NEW PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP

AND

SCHOOL CULTURE

A study of three primary schools facing challenging

circumstances in

Trinidad and Tobago

RINNELLE LEE-PIGGOTT

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A study of three primary schools facing challenging circumstances in Trinidad and Tobago

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RINNELLE LEE-PIGGOTT

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Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour (Romans 13:7).

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ABSTRACT

The literature on new principals tends to focus on the challenges of incumbents. However, there is little detailed evidence of the nature of their attempts at reshaping or enhancing school culture, which may be their greatest single professional challenge. A significant number of primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago are currently headed by new principals and concerns have been publicly raised at the national level about these new principals' fit to schools.

This study was designed to investigate the nature of the interactions between new principals' leadership and their inherited school cultures in primary schools of different effectiveness states - high, average and low achievement - which face challenging circumstances. It also investigates the impact of these interactions on school processes, new principals' emotions and professional development and student academic outcomes.

The thesis adopts an explanatory, multiple-case study approach that conceptualizes principal leadership as relational, recognizing that whilst a new principal may wish to re-culture and restructure a school, the existing school's culture and the new principal's own professional judgment may combine to influence his/her ability to do so. The main research method used for engaging with this work was a critical incident technique.

Findings reveal the complex nature of the leadership-school culture interplay and the factors which influence: a) the various manifestations of the leadership-school culture interactions and, b) the degree of change observed at the schools. Associated implications and areas for future research are also discussed.

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List of Abbreviations

CPD:	Continuing Professional Development
EFCL:	Educational Facilities Company Limited
IDB:	Inter-American Development Bank
MOE:	Ministry of Education
MTPF:	Medium-Term Policy Framework
NT:	National Test
OJT:	On-the-Job Trainee
PTA:	Parents-Teachers Association
SBM:	School-based Management
SCO:	School Clerical Officer
SfCC:	Schools facing Challenging Circumstances
SEA:	Secondary Entrance Assessment
SIR:	School Improvement Research
SS:	School Supervisor
ST:	Senior Teacher
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TSC:	Teaching Service Commission
T&T:	Trinidad and Tobago
VP:	Vice Principal

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with understanding how newly appointed principals manage the cultures of the schools to which they have been appointed. Literature on new principals generally focuses on new principals' professional challenges; however, there is evidence (e.g. Barth, 2001) to suggest that a new principal's most demanding professional challenge may be reshaping school culture. To date, there has been little attention on how new principals manage their inherited school cultures, particularly in contexts of socio-economic challenge where the presence of micro-politics may make the situation more acute; hence, the significance of this study. The research was conducted in three high poverty primary schools – high performing, average and low performing – in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T). I have taken a multiple case study approach as a means of understanding the interactional phenomenon between the leadership of new principals and their inherited school cultures and how this impacts the new principals and their ability to bring about school change. The aim of the study is to assist our understanding of why change in some schools is not fully implemented or, where there is full implementation, it is not sustained.

This introductory chapter continues by sharing the motivation behind this study, which takes the form of a sad story that leads into rationalizing the study, the identification of the research problem and presentation of the guiding research questions. The research problem is situated within the primary sector of T&T's education system and so this chapter also provides a brief description of this context. Also, the study's limitations and delimitations are revealed and a list of definitions of key

terms and concepts as used in the thesis are presented. The structure of the thesis beyond chapter 1 is also presented and closes this chapter.

A Sad Story

Newly appointed as principal to a primary school in a socio-economically disadvantaged community, Ms Monroe finds low test scores, falling rolls, high student indiscipline, high teacher and student unpunctuality and irregularity and a pervasive belief that the pupils could do no better than they were doing. Almost immediately she begins to make changes: enhancements to school facilities and communication methods, establishment of parent and community support groups and transformation of assemblies into forums for welcoming visitors and celebrating achievements. But, sadly, her attempts to improve student performance were unsupported. Changes to the pupils' uniforms and the school's motto and vision were met with fierce resistance from teachers who were the original designers. Though she tried, sometimes using the power of her position, Ms Monroe could not change teachers' beliefs, behaviours or practices. They continued being irregular at school, disregarded her requests and some staged a boycott of a school event because of a dislike for Ms Monroe's manner and a decision she had made. Undeterred, Ms Monroe decided to work with the few teachers who supported the new vision. When she eventually left, the school looked no different; even the pupils' uniforms were changed back to their original designs.

While this story is only part told, it is based on events that truly happened at a school at which I taught. It reflects a rather unsuccessful attempt by a new principal to improve that school and points to the need

to examine more closely: a) the leadership of the new principal; b) the cultures of high poverty schools; and c) school change.

Certified in Educational Administration, as education policy in T&T now requires; placed in a school that serves a socio-economically disadvantaged community, having its own culture; and charged with the responsibility of leading school improvement, one wonders how does the new principal determine the practices and strategies to be used to do just that. Ms Monroe's practices, in themselves, were not different from those reported in the extant school leadership literature, yet hers did not achieve school improvement. However, the story provides additional information on the school's cultural context, which seems to provide a frame for school members to evaluate the new principal's actions, determine acceptable patterns of behaviour, rationalise the underperformance of pupils and recognise the inviolability of certain school symbols, like the pupils' uniforms. The account also mentions school member responses to Ms Monroe's leadership, such as: support from a few and resistance, disregard and disapproval from others. These responses likely affected Ms Monroe and evidently contributed to the school's improvement or lack thereof – the third issue, school change.

This situation between the leadership of the new principal and her inherited school culture appears to be relational, involving two-way influencing. Whilst a new principal may wish to re-culture a school, the existing school's culture may act to influence his/her ability to do so (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1996).

RATIONALE

A study that undertakes to investigate the nature of the interaction between new principals and the cultures of schools serving disadvantaged

communities within T&T is necessary for a number of reasons. The first of these is that many of the studies conducted on new principals and on school culture originate in developed countries, such as the UK and USA. While such research has been instrumental in guiding governments, including that of T&T, on educational change (Jansen, 2009), there is need for reform that is informed by context-specific inquiries. Even those studies originating from developing countries, such as Kenya, may bear limited applicability to T&T, which, though small, has a wealthy oil-based economy, placing it in a more advanced stage of economic development. As such, principal success in T&T may look very different to that of many other developing countries; hence the need for this investigation. Additionally, while there is prolific educational research being conducted in T&T, little, if any, focuses on the professional lives of new principals which further justifies the need for a systematic study of new principals in T&T.

This study is also timely because of educational leadership policy revision enacted to usher in system-wide school reform and improvement, which has resulted in an influx of new principals within the primary school system, possessing the now mandatory requirement of a Bachelor of Education with specialization in Educational Administration. What it means to be a principal in the T&T context has changed over the years. Such a situation raises questions about the validity of the policy change – how are new principals working with their 'inherited' school cultures, i.e. the existing cultures they meet on appointment to a school? and how is such a change impacting schools? These questions are addressed by the current study. Moreover, the findings of the investigation may speak to the concerns of the TSC.

Additionally, for many new principals, principalship is about making their mark at a time when they maybe in "mid-life transition" and "experiencing some level of personal change" (Day & Bakioğlu, 1996, p.

222) while learning to overcome the challenges of the job; therefore, it is important to throw light on what they do, how they do it and how effective it is to increase the awareness and understanding of first time, new to a school and aspiring principals of the potential events and factors that can comprise the succession experience. Such an understanding can also better enable the implementation of systems of support for new principals.

This study may also contribute to the international knowledge base on school leadership in looking at principal leadership as possibly a relationship between leader and the led as two-way influencing or reciprocal. Such a concept of leadership is underexplored, according to Hallinger and Heck (2011). Recent school leadership studies adopt a dominant perception of principal leadership as the independent factor, hardly considering it as possibly moderated by contextual factors; though, they may acknowledge principals' consideration of school context in their leadership.

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As a research problem, the relationship between the leadership of new principals and their inherited schools' cultures is a concern also shared by others nationally and reported in the nation's daily newspapers. Among the voices is that of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC), the body responsible for the recruitment, appointment, promotion, transfer and disciplining of members of the teaching profession in T&T. Having appointed new principals to 10% of primary schools in 2011 and again in 2012 as well as having to address issues of teacher misconduct in schools, the TSC is reportedly concerned about principal-school 'fit' (TSC Plans and programmes, 2012). So concerned is the TSC that they have determined to collaborate with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to obtain school

profiles that will enable them to better match the competencies of a principal candidate to a particular school environment. Additionally, the TSC has made revisions to the selection instruments for appointing new teachers into the profession to include psychometric testing and obtaining statements of good character from the police (TSC, Plans and Programmes, 2012). Their actions point to the gravity of the situation and their apparent concern about candidates' personal attributes.

Continued speculation and misunderstanding of the interplay between new principals and their inherited school cultures will translate into continued hits and misses regarding principal effectiveness, school effectiveness and school improvement, with more likely misses as is prevalent in the public primary school system in T&T, which is later discussed. There is need, therefore, for empirical understanding into what goes on at schools upon the appointment of new principals with their inherited school cultures.

At present, there is a dearth of empirical studies on school leadership in the T&T context. Many of those that exist focus on secondary school leadership but also point to the need for improved school leadership. James (2010), for instance, noted that while there exist systems for change in some secondary schools, her findings suggest that secondary principals' styles of leadership were not responsive to their schools' contexts, resulting in feelings of powerlessness and limited school improvement. Additionally, evidence from a study conducted by the author (Lee-Piggott, 2014) into the principalship of one beginning principal of a high poverty, underperforming primary school draws attention to a rather discordant principal-teacher relationship mainly as a result of the principal's attempts to reshape the school's culture towards school improvement. Again, the notion of 'fit' as raised by the TSC and implicit in the mentioned studies bears direct relevance to the notion of leadership as

a relationship between leader and the led (Burns, 1978), which forms the underlying thrust of this study. It seems timely and critical then, at least for T&T's public primary education system, that such an investigation into the realities of new principal's interaction with their inherited school cultures towards reshaping the cultures of their schools be conducted that would help in understanding the nature of this interplay and its impact on the new principal and the school. Arriving at this understanding forms the focus of this study, which was guided by the following main research questions:

1. What is the nature of the interplay between the leadership of new principals and the cultures of schools facing challenging circumstances?
2. How does the nature of this interplay impact on new principals and their schools?

Sub-questions to question 1 are:

a) What do the cultures of schools serving disadvantaged communities look like?
b) What intervention practices and strategies do new principals use?
c) What is it about who new principals are, what they do and how they do it which helps or hinders them in achieving school change and improvement?
d) What are the responses of school members to the leadership of their new principals and how might they be understood?

PRIMARY SCHOOLING IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

This section 'walks through' the beginnings of the education system and its current structure; but then narrows the focus onto the public

primary education system, discussing its function and highlighting some of the issues that have plagued it for decades. This section also discusses the attempts of successive governments to improve this system and draws attention to the mantle that has been placed upon primary school principals in realizing school and, ultimately, system improvement.

Beginnings

T&T is a twin-island republic of 1.3 million people. In the education system of T&T, primary schools are considered the foundation layer to the development of the nation's citizenry, with compulsory education and indeed functional literacy determined to have been acquired by the end of primary school. From its colonial past, education in Trinidad engendered race and class prejudices incited by competitiveness (Campbell, 1992), resulting in a highly stratified system. Today, T&T's primary education sector consists of two categories of schools: public and private, with public schools pertaining to government and denominational schools which are free to attendees; whilst fees are applied for private school attendance. The study reported in this thesis focused on primary schools within the public domain.

The system of public primary education

There are 137 government primary schools and 339 government-assisted or denominational schools (2011 data), according to MOE (Strategic Plan: 2011-2015). Public primary schools are of varying sizes in terms of their student populations, with some schools having just under 100 students, whilst others may have on roll more than 700 students. The teacher-student ratio is currently 1:20 for Infants 1 and 2; while for standards 1 to 5, the ratio is 1:25. Currently, the national average is 1:17 (Strategic Plan: 2011-2015). The sector is comprised of single-sexed schools and co-educational ones across eight education districts, which are overseen by School Supervisors but managed at the school level by school

principals and school-based management (SBM) teams who may work with local school boards or denominational boards and are accountable to the centralized, state-run ministry of education (MOE).

Public primary education is provided full-time to children aged 5 to 11+ years, but the system caters for late starters and class-level repeaters up to age 14. Primary students start in *Infants year 1*, the equivalent of *Reception* of the English school system and *Kindergarten* of the American system. Seven years of primary schooling is completed at the end of Standard 5 (Year 6 of the English System and Grade 5 of the American System). Standard 5 culminates with the sitting of the Secondary Entrance Assessment Examination (SEA), which replaced the Common Entrance Examination, to determine placement in secondary schools – a highly competitive and meritocratic process. Only those students passing the examination can be placed usually in one of four secondary schools of their choice; however, students may be placed in schools not listed as a choice. Presently, students not meeting the standards are required to re-sit the final examination, which means repeating the class level. Apart from the SEA, primary school students are required to write National Tests.

These National Tests are designed to serve the following purposes as identified by the MOE (1997, cited in National Test report, 2011):

i. to gather information as feedback for decision making at the district and national level
ii. to tract students' progress, across time, in the school
iii. to compare students' performance by school, educational district and nationally
iv. to identify national norms
v. to point to aspects of teaching and learning that may require further investigation
vi. to discriminate between essential and desirable levels of curriculum
vii. to determine students' strengths and weaknesses at the school, district and national levels (p. 11).

Depending on their class levels, students sit two examinations. At Standards 1 (year 2) and 3 (year 4), students are examined in Mathematics and Language Arts, with the latter comprising Grammar, Comprehension, Spelling, Vocabulary and Creative Writing; while students in Standards 2 (year 3) and 4 (year 5) write examinations in Science and Social Studies with strands derived from Health and Family Life Education, Current Events, History and Geography. Examinations are based on the content of the National Primary Schools Curriculum, which is used by all public schools. Schools can, however, offer additional co-and extra-curricular subjects.

Issues within the public primary system

The education system of T&T has for a considerable number of years been characterized by issues of access, quality and equity. While accessibility is no longer a problem as the nation achieved Universal Primary Education status since the 1960s, issues of quality and equity remain pervasive resulting in issues of school performance.

In terms of quality, the MOE (Strategic Plan 2011-2015) has identified 12 issues they consider to be major challenges to the entire education system, including the primary sector. Among them are: (1) teacher indiscipline and absenteeism, (2) poor attainment and literacy levels, (3) student demotivation, (4) school violence and student indiscipline, and (5) parental indifference /lack of involvement. These in themselves cast a picture of public primary school culture in T&T. A report by the IDB Strategy (2000) identified similar issues but added concerns over the quality of teacher education programmes and in-service professional development. However, noticeably absent from both reports was the quality of principal leadership which has been raised as a concern by the TSC.

Inequity in the primary system is evident in the scores at the 11+ examination, SEA, as well as in the practice of 'tracking', which places students with poor scores in secondary schools of seeming lesser quality (World Bank, 2000). The World Bank has identified a number of variables that have been noted to play influencing roles in the performance of students in these examinations. Among those identified is student socio-economic status (World Bank, 2000). Students with high socio-economic status score significantly higher than their counterparts from low socio-economic backgrounds and are more likely to be placed in the high performing, traditional 5- and 7- year secondary schools. Primary school performance, in particular, appears to be stratified along the lines of gender, social class, culture and ethnicity (Jules, 1994 cited in World Bank, 2000). The "bottom line is", according to the IDB (p. 6), "that learning in schools, by all accounts, remains strikingly deficient in all but a few elite primary institutions" – a situation no different from that existing in the early years after emancipation.

An essential aim of T&T primary schools, none-the-less, is to have students meet or even exceed education/subject standards. Yet, according to the National Test (2011) report, over the period 2005-2010, between 40 and 60 percent of students did not meet the standards in both Mathematics and Language Arts; they either nearly met the standards or performed well below them. Performance in the National tests according to education districts is also telling. The highest performing district, over the same period, is consistently Victoria, where the second city in Trinidad is located. A look at the two education districts from which this study's case schools were selected revealed that the 'excelling' schools were predominantly private schools. In Port-of-Spain and Environs for instance, of the 11 'excelling' schools, only 1 was a public school, while almost half

of the 89 schools in the education district were 'under academic watch'. In St George East, a very different picture exists as this is the second highest performing district in the nation. Most schools (70%) are 'mostly effective' with 8 out of the 104 schools within the education district labelled as 'excelling'. In a planning document, the Medium-Term Policy Framework (MTPF, 2011-2014), SEA data from 2011 show that 9.9% of the 17, 280 students writing the exam scored 30% or below in Mathematics, Language Arts and Creative Writing, reflecting unacceptable performance. On international assessments the picture is even worse. For instance, in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Survey (PIRLS) 2011 reported by Mullis et al. (2012) in which 45 countries were assessed, T&T outperformed only eleven countries having an average just under the intermediate international benchmark. The picture painted here is one of average low performance of the T&T public primary school sector.

Reform of the public primary sector

Recognising the need for improvement in the education system, successive governments have committed to a goal of having a seamless, self-renewing, high quality education system by the year 2020 (Vision 2020) using strategies which: focus on the school, reform the MOE and involve the community (Vision 2020: Progress Report, 2008) and has determined to identify and address the factors affecting student performance in both primary and secondary schools (MTPF, 2011). Notable reforms intended to affect the functioning, particularly at the school level, of the public primary sector are changes to school management, namely the shift to decentralisation in the form of school-based management (SBM), which has been identified as "the *main strategy* [emphasis mine] used to ensure the effective delivery of quality education to our students and development of all our schools as centres of excellence", according to the International Conference on Education (ICE)

National Report, (2008, p. 6). The aims of this key strategy, together with restructuring of the system, are "to improve learning, teaching and management in the education system, as well as organisational performance and effectiveness" (ICE National Report, 2008, p. 9). This SBM, for which senior teachers and principals have been trained (National Report, 2004), is set to be executed through the creation and functioning of SBM committees/teams which have mandated responsibilities such as the creation of school development plans. Monetary grants were disbursed to schools for the implementation of these in 2009 under the School Improvement Programme (SIP). Support for the SBM teams comes from the local school boards to government schools and, for regulation of and consistency within the system, the MOE has compiled Standards and Guidelines for the Operation of All Schools (Green Paper, 2005). At the helm of the SBM team and charged with the responsibility of ensuring the effective delivery of quality education and the development of schools as centres of excellence, as espoused in the ICE National Report (2008), is the principal.

Principals of public primary schools and their roles

To ensure such aims are met, the MOE upgraded the requirements for promotion to primary school principal. No longer were appointments to the post of primary school principal to be confirmed based on seniority and proximity to the vacancy, but candidates were to possess a Bachelor degree with specialisation in Educational Administration, for which an increase in salary was negotiated. Selection is based on performance on selection tests based on knowledge of the regulations, an interview and a special report completed by the applicant's principal or supervisor besides the content of the candidate's application form. Suitable candidates are placed on a merit list to be considered when there is a vacancy; however,

candidates can reject a school appointment (TSC Annual Report, 2006) or, in the case of a denominational appointment, respective boards can recommend or approve a candidate.

Outlined in the Education Act and the Standards of Operations for All Schools are the roles and responsibilities of school principals. Roles and responsibilities listed in the Education Act include: the administration of the school's programme and responsibility for the discipline of the school, teaching, keeping proper records, safety of students, proper use of school equipment and stock and ensuring the adherence to the Education Act. While a more detailed list is presented in the Standards of Operation, they reflect those in the Education Act, having been developed from this piece of legislation. Interestingly, the roles and responsibilities listed for the principal of T&T schools are mainly managerial in nature, which is to be expected as the Education Act (27: 26 of 2000) conceptualises principalship as "the day to day management" of schools, excluding leadership practices. In the Standards of Operation (2005), there is reference to instructional leadership as being the "chief function" of the principal in which he/she "is responsible for the improvement of instruction" (p. 63). While this is a critically important function, arguably there is more to leadership and school improvement than improving the pedagogy of teachers as the literature on successful school/principal leadership will confirm. Such principal practices as setting direction and vision creation; ensuring the continuing development and empowerment of staff; ensuring conducive learning environments through developing the organisation and reculturing the school; and ensuring all school programmes and activities align to the vision of the school are not included, least of all the principal's responsibility to build school-wide capacity for improvement.

As the 'manager' of their schools, principals are directly accountable to their respective denominational or local boards and to their school supervisors from whom they must also gain permission for initiating a number of school activities, such as class field trips. However, of all the responsibilities associated with their role as 'manager', the greatest emphasis is placed on their responsibility to ensure the discipline of the school and school members' adherence to the Education Act. This may be because public primary school principals are not responsible for hiring and firing of teaching staff and as of 2000 corporal punishment no longer forms part of their permissible strategies for disciplining students. The principal's log book then has become an important journal of daily happenings at the school and a record of the principal's actions towards fulfilling this responsibility. Public school principals often use their influence as well, particularly in generating support and funding to supplement that provided by the MOE.

LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

As this study focuses on only three new principals of three very different schools serving disadvantaged communities, there exist limitations on what can be generalised to all new principals heading such schools in T&T and elsewhere; however, there is potential for relating the findings herein to similar subjects and contexts. However, this limitation is counterbalanced by the many benefits of case studies, expounded when the research design is later discussed and which include the rigorous, in-depth and naturalistic inquiry that produces a wealth of data leading to robust findings. I do think though that if the second phase of data-collection, occurring at least two years from the first phase, was similar to the first, more robust findings would have been had on how interactions

between the new principal and school members developed over time and how this impacted on the school and new principal. However, time only allowed for collecting student performance data in the second phase.

Acknowledged as a delimitation, this study did not seek the perspectives of parents, ancillary staff – cleaners, secretaries, teacher assistants, cafeteria workers – or that of education support personnel who are based at the schools part-time, such as guidance officers and social workers, even though they would have their own insights on the culture of the school at which they were based, the leadership of the principals and the nature of the interaction between the two. Whilst I recognise that these persons may have some part to play in the schools' cultures, by selecting teachers, pupils and the principals, I have focused on the views of the main actors.

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS AND TERMS

The ***new principal*** of a school is one confirmed in the post of principal for a maximum of approximately two (2) years, according to Weindling's (1999, 2000) map of transitional stages of headteachers. Herein the term *new principal* is distinct from *beginning principal*, who is one in his/her first months in post, and the *early-career principal*, who may be in post for between 3 and 7 years. Throughout the study, 'principal' is used synonymously with 'headteacher', acknowledging that different country contexts have a preferred term use.

Principal succession is a process of transition between the new principal's appointment and, for the purposes of this study, the end of his/her second year in post. A timeframe for the acceptance of a new principal does not appear to exist, partly because the length of time for this to occur varies from context to context.

Principal Leadership is defined in terms of direction and influence of the principal. Leadership "acts as a catalyst" (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins, 2006, p. 4) in providing the conditions necessary for successful, sustainable school improvement and has a significant, albeit mostly indirect, effect on pupil achievement (Leithwood et al., 2006; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). For the purposes of this study, the new principal's leadership is investigated through an examination of his/her practices and strategies to reshape or enhance the school's culture for school change and improvement through four types: transformational, transactional, managerial and political. It is conceptualised as a reciprocal relationship between the leader and the led.

School culture is defined as a dominant pattern of behaviours and beliefs held by school members that acts as a frame of reference for the way they interact and the way things are done at the school, but which does not discount the existence of subcultures in the school. Within this study, school culture is conceptualised as occurring across four overlapping dimensions: Professional Orientation, Organisational Structure, Quality of the Learning Experience and Environment, and Student Orientation, adapted from Schoen & Teddlie's (2008) conceptualisation. This conceptualisation of school culture also exists at three levels theorised by Schein (1990; 1992): artefacts, values and underlying beliefs.

Inherited school culture is the existing culture a new principal meets on appointment to a school that is new to him/her.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis is structured into nine main chapters. Following chapter 1, the thesis continues as follows:

CHAPTER 2 – *Review of Literature*

This chapter reviews the literature on schools serving disadvantaged communities, school culture and leadership following which conceptual frameworks are discussed for school culture and leadership. This chapter also argues for a relational understanding of new principal leadership as both influencing school change through mediating school culture and possibly being moderated by school culture, which leads into discussing existing knowledge on new and successful principals' interactions with school culture. Gaps in existing knowledge are identified and a theoretical framework that informs this study is presented which includes how the gaps will be addressed by this research.

CHAPTER 3 – *Methodology*

Chapter 3 presents and discusses the author's ontological and epistemological perspectives, the research strategy – case study – and the methods employed. The sampling strategy, access negotiation and issues of ethics are also discussed, following which the selected analytical methods are explained.

CHAPTER 4 – *Introductions and housekeeping*

The context of the three case study schools – Memorial Park, Community Pride and Riverside are discussed. Details of the structure and foci of the three case-interaction chapters are also provided. This chapter also provides definitions of terms used in the case chapters and gives some sense of findings across the three cases.

CHAPTER 5 – '*Tests and trials': Case 1*

This is the first of the three findings chapters that discusses the interaction between the leadership of the new principals and their inherited school cultures. The title of each of these chapters is intended to reflect the nature of the respective case interaction. In this chapter the interaction between Mr Quincy, a new principal, and the culture of

Memorial Park, the school to which he was appointed, is discussed. The chapter discusses how his personal attributes and values as well as his school culture awareness inform his reshaping of school culture and reports on how school members' respond to this. In light of these, the impact on Mr Quincy's emotions, leadership development and school change is discussed. The chapter concludes with plausible explanations of the case interaction.

CHAPTER 6 – *'On to a good thing': Case 2:*

Similar to chapter 5, chapter 6 presents the second of the three cases, focusing on the nature and impact of the interplay between Ms Figaro's leadership and the culture at Community Pride.

CHAPTER 7 – *'Learning the ropes': Case 3*

Chapter 7 presents the third of the three cases, focusing on the nature and impact of the interplay between Mr Remmy's leadership and the culture at Riverside.

CHAPTER 8 – *Explaining new principals' encounters with school culture*

A discussion of the findings on the nature and impact of the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture in light of the literature is undertaken. A leadership-school culture model is presented and a number of claims are put forward. Key implications of those claims are also discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 9 – *Conclusions*

This chapter presents the main findings that may be derived from this study and notes the contributions to knowledge that have been made. It also identifies areas for future research and concludes with the author's personal reflections on pursuing a doctoral degree.

Having introduced the study, the following chapter is dedicated to a review of relevant literature.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter briefly reviews extant literature on schools serving disadvantaged communities. It then situates new principals developmentally and reviews their professional lives, pointing out that amongst new principals' challenges – a major theme in the literature on new principals - the most stressful may be shaping the culture of their schools. This moves the review into considering how researchers have described, conceptualised, classified and investigated the creation, enhancement and sustenance of school culture towards informing this study's diagnosis of the cultures of participating schools. In recognition of the major influence that principal leadership has on (re)shaping school culture, the concept of leadership is also reviewed and conceptually framed for the purposes of the current study. The review then argues for the marrying of these two concepts – school culture and leadership – in a conceptualisation of relational leadership for the purposes of this study, focussing on new principals' interaction with school culture. Following, the study's theoretical framework is presented. It argues for a need to investigate new principals' attributes, values and school culture awareness towards understanding their professional judgment – a critical factor in the leadership-school culture interplay. Existing literature is reviewed as are school members' responses to principal leadership and how these responses moderate new principals' leadership and school change as well as impact on new principals' emotions and professional development. The chapter closes with an overview, which includes the study's intended contribution to knowledge.

SCHOOLS FACING CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

In recent years, research into schools has come to focus on those serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Much of this research originates in the US and UK. While in the US literature these schools are generally referred to as 'high poverty' schools, in the UK, the phrase, 'schools facing challenging circumstances' or SfCC is more widely applied. This thesis uses the latter, for which challenging circumstances are the effects on the school and students from economic and socially debilitating issues, such as poverty, community crime and domestic problems. Often, but not exclusively, SfCC are 'ineffective' or 'failing' (Muijs et al., 2004), warranting much attention to how they are improved (Chapman & Harris, 2004; Harris, et al., 2006; Jacob & Ludwig, 2008). Other studies have emphasized what effective leadership looks like in such schools (Day, 2005; Harris, 2002; West, Ainscow & Standford, 2005; Ylimaki, Jacobson & Drysdale, 2007) and the concerns of their heads (Day & Johansson, 2008), although little specific attention has been paid to the leadership of new heads in such contexts.

In the T&T context, while the research is comparatively scarce, attention has been paid to identifying and characterizing schools facing exceptional challenge (e.g. De Lisle, 2011), the nature of learning in these schools (e.g. Lochan, 1998) and identifying those that are high- and low-performing (e.g. De Lisle et al., 2008). 'Schools facing exceptional challenge' is used to mean those schools "confronted by complexity resulting from higher levels of poverty [at least 90% receiving FSM], disadvantage, and turbulence among student, parent and staff, thereby threatening school performance" (De Lisle, 2011, abstract, after MacBeath et al., 2005). While these studies report findings on principal leadership,

it is not their main focus and none investigate the leadership of newly appointed principals.

Overall, key to such studies is describing SfCC and while there may exist a high degree of consensus within the literature on these schools' contexts, the lines of demarcation tend to blur with respect to descriptions of culture or effectiveness and school performance. Consequently, most of the literature on these schools (e.g. Potter, Reynolds & Chapman, 2002; West, Ainscow & Standford, 2005) give the impression that all are underperforming and in need of drastic improvement. However, while research confirms that SfCC tend to underperform on standardized tests (e.g. De Lisle at al., 2008), in actuality there exist high performing SfCC as reported by, for example, Day et al. (2011); James, Connolly, Dunning and Elliott (2006); Maden (2001) and; Matthews, Rea, Hill and Gu (2014). Thus, for research purposes, there is need to make clear these distinctions. This study attempts to do so.

Contextually, SfCC tend to serve communities which suffer many problems, including high levels of unemployment, physical and mental health, low educational achievement and the migration of the most qualified persons to other communities (Gore & Smith, 2001, cited by Muijs et al., 2004). For research purposes, proxy indicators are usually used to determine the degree of challenge faced by schools, which include the number of students eligible for FSM, socio-economic status of students and parental education and occupation (Chapman & Harris, 2004). Yet, culture cannot be so easily delinked from effectiveness and school performance (James, et al., 2006; Rossman, Corbett & Firestone, 1988). High performing SfCC are not very different from those reported in School Effectiveness Research (SER) as a whole (Thomson, 2010) and display characteristics indicative of healthy school cultures, which are elaborated on when types of school cultures are discussed. These schools generally

have, for example, high teacher commitment and collaborative cultures; while low performing ones may have, for instance, a teacher culture of blame (Reynolds, 2010), high student indiscipline, low literacy levels and irregular school attendance (Potter, et al., 2002) or students with a general disinterest in school (Jacob & Ludwig, 2008). Yet, even an underperforming SfCC may share some characteristics with high performing ones, such as high commitment and effectiveness among some of its teachers (Levin, 2006; Lochan, 1998). Despite this, realizing improvement in low performing SfCC for the reasons mentioned and a history of a lack of success is often difficult and success short-lived (Whitty & Mortimore, 1997, cited by Muijs et al., 2004). Change in these schools is frustratingly slow, particularly for principals (Day et al., 2011; Stoll & Myers, 1998), and possibly more so for new principals. The following section draws attention to the new principal.

SITUATING NEW PRINCIPALS

Principals function in characteristically different ways depending on the stage/phase they are in during their professional lives. As this study focuses on new principals, understanding where they 'sit' in terms of their thinking and actions as principals is important. A number of authors have applied various models to understand and describe the development of principals' professional lives (e.g. Daresh, 2001; Day & Bakioğlu, 1996; Ribbins, 1999). A useful model that maps the transitional stages through headship was produced by Dick Weindling (1999, 2000), who combined the findings of a number of studies on stages of headship and leadership succession, including: Day & Bakioğlu (1996); Gabarro (1987); Gronn, (1993); Hart (1993) and Ribbins (1998) with those of a National

Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) longitudinal study (e.g. Weindling & Earley, 1987).

Weindling's (1999, 2000) transitional stages through headship, with approximate timings, are:

Stage 0 – preparation prior to headship

Experience as deputy heads or acting principals and/or participation in principal preparation programmes help to create a conception of the headship. Such conceptions began to take shape in aspirant principals during their career as they learned by observing both effective and ineffective role models of school leadership.

Stage 1 – entry and encounter (first months)

The new head's conception of headship meets the reality. It is a time of surprise and sense making of the complexities and culture of the school.

Stage 2 – Taking hold (three to 12 months)

This is when the new head implements a number of organisational changes. The stage is also part of the 'honeymoon period' when staff members are more welcoming to changes, but which ends suddenly in aggressive resistance to some action by the head.

Stage 3 – Reshaping (second year)

A period of major change as the new head has become more confident and possesses a more realistic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of staff.

Stage 4 – Refinement (years three to four)

After two years many of the structural changes have been made, but further changes are introduced, while refinements to earlier initiatives are made.

Stage 5 – Consolidation (years five to seven)

After about five years when most of the planned changes have been introduced, a period of consolidation seems to occur although externally imposed reforms may still be initiated.

Stage 6 – Plateau (years eight and onwards)

This stage may see heads transferring to another school, having achieved their goals. Those that stay are either looking to make further improvements, being motivated by their work or have become frustrated or disenchanted, having not found another job and harbouring feelings of failure.

For this study, this model is used as an initial premise to define new principals because it benefits from source triangulation of findings. Conceptually, new principals are defined as fitting into stages 1-3 of Weindling's (1999, 2000) model: entry and encounter – stage 1, taking hold – stage 2 or reshaping – stage 3; therefore, a new principal is one in role for a maximum of approximately two years. Therefore, for this study, new principals in post from appointment to two years were solicited. The following section throws light on the professional lives of new principals.

NEW PRINCIPALS' PROFESSIONAL LIVES AND CHALLENGES

As suggested by Weindling's (1999, 2000) model, new principals' organizational socialization is characterized by simultaneous and on-going processes of learning (after Schein, 1968) and making changes – processes that involve a number of challenges

Professional challenges form a major theme within the literature on new principals. Most paint a dismal picture of the novice principal's work. Researchers consistently report on new principals' role uncertainty and lack of clarity (Daresh, 1987; Daresh & Playko, 1994); low levels of confidence in adopting perceived role identities (Holligan et al., 2006;

Wildy & Clarke, 2008); stress over dealing with ineffective staff (Cheng et al., 1997; Northfield, 2011; Quong, 2006; Sigford, 1998); 'headaches' in managing school premises, implementing new government initiatives and handling school budgets (Thomas & Hornsey, 1991; Weindling & Dimmock, 2006) ; and difficulty in enhancing the public image of the school (Weindling & Dimmock, 2006) and improving student behavior (Day et al., 2011; Quong, 2006). Also found to be challenging to new principals was time management due to administrative overload and the unpredictability of their work (Draper & McMichael, 2000; Cowie & Crawford, 2008), which was compounded by a lack of clerical assistance and reluctance to distribute leadership (Roberts, 1992).

The challenges faced by new principals are not uncommon to more experienced principals and are irrespective of new principals' gender, age, race, and level of education, according to Parkay and Rhodes (1992). However, developing a healthy school culture, may be the most stressful of the challenges (Barth, 2001; Cheng et al., 1997), as it encapsulates some of the named challenges, such as, improving student behaviour and dealing with staff issues, as well as a group of challenges not yet mentioned but experienced by the new principal in his/her attempts at reshaping and interacting with school culture. This notion brings together two concepts: school culture and the leadership of the new principal. Each is discussed in turn before they are addressed in relation to each other.

SCHOOL CULTURE

The terms 'culture' and 'climate' are, arguably, parts of the same construct, although they have been studied differently within different research traditions (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). While culture focuses on shared values and assumptions within an organization, and climate on

shared perceptions, they both attempt to identify organizational properties (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991) as does 'ethos' which focusses on relationships within the organization (Glover & Coleman, 2005). Though these concepts are often used interchangeably, Glover and Coleman (2005) argue for consistent use of the terms in order to maintain interpretive variation, but point out that ethos like climate are only 'surface manifestations' (Schein, 1990) of the much deeper organizational characteristic, culture; thus, making culture one of the most important, powerful, complex and taken-for-granted concepts in education (Barth, 2001; Deal & Peterson, 1998; Stoll, 1999). Indeed, although external and internal cultures influence all that occurs in schools: from communication patterns, to the emphasis placed on student and teacher learning, to staff's responsiveness to change and even how visitors are welcomed, it is generally neglected in school improvement efforts (Stoll, 1999). One possible reason is that it is difficult to conceptualise (Alvesson, 2002; Smircich, 1983).

School culture: a conceptual overview

There are many definitions of culture due, in part, to authors' ontological and moral stances (Martin, 2002). However, there are some commonalities across the definitions. Culture appears to be a shared phenomenon (Davis, 1984, cited by Connolly, James & Beales, 2011; Schein, 1990) that is first created and learnt and protected (Schein, 1990; 1992). It involves an intricate mix of beliefs, values, meanings and assumptions, which are manifested in an array of symbolic representations, such as ceremonies, artefacts and relationships. Culture is also a strong determinant of individual and group norms, that is, their attitudes, behaviours and actions (Barth, 2001; Deal & Peterson, 1998; Nias, Southworth & Yeomans, 1989). Therefore, culture defines reality for the organisation's members and arguably provides them with an identity

and a lens to analyse people, objects and actions that are encountered (Hargreaves, 1994, cited by Stoll & Fink, 1996). Simply put, culture is "the way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1983, p. 14).

But, what is 'school culture'? Widely recognised as an important feature to understanding the functioning of schools, school culture has been studied from as early as the 1960s (Prosser, 1999), often as a pre-requirement to understanding some other school-level phenomenon or with the aim of examining its effects on say, school effectiveness (Maslowski, 2006; Pol et al, 2005) as did Rossman et al. (1988). Few studies (e.g. Caesar, 2007; Schoen, 2005) explore school culture for the purpose of understanding the system/phenomenon itself (Pol et al., 2005). While definitions of school culture speak of the elements and properties previously outlined, they neglect to say about what and held by whom – a shortcoming of these definitions. Cavanagh and Dellar (1997) believe school cultural values and beliefs are about "…the education of children and the social interaction within the school" (p. 4), held by teachers. In an indirect way, Schoen and Teddlie (2008) assert that they are those manifested in "the Professional Orientation, Organizational Structure, Quality of the Learning Environment and Student-Centred Focus of the school that determine and sustain the norms of behavior, traditions and processes particular to a school" (p. 139). However, Schoen and Teddlie (2008) do not say who subscribes to the school culture; is it all school members or just teachers? Within schools, differing and, possibly, competing value systems are likely to exist (Morgan, 1997). This draws attention to the notions of holistic school culture as distinct from the existence of subcultures to a more dominant one within schools. Interestingly, both definitions imply that the set of values, beliefs and assumptions held to is specific to individual schools, indicating the uniqueness of a school's culture. However, considering the raft of

definitions and conceptualisations of organizational and school culture, what is needed is a conceptual framework to treat with the concept. Schoen (2005), in her doctoral thesis, devised such a framework. This framework has been adapted for use in this study.

An adapted conceptualization of school culture

Recognising this need for a conceptual framework, Schoen (2005) undertook a review of the literature on organizational culture, school climate and school culture in order to create something of a 'unified theory' of school culture (p. 78). The result was the development of a new conceptualization of school culture, published in Schoen and Teddlie (2008). This conceptualization is based on the conjecture that "a dominant pattern of behaviours and set of beliefs exists in each school" (p. 147), but does not discount the existence of subcultures (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). I, along with Schein (1985) and Wilson (2005) also share this notion of school culture. Thus, in this study, **school culture is defined as a dominant pattern of behaviours and beliefs held by school members that acts as a frame of reference for the way they interact and the way things are done at the school.** Using this idea of a frame of reference allows for consideration of school members' responses to principal leadership as a function or expression of school culture. This conception of school culture does not discount the individual agency of school members or the existence of subcultures in the school.

The study's framework for understanding school culture is adapted from Schoen and Teddlie (2008), who conceptualised school culture as having four dimensions: Dimension I – Professional Orientation; Dimension II – Organisational Structure: III – Quality of the Learning Environment and; IV – Focus on Students. The adapted school culture framework, while also consisting of four dimensions, shows that some indicators were reworded or moved to a different dimension and new ones

added. However, the major adaptations are: (a) the grouping of related indicators under sub-headings which allow for a quick reading of the contents of each dimension, (b) the merging of the original dimensions III and IV, and (c) the creation of a new dimension – Student Orientation. Adaptations (b) and (c) are reflected in figure 2-1.

I. Professional Orientation	II. Organizational Structure
the activities and attitudes that characterize the degree of professionalism present in the faculty	the style of leadership, communication & processes that characterize the way the school conducts its business
III. Quality of the Learning Environment	**IV. Student-Centered Focus**
the intellectual merit of the activities in which students are typically engaged	the collective efforts & programs offered to support student achievement.

Adapted to

I. Professional Orientation	**II. Organisational Structure**
The activities, attitudes and dispositions that characterise the degree of professionalism at the faculty	Leadership approach, communication and processes that characterise the way in which the school conducts its business
III. Quality of the Learning Experience / Environment	**IV. Student Orientation**
The quality of instruction and assessment as well as the opportunities for learning, which include the extent to which there is a focus on students	Pupils' dispositions and attitudes to school and learning and their relationships with other school members

Figure 2-1 – Adjusted descriptors of school culture dimensions

The dimensions of this study's school culture framework are:

I - Professional Orientation describes the practices and dispositions that characterise the degree of teachers' professionalism at the school, including their relationships with each other and parents.

II – Organisational Structure defines the leadership approach, social and management structures and processes that characterise the way in which the school conducts its business.

III – Quality of the Learning Experience and Environment is concerned with the quality of instruction, opportunities for learning, academic rigor/press, focus on students and the quality of the learning environment, both physical and climatic.

IV – Student Orientation considers pupils' dispositions and attitudes to school and learning and their relationships with other school members.

The outlined adaptations were made following the identification of certain shortcomings in the original school culture framework put forward by Schoen (2005, p. 87). The following observations were informed by my own experience of primary school teaching and working with a number of primary schools in both a professional capacity and for the purposes of research. The observations are also informed by the findings of both past and current educational research. Each dimension is addressed in turn. The adapted conceptual framework, including the lists of indicators per dimension and a key that informs the reader of where the adaptations have been made, is provided in table 2-1.

Dimension 1 – *Professional Orientation* speaks of teachers' individual or collective involvement in activities that foster professional growth and development and that are focused on student learning (Schoen, 2005). It also incorporates such conceptions as 'professionalism' (Louis, Kruse & Associates, 1995, cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008), 'norms of collegiality' (Little, 1982, cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008)

I. Professional Orientation	II. Organisational Structure
Teacher dispositions • staff attitude regarding professional growth and change • **teacher efficacy, commitment, resilience, effectiveness & satisfaction** • **the extent to which teachers feel safe** **Teacher practice** • formal goal setting and planning for improvement * • the extent of professional inquiry & problem solving • extent to which teachers engage in reflective practice (individual or collaborative)* **Teacher relationships** • degree of collegiality & teamwork in instructional planning • **the quality of staff's interaction with students, the public, visiting professionals & ancillary staff** • **the degree to which** teachers maintain a rapport with parents & **actively involve them** ** **Teacher support** • **induction and** mentoring of new teachers • focused **continuing** professional development for teachers • instructional support available for teachers	**Leadership** • principal leadership approach & **practices*** • **existence of distributed leadership** • **extent to which teacher leadership is encouraged & supported** • **the quality of principal-school members relationships** **Social structures** • communication structures * • internal accountability norms • shared sense of mission & faculty cohesion • extent to which vehicles for involvement of multiple stakeholders exist * • formal structure for problem solving & conflict resolution **Management structures** • implementation of internally/externally initiated reforms * • **the extent to which** school policies, procedures, rules, routines and traditions **exist and are enforced or institutionalised** • **nature of school/office administration**
III. Quality of the Learning Environment & Experience #	**IV. Student Orientation ##**
Instruction & Curriculum • **quality of instruction (lesson planning, use of teaching aids, differentiation to meet needs of students)** • interdisciplinary approach to curriculum, with occasional teaming of teachers/classes • curriculum meets state standards & provides for student exploration of personal interests • **the degree of academic rigor existing** **Opportunities for Learning & Assessment** • learning activities require active involvement of students and have value beyond school • the extent to which students work in non-static groups on cooperative projects • all students routinely involved in higher order thinking • the extent to which extra-curricular activities are provided • student assessment practices reflect school goals, teacher objectives and student needs • **the extent to which** multiple modes of learning activities and assessments are used **Focus on students** • **teacher expectations of students** • student motivation/academic futility addressed ** • recognition of student achievement ** • the extent to which student involvement and learning are effectively monitored • school wide approach to student disciplining • mechanisms exist for identifying and providing for individual student needs **(school-sponsored support)**** • **Extent to which the environment is safe & conducive for learning**	**Student disposition** • students' dispositions towards school in general, school members and lessons/activities • the degree of adherence to school policy, routines and procedures • **the extent to which students feel safe** **Student work ethic** • students' motivation or academic futility/efficacy • the extent to which students remain on task and complete assignments (academic optimism) **Student Relationships** • the extent to which peer support/antagonism exists among students • The quality of students' relationships with each other and teachers **Key:** * Changed wording ** Changed dimension Items in **bold** have been included # Original dimensions III & IV merged ## New dimension created

Table 2-1 – Dimensions and indicators of school culture (Adapted from Schoen & Teddlie, 2008)

and 'collaborative cultures' (Lieberman, 1990, cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008) to name a few. Teachers' relationships with parents and professional others, such as guidance offers, has been added to this study's framework, since the manner in which teachers welcome and work with these individuals who have a vested interest in the well-being of the students is a reflection of existing school culture (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Nias, 1989). Thus, the indicator *'teachers maintain a [rapport] with parents and communicate frequently'* was moved from dimension III – Quality of the Learning environment to dimension I – Professional Orientation. Moreover, although mentoring of new teachers is included, an equally important part of the sharing and learning of school culture is the induction of new members of the teaching staff (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

Another aspect of the professional orientation of teachers which appears to be underdeveloped is teachers' disposition, which Schoen (2005) refers to as "psychological and attitudinal constructs" (p. 140), such as their expectations for students, their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and their levels of commitment, which are cultural elements not to be overlooked. Included for this study is 'collective organisational commitment', which is teachers' willingness "to provide considerable effort and expertise beyond the traditional job requirements of classroom teaching" (Day & Gu, 2010, p. 136). Another cultural element evidenced as influencing school members' actions, including individual teacher performance, and school achievement is *collective teacher efficacy* or *collective efficacy beliefs* (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Goddard et al., (2004) define collective efficacy beliefs as "the perceptions of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can organise and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students" (p. 7). Also included are teacher *resilience, effectiveness and satisfaction* (Day &

Gu, 2010). Also critical is the extent to which teachers feel safe physically, emotionally and intellectually – issues such as quality of the physical environment, prejudice, teachers' creative risk taking come to mind. Schwartz's (1990) findings "… point to a significant correlation between unhealthy school culture [unsafe schools with high gang activity] and inhibited teacher collaboration" (p. 8). In other words, teachers in such schools were less committed to their school's 'social system'.

Dimension II – *Organisational Structure* in the original framework appears to be inclusive, since structures can be social, physical and even political. It includes the types of leadership at the school (Harris et al., 2003; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999; Senge, 2000, cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). However, the extent to which distributive leadership and teacher leadership are supported gives an important indication of the value placed on not only staff development, but also on existing beliefs about the way in which the school's management should be organized. These also bring into focus the issue of 'trust' among staff members – a critically important element to the success of principals (Day & Johansson, 2008; National College, 2010) and 'healthy' school cultures (Harris & Day, 2003; Saphier & King, 1985), but found to be lacking among some new principals with regards to their staff (Harvey, 1991; Roberts, 1992). Additionally, the indicator, '*formal structure for change'*, has been omitted because it is assumed to be subsumed within the indicator, '*implementation of internal/external reforms*'.

Quality of the learning experience and environment is Dimension III. The original dimension, 'Quality of the Learning Environment' includes indicators intended to provide a sense of the learning experiences of students that focuses on intellectual rigor (Newmann & Associates, 1996, cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008), which this study has replaced with academic press (Hoy, Tarter & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006) – an important aspect

of school culture (Dumay, 2009). Hoy and colleagues define academic press as "… the extent to which a school is driven by a quest for academic excellence – a press for achievement" (p. 427). The quality of instruction and learning opportunities are also included in this dimension; however, the name of the dimension does not reflect this and hence was change to include the learning experiences of students.

