment, 73% of the school population scored grade A/B in 2008 compared to 58% in 2007, a 15% improvement. Figure 7.3 also indicates a 4% decrease in learners achieving grade C and an 11% decrease in learners achieving grade D/E.

Such improvement relates to the interviewees' opinion that the senior leader's positive influence on staff, in developing a whole school focus on teaching and learning, has resulted in improvement in learners' performance. They stressed that this has been achieved through strong emphasis being placed by the HT on the systematic monitoring of the implementation of strategies which, according to the headteacher, can be attributed partly to the MBA course.

Figure 7.4 compares the year 6 National examination results for Mathematics for 2005-2007. This figure shows that the school has made steady progress in this period. In 2007, the school mean was 55%, representing a 9% increase over 2005 and a 3% increase over 2006 results. Although the progress is more modest than implied by the internal assessments, table 7.15 (See Appendix 4) highlights continuous progress in the national examination results of year six learners in all subjects over a period of four years.



*Figure 7.4: School National Examination Mathematics mean from 2005 to 2007*

Figure 7.4 shows that the school has been able to achieve improvements in Mathematics, its main focus in the development plan. There was also progress in other targeted areas such as:

- Healthy eating by learners where there has been an increase in the number of learners taking healthy lunch over the years 2006 to 2008, showing that learners are aware of the benefit of practising healthy eating habits
- Effective monitoring of teaching and learning by management:
  - (1) The following structures were put in place; team planning, peer observation, mentoring, shared reading, curriculum training, curriculum forum and networking.

- (2) There has also been systematic checking of records, lesson observations, and documentation by management.

This shows that, according to the three year development plan evaluation report, the school has been able to achieve the intended outcomes in the areas of teaching and learning, support and guidance, and management. This achievement has been acknowledged by all interviewees, with the belief that the school senior leader's change in approach and attitude played an important role in bringing all partners together for the holistic development of all learners. The senior leader revealed in the interview that, through leadership training, she has come to value collegiality through effective team building and parental involvement, notably in modules on 'school culture', 'parental involvement' and 'marketing'. These concepts were shared with staff so that they can speak the same language for team implementation of strategies.

### **Summary**

This case study report presents detailed information about a school whose senior leader successfully completed leadership training and was then deployed to the same school. It highlights changes in leadership practices, and their impact on school outcomes, from the perceptions of parents, teachers and management, adopting a 'before and after' perspective.

There was much correlation between what was reported in interviews, observed through shadowing of the HT, and gathered from the analysis of documents. The main changes that have taken place in the school, when comparing the pre-training and post-training periods of the senior leader, are in the areas of; communication,

interaction, relationships, leadership, professionalism and the involvement of others. The senior leader's return to the school resulted in the practice of leadership styles that involved more shared decisions being taken, delegation of duties, implementation of strategies for the monitoring of teaching and learning, and with much appreciation of learners, staff and parents. These observable changes have impacted positively on the school ethos, leadership and management, teaching and learning, and parental involvement. There was unanimous agreement that learners' performance has improved during this period. Although such internal data are bound to be subjective, due to self reporting, the School National Examination Mathematics mean from 2005 to 2007, and the school year six learners % pass rate in all subjects examined at national level for a period of four years, confirms such improvements.

St. Catherine School has made significant improvements during the past four years, due to strong team work which has developed into a culture of learning with collaborative practices. It seems likely that the improvement in school outcomes can be attributed, at least in part, to the work of the senior leader and to her leadership training because several of her practices observed, and strategies implemented, revealed acquisition of much knowledge and skills acquired through modules studied during her MBA course.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## ANALYSIS

### Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the study's main findings drawn from five sources; the literature review, the Ministry officials' interviews, the pilot survey, the main survey, and the case study. These findings are compared, using a thematic approach.

The themes arising from the enquiry, and the literature review, are:

- Approaches to leadership development
- Recruitment and selection for leadership training
- Leadership succession and selection
- Training expectations and experiences
- Impact of leadership development on leadership practices
- Impact of leadership development on school outcomes
- Programme completion and leadership effectiveness
- On-going support and professional development

Each theme is discussed below.

### Approaches to Leadership Development

The growing evidence of the importance of school leadership for school improvement, student learning, and other outcomes (Bolam, 2003; Brundrett, 2001; Bush, 2003 and 2008; Bush and Glover, 2002; Day, Harris and Hadfield, 2002; Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993; Leithwood et al., 1999) has led to recognition that the

effective preparation and development of school leaders might make a difference to their leadership practices (Crow, 2006). Developing the potential of leaders is vital for the continuing success of schools and the educational system around the world (Bush and Glover, 2004). Research has revealed the ‘culture shock’ of newly appointed leaders (Daresh and Male, 2000) and a strong need to be empowered in areas of teaching and learning (Billot, 2003; Bush and Glover, 2004). Gunraj and Rutherford (1999), however, also acknowledge that headteachers’ needs are constantly changing by responding to new challenges within their schools. Many countries, particularly those with developed economies, have in place their own formalised leadership development programmes to empower their leaders at different stages of their career path (Brundrett, 2001).

Formal leadership development programmes are often lacking in developing countries, including small island developing states (SIDS), notably in respect of opportunities for pre-service preparation and enhancement of leadership effectiveness after appointment (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008). One way of addressing such limitations is by establishing partnerships with developed systems (Scott, 2001).

According to senior MoE officials, the concept of school leadership, as opposed to management and administration, is quite new in Seychelles. Before 2002, in-service training offered to headteachers was more to do with managing and administering educational institutions than with leading them. The inception of the ‘school improvement programme’ (SIP) brought an awareness that the role of the headteacher was shifting from managing and administering to that of leading their

school towards improvement. In-service training for senior leaders is being offered in partnership with International Higher Educational Institutions, currently Warwick University, in collaboration with the National Institute of Education (NIE), leading to a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Innovation (MA). For leaders who do not meet the requirements for entry to the Master's programme, a local bridging programme, the Advanced Diploma in Educational Leadership (ADEL), has been designed and implemented.

The linked programmes have different emphases. The MA programme is dependent on 'policy borrowing' from other education systems and the content is adapted to suit the local context. The ADEL is customized to the specific context of the Seychelles, although the content of the international programme was considered in its design.

The current leadership development approach in the Seychelles is cohort based, with participants permanently grouped for a year's learning, with a new group every year. The emphasis was placed on professional growth through self evaluation and reflective thinking, knowledge enhancement, skills development and research.

Survey participants' expectations of the MoE upon enrolment, and after completion of training, were similar in terms of successful completion and putting into practice what had been learnt so as to bring about positive change and improvement in school outcomes. The MoE expectations were made clear to only about half of the trained leaders surveyed, and only one quarter of the pilot participants. In a small centralized education system, the assumption was that the expectations of the Ministry should be known without being told.

All surveyed participants agreed strongly that their expectations of the training programme have been met, and they claimed that they are better leaders and professionally different in terms of; knowledge, skills, competence and character. Although such information is based on self-reporting, evidence from the case study report highlights one primary school leader's leadership and professional change, attributed to leadership development and training.

From the perceptions of senior Ministry officials, offering leadership training to school leaders is one of the greatest achievements for the Seychelles education system. However, they are still anticipating further good practices from graduate leaders, mainly in the adoption of a distributed leadership model, which they feel was lacking before, on a larger scale. They expect more involvement of parents and learners in the decision-making process, and in the establishment of strong links between school and the community. Through the practice of instructional and transformational leadership models, more experienced school leaders should aim to be different in being more research oriented and innovative in their approaches, and to empower their middle leaders and teachers on issues to do with teaching, learning and support. Although a comprehensive programme for monitoring performance of leaders is lacking, there is hope that the current contract for headship, and reforms intended to provide schools with more autonomy, will make them more accountable for the overall performance of their school.

The literature review of leadership and leadership development reveals the importance of good leadership as an essential requirement for successful schools.

Seychelles shares most of the limitations of SIDS in higher education (HE) provision (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008). However, upon recent awareness of the relationship between leaders' performance and positive school outcomes, the nation embarked on the establishment of a partnership with HE bodies in the quest for formal training of senior leaders. The trained leaders claim that they are now all more professional and better in leading the change process for improvement in outcomes at institution and system levels. The case study of a primary school also supports this claim.

### **Recruitment and Selection for Leadership Training**

Recruitment and selection for leadership training differs, depending on how developed the country is and the level of government control of the education system. In England, the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) leadership development framework makes provision for leaders at different stages of their career (Hartle and Thomas, 2003; NCSL, 2001). The nature and content of the programmes, recruitment and selection criteria, and procedures, are well documented and accessible to all through different media. Similarly, most States in the USA have well documented formal comprehensive pre-service and in-service programmes. Their recruitment and selection procedures involve formal applications by participants, mainly excellent teachers, for identification, selection and screening, with recommendations for evidence of teacher leadership and leadership potential (Young and Grogan, 2008). These practices reflect the purpose and assumptions about leadership and its development (Orr, 2006). In Australia, although various leadership programmes exist, providing higher qualifications in leadership, they are

not mandatory and any teacher can apply (Anderson et al., 2008; Huber and Pashiardis, 2008).

In Africa (Bush and Oduro, 2006), in many Asian countries, especially in the area of pre-service (Kandasamy and Blaton, 2004) and with the exception of Taiwan, (Walker, Chen and Qian, 2008), and in most SIDS, there are no formal requirements for school principals to be qualified as leaders. In the Seychelles it is the Ministry of Education who acts as 'gate keeper' in deciding who shall be nominated for admission to the leadership training programme (Bush, 2005).

According to senior Ministry officials (SMO), several criteria are used to determine access to leadership preparation in the Seychelles. These are; years of experience in the teaching profession, linked to their current leadership post, academic qualifications, evidence of leadership potential, and personal interest. They acknowledged that recommendations from the senior management team of the Ministry of Education (MoE) are important for the selection process. Although potential candidates should possess at least a first degree, or a diploma including ADEL, some candidates have been accepted on the training programme without such qualifications, simply due to years of experience in a leadership post or otherwise. This illustrates that leadership training and development in Seychelles is mainly in-service. In the absence of an official set of criteria for the recruitment and selection of candidates for leadership training, the most important influences are the views of the senior MoE officials.

The main survey shows that all trained leaders perceived their selection for training to be based on similar criteria to those mentioned by senior MoE officials. A large

majority (89%) stated ‘practising senior leader’ and more than half stated academic qualifications and experience as a teacher and/or leader. More than a third (38%) mentioned appraisal performance, a criterion not mentioned by Ministry officials. In addition, all the pilot participants mentioned ‘leadership qualities’ and recommendation based on performance and aptitude, while 50% referred to their expertise in a specialised area.

Although most surveyed participants mentioned criteria similar to those identified by the Ministry officials, more than half of them also stressed that these criteria are not clear due to inconsistency in their application, resulting in a shared belief that there is a hidden criterion of selection based on ‘personal affiliation’, leading to the suspicion of favouritism on the part of the MoE in the selection process. While this opinion is shared by half of the pilot participants, the other half perceived the MoE criteria to be based mainly on appraisal performance linked to recommendations from immediate supervisor and leadership qualities displayed. A quarter believe that one most important criterion for the selection of leaders for leadership training is “an individual that the MoE can trust and is competent to implement Ministry policies” (Leader B), supporting the point about ‘personal affiliation’.

In terms of the process for selection and recruitment, the approaches used lacked consistency, raising questions about the nature of the formal process. There were differences in the process, as not all surveyed and pilot participants were formally interviewed or inducted prior to enrolment on training. However, there was contact with senior Ministry officials, through an official letter, group or individual meetings

or ‘tête à tête’, and all participants went through the process of completing application formalities.

The literature on the selection and recruitment of leaders for leadership training and development shows certain similarities across developing nations, especially in Africa and in SIDS, as opposed to developed countries (Bush and Oduro; 2006; Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008; Cardno and Howse, 2004 and 2005). The Seychelles findings revealed that a comprehensive formal set of criteria, and established procedures for recruitment and selection of leaders in Seychelles, are lacking. This shows an area of concern for the strongly centralized education system of the Seychelles and illustrates certain limitations that are also common in other countries in Africa and SIDS (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008; Otunga et al., 2008).

## **Leadership Succession and Selection**

### Recruitment and selection criteria

In order to lead schools in many countries, including Canada, England, France, Singapore, Scotland, and many American states, potential principals need a specific qualification and/or a special licence or certification (Bush, 2008). In the US, certification is usually tied to the successful completion of graduate level educational leadership courses (Young and Grogan, 2008). In Australia, the only formal requirements for school leaders are a four years teaching qualification, and registration. Higher qualifications in leadership exist but are not mandatory, so the possession of such qualifications may prove favourable for applicants to gain and

retain leadership positions (Anderson et al., 2008). In Asia, emphasis is placed on qualifications, years of experience and in some cases performance as a teacher, where seniority and qualifications play the most significant role in recruitment (Kandasamy and Blaton, 2004). In the absence of formal requirements for leadership qualifications or training in Africa, alternative criteria are required for recruiting and selecting principals. These are mainly years of teaching experience and candidates' perceived competence as teachers - in Ghana emphasis is also placed on teacher seniority in 'rank' (Bush and Oduro, 2006).

With no formal requirements for head teachers in most SIDS (Bezzina, 2002), the recruitment and selection of school leaders are based on a set of criteria developed by senior officials in the Ministry of Education (MoE) or related bodies (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008). In Malta however, principals need to be holders of a diploma in educational administration and management (Bezzina, 2002). The appointment of principals in Cyprus is considered on years of service, worth and excellence as a teacher and academic credentials resulting in the majority of secondary school principals being above 50 years of age (Pashiardis and Ribbins, 2003).

Before 2002, headteachers in Seychelles were appointed on the basis of experience due to long years of service and perceived qualities for headship, and with no specific formal training (Dora, 2002). Although the revised Teachers' Scheme of Service (TSS, 2000) states that the prerequisite qualifications for headship are a first degree or higher national diploma, this has not been practiced (Octave, 2004). However, with the introduction of MBA/MA leadership training programmes it

seems that potential principals are expected to obtain such qualifications (Bush, 2005).

According to the Senior Ministry Officials (SMO), the MoE has a set of criteria for the recruitment and selection of leaders which rely mainly on experience and qualification, performance and recommendation, current leadership post and interest. They agree that these criteria have never been formalized but add that participants should meet all the stated requirements, and that holding a leadership qualification is soon to be made mandatory.

The main survey revealed that nearly half of the trained leaders were promoted after training while half remained in their current post as senior leaders. They believed that their promotion to a more senior post was based mainly on their successful completion of the leadership training programme. This belief is shared by the pilot participants who were all promoted after successful completion of training. The leaders who remained in their current post are those who were already in senior leadership posts. Those deployed to other institutions are of the opinion that their deployment was based on system needs. They confirmed that the so-called 'set of criteria' used by MoE for the selection of leaders is not officially documented, and some participants believe that appointment of senior leaders at institutions and system levels are subjective to 'personal affiliation' and politics, but not necessarily gender. However, a great majority (80%) of trained leaders are female, which confirms that, unlike most countries, especially in Africa and SIDS, there are more women leaders in Seychelles than men.

## Recruitment and selection procedures

Recruitment and selection procedures differ according to the type of education system. In most developed countries, the process involves extensive marketing through publications and advertisement, pre-screening and short listing of candidates and the conduct of panel interviews (Anderson et al., 2008; Huber and Pashiardis, 2008; Young and Grogan, 2008). This is not the case in some African countries and most SIDS, including Singapore, where the MoE is in charge of the whole process of selection, training and development of leaders (Huber and Pashiardis, 2008). In the Fiji islands and the Seychelles among others, senior school leaders are appointed by the MoE (Cardno and Howse, 2005; Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008), which shows strong control by central bodies, due to their highly centralized education systems.

The appointments process, however, may be strongly influenced by politics and gender as in Kenya (Herriot et al., 2002), South Africa (Bush and Heystek 2006), Ethiopia (Tekleselassie, 2002) and Ghana (Oduro, 2003; Oduro and MacBeath, 2003), where prospective female principals are at a disadvantage. In the Seychelles however, the presence of more female in headship position is “quite unique compared to other” SIDS and African countries (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008: 456).

The Senior Ministry Officials confirmed that leadership posts are not advertised or published and that recruitment and selection of senior leaders are done internally. They stated that identification and nomination of potential candidates are made by the immediate supervisor at MoE level and that such posts are for locals only (not

expatriate teachers). Usually, the process involves a short informal meeting after nomination, where a recommendation is made and approval sought, mainly from the Principal Secretary and the Minister for Education. A short 'induction meeting' is conducted by senior Ministry officials followed by a letter of 'confirmation in post' by the Ministry of Administration and Manpower (MAM). Such procedures for selection and deployment of leaders are not formalised, documented or published. According to senior Ministry officials, deployment of leaders is based on system needs such as vacancies and replacement due to training release and performance in a previous institution. This may lead to a demotion, where the overall performance of the school is unsatisfactory compared to national norms, or promotion in the case of deputy heads, or a request for a transfer. They acknowledged that the MoE received few requests for transfer and that the deployment process usually involves only a consultative meeting with MoE officials.

The survey participants claimed that there were no clear guidelines for their recruitment and selection as different processes were used. While some took part in a short informal tête a tête meeting, others attended a more formal meeting with senior Ministry officials. However, they agreed that they were all informed of their new posts, through direct or indirect contacts, but with limited opportunities to share personal opinions, especially in regards to choice of work place. Such views are shared by most of the pilot participants, who added that all decisions were taken by the MoE and that they were simply informed, through an inconsistent process. This indicates a lack of clear guidelines and processes in place, within the MoE, for leadership recruitment, selection, subsequent appointment in post and deployment.

Much of the literature on leadership succession and selection reveals strong differences, as well as similarities, across countries depending on the education system in place. Many developed states have in place comprehensive criteria and official guidelines for the selection and recruitment of leaders, including extensive marketing and advertising of posts. Some African countries and most SIDS, including the Seychelles, fall short of such a programme. In comparison to most African countries and SIDS, where seniority, gender and politics are discriminating elements in leaders' selection, participants say that only the latter influences the appointments process in Seychelles. Having 80% female heads may appear to be discriminatory, especially with 'the dominance of women in most professional settings' (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008:458), and gender is a possible factor in leaders' recruitment and selection processes. The existing strong element of central selection, as opposed to self selection, is a typical characteristic of highly centralized education systems that the Seychelles shares with some Asian, African and SIDS.

### **Training Expectations and Experiences**

Based on their experience of 'needs analysis and diagnosis', NPQH graduates in England perceived themselves to be better prepared than other leaders in areas of management and administration, vision and mission formulation and sharing, team work and curriculum planning (Male, 2001). Empirical evidence from the US shows that participants' experiences of cohort structured learning are positive in the enhanced feelings of group affiliation and acceptance due to elements of group emotional and social support, motivation and mutual assistance (Davis et al., 2005). Such experiences have resulted in improvement in academic learning and

programme completion rates among candidates (Browne-Ferrigno and Muth, 2001; Davis et al., 2005).

Empirical evidence from Asian countries, such as Nepal, show the training experiences of many headteachers to be beneficial in identifying the schools' problems and assessing needs, monitoring and motivating students, parents and communities (IIEP, 2004). This is because the training programmes provide ideas on how to observe, monitor and assess teachers' activities and evaluate them. Hong Kong female principals experienced the usefulness of the newly appointed principal programme (NAP) in providing emotional support and opportunity for them to share experiences and practices, enhance confidence and see their roles in broader perspective (Wong, 2005). Those in Malta, however, found that their leadership experience was equal to and, for some, more valuable in terms of their professional development than the training received (Bezzina, 2002).

The majority of the surveyed participants, including those in the pilot, expected the training programme to empower them with new knowledge and skills to lead an educational institution effectively. Being graduates of an internationally recognized postgraduate qualification of high academic standard brings more recognition and status, and builds their self confidence.

The most valued aspects of the course were modules of leadership and change which participants could relate to their own experiences and previous; the international experience programme where they could see theories and concepts taught being put into practice; group discussion and sharing of experiences resulted in the

enhancement of critical and reflective thinking. The relationship with lecturers was much appreciated as there was a strong element of warmth and professionalism in the interaction and support being provided. Research, independent study and maintaining a professional journal were much valued by participants as they could put into practice organisation, planning and management skills learnt, and witnessed their own professional growth. Research and choice of modules are the pilot participants' most valuable aspects of their training course, since they could select topics that they considered to be relevant, and research on areas of personal interest.

Higher education provision, such as space / resources / computer technology facilities, access to international journals and local empirical literature, were the least valuable aspects revealed by participants. However, these were initial concerns which were gradually alleviated. Personal financial constraints associated with the international experience, acquisition of study materials, and the 'silent competition' among cohort members, were unpleasant experiences raised by few participants. No aspects of the course were the 'least valuable' by about a quarter of surveyed participants and three quarters of pilot participants, suggesting high levels of satisfaction for these respondents.

The surveyed and pilot participants highlighted that, although most theoretical concepts and models studied were new, due to their experiences they could relate to several aspects of centralized education systems that are applicable to the local context. They mentioned educational change and innovations, leading and managing people, high performance and teams, as some of the most valued topics. Finance and budgeting, strategic planning, and marketing, are considered as the least valuable

course topics by about half of the surveyed participants. Although the content of the strategic planning topic involved new concepts which are interesting and challenging, it was difficult to relate to existing knowledge and experience of development planning. Modules such as finance, budgeting, and marketing, however, lacked specificity to SIDS and local empirical evidence. Surveyed participants attributed their lack of knowledge and experience in those mentioned areas to the strong local central control of institutions' financial matters.

The literature presented on training expectations and experiences, although quite limited, highlighted training and development approaches and models as important for their job experience. Issues raised are mainly to do with preparedness and, in identifying needs that have to be met at institution level, with a degree of apprehension in regards to the effectiveness of training methods used, in relation to their current leadership post. The findings revealed differences in experience as the focus was on the content and nature of the programme and approach used while most participants considered that the most valuable aspects were the emotional support and sharing of experiences. These relate to the positive effects of cohort learning, highlighted in the literature on English, American and Asian principals, especially in terms of team work, management planning and vision building (Male, 2001; Davis et al., 2005; Wong, 2005).

### **Impact of Leadership Development on Leadership Practices**

Leadership development is perceived as becoming more strongly related to the promotion of collaborative approaches to organizations, with distributed leadership

as the dominant mode of professional organisation (Hannay and Ross, 1999). Its impact on school leaders is thought to be directly related to development opportunities strongly linked to leadership for learning by way of transformational philosophies (Crowther and Olson, 1997).

In the US, there is little empirical evidence on how specific programme components influence leadership behaviours, on-job performance, or student outcomes (Davis et al., 2005), principals who participated in a preparation programme received higher performance evaluation ratings by supervisors and were perceived by teachers as being more effective in managing their schools (Valentine, 2001). A study carried out in the Seychelles revealed that, although the training impacted positively on secondary school leaders in several areas of distributed leadership skills, management of change, team work, and creating a conducive climate for the enhancement of school performance, the involvement of staff is still a major concern, leading to authoritarian leadership practices (Elizabeth, 2006).

Senior MoE officials believe that leadership development has had a positive impact on school leaders mainly in regards to leaders' status and pride in achieving an internationally recognized degree, self esteem, confidence and assertiveness, knowledge acquisition and skills development, attitudes and school ethos. The majority agree that changes in leadership practices through delegation of duties; involvement of staff, parents and learners in decision making and activities, better record keeping and documentation, are very apparent in several schools. Although the quality of leaders' self evaluation needs improvement, there is agreement among the respondents that most school leaders are more reflective in their practices and in

the sharing of best practices. There is evidence that the school budget and school fund are now managed better by school leaders. However, senior MoE officials say that empowerment of other leaders in schools by trained leaders is very slow and very few are attempting to do this.

Putting into practice what has been learnt through training was a major challenge for more than half of the survey participants with the argument that a highly centralized system of educational control present limited autonomy to fully implement what they see as best for their school or section, and the limited support from the centre in enabling them to perform at their highest ability. About a third of the participants found difficulty in selling their ideas and persuading others to think and see things differently. The difficulty for slightly less than a quarter of the participants was in sustaining good practices, and maintaining standards, due to constant staff shortages and redeployment. Expectations of parents, staff and MoE officials on leaders to bring about immediate positive changes and to be accountable for them were a big challenge for some participants. These major challenges were mentioned by three quarters of the pilot participants, mainly in practising what was learnt, and in convincing and changing the mindset of others. A quarter of the participants believed that, although leading others was not difficult, leading by example was and still is very challenging, and there are difficulties associated with access to resources due to too many bureaucratic procedures.

Despite the major challenges encountered after leadership training more than half of the survey participants claimed that they have practiced distributed leadership styles through delegation of duties and involvement of others in decision making, a third

claimed they have practiced transformational leadership styles through empowerment of school and/or system based staff, and about a quarter claimed they have practiced instructional leadership through close monitoring of teaching and learning and the sharing of good practices. More than half of the pilot participants also claimed that they have empowered other leaders to take up leadership roles, reinforced collaborative work and created opportunities for more involvement of staff, students and parents in school activities.

It was self-reported by more than half of survey participants that, due to these modified practices, there is more collaborative work taking place and more shared decisions and information sharing. About a third claimed that more leaders are assertive enough to question MoE decisions, that there is more involvement and participation of partners in education, and that there is improvement in school ethos and teacher performance. More than half of the pilot participants report observable changes that have taken place, including the receptiveness of staff members to carry out delegated duties and to accept criticism, better team spirit, increased numbers of students in school activities and parents in meetings.

The case study revealed significant changes in a senior leader's practices. Interviewees expressed strong views about observable differences in the practice of their senior leader during pre-training and post-training periods, notably in respect of communication and support. They say that their senior leader's leadership practices shifted from an authoritarian and domineering style to being more distributed, humanistic and collegial. The senior leader attributed these major changes, including the practice of different leadership styles, and implementation of strategies

for improvement, to her leadership training. Participants revealed changes in the practices of their senior leader, emphasising monitoring and supporting teaching and learning, delegation of duties, involvement of others in decisions and activities, empowerment of staff and networking. Through shadowing and analysis of documents, these practices were observed and evidence of implementation of strategies was well documented.