Remaining true to the new scope of dimension III, the indicators under dimension IV – 'Student-Centred Focus' have been incorporated within dimension III because, arguably, the extent to which there is a student focus in a school determines the quality of the learning environment and experience for students. '*Teachers' expectations for students*' has also been included as an indicator within this dimension, though also considered in dimension I, because the development and cultivation of high expectations have been widely reported to be an important ingredient of healthy school cultures (Barth, 2001; Deal & Peterson, 1999; Hargreaves, 1995) and successful schools (Day et al., 2010). The extent to which these are present, then, is critical to learning about a school's culture.

Having integrated the original dimensions III and IV into dimension III, a new fourth dimension is proposed called S*tudent Orientation.* It considers students as active participants in relation to existing school cultures. Dimension III would have considered what is done *for* students. It is likely that students may display particular orientations to school, reflecting another dimension of school culture alluded to here. It is debateable, however, whether student orientations are separate student cultures or can be subsumed into a dominant school culture. It is also likely that dimension IV as presented here may provide a more holistic treatment of school culture. This fourth dimension accounts for pupils' dispositions and attitudes towards school in general, as possibly seen in,

for instance, their adherence to school rules and routines (Higgins-D'Alessandro & Sadh, 1997). The quality of relationships among students and with their teachers is also a facet within this dimension, informed by Higgins-D'Alessandro and Sadh's School Culture Scale (1997) which is briefly discussed in chapter 3. The work ethic of students is also included as a sub-dimension of student orientation in this study which considers students' motivation or academic futility and the extent to which students remain on task and complete assignments.

The final adjustment to Schoen and Teddlie's (2008) conceptualisation of school culture regards the presentation of the indicators as shown in Schoen (2005, p. 87). Clearly, some of the indicators are related. Sub-headings were applied to indicate sub-dimensions, grouping related indicators and giving the reader a quick sense of the scope of named dimensions, appearing easier on the eyes. Consequently, the four dimensions have been subdivided into sub-dimensions, presented earlier in table 2-1 but reflected in figure 2-2.

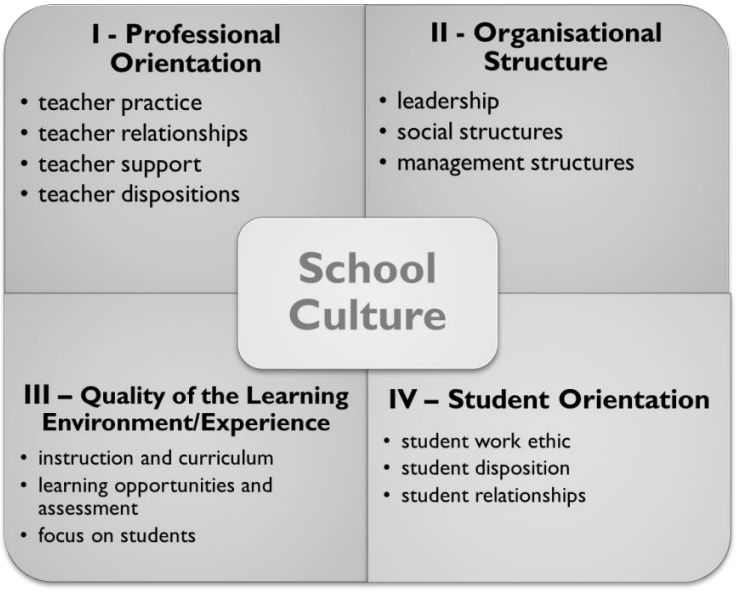


Figure 2-2 – The four dimensions and sub-dimensions of school culture

Three levels of culture

Schoen and Teddlie's (2008) conceptualization of school culture, and thus this study's adapted version, adheres to Schein's (1985, 1992) theory of three levels of culture. It is assumed that each of the four dimensions of school culture manifests at the three culture levels: artefacts, values and underlying beliefs (1985; 1992). This adherence is not uncommon, since Schein's theory of organizational culture is widely used as an important framework for understanding school climate (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000 cited by Schoen, 2005), school culture (e.g. Deal & Kennedy, 1983; Deal & Peterson, 1999) and organizational culture in educational settings (e.g. Corbett, Firestone, and Rossman (1987, cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008).

Figure 2-3 lists in order of their increasing evasiveness to empirical decoding, the three levels: artefacts, values and basic underlying assumptions.

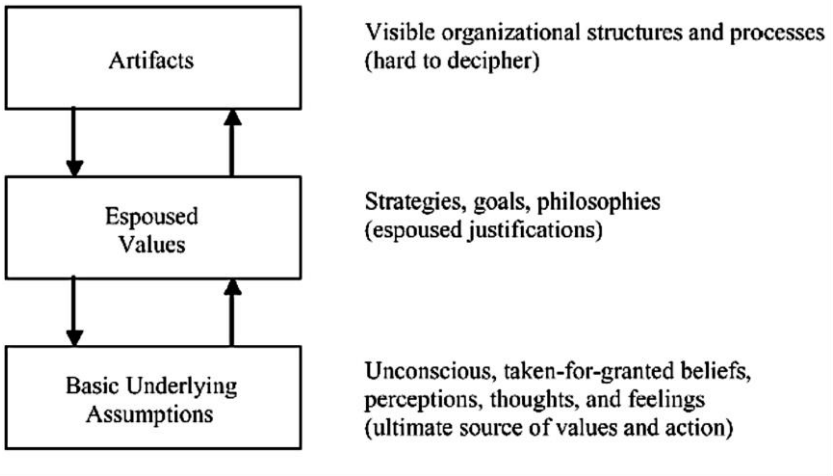


Figure 2-3 – The levels of culture; Source: Schein (1992, p. 17)

The uppermost and most visible level – artifacts [sic] – includes visual representations, such as icons, ceremonies/events, behavioural norms, verbal expressions and settings (Jones, 1996; Schein, 1992). While

artefacts are reflective of the two other deeper levels of culture it only scratches the surface of understanding organizational culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). Interpreting the meanings at this level is difficult as symbols can be ambiguous (Pring, 2004; Schein, 1992). Espoused values indicate aspired realities, which may not be reflected in practice or behaviour displayed at the level of artefacts. In schools, espoused values may be expressed in the school's vision, mission and motto. Consequently, a study of espoused values may only provide partial answers to understanding organizational culture, whilst basic assumptions, which form the foundation of a group's shared knowledge structure, may be more illuminative on a group's culture. These are created from tried and proven actions. Like values, basic assumptions or underlying beliefs are usually taken-for-granted and not so easily compromised.

Relationally, as suggested by the arrows in figure 2-3, assumptions or underlying beliefs are expressed in values (espoused or in-use), which in turn are embodied in artefacts, according to Hatch (1993; 2004). Moreover, Schein's three-level representation of culture is not static. Stolp and Smith (1995) explain that as time progresses, the values and beliefs that inform daily interactions (second level) or the artefacts (first level) may shift, becoming part of the third, more hidden level of culture, underlying beliefs. These shifts, Stolp and Smith say, make cultural change difficult to recognize.

The current study has attempted to establish what values and beliefs are shared and deeply held to by school members and their connection to observable norms of behaviour and school artefacts, considering that any understanding of school culture must rest upon acceptance that educational practices are value-laden and rooted in underlying beliefs (Nias, 1989). There is also an attempt to discuss the educational significance or strength of those beliefs and values that

underlie the cultures of the case study schools and how they 'fit' with those of their new principals. Although this study recognises the uniqueness of schools' cultures, it appreciates the benefits of organising frames that identify school culture typologies, which will inform the classification of the cultures of participating schools.

Types of school cultures

Recognizing school culture types becomes useful when talking about the culture of one school in the context of others or when making comparisons is the objective. Every school has a culture, which, it is claimed, can take three forms: generic, unique, and perceived (Prosser, 1999). However, it may be argued that three forms of school culture do not actually exist, but one form. Multiple forms may appear to exist depending on the depth of knowledge and experience one has with a given school culture. Also, perceived culture may or may not be reflective of a school's actual culture (Prosser, 1999).

The types of cultures named by researchers usually emerge from investigating **the content of school culture**, which consists of the artefacts, norms, values and underlying beliefs earlier described (Maslowski, 2001). While there are different approaches to describing or analysing school culture, types of school cultures have been mainly portrayed in two ways: as dichotomies or existing in dimensions. As dichotomies, school cultures are said to be either hospitable or toxic (Barth, 2001); positive or toxic (Deal & Peterson, 1998) and healthy or unhealthy (Saphier & King, 1985). However, there is some agreement in the content criteria at the respective poles of the dichotomies. The healthy, positive or hospitable cultures are characterized by norms of celebrating achievement, collegiality among staff, purpose-driven practice, high expectations and trust, to name a few; while, those cultures which are negative do not work in the best interest of students. In such cultures

staffs are fragmented and negativity abounds. However, a dichotomous portrayal of school culture types gives the impression that school culture is monolithic: that is with healthy cultures having no elements of toxicity and vice versa, which in all likelihood does not exist (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Types of school cultures may exist, rather, along a continuum where the two extremities are polarised.

Alternatively, authors such as Hargreaves (1995) and Stoll and Fink (1996) utilize dimensions. Hargreaves' (1995) model identifies five types of secondary school cultures based on two dimensions: the instrumental domain, reflecting social control and orientation to task; and the expressive domain, reflecting social cohesion through maintaining positive relationships. However assuming, as this study does, that secondary school cultures are different from primary school cultures, this study utilizes Stoll and Fink's (1996) typology of schools which indicates inherently different types of cultures. The authors utilize dimensions of effectiveness and improvement to identify a typology of schools (figure 2-4): *moving schools, cruising schools, strolling schools, struggling schools and sinking schools.* According to Stoll and Fink (1996), moving and cruising schools have those identified characteristics of healthy school cultures; however, cruising schools are not keeping pace with their changing contexts. Strolling schools' pace of improvement is inadequate; while struggling and sinking schools are both ineffective. However, where struggling schools have a will to improve but are in need of good leadership; sinking schools make no effort to change.

Moving Schools	are very effective. The people in them actively work together to respond to their changing context, and to keep developing. They know where they are going and posses the will, structure, and skill to get there.
Cruising Schools	Have many qualities of an effective school. They are generally perceived as effective by teachers, administrators, and the surrounding community. They are usually located in higher SES areas where pupils achieve despite the quality of teaching. Students score well on standardized measures when compared with the population at large, though not necessarily well against other students of similar economic backgrounds. 'These are good schools if it were 1965', but they are not seeking to prepare students for a changing information age society and are doing students and society a disservice.
Strolling Schools	are neither particularity effective or ineffective. Efforts are made towards improvements, but at an inadequate pace. They have ill-defined and sometimes conflicting aims. These are average schools that seem to be meandering into the future. Strolling schools often require stimulation from an outside source.
Struggling Schools	are ineffective and they know it. They have the will to improve, but lack the direction or the skill. They will try anything (and often already have). These schools benefit the most from outside consultants.
Sinking Schools	are ineffective schools, often found in lower SES areas. The staff is, either out of apathy or ignorance, making no effort toward change. The curriculum at these schools is undemanding and the teachers explain away failure by blaming it on the home-life of the students. Such a school culture is incapable of repair. The school should be closed to allow this harmful culture to die out. Later another school with a new name, new faulty, etc. can be reopened on the same location.

Figure 2-4 – Stoll and Fink's (1996) school culture typologies along dimensions of effectiveness and improvement; Source: Schoen (2005, p. 50)

Apart from the content of school culture, to which most researchers apply their attention, the homogeneity and strength of school cultures have also been investigated. ***School culture homogeneity*** refers to the extent to which existing underlying beliefs, values, norms and symbolism (artefacts) are adhered to by school members. If (almost) all school members share in a dominant school culture, then that school culture is *homogeneous* (Maslowski, 2001), but if they ascribe to very different values, norms and underlying beliefs, one might say the school culture is *heterogeneous*. The existence of sub-cultures, however, may be demonstrative of a rather *differentiated* school culture (Soeters, 1988, cited by Maslowski, 2001), where each sub-culture is relatively homogeneous as might be the case within departments of a school (Siskin, 1991, cited by Maslowski, 2001).

The ***strength of school culture*** is determined by the extent to which the values, norms and underlying beliefs are actually and rigorously enforced as the framework for school members' behaviours and practices (Cox, 1993, cited by Maslowski, 2001). The strength of school culture is

therefore understood as the degree of compliance to the school's values, vision, goals and beliefs by school members. In other words, 'Are members mandated to act in specific ways or just advised, being free to act in ways they see fit'? Some researchers (e.g. Cheng, 1993) tend to associate strong school cultures with positive or healthy school characteristics, such as collegiality and high student achievement, thereby implying that weak cultures are negative. However, it is quite likely, considering the difficulty in improving underperforming schools, that some strong school cultures can be negative (Deal & Peterson, 1990). The homogeneity and strength of school cultures are investigated in this study and are likely dependent on how school cultures are created, or reshaped, and sustained.

How school culture is created and/or reshaped

A school's culture, in particular, is influenced by a blend of internal and external variables (Stoll & Fink, 1996), which make them unique. Internal influencers include a school's history, context and members; for example: the size and level of the school, the composition of the staff and students and design of the school building. External influencers can take the form of changes in society and changes in national and educational policy. Additionally, external political and economic forces can influence a school's culture. One example is through the actions of teachers' unions (Fink, 1997 in Stoll, 1999). A rather comprehensive list of contextual variables, both internal and external, that can influence a school's culture is identified in Day et al (2011, chapter 1). One wonders, however, to what extent degrees of socio-economic disadvantage of students and the school's community contribute to school culture.

A not-too-different way of looking at school culture formation is reasoned by Den Hartog and Dickson (2004) who consider organisational culture as developing from three sources: (a) the beliefs, values and

assumptions of founders of a school; (b) the learning experiences of school members as the school grows and evolves, and (c) new beliefs, values and assumptions brought by new members and, particularly, new principals. From this understanding, founding leaders may be instrumental in the creation of a new culture. New members, on the other hand, such as a new principal may work to reshape or enhance an existing culture, seeing that very few new principals have opportunity to head a newly established school (Deal & Peterson, 1990). Additionally, it is possible that school culture can be reshaped when key persons leave a school or if the beliefs and attitudes of staff shift over time in response to, for example, the changing demographics of the student intake (Deal & Peterson, 2009), supporting Den Hartog and Dickson's point on school growth and evolution. Moreover, but not mentioned, is that reshaping may be positive, towards the development of more healthy cultures or negative towards more unhealthy or even toxic cultures.

Schein (1990) theorises that the norms of an existing school culture are formed around critical incidents such as those named by Den Hartog and Dickson. Therefore, reconstructing the history of those critical incidents and how members dealt with them are likely to reveal how those norms came to be and, consequently, how the culture was created or reshaped. Schein (1990) also posits that when members identify with a leader, they tend to internalise the values and assumptions modelled by him/her, indicating the influence of leaders in culture formation. This draws attention to the study's second main concept, leadership and, as this study looks at the impact of the leadership-school culture interplay, its influence on school change.

LEADERSHIP AND ITS EFFECTS

This section focuses on the concept of leadership and models of leadership effects. It does not, however, examine the practice of leadership. This is reserved for discussion within the study's theoretical framework (p. 53). There is widespread consensus that leadership – successful and effective educational leadership – are vital to the success of schools and entire education systems (Bush, 2008; 2011; Harris et al., 2006), where the leadership of the principal "acts as a catalyst" in providing the conditions necessary for that success at schools (Leithwood et al., 2006, p. 4). While there are many different conceptualisations of leadership within education largely due to conceptual borrowing from disciplines such as sociology, political science and organizational management; the concept may be usefully defined as concerned with influence, values and practices towards accomplishing a vision and group goals (Bush, 2011). This understanding leads one to appreciate that leadership can be practiced by individuals, such as a principal, as well as groups, such as a school-based management (SBM) team (Bush, 2011). This study focuses on school principal leadership but notes the influencing strategies of school members.

Nevertheless, leadership has often been distinguished from management (e.g. Cuban, 1988; Day, 2003a). Day (2003a), for instance, surmises that "leadership is essentially the process of building and maintaining a sense of vision, culture and interpersonal relationships, whereas management is the coordination, support and monitoring of organizational activities" (p. 191). Whilst acknowledging this difference, this thesis also recognizes that, particularly for new principals attempting to change the way things are done at a school, leadership may involve the influencing of "functions, tasks and behaviours"; that is, managerial

leadership (Leithwood et al., 1999 in Bush, 2011). Additionally, while the literature names many types of leadership, this thesis in considering the nature of new principals' interaction with school culture focuses on the associated behaviours of four types of leadership: transformational, transactional, managerial and political. The first three types are popular in leadership literature and form the main parts of a leadership model originally developed by Bass (1985, cited by Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) but enhanced by Leithwood and Jantzi (2005). Political leadership was included to address findings that emerged from this study's data. All four types are developed in this study's theoretical framework. Instructional leadership, another popular type, has been subsumed within managerial leadership as 'focus on teaching and learning', which is similar to 'managing the instructional programme' (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

In relation to student achievement, particularly in Mathematics and Language Arts, principal leadership is widely recognized as having significant, albeit mostly indirect, effects (e.g. Day et al., 2011; Leithwood et al., 2006). The work of Day and colleagues, for instance, evidenced moderately strong direct influences on school and classroom processes, such as teacher collaborative culture and improvement in school conditions, which lead to "modest but statistically significant indirect links… to improvements in students' academic outcomes… at improved and effective schools. Similar kinds of effects on intermediate and academic outcomes have been found with respect to leadership paths, such as transformational leadership, (Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Ross & Gray, 2006). Yet arguments have been made by, for example, Hallinger and Heck (2011) that suggest that recent school leadership studies generally adopt a dominant perception of principal leadership as the independent factor, hardly considering it as influenced by school context. However, there exist studies that contradict this assertion, demonstrating the influence of

context on leadership practice and strategy use (e.g. Day et al., 2011; Dinham et al., 1995; Eshbach & Henderson, 2010); yet, such studies provide little to no evidence of the moderating effect of school culture though it is often evidenced as a leadership mediator to school improvement.

Eshbach and Henderson (2010), for instance, studying a symbiotic relationship between each of 17 new principals (1 year in post) and their schools' climates, which the current study views as a sub-construct of school culture, found that a significant positive correlation existed between leadership behaviours of the principal, that was more transformational, and open school climates, resulting in positive leadership outcomes of effectiveness, extra effort and satisfaction. In that study, an open school climate was characterized by the presence of strong, supportive and flexible leadership together with the presence of high levels of teacher collegiality, competence and commitment as indicated by a revised version of the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for elementary schools (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991, cited by Eshbach & Henderson, 2010). However, where more transactional or passive/avoidant leadership behaviours were practiced, such as management-by-exception, the climate of the school was either disengaged or closed. While providing evidence that relationships exist between principal leadership and school climate, the authors present school climate as dependent on principal leadership, but no evidence of principal leadership being influenced by school climate. This represents a weak argument for the existence of symbiosis between the two concepts. School members' responses to principal leadership as expressions of school culture are often ignored. Conceptualizing leadership as a relational concept; that is, one that is viewed as a two-way or reciprocal relationship between the leader and follower as advanced by James

McGregor Burns almost 4 decades ago in 1978, in his seminal work, *Leadership*, is still underexplored (Hallinger & Heck, 2011). There is need to investigate not only how contextual factors, such as school culture, moderate leadership but to what extent such influences affect school improvement.

The 'reciprocal effects' model presented by Hallinger and Heck (2011) represents two-way leadership influence; however, this model may satisfy use in quantitative research designs that emphasise linking leadership to student academic outcomes. This study, by exploring school culture as a leadership mediator and moderator, investigates leadership as relational from a qualitative perspective that can draw out the hows and whys of such leadership and its impact on school processes and outcomes as well as on the new principal.

PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL CULTURE FOR SCHOOL CHANGE

School change can be conceptualized as both a process and product, which are inextricably linked to the purposes of the change (Thomson, 2010). A clear message emerging from the constant push for school reform (Harris, 2006) reported consistently in conceptual and research literatures is how slow, difficult, complex and non-linear positive school change can be to bring about (Earley & Bubb, 2004; Fullan, 2001a; Thomson, 2010). Presently, education reform agendas internationally are predominantly focussed on improving underperforming SfCC (Harris, 2006).

Research on school change generally fall into two interconnected traditions: school effectiveness (SE) and school improvement (SI), which includes school- and practitioner-based action research as part of a 'bottom-up' approach (Thomson, 2010). While both research traditions

have been criticised especially for de-emphasising the impact of external context on the school (e.g. Thrupp & Lupton, 2006), SE research, in particular, has been criticised for emphasising academic outcomes over the 'how' of school change recognised by SI research (Stoll & Fink, 1996).

The dominant message from SIR is that all schools can improve and, possibly due to strong desires for this, school improvement appears to be regularly treated as synonymous to school change (e.g. Harris, 2006). However, school change can be positive or negative; "[a] school is either improving or it is getting worse" (Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 42); hence, this thesis' preference for the term 'school change', which does not presuppose that all schools do improve under the leadership of new principals.

School change according to Morrison (1998, cited by Earley & Bubb, 2004, p. 34) is defined as:

> … a dynamic and continuous process of development and growth that involves a reorganisation in response to 'felt needs'. It is a process of transformation, a flow from one state to another..., leading to a realignment of existing values, practices and outcomes.

While there is much discourse on the processes and management of school change for success (e.g. Earley & Bubb, 2004; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006), there is a considerable lack of consensus (Fullan, 2001a; Miles, 2005; Thomson, 2010). It has been said, however, that the change process consists of three phases: (1) initiation, which includes acknowledgments of a need for change, readiness for change, planning and gathering resources and support for the change; (2) implementation or putting reforms into effect and; (3) institutionalisation, describes whether or not reforms become a part of every-day practice (Miles, 1986; Fullan, 1991, both cited by Stoll & Fink, 1996). Earley and Bubb (2004) add a fourth stage, outcomes. However, most school change initiatives realise short-term improvements or fail altogether, according to Fullan

(2001b) and Miles (2005) because of their failure to understand and work with the culture of schools (Sarason, 1990, cited by Fullan, 2001b) and because they neglect or devalue the feelings and thoughts of teachers, the main implementers of the reforms (Day, 2002; Kelchtermans, 2005). There is, though, increasing evidence of successful school change (e.g. Day et al., 2011). A key issue for leaders who wish to change and improve schools is changing their culture (Fullan, 2001ab; Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001 cited in Thomson, 2010). While school change can be initiated at the systems level or district level, this thesis focuses on school change at the level of the school, introduced and/or managed by new principals.

Principals reshape or enhance existing cultures for improved effectiveness by installing new values and beliefs (Deal & Peterson, 1999). School leaders who engage in such installation of values and beliefs have been described as *Cultural Change Leaders* (Fullan, 2002) or *Symbolic leaders* (Deal & Peterson, 1999) or as demonstrating some aspects of *transformational leadership* (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; 2005) as alluded to earlier. The process of reshaping or enhancing school cultures has been described as 'reculturing' (Fullan, 1996 cited by Stoll, 1999; Morgan, 1997) and necessarily involves becoming intensely aware of the existing culture or diagnosing it (Hargreaves, 1999), as well as identifying those values and norms in practices and behaviours among school members that either work in the best interest of students or against them (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Morgan (1997) describes the process this way, regarding reculturing as:

> … a challenge of transforming mind-sets, visions, paradigms, images, metaphors, beliefs and shared meanings that sustain existing… realities and of creating a detailed language and code of behaviour through which the desired new reality can be lived on a daily basis… It is about inventing what amounts to a new way of life (p. 143).

The "new way of life" of which Morgan speaks is the enhanced or reshaped school culture. This type of whole school change in which the culture of the school is affected is referred to as second order change by Cuban (1988). In such a change, the leader may, consequently, invalidate the destructive cultural elements and attempt to treat with the school's nondiscussables (Barth, 2001). According to Barth (2001), these are:

> …subjects sufficiently important that they get talked about frequently but are so laden with anxiety and taboos that these conversations take place only at the parking lot, the men's room, the playground, the car pool, or the dinner table at home. … The nondiscussable is the elephant in the living room… (p. 9).

For principals, particularly new principals, this may mean walking in "dangerous" territory (Lumby & Foskett, 2011, p. 452) and inviting "serious repercussions" (Deal & Peterson, 1990, p. 13) as school members may not easily relinquish aspects of their school's culture. The result may be resistance and failure as seen in the story told in the introduction of this thesis.

Attention is now turned to new principals' interactions with school culture. Some of the literature reviewed is set in a pre-performativity era – a time, 1990s to early 2000s, prior to many governments' purposeful involvement in improving education through strict accountability measures and system reforms, such as school inspections and school governance as observed in the UK and US. They have been included for two reasons: 1) literature specifically focusing on new principals' interaction with school culture is scarce and 2) they are still applicable to T&T whose education system has not as yet, though it is fast approaching, adopted such intense systems of accountability as the UK and US.

New principals interactions with school culture

Earlier in this review, it was noted that one of the most stressful challenges that new principals face is in the shaping of a healthy school culture. MacMillan (1996) in his doctoral thesis noted that the relationship

between new principal practices and school culture is "an often conflicted, complex interaction of players with significant implications for the introduction of change" (p. 268). MacMillan adds that the nature of this complex relationship is dependent on the new principal's sensitivity to the culture, which is noted in this thesis as awareness of school culture and discussed in the study's theoretical framework. New principals' awareness of school culture is consistent with findings elsewhere, which show that almost immediately upon taking up the role new principals experience a culture shock. They are cautioned against violating any cultural codes of the school (Langston et al., 1998 cited in Walker & Qian, 2006) – codes, which Harvey (1991) discovered in a re-analysis of a multiple case study he conducted in 1988 in Australia, they are pressured to accept.

Additionally, teachers' receptivity and expectations of the new principal come into play in his/her interactions with school culture (MacMillan, 1996). New principals have been reported as having to deal with the influence of previous principals through their staffs (Crow & Weindling, 2010; Earley, et al., 2011; MacMillan, 1996; Walker & Qian, 2006). Walker and Qian (2006) refer to this as new principals facing the "ghost/s of principals past" (p. 301). If the predecessor was considered successful, the new principal's leadership would likely be more difficult for teachers to accept than if the previous principal's practices were judged ineffective or unacceptable (MacMillan, 1996). The attitudes and behaviours of members of the management team, in particular, often reflect the previous principal's management style – a style with which new principals report they were in disagreement (Day & Bakioğlu, 1996), possibly because being in the early stages of principal development, they are unaware that their leadership approaches will likely change as they developed professionally, as realized by researchers (e.g. Day & Bakioğlu, 1996).

For new principals, encountering school culture may also occasion dealing with resistance groups (Northfield, 2011) and engaging in 'micro-politics', which are:

> … the formal and informal use of legitimate and illegitimate power by the principal and teachers to further individual or group goals, with such goals based on values, beliefs, needs and ideologies. Shifts in balances of power can be created through collaborative efforts and may shift with time and circumstance (Meyer et al., 2011, p. 3).

Particularly in ineffective schools serving disadvantaged communities, micro-politics are often overwhelming (Thomson, 2002). New principals find that in developing relationships, issues of power and control also play a part (Meyer et al., 2011; Parkay & Rhodes, 1992), though how significant a part has not been considered. New principals are found to struggle to "establish a moral ascendancy over one or more deputy principals or senior staff" (Harvey, 1991, p. 21), who function as gatekeepers of the existing culture (Deal & Peterson, 1990); but, only a few of the new principals in Harvey's study challenge these gatekeepers on decisions. Consequently, influencing the quality of instruction is difficult (Earley et al., 2011; Northfield, 2011) and often approached with caution, as new principals are aware that voicing concerns about practices or policies before meaningful relationships are established could lead to loss of support for their leadership (Harvey, 1991; Northfield, 2011).

Towards a theoretical framework

The literature reviewed thus far suggests a possible initial temporary disequilibrium between (new) principal leadership and school culture and highlights strong influences of either on the other. Thus, this study focusses on the extent of disequilibrium that may exist between new principals and their inherited school cultures and to what degree this impacts on the new principals and school change. Therefore, not only are new principals' leadership practices investigated but also their level of awareness of or sensitivity to school culture as noted by, for example,

MacMillan (1996). Additionally, since leadership and leadership success are so inextricably linked to leaders' values and attributes (Bush, 2011; Day et al., 2011), this study investigates new principals' characters as displayed through their traits/attributes and values.

In conceptualising the nature of the interplay of new principals' leadership and school culture as reciprocal, this study also examines the influences of school culture through school members' responses for two reasons: 1) because their receptivity to principal leadership impacts the degree of school change adopted and; 2) school culture is embodied in/enacted through the values, actions and underlying beliefs of school members. School members, in this study, are teachers, students and parents. Additionally, how this two-way relationship impacts not only the school but the principal as well is investigated, simply because the many challenges faced by new principals as mentioned in this review no doubt impacts on their emotions and learning. Another important consideration towards understanding the leadership-school culture interplay is how the effectiveness state of a school affects the nature of the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture, seeing that schools' cultures may be of different types and reflect varying capacities for improvement. These factors and outcomes of the successor-school culture interplay form the theoretical framework for this study, which are developed in the following section.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for understanding the nature of the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture (see figure 2-5) includes the following seven factors and their interrelationships: (1) new principals' practices and strategies in shaping and mediating school

culture; (2) new principals' traits/attributes; (3) new principals' values and beliefs; (4) new principals' levels of awareness of school culture; and (5) school members' responses, in light of the first three factors. The outcomes to be considered in this study towards appreciating the impact of the interplay include: (1) the new principals' emotions and learning; and (2) school and student outcomes – the latter was discussed under leadership effects and is not revisited here.

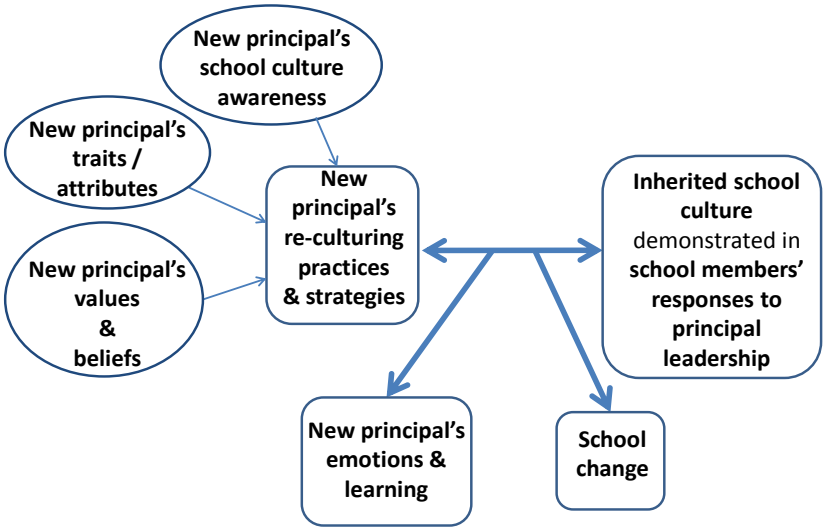


Figure 2-5 – Study's theoretical framework

Each of these is reviewed in turn; however the framework is informed by the leadership of successful school principals in advantaged and disadvantaged school contexts. The practices of these successful principals were used to gauge the leadership of new principals within this study who head schools of very different effectiveness states from high performing to underperforming.

Shaping of school culture: leadership practices and strategies

Internationally, there is growing consensus about what makes a successful leader (National College, 2010). While there is no single model

for success (Day et al., 2010), successful school leaders "…draw on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices" (Leithwood et al., 2006, p. 6). They set direction and create vision; they provide opportunities for people to develop; they create the conditions necessary for organizational development; they manage the instructional programme; they respond productively to challenges and opportunities and; they manage change (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; National College, 2010). Successful principals' engagement in these practices provides evidence for the way they shape school culture.

The current study is informed by Leithwood and Jantzi's (2005) enhanced version of Bass' (1985) leadership model. This enhanced model incorporates successful principals' basic leadership practices, such as setting direction, developing people and redesigning the organization as the transformational leadership practices or behaviours aggregate and; managing the instructional programme as aspects of managerial leadership. It also includes transactional leadership because Bass believed that the best leaders exercise both transformational and transactional leadership. Political leadership, while not included in this model, is also reviewed to cater for findings that emerged in this study's data. Figure 2-6 shows the leadership framework that was used to organize this study's findings.

The transformational leadership aggregate is firstly discussed. According to James McGregor Burns in his 1978 seminal work, *transforming* leadership "occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (1978, p. 20, author's italicization), resulting in, Burns argues, the development of "a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents" (p. 4); thus, fusing the purposes of

leaders and followers. Being uncomfortable with the term 'follower', which implies one who supports, leaving no room for considering other responses to principal leadership; I have substituted the term with 'school members'.

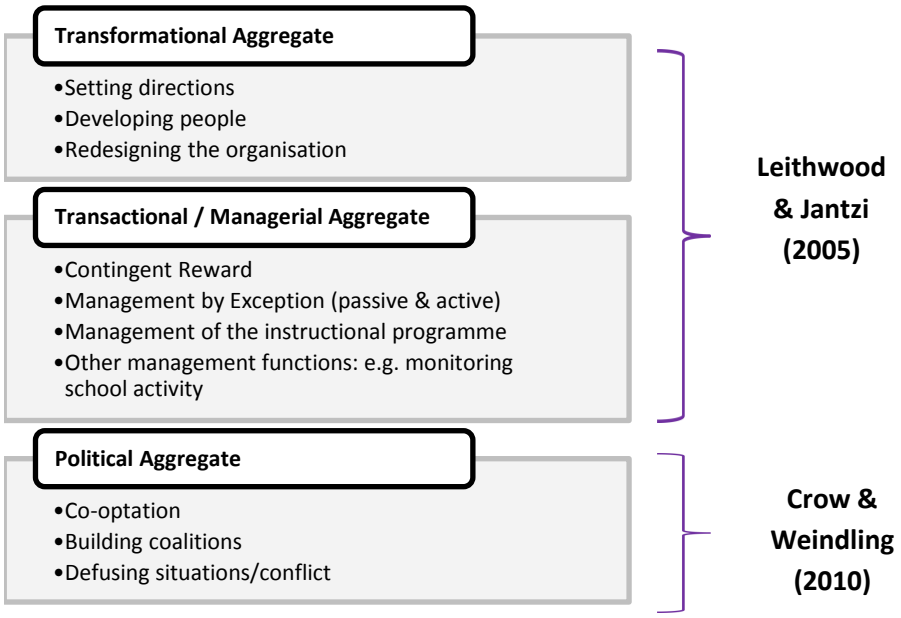


Figure 2-6 – Leadership conceptual framework

Agreeing with Burns, Bass (1985, cited by Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) asserted that the transformational leader is either directive or participative and authoritarian or democratic in response to context (cited by Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) enhanced Bass' conception of transformational leadership to focus on the behaviours: setting directions, developing people and redesigning the organization. These are now developed using the findings of research done on successful principals, following which managerial leadership and political leadership are discussed.

Setting directions

Successful principals, in their capacity as visionaries, develop a sense of what their schools should be by creating a clear and focused

vision and set of core values and high expectations for their schools (Day et al., 2010; Deal & Peterson, 1990; 2009). They actively commit themselves to re-enforcing the vision in the school's culture by using patterns of communication, symbols (e.g. logos, mottoes, trophies and other artefacts), rituals and ceremonies (Roberts, 1992; Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford, 2007) as well as their own highly visible and consistent behaviours (Deal and Peterson, 1990) that demonstrate high expectations of its achievement (Belchetz & Leithwood, 2007). Such actions provide opportunities for school members to reaffirm their commitment to the school and for all that it stands.

Successful principals, in effect, appreciate the need for a clear sense of direction that would motivate teachers, bring coherence to school programmes, inform planning and decision making and bring clarity to roles, thereby increasing the chances of their schools' success (Leithwood et al., 2006). In the face of external and internal forces to move in different directions, they stick to the vision, discriminating between those forces that align with the vision and those that do not (Day et al., 2011). While new principals may recognize the importance of setting directions and creating visions for their schools (Northfield, 2011), how they do these is critical to school member buy-in and school success, as is made clear in this practice of successful principals.

Helping/Developing people

In reculturing their schools for improvement, successful principals recognize the need to provide opportunities for the development of capacities along five strands: 1) personal capacity, 2) professional capacity of staff, 3) organizational capacity, 4) the capacity of the school's community and 5) social capital[1] (National College, 2010). They provide resources and time and offer support individually and through continuing professional development (Day et al., 2011; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003) for

the development of skills and knowledge of staff as well as the enhancement of their motivation, self-efficacy, commitment and resilience (Gurr et al., 2007; Leithwood et al., 2006). Staff are intellectually stimulated (Belchetz & Leithwood, 2007) through professional activities, such as coaching, peer support, team working, in-house workshops using teachers' expertise or external agents, visits to other schools, professional dialogue, guided practice, and action research (Day et al., 2011; Harris & Day, 2003). Successful principals, additionally, model the values they consider desirable in their behaviours and practices towards the achievement of school goals and ultimately the vision (Day et al., 2011; Harris & Chapman, 2002; Jacobson, 2008). Bass (1985) originally refers to this as 'idealized influence'.

Successful principals also afford teachers opportunities to apply their learning through 'distributed leadership' (Gronn, 2003; Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2006) and 'teacher leadership' (Danielson, 2007; Harris & Muijs, 2005), causing them to become empowered and competent co-participants in developing the school (Harris & Lambert, 2003, cited in Harris & Day, 2003). The result is 'total leadership' (Leithwood et al., 2006) – an effect which not only enhances student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2006; Rosenholtz, 1989), but is more impacting than the 'great man theory' of leadership (Leithwood et al., 2006). While authors, such as Hargreaves and Fink (2006) are critical about the effects of such leadership, believing that 'too many cooks spoil the broth', successful school leaders are known to establish systems and incentives to ensure the sharing of leadership that brings desired outcomes (Harris & Day, 2003). The current study also investigated new principals' strategies in helping/developing people towards the reshaping of their schools' cultures.

Redesigning the organization

Successful principals also exercise deliberate influence in the creation of cultures that are collaborative, trustful and inclusive (Day et al., 2011; Harris & Day, 2003). Because of the developmental nature of trust (Lewicki, Timlinson & Gillespie, 2006), building trust, in particular, is viewed as not only possible but as two-way – principals establishing their own trustworthiness as well as trusting others through progressive distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities (Day et al., 2011). Trust, according to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998, 2000 in Tschannen-Moran, 2014) is a "willingness to be vulnerable to [someone] based on the confidence that [he/she] is benevolent, honest, open, reliable and competent" (pp. 19-20).

In such cultures, strengthening the relationships between and among school members and with the school's community (Day et al., 2011; Stoll et al., 2006) is important to school members' sense of community and identity and the school's success. Towards this end, Day and colleagues also see successful principals developing links and working with other schools. By actively including parents in the life of the school (Belchetz & Leithwood, 2007; Day & Johansson, 2008; Jacobson, 2008), successful principals narrow the 'professional distance' (Johnson & Carpenter, 2006) between teachers and parents and demonstrate care (Day, 2003ab) and values of social justice, respect and equity (Belchetz & Leithwood, 2007; Gurr et al., 2007; Harris & Day, 2003). A closer look at successful principals' values is had later. Students, too, are encouraged by effective principals to participate in a number of school-related activities (Ruddock & McIntyre, 2007) that involve them in decision-making or leading projects as a way to promote inclusiveness as well as student motivation and learning (Day et al., 2011).

As part of redesigning the organization, successful principals in Day et al. (2011) study additionally formed new senior leadership or SBM teams and/or reconfigured the team members' roles and responsibilities for more effective communication and working. Also found in this study was successful principals' introduction of non-teaching pastoral staff, such as teaching assistants and learning mentors, who were responsible for providing support and care to students with emotional/behavioural needs, particularly at the primary school level.

Transactional and Managerial Aggregate

As new principals may likely use transactional and managerial leadership strategies, as noted earlier, these are also reviewed. Transactional leadership, according to Burns (1978), is viewed as a relation existing between most leaders and those they lead, with "leaders approach[ing] followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another" (p. 4) - behaviours distinct from transformational leadership. Such behaviours as motivating school members, using systems of rewards and discipline are characteristic of transactional leadership. Bass's model of leadership behaviours includes these transactional behaviours as *contingent reward*; *active management-by-exception*, where the leader in advance clearly outlines his/her expectations as well as consequences for failure to meet those standards, and; *passive management-by-exception*, where the leader intentionally waits for unacceptable staff behavior or performance and problems to arise and then reacts, not having stated goals and expectations beforehand (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transactional leadership behaviours are not investigated or named among the practices of successful leadership in recent literature.

With respect to managerial leadership, Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) add four management dimensions to develop Bass's conception of transactional behaviours, which they report was criticized for its

underdevelopment. The four management dimensions are (1) staffing, (2) instructional support, (3) monitoring school activity and (4) buffering. As staffing is not a responsibility of new principals in the T&T context, it is omitted from the leadership framework used in the current study and thus not reviewed here. Additionally, buffering has been addressed under political leadership and so is not here. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, new principals' managerial leadership includes focusing on teaching and learning, which includes providing instructional support, and monitoring school activity. These are reviewed.

In successful schools, school culture is linked to instruction (Roberts, 1992). In paying attention to pedagogy and student learning, successful principals not only insist on the high standards they set from school members but consistently praise good work, support teacher innovation and use creative management strategies, such as modelling good teaching themselves for teachers to observe and provide feedback (National College, 2010). They also supervise and evaluate teaching and ensure that conducive conditions and resources for teaching and learning are catered for (Hallinger, 2003, cited by Day et al., 2011). Day et al., (2011) also find that successful principals also managed the instructional programme by creating consistency, such as through standard lesson plan templates. The authors also find that successful principals also developed consistent school-wide policies on pupil behavior and attendance, linking these with student academic achievement. Such policies were supported by "strong pastoral systems that reinforced respect between staff and pupils" (Day et al., 2011, p. 127). How new principals encourage similar outcomes is important to this study.

Political leadership

Also not generally reported in mainstream literature on successful principals' practices is political leadership, which generally speak of 'power

over' strategies (Blase & Anderson, 1995). However, while not labelling any of the strategies used by the five successful principals studied in their multiple case study Deal and Peterson (1990) noted strategies that can be considered such. One such political strategy is facing conflict rather than avoiding it, either by using conciliatory means, such as discussion and collective problem solving, or by more direct ways that were even confrontational. This strategy was also noted by the authors later in 2009 as used by principals when reshaping very toxic school cultures. Another more uncommon political strategy is waiting out situations (Deal & Peterson, 1990).

Other researchers not investigating successful principals (e.g. Blase and Anderson, 1995; Crow and Weindling, 2010) have found that principals may have cause to display this leadership orientation. Crow and Weindling (2010), for instance, in a multiple case study of four new British headteachers identified five "tactics" (p. 151) used by the new principals in their political roles: co-optation, coalition building, buffering, the use of interpersonal skills to defuse situations and avoidance. In this study, one new principal was described as co-opting borough councillors by keeping them abreast of the good things happening at the school. The new heads most frequently formed coalitions or joined networks to "achieve purposes, gather resources and persuade others" (p. 151). Less frequently used, according to the authors, was buffering staff from external interferences; while using humour, diplomacy and listening as interpersonal skills were used to diffuse tensions; and avoidance to altogether avert political conflicts (Crow and Weindling, 2010). These political strategies were used in response to internal conflicts with staff and parents and external conflicts with entities in government and school governance, the press and teachers' unions, according to the authors. It is this study conducted by Crow and Weindling (2010) that informs the

current investigation of new principals' political strategies in interacting with school culture for the simple reason that it focussed on new principals' political leadership.

Following is a brief review of principals' culture shaping in disadvantaged contexts. This subsequent review considers only more specific strategies used within these contexts by successful principals and is included because this study specifically investigated new principals' attempts at reculturing schools facing challenging circumstances, situated in disadvantaged contexts. Again, the literature that focusses on new principals' work in such contexts is scarce and so the review includes the culture-reshaping practices of both new and more experienced principals.

Principals' culture shaping in disadvantaged contexts

While successful principals in challenging contexts also demonstrate use of the core practices earlier mentioned – their use alone is insufficient for success (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005). Successful leadership within these schools is undoubtedly different from and arguably more difficult than that within more advantageous schools' contexts, (Day & Johansson, 2008; Lashway, 1997; Harris & Thomson, 2006) and is likely to emphasise certain aspects and approaches in response to context.

When first appointed, principals of high poverty schools tend to introduce early changes, which often take the form of refurbishments to the physical environment, sourcing new equipment and furniture, restructuring management procedures, such as communication, and making changes to school symbols, such as students' uniforms (Day et al., 2011; Harris & Thomson, 2006; Jacobson, 2008).

In setting directions, Jacobson (2008) finds that the three principals in his study convinced their staffs and students to not allow the deprived reality of students' lives to lower performance expectations, thereby setting a new direction for their schools. In focusing on teaching

and learning, successful heads often develop new instructional strategies (Connell, 1996, cited by Harris & Thomson, 2006), function as a model and instructional resource to teachers (Andrews & Morefield, 1991; Jacobson, 2008) and closely monitor and evaluate student achievement (Englefield, 2001). Additionally, these principals tend to ensure that their schools catered to students' learning needs by, for example, early identification and support of students needing academic support and providing extended learning time in the form of classes after school, weekends and/or during vacations (Barth et al., 1999). Successful principals in disadvantaged contexts also attend to students' social needs (West et al., 2005) and the development of their social and cultural capital[2] through the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities, after-school and vacation programmes, that in themselves contribute to realizing improved attainment (Day, 2005).

Moreover, in disadvantaged contexts, successful principals' exercise of leadership focus on people; not only in developing trustful, collaborative relationships with them through for instance shared leadership (Harris, 2002) but also towards building and sustaining inclusivity (Day, 2005; Day & Johansson, 2008). These heads did not only include parents and the community in their school activities but provided ways to assist them through, for example, community education and evening classes (Day & Johansson, 2008; Jacobson, 2008).

Irrespective of school context, what principals do and how they do it requires sound professional judgment because, as mentioned earlier, their leadership has significant direct and indirect influence on school processes; intermediate outcomes, such as teacher satisfaction, and; student outcomes. Thus, the way principals sequence, combine and employ leadership practices and strategies to suit their schools' contexts are critical to success (Day, 2003a; Day & Johansson, 2008; Day et al.,

2011; Leithwood et al., 2006). Principals' professional judgment is now discussed.

Principals' professional judgments

Referring to teachers' judgment, Tripp (1993; 2012) defines professional judgment as "… a matter of 'expert guesses' (author's emphasis), having more to do with reflection, interpretation, opinion and wisdom, than with the mere acquisition of facts and prescribed 'right answers'" (p. 124). In other words, the exercise of professional judgment calls for the professional (principal) to draw on much more than the knowledge he/she may have acquired prior to appointment such as in preparation programmes or through vicarious experiences like observing principals, although these provide valuable knowledge. Rather, Tripp is suggesting that exercising professional judgment involves an engagement of self, who principals are, as well as a commitment to making sound assessments of people, situations and context, such as school culture. Yet, the exercise of sound professional judgment is unapologetically expected not only from the experienced principal but also from the beginner as highlighted by Cheung and Walker (2006, p. 394). Principalship, they say, includes:

> …all aspects of the work lives of the beginning principals; that is, everything they do to try to lead their schools together with their personal attributes, including their perceptions, emotions and other feelings, as well as their knowledge and skills.

Considering, as mentioned earlier, that new principals are often uncertain about their roles and duties (e.g. Daresh & Male, 2006; Weindling & Dimmock, 2006) and may be cautious in their approach to leading change (e.g. Northfield, 2011), it is worth investigating how the new principal's professional judgment is interpreted by self and others, particularly in his/her handling of dilemmas which can test professional judgment. The new principal, for instance, may be faced with a situation that requires a

decision, but despite the choice made he or she may appear to have gone against a 'sacred' school value or neglect an individual or group, resulting in disappointment, to say the least (Murphy, 2007). Such situations or dilemmas have no absolute right or wrong solutions; hence the need for sound professional judgment on the part of the principal. The positive or negative emotions of school members generated by principals' professional judgment can have lasting and far-reaching impacts (Leithwood, 2007; Murphy, 2007), affecting relationships, teaching and learning, and in turn, school improvement. It is the quality of principals' professional judgment that is used by school members to assess principals' credibility and performance, needed for school members to decide on their degree of support to the principal.