Senior MoE officials revealed areas of concern in relation to the current practices of trained leaders. More than half of the participants felt that some leaders tend to be arrogant with parents, staff and students, brought about possibly by their enhanced self esteem, assertiveness and status after successful completion of training. Such attitudes are perceived to be detrimental to establishing strong ties and mutual understanding with all partners in education. According to half of the participants, there are trained leaders who are having difficulty understanding the needs of their staff and students. The main difficulty is in interpreting students' behaviours and identifying the underlying causes of the problem. They believe that trained leaders face major challenges in implementing strategies for improvement, critical reflection and self evaluation, and coping with social ills.

Literature on the impact of leadership development on leadership practices, although limited, especially in relation to SIDS, links to the research findings in terms of collaborative and distributed leadership approaches at the level of organisations (Hannay and Ross, 1999). There is a strong correlation in the reported impact on leadership practices, as perceived by senior MoE officials and survey, pilot and case study respondents. Although most of the evidence is self reported and liable to

subjectivity, the case study ‘role set analysis’ (Bush, 2008) confirms some of the claims made, especially in regards to leadership for learning through transformational leadership practices (Crowther and Olson, 1997) and changes in instructional practices and attitudes. The impact, in terms of distributed leadership practices, improved team work and school ethos, as well as concerns raised by senior MoE officials in regards to the authoritarian behaviour of some leaders, corresponds well with Elizabeth’s (2006) findings.

### **Impact of Leadership Development on School Outcomes**

The effectiveness of schools as learning organisations is characterised by strong and purposive leadership, with the display of collaborative culture; common shared values, goals and mission, strategies for continuous improvement of staff and involvement of all parties (Bolam et al., 1993), with the ability to improve their processes and structure by turning their learning upon themselves (Bierema, 1997). Literature on the impact of leadership development on school outcomes is extremely limited in Africa and SIDS. In developed nations, the limited information often relies heavily on self-reported data, such as the initial study of the impact of the NCSL programme, ‘Leading from the Middle’ (Naylor et al. 2006), where participants claimed considerable increase in confidence and team effects on learners’ progress (Bush, 2008). In an evaluation of the SQH, Reeves et al. (2001) claim a noticeable impact on participants and their schools but they fail to reveal specific details of this impact on school outcomes. In an examination of the impact of NCSL’s New Visions’ programme, Bush et al. (2006) reported on changes in knowledge, disposition and skills; leadership practices, altered classroom conditions and

determination to improved learners' outcomes. The credibility of such self-reported findings was enhanced through the adoption of role set analysis (Bush, 2008).

Senior MoE officials believe that the leadership training programme has enabled leaders to lead their institutions more effectively. With a caution that improvement is still needed, impact is perceived through leaders' enhanced effectiveness in the areas of teaching and learning, development and action planning, parental involvement and community links. The majority perceive that monitoring of teaching and learning has improved through the use of instructional leadership practices, sharing good practices, and collaborative work, resulting in improved documentation and learners' performance in some schools. Although auditing at school level is an area where assistance is sought from MoE support providers, the majority agree that there has been noticeable improvement in the formulation of more realistic school visions and missions, within a more conducive school environment. Although classroom impact of staff professional development sessions is slow, there is perceived improvement in the nature and consistency of the sessions at school level. With the majority of schools perceived to be practising an 'open door' policy, there has been remarkable improvement in the involvement of parents in school decisions, with increased turn out of parents, especially fathers, in school organised activities and stronger links established with outside agencies and the community at large. Senior MoE officials attribute these outcomes to school leaders' training.

Survey and pilot participants revealed several specific strategies that were employed in their respective work place. The reported impact is in the improvement of staff professional development and training, both at system and institution levels, resulting

in improved quality of school support, empowerment of more middle leaders, noticeable improvements in the quality of examination papers produced, monitoring of teaching and learning, enhanced teacher-student relationships, and the sharing of good practices within and among schools. The majority of surveyed and pilot participants claimed impact in the area of climate and ethos, through observable improvement in learners' behaviour and attitude, staff attitude and involvement at institutional and system levels, liveliness and calmness of atmosphere, management awareness of school issues, sense of belonging, active participation in discussion, and information sharing.

In the areas of teaching and learning, and parental involvement, there are claims of much improved cooperation and team work, punctuality of staff and learners, monitoring of learners' classes and homework, resulting in claimed improvement in learners' performance in some schools. These newly created conditions were perceived to have strengthened links with parents and the community with more cooperation, better communication, and increased turnout of parents in school activities.

Survey and pilot participants claimed impact in the area of 'Leadership and Management' which, through the practice of distributed, transformational and instructional leadership practices, resulted in better delegation and involvement of other leaders in decision making and activities, improved collaborative planning and communication between management and staff at institution and system levels.

Enhanced 'Student Involvement' is shown by the revival and setting up of learners committees, active participation of prefects and student bodies in information sharing and decision making, with more interaction with management, reduction in cases of vandalism and misbehaviour, and the emergence of student leaders, with their voice being heard in schools through learners' representation on school committees.

The case study role set analysis revealed impact on school outcomes in areas similar to the survey, most of which they attributed to their senior leader's training, due to strong observable changes in her practices since undertaking training. These were mainly in the conduciveness of the school atmosphere with no reported cases of learners' disruption, which was confirmed during shadowing. Evidence of the collaborative culture of the school was seen in the conduct of professional development sessions to empower staff, and in promoting the sharing of good practices and team work. The conduct of meetings with staff and PTA members, and assemblies with learners, demonstrate the involvement of partners in school decision making and activities. Evidence of specific actual outcomes of strategies implemented for monitoring and supporting teaching and learning was witnessed by the author, and well documented. These improvements were evidenced through the strong involvement of management in lesson observation and conferencing, peer teaching and observation by teachers, team planning among management members and among teachers, rewarding learners through positive notes, and subject meetings with parents.

It was evident that the senior leader's positive approach in relating and communicating to learners, staff and parents were well appreciated. Her active

participation in professional school-based development sessions, personally monitoring teachers' and learners' performance, and promoting shared decision making and delegation of duties, provide evidence of transformational, instructional and distributed leadership practices, revealed by participants and their role sets, as well as through shadowing and documentation. These changes were perceived to have led to steady improvement in learners' performance at school and national levels in most examinable subject areas. The improvement achieved during the post-training period is attributed, by participants and their role sets, to their senior leader's training.

Empirical evidence of the impact of leadership development on school outcomes (Bush et al. 2006; Naylor et al. 2006; Reeves et al. 2001), and what is revealed by the four different sources of the author's enquiry, highlight strong correlation. The senior MoE officials' perception of impact in terms of improvement in school ethos and climate, involvement of partners in school decisions and activities, documentation and sharing of good practices, and monitoring of teaching and learning, which in some schools have resulted in improved learners' performance, were confirmed by interviews. The strong emphasis placed on team work through a collaborative learning culture has been revealed as one aspect of the training that the majority of participants have promoted in their respective work places. Elements of the effectiveness of schools as learning organisations (Bolam et al., 1993) were supported by the case study of a primary school under the leadership of an empowered head, displaying the ability to improve their processes and structure through self learning (Bierema, 1997). Although most of the information is self-reported, the case study participants and their roles set analysis enhanced the

credibility of information gathered (Bush, 2008). However, such data should be interpreted cautiously.

### **Programme Completion and Leadership Effectiveness**

Upon emerging from training, leaders are not fully prepared as an ongoing process of socialization is imperative in becoming an effective school leader (Duke, 1987). Although several programmes exist to enhance the effectiveness of leaders (Davis et al., 2005), there is great concern in regards to the induction and transition of principals which may discourage capable people from taking up posts (Barnett and O'Mahony, 2008). In England, the 'New Visions' programme supports first-time headteachers in identifying and addressing their personal and professional development needs to take up their role with confidence (NCSL, 2005). Australia's School Executive Induction Programme (SEIP), and the Principal Induction Programme (PIP), are designed to induct new appointees into their leadership functions (Anderson et al., 2008; Huber and Pashiardis, 2008; Rusch, 2008). Several Asian countries have in place programmes for enhancing newly appointed heads' effectiveness (Kandasamy and Blaton, 2004). In most African countries, there is little evidence of formal induction of principals (Bush and Oduro, 2006). Some typical cases are those of Ghana (Oduro, 2003), Kenya (Kitavi and Van der Westhuizen, 1997), Nigeria (Otunga et al. 2008) and South Africa (Heystek, 2004), although there are attempts at enhancing principal effectiveness through programmes in Kenya (Herriot et al. 2002) and South Africa (Otunga et al., 2000).

There is little evidence of formal induction in SIDS educational systems (Bush and

Oduro, 2006) although Gronn and Ribbins (2003) revealed that few Cyprus principals were satisfied with their formal induction. In the Seychelles, an SIP study revealed that the training of headteachers through partnership with the Quebec University did not create the enabling conditions for headteachers to put into practice what had been learnt (Ministry of Education, 2000).

Senior MoE officials acknowledged that induction and mentoring are important to ensure that trained leaders are supported, so as to attract them to remain in post, rather than as a means of enhancing their effectiveness in leading their schools. They say that this is an area of weakness in the Seychelles education system. These processes have not been properly established at system and institution levels, in the absence of a national comprehensive programme being in place. However, the majority perceive that formal and informal induction, as well as informal mentoring, does take place for middle leaders in some schools that have policy guidelines and a short programme is in place. Some participants claim that informal induction for senior leaders is carried out partially at MoE level, where an induction programme, which include aspects of mentoring (not formally and officially established), is being implemented for middle leaders of primary schools. They anticipate the implementation of a similar, but more comprehensive, national programme for newly appointed heads in the near future.

In terms of provision for smooth transition, only about a quarter of the survey participants mentioned that they received support in the form of regular visits by Education coordinators and through meetings with senior MoE officials, where concerns were shared, advice given, and support offered, for their initiatives. Nearly

three quarter of participants, mainly those who retained their post or remained in the same workplace after training, claimed that meetings and visits did not provide the kind of support needed. Similarly, the majority of pilot participants stated that there was no provision for transition, except that they were placed in familiar surroundings, such as their previous institution, prior to deployment to a more senior leadership post, where support was received from the immediate supervisor.

Fewer than a quarter of trained leaders' interviewees acknowledged being inducted prior to deployment and only 7% claimed that they followed an induction programme, contrary to about a half of the pilot participants who stated that they were informally inducted mainly through a tête a tête with their immediate supervisor. Although one eighth of survey participants stated they were mentored, only 4% acknowledged following a programme, while about half of the pilot participants reported they were not mentored. More than three quarters of survey participants, however, claimed that they were neither inducted nor mentored.

The literature presented on issues related to leadership effectiveness upon completion of training highlight strong differences in provision among education systems of developed countries and those of developing countries, mainly Africa and SIDS where evidence is limited. It does serve to show that principals in countries with established comprehensive programmes such as England, Australia and the US, are presented with more opportunities for becoming effective in leading their institutions. In most African countries and SIDS, such as Seychelles, these opportunities are limited. In the latter, interviewees' responses confirmed what senior MoE officials perceived as an area of weakness of the education system, in

providing induction and mentoring services to leaders to facilitate a smooth transition to their new posts. Although research has shown that partnership with Quebec did not proceed to enhancing leaders' ability to implement change (Ministry of Education, 2000), the more than three quarters of the survey interviewees not inducted or mentored signalled a major concern shared by most African countries and SIDS. This issue merits the attention of government in order to enhance their school leaders' effectiveness.

### **On-going Support and Professional Development**

Petersen (2002) argues that professional development activities should build on prior learning experiences and continue throughout the stages of a principal's career. Davis et al. (2005) add that closer links should be made with principal preparation to provide such continuity framed around the principles of instructional leadership. On-going support and leadership professional development opportunities exist in communities with developed education systems. There are carefully designed comprehensive programmes in place by various recognised organisations such as the NCSL in England (NCSL, 2005); national, state and district leadership academies in the US, with some offering mentoring and coaching programmes alongside institutes and other professional learning experiences (Young and Grogan, 2008), the Principal Development Programme (PDP) and the School Executive Development Programme (SEDP) in Australia (Rusch, 2008; Huber and Pashiardis, 2008; and Anderson et al., 2008). In several Asian countries, apart from continuous professional development (CPD), support is mainly in the form of supervisory activities provided for school leaders (Kandasamy and Blaton, 2004). However, due to lack of resources and a

control-oriented attitude, these services do not always function efficiently (IIEP, 2004).

Provision for on-going professional development is limited in most African countries and SIDS. In Fiji, however, although such opportunities exist, principals complained that they are not formalised (Cardno and Howse, 2004) while Tonga principals acknowledged the need for skills and competences that supported teaching and learning (Billot, 2003), revealing the importance of life long learning applications that are slowly being applied to professional development in SIDS (Crossley and Holmes, 1999). In the Seychelles, Elizabeth's (2006) study revealed that, while senior MoE officials believe that the amount of support provided to school leaders is adequate, leaders are of the perception that support is lacking.

Senior MoE officials believe that, in the absence of nationally established programmes for induction and mentoring, a support programme for leaders is in place and being implemented by Schools Divisions' Education Coordinators and Directors. This programme involves consultative meetings and conferencing with school leaders at system level and follow up carried out at institution level, facilitation and assistance with school-based professional development sessions, school visits, and networking organised at zone and central levels for sharing of good practices. Visits to primary and secondary schools are conducted to provide coordinated team support in monitoring teaching and learning, leadership practices, pastoral care and school ethos, learners and parental involvement. Training and networking sessions at central level are the MoE's main provision for school leaders' continuous professional development.

The support mentioned by senior MoE officials is mainly for school leaders as there was no mention of specific forms of support for leaders at post-secondary institutions and at system level. There was also no mention of any specific structures in place or provision for continuous professional development of educational leaders in general.

Very few survey participants acknowledged being aware of the existence of structures at MoE level that provide ongoing support and continuous professional development for school leaders. Only one fifth of the participants mentioned that Education coordinators and section directors regularly visit them and conduct training and networking sessions. Such strategies are employed by the MoE but more than three quarters of participants do not consider them sufficient to enhance their leadership effectiveness. This view is supported by the pilot participants who all believe that no such structure exists, but are of the opinion that the MoE employs different strategies to support leaders. These strategies are employed to support leaders in primary and secondary schools mainly, but not necessarily for participants in post-secondary institutions and at system level. Forms of support mentioned by some survey participants are the zone 3 decentralization pilot project, providing support to individual schools based on their needs at zone level rather than from the central body, and provision of resources. Networking and training sessions carried out at central level, according to survey participants, do not necessarily develop them professionally as these sessions are mainly a repetition of things already learnt. At zone level, however, the sharing of good practices through networking among schools was more appreciated.

The limitation of the MoE in providing opportunities for continuing professional development of leaders is revealed by the different strategies employed, where few participants are fortunate enough to participate. One fifth of the survey participants are involved in developing / facilitating the local training of leaders and in tutoring master's tutees. A small number (4%) are carrying out research at doctoral level. About a quarter are involved in committees and working groups at MoE level to conceptualise projects, write policy guidelines, drafting information for handbooks, piloting, implementing and evaluating projects, both school-based and at system level. About two fifths have prepared and presented a research paper in national forums and 10% have done so in international forums. More than a quarter of the trained leaders surveyed have not been involved in any professional development activities as opposed to four-fifths of the pilot participants who have done so.

The literature presented highlights certain similarities in provision in terms of established structures and /or comprehensive programmes for ongoing support and continuous professional development opportunities that exist in developed communities such as the US, Australia, England and some Asian countries, in comparison to the limited opportunities in most African countries and SIDS. The author's findings reveal a strong need, shared by most African states and SIDS, for the existence of such opportunities for all, and the desire to address such limitations in provision by working towards contextualised programmes for on-going support and continuous professional development of school leaders. The participants' perception of the existing lack of on-going support for leaders confirms claims made by participants in the study by Elizabeth (2006). What senior MoE officials

perceive as strategies for support is confirmed by only a few survey and pilot participants, revealing conflicting understanding of what on-going support entails.

However, the fact that the majority of participants claimed to have been involved in one or more professional development activities, shows that opportunities exist. Such opportunities however, should be made available to all leaders in the Seychelles.

### **Summary**

Seychelles is one of the smallest island developing states (SIDS) in the world and shares most of the limitations of SIDS in higher education (HE) provision. It has, however, embarked on a serious quest to provide training for its leaders in education by establishing partnership with HE bodies. Although Seychelles' leadership development approach shares certain similarities with that of the developed communities, it is not yet comprehensive. For example, it lacks a formal set of criteria and established procedures for recruitment and selection of school leaders, suggesting an element of subjectivity on the part of senior MoE officials, as their perceptions are the dominating factors. However, the participants' high level of satisfaction with the training revealed aspects of the programme that should be consolidated. Much of the literature, and the author's findings, reveal similarities with other highly centralized education systems. The central selection of leaders, control over leadership succession, major concerns over leadership effectiveness, provision for on-going support and professional development, are typical in the Seychelles and in other similar communities, such as those in Africa and SIDS. An exception, however, is the dominance of female leaders in education in Seychelles,

which suggests a degree of gender subjectivity in the recruitment, selection and appointment of school leaders. Although limited empirical evidence exists to support the findings presented on the impact of leadership development on leadership practices and school outcomes, the analysis revealed strong evidence of changes in leadership practices and improved school outcomes attributed to leadership training.

The issues discussed in this chapter will be reinforced in the final chapter, which will also present recommendations and discuss the limitations of the research. Emphasis will be placed on the empirical and theoretical significance of the research, leading to an adapted model for leadership development in the Seychelles (the Seychelles' model) that can be implemented by SIDS.

## CHAPTER NINE

### CONCLUSION

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents an overview of the main findings of the research enquiry on leadership development in the Seychelles. The answers to the main research questions are provided followed by consideration of the significance of the study. The recommendations and limitations of the research are also revealed. The chapter ends with an overview of the whole thesis.

#### **Overview of Main Findings**

The main findings are presented under the following broad themes:

- Preparing and supporting leaders
- Impact of leadership development

#### Preparing and supporting leaders

National awareness of the growing evidence of important links between school leadership and school improvement has inspired the Seychelles government to establish a partnership with international Higher Education (HE) communities in providing formal leadership training at Master's level for school leaders. This partnership is an opportunity much desired by most SIDS. Dependent on 'policy borrowing', and a cohort grouping learning approach, the content of the programme

is adapted to the local context with the development of a local bridging programme for leaders not meeting entry requirement. With more than 90% of school heads holding a leadership qualification at master's level, this is a major achievement for the Seychelles as one of the smallest island developing states in the world.

The Seychelles Education System, however, lacks a comprehensive leadership development programme because formal sets of criteria for the recruitment and selection of leaders for training, appointment of senior leaders, promotion and deployment, are lacking. Advertisement of posts is not a common practice and a policy for leadership development has yet to be produced. This in itself reveals the subjectivity of senior MoE officials' perceptions being the dominating factor in the selection and appointment processes of school leaders, which is a typical element of strongly centralised education systems. Unusually, the majority of system leaders are female, as are the majority of the 90% of leaders trained and appointed as head teachers, suggesting that gender could be a significant influence on the recruitment and development of leaders.

Several limitations that are common in SIDS also exist in the Seychelles education system, especially in the restricted enhancement of leadership effectiveness and support after training (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008). This is revealed by the lack of established structures and comprehensive programmes in place for the induction and mentoring of school leaders, with limited provision for on-going support and continuous professional development. Although several strategies are used, not all leaders benefited from them. This shows inconsistency in the approach used for preparing and supporting school leaders. These are major concerns that need the

attention of government officials in order to promote leaders' effectiveness and ensure overall improvement in school outcomes.

### Impact of leadership development

The findings reveal the impact of leadership development in areas such as: participants' satisfaction; changes in knowledge, disposition and skills; changes in leadership practices; and improved school outcomes.

#### *Participants' satisfaction*

School leaders reported very high levels of satisfaction with the training received, highlighting specific areas of professionalism and emotional support that need to be consolidated. The sharing of experiences and modules on educational leadership and change were much valued. Although the expectations of the MoE were not made clear to the majority of leaders during training and upon completion, their own expectations of the training programme were met.

#### *Changes in knowledge, disposition and skills*

Several claims were made in the pilot and main surveys about significant gains in leaders' confidence and status. Personal development in terms of knowledge acquisition, skills development and professional growth were also revealed. Most of these changes were confirmed by the case study participants and their role sets, and

senior MoE officials, with the desire that such positive changes be used to empower other leaders at institution level.

#### *Changes in leadership practices*

Based on claims made by pilot and survey participants, the main changes in leadership practices are in the emphasis being placed on distributed, participatory, instructional and transformational leadership. Although limited empirical evidence exists to support such claims, the case study participants and their role sets revealed strong evidence of changes in leadership practices attributed to leadership training, with an increased focus on leadership for learning. There is a need to be cautious, however, as this is a single case. However, senior MoE officials also noted certain observable positive changes in the leadership practices of trained leaders, with more school heads advocating and practicing instructional and distributed leadership practices.

#### *Improved school outcomes*

Participants claim the implementation of several strategies, which contributed to improvements in school outcomes. One significant example is the altered classroom conditions revealed in the case study school, where there is a greater emphasis on a 'whole school' approach to monitoring and supporting teaching and learning. Enhanced team work is developing into a culture of learning with collaborative practices and improved school ethos. There has been a steady improvement in learners' performance at the case study school, and its progress is better than the

national average in most subject areas. Although this is a single case, it confirms several claims made by the pilot and survey respondents, that there has been considerable improvement in school outcomes, supported to some extent by senior MoE officials. This is mainly attributed to strategies implemented for the monitoring of teaching and learning, resulting in improved learners' performance in some schools; better quality of documentation in schools, considerable improvement in the involvement and participation of learners, staff and parents, especially fathers, in school decision making and activities; and improvements in school ethos.

### **Answering the Research Questions**

The enquiry has been guided by seven main research questions, all of which are presented below. The discussion following each question is based strictly on the outcomes of the research findings from the four sources; Ministry of Education senior staff interviews, pilot study, main survey and case study.

*1. What is the process by which school leaders are identified and recruited to take part in the MBA/MA programme in educational leadership?*

The processes by which school leaders are identified and recruited to take part in leadership training vary. In identifying and recruiting leaders, a set of criteria based mainly on experience, current post and qualifications, is used. In practice however, other criteria are used such as: leadership qualities displayed, personal interest, and recommendations from the immediate supervisor. As such criteria are not formalised or published school leaders are sceptical of their existence and consideration. It is the

most senior of the MoE officials who have the final say in who is admitted to the training programme. The identification and recruitment procedures being practiced lack clear formal guidelines, resulting in inconsistency in their application. This is revealed by the majority of participants who attended only consultative meetings with senior MoE officials as compared to a minority who went through an interview process. All participants, however, completed an application form after being perceived 'suitable' by senior MoE officials and this is where the element of subjectivity is most influential. Overall, it is clear that the whole process of identification and selection of leaders for leadership training is under the tight and strong control of the central body, the MoE.

*2. What are the experiences of the participants taking part in these programmes?*

All participants rated their satisfaction with the training received very highly. These are mainly in terms of the modules' content, relevance to their experience and the context of the Seychelles, the quality of the materials used, the expected standard of assignments, and the delivery mode. All participants' expectations of the programme were met. The modules on educational leadership, emotional support, and the relationships established among participants and lecturers, were the most valued aspects of the course. As the majority of participants were in-service as senior or middle leaders, there were no apparent differences in their experiences, as most of the concepts were new and challenging to all of them. The successful completion of the training resulted in changes in status, knowledge, disposition and skills, with all participants claiming that they are professionally different and are better leaders.

3. *What is the process by which participants taking part in these programmes are identified for leadership roles following completion of the programme?*

The possession of a leadership training qualification is yet to be made mandatory in the appointment of school leaders. However, the majority of participants who retained their senior leadership posts, or were promoted to a more senior post after training, believe that their identification was based on successful completion of the course. In practice, nearly all leaders at institution level are identified based on their leadership training. A set of criteria, which is not official, is used in the appointment of school leaders, relying mainly on experience, qualifications, performance, leadership skills displayed, and recommendations from the immediate supervisor.

The small size of the population of the Seychelles means that ‘an individual’s personal knowledge is common knowledge’. Discrepancies in the use of criteria in the identification process, where no clear guidelines are in place, leads participants to believe that ‘personal affiliation’ and politics are hidden factors that determine the outcome of the identification process. This is supported by the evidence that it is the most senior of the MoE officials, who have the task of selecting senior school leaders, and have the final say in their subsequent appointment. This is a characteristic of central selection, which is typical of centralised systems of education (Bush, 2005).

4. *What is the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools?*

The leaders' satisfaction with their training, and their postgraduate qualification, have boosted their confidence and uplifted their status. The participants claim changes in their behaviour, attitude and professionalism, which are partially supported by senior MoE officials. The main changes in leaders' practices are in areas of communication and relationships with stakeholders, parental and student involvement, sharing of good practices, networking, delegation, and implementation of strategies to improve the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Although limited empirical evidence exists to support the impact of leadership development on leadership practices and school outcomes, the case study revealed significant changes in one primary school leader's practices, which she attributed to the leadership training received. Such changes have resulted in an enhanced focus on leadership for learning, altered classroom conditions, and improved learners' outcomes.

5. *To what extent is the effectiveness of school leaders enhanced following successful completion of the programme?*

Although successful completion of the training spearheaded certain positive changes in leaders' practices, leading to some improvement in school outcomes, more could have been achieved if an appropriate follow-up programme was in place to enhance leaders' effectiveness.

The findings show that further enhancement of school leaders' effectiveness, following successful completion of the leadership training programme, is minimal. This is due to several weaknesses that currently exist in the education system. Such weaknesses including the lack of appropriate support, and of a comprehensive national programme, for induction and mentoring of leaders, highlighted in the pilot and main surveys, and confirmed by senior MoE officials. This is shown by the evidence that more than three quarters of the survey participants were neither inducted nor mentored upon completion of training and prior to being appointed. The majority of the few who claimed that they were inducted and mentored did not follow formal programmes.

6. *What arrangements exist for the ongoing support and professional development of graduates from the MBA/MA?*

Ongoing support is provided by education coordinators and directors of the Ministry's Schools Division through visits, meetings and networking activities at central, zone and institutional levels. According to senior MoE officials, the support providers arrange a termly programme of activities for school support. Those 'supportive activities', however, are only for school leaders, not those at post secondary levels and within the wider education system. Also, the majority of survey and pilot participants say that those activities are not really supportive and that ongoing professional development is very limited. This view is linked to the evidence that the majority of participants have not been inducted or mentored upon re-appointment in post or on deployment.