In looking at new principals' professional judgment, this study examines the new principals' leadership practices and strategies in light of their school culture awareness and who they are in terms of their traits/attributes and values. Arguably, these factors influence the new principals' school improvement foci and their most used practices and strategies as well as the nature of the relationships they share with school members, thereby enhancing understanding of the nature of the leadership-school culture interplay.

Principals' level of awareness of school culture

Principals' attempts at school change without first understanding for example how the school came to be, its existing patterns and purposes will result in certain stress and ultimate failure (Deal and Peterson, 1990). To be effective, say Deal and Peterson (1990), principals must first *read* their school and community cultures. Barth (2001) agrees, noting the importance of naming and openly acknowledging the existence of non-discussables or impediments to student learning and achievement. It is such sensitivity to schools' contexts that informs successful principals'

strategy use for not only managing their schools but leading them to enhanced effectiveness and improvement (Day et al., 2010).

Deal & Peterson (1990) note several forms of culture reading, including: listening to staff recount the history of the school; interviewing school members about the existing culture of the school and what they would like their school to become, which gives an indication of what is absent, and; examining school artefacts and records. In their 2009 edition, Deal and Peterson also emphasize the principal taking time to identify the key players in the perpetuation of the existing culture – the 'culture network' and determine how influential they are in the school. The authors provide a list of roles that key players adopt in supportive cultures (see Deal and Peterson, 2009, pp. 117-121) and in cultures of toxicity (see pp. 122-126). For example in supportive cultures, *priests and priestesses* are guardians of cultural values and beliefs letting newcomers and veterans alike know the school's cultural ways; while *heroes and heroines* are exemplars of the school's core values, functioning as role models who inspire others. In noxious cultures, Deal and Peterson (2009) speak of, for example, *saboteurs* who almost always find ways to incapacitate or undermine any new and positive ideas, programmes or activities. Using the weaknesses of others, they dampen enthusiasm and depress the willingness of others. However, the most destructive of the players described are, according to the authors, *anti-heroes* and *devils* who encourage others to act in ways that are incompatible to the core values of a positive culture.

However, the length of time new principals take to acquire school culture awareness differs (Noonan & Goldman, 1985) as does their depth, according to Harvey (1991). Harvey claims that while some new principals are oblivious, some others adopt an intuitive understanding of values and shared meanings held by school members; but, a few new incumbents

adopt an analytic orientation, actively exploring and making sense of the existing school cultures that then inform their leadership. These new principals, according to Harvey, systematically seek to identify beliefs and values, explain relationships between and amongst groups and understand power dynamics, likely making them more able to work more effectively for students (Goldring, 2002). It is this more analytic orientation to learning about a school's culture that would more likely enable the new principal to recognize the previous principal's influence and image in the school's culture (Weindling, 2000) – an awareness that new principals need to have in order that they may acknowledge and respect the past (Rooney, 2000) and obtain the support of school members, particularly teachers. The new principal's level of awareness of the school culture becomes particularly important to his leadership especially if the previous principal was head for many years and founded many of the symbols highly esteemed by school members (Harvey, 1991). With such an appreciation, the new principal may be better poised to assist school members through, for example, their sense of loss for the previous principal (Harvey, 1991; Weindling & Earley, 1987).

As new principals engage in reading school culture who they are, besides what they do, are also in constant focus of school and community members (Deal & Peterson, 1990). Following, is a review of successful principal traits/attributes.

Principals' traits/attributes

Within the literature on successful leadership within schools and non-school contexts is evidence of associations between leaders' personal qualities and leadership success (Zaccaro, Kemp and Bader, 2004; Day et al., 2011; Leithwood et al., 2006; Leithwood & Day, 2007a). Despite this evidence, a traits-based approach to studying leadership and leadership effectiveness in non-school contexts has undergone rapid ascendency,

demise and resurgences (Zaccaro, et al., 2004); while educational studies adopting such a perspective are still few by comparison.

Traits, as defined by Zaccaro et al (2004), are "relatively stable and coherent integrations of personal characteristics that foster a consistent pattern of leadership performance across a variety of group and organisational situations" (p. 104). In a review of research conducted on leaders' traits/attributes, the authors noted a number of attributes found to be associated to leader effectiveness and emergence. They categorise leaders' attributes (after Mumford, et al., 1993, 2000) as (a) cognitive abilities, (b) personality, (c) motivation, (d) social appraisal (interpersonal) skills and, (e) leader expertise and tacit knowledge (p. 109). This classification system of leader traits and attributes used by Zaccaro et al. (2004) is also used by Leithwood and Day (2007b) to report the qualities of the successful school principals in the International Successful School Principals Project (ISSPP), which was conducted across 8 developed countries: Australia (Tasmania and Victoria); England; Canada; China; the United States of America; Norway; Sweden and Denmark. Their findings are reviewed here together with related evidence from other studies.

Evidenced in Tasmania was an association between *cognitive flexibility* as well as *creative and lateral thinking* with successful principalship. Jacobson and others (2005, cited by Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008) also report flexibility in the thinking of the successful principal participants who head schools facing challenging circumstances as did Ylimaki et al. (2007), concerning the successful principals in their study of schools in similar contexts. Although, creative and lateral thinking as a **cognitive ability** was not reported by Zaccaro et al (2004), it was identified by Ylimaki et al. (2007).

Within the second category, **personality**, Leithwood and Day report *openness* as the most cited personality trait across the 8 countries, being usually associated with a participatory leadership style. Handford and Leithwood (2013) also find openness, as demonstrated in principals' developing people through empowerment, teacher/distributed leadership and communicating with staff, to be a trait teachers interpreted as indicative of trustworthy leaders. Other identified personality attributes evidenced in the ISSPP were *self-confidence (internal locus of control),* which also finds support in the wider research on leaders' personality; *innate goodness*; *other-centredness* and *humility*. Other studies report a *readiness to learn from others* or *open-mindedness* (Jacobson et al., 2005, cited by Leithwood et al., 2008).

Leithwood and Day (2007a) report successful principal participants of Australia and Norway have *strong achievement needs*, but find no obvious evidence to support a need for dominance, power or affiliation as was reported by Zacarro et al. (2004) concerning leader **motivation**. Respondents from Tasmania, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Canada were reported to be *passionate about their work*, *highly committed emotionally* and *highly motivated*; while principals as reported in two (Australia and England) and three (Australia, England and Denmark) country reports, respectively were perceived to *have high energy levels likely to be motivational to others*, as well as *determined*, *persistent* and *industrious*. Persistence was also noted by Jacobson et al. (2005, cited by Leithwood et al., 2008) and Ylimaki et al. (2007). These findings represent additional evidence not explicitly identified in the Zaccaro et al. review (Leithwood & Day, 2007a).

In the category **social appraisal skills**, which was the last category mentioned for which Leithwood and Day (2007a) report evidence, the authors identify principals in five of the nine country reports

as *being good listeners* and in the Danish report as having a *good sense of humour* perceived as a sign of good social appraisal skills in circumstances that may, for example, require a defusing of conflict or reduction of tension.

A few other traits/attributes evidenced in studies reviewed here seem not to fit the leader traits and attributes categorisation used by Zaccaro et al. (2004). They include: *courage* (Ylimaki et al, 2007); *willingness to take risks*, *resilience*, *hope* and *moral purposes* (Day et al., 2011) and may be better classified as *leader dispositions,* where disposition is defined as a habitual inclination or tendency to act or think in a certain way. Habits are formed over time but can be changed with effort. The traits/attributes and dispositions of school leaders as identified in this review are presented in table 2-2.

The classification system of leaders' traits and attributes used by Zaccaro et al. (2004) and later by Leithwood and Day (2007b) seems to be a useful frame for organising the leaders' traits/attributes and was used in the current study for that purpose. However, as the principals in the present study are new in post, the fifth category – leader expertise and tacit knowledge has been omitted but a category named 'dispositions' will replace it to reflect the findings of Ylimaki et al. (2007) and Day et al. (2011) as previously mentioned. Also since 'personality' seems an all-encompassing term for an individual's character, it has been replaced by 'personal qualities' to cater for the group of distinctive attributes that define an individual.

1.	**Cognitive Abilities**
	cognitive flexibility
	creative and lateral thinking
2.	**Personal Qualities**
	openness
	self-confidence
	internal locus of control
	innate goodness
	other-centredness
	humility
	readiness to learn from others
	open-mindedness
3.	**Motivation**
	achievement needs
	passionate about work
	highly committed emotionally
	highly motivated
	high energy levels
	determined
	persistent
	industrious
4.	**Social Appraisal skills**
	being good listeners
	having a good sense of humour
5.	**Dispositions**
	courage
	willingness to take risks
	resilience
	hope
	moral purpose

Table 2-2 – School leaders' traits/attributes & dispositions (2007-2013)

While informative in many respects, this review of leaders' traits and qualities and their associations to leader practices gives the impression that successful leaders/principals are for instance, always accommodating to staff and situations. However, if one is to consider the evidence on the associations between who leaders are, their values and their actions, it is plausible to think that successful leaders/principals may at times need to be, for example, adamant rather than flexible or uncompromising with respect to their values for the best interest of their organisations or schools. Moreover, it is also reasonable to consider as did McCaulley (1990) that individuals with a variety of traits and attributes

assume leadership positions, suggesting some traits and attributes may not necessarily contribute to successful leadership or some aspect of it. Identifying these traits and their effects may be illuminating to aspirant and practicing principals.

Throughout the review on successful principal practices, the centrality of values and beliefs in their shaping of school culture was alluded to. Indeed, empirical findings reveal a clear link between principals' personal values or visions and those they promote for the schools they lead (Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2001; Yeoli & Berkovich, 2010). The following section will consider the nature of those values and beliefs.

Values and beliefs in principal leadership

Leadership is increasingly linked to values (Bush, 2011) – particularly, the personal and professional values of the principal (Day, 2003). These values have been found to be associated with successful principals' actions (Gold et al., 2003; Leithwood & Day, 2007a). Such an association is a possible distinguishing feature of successful principals' work compared to their less successful counterparts, according to Leithwood and Day (2007b). Specifically, the use of basic human values and professional values by expert leaders – comparable to successful principals, according to Leithwood and Day (2007b) – dominates their decision making and problem solving (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995). Moreover, research findings indicate that expert leaders, or successful principals and headteachers, are guided by common core values (Day et al., 2010; Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995).

Gold et al. (2003) claim that almost all their outstanding school leader participants demonstrated values of *respect*, *appreciation*, *inclusivity*, *cooperation*, *equity*, *teamwork*, *high expectations* and *commitment*, which the authors broadly define as being 'social democratic or liberal humanist in nature' (p. 136). The successful principals in Deal

and Peterson's (1990) study also expressed core values for quality teaching; high standards of performance, discipline and professionalism; a nurturing, trusting environment for students, diversity, inclusion and helping the less fortunate; and the image of the school as well as a belief that every child can reach his/her potential. A review of the evidence from the ISSPP by Leithwood and Day (2007a, see pp. 197-198) notes 13 specific values and beliefs of successful principals across the 8 developed countries in the study. Summarised into four categories drawn out by Leithwood and Steinbach (1995), they are: 1) *respect for others* and 2) *happiness*, classified as **basic human values** (mentioned earlier); 3) *honesty*, 4) *empathy*, 5) *equity and social justice*, grouped under **general moral values**; 6) *role responsibility*, 7) *best interests of students must be the focus of the school* 8) a belief that *all children can learn and should succeed*, 9) a belief that *all children have potential that should be realised* are the **professional values and beliefs** (referred to earlier); 10) *value for community involvement especially in the school's vision*, 11) *participation of all stakeholders in decision making*, 12) commitment to school's vision and 13) a belief that *the capacities held by school personnel should be utilised for the best interest of the students* were classified as the **social and political values and beliefs**. From the findings of a more recent study, conducted by Day et al. (2010) across a three-year period of 20 English headteachers in primary and secondary schools, a set of common core values and beliefs was also identified. It includes: *a strong sense of moral responsibility* and *a belief in equal opportunities*; *a belief that every pupil deserves the same opportunities to succeed*; *respect and value for all people in and connected with the school*; *a passion for learning and achievement* and; *a commitment to pupils and staff*.

A collation of these findings, which reflects commonalities across studies, is presented in Figure 2-7 using the classification proposed by Leithwood and Steinbach (1995). The classification provides a useful frame for presentation of the current study's findings.

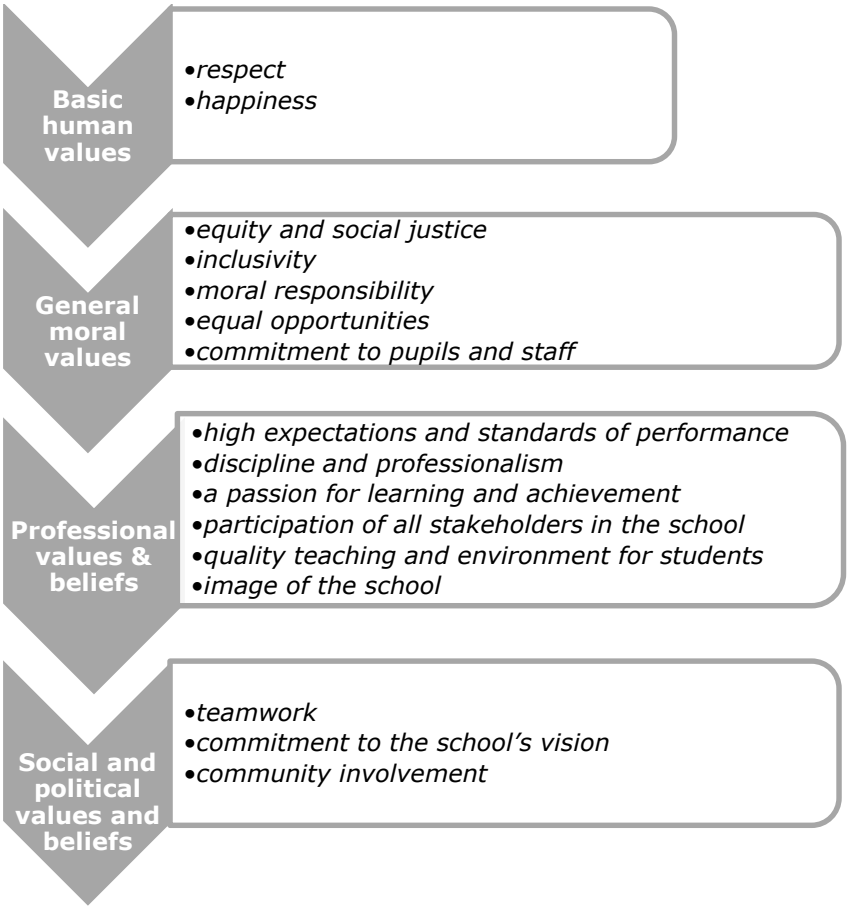


Figure 2-7 – Values and beliefs of successful school leaders (1990-2010)

A principal's actions and reactions signal the values to which he/she holds (Deal & Peterson, 1990) and so too do his/her traits/attributes. Together, attributes and values, give a sense of who a principal is and what his/her character is like, and contribute to influencing his/her conception of the role, which Levinson (1959) argues can vary widely from principal to principal. Role conception, he explains, is a way of thinking about "the specific functions, values and manner of functioning

appropriate to one position" within an organization and "offers a definition and rationale" for that position, making new principals' role conceptions a most critical factor in the nature of their interactions with school culture likely contributing to various types of school member responses, which are reviewed next.

School member responses

While new principals may occupy themselves in reading a school's culture, as earlier noted, from the time of their appointment, school members also do their own reading of the new principal, according to Deal and Peterson (1990) and Harvey (1991). Everything from the incumbent's age, gender, reputation and other characteristics become important signals about who he/she is, what he/she does and his/her values. The following review shows how school members respond to their new principals in light of who they are (attributes and values) and what they do (practices and strategies). It also briefly reviews evidence on the reasons and purposes for school member responses, which likely affect the leadership-school culture interplay.

Northfield (2011) finds that staff, in particular, mitigated new principals' innovative attempts at school change. Teachers in his study scrutinized, resisted or ignored these attempts, especially those meant to adjust their instructional and assessment practices. Also noted by the new principal participants was veteran teachers' refusal to commit to their schools' development. These teachers had, in effect, retired long before walking through the door (Northfield, 2011). Eshbach and Henderson (2010) also identify low commitment as a teacher response to new principal leadership, together with intolerance and divisiveness. However, the authors count these as "disengaged behaviours" of teachers because they were exercised despite the efforts of the new principal participants to

practice transformational leadership, appearing to the authors to be a mismatch.

The findings thus far point to a possible 'instability' characteristic between the new principal and school members – an instability that school members try to regulate through exchange and reciprocation processes (Blase, 1989 after for e.g. Gouldner, 1966).

Exchange and reciprocation processes

Blase (1989) explains that exchange and reciprocation processes – a major finding of his work - are expected to emerge in superordinate-subordinate relationships like principal-school member relationships in order to secure a sense of balance. While rather dated and not focussed on school members' responses to new principals' work, Blase's studies (1991; 1995) offer the most comprehensive look at school member responses to principal leadership and are informative to the current study. Additionally, while the current study does not regard principals as 'open' or 'closed' as does Blase's studies, its attention to new principals' practices and attributes and, of course, school member responses, makes Blase's findings relevant although his data-collection methods did not probe the collective action of teachers as did the current study.

Blase's findings indicate that teachers seemed to achieve perceptions of equity having received desired results from the political strategies they used with principals in relationships of long-term debt and interdependence that they created with them (Blase, 1989). Blase identifies 6 major strategies used with open principals – those who were supportive, encouraged collegiality and participation and held high expectations –: diplomacy, conformity, extra work, visibility, avoidance and ingratiation and; three minor ones: documentation, intermediaries and threats, which were used by about 3% of 440 teacher-participants (p. 383). The most used strategy (by 61% of teachers) was diplomacy.

These strategies used with open principals, Blase reports in his (1991) study, are used to a lesser degree with closed principals – those described by teachers as authoritarian, inaccessible, inflexible, unfriendly and non-supportive, among the descriptors. However, other strategies used with closed principals not reported as used with open principals include confrontation, coalitions and non-compliance (Blase, 1991). These differences indicate not only an association between principal leadership and the responses of teachers but also, according to Blase (1989; 1991), the importance of principal characteristics in contributing to the orientations of teachers, which was found to be one of the main reasons cited by teachers for every strategy used toward closed principals in Blase (1991) study. This and the findings of Engles and colleagues (2008), who also find relationships between principals' attributes and teacher responses, provide added impetus for the inclusion of character attributes in the investigation of the nature of new principal leadership-school culture relationships, the purpose of the current study. However, it is likely that the responses of school members to principal intervention are also dependent on two other factors which are related, pointing to school members', particularly teachers', readiness for change. These factors are: (1) if teachers believe there is need for a new direction and change to solve existing school problems – this is often the realization of a school at crisis stage and (2) the existing capacity for school improvement. Consequently, the current study is conducted within schools of different effectiveness states.

Purposes of school member responses

Also revealed in the review on school member responses are the purposes behind school members' responses to principal characteristics and leadership. Northfield (2011) finds that teachers' responses (resistance, low commitment and indifference) served a conservatory

purpose – maintaining the status quo. Blase (1989; 1991) finds teachers' responses to principals they described as open and effective or closed and ineffective were mainly intended to "maximize gains", such as increased job security, recognition and praise and influence in decision-making, or "to reduce the costs of interaction" or protection from criticism or sanctions (p. 401). School member responses, such as confrontation, were used to force principals to respond to needs perceived by teachers as pressing; while teachers' use of coalitions were for influence and protection from closed principals (Blasé 1991).

Investigating the 'why' and 'what for' of school member responses to new principal leadership will enhance understanding of the nature and impact of the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture. The current study has assumed that new principals and the impact of their leadership may be affected by school culture and the responses of school members, especially teachers. This added dimension of the study can assist in understanding why a school, such as the one in the introduction of this thesis, may see superficial, short-term change while others may realise improvement. The following section reviews the moderating effects of school culture and school member responses on new principal leadership.

School culture as a moderating/influencing factor of new principal leadership and school change

Mentioned earlier is the significance of school culture to positive school change and enhanced student outcomes, but a school's culture can work for or against school improvement and reform (Barth, 2001). So great is the influence of school culture on school improvement that Wagner and Madsen-Copas (2002) consider its influence more far reaching than those of strategic plans, curriculum and assessment reforms, valuations, and effective school strategies that have been applied to

achieve improved school effectiveness. Each school's pre-existing culture plays an important role in determining how the school interprets and enacts reforms, internal or external (Hargreaves 1997). Such interpretation results in reforms being adapted to fit the already established cultures in schools and while changes may occur in teachers' practices, a school's culture can remain largely unaffected (Gordon & Paterson, 2008). Sarason (1996) has argued that if the norms embedded within the reforms do not fit those of the existing school culture, then take up of the reform would be shallow even though accepted. It is evident that school culture influences school reform; however, there is little knowledge on how school culture, particularly through school member responses, influences principal leadership.

Influence on leadership practices

Researchers have found that when new principals encounter school member responses that they consider difficult, they may change their leadership approach. Osterman, Crow and Rosen (1993) report, based on their survey of 158 new principals in New York city, that new principals would relinquish their commitment to transformational leadership approaches, resorting to transactional behaviours when faced with challenging conditions, such as staff issues, despite their knowledge of the effectiveness of transformative leadership. Noonan & Goldman (1995) report similar findings, observing that new principals in post-succession resorted to highly directive and restrictive behaviours having initially demonstrated supportive behaviours. It is such directive and restrictive behaviours that Eshbach & Henderson (2010) find to be associated with closed school climates and which cause Hart (1993) to conclude that most successions or appointments of new principals result in small disruptions to school functions which then return to the way things were, without altering the climate of the school. If one accepts this as true, then the

same could be said for school culture. While these findings are set in a pre-performativity era, similar findings exist in contexts of high performativity as well.

It is in the face of internal issues, such as conflict with and among school members, that the new principals in Crow and Weindling's (2010) study adopted a political role, exercising political leadership. Jones and Webber (2001) recognize that the new principal in their study reacted to school members challenging her core values; while Northfield (2011) finds that in order to move ahead with change initiatives after encountering, for instance, staffs' resistance, the new principals resorted to working with those colleagues who supported their change initiatives, while simultaneously waiting out resistors who in time would voluntarily leave or retire. Among successful principals too, school member responses can moderate leadership impact. In the ISSPP reported by Leithwood and Day (2007a), the authors identify, among others, the extent of mutual trust and respect between leaders and teachers to be a moderating factor of successful leadership. To what extent then do new principals alter their leadership approaches as a result of their interactions with school culture? The current study investigates this. Yet, school culture through school member responses not only influences a principal's leadership but understandably the principal as a person, affecting his/her emotions and learning. This is particularly crucial to new principals who are essentially in learning mode but must exercise sound professional judgment.

Influence on the new principal

Professional judgment is developmental and most likely enriched through experience – learning on the job. For new principals, developing their professional judgment appears to be linked to the emotional experiences they have on the job, which they perceive as critical to their development and thinking. The nature of these emotional experiences and

how they impact on the new principals' learning is critical to their leadership effectiveness. Investigating these may enable better understanding of the nature and impact of the interactions between new principals and their inherited school cultures, which may in turn highlight areas in which new principals, at least in the T&T context, may need to be better supported.

Harris (2007) notes that among leadership studies few explore the underlying emotional dynamics of school leaders' work. Beatty (2005) and Crawford (2011) agree. This holds true among the literature on new principals, which may emphasize new principals' feelings of isolation, uncertainty and stress (e.g. Legotlo & Westhuizen, 1996; Daresh & Male, 2000; Wildy & Clarke, 2008), but probe no further.

Current authorship and research (e.g. Beatty, 2005; Cai, 2011; Crawford, 2004; 2011) provides evidence of the complex relationship between leadership and emotions, recognizing the epistemological value that such study can have in relation to leaders' inner worlds and their interpersonal relationships with school members (Crawford, 2011). It is said that principals work in 'emotional silence' (Beatty, 2005, p. 124), where masking emotions is normative and 'emotional hypocrisy' (Fineman, 2000, p. 12, cited by Crawford, 2011) is practiced. The result is 'emotional labour' (Hoshchild, 1983, cited by Crawford, 2011, p. 206), where leaders suppress their true feelings in order to maintain a professional persona that produces a required emotional state in others (Crawford, 2011). It is claimed that emotional honesty (Beatty, 2005) and regulation (Crawford, 2011) are beneficial to the development of principals' deeper self-knowledge and their trust renewal in staff where relationships were strained or 'wounding' was involved (Harris, 2007; Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004). A wound, says Meizirow (1991 cited in Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004, p. 313) can range from "a

disappointment" to "a problem" to "a disorienting dilemma", but a wounding experience, according to Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2004), offers an opportunity for the principal to "question basic personal and organizational assumptions and values" so that "new ways of interpreting intrapersonal and interpersonal events can emerge" (p. 325). This notion is indicative of 'learning the hard way'.

It comes then as no surprise that, in their interactions with school members, new principals acquire new knowledge firstly and chiefly through trial and error - learning from their mistakes (Crow & Weindling, 2010) and through other ways, such as the advice and support of mentors and role models, such as principal friends, deputy principals and, at times, teachers (Crow & Weindling, 2010; Nir, 2009; Lee-Piggott, 2014); information gathering (Crow & Weindling, 2010) and; reflecting on their work relationships and practice (Day, 2003b; Lee-Piggott, 2014). However, the literature appears to be silent on what new principals learn on the job that impacts their leadership development. An understanding of their workplace learning as a consequence of interactions with school culture can add to our knowledge of how new principals become successful or not-so successful in their specific school contexts.

OVERVIEW

In summary, the review of literature for this study draws attention to schools serving disadvantaged communities and assists in conceptualising new principals in terms of their thinking, challenges and practices in influencing school culture. Additionally, some leverage on the concepts of school culture and leadership has been had. The review of these two concepts provides foundational understanding for grappling with the idea of a two-way relationship between leadership and school culture.

Highlighted was the interconnectedness of a number of factors involved in the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture, which was presented in the study's theoretical framework. They include: the new principal's character in terms of his/her traits/attributes and values, level of awareness of school culture and culture-shaping practices and strategies – all of which contribute to impressions of the new principal's professional judgment. On the other hand are school members' responses to these, which may moderate new principals' leadership and its effects on school and student processes and outcomes and, impact the new principal's emotions and leadership development. By investigating these factors and their interconnectedness, this study hopes to illuminate on the nature and impact of the new principal leadership-school culture interplay. The intention is to contribute to knowledge that hopefully fills the gaps in the literature identified.

Intended contribution to knowledge

Generally, the current research speaks to literatures on new principals, leadership of schools facing challenging circumstances, school leaders' attributes and values, leadership effects, school culture and school change. This chapter concludes by reiterating the gaps identified in the literature and presenting the intended contribution of this study towards filling those gaps.

While there is burgeoning literature on new principals, few originate from Caribbean developing countries. Most of these studies were conducted in developed nation states (e.g. Crow, 2007) or in developing countries such as Central and South Africa (e.g. Legotlo & Westhuizen, 1996), which suffer very different developmental challenges than Caribbean nations. Additionally, although new principals' challenges form a major theme within this literature, few focus attention on new principals' leadership within schools facing challenging circumstances or explore the

new principals' emotions and learning that may arise from such challenges. Moreover, a predominant view of leadership as an independent factor with respect to school and student outcomes means that few studies have conceptualised leadership as relational and possibly influenced by contextual factors such as school culture or how leaders' attributes and values contribute to their exercise of leadership. Of those studies that investigated a leadership-school culture interaction or probed school member responses to principal leadership many are dated, having been conducted in the pre-performativity era and are mainly quantitative and/or not focused on new principals.

This study intends to contribute in a small but hopefully significant way to filling the gaps identified by focusing on new principal leadership of schools facing challenging circumstances within T&T, which is a developing nation in the Caribbean. It adopts a reciprocal leadership perspective to investigating the nature of the interaction between the leadership of three new principals and their inherited school cultures and thus, considers the responses of school members to that leadership as well as how the new principals' attributes, values and school culture awareness contribute to their exercise of leadership. The current study also explores outcomes of the new principal leadership–school culture interplay: the emotions and learning of the new principal and school change. Additionally, eschewing a positivistic perspective to understanding this interplay, a social constructionists lens and qualitative case study methodology are applied to obtain a rich understanding. These are discussed in the next chapter.

3. METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this chapter is to present and justify this study's chosen research design – case study. To this end, the philosophical underpinnings which informed the selection of this design are discussed. The chapter also explains how 'case study' is conceptualised in this thesis by first evaluating the conceptualisations of several authors. It also discusses the specific case study approach used to investigate the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture, which entailed four research activities: diagnosing school culture; getting to know the new principals; understanding the interplay and; determining the impact on the new principals and on schools. Next, the multiple methods used for data collection are described and justified before I reflect on their usefulness to the study's purposes. The selection of the three cases, access procedures, ethical considerations and data analysis are also discussed in this chapter, which ends with an overview.

PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS

This study is informed and guided by the basic ontological and epistemological assumptions held by the researcher. These assumptions inform the methodological approach adopted, which then has implications for the selection of data collection methods.

Ontological assumptions and claims are:

> … made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other. In short, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality (Blaikie, 2000, p. 8).

Fundamental questions surrounding ontology, therefore, are: What is the nature of reality and existence? And, how is the social world perceived and understood (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 19)? It is understandable

then for people from different contexts to have diverging views of the world and different assumptions underpinning how they go about social inquiry, all of which are irrefutable empirically (Grix, 2010). The ontological position underpinning this study views reality as socially constructed.

People are social beings. They continually seek understanding of their lives and work experiences through construction of meaning through interaction with the social and physical world. While there may be an infinite number of constructions of social reality, there is no one true interpretation of the social world (Crotty, 1998). As such the researcher appreciates the existence of multiple interpretations and therefore, 'multiple realities' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 72) – a relativistic view of social reality. However, the constructions are not only subjective, but are inseparable from people, events and objects. Social reality, then, is not only interdependently constructed, but is reproduced through the continuing activities of people, which they are constantly interpreting (Blaikie, 1993, cited by Crotty, 1998). A social construction of reality acknowledges too that the world exists independent of constructions of meanings of that world.

Derived from the Greek words *episteme* (knowledge) and *logos* (reason), an epistemology is a theory of the nature/form of knowledge. Epistemology addresses what we can know about social reality and the process of knowing it (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989, 1995). Whilst these are not the only ones, two contrasting epistemological positions are positivism and interpretivism. Positivism as advanced by Auguste Compte, a French philosopher, is a position which aims at objectivity in social inquiry by adopting the methods and procedures of the natural sciences, such as experimentation and survey (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). It assumes that human behaviour is observable, measurable and predictable.

Because reality is considered absolute and independent of meaning, deductive reasoning is often applied to knowledge generation within this paradigm. Interpretivism, on the other hand, respects the differences between people and animals or things and recognises that human beings are capable of developing subjective meanings to their experiences and so seeks to make sense of those subjective meanings (Cohen et al., 2007). This study, however, adheres to social constructionism which bears some resemblance to interpretivism.

For social constructionists, knowledge is continually constructed and reframed upon the acquisition of new knowledge and new experiences and is understood using individual/group perception hinged to personal values, beliefs and histories (Crotty, 1998; Burr, 2003). The 'social' in 'social constructionism' is about the mode of meaning generation and not the type of object to be made sense of. Therefore, social constructionism involves sense making of not only situations involving people but also of interactions with physical and natural objects (Blaikie, 1993, cited by Crotty, 1998). As such meanings of even these natural or physical entities are understood to arise from human interaction – a notion that is particularly important to the understanding of school culture symbols in this study. Therefore, social constructionism marries some tenets of objectivism and subjectivism (Crotty, 1998) and; explains this study's acknowledgement and/or use of the findings of researches adhering to either of the two perspectives or both as might be the case for a mixed-methods study.

The social constructionist relies as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation under study in order to understand the processes involved in the interactions and how participants make sense of or interpret the meanings of their social world. Because personal and group backgrounds and contexts of participants' lives and work help shape

interpretations, the researcher is keen to consider these. Therefore, visiting participants in their natural settings adds to the researcher's sense making of the situation under investigation. The researcher's role, then, involves: (a) reconstructing those realities as accurately as possible and; in understanding that each participant's construction is likely to be incomplete or inaccurate to some degree, (b) finding patterns across the multiple interpretations which allows 'truth' to emerge in a composite view of the perspectives of as many participants as is practical in the given situation under study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, a methodological approach that allows participants to openly share their views is necessary so as to ultimately generate patterns of meaning inductively (Creswell, 2009); thus, case study was considered for collecting data on the outlined research questions, which are worth reiterating here.

The main research questions are:

1. What is the nature of the interplay between the leadership of new principals and the cultures of schools serving disadvantaged communities?
2. How does the nature of this interplay impact on school effectiveness and school improvement?

You may recall that question 1 is further explored through the following:

a) What do the cultures of schools serving disadvantaged communities look like?
b) What intervention practices and strategies do new principals use?
c) What is it about who principals are, what they do and how they do it which helps or hinders them in achieving school change or improvement?

d) What are the responses of school members to the leadership of their new principals and how might they be understood?

RESEARCH DESIGN: CASE STUDY

The use of case study is quite common to research in many disciplines, including the Social Sciences under which educational research stands. However, despite this widespread use of the strategy, there exist varying interpretations of what constitutes a case study and what, in essence, is a case (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Thomas, 2011). In the following section, a few conceptualisations of case study selected from earlier writings to more recent ones and from well-known authors in the field are considered towards the development of a case study concept that framed the execution of the current study.

Towards a case study conceptualisation

In reviewing a number of definitions, Simons (2009) claimed that there were two commonalities among them: the first being the commitment among researchers to studying the complex as characteristic of natural settings and the second, a general propensity towards defining case study as something other than the data collection methods it employs. She states:

> Case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a "real life" context (Simons, 2009, p. 21).

By acknowledging the complexity of reality, Simons (2009) seems to suggest that in order to 'truly' understand that reality, case study needs to be an exploratory process, occurring within naturalistic settings that employs source triangulation. Stake (2005, p. 443), placing emphasis on 'case', defines case study this way:

> Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied. . . . By whatever methods we choose to study the case. We

> could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, and by mixed methods—but we concentrate, at least for the time being, on the case (Stake, 2005, p. 443).

One can see from Stake's (2005) definition that case study, as an analytical frame, is multimodal and may be embraced from different philosophical positions – *interpretivism* (the view that knowledge of the social world is subjective and relativistic) as implied by hermeneutics or methods of interpretation, *positivism* (the view that knowledge is objective, external to reality and is discovered through general laws) as suggested by 'repeated measures' and *pragmatism* (problem-centred; pluralistic use of what works) as might be associated with mixed methods. Another idea coming from this definition is the temporality of the case, that is, it being bounded in time. Earlier in 1999 cited by Baxter and Jack (2008), Stake alluded to the necessity of boundaries on cases for the purpose of study in order to prevent the tendency of researchers attempting to answer too-broad a research question or work on a study with too many objectives. Necessarily, cases may also be bounded by other parameters, such as place (Creswell, 2003) context and definition (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Attempting a reconstruction of case study as used in educational research, Bassey (1999) defines what he terms an 'educational case study' (p. 58) as an 'empirical enquiry', which he adds, is:

- conducted within a localised boundary of space and time (i.e. a singularity);
- into interesting aspects of an educational activity, or programme, or institution, or system;
- mainly in its natural context and within an ethic of respect for persons; in order to inform the judgments and decisions of practitioners or policymakers;
- or of theoreticians who are working to these ends;
- in such a way that sufficient data are collected for the researcher… (Bassey, 1999, p. 58).

Bassey's (1999) definition, like Stake's (2005), speaks of boundaries and, like Simons' (2009), bears witness to case study within its natural context.

However, Bassey's (1999) conception stands out in its recognition of the significance of the case study approach in its being empirical, respectful of participants and relevant to the work of a variety of educationists. Because educational case study is serious business, ample data must be collected that contributes to the credibility, dependability, trustworthiness and confirmability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and possibly lead to 'fuzzy generalization' (Bassey, 1999, p. 12) – a qualitative measure that claims the likelihood of conclusions drawn from a single case also being found in other similar cases elsewhere.

Another conceptualisation of case study is that of Sturman (1994). He states:

> 'Case study' is a generic term for the investigation of an individual, group or phenomenon. While the techniques used in the investigation may be varied, and may include both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the distinguishing feature of case study is the belief that human systems develop a characteristic wholeness or integrity and are not simply a loose collection of traits (Sturman, 1994, p. 61).

Sturman's (1994) conceptualisation is distinctive in its recognition of 'holism' (coined by Smuts, 1926) as an important characteristic of the case to be studied, for despite the unit, it is the ability to function as a whole that explains many of the actions performed by the unit – actions that may be very different from those taken by individuals constituting the whole. It is for this reason, that in order to understand the case, many aspects of that case– because it is impossible to focus on all – and the relationships between and among them that will aid interpretation are considered and this holds true whether the case is, as he says, 'an individual, group or phenomenon'. Sturman (1994) puts it this way:

> As a consequence of this belief, case study researchers hold that to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalise or predict from a single example requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge (Sturman, 1994, p. 61).

Another author, Thomas (2011) upon examining a number of definitions of case study, including those of Simons (2009) and Stake (2005) presents his notion of the strategy. He states:

> Case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods. The case that is the subject of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame – an object – within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates (Thomas, 2011, p. 513).

Thomas' (2011) definition lists the many types of units that can form 'the case' of an investigation, not mentioned by other authors and he too, like Sturman (1994) considers the holistic and multi-modal study of cases. However an important feature of Thomas' (2011) definition is the identification of 'an object' and its purpose in relation to the case or subject of the study. Indeed, the 'object' of a case study is often identified and even described, but it is its relationship with the subject or case that provides the reasons for engaging in a proposed investigation.

Across all the definitions considered here, there is agreement that case study is a naturalistic, in-depth, multimodal inquiry that values the relative uniqueness of cases towards understanding social reality. Being multimodal and multi-perspectival, case study likely compensates for the limitations of individual methods (Bromley, 1986 cited by Day & Bakioğlu, 1996; Maslowski, 2006 cited by Schoen & Teddlie, 2008) and contributes to qualitative reliability and validity of the findings. It is clear that almost anything can be studied as a case and, as a strategy, case study appears to be flexible for use despite one's worldview as implied by Stake (2005), resulting in conceptual variation. It seems that for some authors, case study is a process – see for example, Sturman (1994) and Simons (2009), while for others, case study is an analytical frame of sorts consisting of guiding principles for the investigation of 'the case' – for example, Stake (2005) and; yet for others, case study is the product resulting from

analysis – see Thomas (2011). These conceptualisations seem to reflect authors' dispositions about what aspects of the strategy should be emphasised. These ideas can contribute towards a case study conceptualisation for the proposed study, which follows.

A case study conceptualisation for the present study

Understanding the nature of the interplay between new principals and the culture of the high poverty schools they lead ideally requires the researcher to immerse him/herself for an extended period into the very complex life of each school: observing, learning its history, interacting with stakeholders and making sense of the rules that govern their actions. However, as reasoned by Day (2011), such research is practical for only a few ethnographers and anthropologists. For this reason, this study seeks to gain understanding through an approach that is multi-perspectival and multi-modal, given the relatively short time the researcher can dedicate to data collection. It is through appreciating participants' social constructions of reality (Crotty, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), even though they may be subjective, that the researcher is best able to understand that reality. Additionally, understanding *how* and *why* things happen as they do between the new principal and the culture of schools serving disadvantaged communities necessitates the scope, depth and rigor that case study affords (Cohen et al., 2007; Yin, 2014) and implies a 'naturalistic inquiry' – one that is allowed to unfold in its natural setting without the researcher's manipulation and imposition of 'a priori units' on the outcomes of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 8). Moreover, case study allows for the development of a rather collaborative relationship between the researcher and participants, which greatly facilitated the data-collection process.

Consequently, for the purposes of this project, case study is conceptualised as a comprehensive *process* of empirical investigation into

a complex phenomenon – the interplay between the leadership of a new principal of a high poverty school and school culture (the case) – that is bounded by time, place and definition, through the use of multiple methods and sources of data within its natural context to understand the nature of the interplay between new principals' leadership and school culture. As a 'theory-seeking' (Bassey, 1999, p. 62) or explanatory (Yin, 2014) case study, three cases were studied; their subjects being: the new principals of (1) an 'effective' school, (2) a 'mostly effective' school and (3) a school 'under academic watch', all serving socio-economically disadvantaged communities. The case study approach is now discussed.

CASE STUDY APPROACH

This explanatory multiple-case study involved four research activities: (1) diagnosing school culture, (2) getting to know the principal, (3) understanding the interplay and (4) determining the impact of the interplay on the principal and the school.

(1) *Diagnosing school cultures* – The choices of methods preferred by researchers to diagnose school culture usually stem from whether they believe school culture to be measurable or non-measurable (Pol et al., 2005) in alignment with their ontological and epistemological perspectives. Researchers who adhere to the belief that school culture is indeed measurable tend to hold a positivistic view of the phenomenon and prefer to utilise quantitative-type questionnaire surveys and multivariate statistical analyses. However, those researchers that consider school culture to be immeasurable usually conduct more qualitative-type studies, demonstrating their more interpretivistic positioning and/or sociological/psychosocial perspectives. Such researchers tend to utilize case studies, ethnographic approaches and/or visual methods to

understand the content of school culture, making homogeneity and strength of culture secondary foci.

Studying the existing cultures of the schools of this project was approached using multi-method case study in order to compensate for the weaknesses of individual methods. Consequently, questionnaires, observation, document research and interviews were utilised to investigate the content, homogeneity and strength of the three schools' cultures of this study as shown in table 3-1.

The assessment of the schools' cultures was undertaken using the adapted conceptualisation of school culture discussed in chapter 2, which is one plausible way of studying and explaining the way things are at a school. As a framework, it was useful for "... describing, discussing, and comparing school functions..." (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008, p. 147), thereby facilitating case-by-case and cross-case analyses of school culture data. It also facilitated the use of the multiple methods named, allowing for triangulation across them which in turn contributed to increased trustworthiness in the data and findings of this study.

(2) *Getting to know the new principals and their practices* – A combination of direct and indirect approaches was used in the collection of data on the new principals' attributes, values, cultural awareness and leadership practices. Direct approaches included asking the new principals outright to talk about themselves: attributes, values, training and practices; while more indirect approaches involved learning about him or her from observation and/or speaking to other participants. These are further explained in section 3.8 and are all quite common approaches in researching educational leadership (Briggs & Coleman, 2007). The leadership literature reviewed in chapter 2 informed the analysis and interpretation of the study's data.

Levels of culture (Schein, 1992)	**Data collection methods**
Artefacts/symbolic representations (the visible: icons, ceremonies/events, behavioural norms, verbal expressions, settings)	• observation & field notes • questionnaires (for behavioural norms) • interviews
Values (desired or highly esteemed principles or qualities)	• questionnaires • interviews • observation & field notes of settings, actions, routines & events • document research of school brochures, minutes of past meetings, school development plans, etc. for expressions of vision, mission, educational goals, core values, etc.
Basic Underlying Assumptions (unconscious, taken-for-granted, beliefs, thoughts, perceptions and feelings)	• interviews • inferences to be made about data collected from above methods

Table 3-1 – Methods for studying school culture

(3) *Understanding the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture* – To focus discussions on the interplay, a critical incident technique was used with the three new principals and was the main method used for collecting data on this aspect of the study. It is further explained later in the sub-section entitled 'Data-collection Methods and Processes'. Additionally, teachers and students were directly asked in questionnaires and interviews about the interplay.

Questions on the interplay were devised using the theoretical framework discussed in chapter 2. See tables 3-2 and 3-3 for associated interview questions for each aspect of the interplay. They were designed to capture the interconnectedness of the named factors in the framework

towards understanding not only which values, attributes or practices were most commonly used by new principals or the types of responses of school members but also to gain a sense of how these factors function and interconnect to facilitate or hinder school improvement. Within this study, only the actions of individual or groups in response to principal intervention that seemed to be informed by the frames of reference of school culture were reported.

(4) *Determining the impact on new principals and their schools – H*aving adopted a perspective of leadership effects as mutually influencing, a longitudinal design was conceived to robustly capture this effect on the new principal and on school improvement, for which data were collected from principals and school members in two phases separated by two academic years. Should one reasonably expect new principals to effect change in such a short time? The data provided initial impressions.

The critical incident technique also formed the main source of data for determining the impact of the interplay on new principals and their schools. To supplement, a section on the teachers' questionnaire was dedicated to this aspect of the study as well as both teachers and students were asked in interviews about school change. Additionally, school performance data in the form of standardized National Tests in Mathematics and Language Arts spanning three years were collected from each of the 3 case study schools. This is further explained in the sub-section – The Data-collection Process. In terms of school change, this study investigated new principals' and school members' perceptions of changes across the four dimensions of school culture adopted for this study, which are I) Professional Orientation of teachers, II) Organisational Structure, III) Quality of the Learning Experience and Environment and IV) Student Orientation, but allowed participants to indicate any other changes in process or outcome that they experienced.

Leadership-school culture Interplay Factors	**Associated Interview Questions** (P – Principal; CIT – Critical Incident Technique; T_2 –Teacher Schedule 2; S – Student)
New principal attributes and values	P Q2(a) What is your vision for the school (b) How is this personal vision similar to or different from the school's vision? P Q3 How do you project those values that you think need to be symbolised in the behaviours of school members? CIT Q4 Were any of your core values confirmed or challenged? T_2 Q1 What values/beliefs with regards to schooling does your principal portray? T_2 Q2 How does he/she project those values and beliefs to school members? T_2 Q3 How are these values/beliefs similar to or different from what the school has been known to esteem? T_2 Q6 How would you describe your principal's approach to leadership? What is unique about his/her approach? S Q7(a) Tell me about your principal?
Level of cultural awareness	P Q4(a) How have you tried to learn about the school's culture? (b) What has facilitated this learning? (c) What has made this learning difficult? P Q5(a) What were your initial impressions about the culture of this school upon taking up the appointment? (b) How have your impressions changed, if at all? And why? P Q6 What aspects of the existing culture, in your opinion, works well in terms of the school's effectiveness? And why? P Q7(a) What aspects of the existing culture need/needed changing? And why? T_2 Q5(a) How has he/she tried to learn about the school's culture? (b) What has facilitated this learning? (c) What has made this learning difficult?

Table 3-2 – Questions on new principals' attributes, values and school culture awareness

Leadership-school culture Interplay Factors	**Associated Interview Questions** (P – Principal; CIT – Critical Incident Technique; T_2 –Teacher Schedule 2; S – Student)
Leadership practice	P Q1 How do you view… your role as principal in relation to the school? P Q2(a) What is your vision for the school P Q2(b) How is this personal vision similar to or different from the school's vision? P Q10 When and how did you address those aspects of the school culture that needed changing? Why did you use those approaches? Can you give an example? P Q12(b) From what knowledge/experience base do you draw in order to intervene? CIT Q1 What did you do well? Q2 What would you have done differently if you had the chance? Why? T_2 Q6 How would you describe your principal's approach to leadership? What is unique about his/her approach? T_2 Q8(a) When and how has your principal addressed aspects of the school's culture that needed changing? T_2 Q9 Where the principal's interventions were met with resistance, how did he/she diffuse or manage these? T_2 Q10 How does your principal exercise power/influence to encourage staff/students/parents to function/act in desired ways? How has his/her use of influence/power changed over the time he/she has been here?
School member responses	P Q9 In what ways has the culture of the school function to support/influence/contest your leadership? Can you give an example? P Q11 How did staff/students/parents respond to your interventions? Why do you think they responded as they did? P Q12(a) Where your interventions were met with resistance, how did you diffuse or manage these? And why did you choose those means? T_2 Q7 In what ways do you think the school's culture supports the principal's leadership? Please provide examples. T_2 Q11 To what extent does the school's culture influence/contest the principal's leadership? And, in what ways? S Q6 What do you think prevents [your school from being the way you would like]? S Q7b How do you feel about the changes [made by your new principal]?