There is no structure or comprehensive programme at system level for the provision of continuous professional development of leaders. The MoE, however, does employ several strategies for leaders' professional development. These include the opportunity to participate in conferences or forums at national and international levels; involvement in committees and working groups related to project conceptualisation, implementation and evaluation; drafting of policy guidelines and handbook chapters; tutoring at master level; and post graduate research studies. Those 'professional development activities' however, do not involve the participation of all trained leaders. More than a quarter (29%) of surveyed participants have not undertaken or been involved in any kind of such 'professional development activities' after leadership training.

*7. What are the perceptions of senior Ministry officials of the impact of leadership development on leadership practices in schools?*

Senior MoE officials (SMO) perceive that leadership training has had a positive impact on leaders' practices in school. They revealed noticeable improvement in several areas such as; the sharing of good practices, documentation, school ethos, and distributed and instructional leadership.

SMO perceive leaders' enhanced effectiveness in the areas of teaching and learning, development and action planning, parental involvement, and community links. Although they cautioned that improvement is still needed, more leaders are involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning, with improvement in learners' performance in some schools, while it has been maintained in others. SMO

confirmed that school vision and mission are more realistic with Professional Development (PD) sessions done regularly in all schools. They acknowledged that more schools are practising an ‘open door’ policy and that turn out of parents at school activities has increased significantly.

SMO revealed that the biggest challenges facing trained leaders is in coping with the wider society’s current social ills, and to critically evaluate their own performance in relation to the needs of their school. Their perceptions are that leaders’ good practices include the involvement of more learners in school decision making, and the conceptualisation and implementation of small projects to improve teaching and learning within their schools and zones. They perceive leaders having difficulties in initiating strategies to cope better with students’ misbehaviour and their poor attitudes towards learning.

## **Significance of the Study**

### Empirical significance

This research dealt specifically with issues of leadership development and its impact in the Seychelles, a small island developing state. Most of the literature on the development of educational leaders relates to much larger, and predominantly developed, systems, in Asia, England, Australia and the United States. The research is significant as it is the first major study of leadership development in the Seychelles, and makes a major contribution to the limited literature on leadership

development in small island developing states (SIDS). It also makes a contribution to the literature on leadership development in centralised systems.

Although school leaders, particularly headteachers, are widely perceived to be of critical importance in achieving school effectiveness and improvement, their roles are significantly changing with the introduction of educational reforms designed to raise standards through school improvement (Bolam, 2003). This provided the rationale for the Ministry of Education (MoE) embarking on the ambitious project of providing leadership training to school leaders through a partnership with HE bodies.

The research shows that 90% of secondary school heads and 91% of primary school heads are master's graduates in educational leadership. This represents a 96% programme completion rate for participants. This confirms one of the main positive effects of cohort grouping, reported by Davis et al. (2005) in the United States, 'that cohorts can foster improved academic learning and programme completion rates'. This approach to adult learning was adopted for the training of school leaders, and other positive effects, such as enhanced feelings of group affiliation and acceptance, social and emotional support, and group learning, were revealed by participants.

The leader's performance is being increasingly and strongly scrutinised, and expectations of stake holders are high and varied (Bush et al. 2002). This is especially so in a small island state like the Seychelles, where there are high levels of personal and professional knowledge of all school leaders. This is confirmed by the senior MoE officials' (SMO) expectation and perception that some trained leaders are yet to practice what they have learned, to bring about improvement in their

school outcomes. This is also an aspect which most trained leaders confirmed to be their biggest challenge. Considering the small size of the Seychelles, what takes place in their schools is often common knowledge. In this respect, this research provides a significant, and distinctive, contribution to the current literature on leadership development in SIDS.

Leithwood et al's (2006:5) research shows that "school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupils learning". The participants' self reported findings indicated that the standard of learners' attainment has either increased, or been maintained, in schools with trained leaders. The case study of a primary school revealing a trained leaders' influence in successfully turning around its learners' achievement through changes in leadership practices impacting on classroom practices. Even as a single case, it seems to confirm that "there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership (Leithwood et al. 2006:5).

Mentoring as a mode of leadership development has been shown to be increasingly important (Davis et al. 2005; Huber, 2008), highly successful in promoting the development of practising and aspiring leaders (Hobson, 2003; Bush and Glover, 2004), and serving to accelerate the transition process to headship (Pocklington and Weindling, 1996). When combined with coaching for skills development and performance, it eases the problem of how to transfer learning from training back to the job (West and Milan, 2001; Hartle and Thomas, 2003). This research revealed that limited mentoring took place and a total lack of coaching was offered to practising and aspiring school leaders after training. It therefore confirms that, in the

absence of mentoring and coaching, enhancement of leadership effectiveness is seriously affected. The Seychelles' school leaders say that putting into practice what has been learnt in training to bring about improvement in school outcomes is their biggest challenge during the transition stage and beyond. It appears that setting up effective mentoring and coaching arrangements has proved particularly challenging for this small island state.

With the current limited empirical evidence on the impact of leadership development on leadership practices and school outcomes, especially in SIDS, this research provides substantial additional and valuable data on this issue. Although data collected through the pilot and main surveys are self reported, the case study participants' role set analysis reinforced the credibility of findings pertaining to changes in leadership practices and school outcomes attributed to leadership training.

#### Theoretical significance

##### *Theory-data-fit in terms of model or theory*

##### *Theories and models of leadership development*

Models derived from developed countries cannot easily be adapted for application in SIDS. This is mainly due to the specific limitations of SIDS, such as inadequate funding and limited higher education. As such, a model for leadership development in SIDS should be customized to their specific context and needs. This could involve establishing partnerships with HE bodies, and focusing on in-service preparation, as is common to some developing countries with centralised systems of education.

### *School leadership and school improvement*

For all phases of the school development process, school leadership is considered vital and is held responsible for co-ordinating individual activities during the school improvement processes (Huber and Pashiardis, 2008). Existing theory has been developed in large and predominantly decentralized systems, and needs to be modified for SIDS. This research contributes to this process by revealing how, in highly centralised systems, the principal's role may be circumscribed by the strong control exerted by central bodies, for example in the selection of leaders for post-training appointment. The empowerment of middle leaders by trained leaders has been revealed to be an effective approach in promoting their school as a learning organisation through self empowerment and learning (Kenning, 2002; Hartle and Thomas, 2003). More autonomy to schools would facilitate school-based training and should contribute to overall school improvement.

### ***Grounded Theory***

#### *The theory of the selective influence of gender*

The Seychelles education system is unique compared to other African nations and SIDS, and most other countries, in regards to the high proportion of women in senior positions. The research revealed that the large majority of women in senior leadership positions may be an influential factor in the selection and recruitment of female counterparts for training and subsequent appointment. As a result, there are many more female leaders enrolling for leadership training, more female leaders with

a leadership qualification, and more females occupying senior leadership posts at institution and system levels. This supports the theory of ‘the selective influence of gender’, which states that women of power in high professional settings favour the enhancement of career development for females compared to males. Due to the small size of SIDS, knowledge of who to trust for promotion and appointment is common knowledge. Although the element of trust may not necessarily be gender-based, it may be considered as a factor influencing the rise of senior female leaders in education at both institutional and system levels.

#### *The theory of subjective alliance*

In small communities like the Seychelles, ‘personal knowledge’ is perceived as ‘common knowledge’. Through the process of socialization, educational leaders at various levels within institutions and the wider system, and those in very senior positions, have established close relationships. This research revealed that the small scale and ‘short power distances’ (Bray, 1991: 27) of SIDS enable regular contacts among individuals whereby personal knowledge is shared but not necessarily in an objective manner. This was clear in the survey where participants expressed their awareness of MoE expectations of them, without any official communication. However, some expressed uncertainty about the selection for training, and the subsequent appointment criteria.

The exchange of personal information in the SIDS is prone to subjective judgments, due to the established close relationships in such small countries. The relationships among leaders at various level of authority present a ‘subjective alliance’. This alliance influences the perception, and clouds the professional judgment, of those in

senior positions, and affects their ability to make objective judgments when recommending leaders for training and appointment to senior posts.

This theory is grounded in the senior MoE officials' reluctance to comment on the expectations and practices of trained leaders at system level, while confirming that they are considered as 'one of them'. The theory of 'subjective alliance' is also grounded in the perceived 'personal affiliation' and 'politics' as determining factors in the outcomes of leaders' selection and appointment processes, as revealed by the survey respondents. This implies that the close relationships established among leaders in senior positions at the system level, and those at institutional level, with a risk that the undesirable features (in this case not meeting selection or appointment criteria), are not considered and the suitability of the person is confirmed.

This theory also relates to the perceived 'good' practices of trained leaders, where this is not necessarily the case. This is done usually in an attempt to maintain 'good' and productive relationship between subordinates and their immediate supervisors. According to the research findings, the smallness of SIDS makes it difficult for leaders to reflect and make objective judgments. The research confirms that it is the senior MoE officials that have the final say in the selection and appointment of leaders. The inconsistency in the approach used for pre-training selection and post-training appointment, and the absence of a formal set of criteria and guidelines, reinforces the validity of such a theory and supports the claim that appointments are based on the 'chessboard approach' (Bush, 2005).

However, this research also reveals the positive side of the ‘subjective alliance’ theory grounded in the realities of small island states. It provides a platform for professional and organisational socialisation (Heck, 2003) to take place during leadership preparation and post-preparation appointment periods. It presents a powerful network for effective communication among immediate supervisors on the suitability of candidates for pre-training selection and post-training appointment recommendations.

This thesis provides an evidence-based starting point for the construction of an adapted model for the development of leaders in small island states. The components within the model have been adapted from Bush and Oduro (2006), and Bush, Purvis and Barallon (2008), who offered models for leadership preparation in Africa and in small island states.

### **Towards a Model for Leadership Development in SIDS**

The model of leadership preparation in Africa (Bush and Oduro, 2006) presents a comparison with current practices and the approach of Western countries. The model for leadership preparation in Small Island Developing States (Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008), modified from Bush and Oduro (2006), shows how this could be adapted for SIDS. Figure 9.1 is an adaptation of both models. The new proposed model highlights leadership development as a lifelong learning process, and its relevance to professional development, while acknowledging the important contribution of professional and organisational socialisations in the process. According to Crossley and Holmes (1999: 62), and Bush, Purvis and Barallon (2008:

461), notions of lifelong learning, increasingly being applied to professional development, are gaining ground in small island states.