Table 3-3 – Questions on new principals' leadership and school members' responses

Figure 3-1 summarises the study approach. The arrows show how each research activity informed other aspects of the case study process, although in reality the process is by no means linear. Figure 3-1 also shows how methodological and source triangulations (Denzin, 1978) were achieved that contributed to the credibility, trustworthiness, dependability and confirmability of this study's findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The selection of cases is discussed next.

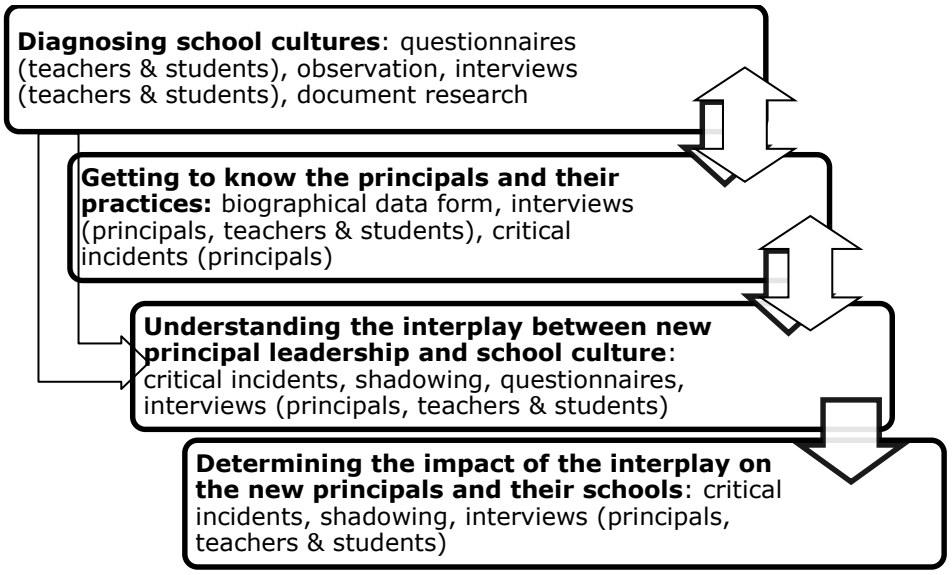


Figure 3-1 – Study Approach

SELECTING THE CASES

Three new principals heading primary schools serving disadvantaged communities, the subjects of the cases, were enlisted for participation. One is the head of an 'excelling' school; the second heads a 'mostly effective' school, while the third heads a school 'under academic watch'. See table 3-1 for a description of these terms. The schools formed the first unit of purposive sampling, selected using existing data held by the Division of Educational Research and Evaluation (DERE) of T&T's MOE. The assumption underlying the selection of schools of

different 'effectiveness' states is that they possess very different school cultures that contribute to those very different states of effectiveness.

Firstly, the 2011 National Test report was reviewed for schools located in only two of the eight education districts in T&T. The intention was to conduct the study in only one education district, namely Port-of Spain & Environs, but I could find no excelling high poverty public primary school headed by a new principal in this district. Consequently, the excelling public primary school is located in a near-by district, St George East. The two districts, Port-of-Spain & Environs and St. George East, were selected for practical reasons. For each category – 'excelling' schools, 'mostly effective' schools and schools 'under academic watch' – I considered two indices. The first index is based on consideration of the schools' average composite Academic Performance Indicators (APIs) and Annual Yearly Progress (AYP).

API Range Scores	LABEL	DESCRIPTION
401-560	EXCELLING	Extremely high proportions of students meeting or exceeding standards in both classes and areas of learning
241-400	MOSTLY EFFECTIVE	Adequate to high proportions of students meeting or exceeding standards in both classes and areas of learning
81-240	ACADEMIC WATCH	Inadequate numbers of students meeting or exceeding standards in one or more classes or areas of learning. Requires immediate attention to specific challenges faced by school.
< 80	ACADEMIC EMERGENCY	Inadequate numbers of students meeting or exceeding in both classes and areas of learning. Requires urgent and immediate intervention

Table 3-4 – Rubric for interpreting the API (source: National Test Report 2011)

These measures were created from scores on the 2005 to 2010 national tests, obtained from DERE. More recent years were not

immediately accessible. APIs indicate individual school's effectiveness state, which can be one of four as stated in table 3-1. Since the APIs are associated with scores within ranges (E.g. a 'mostly effective' school can have an API score within the range 241-400), it was important that the three schools selected did not have scores that were comparatively close even though they may be labelled differently. Consequently, the AYPs were examined to ensure selected schools had a history of consistent performance in their particular effectiveness category.

The second index is a measure of 'economic and social deprivation'. As national policy on school feeding and nutrition dictates that all public primary schools be allocated breakfast for 33% of the school's student population and lunch for 66 % of the student population, using free school meal (FSM) allocations as the only measure of the school's degree of economic deprivation was not a viable option. For this reason, within this study, parental occupation as recorded in schools' registers was used as a measure of economic and social deprivation at each school as well. These indices helped to identify a short list of schools in the categories of 'excelling', 'mostly effective' and 'under academic watch'.

The final selections met the following criteria, which served as selection filters.

For the first case:

- Filter 1 - be located in the education district of Port-of-Spain & Environs or St George East
- Filter 2 – be a government or government-assisted primary school
- Filter 3 - be a school 'under academic watch' with an average API between 81 and 240. Incidentally, there were no schools in either district with an average API below 170.
- Filter 4 - have a history of consistent performance within this category

- Filter 5 - have a free school meals allocation of at least 60%
- Filter 6 - be headed by a new principal

For the second and third cases, the criteria were the same except for filter 3, which were:

Second case:

- Filter 3 - be an 'excelling' school with average API between 401 and 560

Third case:

- Filter 3 - be an 'mostly effective' school with average API between 241 and 400

Using the above selection filters/criteria, excluding the final filter 'headed by a new principal', relatively short lists of schools in each category were generated. The shortlists were then forwarded to a colleague who is a principal for her to check whether or not the listed schools were headed by new principals. She was able to use her contacts and information to further shorten the lists of schools and provide the names of some principals. I contacted the schools on the lists and spoke to principals about the purposes, methods and expected outcomes of the study, the degree of participation needed by them and school members and the proposed start and duration of the study. While principals appeared to be genuinely interested in the study, some were either not new principals or were not keen on participating themselves. Eventually, after many phone calls, three new principals, meeting the outlined criteria of the study's cases, volunteered to participate. Once schools and principals were selected, the next consideration was gaining access, which the next section addresses.

NEGOTIATING ACCESS

Subsequent communication with principals was made via email. An information sheet (See Appendix A1) was made available to each principal and initial dates for entry into the school for face-to-face meetings were arranged.

Having obtained the 'go ahead' from the principals, permission was sought from the MOE of T&T in order to conduct research in the nation's schools. See Appendix A2 for the ministry's approval. This approval, together with the principals' agreements to participate, facilitated my entry into the schools. Once in, I was allowed the opportunity to invite teachers and students to participate in the study for whom the information/consent form was adapted.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The schools

All three schools – Memorial Park, Community Pride and Riverside – participating in the study are public, primary schools facing challenging circumstances. Memorial Park, the object of case 1, is 'under academic watch' or underperforming; Community Pride, the object of case 2, is 'excelling' or high performing and Riverside, the object of case 3, is 'mostly effective' or average in terms of academic performance. A more detailed description of the schools' contexts and cultures are presented in chapter 4. The purpose here is to present and classify the research participants of the study who were at these schools.

New Principals

As mentioned earlier, three new principals participated in this study (see table 3-2) and are the subjects of the cases under investigation.

Teachers

Forty-six teachers participated in this study. The views of teachers were sought because they are believed by the researcher to be the main knowledge holders of a school's culture. Being members of the same school, they would have learnt and shared ways of being and doing in conducting their duties and in response to daily tasks and challenges. Additionally they, being the embodiment of the existing culture, sit at the receiving end of the new principals' leadership and so can illuminate on the ways in which aspects of the school's culture relate to the leadership of the new principal. Participating teachers must have been under the leadership of the principal for at least one year. All consenting teachers, meeting this criterion, were selected to participate in the study.

With respect to interviewees, the perspectives of teachers representing different groups of staff were sought (table 3-2): (a) members of the SBM team and/or key staff, such as Vice Principals (VP), Official Senior Teachers (ST), Heads of Department (HOD) and teachers' union representatives (Union rep); (b) senior teachers, having more than 20 years' teaching experience; (c) junior staff having less than 10 years' teaching experience and; (d) teachers representing the three student levels of the school: infants, years 1 or 2; juniors (lower primary – Standards 1-3) and seniors (upper primary – Standards 4 and 5).

Pupils

The voices of students provide another set of perspectives that may be congruent with those of teachers or that may be divergent. Students' orientation to school, in terms of their attitudes and actions represent an important dimension of school culture that a new principal will encounter. This notion views student orientation as an important dimension in a holistic and dominant school culture as against the idea of a separate student culture. The upper primary students, who would have completed at least 5 years at their schools, were therefore encouraged to participate

in this study in order that they may provide their insights on school culture. As such, upper primary students who recently transferred in to the school or had highly irregular attendance did not qualify to participate. The 117 students who acquired parental consent were selected to complete questionnaires, while teachers selected from these to participate in the focus groups. (See table 3-5).

PARTICIPANTS	**SCHOOLS**			
	Case 1 Memorial Park R.C.	**Case 2 Community Pride Gov't**	**Case 3 Riverside Gov't**	**Total partici-pants**
Principal Name	Mr Quincy	Ms Figaro	Mr Remmy	Principals **3**
Teachers: Questionnaire respondents	10	25	11	Teachers **46**
Interviewees' duties (no. of years at current school)	6 interviewees: • Infant 1 (11) • Infants 2 (13) • Std 1; Union District Convener (12) • Std 3; Union Rep (6) • Std 4 (31) • Retired Principal; reading remediation	8 interviewees: • VP (14) • HOD; Infant 2 (28) • Std 1 (5) • Std 1 (3) • Std 2 (13) • ST; Std 4 (26) • Std 5; Union Rep (10) • Std 5 (1)	8 interviewees • ST; Std 1 (21) • Std 3 (19) • Std 2 (7) • Std 5 (22) • Std 5 (2) • HOD; Infant 2 (15) • Infant 2 (9) • Std 2; Union Rep (15)	
Students: Questionnaire respondents	12	86	19	Students **117**
Interviewees (no.; class)	4 Std 4s 5 Std 5s	8 Std 4s 6 Std 5s	4 Std 5s	
Total participants by school	**23**	**112**	**31**	**166**

Table 3-5 – Study participants' profiles

Upper primary students are those in Standards 4 and 5 (years 6 and 7), between the ages of 9-11+. These students were solicited for participation because, being in the 6th or 7th year of their primary schooling, they would have a longer experience of what it is like attending

that school than students in the lower levels or those recently transferred in. Additionally, they are likely to be more capable of articulating already formed perceptions of their school's culture.

The opportunity to work with principals and other school members, while exciting, raises a number of ethical concerns, which follow.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ethical principles guiding the process of this research were approved by the university's ethics co-ordinator and follow.

Informed consent – All participants were provided with an information /consent form which outlined the purposes, methods and duration of the study and the degree of participation required of them. The form provided opportunity to indicate 'yes' or 'no' to participation. For students' participation, parents' permission was sought.

Right to withdraw – Potential participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage, with the assurance that they would not be prejudiced or harmed in any way. This assurance was also given in relation to withdrawal of statements.

Privacy, Anonymity and Confidentiality – To ensure these, all participants and the school were given pseudonyms so that their contributions would not be traceable. Concerning focus groups, the researcher impressed upon participants the need for individual's privacy, anonymity and confidentiality and sought their agreement. Additionally, the permission of participants was sought concerning the passing on or use of data in transcript or published form to third parties. The researcher also promised to identify any third parties.

Data protection – Participants were assured of the secure storage of data and any copies of that data.

Honesty – the study was conducted based on an understanding between the researcher and participants that a relationship free from deception and dishonesty be developed and maintained and that the final report would reflect participants' perceptions as accurately as possible.

Sensitivity to the running of the school – This principle was adhered to on the part of the researcher by ensuring that the collection of data did not unduly interfere with the policies and operations of the schools. Permission from the appropriate gatekeepers was sought at all times for the carrying out of research activities.

Having gained access to schools and secured the consent of participants, field work began and is discussed next.

DATA-COLLECTION METHODS AND PROCESS

In this section, it is my intention to not only describe each selected data-collection method but also to justify their selection and reflect on their usefulness to this study. How data-collection progressed is also discussed. Generally, the methods outlined here were selected for their appropriateness in generating the thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) that would answer the guiding research questions as shown in table 3-6. The methods employed were: (a) critical incident technique, (b) closed and open-ended questioning, (c) semi-structured interviewing (individual and focus group), (d) natural observation and shadowing, and (e) document research. Each is discussed in turn below.

Research Questions	Methods
RQ 1 – What is the nature of the interplay between leadership of new principals and the cultures of school facing challenging circumstances?	
RQ 1a – school culture diagnoses	observation, questionnaires, interviews, document research
RQ 1b – new principals' practice & strategies	critical incident technique, interviews, shadowing, document research
RQ 1c – professional judgment	critical incident technique, interviews, shadowing
RQ 1d – school member responses to principals' leadership	critical incident technique, interviews, shadowing
RQ 2 – How does the nature of the interplay impact on new principals and the schools	
RQ 2 – impact	critical incident technique, interviews, questionnaires, document research

Table 3-6 – Research questions matched to methods

Critical Incident Technique

As mentioned earlier, the norms of an existing school culture are formed around critical incidents or CIs (Schein, 1990); hence the use of a critical incident technique (CIT). Incidents deemed critical in the interplay between principal leadership and school culture were significant for understanding the new principals' reshaping of an existing school culture towards school change and school members' responses to their leadership.

Description of CIT and critical incidents

The CIT was first formally developed as "an outgrowth of studies in the Aviation Psychology Program of the United States Army Air Forces in World War II" (Flanagan, 1954, p. 328). As described by Flanagan (1954), the CIT "is essentially a procedure for gathering important facts concerning behavior [sic] in defined situations". This data collection method involves either (a) having expert observers watch people perform

a given task or b) having individuals report from memory about extreme incidents that occurred in the past (Flanagan, 1954), which is similar to methods such as observation and interviewing, respectively. However, the CIT is unique in its focus on incidents, which Flanagan (1954) stated, must have "special significance" and meet "systematically defined criteria" (p. 327) that make them critical.

"To be critical", says Flanagan (1954, p. 327), "an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer [or person recalling the incident] and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects". Because critical incidents can be "any observable human activity" (p. 327), it is more likely that most identified critical incidents in educational research would be, according to Tripp (2012; 1993), "commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice" (p. 24-25) rather than major life-changing events. For the same reason, there can be no rule or principle that can countermand what participants deem as critical once the described incidents fit the research criteria of a given study.

Historical use of CIT and in the present study

In its formative years, the CIT was used as a scientific tool (Symon & Cassell, 1998); today, the CIT has become a widely used qualitative research method recognised for its effectiveness as an exploratory and investigative tool (Chell, 1998; Woolsey, 1986 cited in Butterfield et al., 2005). This reality points to the method's flexibility for use within either of the research paradigms, positivism or interpretivism, and across many different disciplines.

The CIT has also been used in educational research, though not as widely. Table 3-7 summarises CIT use in seven education studies, demonstrating its flexibility. Four of these investigated educational

leadership: Bolman and Deal (1991), Earley and Fletcher-Campbell (1989), Grady and Bryant (1991), and Kerry (2005). One looked at school culture: Angelides (2001) and the other two (Day & Gu, 2010; Tripp, 1993, 2012) looked at aspects of teachers' work. Though their purposes varied, all seven studies utilised reported CIs and operated within an interpretive paradigm, seeking not for objectivity as did Flanagan; but embracing, as does this study, the subjective and multiple realities of participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

CIT use in these seven educational studies informed my own use of the technique, helping me to understand that CIs are constructed and that it is not the events themselves that makes them critical, but the value attached to the events based on the individual's interpretations (Tripp, 2012, 1993) and, I dare add, the lessons learnt from the events or incidents that classify them as critical. Therefore, in this study, new principals were asked to describe CIs, rationalise their significance, evaluate their professional judgments as was done in Kerry's (2005) study – see table 3-7 – and, tell about the consequences of the CIs. Having participants interpret their own CIs, which I then reconstructed, fits nicely with a social constructionist perspective. Appendix B1 shows the CIT used for this study.

The new principals' critical incidents were audio recorded in twenty-minute interviews. Transcripts of the interviews and reconstructed CIs were provided to each principal for their assessment, correction of errors where they existed, or for them to provide additional information or even retract statements in a process known as "member checks" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314) or "member validation" (Bryman, n.d., p. 1). The three principal participants were satisfied that the transcripts and CI reconstructions remained true to their reports.

The use of the CIT was beneficial to both researcher and participants. To the researcher, an important benefit was the collection of actual specific incidents that represented the situations in which new principals in the T&T context found themselves – incidents identified as significant to the new principals' development and practice of leadership. These incidents were also particularly useful for developing an increased understanding of the professional judgment of the new principals – a benefit also noted by Tripp (2012) with respect to teachers. For participants, the CIT used also served as a useful reflective tool, allowing their self-discovery and identification of lessons and, the generation of new leadership strategy ideas. However, using a CIT meant having to initially clarify for participants the meaning of 'critical incident' and, thereafter, carefully moderating to ensure that the interviewees focussed on one incident at a time as participants, at times, went off topic. However, with one principal participant, the problem was getting him to be open with me. This new principal kept responding in hypothetical and theoretical terms. While not dismissing the responses offered, with much probing and assurances of anonymity and confidentiality, this participant eventually opened up.

Open-ended Questioning: Biographical/Contextual Data Form

The principal of each school was asked to complete a biographical/contextual data form (see Appendix B2). This form was designed to capture personal details, such as professional training and development attained by the principal and school profile details, including the numbers of teachers on staff and pupils on roll that would give an initial sense of the school's context before I used other methods of data collection. It deliberately used open-ended questions to enable free responses, for which predetermined categories may have been limiting (Cohen et al., 2007). However, principal participants appeared to be off-

Author(s) of Study	Purpose	Participants	Observed or reported incidents	Data collection method	How analysed
Angelides (2001)	(i) to disclose concealed and taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs which constitute manifestations of culture; (ii) to enable schools to develop procedures of self-review	Head teachers, students,	Observed & reported	Observation of common-place occurrences in classrooms that surprised the researcher; interviews	Use of an 'interpretive tool', a series of 4 questions (p. 28) adapted from the work of Smyth (1991) to probe each CI and the participants' interpretations
Bolman & Deal (1991)	(i) to operationalize a model of how leaders see their world; (ii) to answer two questions: (a) How many frames do leaders use? (b) Which ones?	Higher education and School Administrators	Reported	Written critical incidents that describe a situation that was "challenging and raises issues of how to provide effective leadership"	Coding of incidents using four frames of reference (structural, human resource, political and symbolic) to issues and leaders' actions
Day & Gu (2010)	(i) to explore teachers' perceptions of their sense of commitment and effectiveness and the various factors that they felt had shaped these over the course of their professional lives.	Teachers in identified professional life phases	Reported	In narrative interviews focussing on 'turning points' over professional and personal life histories; 'work line' charts	Identified significance and meaning of CIs and patterns of critical influences
Earley & Fletcher-Campbell (1989)	(i) to examine the main difficulties and constraints faced by secondary school middle managers and how they coped	Heads of departments / faculties	Reported & shadowed	Asking middle managers to identify & describe two/three CIs that caused them difficulty; to say what action was taken and the outcome	CIs were grouped according to types of difficulty and constraints teased out.
Grady & Bryant (1991)	(i) to identify what school board members perceived to be critical incidents in their work with superintendents	School board members	Reported	Telephone interviews; ten open-ended questions; describe the incident and its	Identified 75 CIs which they placed into 11 distinct categories
Kerry (2005)	(i) to throw light on the importance of the role of the deputy head in primary schools	new-in-post deputies	Reported	Asking deputies to identify and write about an critical incident from their careers as deputy; allocate the CI to one of 15 identified job roles; identify what they did well, did badly and lessons learned from the CI.	Classifying CIs; quantifying respondents' answers to the job-role question; collecting and ordering the factors of good and bad features of performance and lessons learned
Tripp (1993; 2012)	to develop an increasing understanding of and control over professional judgement and thereby over practice; and as a means of finding a focus for classroom action research	Teachers	Observed & reported	Observation of routine, common-place phenomenon; interviewed teachers about incidents reported in their incident files	Different kinds of analysis, e.g. procedural, descriptive, explanatory, social, etc.

Table 3-7 – CIT use in educational research

put by the design of the biographical/school context form, expressing that the form looked as though they would have to do copious amounts of writing to complete it. Consequently they procrastinated in completing and submitting these, waiting until the end of data-collection, only to later admit how easy the form was to complete.

Closed-ended Questioning: Questionnaires

For specifically investigating school culture and, to a lesser extent, the nature and impact of the leadership-school culture interplay, two questionnaires were developed: 1) the Teacher School Culture and Leadership Questionnaire and 2) the Student School Culture and Leadership Questionnaire. See Appendices B3 & B4, respectively.

Item construction and questionnaire design

To construct the items on the questionnaires, the following were used:

- the adapted conceptualisation of school culture (Table 2-1, p. 32 herein)
- two established school culture questionnaires
- data from the present study's interviews and observation

It is useful to elaborate on these. The adapted conceptualisation of school culture was used as the framework for the design of the questionnaires. The four dimensions: I) Professional Orientation, II) Organisational Structure, III) Quality of the Learning Experience and Environment and IV) Student Orientation formed the first four sections of both teacher and student questionnaires, with 'Student Orientation' placed as the first section on the student questionnaire whereas 'Professional Orientation' was the first section on the teachers' questionnaire for the simple reason of having participants initially deliberate on matters that were of most concern to them at school before progressing through the questionnaires. Section labels were excluded on participant copies of the questionnaires.

The indicators under each dimension on the adapted conceptualisation of school culture (Table 2-1, p. 32) were used to create questionnaire items under respective dimensions or, for items adapted from established school culture questionnaires, to determine their fit under a given dimension.

Additionally, to inform the creation of the questionnaires, some items were adapted from the SCEQ (School Cultural Elements Questionnaire) developed by Cavanagh, Dellar and Giddings, which was used with 422 teachers in six senior high schools and two primary schools in Western Australia (Cavanagh, 1997). A few others were adapted from the School Culture Scale (SCS) developed by Higgins-D'Alessandro and Sadh (1997) in the US. These questionnaires were selected following a review of six school culture questionnaires, which were among those explicitly developed for diagnosing the culture of schools and so excluded questionnaires designed to measure school climate, general organisational culture or teachers' well-being. They were also the only ones accessible for viewing and/or were reviewed by an author other than me. Therefore, those questionnaires which I was unable to locate either by searching libraries' databases or catalogues, or by contacting the instruments' developers could not be reviewed. The six inventories reviewed were: 1) The School Culture Assessment Questionnaire (Sashkin & Sashkin, 1990, cited by Stolp & Smith, 1995), 2) the School Culture Survey (Saphier & King, 1985; Edwards et al., 1996, cited by Maslowski, 2006), 3) The School Work Culture Profile (Snyder, 1988, cited by Johnson et al., 1993), 4) The School Cultural Elements Questionnaire (Cavanagh & Dellar, 1998, cited by Maslowski, 2006), 5) School Culture Scale (Dumay, 2009), and 6) the School Culture Scale (Higgins-D'Alessandro & Sadh, 1997).

The SCEQ was selected because its six dimensions and items most closely resemble sub-dimensions /indicators within my adapted school culture framework. See Table 3-7 to see how the dimensions compare.

One will notice that four of the dimensions of the SCEQ fit into just one dimension, Professional Orientation, of this study's school culture framework, indicating the developers' emphasis and conceptualisation of school culture as mainly a function of teachers' work. Therefore, the SCEQ informed a few items within the Professional Orientation dimension of the questionnaires used in this study.

Dimensions (and indicators) of this study's Adapted School Culture Framework	**Dimensions of the SCEQ (Cavanagh & Dellar, 1996)**
Professional Orientation: *(teacher efficacy;* *degree of collegiality and teamwork in instructional planning)*	teacher efficacy collegiality collaboration shared planning
Organisational Structure *(principal leadership approach & practices)*	transformational leadership
Quality of the Learning Experience & Environment *(opportunities for learning & assessment; focus on students)*	emphasis on learning
Student Orientation	-

Table 3-8 – Comparison of school culture dimensions

The SCS, however, was specifically used to develop items within the Student Orientation dimension of my adapted school culture framework because it was the only questionnaire reviewed that contained items pertaining to students' normative behaviours or dispositions and relationships at school.

Consequently, data obtained from my own field work informed the inclusion and construction of most of the items on the teacher and student questionnaires, which were administered in the last round of the first phase of data-collection, that is, after all other methods were employed. In fact, the more significant contribution went towards *The Interplay of*

principal leadership and School Culture, which was section five on the student questionnaire and section six on the teachers' questionnaire and *School Culture Strength and Homogeneity,* section five on the teachers' questionnaire (See Appendix A3 & A4). Items on school culture strength and homogeneity were not included on the student questionnaire for two reasons: 1) it was felt that their perception on this might be gleaned from the student focus group interviews and 2) the questionnaire was already lengthy as is for students. These additional sections were included because, again, to satisfy the need to know how all participants felt about these matters that formed this study's foci.

All items on both questionnaires were written simply and in a positive sense so as to reduce confusion over items and for easier analysis than if they were complicatedly written or in the negative. A simple three-point Likert scale also assisted towards this end. Respondents were asked to consider each item in relation to their school to which they would respond 'Yes' (if it was mostly true), 'Sometimes' (if it occurred sometimes) or 'No' (if it was mostly false). It was felt that a five- or six-point scale as seen on the established questionnaires reviewed earlier was not necessary for my purposes, nor was the inclusion of an option for uncertainty or indecision as respondents can easily skip an item if they were unable to respond to it.

The Teacher School Culture and Principal Leadership Questionnaire consisted of 56 items arranged in six sections: 1) Professional Orientation, 2) Organisational Structure, 3) Quality of the Learning Experience and Environment, 4) Student Orientation, 5) School Culture Strength and Homogeneity and 6) Interplay of Principal Leadership and School Culture. It was administered to a total of 46 out of 53 teachers from the three case study schools – an 87% response rate.

The Student School Culture and Principal Leadership Questionnaire consisted of 49 items arranged in the same sections as the teacher questionnaire, excluding the School Culture Strength and Homogeneity section and was administered to a total of 117 out of 264 upper primary students from the three participating schools – a 44% response rate. Items on both student and teacher questionnaires were comparative allowing for easy comparison between the two groups' perspectives.

Benefits of questionnaire use to this study

Complementary use of questionnaires was made in this qualitative study, as they have the advantage of being deliberately focused and relatively easy to analyse (Cohen et al., 2007). Questionnaires were also used for the expressed purpose of obtaining a more representative picture of the study's foci from as many teachers and upper primary student participants as will participate, since information can be obtained from more people than interviews in a short period of time (Lewin, 2005). I also found that participants who were uncomfortable with interviewing appreciated participating via questionnaire. This method also helped to increase the trustworthiness of my findings on school culture in particular; although, I realise that the relatively small number of participants in this study does not allow for generalisability of the findings or statistical analyses. The use of questionnaires was also important because the construct, school culture, is so multifaceted that I decided that a questionnaire on school culture would cover more scope than say interviews and observation, with limitations of course, such as its unsuitability for identifying or making sense of artefacts and underlying belief systems.

Interviewing: one-to-one

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three new principals to allow them opportunity to share their perceptions about the

existing cultures of the schools and to provide broader descriptions of their interactions with their inherited cultures that the CIT may not have allowed and to embellish their thoughts on those more specific encounters (see Appendix B5 for schedule). Teachers, too, were interviewed individually using semi-structured schedules on school culture and the interplay between their new principal's leadership and school culture (see Appendix B6 for interview schedule).

Predominantly, a projective approach (Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000) to addressing these topics was used, which asked each respondent to talk about how school members, as a school, functioned and worked with their new principals. The strength of this approach probes for the frame of reference school members generally used rather than prompting teachers to relay their own espoused values and beliefs about working in schools or notions of socially desirable norms. Also used was a type of 'progressive focussing' (Parlett & Hamilton, 1976), which entailed my using data gathered from previous interviews to inform what I would ask or focus on in subsequent interviews.

Twenty-three teachers were interviewed in total: six from Memorial Park, eight from Community Pride and eight from Riverside. The interviews, averaging 50 minutes in duration, were conducted at convenient times for each participant and audio recorded with accompanying field notes.

The use of semi-structured interview schedules offered the advantage of increased freedom and comprehensiveness of interviewee responses (Ribbins, 2007). This required of me, however, a good knowledge of the questions on my interview schedule (without having to look at them too often) so that the order in which participants addressed these was not as critical as them touching on all of the issues and any new ones they raised. Although time consuming, the one-to-one interview

facilitated the rephrasing of questions where needed and probing for clarity or additional information from interviewees. An example is my asking teachers, "What is the prevailing belief system that operates in this school?" – a question not on the interview schedule but one I felt needed to be asked because I was not getting at the underlying assumptions or core beliefs that informed the way school members functioned at the school without this question. Individual beliefs were readily forthcoming, particularly if they differed from the prevailing beliefs but were not adequate for my research purposes. The new question encouraged interviewees to project their feelings, and possibly behaviours, to other school members in their responses on non-discussables (Barth, 2001), reporting how the group might behave, think or feel. Moreover, in face-to-face interviews as used in this study, I had access to non-verbal cues, which supplemented the richness of the data being generated.

Interviewing: focus groups

In each school, focus group interviews were conducted with students to ease the likely anxiety of students if interviewed individually. Discussions focused on school culture, their new principal's characteristics and leadership as well as on observed school changes. Each focus group session, averaging 40 minutes, was digitally recorded. The student interview schedule is included as Appendix B7. Although focus groups have a tendency to generate 'group think' – agreement on the thoughts of the most dominant or vocal participant of the group – and potential to challenge the researcher's ability to manage them, my own prior experience in preparing for and moderating such interviews, while limited, assisted in the generation of quality data. Focus group interviews offered a number of advantages over the one-to-one interview that were particularly welcoming for this research project. These, as noted by Wilkinson (2004), deserve mention.

The first advantage was that the focus group approach to interviewing provided a way of collecting data relatively quickly from more research participants. Therefore, instead of conducting say four individual interviews, the perceptions of the four participants were instead gleaned in a shorter time in a focus group, allowing time for working with another focus group of an additional four participants. My intention was to interview two groups of four students in each of the smaller schools – Memorial Park and Riverside – and four groups of four students at Community Pride. However, one additional student was included in one of the two groups at Memorial Park, making it nine student interviewees at that school; one group of four standard 5 students were interviewed at Riverside only because the Standard 4s were unavailable and; at Community Pride, two group interviews of four students and one with six students were conducted. A total number of six focus group interviews were done with a total of 27 student interviewees.

Another advantage emerged from the first: the 'synergistic effect' (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990 in Wilkinson, 2004). The most effective focus groups move beyond each participant responding in turn to all participants contributing to a free flowing discussion on topics related to the research focus. Such discussions can, as alluded to before, create a "…context of agreement and support…" in which a participant may "…enthusiastically extend, elaborate, or embroider an initially sketchy account…" (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 180). With the student participants, this synergy added to the richness of the data being generated and was attributable to the fact that these students knew each other quite well. They also had prior opportunities to see me around the school and interact with me before the interviews; thus power dynamics between researcher and participants were reduced (Finch, 1984, cited by Wilkinson, 2004). Even when the students disagreed, this facilitated the development of

responses as participants tried to justify or even defend a position that had been challenged by another member of the group. This synergy allowed for a satisfying exploration of even some of the 'non-discussables' (Barth, 2001, p. 9). Student participants were quite open in discussing sensitive issues, on which teachers were generally silent or vague, such as the nature of teacher-student relationships and teaching and learning processes. These points do, too, of course, alert one to the need for effective moderating of focus groups.

A third benefit, 'structured eavesdropping' (Powney, 1988, cited by Wilkinson, 2004), allowed the researcher to listen in on the way participants habitually talk with one another or about other groups of the school. Students' expressions were particularly useful for the researcher's sense making of the shared meanings held by certain groups, illuminating aspects of the school's existing culture.

Despite these benefits, there was one drawback with respect to students' reflection on the past. For probes that sought details on class work and lunch-time activities (See question 2, Appendix B7), students found it somewhat difficult to reflect on what it was like when they were juniors, restricting their responses to their present class-level experiences. However they were able to express views on the situations in other classrooms.

Natural Observation and Shadowing

On average, a total of 85 hours was spent naturally observing in each participating school over four weeks (see table 3-9). School settings, such as principals' offices, teachers' staff rooms, schools' special rooms (e.g. Library, Computer room), classrooms, students' play areas and cafeterias were observed as well as the school's immediate community. Artefacts, such as trophies and achievement walls were also observed.

The researcher also paid keen attention to school members' routines, such as: the manner in which visitors were received, assemblies, staff meetings, test preparation and administration and organisation of events for Carnival and Christmas. The purpose of these general observations were to enhance my understanding of the existing realities at each school, with the intention of capturing data that would confirm or disavow that obtained from other sources of data such as interviews and questionnaires. Initially, almost everything was recorded because I could not be sure of what would be useful. As time passed, relevant observations were identified.

The researcher was involved in another more focused type of observation – shadowing – where each principal, having agreed, was tracked (Jones & Somekh, 2005) or shadowed. The purpose was to capture real-time data of the interplay between principal leadership and school culture. The times, activities for shadowing and the conditions of my feeding back any information to the principals also formed part of the initial and/or subsequent agreements with the principals. Yet, the new principal participants were generally uncomfortable with being shadowed. Even though they had agreed to be observed, they ultimately determined to which activities I was privy, managing the effect my presence would have on them, 'the observed'. Therefore, if the principal deemed a situation to be highly sensitive for those involved and wished to preserve their confidentiality and privacy, I was asked to absent myself for the duration of that activity. Such activities included conferences with parents and/or teachers, phone conversations and some staff meetings; following which, principals would provide for my information some sense of the nature of the activity, the parties involved and their actions. Consequently, most shadowing involved observing new principal participants take assembly and conduct administrative duties, with fewer

opportunities to observe them do class visits, walk-abouts, taking or teaching unsupervised classes and chairing staff meetings. In terms of usefulness, shadowing these principals mainly provided insight on the busy-ness of the job and how these principals allocated their time, as was observed by Earley (2012; Earley & Bubb, 2013); but, only provided glimpses of the nature of the relationships between new principals and school members.

The risk run by this method of observation, though, is that of school members perceiving the researcher as the principal's associate, possibly causing them to be extremely selective of information provided to the researcher. This is dependent, though, on the relationship the principal has with individual school members; however, where this may have existed was reconciled by the relationship with which the latter developed with the researcher.

Observations, both general and shadow, were unstructured, but guided by themes selected from the literature, such as the power of school culture in action as was observed by Deal & Peterson (1998) and Thomson et al (2009) and the new principals' exercise of influence (See Appendix B8 – Shadow Observation Themes). Unstructured observations enabled the researcher's identification of features of on-going interactions and behaviours including non-verbal ones, which were critical for not only understanding the interaction between the new principal and the existing school culture but for also making sense of the shared meanings of that culture, which may govern behaviour. They are particularly useful in generating data not acquired by other methods; but, which are quite easy to merge with that of other methods.

While the researcher's presence did have some kind of impact on those observed – the 'observer effect' (Wellington, 2000, p. 45), this was reduced over time as participants became more comfortable around me.

Observations were recorded in the researcher's diaries in a manner that was discreet as possible, usually at convenient intervals outside of the interactions themselves and in the form of 'catch phrases' which were further developed at more convenient times. The diaries, small notebooks for each participating school, were used for making regular entries that included dates and times of research activities, such as interviews with principals. Also recorded were impressions from interviews; descriptions of observations made; post observation reflections (Newby, 2010) and personal and participant reflections on methods used - all of which generated ideas and plans for proceeding with different stages of the research (Altrichter & Holly, 2005), as did tentative interpretations of data which were also included and which encouraged early analysis of the mass of data that eventually accumulated by the end of the data-collection process.

Document research

Documents serve as records of the past (Fitzgerald, 2007). For this study, student admissions registers, national test data records for 2012-2014, development plans, school brochures and minutes of staff meetings aided the building of the case of schools' contexts and the cross-checking of data retrieved from other sources and methods on the interplay of school leadership and school culture. National test data were examined for evidence of change in students' academic performance.

Documents may even provide data not easily accessible or readily available from using other methods (Fitzgerald, 2007); however, accessibility of documents in some instances at participating schools posed a challenge. For those documents obtained, apart from studying their contents, say that of a school's development plan, the researcher also sought to get answers to when, how and by whom the documents were produced and how the production was socially organised as advised by

Prior (2004) in consideration of the authenticity, accuracy, intended meaning and relevance to the school's present context and the researcher's purposes (Scott, 1990, cited by Fitzgerald, 2007). It was also helpful to know how such documents were used by school members. The answers to these questions were illuminative of aspects of schools' existing culture and the current practices of school members.

The Data-collection Process

Data collection occurred in two phases. The first was the longer of the two, as the second phase was solely dedicated to the collection of National Test data and occurred two years after the start of the first phase.

The first phase of data collection occurred over four months across two school terms and consisted of four rounds of school visits as shown in Table 3-9. A round involved the researcher spending a full school week in each of the three schools in turn and was consequently three weeks long. Therefore, during this phase, each school was visited a total of four non-consecutive school weeks across the four months. Using this approach acknowledges that each term in an academic year differs from another with regards to its major activities and consequently in the functions of school members. Therefore, visits to each school in a given term allowed for a more even-handed assessment of how each school functioned.

The purpose of these visits was to gather data both retrospectively over the schools' histories and the new principals' tenures, and in snap shots of real time during the week-long visits. Table 3-9 shows the duration of each round and its foci. The data-collection activities undertaken at each school during each school week of each round in this phase are also presented in the table. One will observe that a considerable amount of time was planned to be spent with the subjects of

the investigation, each new principal, in the form of nine interviews, beginning and ending each week for them to share critical incidents, and nine shadow observation sessions. Rounds were intentionally focused to provide sufficient structure to data-collection activities for the researcher. Round four mainly served for the confirmation of data collected during the preceding rounds; thus, questionnaires were administered in this round.

Rounds / School week	**Round 1** (Jan 7th – Jan 25th) **Foci: Principal attributes; School culture**	**Round 2** (Feb 4th – Feb 22nd) **Foci: school culture; leadership-culture interplay**	**Round 3** (Mar 4th – Mar 22nd) **Focus: leadership-culture interplay**	**Round 4** (Apr 1st – Apr 19th) **Focus: Data Confirmation**
Day 1	principal interview 1: values & culture awareness; distribution of critical incident technique guidelines; observation	shadow observation 1; one-to-one interviews with teachers	principal interview 5: critical incident; one-to-one interviews with teachers	principal interview 8: critical incident; shadow observation 8
Day 2	document research; observation	principal interview 3: critical incident; student focus group interview (from Standard 4 classes)	shadow observation 4; one-to-one interviews with teachers	shadow observation 9
Day 3	document research; observation	shadow observation 2; student focus group interview (from Standard 5 classes)	principal interview 6; shadow observation 5	observation; distribution & collection of school culture/leadership questionnaires
Day 4	document research; (ostensible) shadow observation	observation; one-to-one interviews with teachers	shadow observation 6; one-to-one interviews with teachers	observation
Day 5	principal interview 2: critical incident;	principal interview 4: critical incident; shadow observation 3	principal interview 7: critical incident; shadow observation 7	principal interview 9

Table 3-9 – Data-collection plan

Table 3-9 also served as a schedule for each participating new principal as copies of this plan was made available to them with the exact dates of week-long visits to each of their schools. This gave them an idea of when I would be at their schools, what I would be doing there and with whom I would be meeting on any given day in a given week. Understandably, adjustments were made to the data-collection plan in response to situations in the field and there was need to manage my insider-outsider role in the process of data collection.

Adjustments

One can appreciate that my data-collection plan, being used as a guide, was subjected to adjustments due to participant availability and a number of contextual circumstances. Therefore, upon entering the school, because documents were not immediately accessible, instead of interviewing teachers in the second round, which was a month away from start-up as scheduled on the research plan, I decided to begin interviewing teachers from as early as the second day of the first round, having arranged dates and times with each from the first day. Interviews with teachers and students, generally, went as planned. Where, for instance, interviews needed to be rescheduled, these were agreed upon, and sometimes occurred during the lunch break. This earlier start worked well, as the high momentum and interest observed at the start began to wane nearer the end of data-collection as activities such as end-of-term tests and school sports became the schools' foci.

A not so expected adjustment was balancing my emotions and dispositions while in the field. Although data-collection was generally enjoyable, there were times that required my balancing anger/disappointment with understanding the nature of the principalship, in recognition of the capacity within which I was at the schools. I needed

to remind myself, therefore, that my purpose at the school was not first priority for my participants, especially the new principals. So, at times school business overrode commitments made to me. Principal participants sometimes forgot that I was to meet with them or left me waiting for long periods of time. One principal even asked on three occasions that I return another day. Put in such situations, I learnt to adjust my schedule to perform some other activity, such as observation or document research or prepare for the unexpected by walking with my notebook computer and headphones in order to transcribe recorded interviews so as to make use of the free time.

Reflexivity: managing the insider-outsider role

As a student researcher, I found myself having to manoeuvre between being an insider and an outsider to each school. Raised eyebrows of persons when they heard that not only was I pursuing doctoral studies, but that I was doing so fulltime at a British university was the first indication that I was an outsider. The typical primary school teacher in T&T does not pursue doctoral studies, but there I was introducing myself as a co-practitioner – a primary school teacher. However, I felt that particularly the teachers of the upper primary classes felt some connection to me as I too in my career was mainly an upper primary school teacher. I say manoeuvring because, noting the diversity among staffs in terms of their ages, teaching experience, level of qualification, or experience in SBM, I appropriated my own attributes and experiences. In other words, depending on the participant, I would reveal some part of who I am. This helped to build trust and a healthy rapport between participants and me – the aims being for them to perceive me more of an insider rather than completely an outsider and to generate data for my study.

Interestingly at one school, the situation was the opposite. At this school, it turned out that I was acquainted with almost every member of staff. The members of the teaching staff, I knew either from professional training and development or from participating in some district-level activity. Here, the challenge was to present myself more as an outsider – the researcher - than as an insider. Therefore, after pleasantries of a more personal nature, for example asking about each other's children, were exchanged, I then had to refocus discussions to the purpose at hand – my study. These interviewees, in my opinion, appeared to be quite guarded initially in what they shared with me. As each interview progressed, participants would at some point attempt to remind me of my assurances of confidentiality and anonymity.

With the three new principals, managing the insider-outsider role was also critical. Sometimes they would talk as if I was not only an outsider to their school but to the whole T&T school system by spelling out the meaning of acronyms, such as SEA, or going into great length to describe some aspect of teachers' work. Comments like: "I'll tell you this"; "let me share this with you" (both probably suggesting a cognitive selection of information to share or not share); or prefacing a response with "this is confidential, right?" demonstrate how principals began to view me more of an insider (a colleague in education) than outsider as trust began to build. Eventually, because I spent a considerable amount of time with principals, interactions seemed to reflect this change and so they would freely call names, for instance, relying on the ethical assurances I had given.

A challenge regarding the insider-outsider role was taming the 'teacher' in me. As a teacher leader, I sometimes caught myself offering suggestions, sometimes without being asked, towards resolving issues at

the schools or correcting students' behaviour. However, I was careful to maintain the researcher-participant relationship by reminding myself of the purpose for my being at the schools. I did at times act as a participant observer assisting with student National Test registration at one school and even supervising a class at another school. At the third school, I got involved in preparing snack boxes for sale at a school event. These opportunities made for even closer relationships with staff and students and allowed access to the ways of thinking and being at each school.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the data collected involved at least three stages, which were iterative. The first stage involved both deductive and inductive coding (Altrichter, Posch & Somekh, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994) of the raw data retrieved from critical incidents, interviews, observation and documents. The data were sorted into categories and assigned codes derived from the literature relevant to the purposes and research questions of this study. Additional codes emerged from the data. In a manner similar to the long-table approach, but using a computer and Microsoft Word application software, quotes were cut and pasted into relevant categories, taking care to identify the sources of the data (Kreuger, 1994). Codes were then reduced into themes. This iterative first stage involved the defining and redefining of codes, determining if data previously assigned to codes really fit as evidence within the named categories and the grouping and regrouping of codes into themes and subthemes. A constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used, for which each piece of data uncovered was compared to data already coded to create substantive categories. In this way, data were

either subsumed under existing categories or coded to new categories until data saturation was achieved, that is until no new insights were had from additional data (Newby, 2010). Following which, the data from the various sources and methods were triangulated.

The second stage involved moving to the conceptual and critical levels of analysis for which the coded data were entered into thematic matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Five thematic matrices spread across an average of 105 A3-sized sheets were generated for each case, which provided the information for the four findings chapters (four to seven) herein. The matrices were useful for interpreting the data, which were put in MS word comment boxes on each page. See Appendix C1 for a sample of the matrices. The within-case interpretations were then used to generate cross-case matrices, which juxtaposed the information for each case under the main themes. This stage also involved searching for patterns and relationships and making links to theory and the literature. The third stage of analysis occurred during the writing up of the findings, where revisions and decisions about the presentation of the findings were made.

As this is a qualitative study involving small samples, questionnaires were not analysed for statistical significance. Questionnaire data were entered onto excel spreadsheets – one for teacher responses and another for student responses for each school (see Appendix C2). After which, the total number of each type of response (Yes, Sometimes, No/No response) for each questionnaire item was counted in order to determine the proportion of the total number of respondents responding in each way. Interpretations were then made based on these. Findings from the questionnaires were then triangulated with the more qualitative-type data. The overall analytic process involved within-case analysis and cross-case analysis (Schwandt, 2001; Yin, 2014).

OVERVIEW

This chapter has discussed in detail the case study approach used for this study. Considerable attention was also paid to discussing the study's data-collection process and methods, making mention of their fit for purpose. The chapter also explained the selection of cases and participants, ethical considerations made and data analysis processes. Next, the demographic context and culture of each of the three participating schools are discussed before the findings of case interactions are presented.

4. INTRODUCTIONS AND HOUSEKEEPING

This chapter introduces the three participating schools of this multiple-case study, focusing on the schools' community, compositional and socio-economic contexts in order to highlight the degree of challenges that these schools faced. Findings show that all three faced similar challenges that impacted school life. To reiterate, according to the T&T National Test performance descriptors, Memorial Park Boys' RC, is the school 'under academic watch'; Community Pride Girls' Government, is the 'excelling' school; and Riverside Government, is the 'mostly effective school'. This chapter also, in keeping with an explanatory-type case study design (Yin, 2014), provides the structure, foci and general impressions of the findings of the case study chapters which are dedicated to the interactions between the leadership of the three new principals and their inherited school cultures. This, I have termed 'housekeeping'. To reiterate, chapter five discusses case 1 – the interaction between Mr Quincy and Memorial Park's struggling culture; chapter six is dedicated to the interaction between Ms Figaro and Community Pride's moving culture, which is case 2; and case 3, the interplay between Mr Remmy and Riverside's strolling culture is discussed in chapter seven.

THREE SCHOOLS FACING CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES

As schools serving disadvantaged communities, Memorial Park, Community Pride and Riverside, experience their share of socially-debilitating issues as a consequence of the dysfunctional nature of some familial relations, poverty and crime existing in their immediate communities – a finding consistent with others reported in the literature

(De Lisle, 2011; Muijs et al., 2004). However, a notable difference associated to their effectiveness states is public image. While Community Pride is held in high esteem in its community and recognised nationally, Memorial Park and Riverside have not-so-positive public images; although, Memorial Park once held a position of great esteem and Riverside enjoys occasional positive accolades. Yet, all three schools appear to have no problems retaining staff despite the challenges faced - a finding that differs from that of West et al. (2005) in the UK context, for instance, and which makes discussion of school culture homogeneity and strength plausible. In the following sub-sections, the unique contexts of each school are discussed in more depth.