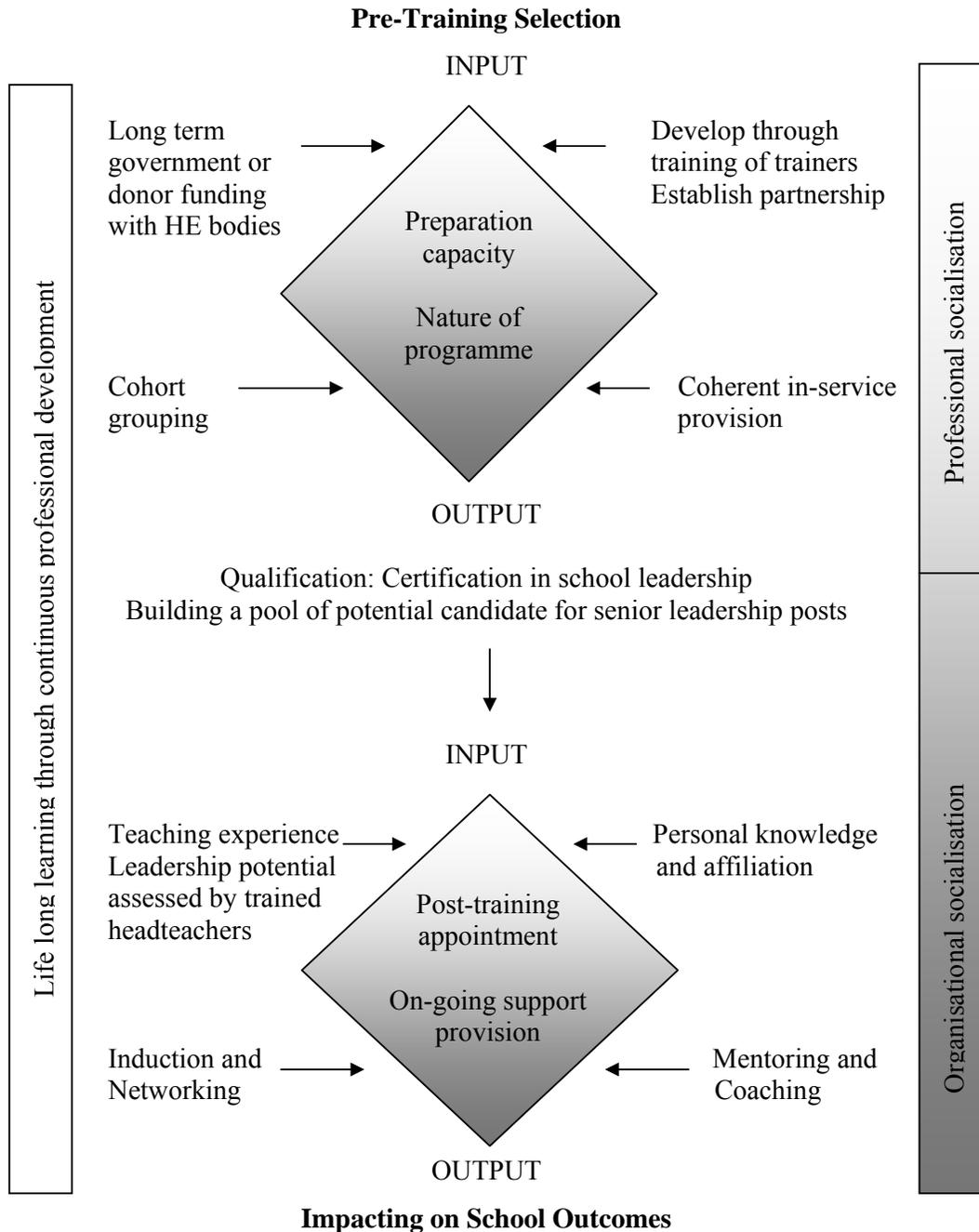


Figure 9.1: The proposed model of leadership development in Small Island States

The transparent pillar on the left hand side of the proposed new model of leadership development in SIDS places the emphasis on the notion of lifelong learning embedded within the development process of school leaders. The shaded pillar on the right hand side shows the twin concepts of socialisation that take place during the key stages of the leadership development process. The shaded diamond shapes aligned in the centre of the model are the two key stages, where professional and organisational socialization (Heck, 2003) takes place, as depicted in the right hand side shaded pillar. The arrows show the proposed components that are specific to small island development states. Those components are crucial for the implementation and sustainability of the development programme. While some components of the new model have been adapted from other models (Bush and Oduro, 2006; Bush, Purvis and Barallon, 2008), others have been added as a result of the author's research findings in Seychelles but with potential wider application to SIDS in general. The input and output signs before and after each key stage indicates the rationale for leadership development. The input for the first key stages comprises the untrained leaders and the outputs are the trained certificated leaders. For the second key stages, while the input is the qualified leaders being appointed, the output is the impact on school outcomes. It is the impact that determines the effectiveness of the new proposed model for leadership development in small island states. The effectiveness of the school leaders' preparation and development programme will no doubt shed more light on the twin assumption that leaders are 'made not born' and that schools are more likely to be effective if they have good leaders.

## **Limitations of the Study**

This study on leadership development in Seychelles, a small island developing state, dwells broadly on issues of leadership preparation and support for the enhancement of leaders' effectiveness. It is based substantially on a 100% sample survey, through face-to-face interviews, with all students taking the programme between September 2002 and December 2006. Although data collected was triangulated among the respondents of the various cohorts, pilot participants and senior MoE officials, much of the information gathered on 'changes in leadership practices and impact on school outcomes' was self-reported and has to be interpreted with caution. There was also only limited local empirical literature to support the interview data.

Relying on a single case study of a primary school is the main limitation of the research. Although potentially transferable to other primary schools with similar features, it cannot readily be transferred to the secondary school context. Having two case studies, one from each type of school, primary and secondary, would have given a richer picture of the impact of leadership training. The researcher would have been able to compare and contrast leaders' experience of the training, changes in leadership practices, and the impact on school outcomes attributed to leadership development.

Another limitation of the study is that it does not offer the scope to establish the different stages of transition of the leaders' career. Adopting and possibly adapting the model of stages of transition through principalship (Weindling and Earley, 1987), would have presented valuable information on the differences in leaders' practices,

and impact on their school outcomes, in comparison to the stages of transition they are at. It would have served to clarify why certain leaders are having difficulty putting into practice what has been learnt through training while others are attempting to do so. It would have possibly served to establish the relationship that exists between the stages of transitions of the leaders and the impact on school outcomes brought about by positive changes in practices. This could have provided a good basis for possible evaluation of school leaders' performance. However, to have replicated this study would have required a longitudinal approach which is not possible for a Ph.D.

Another limitation is that the researcher is an 'insider' to the Seychelles system, as a former head, a MoE official, and one of the first leaders to be trained. The researcher's interpretation and reporting of the data obtained from institutional leaders may be more objective than those from system leaders but still be hampered by her personal knowledge of school leaders and the wider education system. Being an insider researcher, currently working at system level as a support provider to schools, may mean that system level leaders would not comment fully on their colleagues' changes in practices and impact attributed to leadership training and development. These limitations of insider research were highlighted in chapter three.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and analysis of the research, the proposed model for leadership development in Seychelles could be used by other SIDS. The following additional recommendations, grounded in the data, are also presented.

1. In terms of concerns raised in regards to the selection and recruitment of leaders there is an urgent need to:
  - a) Formulate formal sets of criteria for selection and recruitment of leaders for:
    - leadership training
    - appointment to leadership posts
    - deployment to other institutions or system level
    - promotion and demotion
  - b) Construct clear procedural guidelines for selection and recruitment for leadership training, appointment and deployment procedures. The objectiveness of candidate choice can be obtained by the use of an official formal set of criteria and a comprehensive set of guideline procedures. These procedures should be implemented jointly by the system and by schools to move towards gradual decentralisation of operations that are currently strongly centralised.
2. As it is senior MoE officials who act as ‘gate keeper’ to training, appointments, promotions and demotions, there is an urgent need to re-establish trust in the system through transparency and accountability measures by:
  - a) Preparing a career progression manpower forecast plan to ensure that all trainees are represented in the plan and know ‘where’ they are in terms of the next phase of their career.
  - b) Ensuring that appointment and promotion are done through merit-based and experience-based approaches.
  - c) Ensuring that deployment of leaders is not done through the ‘chess board’ approach by senior MoE officials who usually know all school leaders well

and are well placed to decide who shall be nominated for headship. Instead, there should be a 'pool of graduates', with the requisite training, whose performance is closely monitored as they progress through the different stages in their leadership career - in line with the national manpower needs plan.

3. Provision for on-going support and professional development are clearly established, presented and published in the form of a comprehensive programme for educational leaders, based on their needs.
4. On-going support and professional development opportunities should be made available to all leaders in the Seychelles.
5. There is a need to prepare a country-wide programme for the evaluation of leaders' performance

### **Proposed Further Research**

In attempting to address a limitation of the current study, there is a need to conduct an investigation of the relationship that exists between the stages of transition of principalship, the nature of on-going support provision made available, the degree of changes in leadership practices, and what impact they have had on school outcomes, including learners' performance. Such a study would generate important information for policy-makers on the effectiveness of the leadership preparation approaches in use, for appropriate modification and funding.

A major need is to conduct similar research in other SIDS, so that the Seychelles findings can be compared with those from other similar states.

## **Summary**

In this concluding chapter, the review of the main findings highlighted a significant achievement for the Seychelles education system in preparing its leaders, by establishing a partnership with HE bodies for leadership training provision. At present, 88% of school heads hold a master's degree in educational leadership.

Leadership development in Seychelles has been revealed as not fully comprehensive, through the lack of formal criteria and procedural guidelines for the selection of leaders for training and their subsequent appointment, promotion and deployment. In such a small and highly centralized system of education, central selection prevails, as it is the senior MoE officials', acting as 'gate keepers', who have the final say in the selection and appointment processes.

The female domination of leadership positions at system and institutional level makes Seychelles unique compared to other African countries and SIDS. The large number of female trained leaders, in direct correspondence with the dominance of women in senior positions, illustrates the 'gender subjectivity' theory.

The absence of a comprehensive programme for induction and mentoring of leaders, to enhance their leadership effectiveness, with limited provision for on-going support

and continuous professional development, are major issues that need the attention of government officials.

The perceived success of the training is evident in several outcomes: participants' satisfaction; changes in knowledge, disposition and skills; changes in leadership practices; and improved school outcomes.

With limited empirical evidence on the impact of leadership development on leadership practices and school outcomes, this research is significant as it provides a valuable contribution to the literature on SIDS.

The proposed new model is an evolving one which takes into consideration the limitations of SIDS and illustrates that investment in training can lead to higher quality of school leaders, who will contribute effectively towards the overall improvement in school outcomes and of the wider system.

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## APPENDICES

- Appendix 1** (a): Interview Schedule - Senior Ministry Officials  
(b): Interview Schedule - Survey (MBA/MA Participants)  
(c): Interview Schedule - St. Catherine Case Study (Management / Teacher)  
(d): Interview Schedule - St. Catherine Case Study (Parent)
- Appendix 2** (a): Interview Response - Senior Ministry Officials  
(b): Interview Response - Survey (MBA/MA Participants)  
(c): Interview Response - St. Catherine Case Study (Management / Teacher)  
(d): Interview Response - St. Catherine Case Study (Parent)
- Appendix 3** (a): St. Catherine Case Study - Observation Sheet 1  
(b): St. Catherine Case Study - Observation Sheet 2  
(c): St. Catherine Case Study – Observation Sheet 3
- Appendix 4** St. Catherine Case Study – Table 7.15

**Appendix 1 (a)** Interview Schedule - Senior Ministry Officials

Theme 4 and 7: Ministry’s perception of the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools

1. To what extent has the Ministry’s expectations of graduate leaders been met? Please state specific area of performance based on your perception of their current practices (*Emphasise on areas of satisfaction and that of concerns*).

Area of Satisfaction (Achievements)	Area of Concerns (Need improvement)

2. Do you think that the leadership training programme has enabled the graduate leaders to better lead their institution / sections?

Yes  No

Why and in which particular areas (Please consider their job description)?

Reason	Areas

3. What are the main observable changes that have taken place in institution / section with trained leaders?

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4. What do the Ministry feel is/see as the biggest challenge for graduate leaders?

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5. What 'good' practices would the Ministry have liked to see from leaders?  
Have the Ministry noticed any of these practices being practiced?

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**Additional Information**

Anything else you would like to comment on with regards to your perception of the current performance / practices of graduate leaders?

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**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 1 (b) Interview Schedule - Survey (MBA/MA Participants)**

General Information

Institutions/System based: .....

Age: ..... Post title: ..... Gender: .....

Theme 1: Process by which school leaders are identified and recruited to take part in the MBA / MA programme in Educational Leadership

1. Why do you think you were selected to take part in leadership training?

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2. What process did you go through in order to be enrolled on the programme?

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3. What according to you are the Ministry's criteria for selecting leaders for leadership training?

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Theme 2: Experiences of the participants taking part in these programmes.

1. a) What were / are the Ministry's expectations of you:

(i) Once enrolled in the programme	(ii) After completion of the programme
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b) What were / are your expectations of the Ministry:

(i) Once enrolled in the programme	(ii) After completion of the programme
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c) Were the Ministry's expectations made clear to you prior to enrolment on the programme? If yes, how and when.

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d) What were your expectations of the leadership training programme:

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e) What have you appreciated the most about the programme? Why?

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f) What have you disliked the most about the programme? Why?

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g) What content area of the course did you find most relevant? Why?

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h) What content area of the course did you find most challenging? Why?

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i) In what ways are you different professionally after completing the 1 year training programme?

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j) Are you a better leader after following the programme? If yes, in what ways?

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k) What skills' development has taken place? (Leadership, research, etc.)

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Theme 3: Process by which participants taking part in the programmes are identified for leadership roles following completion of the programme?

3. a) According to you, on what basis were you (in terms of criteria used) identified for leadership role after completion of the programme?

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b) What process did you go through after completion of the programme to reach your leadership post?

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c) What was your career path / career progression up to being selected for headship after the training?

Post occupied	Number of years in Post
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•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

Theme 4: Impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools

4. a) What have been the major challenges for you as a leader after completion of the training programme?

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b) What aspects of the training programme course content in terms of leadership concepts and models learnt, have you been able to put into practice?

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c) What observable changes have taken place in your school / institution based on such practices?

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d) What strategies have you been able to employ / put in place and what were the outcomes? (*Responses to triangulate with Case study schools' documents*)

Focus (i) Staff Professional Development and School -Based Training		
Strategies	Intended/Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes/comments
Focus (ii) School/Institution Vision and Mission, Climate and Ethos		
Strategies	Intended/Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes/comments
Focus (iii) Students' Involvement and Participation in School life		
Strategies	Intended/Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes/comments
Focus (iv): Parental Involvement and Community		Links
Strategies	Intended/Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes/comments

Theme 5: Extent to which the effectiveness of school leaders is enhanced following successful completion of the programme

5. a) What provision was made available to you in order to facilitate smooth transition to your leadership post?

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b) What type of induction process did you go through prior to deployment?

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c) What type of mentoring process did you go through once deployed?

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Theme 6: Existing arrangements for the ongoing support and professional development of graduates from MBA/MA

6. a) What kind of structures exist at Ministry level for ongoing support and professional development of graduate leaders? *(To triangulate with MoE resp.)*

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b) What strategies are employed by the Ministry to support and professionally develop graduate leaders? *(To triangulate with MoE officials' responses.)*

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c) What kind of support have you received so far?

Nature / Type / Form of Support	Source / Provider

d) What kind of professional development activities have you undertaken?

Initiated by/Took place at Ministry level	Others (Please state source and place)

**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 1 (c) Interview Schedule - St. Catherine Case Study  
(Management/Teacher)**

Post title: ----- Years in service: -----  
 Gender: ----- Years spent in current school: -----  
 Classes taught: ----- Classes currently teaching: -----

Q1. a) How long have you known your senior leader (headteacher)?

A1. a) -----  
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Q1. b) How often do you meet on a one to one basis with your senior leader?