Memorial Park: school contexts

Memorial Park Boys' RC is a small urban primary school 'under academic watch' with a population of 227 students and a fairly stable staff of 11 teachers. At 68 years old, the school is housed in a structure built in the late 1940s and, though well-painted, the buildings bear structural weaknesses. According to interviewees, Memorial Park was once the most sought-after school in its education district until it tried to address oversubscription.

> This school had over a thousand children. [It] was the premier boys' school in [education district]. Everybody wanted to send their children here. … A lot of prominent men in society went here. What happened to this school to cause it to drop is that it was so big that it went into a shift system [so] the more influential parents started to take their children out and sending them to other schools and since then it has not been able to raise itself back up because we take the dregs (Naomi, key staff).

At the time of data-collection, Memorial Park's performances on National Tests in Mathematics and Language Arts at both the standard 1 (year 2) and standard 3 (year 4) levels were below the national mean, which is set at 50%, and the district means. See table 4-1.

Subjects / Class Levels	National Mean %	District Mean %	School Mean %
Mathematics Std. 1	50.0	46.0	25.4
Language Arts Std. 1	50.0	47.0	23.5
Mathematics Std. 3	50.0	48.0	34.4
Language Arts Std. 3	50.0	48.0	24.7

Table 4-1 – National Test scores (2012): Memorial Park

The school currently serves the students of its immediate socio-economically disadvantaged urban community – a community in which there is a well-known drug den, youth crimes and the regular destitute or addict wandering the streets. This fact is not lost on the school, which must deal with the social effects, which sometimes breach their security, putting school members in danger. Teachers spoke of a number of social ills, which infiltrate the lives of students, over-exposing them to substance abuse, neglect and/or trauma.

> [A student] saw his uncle get shot in front of him and right now he is at a loss. We have the social worker trying to talk to him… There is a boy in standard four right now, the day he was born, the mother came out of the hospital and drop him by his father. This boy had no love from his mother. These are some of the issues that we are dealing with. These children could tell you who are the drug lords. Some of them smoking cigarettes, marijuana... They come from environments where they are accustomed to seeing marijuana, guns, prostitution. They see it every day (David, key staff).

Apart from the social issues are the economic challenges. Although 33% and 66% of the student population receive breakfast and lunch, respectively, as free school meals, many more students at Memorial Park are needy as indicated by the parental occupation index. According to the admissions register dating back to 1993, most parents (~80%) at the school are skilled workers, such as seamstresses and construction

workers, who receive minimum wage. Additionally, teachers describe extreme living conditions.

> ... there was a boy who was a street child – living on the streets. We had another one [whose] mother and father lives in a 9 [feet] by 9 [feet] room with ten or eleven children - each one about a year apart [from the next]. There was no correct date of birth for any of them (Meeta, teacher).

Due to students' low economic situations their basic needs, such as food and stationery, may be unfulfilled and their school attendance may be affected.

> [Some] families are able to provide for their sons – food, expenses; you name it, they have it. The others you could tell are having a hard time at home. You can tell from the way they dress to come to school, the way they look, some of the books they use – you can see the books are second-hand [re-used]... Sometimes you ask them for simple things and they don't have... [Most] of [the standard three] boys don't come to school and when they [do], they have eaten nothing for the morning, not even a cup of tea (David, key staff).

Despite these challenges, the school boasts of many sporting achievements at district and national levels.

> We are renowned for our sports performance because the boys tend to be not so much academic but very good at their sports. So we have many, many trophies, many championships under our belts… (Nicole, teacher).

Community Pride: school contexts

Community Pride is an 'excelling', sub-urban girls' government primary school located in a developing borough in Trinidad, almost hidden amongst residential properties and tuck shops in a quiet neighbourhood. Being over 150 years old, Community Pride was one of the first to be built in the district and has on roll 633 students, making it a large primary school in the T&T context. Despite the school's attempts to manage enrolment capacity, its academic reputation built over the years has made it the first choice of many potential parents, resulting rather in oversubscription.

At the time of the research, Community Pride's National Test performance data were higher than the district and national means in Mathematics and Language Arts at both the standard 1 (year 2) and standard 3 (year 4) levels (see Table 4-2). Although the school excels when involved in sports, it is most renowned for its academic achievements at the Secondary Entrance Examination (SEA). Every year at least one of its students is featured in the top one hundred nationally for SEA performance.

Subjects / Class Levels	National Mean %	District Mean %	School Mean %
Mathematics Std. 1	50.0	50.0	55.6
Language Arts Std. 1	50.0	50.0	57.8
Mathematics Std. 3	50.0	51.0	64.4
Language Arts Std. 3	50.0	51.0	65.3

Table 4-2 – National Test scores (2012): Community Pride

Held in high esteem by community members, many generations of families have attended Community Pride and, according to interviewees, this causes some parents to claim a right to have their daughters attend the school. The school secures strong support in the form of a vibrant PTA and active school board, who procure funds for the school and assist with school projects.

Teaching staff presently number 30, not counting the principal and vice principal. Ninety percent of the staff is trained and most have been at the school for at least ten years.

As with Memorial Park, many more students at Community Pride are needy than do the FSM allocations suggest as indicated by parental occupation and teachers' comments. Just over 50% of the student population receive free lunch, while approximately 33% receive free breakfast. However, according to the school's admissions register dating

back to 1986, 60% of parents are skilled workers, who earn minimum wage; 10% are service workers; 20% are housewives and the remainder are either self-employed or unemployed. Teachers' comments confirm the degree of economic deprivation at the school but also point to many parents' value for the education of their children.

> The catchment area … is low income. … and a lot of the children come from those areas. … [it] is not as affluent in terms of dollars and cents but in terms of determination and expectations for the child it is rich (Helen, key staff).

Beside economic challenges, social challenges were also pervasive. A greater proportion of students in recent years come from single-parent and/or dysfunctional homes or are the offspring of teenage mothers, which has impacted negatively on students' dispositions.

> … we have been noticing that a lot of the parents are getting younger and younger so that the moral values that they are passing on are really not what they should be in many cases. … more and more [students] are coming from single-parent homes or dysfunctional families. So the father might be there but there is so much quarrelling and cussing going on… Almost half of our population is coming from those kinds of families. It affects the children's behaviour, how they relate to other children and we are getting more and more girls becoming aggressive (Sheila, key staff).

This demographic change has also contributed to an increase in other social issues, such as students being physically and/or sexually abused due to low parental supervision and care.

> … we have just children crying out for attention because sometimes they are seeing their parents for such limited time because they are often not available … Sometimes even hygiene – parents don't [ensure] ... [teachers] may tell [students] ok when you go home I want you to learn this or study this but when they go home there is no parental supervision. … [W]e have a few cases of sexual abuse maybe by neighbours or people in the same house or environment because the mother or the father who is the bread winner or primary care giver is not home… (Beverly, key staff).

Riverside: school contexts

Riverside Government is a small sub-urban primary school with a mixed student population of 226 and a stable staff of 11 teachers.

Teachers' years in service range between 7 and 23 years. They are all trained, possessing the required Teachers' Diploma and are professionally qualified at the bachelors level, with one teacher having an additional degree at the masters' level. Established in 1961, the school is housed in its original buildings, which have undergone few enhancements throughout the years.

Described as a community school, most students come from the immediate surrounding areas; although Riverside may not have been their parents' first choice for them.

> ... there are some members of the community that wouldn't send their children here ... I guess because when you look at [our] results and you look at the [secondary] schools that children pass for the [upper class parents] would have to send their children to other schools rather than send them here. … then, too, a lot of parents try other schools and by the time they don't get through, then they come here (Catherine, key staff).

It is for this reason that Riverside has a relatively long student registration period, even taking in new entrants after the start of a new academic year and admitting a high number of transfers.

Riverside has been recognised both positively and negatively. On the positive side, it is known to have had national achievements in sports and calypso competitions, although such success has eluded the school since the leaving of teachers and students, due to retirement and graduation, who would have been instrumental in securing these successes. Moreover are the accolades for the small proportion of academically excelling students, who go on to attend some of the nation's prestigious secondary schools.

> ... we have children who do very well also because we have our [names a string of prestigious secondary schools that students have passed for in years gone by] but the majority of them are not at that level (Keith, key staff).

These achievements and the school's performance at the National Test Level (see table 4-3) have caused the school to maintain an API at the lower end of the 'mostly effective' school performance category.

Subjects / Class Levels	National Mean %	District Mean %	School Mean %
Mathematics Std. 1	50.0	46.0	30.49
Language Arts Std. 1	50.0	47.0	29.72
Mathematics Std. 3	50.0	48.0	35.90
Language Arts Std. 3	50.0	48.0	29.84

Table 4-3 – National Test scores (2012): Riverside

On the other hand, according to interviewees, are the outcomes of the high number of underperforming students who become involved in risk behaviours, such as youth and drug-related crimes and teenage pregnancy. Teachers lament on some of these students' imprisonment and/or shooting deaths.

> We have had some who have gone on and have chosen wrong paths and have gotten into the wrong sphere and have died by guns; have entered the drug trade and have been killed … (Mala, teacher).

According to the school's admission register, dating back to 1993, most parents are either housewives, self-employed or menial wage earners, such as labourers or security guards. Additionally, many more students are economically disadvantaged than the FSM allocation to the school may suggest as the following comment indicates:

> … when they come, they are hungry. Yes we get breakfast in school but each class is allotted a certain number. Even when I give and there may be extra, I still have 10 asking for the 1 or 2 (Catherine, key staff).

Socially, there are cases of teenage pregnancies, sexual and physical abuse and trauma, such as having family members being gunned down, as well as increasing cases of unattended children which all pose a social challenge to the school.

> We have a lot of absentee parents in terms of we have a lot of what we call 'latch key' children who go home to empty homes. Parents coming home late, they have no time and they leave very early in the mornings so these children are really unsupervised very often (Sandra, key staff).

> [some boys] are from very violent, very abusive homes; don't care-ish. Many of them don't have father figures … (Lydia, key staff).

The school is also challenged by the presence of special-needs students for which it is ill-prepared to cater. As a consequence of these socio-economic challenges staff has identified a worsening literacy problem and deteriorating conduct among students with each new academic year.

> Since I came here, every class I have gotten, I always have more children struggling with reading than those who can handle it (Lynette, teacher).

> I find year after year it's getting worse and worse in the attitude department [with the students] (Sandra, key staff).

The contexts of the three participating schools are summarised in table 4-4. Their contextual factors have been found to contribute to their cultures, which are discussed respectively in chapters five, six and seven.

	Memorial Park	**Community Pride**	**Riverside**
SCHOOL CONTEXT			
Location	Urban	Sub-urban	Sub-urban
Student population	227, boys	633, girls	226, boys & girls
No. of teachers	11	31	11
API	227 - academic watch	404 – excelling	241 – mostly effective
Degree of challenge	> 66% FSM; low waged parents; social deprivation	> 66% FSM; low waged parents; social deprivation	> 66% FSM; low waged parents; social deprivation

Table 4-4 – Summary of cases

HOUSEKEEPING: LEADERSHIP-SCHOOL CULTURE INTERPLAY

The three cases of this study are distinctive with respect to the new principals' dominant approaches to leadership and school members' most

common responses to their new principal's leadership, indicating the uniqueness of the leadership-school culture interplay. However, there were similarities with respect to the purposes of school members' responses to new principals' leadership and the types of lessons learnt by the new principal participants, which point to the potential of school culture through the actions of school members to moderate the leadership of new principals. Also, while the findings of the case interactions demonstrate unique manifestations of the leadership-school culture interplay, across them two phases of interaction were interpreted: 1) Inheriting, and 2) Building and shaping.

1) Inheriting

'Inheriting' describes new principals' experiences of taking over schools from their predecessors, encountering and making sense of the cultures of those schools and trying to transition school members to their leadership.

2) Building and Shaping

'Building' refers to new principals' reculturing practices, which encouraged the creation or re-introduction of structural and cultural elements at the school; while, 'shaping' speaks to their modification and enhancement of existing school features. The qualified responses of school members to these reculturing practices are captured in this phase as well.

My use of the term 'phase' as opposed to 'stage' is deliberate. While 'stage' implies a distinct period of time that is qualitatively different from other stages in a process; 'phase' suggests that behaviours present in one phase of the process may also exist in other periods. The difference is succinctly captured by Karmiloff-Smith (1984, cited by Day and Bakioglu, 1996, p. 207) who explains: "the phase concept is focused on the underlying similarity of process, whereas the stage concept usually refers to similarity of structure".

Structure and Foci of the Case Chapters

Each case chapter is sub-divided into five parts. Part 1 – 'The new principal' – introduces the novice, but focuses on his/her personal leadership attributes and values.

Part 2 – 'Phase 1: inheriting' – makes explicit the new principal's personal encounter and sense-making of his/her inheritance, the culture of the appointed school. Thus the culture of the school is summarized and discussed, providing bases for my analysis of the new principals' levels of culture awareness and for my discernment of the degree of change that the schools actually realized. The evidence amassed for each school's culture has been matched to Stoll and Fink's (1996) typology of schools, which is discussed in chapter 2 and describes different types of school cultures, resulting in each case study school being assigned a most appropriate culture descriptor. Inevitably, describing schools' cultures involves identifying characteristics of school effectiveness (James, et al., 2006; Rossman et al., 1988) and so the findings of school effectiveness research (e.g. Reynolds, 2010; Sammons, 2007) have also been used to weigh this study's findings along with literature focused on school culture (e.g. Peterson & Deal, 2009; Saphier & King, 1985).

Part 3 – 'Phase 2: Building and shaping', focuses on the school improvement foci and key leadership practices and strategies of the new principal that influenced the nature of the case interaction and its consequences. Although each new principal was found to have practiced all four types of leadership discussed in chapter 2, emphasis is given to their most common approaches. The responses of school members to their new principal's leadership are also discussed with a focus on the most common responses but not on the reasons and purposes of these, which are discussed in part 5 of each case. Across the cases, some

responses were positive, others were positive qualified and yet others were negative. See table 4-5.

Positive	**Positive Qualified**	**Negative**
support accommodation	reasoning astonishment	disregard confrontation withdrawal wounding/defamation/sabotage

Table 4-5 – Types of school member responses across the 3 schools

In this thesis, the following definitions are applied to the various school member responses.

- **support** – actions meant to assist, advance or conform to a new principal's leadership;
- **accommodation** – a willingness to oblige, adapting oneself to help a new principal;
- **reasoning** – the act of using evidence and drawing conclusions in argumentation;
- **astonishment/disbelief** – the state of being surprised at a new principal's actions.
- **disregard or non-compliance** – lack of due respect; ignoring;
- **confrontation** – an act of confronting face-to-face, especially with conflicting ideas or opinions;
- **withdrawal** – the purposeful disengagement, emotionally and/or physically, of personally supporting the achievement of school goals;

- **wounding/defamation/sabotage** – an act intended to tarnish a new principal's character and/or reputation, hurt him/her or obstruct the realisation of school goals.

Part 4 – 'The impact of the case interaction' – draws attention to the most evident consequences of the case interaction on the new principal's emotions and learning and on the school. It was evident across all cases that the extent and kinds of impact experienced were dependent on and specific to the nature of the leadership-school culture interaction evidenced at each school.

Of the 19 generally negative CIs described by the three new principals 10 qualitatively different but mainly negative emotions were identified (figure 4-1), indicating how emotionally-taxing principalship can be and highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence to the new principal, especially. Incidentally, common to all three were surprise and anger.

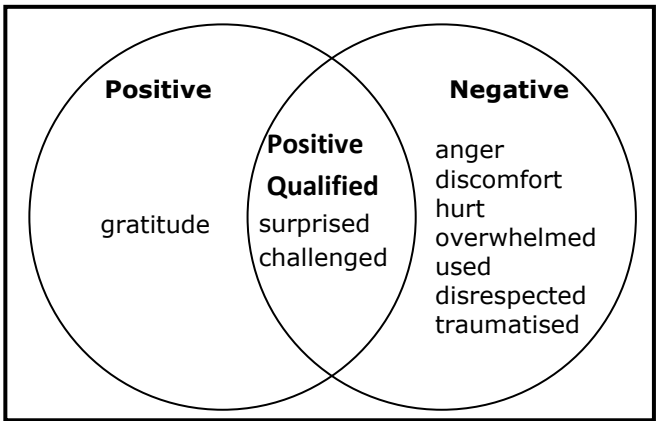


Figure 4-1 – New Principals' emotional reactions

The new principals' CIs also prompted case-specific learning broadly framed in three categories: (1) lessons about the job, (2) lessons about school change and, (3) lessons about self.

Generally, school change at individual schools was also directly associated with the new principals' school improvement foci. Also discussed is evidence of changes in students' performance in Mathematics and Language Arts National Tests across three years, 2012 (the time of the new principals' appointments), 2013 and 2014.

Finally, part 5 – 'Understanding the case' – attempts to make sense of the particular case interactions and offers the most plausible explanations by reflecting on the relationships drawn out in the study's theoretical framework (chapter 2) amongst investigated and emergent factors, such as role conception and leadership practices. The evidence shows that within each distinct manifestation of the leadership-school culture interaction, the most common school member responses were generally reflective of the new principal's reculturing consideration, highlighting the importance of new principals' informed responsiveness to school culture and earnest attempts at true collaboration and relationship building with school members. It was clear, though, that similarities existed across the cases with respect to the relationships between the factors, enabling the assertion of evidence-based claims on the nature and impact of the leadership-school culture interaction and, more specifically, on new principals' leadership and school members' responses. These claims are openly made in the final chapters of this thesis.

5. 'TESTS AND TRIALS': CASE 1

This chapter discusses the unstable interaction between Mr Quincy's leadership and the struggling culture of Memorial Park. Mr Quincy often used the metaphor, 'tests and trials', or its synonyms to refer to his encounters with his inherited school culture, likely accepting these as a truism of his principalship being Catholic.

The chapter focusses on Mr Quincy's adoption of political practices in response to school members' largely negative responses to his leadership and presents the mixed outcomes of this interaction towards explaining this case's leadership-school culture interaction. The chapter begins by introducing Mr Quincy, the new principal of Memorial Park.

MR QUINCY: NEW PRINCIPAL OF MEMORIAL PARK

Mr Quincy was appointed as principal to Memorial Park Boys' RC in April, 2012. At 39 years old this is his first appointment as principal, having been promoted from Acting Vice-Principal, the post he held for 2 years at his former school, a prestigious boys' RC primary school. Although he holds a Bachelor degree in Education, his specialisation was not in Educational Administration, which is the national requirement for the post; however, he holds a certificate in Educational Leadership. He also received training in emotional intelligence and crisis management.

Personal attributes

Associated with Mr Quincy's leadership were self-professed personal attributes, most of which were corroborated by all of the interviewees. However, as many as four of Mr Quincy's motivational and social attributes were variably perceived by school members who had not

been as effective as they would have liked in their interactions with this new principal.

Cognitive ability

Analytical

As an analytical thinker Mr Quincy gathered and processed information from different perspectives before taking action with respect to school issues and thus responded cautiously rather than hastily.

> … this young principal here doesn't operate under emotion. I operate on logic (Mr Quincy).

> When sir sits with you to have a meeting, … he doesn't just talk about the issue. He tries to find the source, what is causing the issue. … and deals with the underlying cause of the problem and he has follow up meetings… (Meeta, teacher).

Creativity

His creativity was demonstrated in his ideas for school development.

> I am an innovative principal. I'm getting that, "Ok, he really is contributing to the development of the school" (Mr Quincy).

Personal qualities

Self-confident

He exuded self-confidence in his ability as a new principal but saw the need to demonstrate humility to his staff should he make an error.

> I am a strong leader. … I'm a young principal. I just turned 39. I have been here six months. I am already seeing that my supervisors see a lot of strength in me… Everything I have done so far has been a success. … I admire my strength in dealing with situations. ... I wouldn't have it right all the time. I will tell them at my meetings that I erred to show them humility (Mr Quincy).

Self-consistent and straightforward

Mr Quincy also mentioned being self-consistent, remaining true to self particularly with respect to addressing staff issues. He made regular reference to this attribute, often pairing it with his being straightforward.

> I have to be consistent. I am a straightforward person. I'll tell you when you are wrong and I'll come back normal. … but I am being

> consistent about who I am, integrity, my principles. I am not going to sell short my principles. ... I'm not saying that I am a saint, but there are still things that I will not tolerate. … I am not afraid to confront teachers about doing the correct thing (Mr Quincy).

While he considered himself "very tactful", though frank, at least one teacher considered him "very rude" because of the way he addressed staff issues, which is later discussed in 'Mr Quincy's reculturing practices'.

Open

Staff at Memorial Park considered Mr Quincy as 'open in influence' by allowing parental involvement in the school and 'open in control' by depending on teachers to whom he delegated responsibilities.

> … he doesn't covet his position like you know 'I must do everything' kinda thing; no, he is not like that. He is the man who realises that he can't do everything and he is willing to utilise his people (Naomi, key staff).

Motivation

Devoted, passionate

His devotion to improving Memorial Park was noted in his strong attachment to the work of the school and a rather substantial commitment of his personal time.

> I spent my entire vacation here and the ministry cannot pay me for that… I come here on Sundays, Saturdays, sometimes in the night. I live [names area, which is approximately 2hrs commute from the school]. When I drive down here I might leave 12 midnight or minutes to 1 in the morning. You see, I believe in what I do. If I wasn't as passionate as I am about children, I could just be getting paid and not doing anything. But I have a passion for children and the teachers as well (Mr Quincy).

While some teachers attested to this, one teacher viewed his show of devotion as selfishly motivated.

> … honestly speaking, I think it is a case just like every other principal: what they are doing is for themselves and for their image to say, 'this is my school' and 'after a while people will hear about my school'. So even though he is saying it is for the children, it's really to say my school is on top because this school was on top. … So his ambition, at the end of the day, yes it might be for the children, but it is also to say

> that I am the person that put this school back where it used to be (Naomi, key staff).

Achievement-oriented, optimistic and determined

Mr Quincy kept a close eye on student performance at Memorial Park and was not only optimistic that the school would improve but was willing to try anything to realise school improvement and was determined to get there.

> I will be pushing for National test just like how they did on 'Lean on me'. I'll be having people coming in to help the boys. I have some already. Some will be coming to do after-school remedial reading … The school is not at the best that it is supposed to be, but once I have health and strength, I am going to bring people into the school to move these boys forward. So what other schools experience, I am going to bring to this school … when the new cohort comes to the school, we'll be using the thematic approach with them … because we have to try something different – look at our National Test API! (Mr Quincy).

> I'm a risk-taker. Some principals were telling me, "[the sports day on Fathers' Day] would fail boy, you should have chosen a Saturday or a day in the week" (Mr Quincy).

His strong determination, however, caused some teachers to view him as a 'dictator' and 'unreceptive'.

> … when it comes to running the school, he is like a little dictator when he is ready. The reason I say so is because he likes to see things his way. He likes certain things done in a way that if he doesn't get it, he is disappointed (David, key staff).

> He is not very receptive to if you bring things to him. When you present certain issues and problems that are happening in the department and you are suggesting to him ways in which you can do something about it or maybe control it somehow, he has his mind made up about certain things and the way it should be done and he really does not want to hear what you have to say unless you are his friend, maybe part of his clique… (Nicole, teacher).

Energetic

Yet, there was no disputing Mr Quincy's high level of energy in pursuing school change given his youth and determination.

> He is energetic; he is ambitious. I think he would really like to see the school get back to where it was because he worries about it being where it is now (Janet, Retired Principal).

Fund-raiser

A disposition to raise funds was seen to also be associated to his determination to influence school change.

> … the school had six to seven thousand dollars. So, I decided that I had to raise money in this school. Now, I am a business man. … At [former school], I was always the business person. So, I got sponsors from different people, donations and stuff… (Mr Quincy)

Social appraisal skills

Approachable

Staff and students generally felt comfortable approaching Mr Quincy on professional and personal matters or simply to chat.

> … [Mr Quincy] is nice to his teachers – you can go and sit down and talk to him and stuff – and he doesn't come across as the big dragon boss or anything like that (Naomi, key staff).

> The children now go lunch time, recess time, all the time to him to deal with the issues … because he deals with them (Meeta, teacher).

Trustworthy

He was trustworthy and gave staff the assurance that he would keep personal and disciplinary matters confidential.

> Sometimes people come with their problems, I keep it here [points to heart]. I don't go spreading it all over (Mr Quincy).

> … there are times that you would get down into personal issues with him. I don't know, he just has a way of getting that from you. He doesn't have to ask you. We feel, I say we, but we feel comfortable with him and we know that he is not going to tell everybody (Meeta, teacher).

However, his easy-going manner eventually was considered 'too friendly' and even somewhat 'unprofessional' by some teachers, according to four teacher interviewees.

> … once we are out here, he'll come out and lime with his teachers, but his initial fault, I think when he came in here was that he was too friendly (Naomi, key staff).

> I think that his leadership is compromised. He is getting close and fraternising with certain teachers and talking with certain teachers against other teachers, which is a no no when it comes to leadership …

> I have been socialising with them which I won't again like going to different fund-raising parties. … What I saw going on was very disturbing. … You all are drinking and liming and cooking and playing mas...; you can't come back now and play that you are all professional (Nicole, teacher).

Partial

The teachers who found Mr Quincy to be less-than-professional – about one quarter of the staff – also found his consideration of teachers to be partial, to which he attested.

> I always try to appear to be fair but I'll tell you something, if I have some helpers and they appear to be working hard I don't mind giving them a little 'bligh' [favour] sometimes. And if you are not doing anything, why must you get that? (Mr Quincy).

> His rules are not equal and fair to everybody, only if you are sucking up to him and you do what he would like you to do, the way he wants it to be done then he would turn a blind eye (Nicole, teacher).

Values and beliefs

The values and beliefs discussed here are a collation of those named by Mr Quincy and interviewees. A high degree of consistency among their descriptions was observed. Mr Quincy valued **respect** – a value that he expected to be demonstrated by school members as discussed later.

> You have to respect the office … I need to remind [staff] ever so often … that they need to respect each other as well (Mr Quincy).

General moral values held to by Mr Quincy included **social justice** for students, **integrity**, **moral responsibility** and **commitment to students**.

> I've told [teachers] that in their classes to ensure that they don't short-change the children. ... I believe integrity [was an issue] because of the way they were treating the children. That's stealing. I find that they were going back into their old ways of always wanting free time. Remember at one time we were having a lot of strikes with the union and stuff, so we had a lot of free time (Mr Quincy).

> In his leadership, he speaks *for* the children. Everything should be for all the children. The children should get the greater benefit (Naomi, key staff).

He also ascribed to professional values of **high standards of performance**.

> … we must set high standards and they must be reflected in our academia as well. … I told them and I always tell them, whatever we engage in must have a high standard. We go out there for Sports, discipline must be at a high standard, I am not settling for less (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy was Discipline Convener and Co-ordinator of the prefect system at his former school. This and the following comment demonstrate his value for **discipline** and **professionalism** as well as a belief that *discipline brings success*.

> I believe in discipline. It is a value that I have in my life. I try to pass on to my children as well … I believe that if you have a disciplined household, ... that most of the time the child from there will pass for a college and they do well in life. If there is no discipline or no structure in the household, they will live vikiey vi [indecisively, anyhow] (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy's value for the **involvement of stakeholders** in the school is earlier evidenced by his openness attribute and, as later discussed, through his practices. His professional values for the **quality of the school environment** and the **best interest of the school and students** are also evidenced in his practices, which are later discussed. His **commitment to students** and their holistic development has always been a part of his professional life. At his former school he co-ordinated co- and extracurricular activities such as sports, drama and religious activities. He claimed:

> I always put my students first (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy also articulated professional beliefs such as:

1) **hard work deserves rewards**

> I believe that when you work hard, you must be rewarded. That could be tangible or not tangible. … I told them that when they work hard, they will be rewarded (Mr Quincy)

2) **poverty is no excuse for indiscipline or underperformance**,

> Prayers going on and they're lashing one another and who fidgeting and some, of course, were coming late... I don't believe that indiscipline should be as a result of living in low socio-economic catchment areas (Mr Quincy).

3) **teaching is a vocation for which teachers must be good role models**

> If we want to create an ethos of love, togetherness, respect then the principal and the teachers have to model that to the children… I need to appeal to the teachers and their vocation (Mr Quincy).

In his social relationships with school members, Mr Quincy named **loyalty** as a value that not only he demonstrated but he expected from school members as explained in the section 'Understanding case 1'. A value for **harmonious relationships** is also demonstrated in his practices.

Among Mr Quincy's personal attributes are several that have been associated with successful principalship as reported by for e.g. Day and Leithwood (2007a) and include his cognitive and motivational attributes as well as his self-confidence, frankness and openness. His professional, general and social values have also been found to be valued by successful principals. However, as later discussed when this case is explained, possession of these personal attributes and values alone did not guarantee the success Mr Quincy envisioned. A look at his leadership practice and school members' responses to same were instrumental to understanding why and are discussed next in the two phases of leadership-school culture interaction: (1) Inheriting and (2) Building and shaping.

PHASE 1: INHERITING

Mr Quincy was welcomed with celebration as staff were relieved that the acting principalship of a member of staff had come to an end and they were expecting changes and allowed him the time for same.

> [Mr Quincy] came in here and, at that point, the staff was relieved in terms of there was another teacher, Ms Everret – she left – she was

> running the school. The staff was relieved because there was a lot of 'pulling and tugging' [conflict] between members of staff and the administration. Then Mr Q came in and the staff was relieved and he took over the leadership role so at least in my mind I was saying, "Hear what, things will change now." (David, key staff).

Mr Quincy seized this opportunity to assure staff of a new beginning.

> … from the very first day, I told the staff, "I do not care about where you've erred in the past. From today, you get a new start. Each person has a hundred percent, clean sheet" (Mr Quincy).

Nonetheless, as Mr Quincy recalled, he often had to coax teachers who were resistant in the early days; but as time passed and staff's knowledge of him grew they were able to accomplish some targets.

> Well, before I had to be coaxing people, I've had to delegate. … I have realised that I have to keep talking to them all the time to remind them. … At first they would have gone through a culture shock in the sense that 'this man for real? I wonder if he is soft or if he is hard.' They are now learning my approaches. What they have realised is that all the things that they were against but we went through with, came out to a very high standard (Mr Quincy).

Culture awareness and inheritance

Mr Quincy appeared to have adopted an analytic orientation to understanding his inherited school culture. He observed school members' actions and school activities, such as assemblies; he asked former principals about the school and he studied school documents, such as student performance data and school brochures, outlining the school's history. However, Mr Quincy's awareness of Memorial Park's culture was most developed through cultural enlightenment by school members upon his violation of some cultural code.

Memorial Park is described as a 'struggling' school (Stoll & Fink, 1996), which though ineffective, the staff was willing to try anything for improvement. Questionnaire data, too, suggest a malleability of Memorial Park's culture where most teachers (n = 6) said that staff sometimes protected their school's culture and some (n = 4) believed it to be mostly true that the school's unhealthy culture was homogeneous; while the

remaining n = 6) felt that the culture was sometimes not widely shared. The content of the culture at Memorial Park is summarised in table 5-1 and discussed alongside Mr Quincy's awareness.

School Culture Dimensions & Indicators	Memorial Park's Struggling Culture
Professional Orientation	
• Organisational commitment	variable
• Collective efficacy beliefs	low
• Expectations for students	low
• Teacher stress vs. satisfaction	high stress; sports satisfaction
• Fidelity to change implementation	low
• Teacher practice	autonomous
• Staff relationships	fickle
• Teacher-parent relationships	untrusting (fear; disrespect)
• Instructional support & mentoring	minimal; irregular
Organisational Structure	
• Principal leadership	unfocussed
• Principal-teacher relationships	untrusting; discordant
• Management structures	weak; defunct
• Social structures	workable
Quality of the Learning Experience & Environment	
• Pedagogy	traditional; poor quality
• Curriculum	sports valued over academics
• Academic press	low
• Addressing futility	ignored; punished
• Approach to student indiscipline	usually corporal punishment
• Recognising achievement	teacher-specific; low
• Compensation for disadvantage	inconsistent
• Environment	inadequate; noisy
Student Orientation	
• Attitudes to school	sometimes positive
• Adherence to school rules, routines	variable
• Work ethic	variable
• Teacher-student relationships	discordant
• Student-student relationships	discordant; bullying prevalent

Table 5-1 – Summary of Memorial Park's culture

Over the course of his interactions with school members, particularly teachers, Mr Quincy had come to identify the roles each played and was able to name the key players in the perpetuation of Memorial Park's struggling school culture. For instance:

> [A named teacher] has tried to create her own culture. ... She doesn't feel part of the culture, but as staff rep she has power. She can just speak to people who are reactive or to people who don't think for themselves. ... she is just one person. She mightn't say anything but she is the one controlling (Mr Quincy).

He also noted what he considered to be impediments to student learning and achievement. The high level of indiscipline at the school had him most surprised.

> I came from a school that is very disciplined. ... I went through a culture shock to know the kind of indiscipline taking place in this school (Mr Quincy).

All of the following supporting comments were made by him unless otherwise stated.

Professional orientation

Mr Quincy perceived the teachers as contributors to the school's underperformance, referring to them as "the second source of [student] indiscipline", after parents, through for example their variable organisational commitment.

> ... I'm not saying that they are totally bad teachers. I'm saying that there are a few who are lazy... They need to be team players; they need to work with each other and they need to do the correct things to deal with bad habits. … My feeling is that some teachers try but they are not trying hard enough. Their job is between 8:30 and 11:30 and 12:30 and 3 o'clock. So they are not even concerned about the children at lunch time. ... There are some teachers who would only look after their class; they are not concerned about others. There are some teachers here who if anything should happen to a child they would pass the buck to another teacher or to the principal.

High teacher irregularity and unpunctuality was normative at Memorial Park and an underlying belief that each teacher was responsible for only his/her class was mentioned by staff, confirming Mr Quincy's observation.

> [Whether or not to supervise a class whose teacher is absent] depends on the teacher... it is a strain on the teacher... [On assembly], there are some who would only organise their own boys (Meeta, teacher).

> There was a week I had to go with my mother for an operation… and because I know these leeches inside here when I gone what they would do. ... I paid [a retired teacher] out of my salary... He came

> and he did the [prepared] work and [supervised] my boys. ... The point that I am making here is that I put things in place so that my boys would not be a burden to anybody else (Nicole, teacher).

Yet he appeared to be unaware of staff's low 'collective efficacy' (Goddard, Hoy & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000), having made no mention of this. Teachers believed themselves incapable, as a faculty, of having a positive effect on students because of students' low socio-economic and family conditions.

> … you can fix it how much you want but when [students] go home it's undone. We'll give them love here and they don't know what love is so they'll go and snatch somebody's chain, scramble somebody, curse somebody some F-word. They don't hear that here. So it's only so much we can fix. Even though we want to fix everything, it's only so much we can fix (Nicole, teacher).

According to all the teacher interviewees, although a few teachers demonstrated commitment to students, many more held low expectations for them, believing that they would not succeed – a feature found to exist in ineffective low SES schools (Stringfield, 1993, cited by Stoll & Fink, 1996).

> … it doesn't seem as though all the teachers believe that the children can go far … A few really stick to it; they try, they prepare their work. If they try one way, if they don't get through, they'll try another way. They really work with the boys. But others their attitude is like, "They not going to pass for a good school anyway, they going to fight" (Meeta, teacher).

This underlying belief was found to be related to two others expressed by all the teacher interviewees: (a) we take in "the dregs" ...

> We take children that other schools do not want and they come from very poor situations. So we take the bottom of the barrel, the dregs that nobody wants and we try with them. But because of that, we tend to go a little slower (David, key staff).

… and (b) the parents don't care about their children but expect us to care.

> … for most of the children that come here, the parents think it's the teacher's responsibility to feed them, clothe them, make sure they do their work and some get very angry. … parents in this school don't

> take up their responsibility very well and I guess it's probably why the teachers sometimes they get [frustrated] … (Naomi, key staff).

Mr Quincy shared this perception with teachers, saying that students' parents were the "... primary source of [student] indiscipline", who "want[ed] to fight fire with fire" with the principal and teachers and who undervalued education.

> [Students] come from a catchment area where parents are not serious about their kids and the priority of education is not there at all and then they have social ills.

Consistent with the findings of, for example, De Lisle (2011), Dyson (2004, cited by Levin, 2006) and Reynolds (2010) and evident in all the teacher interviewees' accounts was staff blaming others, especially the students and their families, for failure or focusing on what they did not have. In so doing, they voiced their frustrations over addressing school problems, such as large class sizes and students' low literacy and poor behaviour.

> I think the 38 [students in a class] is beginning to get to me. … and some of those boys need individual attention, which I cannot give. It's 38 boys! In addition to that there are boys with some serious reading problems. I can't even help them. They have behaviour issues and the main fact is ... now I have to focus on passing the National Test (David, key staff).

These conditions were all identified as teacher stressors by Leithwood et al., (1996, cited by Leithwood & Beatty, 2008) in a review of 18 empirical studies that investigated the conditions influencing teacher stress and burnout. Student misbehaviour, in particular, was most frequently named. Mr Quincy recognised staff's low expectations for students but made no mention of them possibly being stressed.

He noted, however, the fickle nature of teacher relationships...

> … the cohesiveness is not there – a lot of confusion and bacchanal and gossip ... From what I've been told a number of the staff meetings would be argumentative; so, many things were not discussed.

... as well a degree of distrust between teachers and parents.

> [The teachers] are not trusting of parents yet, particularly with money…

These are all features of unhealthy cultures and ineffective schools (Deal & Peterson, 1999; 2009; Reynolds, 2010; van de Grift & Houtveen, 2006). Teacher-parent relationships, specifically, were generally untrusting and characterised by fear and disrespect; though, with some parents, teachers enjoyed a workable relationship.

> With some parents, it is good throughout the school. With others, it is scary, especially parents who have a [negative] history, they tend to stay away from the school [but] when they come it's usually because of some issue … This [parent who came to see me] is one of our hired guns. Yes, he kills people for money. We have at least three. We try, well at least I try, not to get into these people's business. The less I know the better, I think (Meeta, teacher).

Consequently, parental involvement and support was low at Memorial Park to the extent that the school no longer hosted PTA meetings. Meeting with parents was treated opportunistically.

> … we have an open-door policy for parents to speak to them anytime they come because that is the only time we may get to see them. If you tell them about making an appointment, you'll never see them again. So we take them whenever we can (Nicole, teacher).

Organisational structure

Mr Quincy was also aware of the dysfunctional principal-teacher relationships that existed prior to his appointment.

> … you see in that era with Ms F [former Ag principal]… there was fighting fire with fire and they had a petition against her to have her removed. [The staff] really put her through a hard time…

Principal-teacher relationships were tainted by staff's (n = 5) reservations about the school's mission for improvement and low confidence in principal leadership as indicated by the following statements:

> … it is up to the administration … they would start off on their high horses, 'We're planning this, we're planning that', we have this committee, that committee and people would probably meet for two weeks, papers might fly around the school and end up in the dustbin;

> but, nothing, no action. And that has been happening since I came here (Naomi, key staff).

> … they would write [petitions] to the ministry about you; but don't worry I got, [another former principal] got and [Mr Quincy] would likely get his (Janet, retired principal).

Mr Quincy was also aware of the lack in the management structures at Memorial Park.

> I said [in a staff meeting] that I can't work in a system like this. … Look at the luncheon period, noise coming down the stairs, anything happening.

Questionnaire findings reflect vague management structures at Memorial Park with half the teachers (n = 5) reporting the existence of few written rules/policies that inform school operations. Interview findings are consistent with this and show, for instance, that all the teacher interviewees reported no management structure in place for monitoring students at recess times. Due to the staff's infidelity to implementation (Slavin, 1996, cited by Potter et al., 2002) – an inconsistent follow through with improvement plans – a host of management structures and improvement strategies had become defunct or ineffective, including: prefect systems and house systems.

Office administration was reported as being for some time disorganised and communication between principal and staff was reported as mainly top-down with the senior teacher expected to function as a middle leader, who although having full-time class teaching commitments was left in charge in the absence of the principal.

> … it is difficult [as a senior teacher] to run your class and still see to other people, unless you have a system in place where you can get someone to come into your class while you go and deal with other teachers. Since we have never actually had those kinds of things in place, you find that these things never really happen. … And it has been like that ever since … (Rose, teacher).

Additionally, reminder notes, assemblies and meetings were used to share information; while staff luncheons served to promote staff cohesion.

Quality of the learning experience and environment

Mr Quincy also noted the high premium school members paid to sports but recognised the need to enhance the quality of the learning experience at Memorial Park, saying for instance:

> They don't go on field trips and stuff. ... Sometimes I go to classes, where I am supervising ... I'm observing, I'm hearing teaching going on. I suspect that there are some teachers who do no teaching but they have every excuse; but the National test reveals something else.

Yet, staff had a will to improve and would try anything (Stoll and Fink, 1996). However, according to most of the teacher interviewees (n = 5), again a lack of fidelity to implementation (Reynolds, 2010 after Slavin, 1996) often made success elusive.

> Initially when an idea [for school improvement] is put into place, teachers run with it. They go with it and they work but then it just falls away… there is never any follow up of anything (Naomi, key staff).

This pattern of discontinuity also meant that teacher leadership efforts were wasted and some members of staff became disenchanted, according to two teacher interviewees.

> I did a Math scheme for the school once and I am not sure if it was ever implemented… I have said all sorts of things in this school, but I don't bother anymore … A teacher was doing remedial reading and it fell through … some teachers felt it was a waste of time because you want to see progress. And then sometimes again, you may start it off and one day we're missing a teacher and the remedial teacher has to go to the class. … and that breaks your own enthusiasm because you don't know on which day you are really doing remediation or supervising a class (Rose, teacher).

Academic press for achievement (Hoy et al., 2006) was generally low, except at the standard 4 and 5 levels where it was higher, and according to most teachers (n = 6), other activities sometimes took precedence over teaching and learning, demonstrating a "lack of academic focus" (Reynolds, 2010, p. 148). Additionally, evidenced in the comments of four teacher interviewees was teachers' lack of confidence in their colleagues'

teaching ability and/or practice, indicating variable instructional quality as was found by, for example, van de Grift and Houtveen (2006).

> I plan, but I am terrible at paper work, but I will still work; but there are some who would not do anything at all. … they would give [students] stuff to occupy them and to keep them quiet so that they look like they are doing work. … Yes the children need practice... but there are some teachers who just give work from worksheets or from the textbooks and they don't actively teach the children. They don't use the teaching aides like blocks or corks; or in Science, the magnifying class … you know to interest the boys ... (Meeta, teacher).

> Personally, I find that we don't have good teachers, when it comes to the professional aspect; it could be better (Rose, teacher).

Consequently, teachers engaged in autonomous planning and assessment but reserved collaboration for the planning and execution of non-academic activities such as a Christmas bazaar or sporting event.

> … we don't plan work [together], the only time we get together is if we have a function or bazaar in this school … we would cooperate and have that fighting spirit for the best house and best this and best that for sports… (Naomi, key staff).

> We don't plan together. Everybody does his or her own thing, individually. … that cohesiveness that is necessary for success… we have never done that kind of cohesiveness where it comes to the educational aspect (Rose, teacher).

Mr Quincy also noted the poor quality of the learning environment, both physical and climatic.

> ... the condition of the classrooms are deplorable, but somehow they operate in it. I inherited these computers – some of them are dinosaurs.

> I can't see how all teachers could be present and there is all that noise unless it is constructive.

However, Mr Quincy made no mention of teachers' predominant use of negative reinforcement to address academic futility and indiscipline or their irregular recognition of student progress and achievement and inconsistent compensation for student disadvantage. A general focus on punishment rather than rewards was evidenced at Memorial Park. Interviews revealed that recognition of student achievement was teacher-

specific with some teachers using intangible or tangible rewards such as stickers and others using no form of recognition for achievement. Also, it was observed that generally, students' work was not displayed except for artwork in infant classrooms and walls bore a few, dirty and torn charts. There was widespread use of corporal punishment at the discretion of individual teachers to address academic futility and student indiscipline, indicating an underlying belief that the students must be hit for 'high social control' (Hargreaves, 1995).

> I give licks [corporal punishment] … they all give licks… You are caught between a rock and a hard place because [the students] don't listen without the wood (Nicole, teacher).

> … the teachers, except for [two] when you do something wrong, … they lash you all over your body and they don't care what happens to you (Jevon, student).

For extreme misbehaviour, it was said that out-of-school suspensions may be issued by the principal or the police may be called into the school.

Concerning compensating for students' lack, infant teachers at Memorial Park had taken to sharing the meal allocation amongst all the students in their classes and one of them had committed herself to sourcing used school uniforms in case the infants needed a change of clothing due to accidents or illness. Other teachers sometimes provided stationery or meals.

> Sometimes I buy extra pencils … erasers, rulers, ... "Borrow it". … It does cost me a little bit of change [money], but I still do it (David, key staff).

However, while some members of staff paid attention to students' basic needs, students' need for learning support was generally left unattended, according to most teachers (n = 7). Interviews supported this.

> … we need a remedial reading programme, even a remedial math programme and we have children here who are not functioning well and we don't even have support systems to help them along the way … these children are just moving along … I think we work here more

> by syllabus than what was taught. … it means that all those gaps are there (Rose, teacher).

Student orientation

Mr Quincy perceived students to be generally indisciplined, with the older students being the main culprits...

> The indiscipline is taking place mostly in standard 5; because they are leaving, because they are nervous, they tend to give most of the trouble.

Interviews with teachers and students confirmed this. Student bullying, in particular, was prevalent amongst other anti-social behaviours with increased occurrences of indiscipline as students got older.

> … we get a lot of children who come cursing, fighting, whatever and we try to cut it out, to curtail it, well hopefully being in infants, we try to stop it before it gets very bad. It tends to get really bad from [standard] three and up (Meeta, teacher).

Mr Quincy also recognised a degree of discord between teachers and students.

> The fact that bullying is taking place and [students] can't or they don't go to the teacher [means] there is some trust level missing between the students and the teacher.

Student interviews revealed students' dislike of teachers' behaviours towards them.

> I don't like school so much. I don't like how the teachers does 'get on with' [behave badly with] you (Chad, student).

Again, as students got older they were said to be "less receptive to teachers' commands" (Nicole).

> … we have serious behavioural issues with our boys. They're very - what should I say – precocious, they test your patience, they put you within an inch of your sanity sometimes and you just want to scramble them but you can't. … Our boys are not the kind of boys that you could talk to them and they would listen. They would quicker puncture your four tyres if you talk to them and they've done it already (Nicole, teacher).

However, Mr Quincy made no mention of students' variable work ethic. While some students worked assiduously; many others appeared to be

indifferent to school work – consistent with findings by Stoll & Fink (1996). They were unprepared and required constant supervision and the teachers' push to remain on task, according to all the interviewees.

> I remember having classes long time, if you lapse, you'll hear, "Miss, let's get to the next subject"... they are goading you on. We don't have that anymore. If you want to waste a whole afternoon and do nothing, nobody cares. The children wouldn't say, "Miss we aint doing no work? Miss, we aint reading?" So that whole interest that was there is gone. … So, I am pushing now (Rose, teacher).

Observations also showed that students' work was generally of a poor quality.

With his deep awareness of Memorial Park's culture, Mr Quincy began to make changes which are discussed next.

PHASE 2: BUILDING AND SHAPING

This section discusses Mr Quincy's school improvement foci and his practices in reculturing Memorial Park's struggling culture. There is evidence to confirm Mr Quincy's use of all four types of leadership identified in chapter 2: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, managerial leadership and political leadership. However, he predominantly utilised political leadership strategies in response to unsupportive school member responses but did not relinquish the transformational practice of redesigning the organisation. The critical incidents which formed the main source of data for this section are presented first.

CI 1: Organising Sports

Days after being appointed, the new principal decided, when asked by staff, that Memorial Park would host its own School Sports after not doing so for many years although the school regularly participates in Sporting Competitions zonally and nationally every year. The momentous event was to be held on Fathers' Day – a risk, by other principals' estimation. The principal asked those teachers on the

zonal sports committee to head the planning of the day. Principal and staff worked collegially towards the planning and execution of the event.

CI 2: Attempted School Shut-down

While attending a Catholic Principals' Convention the principal receives a phone call informing him that there was a 'Hand, Foot and Mouth' viral outbreak at the school and that letters had been issued to students to take to their parents concerning an indefinite closure of the school. Feigning surprise, the principal inquired ostensibly whether or not there were doctors at the school who diagnosed the situation. Upon receiving no answer, he took this to mean that he was being 'set up' and informed the caller that not only was he very 'pissed', but that he was returning to school immediately. On his arrival at 3pm, he found that not only had the school been earlier dismissed, but all teachers were present, waiting for him and having their own conference chaired by a disgruntled teacher who earlier in the week he had asked to apologize to a parent for hitting her son.

CI 3: Defacing School Property

On Valentine's Day, about 4:30pm, two standard five boys broke into the Music/Sports Room. They used spray cans to write certain obscene words and wrestling symbols like 'DX' on the walls and also damaged equipment and materials, such as the marching uniforms to be used for at the upcoming Central Games. The destruction was curbed when a member of the ancillary staff entered the room having heard the sound of the spray cans. They then ran out.

CI 4: Indiscipline

Most teachers are habitually late and irregular to school. They often miss deadlines for handing in reports or don't do them. According to the principal, structures for planning lessons, student behavior, rewards/punishment or keeping the classroom clean appear to be lacking in their classes. Many students too are unpunctual and irregular at school and either do incomplete work or fail to submit homework. Some are often out of class during class time.

CI 5: Staff Meetings

During a meeting the principal was having with the school's Sports committee, one member of staff made a joke to which another responded negatively and cross-talking began. The principal had in times past experienced difficulty whilst chairing staff meetings as members of staff would cross-talk and engage in other actions, such as "… making senseless comments to bring the meeting into disrepute" (P), which he described as displays of indiscipline. So, he roughly chastised both parties. Although they managed to get through what they were discussing, the two staff members left upset.

CI 6: Threats and More Threats

The aunt of a student calls the principal by phone and 'buse him up' [talks aggressively to] and threatens to go on Ian Allen's Crime Watch [popular television talk show in T&T] and to the Ministry of Education, saying that she knows people in high places like the Minister of Education. This was in response to the principal enquiring about an injury sustained by the infant student and believed to have been inflicted whilst he was at home and not at school. At a subsequent meeting with the principal and class teacher, another barrage of threats and displays of aggression were dished out to the principal by the child's mother and uncle (the offender).

CI 7: Union Intrusion

Just as an impromptu meeting with infant teachers was about to begin, in, bringing chairs and all, walk the teaching staff's union representative and the district

convener for the teachers' union into the principal's office. Their intention was to sit in on the meeting to 'represent teachers'. They had been invited by one of the teachers, a non-member of the teachers' union, without the knowledge or permission of the principal or senior teacher. The meeting was to discuss, among other topics, teachers' duty of care to their infant students following a number of injurious incidents among the students, which this teacher took to mean that she was in trouble as one of her students had just before been injured in her absence.

Mr Quincy's school improvement foci and direction setting

The most common school culture sub-dimensions targeted by Mr Quincy were (i) the discordant principal-school member relationships, especially the low regard that some teachers and parents held for his position as principal; (2) the relationships between and amongst school members; (3) teachers' dispositions, with emphasis on their attitudes towards change and their commitment and effectiveness as teachers; and (4) students' dispositions, particularly with respect to their attitudes and behaviours towards school in general, school members and lesson activities.

Defining and sharing the vision

However, Mr Quincy in focusing on these cultural elements promoted a clear and ambitious personal vision for the school as the top-performing school in its education district, which would impact students' homes and community.

> One of my visions is... [to] let this school impact on the community and on society. Let us train them here, create a culture of love, so that when they go home, they teach their parents to be courteous; they teach their parents how to show love. … One of my missions here is to devise a formula to get these children in this catchment area to learn and pass for colleges as well and improve the critical mind so the gangs can't reach them. … I am forecasting that in three years' time, when I have the correct structures and correct people assisting the school that we will be out of academic watch and we will be a force to be reckoned with (Mr Quincy).

This vision was not developed collaboratively. However, teachers at Memorial Park were aware of the vision, if even in vague terms.

> … the principal is trying to push to pass the National Test because he is trying to get out of the so-called image we have gotten ourselves into (David, key staff).
>
> … he wants a lot for us. He wants to see this, he wants to see that (Rose, teacher).

Mr Quincy set high standards, which teachers recognised; although, they did not express this explicitly.

> They are now learning my approaches. What they have realised is that all the things that they were against but we went through with, came out to a very high standard (Mr Quincy).

As goals were achieved they became part of Mr Quincy's repertoire of success stories, which he often shared animatedly. Artefacts of those successes, such as trophies and newspaper clippings featuring the school's successes, were put on display.

Mr Quincy's reculturing practices

The data suggests that in working towards the achievement of his personal vision Mr Quincy most often adopted a political leadership approach in response to school members' responses to his initial transformational and transactional leadership behaviours. However, although he altered his leadership approach, he did not entirely relinquish these initial leadership strategies as his attempts to redesign the organisation show. His reculturing practices are discussed but summarised in figure 5-1.

Political leadership

Advocating social justice for students

As a political school leader, Mr Quincy often adopted a stance of social justice advocate for students by continually encouraging from staff greater commitment to the school and students and by casting 'teaching' as a moral purpose. However, his strategies might be interpreted as counterproductive. Through instilling fear and/or guilt, he used reports of

tribunals on teacher irregularity and notions of religious judgment for less than high commitment.

> I told them as teachers we would be judged because we are the secondary socialisers of children, the parents would first be judged and then us… we have to be teacher, parent, everything all wrapped in one to these children... So, this is a serious profession. … I need to appeal to the teachers and their vocation (Mr Quincy).

In his role as advocate, he made himself available to listen to the students and addressed any concerns they had.

> The children go lunch time, recess time, all the time to him to deal with the issues … because he deals with them. … Those who were wrong, sometimes he puts them on punishment, sometimes he would just talk to them (Meeta, teacher).

Confronting school members

In response to challenges or confrontation presented by school members, apart from recording them in his log book and/or briefing his supervisor, Mr Quincy reacted in kind by choosing to face the challenge head-on either through discussion or by being direct.

> I said, "What pissed me off the most was that a letter went out of this school with my name affixed to it and I'm not in school". ... I [scolded] them. … I looked straight into their eyes; I was direct when dealing with them. I gave them a little drama to show them that I was very upset... A teacher came to me the next day and said, "You really [scolded] us you know". I said, "You all looked for it" (Mr Quincy; CI 2: The Attempted School Shut-down).

Mr Quincy also confronted incidents of staff indiscipline...

> The next meeting I'll be having, I will not remind them [of protocol for conduct]. I will see if they remember, and if they are caught out of line, I'll tell them, "Direct it to the chair". But if they still want to be adamant, then you need to leave the meeting because discipline starts from us: from the top to the bottom member of staff (Mr Quincy; CI 5: Staff meeting).

... as well as instances of disregard for his office.

> I questioned the [marching instructor] and he denies calling [the police to the school]. ... Even though he denied doing it, I told him that in future we need to consult someone. You cannot come into the school and do what you want. We have trained personnel to handle that

situation. I wasn't harsh or rough... I told him that he needed to be careful of overstepping (Mr Quincy).

Transformational Aggregate:

1) Setting directions
- Sells personal vision
- Articulates personal values through success stories & displaying artefacts of success
- Creates high performance expectations

2) Helping / developing people
- Individualised support: counsels, provides information
- Provides intellectual stimulation through teacher leadership & delegation of managerial or extra-curricular duties
- Engages teachers in self-reflection on practice that tends to blaming them
- Facilitates professional learning
- Attends to student dispositions using drama
- Models values & practices

3) Redesigning the organisation
- Redefines school member relationships by resolving differences, building trust, teaming teachers with parents
- Neglects teacher-student relationships
- Creates collaborative culture by consulting staff
- Creates collaborative structures: committees
- Insists on rule adherence
- (Re)establishes new culture symbols: principal's office, assembly, exams, religious character of school
- Builds relations with parents, students & community
- Uses personal network

4) Transactional & Management Aggregate:
- Rewards commitment & motivates staff; grants favour and authority
- Active management-by-exception: excommunicates & waits out non-supporters
- Provides instructional support: persons to assist in remedial reading; getting library up and running; performing class checks
- Enhances learning opportunities: choral speaking, choir
- Monitors school activity: walkabouts, ensuring classes are supervised
- Creates management structures: prefect system
- Addresses staff issues: staff meetings; one-to-one discussions
- Addresses student discipline: assemblies, corporal punishment
- Enhances school environment

5) Political Leadership
- Co-opts support for vision
- Builds coalitions: networking with other principals
- Defuses situations by using interpersonal skills & managing personal response
- Fills abandoned roles
- Confronts school members
- Acts as a social justice advocate for students
- Avoids some conflicts with staff
- Makes log entries of school-related issues

Figure 5-1 – Mr Quincy's leadership practices and strategies

Defusing situations

His confrontations were usually done one-on-one and immediately – akin to 'nipping in the bud' as was seen when he defused potentially flammable situations. To this end, he acted as mediator, pacifying aggrieved school members; encouraged apologies and; at times, involved

the community police, particularly when dealing with issues that involved students.

> … so the Monday, as [the marching instructor] entered the school, I spoke to him. I said, "Sir, you will be tested today. Pray about it before you go down [to the sports room]". ... I had him escorted by the security officer. When he saw the room and the marching uniforms, he was overwhelmed. He went to speak to the teacher, asking to speak to the boys … [One] boy was so disrespectful that he cursed the gentleman… and then he wanted to beat [him]. I took him into a room to try to settle him down. … When he cooled down a bit, I hugged him and told him, "You are bigger than this, you erred. This is not you". And I spoke to him from my heart. I also had the gentleman apologise… I also called in the community police and they started to talk to [the boy]... (Mr Quincy; CI 3: Defacing School Property).

Mr Quincy also made his office less accessible to the public by changing its location so that one must pass through the SCO's office to get to him. This, he believed contributed to pacifying irate parents in particular.

> I believe it is a psychological thing, coming through into here. Before, how it was, as you come in you could rant and rave, but having to pass through here [outer office], it makes a difference (Mr Quincy).

Managing personal response

Mr Quincy allowed himself time to think about how to handle a situation and prayed for guidance before taking action, realising that hasty action could result in highly unfavourable outcomes and so chose his response based on what he perceived to be at stake, which in the following extract, was his influence over staff.

> I gave myself time to think. So, I asked, "What is it going on here?" Not that I didn't realise what was going on, but I wanted time, even ten seconds to think about how to handle this … I had my face puzzled because I [saw] people were bringing chairs, "Did I invite you all to the meeting?" (Mr Quincy; CI 7: Union Intrusion).

Filling abandoned positions

To prevent the premature abortion of goals when angered school members withdrew their support, Mr Quincy immediately got someone

else to fill in. More is said about school members' withdrawal later when their responses are discussed.

> I put someone to run the bazaar committee ... She was not really working. I told someone on the committee to do her job for me to ensure that this thing is successful unknown to her... (Mr Quincy).

Redesigning the organisation

Insisting on rule adherence

Mr Quincy's second most used leadership practice was redesigning the organisation. To this end, he most frequently insisted on adherence to codes of conduct and school rules through constant reminders, dramatizations on assembly, negative reinforcement and attending to classroom structures.

> Each term this will be done. This [new structure] will help with completing their confidentials [staff appraisal] at the end of the year. This will help in getting more structure in the classroom. Today, [at staff meeting], I'll be talking about structure in the classroom to help with discipline (Mr Quincy).

> … he would talk to teachers about late-coming and stuff, but there has never been any warning letter or anything like that… He isn't the type of person that the first time you slip up, [he'll] lay down the law on you, [he] will give you a chance; but he wouldn't be afraid to. I don't think that he would want to jeopardise what he is trying to build (Naomi, key staff).

> I find now… it's too strict… If [Mr Quincy) says, "Attention" and… if he sees you move, he'll beat you. ... And he does say that after you get your licks, you must say 'thank you' (Kwame, student).

Redefining relationships

Mr Quincy also committed himself to redefining the relationships between and among the various groups of school members. He did this by encouraging harmony to each group of school members: teachers, at staff meetings and private conferences; students, on assembly; and parents at PTA meetings. He actively tried to mend relationships by installing new rules of engagement between individuals that demonstrated respect and

built trust. Aggrieved parties were encouraged to hear each other's concerns and apologise if in the wrong as noted earlier.

> I have had cause to ask an ancillary staff worker to apologise to a child and vice versa. If you are wrong, I have to be consistent in my judgment. Not because you are an adult means that you will always be correct. Those children respect me for that (Mr Qunicy).

> When [Mr Quincy] came, he started to change it up a little bit by trying to foster relationships with and amongst teachers and every time he hears some gossip - and the thing is everything goes to him – he knows who is doing the gossiping, he goes and he talks to them, he has meetings with them (Meeta, teacher).

Teachers, in particular, were also provided with opportunities to develop more harmonious relationships amongst themselves through committee working...

> He puts people in committees and the committees work (Meeta, teacher).

... and with parents through, for example, teacher-parent pairing to man stalls at the school's Christmas bazaar.

> [The teachers] are not trusting of parents yet, particularly with money...; so, only teachers were in charge of manning the stalls at the bazaar… but I did have them teaming with parents to help run the stalls (Mr Quincy).

Consulting and involving stakeholders

Mr Quincy consulted teachers on school decisions and also involved stakeholders – parents, students, past principals and community members – in redesigning the organisation.

> I realised that [security guard] has been here for years, so I took him and I view him like part administrator because he loves the children. So, I work with him. He is always willing to help… We are now getting boys to assist in the leading of the singing and praying in church (Mr Quincy).

> ... I am putting things in place for the remediation of reading for Standards 1 and 3s, those who'll be sitting the National Test. ... I've gotten people to dedicate their free time without pay to do that…

> outside help, during class time... one of [the past principals] is helping out... with the reading remediation (Mr Quincy).

Building coalitions

Apart from using his own support network, he actively worked at building coalitions for the purposes of sourcing resources, instructional support and any other type of assistance the school needed.

> I am liaising with another school principal. ... [F]or infants she has introduced the thematic approach. I believe the thematic approach is a very good approach for infants... (Mr Quincy).

> I have taken the cell number of the sergeant of the community police and I told him I want them to marry the school, because we have boys here who need male figures to come and talk to them. That is important to me. I have gotten an arm that I can lean on for help. ... Sometimes I call him just for calling sake because I don't want him to think that when I call him it's only for some problem (Mr Quincy).

Erecting culture symbols

Additionally, Mr Quincy erected new culture symbols to emphasize his values and build students' cultural capital. A typical example was his introducing choral speaking to the school.

> … when I told them, "Let's go to Sanfest", they were like, "Sir what is that?" They didn't know. I wanted to take part in one category, which was choral speaking and I convinced the teachers… [The public] know us for sports; so, it was history in the making – the first time that this school would be taking part in choral speaking (Mr Quincy).

He also placed special importance on exam preparation and performance, ensuring measures are put in place for such and even made himself available to provide formative feedback to standard 5 students preparing for their Creative Writing examination. The student assembly was another important symbol to the culture that Mr Quincy had in mind. He had lines painted on the ground for orderly lining up of students and restricted students' from playing in this area. Assembly activities were meant to set the tone for the school day, characteristic of discipline, order and

character development. He often told stories that emphasised obedience to and love for God at assembly, which were also used to reaffirm the religious character of the school.

> On Mondays, I would lead the assembly. I got a teacher to type out all the prayers, so that anyone coming to the school would be oriented as well because they never had that… So that when we pray with the children, we can model it (Mr Quincy).
>
> … the assembly part, [Mr Quincy] doesn't let us play there (Maurice, student).

Another strategy used was intended to infuse a symbol of the male role model to students. Mr Quincy asked the male teachers to wear ties and dress shirts on Mondays which was the school's dress day when the boys wore long trousers and white shirt jacks rather than their regular dark shirts and short pants.

> He wants all the men on Mondays to wear a tie... His thing is if the boys dress up in their dress uniform, we should dress as well. He also said that he wants us to stand out... to show the boys how men should look like a role model... (David, key staff).

Developing people

Encouraging staff reflection

To develop staff, Mr Quincy encouraged reflection-on-practice in order, it seemed, to get teachers to accept responsibility for the existing state of the school.

> ... [the article on the Seven Bad Work Habits that will Kill your Career] would have had them do introspection: do I display some of those characteristics? ... for it to be internalised ... I wanted them to get it for what was to follow after, which was [the discussion on] discipline… And even though I told them of some of the things that they were doing wrong, I told of the things they were doing well also. So, I balanced it. (Mr Quincy).

Building staff capacities

Additionally, Mr Quincy tried to build the personal and professional capacities of school members by, for example, inviting external agents to conduct in-house sessions, assisting in establishing class structures and modelling best practices.

> … what I have been looking for is structure. Is there a prefect system in your class or some structure for sanitation …; structure [for] completion of your Record and Evaluation, notes of lesson; some structure for communicating with parents. Is there a timetable and what's on it…? So, I've given them a list of what I'm looking at and what I'm going to do is to identify what is lacking and show them what structures need to be there – because it's about empowerment (Mr Quincy).

> He had someone come in and speak about thematic teaching. After she spoke about it, he encouraged us over and over again to teach in themes so that it would make sense and it would stick with the children… [M]y principal has suggested that we clap so that we get the students [paying attention]. You tell them what to do and you clap and it works for my class. … I clap and they are all settled and ready, so that has really helped (Meeta, teacher).

Individual teachers, too, were given opportunities to assist in managerial or extra-curricular duties, such as taking staff meeting minutes or coordinating the student prefect system in addition to leading the planning and execution of school events and projects.

> Sir put a committee in charge about three or four people. … [Mr Quincy] was giving [a teacher] a chance to do something… so, she ended up being the committee leader (Meeta, teacher).

Transactional and managerial

Rewarding staff commitment

Mr Quincy rewarded staff's commitment both tangibly, for example by purchasing a ham for each member of staff after the school's successful Christmas Bazaar, as well as intangibly through recognition and praise.

> I also took time to congratulate the marching instructor for his diligent work... We need to appreciate people. … So, in front of my staff, I had to give him accolades because he really worked hard ... At the

> Sports, I honoured the four past principals and I gave them plaques… I named the houses after [them]... right there (Mr Quincy).

By engaging in such exchange and reciprocation processes with school members, particularly teachers (Blase, 1989), Mr Quincy said he secured some school members' loyalty as well as reinforced the behaviours he valued, such as commitment. School members who demonstrated loyalty to the vision were the ones most often selected to lead school projects and teams – a strategy not uncommon to that observed in studies done by Connolly et al., (2011) and Geijsel et al., (2007).

> I am trying to build soldiers. ... My strongholds are the younger ones like me. ... [They] are my stalwarts... I've told them to anybody coming into this school in the future they'll form an orientation committee. People cannot come and do as they want in this school. That is what breaks down the fabric of a school, and erodes the culture of a school... (Mr Quincy).

Managing-by-exception

Mr Quincy also utilised strategies akin to active management-by-exception, where he regularly reminded school members of his expectations but then ex-communicated non-supporters or decided to wait-out their departure from the school, whether through transfer, retirement or graduation in the case of older students.

> I have given myself a two-to-three-year period because by then the standard fives would have gone, the fours will go and I will have a new tone in my school. Also in two-to-three years, some teachers will go too; ... those teachers who cannot work with me they will leave too because they would realise that they can't have me as they want, so they'll be left out. … But those who want to stay, they have to work… You also have to commit your time (Mr Quincy).

Enhancing physical environment

With respect to management, some of the first changes took the form of extensive refurbishments and enhancements to the physical

environment, demonstrating the importance he placed on high-quality conditions for teaching and learning.

> … that [first vacation after appointment], I spent a lot of time in school. The security [guard] was very helpful… [He] got people to help. We painted, put up signs and posters, power washed, got plants, paid to have the school's name redone – the signage on the outside wall of the school. We enhanced the grotto a bit (Mr Quincy).

This included the refurbishment of the library needed for the remedial reading programme he had organised.

> Republic Bank has an improvement programme... I spoke to the person who is in charge of that and they'll be coming in, so by next year we'll have a twenty-first century, state-of-the-art library. When NALIS [National Library Services] saw [our present library] they took down all the books and they showed [the library trainee] how to re-shelve them. I said, "Lord, thank you". Until the Republic Bank thing starts, it's not like we have nothing (Mr Quincy).

Monitoring school activities

Additionally, Mr Quincy closely monitored school activities through walk-abouts and performing class checks, ensuring consistency with and movement to the culture he was trying to shape while focusing on teaching and learning.

> I went to [the standard 5 teacher] and told her that I would be coming to hear some of [students'] essays. The boys who were in class were excited. I listened to about three or four. I'm going back to them after lunch to hear the others. I know that that makes a difference (Mr Quincy).

> [T]he principal suggested that we do blocked lessons so that we get the integration. He mentioned this at a staff meeting at the beginning of the term. … He said that we would get more meaning if we [teach] it in a block and not based on lessons… because some teachers teach in isolation and it doesn't make sense to the children … But he wanted it to stick… (Meeta, teacher).

Restructuring

He also worked closely with the senior teacher, who he charged with the responsibility of reviewing teachers' schemes of work and records

of lesson evaluation. Moreover, he (re)established structures for the management of student discipline, such as a prefect system.

> I formed the prefect system. It was started this year. I bought badges for them, I have sessions with them to ensure that they maintain [the responsibility]… I gave them spaces to monitor and guidelines to follow, example fights – bring them to the office. If it is not fighting, they basically monitor – hey, pick up that paper, do this, do that (Mr Quincy).

School member responses to Mr Quincy's leadership

At Memorial Park school members mainly responded to Mr Quincy's leadership negatively; although there was some evidence of support. Five categories of responses were identified: (1) disregard or non-compliance, (2) confrontation, (3) withdrawal, (4) wounding/sabotage, and (5) support. These responses were mainly from teachers; however, those from parents and students have been included.

Disregard/non-compliance

Disregard or non-compliance was the most frequently used response to Mr Quincy's leadership and was expressed in school members' paying no attention to or ignoring the principal's expressed wishes, sometimes usurping authority or failing to treat the person or office of the principal with proper respect. One example is some teachers' lack of take up of a new teaching method introduced by Mr Quincy.

> We all agreed that we were going to start to use [the thematic approach]. Only in the infants has it materialised. So change is always met with resistance (Mr Quincy).

Another is non-compliance to his request that male teachers wear ties and dress shirts on the school's formal dress day. Notable is the distinction made between the responses of a new teacher and those working at the school for longer.

> He assumed that we agreed to wear ties; however, on Monday he was shocked when he saw I didn't wear a tie, Mr Earl didn't wear one, neither Mr Dass; only the young teacher wore a tie. But he has just

> started [teaching]. It's a different mindset when you now start (David, key staff).

Another rather telling example is a marching instructor calling the police to the school for students involved in a fight without consulting the principal.

> ... [The marching instructor] denies calling them. He said that he was just talking to his sister who is a police officer on the phone and he didn't expect her to send officers. Three of them came with these big guns. … Apparently he was there and he saw what happened and decided to react in that manner without consulting anyone (Mr Quincy).

Teachers also often failed to submit their records in a timely fashion despite Mr Quincy's reminders. Students too sometimes showed disregard.

Confrontation

This school member response was the second most used at Memorial Park. Mr Quincy was confronted by parents frequently on matters particularly concerning student discipline. The principal's experience from his former school had caused him to form the expectation that parents come in 'humility' to the principal over matters of concern; he found, however, that this was often not the case at Memorial Park. A typical example was parents' confrontational threats over an alleged child abuse (CI 6: Threats and More Threats). Incidentally, teachers too had been confrontational toward the principal either in one-to-one encounters or forming coalitions that involved the teachers' union. See CI 7: Union Intrusion.

Withdrawal

In response to unfavourable decisions or requests made by Mr Quincy, teachers discontinued their involvement in school activities. One example is a teacher discontinuing reading remediation with a group of students because Mr Quincy asked her to apologise to a parent for hitting a student in the eye.

> ... [a teacher] said she is not doing anything in the school again. She was doing reading with some of the Std 5 boys, but because of this she stopped (Mr Quincy).

Another is the marching instructor's withdrawal of services when Mr Quincy condemned his calling the police to the school.

> A simple thing like the incident with [the marching instructor] and the guns, he is upset. Yesterday, he went to train at another school (Mr Quincy).

Students used withdrawal in their dropping out of the prefect system organised by Mr Quincy.

> ... plenty prefects are dropping out because they don't like to do anything again and they are hardly seeing [other] prefects doing anything (Tony, student).

Wounding/Sabotage

Notable examples at Memorial Park include teachers' attempt at an indefinite school closure – CI 1: Attempted School Shutdown – and a committee leader's alleged attempt to sabotage the principal's first Christmas bazaar.

> The leader of the [bazaar] committee, it seemed as though she wanted it to fail because all the things she was supposed to do, she didn't do them and then eventually... she was saying that we shouldn't have a bazaar and different things... someone else who wanted to see the bazaar succeed had to come from under and do the work (Meeta, teacher).

A parent also threatened to defame Mr Quincy and the school to the television media in CI 6: Threats and More Threats.

Support

For Mr Quincy, school members' support waxed and waned during his tenure. Mr Quincy recalled full support from staff in his first month at the school when organising for school sports, reported in CI 1: Organising Sports. Also successful achievement of some school goal or project caused support to heighten; while, school members' withdrawal, for

instance, was observed as a decrease in support. However, Mr Quincy continued to receive support from his 'stalwart' teachers.

> There are two [teachers] who I would say always have my back. You know, if I say, miss do so and so, they'd do. They are like the generals. Then there are some who are in the backline... (Mr Quincy).

> There are a few [teachers] who would support. … they are going all out: staying back after school, calling each other during the vacation and sometimes he is not in the conversation in the organisation and, sometimes they come in [to the school] during the vacation to ensure success (Meeta, teacher).

Teachers' support was most often demonstrated in taking on extra work and responsibilities besides their classroom teaching, such as leading extra-curricular activities such as students' choral speaking and planning school events.

> … this morning I had to help with paperwork for different things we are doing for the school... like typing up letters for donations, calling up people for whatever functions that are happening in the school (Meeta, teacher).

Some parents, too, supported Mr Quincy's leadership by attending PTA meetings and contributing funds, for instance.

> … [parents] usually leave the office promising to donate to the school, come in and help and do stuff for the improvement of the school (Meeta, teacher).

> [Just] yesterday one parent decided that he would donate $600. for sports and $200 for something else (Naomi, key staff).

School member support was also demonstrated in conformity to agreed ways of operating at the school, such as providing lessons for National Test.

> ... I'm getting [teachers] to stay back in school more often and some are giving lessons as well now (Mr Quincy)

> ...because of national Test … I'm giving extra lessons to my boys … to make up time because I'm trying to get my boys on an equal footing for standard four (David, key staff).

IMPACT OF CASE 1 ON MEMORIAL PARK AND MR QUINCY

As a consequence of the leadership-school culture interactions discussed thus far, a number of changes were evident. Those changes observed at Memorial Park occurred in the school culture dimensions that formed Mr Quincy's school improvement foci. See figure 5.2. Consequently, changes (positive and not-so-positive) were recognised in 5 sub-dimensions of school culture: (1) teacher disposition, (2) teacher relationships, (3) student dispositions, (4) student relationships, and (5) the quality of the learning environment. The school changes are discussed followed by an

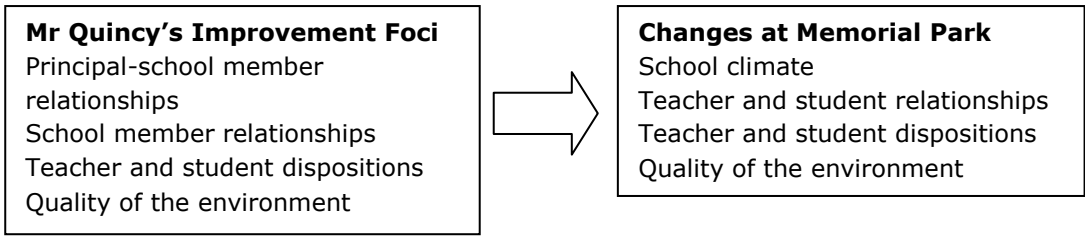


Figure 5-2 – Cultural impact at Memorial Park compared to Mr Quincy's improvement foci

examination of the academic performance of students across three years on National Tests, which revealed an overall decline. Mr Quincy, though having struggled emotionally, has learnt a few valuable lessons especially with respect to school change. These are also further discussed.

Cultural changes at Memorial Park

Improved organisational commitment

Increased organisational commitment was demonstrated in teachers "doing more work" (Meeta) and giving after-school lessons, which translated into an increase in academic rigor. Moreover, teachers were

arriving earlier to school. Although most were still not punctual, the presence of all teachers at assembly was an improvement, according to 2 teachers on questionnaires. Increased commitment was also observed at staff meetings.

> We had plenty to discuss ... In the past, there would always be one or two people who would say, "Sir it's three o'clock, it's time to go home". … What we were doing too was looking at interventions towards helping this school. Most people stayed and participated. … Many great ideas came out of that meeting, which I have documented (Mr Quincy).

Most of the teachers respondents (n = 7) reported having observed a change in staff meetings. This is likely the result of the strategies used in Mr Quincy's managerial and political leadership, such as insisting on the discipline of teachers and asking for greater commitment.

However, while a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment came with increased commitment to the school, for one teacher, a stalwart of the principal, such commitment had begun to affect her work-life balance. She shared:

> I feel good to know that you work so hard and I can see it being done and I can feel the success. But it also means that I have to come on a Saturday and I have to get my work done. And well my family, my husband was complaining that I was staying back too late on afternoons and so I had to organise and leave school as soon as the bell rings. So if I am to do anything to help the school, I have to, ahhh, find some other time. I can't do it after school because I was taking time from my family (Meeta, teacher).

There was no evidence of change to other psychological states of teachers, such as resilience, collective efficacy beliefs or their expectations for students.

Teacher relationships: one step forward, two steps back

Half the teacher respondents (n = 5) recognised a change in staff relationships; however, while teacher relationships appeared to have improved because of reduced gossiping, conflict between teachers arising

from Mr Quincy favouring some teachers over others to lead or work on committees reflected a regression to the already capricious nature of the teacher-teacher relationship. One such conflict is reflected in the following extract as one of the principal's stalwarts - a junior teacher – is being reported as insubordinate to more experienced teachers as they tried to discuss the issue of her "being away from her class for prolonged periods".

> … a big wring down, where she shouted at me and she shouted at [the senior teacher] and [Mr Quincy] didn't say, "Miss, you are a junior teacher". Ms Bell just joined the [teaching] service. She probably has two years or three years, if so much. I've been teaching thirty-one years, Ms R, forty-something years. And the insubordination that we got, he sat there in the infant department meeting and he allowed it to happen. … and this was all about her being away from her class for prolonged periods and he is allowing it because she is doing his secretarial work. ... He is allowing it because she is his friend, so it went on for so long that it has reached a boiling point now (Nicole, teacher).

It appears that more senior teachers were having difficulty with junior teachers being conferred with leadership influence. It is possible as well that this relatively inexperienced teacher may have been misusing this influence.

Improved student dispositions and relationships

Improvement was also noted in students' dispositions especially on assembly.

> I stood on the staircase this morning looking at them and I said to myself I'm getting through to these boys, look how they are standing straight. Look how we have slowed down the saying of the prayers.

All teachers reported seeing similar changes in student discipline, with four regarding it to be an improvement. More than half of the teachers (n = 6) also recognised changes in student attendance, with one believing the change to be an improvement. The importance placed on the assembly and the assembly area were said to contribute to students changed

behaviour there. For instance, all the student interviewees agreed that there were fewer fights on the assembly since the arrival of their new principal. Questionnaire findings confirm this and also show that just over half of the teachers (n = 6) noticed changes in student relationships.

Improved school climate

Another change, noted in the climate or tone of the school, was observed by most of the teachers (n = 9), with one teacher and a neighbour, labelling it an improvement.

> … this was shared with me by my board manager. He said, a concerned neighbour was passing the assembly and … found that the tone of the school was different and [he/she] headed down to the Catholic Board to ask if there is a new principal there, "… because the school is definitely different and tell that person that he is doing a good job" (Mr Quincy).

Teachers recognised that the school was 'quieter', although one teacher interviewee did not credit this change to the principal's intervention but supposed a change in the student intake, saying that, "… boys aren't as bad as they used to be" (Ms Maynard). However, this change in the climate of the school may be a return on the principal's determination to improve the discipline of students and to curb the gossiping among teachers as one teacher noted, realising that:

> I feel more relaxed because that gossiping was killing me. I hate it... The atmosphere is a lot lighter. I feel a lot more at ease with the staff (Meeta, teacher).

The improvement in the social atmosphere was thus associated to improved staff relationships which were recognised by half the teacher questionnaire respondents (n = 5).

Win-lose management

The principal and teachers attested to the school having more finances and tangible support from parents, businesses and NGOs as a

result of Mr Quincy's business acumen. Particularly for parental involvement, more than half of the teachers (n = 7) reported in their questionnaires, that they had seen changes, with one teacher citing same as an improvement. Teachers often made mention of Mr Quincy's 'pushing' to ensure event success that raised the significant sums of money never before materialised from past events. The finances and support were mainly invested into enhancing the physical structure of the school which was in dire need of such. While most teachers (n = 9) recognised changes to the school's physical outlook, only two considered them to be improvements.

On the contrary, improving the investments into the school came with a price – a not-so-positive impact, related to the issue of insufficient personnel at the school later discussed in 'Understanding case 1'. As planning for activities took priority over teaching and learning there was significant loss of teacher-student contact time and school mayhem – concerns raised by three interviewees but better expressed by the following.

> … what I have realised is to get things done, to get what you want, to get the school on the map, like the sports or to say that the school had this grand bazaar and we made so much money, the principal allows [the chaos]. … Last year we had sports and it was total chaos because teachers were not here; teachers were planning the sport meet, seeing about their houses, going to shop for their houses and we had sports just before we had test at the end of the term ... Everything shut down: there was no teaching, boys all over the place. Last year, we won the [zonal sports competition] (Naomi, key staff).

These rather undesirable effects for having increased investments into the school may not augur well for improvements to teaching and learning, which were already often disrupted as noted in the school's base culture discussion. Nonetheless, the school continued to excel in sports and had added to its repertoire of achievement a victory at the national level in choral speaking.

Declining academic performance

A look at Memorial Park's student performance in Mathematics and Language Arts National Tests (NT) (see figure 5-3) revealed that over the 3 years, 2012 to 2014, the mean performance of students in standards 1 and 3 (years 2 and 4) was consistently lower than both the district and national means. At the school level, however, performance in 2014 reflected a marked improvement in Mathematics for both standards 1 and 3 and in Language Arts for standard 3. Yet, this was a partial reflection of the school's performance on National Tests.

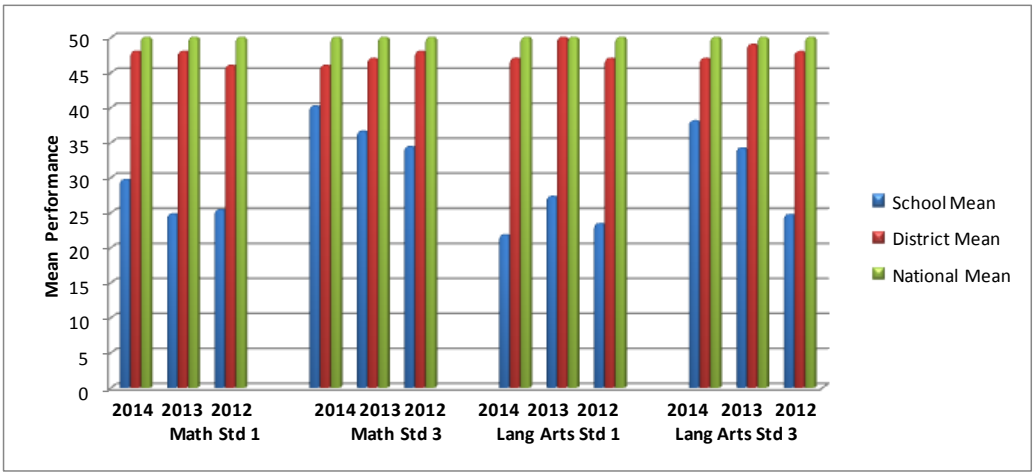


Figure 5-3 – Memorial Park's NT performance over 3 years

The school's Academic Performance Index (API), which is an aggregate consisting of two additional subjects, Science and Social Studies, showed that Memorial Park's average overall performance on National Tests from 2012 to 2014 had not improved but declined. See table 5-2. Questionnaire data are consistent. Memorial Park had remained a school 'under academic watch', not having achieved the lower bound (241) of the higher performance category, 'mostly excelling'.

Year	2012	2013	2014
API	217	217	202

Table 5-2 – Memorial Park's API over 3 years

Mr Quincy's emotions and lessons

Mr Quincy's emotional struggles

The mostly negative critical incidents identified by Mr Quincy caused in him mainly negative reactions. At times, just one CI triggered a myriad of emotions. While Mr Quincy often concealed his feelings from school members, choosing if, when and which emotions to reveal to them, they were likely the catalyst for his adopting a more political leadership approach. Nine emotional reactions were identified by Mr Quincy: (1) surprise, (2) trauma, (3) anger and, (4) disappointment as well as feelings of being (5) overwhelmed, (6) challenged (7) disrespected (8) betrayed and, (9) used.

Mr Quincy divulged being shocked when school members did not respond to his leadership or act in ways he expected. For instance, he felt *shocked* and *traumatised* by the incident involving threats made to him by parents (CI 6: Threats and More threats) as he reflected on the kinds of situations he could face and probably would have to face again as principal of Memorial Park.

> I was flustered because it's my first abuse issue. I was shocked that some parents can go to such lengths to make a school look bad because of their error. … it was very traumatising to me. When I went to principals' conference, other principals were telling me, 'Don't study it, you have more of that to come. This comes with the territory '. And then I said to myself ok, it comes with the territory. But I couldn't have shown the emotion there; … I had to keep a poker face as they call it (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy recalled being *angry* at staff's attempts to shut down the school (CI 2).

> I let them know that I was angry because they never saw me angry before. But even though I was angry, it was a controlled anger. ... Sometimes, you have to let them know that you are pissed. They must know who you are. You see if I am calm all the time, they'll say he is soft. As I mentioned to them, "I aint no saltfish" [I cannot be taken advantaged of] (Mr Quincy).

In this instance, Mr Quincy said that he *chose* to show his anger to teachers to relay the message that he was not to be taken advantage of. When school members did not conform to his expectations or requests, Mr Quincy became *disappointed*. Examples include when his stalwarts went along with the plan to shut down the school rather than took a stand to prevent same...

> I felt disappointed ... I was saying to myself, if you have to be my pillars, you have to rise to the situation. Don't just go with the flow because somebody could talk (Mr Quincy; CI 2: Attempted School Shutdown).

... and when the male teachers did not comply to his request to wear ties.

> ... he likes to see things his way. He likes certain things done in a way that if he doesn't get it, he is disappointed. ... He expected us to [wear ties] and he told us that he was disappointed (David, key staff).

Feelings of being *overwhelmed* were experienced by Mr Quincy when school members appeared to him to be displaying limited receptivity to his interventions.

> I was overwhelmed [at the defacement of the sports room]. I came back to my office and was saying to myself that I am trying for each child to make something of himself and these boys are just fighting (Mr Quincy; CI 3: Defacing School Property).

> Sometimes I am overwhelmed. I am really overwhelmed. … because I can't do it on my own. If I go out [to the assembly after lunch], there would be no problem because I don't do too much of talking; but if I stay in [the principal's office], you'll see how long [teachers] will take to settle down those boys, to discipline those boys. I don't want to be the only disciplinarian! (Mr Quincy; CI 4: Indiscipline).

Following the sports room defacement, he mentioned also feeling *hurt*.

> ... Tears ran down my eyes. ... that really hurt me because I am trying my utmost best (Mr Quincy).

The Union intrusion (CI 7), in particular, left Mr Quincy feeling *challenged*.

> My leadership was challenged. My patience was challenged... My emotional intelligence was challenged. Loyalty was also challenged there because I trained [the Union Rep for a promotion interview]. I am calling a meeting to help develop the school in the infant department and you're coming on a different [mission] (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy also recalled feeling *disrespected* at times, such as during the 'Threats and More Threats' incident (CI 6) when his position as principal seemed not to be recognised by school members as one deserving of respect.

> ... somebody is talking down at you... [and] then was in and out of my office – that is disrespect. I felt disrespected ... I came from [former school] and I didn't have to deal with these incidents ... parents will always come humble. This man, you could see that he wanted blood (Mr Quincy).

From the attempted school shut down incident, Mr Quincy admitted to also feeling *betrayed* and *used* as, for example, he hoped for a similar relationship with the Senior Teacher to that he had in his former school with his principal when he was vice principal – one that was close and united before staff. He felt used because the ST seemed to be more aligned with staff in this incident but did not mind benefitting from him.

> I felt betrayed. ... I felt a bit used too because ... I spoke at length with my senior teacher about my relationship with my principal at my old school where I was [Acting Vice Principal]. I told her how our relationship was. What we discussed in the staff room remained. We were as one before our staff. So I felt that you [the Senior Teacher] know sometimes things happen at the school and I use my own money and I'll show her the bills of what I've done and all of a sudden you just trying to cut me up. If she was principal, she wouldn't like that, to have the school shut down (Mr Quincy; CI 2: Attempted School Shutdown).

Mr Quincy's lessons

Mr Quincy's main lesson about the job, principalship, pertained to his dealing with dilemmas. He conceded, "**I don't always have the**

answer" and so selected the path of least detrimental consequences, while being uncertain of school members' reactions. He recognised that he could not please everyone. Additionally, Mr Quincy had come to realise the isolation that comes with being principal. He reflected:

> I have learnt that ... being principal is being in a lonely place especially if you are in a place where people are doing all the wrong things and you come to change it...

Mr Quincy had also learnt **the importance of closely monitoring school activities** for smooth running. This lesson was learnt from observing student injury and being faced with school members' negative responses, such as the threats received over the alleged child abuse incident (CI 6: Threats and More Threats). Mr Quincy shared:

> ... the need to improve on the systems that we have in the school ... was the positive aspect that came out of that sour issue.

With respect to school change, Mr Quincy learnt that it: **1) takes time; 2) takes effort and; 3) requires stakeholder support**.

Although Mr Quincy was determined to improve Memorial Park, he soon realised that the changes he hoped to bring would take a long time. Consider the following remark:

> I know that I have to take my time and don't rush it. … but what other schools experience, I am going to bring to this school. ... So gradually we're going to get there (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy also appeared to have an increased awareness of the great effort involved in leading school change. He mused:

> … the school has started to transform … and I have plenty to do still… I wouldn't say that I have everything as how I want it… we have far to go still. Once I have strength, I will do it (Mr Quincy).

While he recognised that there was much to do still, the extract also reflects his optimism and; although he seemed to speak in idiosyncratic terms, the following reflects his learning that school change required more

than his own effort. He developed an increased appreciation for the involvement of stakeholders, especially teachers, in the improvement effort. Mr Quincy said:

> I've learnt that ... for [change] to be 100%, I need teachers, parents, all stakeholders involved for it to come to fruition. ... I will not always be the expert, so I will bring people in who can help... I speak to [school members about indiscipline] as a school and separately in groups and individually. It's going well so far but teachers have to get involved too.

It appears that Mr Quincy had come to recognise that change was limited without the willing participation and buy-in of all teachers.

As the literature shows (e.g. Legotlo & Westhuizen, 1996; Daresh & Male, 2000; Wildy & Clarke, 2008), new principals lament on limited feedback about their performance and this was no different for Mr Quincy who remarked, "… sometimes you don't know if you are making any impact and nobody is telling me". As a new principal wanting an evaluation of his performance, Mr Quincy made self-assessments based on the outcomes of his actions in particularly taxing situations. Again, in facing the attempted school shut down incident, school members' indiscipline and threats from parents, he made important self-realisations as a school leader concerning his ability in handling particularly taxing situations. Each successfully-handled outcome became an important source of positive self-efficacy. Mr Quincy shared:

> I realised again that I am a strong person – intrinsic[ally] to deal with a serious situation like that… somebody else, if here, would handle it in a different way and it could have gone worse. … **I am really getting into principalship as I learn to handle situations** ... different strategies for different situations.

Mr Quincy also learned that **remaining calm got him desired results**. This lesson, though initially learnt vicariously, became a personal

one at Memorial Park. For instance and in reference to police officers being called to the school without his consultation, he shared:

> I have learnt throughout the years that as a principal you must always remain calm. You don't create an environment of emotional stress where things become chaotic. A principal must always have a levelled head in any situation. So, even when I saw the guns this morning, I was calm.

However, he seemed not to have recognised the altering effect these challenging situations had on his leadership approach. Upon reflection of the attempted school shut down incident (CI 2), for instance, Mr Quincy decided that he needed to adopt a more wary disposition – one that may not help his relationship with teachers, especially. He expressed:

> My lesson is that **I can't be so trusting**… I started to look at my Senior Teacher with not the same lens of trust. I've started to be more analytical, to expect anything.

Pre-explanation summary of Case 1

This case has shown that although school members welcomed Mr Quincy's appointment, teachers especially eventually became divided in their responses to the new principal's leadership, with some supporting him while others responded negatively. Mr Quincy evidently had considerable knowledge of the struggling culture of Memorial Park but had overlooked key elements, such as staff's psychological states or dispositions. He had bolstered his initial transformational leadership practices by adopting mainly a political approach. As a consequence of his interactions with school members, Mr Quincy had experienced emotional struggles, during which he had learnt some critical lessons especially about school change. Memorial Park, though experiencing some improvements in school processes and intermediate student outcomes, such as change in student behaviour, had observed a decline in students' academic performance. Explaining the nature and impact of this case's leadership-school culture interplay is attempted next.

UNDERSTANDING CASE 1: EXPLANATIONS

Six explanations are proffered for the testy nature and largely negative impact of the interaction, as discussed here, between Mr Quincy's leadership and Memorial Park's struggling culture.

<u>Explanation 1</u>: Mr Quincy's school improvement foci and thus, school change, were limited by his level of school culture awareness and largely directive leadership approach

Already established were associations between Mr Quincy's school culture awareness, his school improvement foci and the sub-dimensions in which school change were actualised. Consequently, those cultural aspects earlier identified as being overlooked by Mr Quincy, did not form part of his school improvement foci. His inattention to teachers' negative psychological states, in particular, meant these were perpetuated resulting in the continuance of student underperformance. Had teachers' low collective efficacy beliefs, for instance, been attended to the effect on student achievement may have been more positive, seeing that collective efficacy beliefs are strongly linked to student achievement (Goddard, et al., 2004).

School change was also hindered possibly by Mr Quincy using a 'directive-follow me' leadership approach that positioned him as often telling teachers what to do and criticizing their practice and commitment, thereby de-professionalising them. He readily assumed that non-implementation on their part was outright resistance to change and appeared not to consider other reasons, such as insufficient time elapsed (Fullan, 2001b). Those who refused to comply were then excommunicated, resulting in fewer supportive staff members to carry and implement the vision for school improvement as was found in studies by

Harvey (1991) and Northfield (2011). Thus, Mr Quincy's neglecting the engagement of teachers as co-creators and co-labourers in resolving school problems such as student discipline and underperformance dissolved opportunities for the increase of staff's individual and organizational commitment (Day & Gu, 2010).

<u>Explanation 2</u>: Mr Quincy's predominant use of political leadership practices was strongly influenced by his straightforward nature, achievement-oriented determination, professional values and beliefs, flawed role conception and mostly negative reaction to school members' responses.

Many of Mr Quincy's traits/attributes, values and beliefs appeared to inform what he did as a school leader and how he did them. Table 5-3 shows for instance how influential (indicated by the broadest band) Mr Quincy's motivational attributes were on his leadership practices and strategies. For instance, Mr Quincy's motivation to achieve and determination to improve Memorial Park were seen in his using his personal network to source resources and support for the school, insisting on rule adherence and filling abandoned roles. The table also shows that a number of his strategies were linked to his straightforward nature and included, among others, his use of active management-by-exception, advocating social justice for students and confronting school members.

Mr Quincy's leadership was also greatly informed by his values and beliefs. This is captured in table 5-4. As can be seen in the table Mr Quincy's transformational leadership behaviours, especially redesigning the organisation, were mostly influenced by his professional values and beliefs. However, Mr Quincy's eventual adoption and most regular use of political leadership strategies were mostly informed by his basic human

values, general moral values and social values. Thus, values for respect, social justice for students and harmonious relationships informed his political practices. Two professional beliefs also influenced his political leadership: 'discipline brings success' and 'teachers must be role models'.