A1. b) Before: -----  
 -----  
 After: -----  
 -----

Q1. c) How would you describe the relationship with your senior leader before and after leadership training (2004), in terms of the following?

A1. c) *(Record responses in the table below)*

	Before training	After training
Support received		
Communication		
Interaction		

Q2. How do you perceive your senior leader's practices in terms of the following?  
 A2. (*Record responses in the table below*)

	Before training	After training
Skills display		
Competence		
Knowledge		
Character		

Q3. a) How would you describe the senior leader's relationship with the following?  
 A3. a) (*Record responses in the table below*)

	Before training	After training
Staff		
Learners		
Parents		

Q3. b) Is there anything that the senior leader was not doing before and is doing now?

A3. b) -----  
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Q3. c) Is there anything the senior leader was doing before and is not doing now?

A3. c) -----  
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Q4. How much involved are you in the following compared to before?

A4. (*Record responses in the table below*)

	Before training	After training
Decision making and taking		
Staff activities		
Parental activities		
Learners' activities		

Q5. a) What major changes /impact have taken place in the school?

A5. a) -----  
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**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 1 (d)** Interview Schedule - ST. Catherine Case Study  
(Parent)

Status: ----- Gender: -----

No. of children in the school: -----

Child/Children current class/classes: -----

Q1. How long how you know the senior leader (headteacher) of the school?

A1. -----  
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Q2. How often do you meet on a one to one basis with the senior leader before and after 2004?

A2. Before: -----  
-----  
After: -----  
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Q3. What kind of support have you received from the school?

A3. Before: -----  
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-----  
After: -----  
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Q4. What kind of school activities have you been involved in, before and after 2004?

A4. Before: -----  
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After: -----  
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Q5. Are parental activities organised at school level sufficient?

A5. -----  
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Q6. How would you describe your relationship with the school head?

A6. -----  
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Q7. How would you describe the head's relationship with the following?

A7. (**Record responses in the table below**)

	Before training	After training
Parents		
Pupils		
Staff		

Q8. What changes have you noticed in the school as compared to before 2004?  
(emphasise on observable major changes before HT training and after)

A8. -----  
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Q9. What are the things taking place in the school that parents appreciate and consider as improvement? (*Follow up with what impact they have had*)

A9. Impact:

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Q10. Anything else you would like to comment on – things you would like the school to improve further on?

A10. -----  
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**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 2 (a) Interview Response - Senior Ministry Officials**

Theme: Ministry's perception of the impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools

Q1. To what extent has the Ministry's expectations of graduate leaders been met?  
Please state specific area of performance based on your perception of their current practices.

*(Please see responses given in italic, for Q1 and Q2 in tables below).*

<p>Area of Satisfaction (Achievements)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In terms of their self esteem and status – now that I have a degree I feel more important.</i></li> <li>• <i>More reflective on their practices</i></li> <li>• <i>Assertiveness and confident</i></li> <li>• <i>About five graduates are initiating more ideas / strategies in their respective schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Pride.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Area of Concerns (Need improvement)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>They are still internalising everything they have learnt and still very slow to put into practice.</i></li> <li>• <i>However, practice on site is not evident</i></li> <li>• <i>Assertive however in things they want, to protect their self</i></li> <li>• <i>Risk taking is not done</i></li> <li>• <i>Attitude wise some tend to be arrogant due to more self esteem, assertiveness and status.</i></li> </ul>
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Q2. Do you think that the leadership training programme has enabled the graduate leaders to better lead their institution / sections?

Yes:  No:

Why and in which particular areas (Please consider their job description)?

<p>Reason</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Knowledge wise – they know leadership concepts, models and theories.</i></li> <li>• <i>Delegation of duties</i></li> <li>• <i>Team building</i></li> <li>• <i>Involvement of others in decision making.</i></li> <li>• <i>Use various strategies to bring about improvement in students/pupils performance</i></li> <li>• <i>Some tend to be too authoritative</i></li> </ul>	<p>Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Leading</i></li> <li>• <i>However, students involvement not much active at primary level</i></li> <li>• <i>Community - liaison work in close partnership with the Ministry</i></li> <li>• <i>Raise fund for school - they are proactive to buy their materials</i></li> <li>• <i>In teaching and learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Interpersonal relationship</i></li> </ul>
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Q3. What are the main observable changes that have taken place in institution / section with trained leaders?

- A3. *The sharing of good practices, opportunity to discuss and participates.  
Willingly accept to pilot or implement projects, although initiated by the  
section.  
Respond positively to invitation to participate in forum, activities and to serve on  
committees.*
- Q4. What do the Ministry feel is/see as the biggest challenge for graduate leaders?
- A4. *To cope well with the changes in society in terms of the social ills such as drugs,  
alcohol abuse and behaviour.*
- Q5. What 'good' practices would the Ministry have liked to see from graduate  
leaders? Have the Ministry noticed any of these practices being practiced?
- A5. *More accountable and responsible to action.  
As a leader to continuously search for and initiate new ideas, strategies to  
strengthen the relationship with parents, staff and students.  
To consider involving more students in decision making at primary level since  
some secondary school leaders have started to do so.  
To sustain new initiatives and strategies used in general.  
To conceptualise and carry out project, research within the school or zones.*

#### **Additional Information**

Anything else you would like to comment on with regards to your perception of the  
current performance / practices of graduate leaders?

*As I am not very familiar with secondary graduate leaders and more of the primary  
ones, I feel that some are doing a good job but others have still a long way to go,  
some has been trained for more than five years or four years ago and should by now  
stop waiting for answers from the MoE / Schools Division and take the leading role  
in initiating new things in their respective schools so as to bring about overall  
improvement.*

**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated  
with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 2 (b) Interview Responses – Survey (MBA/MA Participants)**

General Information

Institution: *Secondary School*  
Age Range: *50 - 55 years*

Post title: *Head teacher*  
Gender: *Female*

Theme 1: Process by which school leaders are identified and recruited to take part in the MBA / MA programme in Educational Leadership

Q1. a) Why do you think you were selected to take part in leadership training?

A1. a) *Already in a senior leadership post as HT  
Experience as a teacher and leader but no leadership training proper.*

Q1. b) What process did you go through in order to be enrolled on the programme?

A1. b) *Filled in the necessary forms after being informed of the selection in a short meeting with PS Education.  
Followed induction – comprising of study skill with assignment practice and ICT training.*

Q1. c) What according to you are the Ministry’s criteria for selecting leaders for leadership training?

A1. c) *Experience  
Potential candidates through Appraisal performance  
Qualification*

Theme 2: Experiences of the participants taking part in these programmes.

Q2. a) What were / are the Ministry’s expectations of you:

*(Your responses are in italic in the tables below)*

(i) Once enrolled in the programme • <i>To gain experience, skills and to successfully complete the course.</i>	(ii) After completion of the programme • <i>To better lead my school and bring positive changes.</i>
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Q2. b) What were / are your expectations of the Ministry:

(i) Once enrolled in the programme • <i>To keep link with the system and in continuous contact for continuous support with MoE.</i> • <i>Financial support with the International Experience programme.</i>	(ii) After completion of the programme • <i>A certain degree of autonomy to initiate and put into practice what I have learnt.</i>
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Q2. c) Were the Ministry’s expectations made clear to you prior to enrolment on the programme? If yes, how and when.

A2. c) *Sort of - as a group in the initial meeting and sometimes individually encouragement was given and check of progress, and support.*

- Q2. d) What were your expectations of the leadership training programme?  
 A2. d) *To get other skills that I have not been able to acquire whilst in the post of headteacher.  
 To empower me to be more efficient in leading the school community.*
- Q2. e) What have you appreciated the most about the programme? Why?  
 A2. e) *The Team spirit and relationship developed with lecturers and tutors.  
 The sharing and reflective thinking during activities in lectures among colleagues and lecturers.*
- Q2. f) What have you disliked the most about the programme? Why?  
 A2. f) *Some of the comments given / received from lecturers once assignment drafts were sent to them for feedback.  
 The hidden agenda, silent competition among colleagues in not willing to share literature materials with others.*
- Q2. g) What content area of the course did you find most relevant? Why?  
 A2. g) *Strategic Management and Planning – there were elements of development planning, vision building and forward thinking.  
 High performance and teams – roles of middle leaders in the school.*
- Q2. h) What content area of the course did you find most challenging? Why?  
 A2. h) *Strategic Management – lots of new concepts to understand and apply to Seychelles school context.*
- Q2. i) In what ways are you different professionally after completing the 1 year training programme?  
 A2. i) *I see things more on a wider perspective – before I did not have something to fall back on but now I can always do.  
 Enriched knowledge and skills due to widely reading and research for materials.  
 I am more reflective and analytical.  
 Can better structure my argument before presenting it.*
- Q2. j) Are you a better leader after following the programme? If yes, in what ways?  
 A2. j) *Yes. I use the distributive leadership style.  
 I think and reflect more before reacting to issues.  
 I understand people better i.e. parents, students and teachers.  
 I am more assertive and delegate better.*
- Q2. k) What skills' development has taken place?  
 A2. k) *Communication.  
 Research.  
 Leadership.  
 Negotiation skills.*

Theme 3: Process by which participants taking part in the programmes are identified for leadership roles following completion of the programme?

Q3. a) According to you, on what basis were you (in terms of criteria used) identified for leadership role after completion of the programme?

A3. a) *N/A – I was already in headship prior to training.*

Q3. b) What process did you go through after completion of the programme to reach your leadership post?

A3. b) *None – I was deployed to another school.*

Q3. c) What was your career path / career progression up to being selected for headship after the training?

*(Your response is in italic in the table below)*

<b>Post occupied</b>	<b>Number of years in Post</b>
• <i>Supply Teacher</i>	• <i>1</i>
• <i>Secondary Teacher</i>	• <i>10</i>
• <i>Studies Coordinator</i>	• <i>1</i>
• <i>Headteacher</i>	• <i>14</i>

Theme 4: Impact of leadership development on leadership practice in schools

Q4. a) What have been the major challenges for you as a leader after completion of the training programme?

A4. a) *To execute certain things / actions in a strongly and highly centralised system of education.  
To get others to understand what I am trying to do, at school and MoE, to bring about positive changes in my school – in putting things learnt into practice.*

Q4. b) What aspects of the training programme course content in terms of leadership concepts and models learnt, have you been able to put into practice?

A4. b) *Delegation of duties to middle leaders and teachers.  
Team building and participatory decision making.*

Q4. c) What observable changes have taken place in your school / institution based on such practices?

A4. c) *Staff feels appreciated and satisfied with their involvement.  
Teachers willingly participate and give a helping hand.*

Q4. d) What strategies have you been able to employ / put in place and what were the outcomes? (*Your responses are in italic in the table that follows*)

Strategies Employed	Intended/Expected outcomes	Actual outcomes/comments
<i>Conduct sessions as a group of senior leaders on mentoring.</i>	<i>To empower teachers on mentoring.</i>	<i>Mentoring is taking place in the school.</i>
<i>Involvement of staff in decision making and taking.</i>	<i>To feel more belong and strengthened the team spirit and school ethos.</i>	
<i>Organise block supervision.</i>	<i>To better monitor students' movement during class hours.</i>	<i>Internal truancy reduced.</i>
<i>Organise open days for parents.</i>	<i>To share school improvement and achievements to parents.</i>	<i>Increased in participation of parents in open days.</i>
<i>Establish students' Action Team. Put up a suggestion box.</i>	<i>To voice out students' concerns and to be more active in bringing out issues that concerns them.</i>	<i>More issues are being brought to the attention of school leaders.</i>
<i>Placing parent in house system. Conduct sessions with parents.</i>	<i>To get maximum participation from parents. Involvement of parents in school initiatives.</i>	<i>More parents are participating at school level.</i>

Theme 5: Extent to which the effectiveness of school leaders is enhanced following successful completion of the programme

Q5. a) What provision was made available to you in order to facilitate smooth transition to your leadership post?

A5. a) *None.*

Q5. b) What type of induction process did you go through prior to deployment?

A5. b) *None.*

Q5. c) What type of mentoring process did you go through once deployed?

A5. c) *No formal mentoring took place.*

*Termly meeting with MoE officials (just introduced) to discuss performance of the headteacher based on the job description competencies.*

Theme 6: Existing arrangements for the ongoing support and professional development of graduates from MBA/MA

Q6. a) What kind of structures exist at Ministry level for ongoing support and professional development of graduate leaders?

A6. a) *SELMA – Independent structure of a NGO.  
Ed. Co. support providers with regular visit and networking / training sessions at MoE level.*

Q6. b) What strategies are employed by the Ministry to support and professionally develop graduate leaders?

A6. b) *Pilot new intervention in my school.  
Represent Ed. System in forums locally and internationally.  
Serves on committees at MoE level – SSWG and GAT.  
Participate and present research findings in conference locally.*

Q6. c) What kind of support have you received so far?

A6. c) *With SSW and gender project being piloted – in the implementation of activities.*

Q6. d) What kind of professional development activities have you undertaken?

A6. d) *None.*

**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 2 (c) Interview Response - St. Catherine Case Study  
(Management/Teacher)**

Post title: *Language Coordinator*  
 Gender: *Female*  
 Classes taught: *Year 5 and 6*

Years in service: *08*  
 Years spent in current school: *08*  
 Classes currently teaching: *Year 5 and 6*

Q1. a) How long how you know your senior leader (headteacher)?

A1. a) *Since 2001(nearly 9 years)*

Q1. b) How often do you meet on a one to one basis with your senior leader?

A1. b) Before: *Often initially as I was on probation, for appraisal and whenever I had a problem or concern.*

After: *More often and more or less in groups apart from appraisal review or personal issues.*

Q1. c) How would you describe the relationship with your senior leader before and after leadership training (2004), in terms of the following?

A1. c) ***(Your responses are in italic in the table below)***

	Before training	After training
Support received	<i>Emotionally and professionally; personally with resources, visit classes and gives feedback</i>	<i>Same and more frequent</i>
Communication	<i>Few conflicts and abruptness, authoritative and would not negotiate as only her decision stands</i>	<i>Seeks advice and others opinions, listen more to staff, more open to suggestions, receptive and approachable</i>
Interaction	<i>Interacts well, organised social activities although staff were reluctant to participate</i>	<i>More and better interaction, staff feels at ease</i>

Q2. How do you perceive your senior leader's practices in terms of the following?

A2. ***(Your responses are in italic in the table below)***

	Before training	After training
Skills display	<i>Authoritative and assertiveness, not much involved in PD and SIP</i>	<i>Communication, assertiveness, share responsibilities and much involved in PD and SIP</i>
Competence	<i>Writing of reports</i>	<i>More so now, involvement of more staff in teaching and learning.</i>
Knowledge	<i>Knowledgeable in all areas</i>	<i>Share knowledge</i>
Character	<i>Less so before, active and motivated, convincing and negotiate well</i>	<i>More so than before, strong in motivating, mobilising and convincing others</i>

Q3. a) How would you describe the senior leader's relationship with the following?

A3. a) *(Your responses are in italic in the table below)*

	Before training	After training
Staff	<i>Good relationship with some staff</i>	<i>Very good rapport with all staff</i>
Learners	<i>Even before but more so after</i>	<i>Feel more at ease, free to come to her, trust</i>
Parents	<i>Less parental involvement and interaction</i>	<i>Open door policy for parents and involved them more in school activities</i>

Q3. b) Is there anything that the senior leader was not doing before and is doing now?

A3. b) *Taking of classes and open movement on school grounds; monitors staff, teaching and learning well, more support in relieving teachers in need of duty, appreciation of staff contribution.*

Q3. c) Is there anything the senior leader was doing before and is not doing now?

A3. c) *Having the last word always in arguments.*

Q4. How much involved are you in the following compared to before?

A4. *(Your responses are in italic in the table below)*

	Before training	After training
Decision making and taking	<i>Not much involved before as I was scared to voice my opinion</i>	<i>Much more involved with lots of consultation</i>
Staff activities	<i>Less involved</i>	<i>More involved than before, draw up calendar of activities</i>
Parental activities	<i>Limited involvement</i>	<i>Fathers' Day, parental observation, cycle meeting and sessions with parents at cycle level</i>
Learners' activities	<i>Not much involvement</i>	<i>Maths committee involve pupils, share ideas, promotional reading</i>

Q5. a) What major changes /impact have taken place in the school?

A5. a) *Examination performance of pupils both at school and at national level*

*Whole school focus geared towards teaching and learning with the involvement of all partners*

*Communication*

*Good team work and team spirit exist*

*Better communication and involvement of staff in school decision making and activities.*

**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher**

**Appendix 2 (d)** Interview Response - St. Catherine Case Study  
(Parent)

Status: *Parent and Ex-PTA member*

Gender: *Female*

No. of children in the school: *1*

Current class: *P6 (2008)*

Q1. How long how you know the senior leader (headteacher) of the school?

A1. *Since 2001.*

Q2. How often do you meet on a one to one basis with the senior leader before and after 2004?

A2. Before: *Not very often only when the need arises.*

After: *Often when the need arises.*

Q3. What kind of support have you received from the school?

A3. Before: *Conferencing and counselling*

After: *Conferencing and counselling but more open, approachable, friendly and listen more.*

Q4. What kind of school activities have you been involved in, before and after 2004?

A4. Before: *Any activity organised by the school*

After: *Being a PTA member I was much involved in activities organised by the PTA and school*

Q5. Are parental activities organised at school level sufficient?

A5. *Yes, in regards to teaching and learning but less sufficient in terms of social activities.*

Q6. How would you describe your relationship with the school head?

A6. *Always friendly and approachable*

Q7. How would you describe the head's relationship with the following?

A7. ***(Your responses are in italic in the table below)***

	Before training	After training
Parents	<i>Although friendly and approachable, not much so to the majority of parents</i>	<i>More communication, good understanding and share more information with parents through school note and phone calls, seek parents opinion and approval before implementing new strategies</i>
Pupils	<i>Good rapport with pupils</i>	<i>Even better rapport and communicates more with pupils, good news notes are given to pupils to take home, monitors pupils well.</i>
Staff	<i>Communicates well with staff</i>	<i>More communication with staff and better and good understanding among members, monitors compound and staff well.</i>

Q8. What changes have you noticed in the school as compared to before 2004?  
(emphasise on observable major changes before HT training and after)

A8. *Same as in the table above and impact given below.*

Q9. What are the things taking place in the school that parents appreciate and consider as improvement?

A9. Impact:

- *Great improvement in academic performance of pupils*
- *Reward good behaviour and performance of pupils*
- *Very much concerned with pupils performance whereby much emphasis is placed on teaching and learning and ensures all parties are equally involved*
- *Sharing of pupils experience and progression among staff and with parents*
- *Increase in participation of pupils in activities at national level.*

Q10. Anything else you would like to comment on – things you would like the school to improve further on?

A10. *More social activities to bring parents and staff closer together.*

**Thank you so much for your valuable contribution. Everything will be treated with the strictest confidence and in the greatest anonymity as possible.**

**The researcher.**

**Appendix 3 (a) St. CATHERINE CASE STUDY – Observation Sheet 1**

Subject: Social studies

Class: Year 4

No. of learners: 24 of which 19 were present (13 boys and 5 girls)

Time allocation: 1 period (40 minutes)

Topic: Regions in Mahé

Lesson delivery	Teacher's action	Learners' action	Senior leader's action
<i>Introduction:</i> Ice breaking activity - to check learners' prior knowledge and to establish link with today's topic	Hand basket containing folded slips of paper to a learner. Claps hands at interval - continued until mostly everyone has had a go at answering a question	Standing in circle the basket is passed around. Learner holding the basket picked out and opened slip of paper, read question and give answer.	Observed attentively and took note
<i>Main body of the lesson:</i> - Topic / lesson development	Explanation and questioning using black board and charts - whole class. -Organised pairs work and give instructions -More whole class explanation, interaction with pairs. -Organised learners in groups of 4, gave group activity instructions -Lead group reporting and consolidate learners understanding of the topic	Listens attentively and give answers by raising hands - Pair work using the dictionary -Report on dictionary meaning of 'region, asked for clarification. -Using a map of Mahé discussed in groups, identified and located districts in the different regions. -Group representative pointed out districts in an allocated region on the black board map chart in front of the whole class while others commented	Observed and took note  Interacted with learners in pair work and guide those in difficulty.  Interacted with learners in group work, check their understanding and provide guidance and assistance
<i>Conclusion – lesson evaluation</i>	Recapitulation through questioning to check learners' understanding of the topic and objective of the lesson	At random learners provide answers to teacher's questions, and assisted in summarizing the main areas of focus as per the topic of the lesson	Thanked the teacher and congratulated learners for their active participation
Conferencing with teacher (same day)	Gave personal reflected of the lesson - what went well and what did not and why – possible areas where support is needed.	--	Comment on teacher's personal reflection of the lesson - discussed teacher concerns, advised and praise.

**Appendix 3 (b) St. CATHERINE CASE STUDY – Observation Sheet 2**

Subject: Social studies

Class: Year 3

No. of learners: 22 (12 boys and 10 girls)

Time allocation: 1 period (40 minutes)

Topic: Houses around the world

Lesson delivery	Teacher's action	Learners' action	Senior leader's action
<i>Introduction:</i> - Began lesson with the lyrics of the song 'Down by the river'	Explain what the song is about by asking learners to describe the pictures – explained the meaning of the words of the song lyrics Then sang the song together with the assistant teacher and learners	Described the pictures in the song - attentively repeated after the teacher the words in the song lyrics - sang the song altogether	Observed attentively
<i>Main body of the lesson:</i> - Topic / lesson development	Explanation involving learners through questioning and repeating of words associated with the different types of houses around the world - whole class activity using lots of charts depicting pictures of houses of different styles. -Organised learners in groups of 5 and give instructions for the groups' activity -Wrote on the board groups reported activities, gave clarification and explanation reinforcing understanding of the meaning of the vocabulary used and pronunciation	Listens attentively and provide answers when asked placing emphasis on getting the correct English vocabulary and pronunciation. -In groups, discussed, agreed on and wrote down activities that took place in houses as part of the community – mainly activities in homes that make them feel happy and safe. -Reported on group activities	Observed and took note  Interacted with learners in group work, listened, assisted and guided those encountering difficulty
<i>Conclusion -</i>	Lead individual activity to check learners understanding of what they have learnt in the lesson.	Individually read out sentences on different strips of paper the teacher placed on the board	Spoke briefly to class, thanked both teachers and learners
Conferencing	Gave personal reflected of the lesson - what went well, what did not and why - Agreed on areas of support needed for improvement	--	Comment on teacher's personal reflection of areas that could be improved on, gave praise for good effort and advised accordingly.

**Appendix 3 (c) St. CATHERINE CASE STUDY – Observation Sheet 3**

Subject: English

Class: Year 6

No. of learners: 15 (8 boys and 7 girls)

Time allocation: 1 period (40 minutes)

Topic: Occupation

Lesson delivery	Teacher's action	Learners' action	Reflection
<i>Introduction:</i> Recall activity - to check learners' prior knowledge and established link	-State purpose of group activity and explained what learners needed to do. -Questioned learners to check prior knowledge.	Provided answers in an orderly manner when addressed. Assisted others in giving the correct answers.	Questions of different level of difficulty were addressed to learners according to their ability in an encouraging manner.
<i>Main body of the lesson:</i> - topic / lesson development	-Organised learners in groups and provided instructions on activity to be carried out, allocated time for activity and give each group a slip of paper. -Assisted groups in need of further clarification and explanation -Facilitated group presentation of mimes -Whole class exposé using the blackboard, on occupation in general and constructed a map using only the main points. -Organised learners in groups and guided them through the activity in while organising ideas for presentation.	Listens attentively and moved around to form the groups - discussed and planned mimes as per stated occupation on the given slip of paper. -Presentation of group mime while others try to interpret the occupation though the actions of the group members. -Listened attentively during exposé and asked questions -In groups, made a work plan and constructed a map for a given occupation by stating the qualities and skills needed the importance of it, advantages and limitations.	Limited time was taken to get group organised. -Good time management was observed which shows evidence of good lesson planning and preparation. -Maximum involvement of learners in group discussion and sharing of tasks within the group. -There was good teacher-learners' interaction throughout the lesson. -Teacher displayed good classroom management techniques created a friendly learning atmosphere.
<i>Conclusion:</i> - Group presentation and summary of lesson	Lead group presentation and praised them -Use the group report to sum up the main points of the lesson – Explained work to be done at home.	Group representative presented the map by explaining how they constructed it – Took note of home work given.	Much use of learners ideas to conclude the lesson. The lesson was a success as the objectives were met. Teacher appeared ....

...confident and at ease in the presence of others which may be due to the monitoring and the practice of peer observation.

**Appendix 4** St. Catherine Case Study – Table 7.15

*Table 7.15: St. Catherine School's year six learners' national examination results of all examinable subjects for the year 2004 to 2007*

<b>Year</b>	<b>2004</b>			<b>2005</b>			<b>2006</b>			<b>2007</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Pass rate</b>									
English	A* - C	43.1	77.3 %	A* - C	29%	90 %	A* - C	65.6	93.7 %	A* - C	64.9	86.5 %
	D - G	34.1		D - G	61%		D - G	28.1		D - G	21.6	
French	A* - C	36	90.9 %	A* - C	43	91 %	A* - C	62.6	100 %	A* - C	64.9	97.3 %
	D - G	54		D - G	48		D - G	37.5		D - G	32.4	
Kreole	A* - C	56.8	79.3 %	A* - C	63	95 %	A* - C	68.8	93.7 %	A* - C	67.6	91.9 %
	D - G	20.5		D - G	32		D - G	25		D - G	24.	
Mathematics	A* - C	13.6	77.3 %	A* - C	32	95 %	A* - C	46.9	96.9 %	A* - C	59.5	91.9 %
	D - G	63.7		D - G	63		D - G	50		D - G	32.4	
Science	A* - C	50	77 %	A* - C	27	86 %	A* - C	81.3	93.7 %	A* - C	61.1	91.7 %
	D - G	27		D - G	59		D - G	12.5		D - G	30.6	
Social science	A* - C	29.5	79.5 %	A* - C	54	91 %	A* - C	59.4	93.7 %	A* - C	47.2	86.1 %
	D - G	50		D - G	37		D - G	34.4		D - G	38.9	

*Reference: Primary Six National Examination Report (2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007), Assessment and Testing Services, Ministry of Education*