TRAITS / ATTRIBUTES / DISPOSITIONS		CONFIRMING PRACTICES / STRATEGIES
Cognitive Ability	**Analytical**	• addressing staff and parent issues **(R, P)**
	Creative	• attending to students' dispositions using drama **(D)** • redefining relationships (e.g. community sports and fathers' day) **(R)** • building students' cultural capital **(R)**
Personal Qualities	**Self-confident**	• selling personal vision **(S)**
	Self-consistent & Frank	• encouraging teacher self-reflection that tended to blaming **(D)** • redefining relationships **(R)** • using active management-by-exception **(T)** • performing class checks **(M)** • addressing staff issues **(R, M, P)** • confronting school members **(P)** • advocating social justice for students **(P)**
	Open	• supporting teacher leadership; delegating **(D)** • providing information **(R)**
Motivation	**Devoted & Passionate**	• involving his personal network **(R)** • personal involvement in enhancing school environment **(M)**
	Achievement-oriented; Risk taker; Determined	• selling personal vision **(S)** • articulating personal values through success stories **(S)** • setting high performance expectations **(S)** • supporting teacher leadership **(D)** • encouraging teacher self-reflection **(D)** • (re)establishing new culture symbols **(R)** • insisting on rule adherence **(R)** • rewarding commitment **(T)** • obtaining external support for school (e.g. remedial reading volunteers) **(M, P)** • filling abandoned roles **(P)**
	Energetic	• articulating personal values through success stories **(S)** • building relations with parents, students & community **(R)**
Social Appraisal Skills	**Approachable & Personable**	• building relations with parents, students & community **(R)** • building trust **(R)** • defusing situations **(P)**
	Partial	• granting favour & authority to stalwarts **(T)** • using active management-by-exception **(T)**
Disposition	**Fund-raiser**	• using personal network **(R)** • enhancing school environment **(M)** • co-opting support for vision **(P)**

S – Setting directions; **D** – Developing people; **R** – Redesigning the organisation;

T – Transactional; **M** - Management; **P** – Political

Table 5-3 – Mr Quincy's attributes as associated to his leadership

Values		Confirming Practices/Strategies
Basic human values	**Respect**	• redefining school member relationships **(R)** • consulting staff **(R)** • building productive relations with parents **(R)** • managing personal response **(P)**
General moral values	**Social justice / commitment to students; Integrity**	• redefining school member relationships **(R)** • engaging teachers in self-reflection **(D)** • enhances learning opportunities **(M)** • addressing staff discipline **(P)** • advocating social justice for students **(P)**
	Moral responsibility	• using active management-by-exception **(T)** • monitoring school activity **(M)** • filling abandoned roles **(P)**
Professional Values	**High standards**	• articulating values through success stories **(S)** • setting high standards of performance **(S)** • facilitating professional learning **(D)** • insisting on rule adherence **(R)** • redefining school member relationships **(R)**
	Discipline & professionalism	• attending to student dispositions using drama **(D)** • supporting teacher leadership; delegating **(D)** • facilitating professional learning **(D)** • (re)establishing new culture symbols **(R)** • creating collaborative structures **(R)** • addressing staff & student discipline **(R, M, P)** • monitoring school activity **(M)** • creating management structures **(M)** • confronting school members **(P)** • advocating social justice for students **(P)**
	Stakeholder involvement	• facilitating professional learning - external agents **(D)** • building relations with parents, students & community **(R)** • using personal network **(R)** • building coalitions with other principals **(P)** • co-opting support for vision **(P)**
	Quality of the school environment (physical)	• redefining relationships **(R)** • creating collaborative structures **(R)** • enhancing school settings **(M)**
	Best interest of school & students	• selling personal vision **(S)** • setting high performance standards **(S)** • (re)establishing culture symbols **(R)** • building relations with parents & community **(R)** • enhancing learning opportunities **(M)**
Professional beliefs	**Discipline brings success**	• insisting on rule adherence **(R)** • addressing staff & student discipline **(R, M, P)** • monitoring school activity **(M)** • creating management structures, e.g. prefect system **(M)**
	Hard work deserves rewards	• rewarding commitment **(T)** • granting favour and authority to supporters **(T)** • using active management-by-exception **(T)**
	Poverty no excuse for indiscipline or underperformance	• setting high performance standards **(S)** • attending to student dispositions using drama **(D)** • addressing student discipline **(R, M)**
	Schooling can liberate the poor	• enhancing learning opportunities **(M)**
	Teachers must be good role models	• creating new culture symbol (ties for male teachers) **(R)** • confronting & addressing staff issues **(M, P)**
Social & Political Values	**Peaceful, harmonious relationships**	• developing trusting relationships **(R)** • defusing conflict **(P)** • managing personal responses **(P)**
	Loyalty	• rewarding commitment **(T)** • granting favour & authority to supporters **(T)** • using active management-by-exception **(T)**

S – Setting directions; D – Developing people; R – Redesigning the organisation; T – Transactional; M- Management; P – Political

Table 5-4 – Mr Quincy's values as associated to his leadership

Role conception and expectations

Mr Quincy conceived his role in three related ways: (1) the new sheriff in town, (2) a king, and (3) a servant leader. This triad conception of the role of principal is particularly helpful towards understanding not only this new principal's eventual adoption and exercise of political leadership but also the directive approach he utilised even to develop school members and redesign the organisation. This conception together with his expectations of school members, especially staff, also clearly reveals Mr Quincy's beliefs about how school members should relate to their school principal.

"[A] new sheriff in town" was the description of his role that Mr Quincy gave to the parent body gathered at his inaugural PTA meeting.

> I told [the parents at the first PTA meeting that] a new sheriff was in town. Those were my words. "Come and see the sheriff". You could discipline children how much, once you show love, they always come back to you. So the parents heard about the disciplinarian. They [students] are going home and saying the new principal, he real strict you know but he is full of love. They come for justice to my office, from infants to Standard five (Mr Quincy, Principal).

The English idiom, 'new sheriff in town', is ordinarily used to describe a new authority figure that assumes an office or position and is now 'in charge'. The additional connotation behind 'sheriff', which speaks of one designated with the responsibility over a region to keep the peace and detain law breakers, draws attention to Mr Quincy's tenue as a disciplinarian discussed earlier. A clear association can be made between this role conceptualisation and Mr Quincy's value for discipline and belief that discipline guarantees success.

Mr Quincy's role conceptions as *a king* and *a servant leader* appear, on the surface, to be contradictory but are not. Consider the following extracts:

> If I was standing, I would have said, "Miss let's go outside…" but I was sitting in my chair – a parent gave me this nice chair. So I am sitting on my throne, in my palace with subjects here and you trying to hijack the meeting to show that you have power... (CI 7: Union Intrusion).
>
> When I was appointed, I told them that I am here to serve – a servant leader. I am first here for the children... then teachers, parents and then ancillary staff.

Mr Quincy, as king, had a throne (his chair) – a symbol of power. The subjects he referred to are teachers at the school and his palace is his office. To continue the metaphor, his kingdom would be the school. With this added information, one can better understand why Mr Quincy's most used leadership practice was political. The power of a monarch, especially while seated on his/her throne, occasions the strict adherence to certain protocols by subjects, failing which, they risk punishment unless pardoned by the monarch, linking this role conception to the 'new sheriff in town' conception. However, this expansion of the king metaphor relates to the first part of the above extract where the principal said, "If I was standing, … but I was sitting in my chair…". Mr Quincy perhaps felt that to submit to the 'demands' of the teachers' union representatives would have been an abdication of his power or influence to them. Moreover, admittance to a palace is by permission of the monarch. With this understanding, it is not difficult to see why Mr Quincy, holding to this conceptualisation and feeling challenged, demanded that the uninvited staff union representatives leave his office, rather than he talked with them. Nonetheless, monarchs may also adopt attitudes of 'service to the people', which links this role conception to that of servant-leader.

In describing himself as a servant-leader, Mr Quincy likely identified with his Catholic pastoral role, casting himself as being most concerned about school members, especially students, through his leadership.

According to Nsiah and Walker (2013) whose work investigates servant-leadership among high-school principals in the US, the term 'servant-leadership' was first formulated by Greenleaf (1977), but the notion originated in old-testament biblical theology and is best depicted in the life and work of Jesus Christ who Catholic school principals, like Mr Quincy, are encouraged to emulate by their boards or chaplaincy. Evidently, Mr Quincy's faith formed an integral part of his principalship.

> I always ask God to take control and guide my actions. In fact even before I became a principal, 'Give me wisdom, not riches give me wisdom just like you gave Solomon to deal with situations and stuff' and since I've asked that, I believe he has given that to me and I am able to handle situations.

His actions in, particularly, redefining relationships and acting as a social justice advocate for students appear to be tied to his role conception as servant-leader.

It was also evident that Mr Quincy's role conceptions were linked to the expectations he held of school members – expectations that were also linked to certain values to which he held fast. The most telling examples were in his value for respect and commitment to school and students, which he expected of school members but which were not as forthcoming as he would have liked.

> [Teachers] have to respect the office. … I am a straightforward person. I'll tell you when you are wrong and I'll come back normal. But if you pass me straight because of how you are, ok; but when you come into my presence, show me my respect (Mr Quincy).

> I felt like I'm clapping or shaking hands on one side but I expect that you would give back to me, give back to the children. A relationship can't be one way; it takes two hands to shake (Mr Quincy).

Mr Quincy's role conceptions and expectations of school members clearly contributed to his often trying interactions with Memorial Park's struggling

culture and cannot be delinked from school members' responses, as was discussed earlier.

Sources of self-efficacy

Although Mr Quincy possessed a certificate qualification in Educational Leadership, he shared that this formal training was not as valuable to his leadership as the experience gained as acting vice principal at his former school. There, he was coached and mentored by the principal and was afforded opportunities to accompany the principal to Primary Principals' Fraternity meetings and head the school in his principal's absence. From these *vicarious experiences* and *performance accomplishments* (Bandura, 1977, p. 195), Mr Quincy learned to handle school-related issues:

> ... my experience as a vice principal at [former school], there were many times when my principal didn't want to deal with certain things and he would call on me. So even before I became principal I was making serious decisions. … but it was good for me so that now I have the experience of dealing with serious situations … I have the experience and the mental fortitude to deal with these crises.

He also used his experiences from his former school as a source of strategies for use at his current school. Some of these sources were *illustrations of the undesired*, that is, happenings at the former school that Mr Quincy determined not to have occurring at his current school while being principal as the excerpt shows.

> ...for future meetings this is the protocol: I am chairman and you address the chair... in [former school] there started to be plenty cross talking, because they couldn't understand [the protocol]; so, I told myself that when I come to my new school that is something I had to maintain.

The data suggest that Mr Quincy's habitual 'borrowing' from his former school was one reason for the tests and trials of his interactions with his inherited school culture.

> The thing is he has all these nice ideas from [his former school] but this is a different culture from [his former school]… I don't think that he knows the culture yet. He still acts like he is in [the former school]. … He has the [former school's] vision but here is different (Janet, RP).

> I should say he is not accustomed to our culture here and we are not accustomed to his culture. … He came from [name of principal's former school]. He [is] accustomed with when they call for parental support, they'll get it. Here, when you call for parental support, you would get about twenty per cent or thirty per cent. He does be quarrelling as to why we are not getting it and it is because of different schools; he has to understand that we are from the bottom of the barrel. Our parents don't come (David, Key staff).

Negative reaction to school member responses

As the nature of Mr Quincy's interactions with his inherited school culture changed and he experienced increasingly negative school member responses, which he likely interpreted as a challenge to person as well as position, a host of negative emotions were invoked, prompting him to make adjustments to his leadership approach. On his appointment, Mr Quincy had extended a high level of 'initial trust' (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 48), which eventually became tainted with elements of distrust. Additionally, although starting with more transformational-type leadership behaviours, he eventually adopted more political strategies without entirely relinquishing the former likely because he still had the support of some school members, such as teacher stalwarts and parents. However, he may require support in coping with those negative emotions to avoid crossing the line from being wounded to becoming a wounding leader. Yet the lessons learnt about school change in particular, such as the importance of teacher buy-in for effective and complete change

implementation, if heeded will positively impact his future judgments professionally.

<u>Explanation 3</u>: There existed a low degree of compatibility of values between Mr Quincy and his inherited school culture, which contributed to school members' negative responses.

Another reason for school members' predominantly negative responses, and thus the often unstable nature of the interaction between Mr Quincy's leadership and Memorial Park's struggling culture, is the low degree of compatibility between the values held by Mr Quincy, the new principal, and those espoused and in-use by school members at the school. Figure 5-4 shows that many of the values held were either incompatible or partially compatible – a realisation not lost on staff.

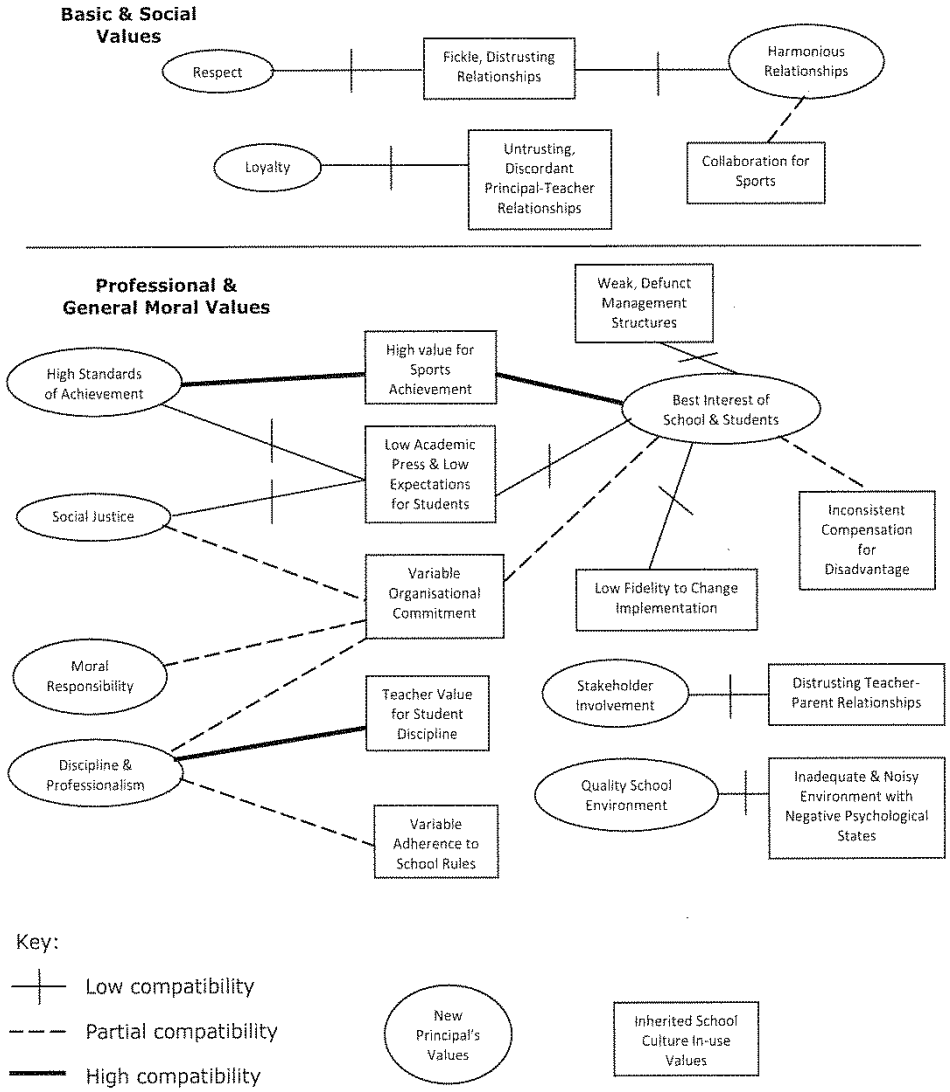


Figure 5-4 – Case 1 values compatibility

> … he is not accustomed to our culture here and we are not accustomed to his culture. So right now, we are getting [many] clashes in between (David, Key staff).

Such low compatibility of values, once perceived, prompts the likely emergence of distrust (Sitkin & Roth, 1993 cited by Tschannen-Moran, 2004), explaining the unstable nature of this case's interaction. Moreover, as Mr Quincy tried to reshape Memorial Park's culture using practices informed by his values, in particular, school members' resulting discomfort was registered in their mostly negative responses. These adverse

responses not only acted as functions of the school's basal culture but showed school members' disapproval of some of those practices. These are further explored.

A function of school culture

Comparing Memorial Park's basal culture with that of its school members' responses to Mr Quincy's leadership reveals that some of their responses functioned as normative expressions of their school's culture. For instance, school members' disregard and non-compliance towards Mr Quincy were customary behaviours displayed with past principals and other school leaders at Memorial Park. Confrontation and defamation were also endemic at the school. The reader may recall, for instance, teachers trying to oust one principal, defame another to supervisors and 'gang up' on an acting principal. One can only speculate whether or not these expressions became learned responses to former principals' less-than-successful leadership and wounding or were especially reserved for any new principal inviting school change.

Disapproval of the new principal's practices/strategies

Disapproval as a reason, rather than a school member response in itself, appeared to be linked to school members' expectation that their new principal demonstrate an understanding of the school's culture in his school reculturing. This is alluded to in the following comment:

> He came from [named school]. He is accustomed with when they call for parental support, they'll get it. ... He does be quarrelling as to why we are not getting it and it is because different schools; he has to understand that we are from the bottom of the barrel. Our parents don't come (David, key staff).

Disapproval or dislike for an action, decision or request made by Mr Quincy was the most apparent reason for school members' disregard, confrontation, defamation and withdrawal. It was also the only reason

identified for school members, particularly teachers, responding with withdrawal of input and wounding/defamation/sabotage. A dislike for some leadership action/decision/request stemmed from teachers considering them to be unreasonable or unjustified such as Mr Quincy's request of male teachers to dress up on the school's formal dress day.

> … upstairs is very hot and you sweat a lot. My belief is upstairs is hot, one; and two, if I wear a tie, it doesn't affect my performance as a teacher. … I believe that if I give my best, a tie doesn't help me to give my best. It's me, the person, the individual; my dress has nothing to do with it… I told him, "Sir I only wore ties four times in my entire life". Sometimes I have to go [outside in the playground]. You think that I could go out there with a tie in that hot sun? I will cook! (David, key staff)

Some other requests by the principal were considered unfair, such as the request to a teacher to supervise students who were not going on a field trip and were mainly from the teacher's class.

> … [Mr Quincy] is telling me if I wanted to go to the show, I should have [promoted] it. I told him that I could not have pushed it yesterday because I wasn't there. He was upset for the fact that I took my salary time and I left. As far as I saw it, it was punishment; so stay back in school and deal with the children. So I told him, I have my right to my salary time - I got really upset (Naomi, key staff).

Those strategies that were also influenced by his frankness and determination especially resulted in confrontation, withdrawal and disregard from school members – the most common types of their responses. The following extract illustrates Mr Quincy's frankness resulting in a teacher's withdrawal of support.

> [Mr Quincy] said, "That's being dishonest. You didn't come here at eight-thirty". So I said, "But sir, I was outside talking with a parent, I heard the bell ring". He said, "Well, next time just sign the book the time you reach". I find that was unfair; he saw me speaking with the parent. … You can't count minutes early in the morning and then in the afternoon now, after three, the minutes don't count… You want us to stay in at lunch time, make sure the children eat lunch… So, all of this I put to him. … We left here sometimes ten o'clock the night if we have a function the following day and … still in [our] work clothes. … He is very rigid about the minutes… I stay after school, but I won't now (Nicole, teacher).

Such interactions caused teachers, in particular, to feel that they were not being heard by Mr Quincy but dictated to. Teachers who tended to feel this way were generally those who tried to justify actions that deviated from the values the new principal was trying to promote.

Mr Quincy's favouring some (usually junior) teachers for leadership roles and his excommunication of others also prompted negative responses, particularly among senior teachers who may have felt disrespected. Three teacher interviewees expressed their disapproval of Mr Quincy's partiality. Their comments were best voiced by a key staff member.

> As a principal you have to set your grounds and be unbiased and when you come in here too friendly and make people figure that you are their friend first before their boss, they tend to take advantage of the situation and they tend not to give that respect where it should be. You see if I and the principal are friends, I might want to talk to him how I want or come to school late or figure that I have some authority or something like that. So, when he comes now to pull back that grade now, it is a lot more stress on him because [he is] now putting down his foot to talk to you [but] you keep slipping up… (Naomi, key staff).

Actions such as these made difficult the development of trust needed for the productive working relationship between principal and teachers especially (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

Incidentally, teachers' value for student discipline and high standards for sporting achievement were evidenced as highly compatible with Mr Quincy's valuing of high standards of achievement and best interest for the school as shown in figure 5-4. These commonly held values facilitated communication, as was the situation in the 'Organising sports' incident (CI 1). They will also likely be the avenue by which principal-school member relationships will develop.

<u>Explanation 4:</u> The support Mr Quincy received was evidence of school members' developing trust in his leadership

For those school members who supported Mr Quincy's leadership, it was evident that their developing trust was the reason for their support, which had been facilitated in two key ways, through: 1) trust disposition and, Mr Quincy's trustworthiness.

Trust disposition

It was evident that some school members were more ready to extend trust through their support to Mr Quincy, demonstrating a 'disposition to trust' (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 54). Mr Quincy's stalwarts, for instance, demonstrated this kind of faith in his plans for school improvement.

> There are a few [teachers] who would support. ... It's as though, they, the few, are having the great desire to succeed in whatever his ideas or projects are. They want them to succeed, so they are going all out… (Meeta, teacher).

"The few" were generally junior and/less experienced teachers who likely had little or no experience of broken trust with former principals and thus had a higher disposition to trust than more senior members of staff at Memorial Park.

Mr Quincy's Trustworthiness

Moreover, Mr Quincy's purposeful and incidental trust building behaviours were important to gaining the initial and continued support of school members. Behaviours, such as modelling trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2104) and presenting himself as trustworthy, were critical in this respect. The confidential manner in which Mr Quincy dealt with staff issues, his support of school members and recognition of their efforts as well as his

openness to involving staff and other stakeholders in school development serve as evidence of him 'walking the talk' with respect to trust. In particular, as school members, especially teachers, became empowered through accepting opportunities to lead and work on teams or committees, they were encouraged to continue to lend their support to Mr Quincy's leadership as indicated in the following comment:

> [Mr Quincy] is, as a principal, good at delegating and getting people to do things… Like Sam, the security guard, [Mr Quincy] gives Sam a little bit of power, … make him feel important, so he feels important [and] he comes to school when he doesn't have to come. All those [posters] you see stuck up around the school Sam put them up (Naomi, key staff).

Demonstrating strong fidelity to implementing school goals until their accomplishment and creating conditions for trust development, such as by reducing gossiping, signalled to at least those school members who supported Mr Quincy that his leadership was trustworthy as indicated by the following extract:

> [The parents] believe in me. Many of the things that have been discussed in [PTA] meetings have come to fruition … a [parent] came and said, "Sir I'm going to contribute some money" and he did. ... and there are other parents who pledged to help as well (Mr Quincy).

<u>Explanation 5</u>: School members' responses to Mr Quincy's leadership served four purposes: 1) to influence, 2) to conserve/protect school culture, 3) to show disapproval, and 4) to demonstrate confidence in principal leadership.

School member responses such as withdrawal, confrontation and wounding/sabotage served to influence the decisions or actions of the new principal, Mr Quincy. Questionnaire data confirm this. Almost half of the teacher respondents (n = 4) reported that school members *often* played a

major part in influencing Mr Quincy's leadership, while another four said *sometimes*. Consistent with Northfield's (2011) findings, disregard and non-compliance appeared to serve a custodial purpose intended to keep things as they are, preserving the status quo. While the purposes of school members' support were not as explicit, one purpose was noted: to demonstrate increasing trust and/or confidence in Mr Quincy's leadership. All the school member responses at Memorial Park, except support, also functioned to show the new principal that affected school members were displeased about some decision or action. These purposes cannot be delinked from school members' expectations of their new principal - expectations which were likely formed on the basis of their comparisons of the new principal's attributes and leadership with those of former principals.

<u>Explanation 6</u>: System mandates and inadequacies contributed to this case's unstable interaction.

At times the mandates and inadequacies of the T&T education system acted as a hindrance to Mr Quincy's realization of school improvement, affecting the stability of the interplay between his leadership and Memorial Park's school culture. The most mentioned system mandate concerned the use of alternatives to corporal punishment in disciplining students. Being untrained or unpracticed in the use of alternative methods to corporal punishment, teachers were placed in a dilemma to enhance the behavioural conditions at the school needed for improved student learning.

> You are caught between a rock and a hard place because they [students] don't listen without the wood. You don't get support from the office. ... They know how difficult it is to do the job without the wood (Nicole, teacher).

Consequently, Mr Quincy acted as and became overwhelmed at being lead disciplinarian as he tried to uphold this mandate regarding teachers' disciplining of students, but liberally used corporal punishment himself.

The mandatory attendance of new principals and staff to training workshops was another system mandate that appeared to frustrate the fulfillment of school plans and hinder the development of the relationship between the new principal and school members as suggested by the standard 4 (year 5) teacher.

> … Mr Quincy is a new [principal] in the system. He has to go to a lot of workshops, so he is barely ever here to really make his presence felt just yet. … within the last six months that he has been here, nearly every week he would have to go on something or other (Rose, teacher).

With respect to inadequacies, the most mentioned concern was insufficient personnel within the school and classrooms. This inadequacy was most apparent when Mr Quincy tried to develop collaborative cultures; address school problems, such as student literacy; handle administrative workload and; cope with teacher absenteeism. Consequently, the school experienced great difficulty having, besides the teaching staff, two on-the-job trainees (OJT) as support staff. Programmes for improvement were stunted by a need for more personnel at the school.

> ... you may start a [remediation programme] off and one day we're missing a teacher and the remedial teacher has to go to the class. So again you have that break in transmission, not through your fault but through the system… So it never really worked. You have to have money to really run a school and personnel (Rose, teacher).

Classes were often left unattended when teachers were absent or should the principal need assistance with administrative work or have to meet with committees.

> … this morning I had to help with paperwork for different things we are doing for the school … I feel as though my own work is being left undone. I see it too in other teachers, doing all the extras to

> ensure that the activity succeeds. Their work is also being left (Meeta, teacher).

This was also the case when the ST, who had a class teaching commitment, needed to perform managerial duties.

> ... everybody has their own class, so even though you are a senior teacher, you have a class to run. And it is difficult to run your class and still see to other people, unless you have a system in place where you can get someone to come into your class while you go and deal with other teachers. Since we have never actually had those kinds of things in place, you find that these things never really happen (Naomi, Key staff).

OVERVIEW

Reported in this case was a generally unstable interplay between the new principal of Memorial Park, Mr Quincy, and his inherited school culture. Contributing to this instability were many factors, including Mr Quincy's predominant use of political leadership strategies, which were not only prompted by school members' often negative responses to his leadership but were also influenced chiefly by his triadic role conception, strong motivation to see school improvement and straightforwardness as well as his regular injecting of cultural elements from his former school into Memorial Park. Mr Quincy's directive approach to developing staff and predilection to transactional leadership strategies, such as rewarding commitment and active management-by-exception won the support of some school members but prompted negative responses from others.

However, not all school member responses were reactions to Mr Quincy's attributes and practices; some were also normative behaviours, which explain school members' disengagement in responding to Mr Quincy's initial attempts at transformational leadership practices. Consequently, a low degree of values compatibility between Mr Quincy and Memorial Park, resulting in generally poor receptivity to his leadership; his

neglect of some crucial cultural aspects, such as teachers' psychological states, and hindrances from policy demands and operational/contextual inadequacies all contributed to the degree and nature of change realised at the school. Nonetheless, with the support of a few teachers and parents, the involvement of community members and Mr Quincy's responsiveness to particular cultural elements small impacts mostly on school member dispositions and relationships were observed; while effectiveness outcomes remained wanting. Mr Quincy also appeared to have experienced on-the job learning as a result of his wounding experiences.

6. 'ON TO A GOOD THING': CASE 2

With Community Pride's moving culture, Ms Figaro had found herself to be 'on to a good thing' – a generally pleasant situation. Reflecting on the encounters with her inherited school culture, she said:

> I would say it has been a very good experience because I hear of situations out there and I just thank God and I bless the Lord every day … because it is like a home away from home and I feel comfortable with the teachers. I think they would agree with me… (Ms Figaro).

This chapter discusses this interaction, focusing on Ms Figaro's deep cultural awareness and propensity to transformational leadership. School members' mainly supportive response to her leadership and the generally positive outcomes of the case interaction also form the focus of this chapter. The chapter closes with explanations of this case interaction. Ms Figaro, the new principal of Community Pride and the subject of this case, is first introduced.

MS FIGARO: NEW PRINCIPAL OF COMMUNITY PRIDE

Ms Figaro was appointed in August, 2011, making it 1 year and 5 months at the time of data collection that she had been in post, at age 53. This is her first appointment as principal to a school that was new to her, having been promoted from Vice Principal of a small, co-educational and underperforming government school within another education district. She possessed the nationally recognised qualification for the post – a Bachelor in Education with specialisation in Educational Administration.

Personal attributes

There was a high degree of consistency in the personal attributes identified by the principal and all other interviewees. Only her non-

confrontational disposition was variably perceived by some school members, according to all of the interviewees.

Cognitive ability

Analytical

In addressing staff issues for instance, Ms Figaro was reported as gathering information and assessing it in order to take the best course of action. In this respect, she was not hasty in making decisions but analytical.

> Depending on the issue, she may call this one and that one or she would try to find out the circumstances surrounding the issue and make the best decision (Beatrice, key staff).

Personal qualities

Humble

Ms Figaro was recognised by her staff as humble. She held a modest opinion about herself as a new principal, readily acknowledging her shortcomings.

> It's not about her own selfish gains, it's not about the position and therefore you must listen to me (Sheila, key staff).

> … one thing for sure, if she wasn't sure, she would let the staff know, "Well, this is the biggest school at which I've taught and you know, I haven't had these experiences at my [former] schools" and she would talk. If she cannot handle something, you would know, she would tell you (Helen, key staff).

Self-consistent

She remained self-consistent, true to who she was, even when under pressure to act in self-contradictory ways, such as when faced with a PTA executive issue.

> I know very well that I am doing things in my way in the situation. I'm not going to go out there and confront anybody to make you feel good and she [the ousted PTA president] is one who would want a confrontation and I am one who would not want a confrontation (Ms Figaro).

Open and straightforward, but tactful

She demonstrated openness in information with school members and openness in influence by allowing teachers to select and direct professional development activities, which are further discussed in the section 'Ms Figaro's reculturing practices'. She was also *straightforward* about issues that needed to be addressed. Staff confirmed this, adding that she tempered her frankness with *diplomacy* and *tact.*

> … if maybe she was telling you about something that you weren't doing correct, the way she would deal with it, it wouldn't leave a sour taste in your mouth (Beatrice, key staff).

Motivation

Need for achievement and harmony

Spending long hours at school daily, Ms Figaro's need for achievement was evident but was not as pronounced as her need for harmony.

> It [academic performance] is still [important] and will always be up there, but … I want to see with the teachers, students and parents a family-like togetherness not competition. It must be that when we're doing stuff, it must be because of our bond (Ms Figaro).

Social appraisal skills

Approachable and willing to listen

School members felt that they could approach Ms Figaro on matters that concerned them, trusting in her honesty and support. Staff also appreciated her willingness to listen and her pleasant manner towards them.

> You feel that you can trust her, you know, if she says, "This is an egg". It's an egg. … The staff is now saying, "Hello, I can now talk to miss about x and y and not be victimised"; not that they were victimised before but the undertone, confidential. I would say that they trust her: both the girls and teachers, and parents. … [Teachers] also knew that we had her support when dealing with parents and children (Beatrice, key staff).

> … she is soft spoken for one which is very pleasing to the ear… you're soft-spoken, you listen, you smile and you have a pleasant conversation. She is very nice, pleasant. You can approach her at times to talk about anything, any problems you are having and it could be personal or teaching. … [S]he gives you – I have to say illusion because I know principals are very busy – she gives you that illusion

> that she doesn't have anything to do when you are speaking to her. You speak and; I love that. It's very open-ended, you talk and you feel comfortable to say what you have to say (Penny, teacher).

Considerate, caring but firm

Though firm in addressing problematic issues with staff and students, Ms Figaro also displayed consideration and caring for their feelings and development needs.

> … she tries not to hurt people's feelings but at the same time she has to do her job. She is very warm-hearted and an understanding principal (Carmen, teacher).

> … she is like a mother. I see [the students] hugging her… but don't mistake it, she is firm too (Helen, key staff).

Disposition

Non-confrontational

Ms Figaro's disposition was non-confrontational, appearing to staff to be gentle, calm and even uplifting. She preferred genteel discussions where parties can reason with one another.

> I tend not to want to be confrontational, I prefer that we sit down and reason and talk it through. That is what my leadership is about, I would talk to you and we would see eye to eye or we don't, but we must not have any loud brawl out in the yard (Ms Figaro).

> The principal came to this school with – for want of a better word – to me, with a calm spirit. You know, it is not just physical, it is spiritual. She has this soothing effect: settling, soothing, calm… [S]he brought a level of calm with her [that was] needed at the time. … she is very lady-like (Beatrice, key staff).

However, her mild-temperedness was also viewed by some school members as a display of gullibility, suggesting that one might easily take advantage of Ms Figaro. This is further explained when school members' responses are discussed.

> … you know there are people who you feel like you can run over or force your will on. I think that people believe that but the persons like me and others would take a step back and say, "This is the principal and whatever she says goes…" but there are some people who would [try to take advantage] (Carmen, teacher).

> She is too calm; she is like a lamb (Sally, student).

Values and beliefs

A high degree of consistency among interviewees was also evident in their identification of Ms Figaro's values and beliefs. A basic human value strongly adhered to by Ms Figaro was **love**. She demonstrated love and encouraged the students to do the same.

> Every time she speaks to the assembly, she speaks to the girls, even though she would not outwardly talk about I'm a Christian or whatever – because this is a government school -, but you get ok that you are supposed to love each other, treat each other like sisters, you must respect each other, you know (Sheila, key staff).

Ms Figaro also strongly valued **inclusion***,* which was demonstrated in her unwillingness to excommunicate school members deemed 'culture misfits', such as the less experienced members of staff, a chronically absent teacher or highly indisciplined students. This value was most apparent in her practices. For Ms Figaro, professional values included the **best interest of the school and for the students** as well as their **holistic development**.

> … I think that [Ms Figaro] is very interested in the students, not only in their academic performance, but in them too so that they develop into well-rounded students (Beverly, key staff).

She valued **discipline** and **professionalism** but believed that **children could be disciplined in alternative ways to using corporal punishment***.*

> Someone was telling me, miss you must beat the children, beat them. I believe that you can discipline in other ways (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro's practices as later discussed also demonstrated the high value she placed on **professional development**, **participation of stakeholders** in the school and **the school's environment and image**. Her value for the school's image, in particular, is expressed in the following excerpt related to the PTA executive issue, CI 1 – Appendix C2.

> … just to get rid of all this … bad vibes … I was telling them the name of the school would end up going down and that would be a bad thing. Because this is our school, our institution and the name I think carries

> for … the children who left here how many years ago. It is still important to them. It is important to the children who are here and it is important to us so it's like your reputation… (Ms Figaro).

Harmonious relationships characterised by **teamwork**, **shared decision-making** and the **input of all involved** was also valued by Ms Figaro and demonstrated in her practices.

> I would say, "Miss, I think so and so, what do you think?" and [the VP] would do the same. So [the VP and I] are working hand in hand … Most of the committees we have [junior teachers] are involved. So it's a mixture of the older [teachers] and the younger ones. The younger ones teach us different things you know as we are teaching them. And that is what we need – a little bit of everybody bringing their input and ideas (Ms Figaro).

As principal, several of Ms Figaro's traits/attributes and values were found to be associated with successful principalship as reported by for e.g. Day et al. (2011). She was analytical in her thinking and her personality was humble, open and frank, but diplomatic. Her motivation was displayed through needs for achievement and harmony. She was also approachable and trustworthy, a good listener, firm but considerate and caring to students and staff. She valued as did the successful principals reported by Day et al. (2011), for example: inclusion, the holistic development and best interest of students, discipline and professionalism, professional development and harmonious relationships. Attention is now turned to the two phases of Ms Figaro's interaction with her inherited school culture, where her leadership as informed by her personal attributes and values were enacted.

PHASE 1: INHERITING

Although school and community members were welcoming to Ms Figaro on her appointment, the staff, particularly, was disappointed that their VP who had applied for the position had not gotten it.

> First few days [during school holidays]: the nice thing about it is that while I was here people heard that there was a new principal so they

> dropped by. Teachers would come, 'Okay, so you are the new principal'. They were very pleasant. I also met the people from the PTA, parents who would pass and the security officer… [but] everyone wanted the VP to be the principal and she had also applied for the post (Ms Figaro).

Additionally, they were wary of the newcomer.

> … in the beginning they were walking on eggshells around me. I felt that they were not sure where to go, how far they can reach and I am a different personality totally from the former principal, so they didn't know where to draw the line or if they were going too far (Ms Figaro).

However, Ms Figaro grabbed the first opportunity she got to not only assure staff of her intentions but waved the proverbial 'truce flag' to the person likely most discouraged by her appointment, the VP.

> … I came in the very first day. … everyone introduced themselves, but after that, I got the opportunity to talk with [the VP]… The previous principal had already relinquished the post and it was she [the VP] who was more or less running the school, but I let her know that I [was] not [t]here to take over and that I hoped that we could work together … In a way my aim was to reassure [school members] that I didn't come to just change things (Ms Figaro).

By acknowledging the VP's contribution to school leadership and demonstrating a willingness to work collaboratively with her, Ms Figaro initiated trust development.

> … any individual would have been sceptical but after [truce-making] we started moving on and I cannot say that we ever had a bad day … Ms Figaro and I had some time – she came and took up duties during the July-August vacation – so I was working along with her even before school reopened. So, by the time school reopened, miss and I had already started working together and started to understand each other … (Sheila, key staff).

Culture awareness and inheritance

Ms Figaro seemed to adopt an 'analytic orientation' (Harvey, 1991) to understanding her inherited school culture. While she observed school members' actions and school activities, mainly from outside classrooms, Ms Figaro especially embraced the opportunity to observe how the vice-principal of the school functioned and managed things, enquiring at times how a particular thing was normally done at the school. She also

entertained the enculturation of the culture guardians at Community Pride, who created opportunities to inform her about their school and about past principals' approaches to student disciplining, for instance. Ms Figaro also spoke with former principals and students of the school and studied school documents.

The evidence on Community Pride's culture suggests that the label 'moving' school (Stoll and Fink, 1996) is most appropriate. According to Stoll and Fink, such a school is a very effective school and in so being, its culture bore many of the characteristics found to exist in effective schools with healthy school cultures as reported in the SER literature, which Thomson (2010) reminds us are not radically different from the characteristics of successful schools serving disadvantaged communities.

It seemed evident that Community Pride's culture was highly homogeneous with norms, values and beliefs being widely shared among school members. Subcultures did, however, exist as is subsequently discussed. The content of Community Pride's culture as contributing to its effectiveness state is summarized in table 6-1 then discussed in relation to Ms Figaro's cultural awareness.

In comparison to school members' school culture descriptions, Ms Figaro had a deep appreciation of Community Pride's 'moving' culture. All of the following supporting comments were made by Ms Figaro unless otherwise stated. Ms Figaro identified workable elements and objects for change and improvement within her inherited school culture.

Professional orientation

She perceived the VP and teachers as passionate, committed and protective of their school.

> [The VP] has a passion for the school. … these women are committed to the school. … Sometimes you have schools where only one person on the staff is working or doing something. It wasn't like that here. I saw the discipline they had, that they wanted to instil in the students.

> … We have some very strong-willed and strong-minded teachers here. They are very protective of their school.

School Culture Dimensions and Indicators	Community Pride's Moving Culture
Professional Orientation	
• Organisational commitment	high
• Collective efficacy beliefs	high
• Expectations for students	high
• Teacher stress vs. satisfaction	high satisfaction
• Fidelity to change implementation	high
• Teacher practice	collaborative; reflective
• Staff relationships	instrumental
• Teacher-parent relationships	partnership
• Instructional support & mentoring	adhoc; purposeful enculturation
Organisational Structure	
• Principal leadership	disciplinarians; culture founders
• Principal-teacher relationships	poor; unsupportive
• Management structures	workable
• Social structures	functional
Quality of the Learning Experience & Environment	
• Pedagogy	traditional
• Curriculum	enriched with extra-curricular
• Academic press	high
• Addressing futility	learning supported; punished
• Approach to student indiscipline	usually shaming & corporal punishment
• Recognising achievement	consistent; celebratory
• Compensation for disadvantage	consistent
• Environment	well-kept; quiet
Student Orientation	
• Attitudes to school	sometimes positive
• Adherence to school rules, routines	sometimes
• Work ethic	resilient
• Teacher-student relationships	variable
• Student-student relationships	fickle

Table 6-1 – Summary of Community Pride's culture

Teachers at Community Pride rigorously enforced values of high achievement and discipline towards protecting the school's culture. Particularly, senior members of staff acted as 'culture guardians' (Deal & Peterson, 2009), protecting the culture by: policing newer and less experienced members of staff, disciplining students and notifying the SBM about anything they observed that deviated from cultural norms or what they'd like their school to be as indicated by the following comment:

> … so you have the [staff meeting] shows [that] would bring up a lot of questions and I guess issues. … if you are doing something that they

> frown upon you might very well get victimised in terms of they get preference, you will not. I think it's a snowball effect but it doesn't come from the top; it starts from the bottom and rolls up, which is strange. So you have certain staff members that, even though it's not their business … they go [to the principal's office] to make a big hullabaloo…, you know, like well "What are you doing about this?" and that makes animosity … (Penny, teacher).

Parents also assisted in promoting and protecting school values by reporting ineffective teachers to the principal, for instance.

A high level of commitment to the school and, specifically, to students excelling was demonstrated in staff's generally high level of regularity at school and their devotion of personal time and effort.

> It will always go down to their commitment to wanting to teach. It is their heart - most of them... There are teachers here who would go beyond the call of duty and go to teachers' homes, go to children's homes; call their parents find out what is going on with them; take their own money to help them… I think for most of us, we really care (Beatrice, key staff).

Moreover, commitment at the standards 4 and 5 levels was reported as markedly higher than observed at the lower levels of the school. Teachers at this level had increased teacher-student contact time by at least 3 hours daily in before- and after-school lessons. Staff's commitment was also observed in their collective responsibility for students especially in the absence of a teacher and treating with student indiscipline. In the absence of a teacher, for instance, the school's unwritten policy dictated that the neighbouring teacher takes and teaches the class as the following extract relates:

> In this school, the policy is you don't teach your class alone, you know like an entity unto yourself. ... When I came here, it was never 'well you absent; that is your children'. Unwritten policy, unwritten rule is if [a teacher] is not coming, that means I have to take her class, nobody is coming to tell me that I have to take the class. You know automatically ... (Beverly, key staff).

It is important to note here that the collective responsibility evidenced at the school was made possible by teachers' collaborative practice, which is

discussed later. Moreover, as was evident in all the teacher interviewees' comments, staff's commitment appeared to be associated to their high level of satisfaction in teaching and realising success for their students – a finding also noted by OECD TALIS (2014) and Williams and Hazer (1986, cited by Leithwood & Beatty, 2008;).

> I think our teachers take pride in knowing that their classes are doing well. So, they are willing to go the extra mile to make sure that at the end of the day when that class is leaving them, they are ready and prepared to go on to the next level. … They really enjoy education - … I'm talking about the majority. They are here not because it is a pay cheque, it's nice holidays. They are here because they want to be teachers and they understand what being a teacher is really about. … that is where the satisfaction comes from seeing the girls do well. So if the girls do well, I have contributed, I have done my part, I have completed my call (Sheila, key staff).

Evident in all the teacher interviewees' comments was teachers' confidence in each other's effectiveness as teachers.

> … we have good teachers - teachers who are dedicated, teachers who are educated. They don't just stay at the level of a teachers' certificate. They move on and have their degrees and so on and besides that they are involved in a lot of other extra-curricular activities (Dorris, teacher).

In essence, a "high level of social expectation [existed among teachers] that they will do what [was] necessary to achieve success" (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008, p. 55). This was evident in the comments of four interviewees.

> One of the greatest expectations is that you would teach in such a way that would make it easy for the [standard 5s] to one day experience number one in the country (Helen, key staff).

James et al. (2006) had similar findings from their study.

Some, usually senior teachers and those teaching at the standards 4 and 5 levels, were referred to as "runners" or "super teachers" – Community Pride's culture 'heroines' (Deal & Peterson, 2009). These teachers were considered highly effective teachers able to prepare students and implement the academic rigor expected for success.

> You would find that the school has 'runners'. When I say 'runners', I mean those who can run with the fast [A class] … (Helen, key staff).
>
> … the teachers who really accomplish that kind of position of super-teacher master being able to motivate children well, being able to build the self-esteem because that is how you get the best out of children anyway (Sheila, key staff).

'Super' teachers were idolised by parents, who showered them with privileges, gifts, accolades and support. Ms Figaro had also identified the culture guardians among them and noted their function.

> … the more senior teachers, they keep a look out. Their ears are always to the ground because they want the best when the children reach up [to standard 5] so they also tell [SBM team] like, "Miss, I'm seeing this happening and you need to pull up on that…"

She considered teachers to be "professional", particularly with respect to their relationships and collaborative culture.

> I found that when I first came to the school that the majority of the teachers were very professional – their manner of speech, the way they conducted themselves. … there are committees and they are good committees. The teachers plan together in groups by levels, Std 1s.., Std 2s…
>
> [Community Pride] is not the best because of the academics, but because of the relationships people have in here – relationships even with the parents. We don't have in here, people coming to curse and 'carry on'… The teachers they all work together. I'm certain that they will have their differences but you wouldn't know. I wouldn't know that unless somebody comes to me to complain. … but there are some with a tug.

Being highly committed, teachers at Community Pride engaged in regular, collaborative reflection and planning for instruction, assessment and school activities – a finding consistent with that of James et al. (2006) and Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995) in their review of effective British and North American schools; however, the form this took at Community Pride varied across class levels. According to all the interviewees, the main purposes of these weekly meetings, apart from voicing concerns about difficulties and sharing best practices, were to

monitor the progress of classes, ensure that the same topics were covered at roughly the same time and to maintain academic press/rigor.

> … usually [teachers] try to meet once a week. If not, some sections meet every two weeks. They do the planning together and they try to keep on track with each other. So even in a case where we may have a slower class of students, they are expected to be exposed to the same work although we recognize that ok their pace may be slower. So I may not be doing the same topics with you this week but I would not be too far behind (Sheila, key staff).

> … in Standard 1 we don't really [have regular section meetings]; we end up doing individual work or if you are good with another teacher you pair up with that teacher… if we were to meet, it would be to plan for… monthly test and end-of-term test... (Penny, teacher).

The majority (n = 18) of teacher questionnaire respondents reported seeing benefits to students' learning most times from these collaborative sessions. Professional development sessions, though few, were also targeted at solving school-related problems, enhancing teaching and learning and up-skilling teachers. Occurring in half-day sessions, once termly, they were facilitated by either internal or external personnel to the school and staff demonstrated positive attitudes to professional change and growth, according to all the teacher interviewees. Additionally, more than half (n = 17) of the teacher questionnaire respondents reported that staff most times used student performance data to inform their teaching but sometimes used research findings. Teachers actively sought ways to improve the curriculum offerings by making links with, for example, community NGOs and by including parents as indicated by the following comment:

> We have a library committee and they are really working assiduously to get the library going towards the end of this next term. ... the school board is assisting ... We also have a literacy drive ... where we [target] parents and students – well the students are always here – but we want to encourage the parents to learn also. We encourage the children to become members of NALIS [national libraries] where so much is available to them. So there is a lot that we have on stream … we are working on linking with a swim school and getting the buses to take them to and from… (Beverly, key staff).

With respect to teacher-teacher relationships, these appeared to be instrumental with the aim of maintaining a working relationship that facilitated the instruction of their students as alluded to in the following comments:

> … most teachers have a good enough relationship that if they know they are not coming to school, they usually send work or leave the work and they communicate. They let the neighbouring teachers know that, you know, I would not be here tomorrow and I'm leaving work for the girls (Sheila, key staff).

> … what I've heard from other teachers and their dynamics within their schools itself and how they have so much fun with their peers; they talk, they laugh. They actually have a staff room where you know they could bond and talk about issues. We do not have that. We're in the classroom from whatever time to whatever time. What else can you do, but deliver the curriculum as best as you could (Carmen, teacher).

Staff relationships were also competitive, according to all the teacher interviewees and were recognised as so being by Ms Figaro.

> … the teachers [here] are competing against each other… But it's a healthy competition.

> We strive as teachers to see whose class the [child going to a prestige secondary school] came from ... It's a sort of friendly rivalry … You hear, 'I had her in first year'; 'I taught her in second year or standard one or whatever' (Helen, key staff).

Additionally, in the interest of teaching and learning, teachers put aside personal discomforts and teacher conflicts.

> The staff - I must say - works very hard. Even though we would have personal disputes… It's very impressive to see how we work together despite whatever … I think that is what really drives the school (Penny, teacher).

Yet, teacher support at Community Pride was dependent on whether the teacher requiring support was trained or untrained, whether or not she sought support and whether or not supporting teachers recognised a need for support. Support, instructional or other, was provided by section heads, at weekly planning sessions or in ad hoc circumstances.

> Once you are a trained teacher, you go into a classroom by yourself. However, in your standard there will be a leader in the standard who will help you along as much as possible. So like if you don't understand something, you have that opportunity to get help. But in some levels it is better established than in others because really and truly I don't have any time to spoon feed anybody at four-five. However, I have the ear. So that if I realise that you are doing something that is incorrect, I will say well, "Miss, I think that this should be done, you know, let's try it this way" (Beatrice, key staff).

Support for new staff, however, took the form of enculturation rather than induction or direct mentoring, where newcomers were placed either close to or with more experienced teachers in classrooms. The main purposes of which, as revealed from teacher interviews, were to monitor newcomers and ensure appropriate school enculturation.

> Any new person coming, whether you came from a school or you were [trained] already, whatever, you were always placed between or next to an experienced teacher so you learn the culture of the school from them. These are things that you don't write down or you tell, but you learn... (Beverly, key staff).

James et al. (2006) also reported on the importance of induction and one-on-one and collective mentoring in the effective schools they studied. However, while at these schools "expectations were clearly explained" (p. 104), at Community Pride, the newcomer was expected to decipher the codes of the culture and follow.

> … [as a new teacher] you learn the hard way mostly. I have told management that [new] teachers need to be mentored. … There is no special orientation or anything like that ... It's just that we go and do what we are supposed to do and expect you to know what you are supposed to do and follow all the hidden and unwritten messages. (Beatrice, key staff).

Additionally, at the standard 4 and 5 levels, where teacher effectiveness was greatly expected and academic rigor high, direct mentoring and even socialising was less likely to occur, as alluded to earlier. Questionnaire data also point to irregular mentoring at the school for which almost half (n = 11) of the teacher respondents said less experienced staff was sometimes mentored; whilst another eight teachers said most times they

were not. The arrangement in which new staff found themselves at Community Pride was described as, at best, unwelcoming especially in their first year at the school.

> Sometimes it's difficult for teachers who've just come because they don't feel welcomed. ... you could feel alienated... if you are here after a year, you would realise that it's not that we are trying to alienate you the person...; it's nothing personal. ... Most of them, 98%, I would say, would fall in and start to get the beat. Sometimes it takes a toll for the first year maybe on their health or they feel a little more fatigued (Beatrice, key staff).

An additional source of discomfort for inexperienced teachers was a general lack of consideration of their knowledge by more experienced teachers, who expected them to be drawing from their wisdom rather than collaborating – a finding contradictory to that of James et al. (2006) who found that at the effective schools in their study that new teachers' fresh ideas, skills and qualities were welcomed as complementary to that of more mature staff.

> ... when you are placed between two senior teachers, regardless of how educated you are, remember you are there to learn from them (Beverly, key staff).

> … the teachers are very ageist and they are very oh I have more experience than you so I am better than you ... We [the younger/less experienced teachers] feel the same way in terms of how the [more experienced teachers] would be condescending and they would speak down to you, you know like, listen, I am telling you this because you cannot teach kind of thing … So it is like hush and take in what I am telling you even though you might have a different or creative way of looking at it; it's like whatever your way is, it is nothing (Penny, teacher).

This appeared to dispirit junior teachers and, possibly, weaken the relationships they had with more senior members of staff.

> If I am new tell me [how]... [The critiquing] was so ridiculous at a point in time that I didn't even care after that. That was the level of de-motivation and ... in any case, nobody wants to hear my side (Penny, teacher).

Ms Figaro was evidently unaware of this but recognised parents' unwelcoming treatment of newcomers and culture misfits in their protection of Community Pride's moving culture.

> … the parents, they are not easy. They'll treat [a new teacher] as if she were an outsider; so you are under scrutiny. You must toe the line or else.

It was evident that new teachers to the school had to prove themselves worthy of respect.

> … some teachers, especially younger teachers – for want of a better word – are not as respected as the older ones; younger in terms of [age and experience]. ... Teachers get respect based on their reputation. So, I would say that all the teachers try, but their success rate, the level at which they enforce discipline for instance ... If you are new here … parents tend to shun you. They don't treat you with the same sort of respect until you've proven yourself (Beatrice, key staff).

However, generally, relationships with parents were described as "critical" to the success of students and the school and so parents were involved in addressing the discipline and/or academic futility of their children and; at the standards 4 and 5 levels, assisting with exam preparation. They were also encouraged to participate in school events and their feed-back on school-related issues was welcomed. In these ways, the teacher-parent relationship thrived and seemed generally characterised by mutual respect. Consistent with findings by Barth et al. (1999), James et al. (2006), Maden (2001) and Sammons et al. (1995), parents were viewed by staff as "partners in education" (School information booklet, p. 14). All the teacher interviews reflect this as well.

> … for the entire staff, I would think, or the majority, teacher-parent relationship is very important and that is a great part as to why our girls do well because of the relationship, home-school-students (Beverly, key staff).

Staff had an open-door policy for meeting with parents should they have concerns and dedicated times each week apart from monthly PTA meetings for specifically discussing student performance.

Organisational structure

It was apparent to Ms Figaro that the VP's leadership was respected by school members despite the school's history of discordant principal-teacher relationships.

> The VP is younger than many persons here, but I have not seen them not wanting her – she has proven herself. Apparently she has been here for years and she worked under strange situations and she made things happen.

The principal-teacher relationship was characteristic of wounding and teachers were described as unsupportive and ill-disposed towards principals that they considered to be unsupportive, directive and crude towards them.

> … people felt that [a former principal] didn't speak to them properly … she told me certain things too that they would have said [that] hurt her. Yes, staff didn't think that she was right for the school, but do or die, they had to do their work ... They were afraid of her... [Teachers] did what they had to do but they [did not support her]... She had this karma that would have us urrrrgh... upset (Beatrice, Key staff).

Ms Figaro was also made aware of the lead disciplinarian role adopted by her predecessors at Community Pride, which functioned to keep both teachers and students 'under control' and though these principals had retired years before, their legacies had remained at the school.

> The principal I met when I came here, she had a tight rein on discipline. She was the type of principal that when you see her coming, you straighten up – [students and teachers]. She didn't have to open her mouth. ... even now people still talk about her ... (Sheila, key staff).

> ... when I came in, the principal at the time was a bit draconian to people ... you could see that she was a no-nonsense person ... but she had the children at heart. ... She meant that when you come to school, you've come to school to work; you didn't come on no fashion parade, you didn't come to [socialise]. ... she left a kind of culture ... that legacy that this is no nonsense; you come here to teach the children (Beatrice, Key staff).

With respect to decision-making, final decisions rested with the principal and vice principal, though teachers may be consulted – a finding consistent with that of, for example, Saphier and King (1985). Additionally, although most teachers (n = 18) reported that school members sometimes operated from a clear understanding of the school's vision, according to most teachers (n = 19) and 74 % of students (n = 64), teacher leadership was present. Interviews supported this.

> … we have sectional heads. Well you know the ministry has the official heads of department positions, right? Well even before that came on stream, we had what we called coordinators. So we put the most senior person in the section who would be responsible for calling the meetings, planning the work and overseeing what is taking place (Sheila, key staff).

Ms Figaro also had some knowledge of the school's management structures and noted the existence of the functional social structures for communication and discussion of school problems.

> This is a very outspoken staff: something bothering them, they tell us. We speak about it. … That is how I see it's done here. … We have a memo book where we put what's happening and pass it around or we tell one teacher, the head of each section and they deal with the section. I like that because the head of each section is able to call their meetings.

However, while management structures were workable they were not without shortcomings. For instance, management structures were inefficient for monitoring teachers' use of school equipment and resources and managing school documents and teachers' files as the following comment indicates:

> ... the former principal had [the office] in an utter mess. Supervisors were like going crazy. It was chaos, total chaos. [She] used to have things scattered all over the place, she didn't have a proper filing system, papers were piled up all over the place (Sheila, key staff).

However, a number of policies and procedures for various aspects of school management, such as student attendance and illness were listed in the school's information booklet (pp. 14-17), and senior students were

often involved in school management according to roughly half (n = 13) of the teacher questionnaire respondents and 55% of student respondents. A highly valued management structure at Community Pride focussed on managing student participation in extra- and co-curricular activities and reduced disruptions to teaching time. This included setting a common period and fixed durations for such activities as well as reserving extra-curricular activities for after-school hours or weekends, according to staff meeting minutes (27.01.2013), the school's information booklet (p. 14) and all the interviews.

> ... we normally standardize and say ok for sports, marching practice for all the houses must be at the same time. … we started off by saying that we are not interrupting teaching time... that is the structure we have had all the time, that Friday afternoon is the time for aesthetics: Art, Craft, Music, those things... (Sheila, key staff).

> We have a very strong guides unit, especially brownies – one of the biggest in the area. … [They're all] after school, every Tuesday is brownies and Friday is guides. … We have a vibrant Red Cross Unit too that meet on Fridays (Helen, key staff).

Social structures at Community Pride were generally functional. Communication with teachers was done via reminder notes or passing around circulars from the principal, through the vice-principal and 'section heads', or at staff meetings, briefings and/or departmental meetings which were often chaired by the principal or vice principal. These structures enabled school-related issues to be discussed and evaluated.

> … when we see things are not as we would like, we would consult with each other and see how we can bring up the standard (Beatrice, key staff).

Staff meetings, particularly, provided forums for identifying school problems or raising sensitive issues. Assemblies were also used to disseminate information and procedures existed for resolving student-related issues and staff conflict. While teachers tended not to fraternise

during the term; to encourage staff cohesion, they organised various end-of-term socials. However, some members of staff excluded themselves.

> … we have a birthday club, some people in it, others not. We have a social club where we try to pull everybody together. Easter is coming up, we usually eat fish and whatever. At the end of each term we spend time together (Helen, key staff).

Quality of the learning experience and environment

Regarding the quality of the learning experience, the high academic rigor at Community Pride was not lost on Ms Figaro.

> … the school is a fast-paced school; so, … where in some schools in the first term they would reach here, our school is always further along the road. … [O]ne teacher was kinda under pressure when she came and she was opposed to the pace the school was moving at... [T]hat particular teacher came saying, "It's hard to catch up".

The 'push' or academic press at Community Pride was consistently described as high and supports findings on effective schools facing challenging circumstances by Muijs et al (2004) and Maden (2001), who edited empirical findings of 11 such schools in the British context. Staff clearly believed that hard work and 'perseverance' brings success, as stated in the school's motto and reflected in their interview comments.

> The girls are pushed pretty hard in the classroom ... when we say 'push', we mean they are exposed to the curriculum to get the work completed. So teachers apply themselves to get the work done (Sheila, key staff).

Consistent with findings by, for example, James et al. (2006) and Sammons et al. (1995), such academic press seemed also associated to the high teacher expectations for students, according to questionnaire responses by almost three-quarters (n = 18) of the teachers and 95% of students. Interview findings are consistent.

> Especially when we see that they have [potential]. It just needs to come out. With some extra push, it will come out … I like the underdogs [the ones others least expect to achieve]. That's me. So I like to work with them and push them. I like that kind of thing; the adrenaline is there. (Beatrice, key staff).

> … the expectation is very high and we push a lot … especially when you see something in a child and you know that child could do well, you push. I see that, especially in Standard 4 and 5 (Penny, teacher).

The academic press/rigor was highest in the standards 4 and 5 (year 5 and 6) classes, where students in preparation for the SEA got copious amounts of challenging classwork and homework, intense practice and reinforcement exercises through working past examination papers and practice booklets, doing quizzes and regular revision. All the interviewees mentioned this.

> [The upper primary teachers] exemplify that force and they work extremely hard to make sure the children are at a certain level. That would include lots of homework – homework like crazy – you have your past papers and you have your revision sessions. ... … there is not anytime that feels like it just passed ...; everything is sectioned and, by the end of the day, everything is done (Penny, teacher).

> The work does be hard. We have a lot of work to do. Sometimes we are in the middle of a subject and miss would stop us and say, "Let's move on; finish it on your own time" (Rachel, student).

While teachers made provisions for students needing various degrees of support in the form of whole class review or extra lessons, individual learning support or removed students from the mainstreams for remediation with the aim of re-integration before the SEA year, Community Pride's high academic emphasis also meant that students were punished for academic futility, that is, for not completing class work or failing to submit a project. This was evident in all interviews. Punishment included embarrassment, in-class suspension, exclusion from class until uncompleted work was done, offer of extra time, corporal punishment and informing parents.

> They will feel discomfort when it comes to the school work aspect – when you're being asked for the homework and you don't have it, when you didn't submit the project. … because we are serious about our work, you will get some kind of punishment. Now, we have been telling teachers, "You know the ministry's policy. We are not supposed to beat the children". Maybe there are some teachers who take a little chance and do it, but generally, we don't. So it is a lot of calling in parents, sending them to the office for us to give them an

> administrative bouf as if… simple things like trying to embarrass them in front of the class, "Everybody else brought in their project, you didn't bring in your project", you know that kind of talk to get them to the point to say, "You see me, I don't want to get that again. I will do my project". Sometimes we take away recess periods or take away the lunchtime so they stay inside and complete whatever work (Sheila, key staff).

A high academic emphasis was also reflected in the purposeful recognition and celebration of student academic achievement at both the class and whole-school levels. All interviews were consistent in this respect.

> … not last year, the year before, we got four [students] in the top one hundred [nationally]. That was the most we ever got… So when that happens, the excitement and it's not just the standard five teacher; on the day of results, practically every teacher is in the yard to hear the results of the children they've taught, whether in standard one, standard three, you know, it's big excitement (Sheila, key staff).

> We get stickers or like for Mental, if anyone gets ten out of ten, they'll get like a sharpener or a pencil. We feel excited [about getting these rewards] (Marsha, student).

James et al (2006) noted a similar 'culture of praise' (p. 101) in the effective, low SES primary schools in their study as did Evans (2001) and Rogers (2001) in their reports. Observed in the outer office or reception area of Community Pride was an impressive assortment of academic trophies and plaques displayed on the walls, shelves and atop cupboards, showcasing prowess in core academic subjects and choral speaking. On the "achievement wall", also in the reception area, were exhibited on framed certificates the names of the students who performed in the top 100 nationally at the SEA – student 'heroines' (Deal and Peterson, 2009) of Community Pride's culture.

To maintain this academic focus, disruptions were kept to a minimum not only through the school's management structures and monitoring class progress, both already identified, but through additional efforts. For instance, school assemblies were short, lasting between 5 and

15 minutes and where there were interruptions to teaching time, provisions were made to make up for lost time to ensure syllabus coverage.

> [Teachers] value their teaching time very much. I might have to pass around to tell the teachers that we want to have a meeting at 1 o'clock …, you'll hear, "Oh, I'm in the middle of doing this; I planned so and so today; [Do] we have to have a meeting today…?". ... Or there are some ... while the meeting is going on, they are correcting books at the back. … there are some who may stand at the back and if they find that [a briefing] is going on... longer than it needs to be, they slip away quietly (Sheila, key staff).

> Even when we have interruptions..., teachers tend to put things in place to make up and get the work covered and to ensure that each child does have that opportunity to excel and to work to the best that they can work (Sheila, key staff).

Teachers' value of teaching time was aligned to the top priority they placed on teaching and learning, which was reported by most (n = 21) of the teacher questionnaire respondents and was also reflected in the 'quiet' tone of the school especially during class time.

> I am sure that you are surprised at the tone of the school and to think that we have blackboards separating classes and this is something that we have had ever since ... In my teaching career, every school that I went to, I would lose my voice because of having to shout over the noise and here I don't have that problem because I don't need to shout and you can tell from first year coming right up. We maintain that: classroom control, keeping the noise level down because it helps with the whole tone of the school so the school could run (Beverly, key staff).

Student discipline, which was highly valued, also contributed to the existing tone of the school and was dutifully managed by teachers – mainly the senior teachers or culture guardians – in similar ways as punishing for academic futility but also included assembly addresses.

> … we have our stalwarts in the school, teachers, to whom the children more or less are respectful. … certain teachers like [the ST] and myself, we can't see nonsense and we just pass [by]. So, most of the teachers would find some way to address the discipline; like I might say, "Miss I notice some girls in your class so and so, let's talk about it" or we may address it on the [assembly] (Beatrice, key staff).

> … some teachers in the school are bigger and taller and might speak loudly and sternly … If it is that anyone starts to shout and make a scene, you immediately get embarrassed…; so that strategy is usually what the senior teachers would use – that kind of shout-up thing. … that usually works with the bigger kids (Penny, teacher).

> [We get lashes with] a wood covered with tape. It's called viper (Myra, student).

Holding teaching and learning as top priority found teachers, particularly those at the Standard four and five levels, often discouraging student participation in extra-curricular activities, such as sports, during school hours.

> … we have had resistance to anything that would take the children out of the classroom … There were times in the past when we used to enter like district games and so on where teachers would go as far as talking to parents to discourage them from letting their children participate. You know, "I'm doing my work you know and I am not going to repeat"; so, by the time they have that kind of conversation with the parent, the parent would decide, "Here what, better you stay in school". ... that is why for a long time we have not been entering [sports] competitions (Sheila, key staff).

Ms Figaro identified with the high value teachers placed on academics at Community Pride and although she mentioned little about teachers' pedagogy, she noted teachers' efforts and shortcomings in the delivery of the curriculum.

> [Planning and record keeping] are things they did. Lesson planning is a little issue… They wouldn't necessarily write out a formal lesson plan, they would just jot down what they were doing. … they would always have their resources and teaching aides. In fact they didn't know that we had so many resources in the cupboards because they'd usually buy and bring theirs.

At Community Pride, teaching was predominantly traditional exposition with dominant use of textbooks and some use of manipulatives but lacked more modern approaches such as the use of technology and learning centres – a feature more reflective of the 'cruising' school whose advancement into the information age is inadequate (Stoll and Fink, 1996) and inconsistent with findings on effective schools (e.g. Rogers, 2001). All the interviews provided evidence.

> We have an OJT and some computers and I don't know if they are being utilised. We also need to have activity centres where more hands-on learning can take place... (Beverly, key staff).

Also alluded to in the key staff's comment above is the quality of the learning experience as being somewhat limited by the school's environment, which although well-maintained, lacked, for instance, an audio-visual room and learning centres. Existing special rooms, such as the library and computer room, were outdated and drab. Classrooms, though print-rich, were crowded. However, attempts at subject integration were evidenced that enriched learning opportunities, as indicated by the following extract:

> … for Carnival ... [w]e usually have a theme, which we usually take from Social Studies and we encourage whole school involvement; whether [students] participate in Carnival or not, they help prepare the costumes even though they don't come on the day. … we try to do things other than the academics to involve the whole school … In each class we try to incorporate some of those things, you know, a little drama, a little dance … (Beverly, key staff).

Students were also provided with opportunities to develop their cultural capital.

> [Students] weren't very exposed about the things that they should know. Now I am seeing a difference. Even now, as teachers we try to take them on field trips so that they would have the exposure. For instance, in fours and fives..., we always take the children to Tobago. We have our tea party, where children sit and have tea and dine and experience the finer things in life... (Beatrice, key staff).

> ... it's just a joy ... taking [students] places that they would never go and some of these places that we take these girls we know that is the first and the last time for many. So when we go, we make it special for them... [We go] all over the country. This term we'll be taking them to the air guard facilities... (Helen, key staff).

However, because classes were expected to keep pace with each other differentiated instruction was largely absent; although, a system akin to 'skimming the cream off the top' was present, where the highest performing students are placed in an A-class and the others distributed across mixed ability groupings.

> I have taught remedial classes here for a number of years, so we have had remedial classes; but now they tend to mix everybody... there are a few girls having problems so they are taken in recess time for extra work (Olivia, key staff).

> ... you have a class of say 25 [students] for the least and ... you have the few of them that need an extra push ..., they come in school and they get frustrated because everyone is moving so quickly... and they can't understand what is going on. Then you go to the teacher and the teacher shuns you off and says, 'what are you doing here you are supposed to know this', especially if it's an A-class and you are slow. … it's so fast and students like that... don't get a place to see if they can shine, we don't really acknowledge the whole Arts side – everything is academics (Penny, teacher).

Ms Figaro did recognise that some students needed support.

> [The children] work very well - some of them. There are a few who need extra help. They have challenges… You see when you have a large school like this, the classes are large and the teachers do not have that little extra time to spend with the child who really, really needs it. I think we need to have people come in to help these children.

Apart from academic support, Community Pride also worked at compensating for students' disadvantage – consistent with the findings of James et al. (2006) and Maden (2001). As such, a generally consistent focus on students' basic needs was evidenced. Teachers occasionally purchased meals for students if there were no extra FSM. Also, the school had established a uniform drive to cater for needy students or those requiring a change of clothes.

> I had a class once and there weren't any extra clothes. There was a virus around: vomiting and diarrhoea, and I had to deal with it and I couldn't deal with it, you know children sitting in mess. ... So I started to tell children to bring in [outgrown] uniforms. So they would bring their uniforms; they would give their teachers; they would give me and I would collect. What has happened now is that the stock has grown so much. There are so many. At the end of the term I would have them washed and ironed. I do much of it. I tell the children, if you need a second uniform, go to the office, collect one but first ask your parents' permission. And parents would also come in before school opens for a uniform, especially if they can't afford. ... they would take from the [principal's] office. It is done privately, so they would not come to me; the children would come to me (Helen, key staff).

Additionally, the school had a student savings initiative with two financial institutions (School information booklet, p. 12). According to the comments of six teacher interviewees, teachers at Community Pride also offered moral support and guidance to students and their families in recognition of the social challenges they faced. Guidance came in the form of practical advice, such as telling parents to take children to the national libraries, and moral development through counselling and storytelling on morning assembly.

> … on a morning after assembly, [teachers] would spend a couple of minutes teaching moral values, in some cases doing bible stories and that kind of stuff (Sheila, key staff).

> We do not ignore the moral aspect of the work here. We do a lot of counselling – teacher-student counselling, whole group, individuals. Usually the older staff, we counsel whole families, parents, everybody. … We have like 50% now – could be more – students coming from single-parent homes. So, the need for counselling is [greater] … the need for mothering them is very important (Beverly, key staff).

It was clear that teachers shared an underlying belief that education is a way out of poverty and abuse. James et al., (2006) recognised a similar mindset in the teaching staff of the schools in their study as "... a powerful desire to enhance the pupils' life-chances" (p. 101).

> … you have this special concern for that particular child because you know the history. By the time a child finishes the first year with you, you know that this child needs to get out of that situation, education is the vehicle by which … so you kind of pumping that into their heads, into the parent's head that this cycle of poverty must be broken or this cycle of abuse must be broken … (Beverly, key staff).

This was replete in students' comments as well.

> "you must learn your work so that you can be something good when you grow up" (Fayanne, student).

> [We have to] study hard to pass for a good school (Tessa, student).

Student orientation

Ms Figaro also recognised that students' dispositions to school not only differed but were influenced by the homes from which they came.

> The majority of [students] are well rounded and they have parents pushing them so as far as school work is concerned they are right there. But there are a few who, some have family problems, some the culture of home is different from the culture here. … we have some children here that come from fighting homes and they come here to fight because that's what they know and then there are children who don't know anything about fighting. They can't matchup to that.

At Community Pride students' attitudes towards school were reported as sometimes positive, according to 68% of student questionnaire respondents. Additionally, just over half (n = 14) of the teachers said that students most times took pride in attending their school. Student interviewees mentioned feeling proud that their school was one of the best in the district and nation; however, they all said that they most disliked students' discordant relationships and indisciplined behaviour, which are discussed subsequently, as well as some aspects of the school environment, such as the unsatisfactory cafeteria arrangements, hot and crowded classroom conditions and defaced toilets, indicating the attention needed to these.

> … students complain about standing in the sun and not having enough room to stand; they think that the whole school should be air-conditioned not just certain rooms like the principal's office and, in the classroom, some teachers keep the fan on them only (Keisha, student).

> I can't say [what I like about school] because the children make plenty bacchanal and fights and could get you into plenty trouble or get your things taken away. With all the marking up in the toilets, you don't feel comfortable using the toilets; sometimes you see blood on the walls from [sanitary] pads and stuff… I find that they should put mirrors in the toilet and fix up the toilets (Lana, student).

Student discipline, in particular, was a concern for the school, Ms Figaro felt.

> … there are girls in whom you see all the lady-like qualities and there are some girls who like they came out from some rough… Discipline wise we are alright but we have a few stragglers who want to bring in the street thing and we have to hold on to them.

Student discipline had deteriorated over time for various cited reasons, such as (1) a reduced use of corporal punishment and (2) students being

"penned up" and constrained by high academic press and strict class management, resulting in any acts of indiscipline being reserved for out-of-class times. Incidentally, offenders were mainly from the upper primary level of the school.

> When I came here … 14 years ago, the girls were extremely well behaved but over time, we have seen a change and I think it has a lot to do with the home environment and the use of less corporal punishment; as well as the change of administration too (Sheila, key staff).
>
> … After school that's when I see children go crazy … they figure that … their teacher is nowhere around to report them to the office or for them to get any kind of shame, so they do what they want basically after school (Penny, teacher).
>
> You see the standard 5s? … they does always break the rules... It's like a little group and they bully people … (Myra, student).

Questionnaire findings add to the interviewees' accounts, showing that students sometimes obeyed school rules, according to the majority (n = 19) of teachers and 65% of students. The presence of highly fickle and discordant student-student relationships, which consisted of fighting, cursing, name-calling and bullying, indicate a student sub-culture to the school's dominant culture.

> … the children make plenty bacchanal and fights and could get you into plenty trouble or get your things taken away. … sometimes [the standard 5s) take your whole lunch kit and throw it into the toilet bowl (Sally, student).
>
> To tell you the honest truth, my feelings are hurt every day by the children because … they say things to hurt you (Leah, student).

At the standards four and five level, in particular, there existed segregation between the girls of the higher performing classes and those who were not performing as well academically as the following comments suggest:

> … she [a std 5 student] is just making confusion and we does just watch her and laugh because we are doing [well] and she is falling behind in her work and making a fool of herself … She is only studying

> to quarrel and to fight. And she comes last in everything, with all kind of 18 out of 100 and thing (Tessa, student).

> [When I see the girls from the other classes], I just shake my head. I talk more with Tasha and Alicia because I am close to them and Tara, but the rest of them I don't really bother with them (Keisha, student).

Questionnaire data are consistent with this finding as 51% of the student respondents said that students belonging to different groups are friendly sometimes and 66% said that students sometimes treat each other with respect and fairness. This evidence is more consistent with the findings in ineffective low SES schools reviewed by Reynolds (2010) than with the findings of James et al (2006) who reported students' care for each other in the effective schools in their study.

During class time, however, students appeared to demonstrate a rather resilient work ethic because although most kept academic pace with their teachers, not only were they sometimes interested in learning, according to 58% of student respondents on questionnaires, but all the interviewees agreed that, in particular, standards 4 and 5 (years 5 and 6) students felt a myriad of negative emotions, such as frustration, longing and avoidance, in response to the high academic rigor and loss of break periods.

> I'm usually fine in class, but when break comes, I feel sad because I wish I could go outside (Sally, student).

> It feels like if you don't have a break. You can't even relax when you just come … as soon as Ms comes, it's "Alright, everybody get ready for test". It could be really frustrating because you have all the distractions … and you have to concentrate and try your best to get over that and you have to work over children bawling and talking [in the playground during morning and afternoon extra lessons] and at the same time you just want to run … (Simone, student).

It was also observed that students generally continued working even when their teachers had left the room and no teacher interviewee expressed concerns about leaving students unsupervised (Field notes – 18.01.2013).

At Community Pride, students' relationships with teachers were highly variable, according to all the student interviews which revealed that students got along well with a few teachers that they considered to be fun, fair, supportive, understanding or because they exercised more restraint in their use of corporal punishment.

> We get along well with [names three teachers]. They are fun. [Names two teachers] because they understand you; Ms M would make jokes (students).
>
> In second year infants, when I was in Ms P's class, she always used to be there for me and when children used to bully me or like take advantage, she would tell them not to do that. … she used to be like my best friend (Ria, student).

Among the senior student participants was an appreciation of those teachers they considered highly effective and interested in students excelling.

> I'm not afraid of Ms C because you see the achievements in the office … She is a really nice teacher. If you do something wrong she would come and talk to you and say don't do that and that "I'll have to talk to your mama". Like yesterday, she told me about my handwriting … and she encourages you to do your work … (Lana, student).

However, some other teacher-student relationships were characterised by fear, as indicated in the following comments:

> … the children are like afraid of [named teacher] because her voice alone would kill you. … and when she like shouts at us or beat us … [O]nce I got shouted at, wow, my soul just jump out of my flesh and I got so scared my heart just fall and sometimes you feel embarrassed … In this standard 5, I tell you the honest truth, we try our best not to get [the named teacher] upset (Coreen, student).

Although teachers tended to describe the teacher-student relationship more harmoniously than did students, both groups agreed that students most times respected teachers and felt that they could confide in them, according to two-thirds (n = 16) of teachers and 62% of students, which is crucial to students' engagement and achievement (Lee, et al., 1993 cited by Sammons, 2007). While Ms Figaro appeared to be unaware of the variable teacher-student relationships, she acknowledged teachers'

habitual and effectual use of corporal punishment in addressing student indiscipline.

> … [teachers] have a good track record of corporal punishment working.

With her deep cultural awareness of Community Pride's moving culture Ms Figaro decided on her interventions which are discussed next.

PHASE 2: BUILDING AND SHAPING

This section focusses on Ms Figaro's improvement foci and leadership practices towards building and shaping Community Pride's moving culture. The critical incidents (CIs) reported by Ms Figaro which formed the main source of data for this section are presented below. The data confirm Ms Figaro's use of all four types of principal leadership identified in chapter 2, but points to a predominant use of transformational leadership behaviours on her part. This section discusses this and shows the overall positive effect that this type of leadership had on school members' responses.

CI 1 – PTA Executive Bickering

Bickering amongst the executive body of Community Pride's PTA had erupted into open conflict on the school's compound, involvement of the National Parent-Teachers' Association and calls for the resignation of the executive president. The executive president refused to step down and meetings to resolve the issue were unsuccessful.

CI 2 – Staff reports

Near the end of her first term as principal, Ms Figaro had to prepare staff reports. Apart from feeling that she didn't know the staff well enough, she also admitted to never having done them prior to her present appointment. The vice principal assisted and she co-signed. Christmas vacation had begun; however, the reports still needed to be signed by teachers before submitting and the submission date was past due.

CI 3 – No signature / the culture misfit

Asked to sign their staff reports after the management team, consisting of the principal and vice principal, had reviewed it, all teachers did so except one. This teacher accused the management team of considering pass misdemeanours within the particular year's staff report. Having unsuccessfully tried to convince the management team that she deserved higher grades, she finally refused to sign the document, which was to be submitted to Ms Figaro's school supervisor.

CI 4 – Infant Admission

Coming from schools in which there was always room to take new student entrants or transfers, Ms Figaro was not accustomed to dealing with oversubscription. Community Pride catered for 60 new entrants each new academic year, but fielded out 150 application forms for which parents hoping to have their daughters attend would stand in line outside the school gates to first obtain a number, which entitled them to get a form – a first come, first obtain a form. To get a number, parents have been reported to position themselves outside the school gates as early as 3 am on the designated day. In her first year, Ms Figaro recalls being thronged by a large crowd of parents and eventually ushered by the security guard through the back gates of the school. She mused at parents' careful monitoring of the distribution of application forms and recalled the emotional pleas from the many parents who had either not received a form or whose daughters were not selected after the interview stage to attend Community Pride. Ms Figaro was also surprised at having to deal with the many who felt they had a right or special privilege to attend the school. She wanted to change this process because infant classes were too large, having over 30 students to one teacher, and because too many potential students were disenfranchised by the present selection process.

CI 5 – Unsafe vending

At the school, there had been vendors set up and operating for more than 25 years under one of the main stairwells, selling drink and food items. Although the Ministry of Health had advised on the situation, deeming it unsafe, minor adjustments had been made to postpone complete removal of the vendors. Ms Figaro eventually met the situation on her appointment.

Ms Figaro's school improvement foci and vision

According to the data, Ms Figaro chiefly focused on her relationship with school members, offering a different form of leadership from the directive, crude leadership that existed with her predecessors. She also focused on Community Pride's social structures towards promoting faculty cohesion and a shared sense of mission. Teachers' professional orientation with regards to their general satisfaction at school and the commitment of especially one regularly absent teacher were also objects of this new principal's attention. Ms Figaro also concentrated on providing support, instructional and otherwise, to teachers. There was also much attention on the quality of the learning experience with an aim to providing a more balanced curriculum. The reader may recall the need for improvement to Community Pride's school environment and curriculum offering with respect to physical development as well as the inadequate support on offer to, particularly, new and/or less experienced teachers.

Visioning and direction setting

While Ms Figaro's personal vision somewhat resembled the school's vision, particularly regarding the holistic development of students, she was working to set new directions for the school. A clear link can be seen between her personal values and the vision set for the school. Her vanguard project focused on institutionalising a more holistic view of student disciplining that favoured the use of alternative forms of disciplining over corporal punishment. Associated was her commitment to transforming students' dispositions that enabled more harmonious, caring relationships among them. Ms Figaro envisioned Community Pride graduates as "polished young ladies", able to impact their homes and communities and developed not only intellectually but socially, spiritually and physically.

> I want to see a school that is on top academically in the nation. But it must not only be academic, it must be an all-round thing. There must be sports and choir. You know, a wholeness. … When a child leaves here, all-round development must have taken place with every child. … I hope that at the end of the seven years that they can leave here as polished young ladies because I think the world needs polished young ladies (Ms Figaro).

Her foresight also included all school members working harmoniously rather than as rivals.

> I want to see with the teachers, students and parents a family-like togetherness not competition. It must be that when we're doing stuff, it must be because of our bond (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro also intended to develop a more effectively organised school, where school-wide adherence to school rules was normative and where school members felt comfortable. In setting these new directions Ms Figaro called for higher standards of school functioning.

Ms Figaro's reculturing practices

The data show that Ms Figaro mainly acted as a transformational school leader through redesigning the organisation, for which she most frequently worked at building a more collaborative culture amongst teachers and developing more trusting, harmonious relationships with school members. She also focused on developing and helping people. The reasons behind her predominant use of transformational leadership behaviours are explored in the section 'Understanding Case 2'. Following which, was her emphasis on management of the instructional programme and school activities. Ms Field's least used leadership orientation was political. A summary of Ms Figaro's leadership practices and strategies as discussed are presented in figure 6-1.

Redesigning the organisation

Building a collaborative culture

Ms Figaro worked at building a more collaborative, egalitarian culture through her joint-working and collegiality with staff. She worked most closely with the vice principal.

> I run things through [the VP] and we sit down and discuss things and she'll give me her point of view and then we'll reach on a common ground somewhere along the line… (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro also collaborated with members of the SBM team and teachers, both experienced and less-experienced, addressing staff's devalue for the input of less experienced teachers and encouraging faculty cohesion. She collaborated with teachers on various matters, at times asking their advice.

> As the TTUTA rep, I would draw things to her attention and of course immediately we would see how best we can figure them out. She never felt that I was trying to impose or anything like that. ... She would always try to consult … and come up with a solution that most people would agree (Beatrice, key staff).

> [At staff meetings] we get asked what do you think or what are our views. We are able to have a kind of free talking; so, you have

> something to say, ... you say your stuff and it will be considered: no kind of judgments whatsoever. Mind you the staff might have their own snigger … (Penny, teacher).

Transformational Aggregate:

1) Setting directions
- Blends personal vision with school vision
- Sets high standards

2) Helping/developing people
- Individualised support: counsels, provides information, demonstrates love
- Intellectual stimulation: involves teachers in management tasks and making presentations at PTA meetings; CPD; facilitates coaching/mentoring
- Models values & practices

3) Redesigning the organisation
- Creates collaborative culture: joint-work, collegiality with all staff; respecting teacher' knowledge & experience; asking for advice
- Develops trust & appreciates staff
- Builds collaborative structures: committees; teacher leadership; open-door policy
- Builds relations with parents & community
- Uses personal network

4) Transactional & Management Aggregate:
- Active management-by-exception: disbanding PTA executive
- Provides instructional support; clinical supervision; identifying professional development needs
- Enhances learning opportunities: sports participation & PE
- Monitors school activity: checklist system, walkabouts
- Addresses staff issues: principal-teacher meetings, involving School Supervisor, teaming absentee teacher with another teacher;
- Creates/enhances management structures: house system; student discipline matrix
- Orders the school environment

5) Political Leadership
- Persuades teachers to use disciplining alternatives
- Defuses situations by using interpersonal skills: openness; managing personal response; showing concern; effective communication; using social appraisal skills;
- Confronts teachers
- Buffers staff and students
- Makes log entries of school-related issues

Figure 6-1 – Ms Figaro's leadership practices and strategies

A large teamwork poster hung in Ms Figaro's office above her head and she often talked about the work at the school in 'we' terms. In collaborating, Ms Figaro generally utilised a joint-reasoning approach, which involved allowing persons their chance to present their views; listening, appreciating that school members may be more knowledgeable about certain aspects of the school and its culture; abstracting the merits of their arguments and; demonstrating willingness to compromise most

times. However, at times, she said that she had to insist on particular courses of action, rather than giving in or compromising.

However, whilst Ms Figaro worked to build a collaborative culture with and amongst staff, she recognised that there are times when collaboration is not required, for instance, in addressing matters that a teacher may wish to keep confidential. She also recognised that the final decision on matters rests with her even when they had been arrived at through compromise. One example was Ms Figaro's decision to dismiss vendors from the school for unsafe vending – Appendix C2: CI5.

> I told [the staff] that I was the one who came to that decision because I am the one who would get into problems should anything come out of it (Ms Figaro).

Developing trusting and productive relationships

Ms Figaro appeared to also be keen on developing trusting, harmonious relationships with school members, especially staff.

> … in the way she started to relate to the teachers…, she really made teachers feel comfortable and made us feel as though school was a comfortable, welcoming place to be. Ms Figaro worked on the relationships between her and the staff (Sheila, key staff).

She offered a listening ear through her 'open-door' policy, which allowed school members' open interaction with her on personal or school-related matters. With the disbanding of the PTA executive, which served as the only piece of evidence of management-by-exception, the principal's building of productive relationships with parents became especially important. Ms Figaro allowed meetings with parents to continue.

> One thing that was said was, "Who would be there for the parents? What if the teachers are beating up on the children, who would be there for the parents?" And we are saying that the parents would be able to come in and talk to us. And we are having [monthly] meetings. … The sections have their meetings every term with their parents (Ms Figaro).

She also instituted a new admissions policy to cater for additional children of current parents of the school, thereby maintaining good relations with parents.

> … there is nothing that says you must take in sisters [to the school], but it's just, well, because good relations: a parent has a child coming here, she has to take another child to a different school, no (Ms Figaro).

In denouncing corporal punishment as well, the principal actively worked at developing her relationship with students through hugs, listening to them and committing time to them.

> … when the girls come into [the principal's office], it might be a child who is giving trouble, [Ms Figaro] spends the time to sit and counsel not only just seek to punish, [but] to get to the root of the behaviour and initially seek to encourage them to behave in the right way, before she reaches to the part where ok I'm calling in your mummy or I want to suspend you or anything like that. … I have seen her show patience with some children that make me pull out my hair (Sheila, key staff).

> If like you have a competition like swimming outside of school, [Ms Figaro] would come and support you. ... She welcomes us at the [school] gate. … She is a really nice woman because when my daddy died, the day of my daddy's funeral she came and visited me (Myra, student).

She also demonstrated her appreciation of staff.

> ... [Ms Figaro] gives us credit where its due; so, if it is we did a concert and it was good – I mean whether bad or good, we worked hard. ... with [staff] meetings we have a little lunch, she brings in a little treat and arranges different things. That alone is refreshing because we have never had that before (Penny, teacher).

Another example is in her providing an office space for the vice principal who, under the former principal, did not have a personal space. To enhance the organisation and get things done, Ms Figaro also utilised her personal network of contacts.

Helping/developing people

Providing individualised support

Ms Figaro offered individualised support to school members through counselling, providing literature/information, demonstrating love through

offering prayer and companionship. The following extract shows such support given to a teacher who was highly irregular at school.

> I go out on a limb for this person…: I stand up and talk, pray and it is the same situation. I'm saying maybe I have to read some books to find out how to deal with this situation because I've tried everything… I spoke, brought little documents for her to read, tell her about things, even bring scenarios that [might cause her to reflect] (Ms Figaro).

Providing intellectual stimulation

Teachers were also provided with empowerment opportunities, such as involvement in the new entrants' admissions process. Teachers shared in the responsibility of interviewing parents and potential student entrants and had opportunity to learn about the process.

> … before it was just [the VP] and I dealing with all the interviewees; so [involving teachers in the admissions process] made them more aware of what we do and the challenges we have to face… (Ms Figaro).

Teachers were also encouraged to make presentations at PTA meetings, thereby developing them professionally. Such opportunities also facilitated the further development of teacher-parent relationships and focused on informing and educating parents. To this end, some PTA meetings featured external facilitators.

> Something we are trying is that at every PTA meeting, teachers have something to prepare to share. … [Also] we are able to bring in people who we think would be able to motivate the parents ... (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro was particularly committed to institutionalising CPD and had established regular CPD sessions, employing the expertise of external agents and senior teachers in passing on best practices, supporting less experienced teachers and meeting school needs, such as exploring alternative approaches to student disciplining and developing remedial teaching for students requiring learning support.

> … if this section is weak in language or reading or whatever it is, then we would have professional development geared to that need. … we were able to use senior teachers to do professional development so

> that they can tell the teachers how they approach [teaching at the senior level] and what they are looking for when the children come up there. I think that was very effective. You actually saw [teachers] going to the teacher who did the presentation to share what they have been doing and what they thought about [the presentation] (Ms Figaro).

> … instead of having [professional development sessions] for an hour or two [Ms Figaro] has increased them to half days and sometimes it would go for a day. … We follow guidelines from like the facilitators that miss would call in. … we do workshops every term to help out, to [learn] strategies. Last week we had one in Mathematics; so, you would find that all the teachers who have the slower children would've been in the workshop (Helen, key staff).

Ms Figaro also encouraged the coaching/direct mentoring of new and/or untrained teachers by senior teachers as a way of providing support to them. This was important considering the nature of available support for teachers, generally, and new teachers, specifically, that existed.

> … one [untrained] infant teacher has really blossomed and I see that she is rising to the occasion because she is teaching right now with another teacher who is leaving [retiring] soon … We have the head of that department there also looking out for her (Ms Figaro).

Modelling key values, such as inclusion, was also a strategy used by Ms Figaro to develop teachers. Four out of the 8 interviewees also mentioned Ms Figaro's role in developing the leadership of the VP, whose approach, they said, resembled that of former principals of the school.

> [Ms Figaro] would mellow [the VP], train her in you know nice virtues that may not have been developed. [The teachers] feel that it's a good blend, the best thing that could have happened. You see, [the VP] may not become principal here. With Ms Figaro's inputs into her, it would reap a perfect principal. ... miss will shine her up and polish her (Helen, key staff).

Management

Focussing on teaching and learning

Ms Figaro's management included a focus on teaching and learning. With the vice principal, she monitored class activities by having clinical supervision sessions, which involved observing lessons and having reflective discussions with teachers on those lessons. She used these

sessions to identify professional development needs, on which development workshops would focus. She also ensured that teachers were provided with necessary teaching aids and considered ways in which they could be better supported and their pedagogy improved.

> ... we are now doing clinical supervision so that we can zone in on the weak areas. We have seen some lapses in a couple of classes. … We are able now to liaise with the head of department ... so we talk about ... the little things that we saw... One of the first year teachers told [the other first year teachers] what we were seeing and what we needed to see and they are working on that. We did the same with the second years and with the standard ones. We are now with the standard twos (Ms Figaro).

Addressing staff issues

Ms Figaro also addressed staff issues, such as irregularity and tardiness, which threatened to upset the teaching-learning programme by talking with members of staff in the presence of the VP. In the case of a chronically unpunctual and irregular staff member, Ms Figaro went beyond speaking to this teacher to adopt strategies that would buffer the effect the teacher's poor attendance had on students.

> … [the regularly absent teacher] has not been assigned to a class by herself because Ms Figaro has been a little more aggressive in getting her to be at school ... We have been to the supervisor and at certain times the supervisor has been brought in to chat with her (Sheila, key staff).

Creating or enhancing management structures

Ms Figaro's leadership also included the creation and/or enhancement of management structures. Lines of communication were improved and a checklist system to monitor and encourage timely completion of staff's record keeping was operationalised. Additionally, in order to move into the set direction of the school practicing more positive disciplining, the principal set up a discipline committee to lead the development of a discipline matrix for the school and re-established a

student house system, which focused on punctuality and regularity at school, deportment, uniform and sanitation.

> … that is what our discipline committee is doing. We are trying different ways of disciplining. … So we have the house system in place (Ms Figaro).

To address the overwhelming process of handling new entrants' registration to admissions, the principal changed its management structure, deciding to: colour-code registration forms to differentiate sisters of current students who were admitted automatically, from other applicants; have the interview sessions on two consecutive Saturdays rather than during school hours and; engage the assistance of teachers in the admissions process.

Ordering the school environment

Her management also involved bringing order to the school environment: re-arranging and sorting the office and other spaces at the school.

> [Ms Figaro] changed around the whole office ... So, that was a pleasant surprise. It became neater, we didn't have curtains. ... bit by bit she was going through the school bringing order to the chaos because as I said my former principal was just not very organised and didn't make certain things important at all (Sheila, key staff).

Bringing order to the school also included Ms Figaro's dismissal of vendors at the school who were operating in less than satisfactory conditions according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Health. See Appendix C2: CI 5.

Political leadership

Co-opting teachers

Taking a political stance was observed in Ms Figaro's co-optation of teachers, trying to convince them to use alternative forms of disciplining to corporal punishment in alignment with policy mandates, for instance.

> I have tried convincing those who do it [issue corporal punishment] but they have a good track record of it working. But I can't exactly tell them to continue because it is against the law (Ms Figaro).

Defusing conflict situations

In order to defuse situations or treat with difficult issues, the principal used her interpersonal skills, such as identifying the problem openly and managing her personal responses, particularly by refusing to shout or argue.

> ... when the uproar started and [Ms Figaro] gave [the PTA executive] three meetings to quiet down and it was still a brawlish uproar, she dismantled it... Without shouting, without a strong eye, without the waving of hands or the finger, she said, "No more meetings" … (Helen, key staff).

Confronting teachers

However, when her character came into question, Ms Figaro confronted school members.

> She uses gentle persuasion. So she is not going to shout. Now, I mean I have heard her raise her voice at times but it would be in a situation where you really push her against a wall (Sheila, key staff).

An example is in her reaction to teachers' response to her dismissal of the unsafe vendors.

> When [the vendors] left, teachers who were close to her started saying that it was so unkind and unfair and it's a poor woman; but it was not said to me personally. I think that was the first time that people heard my mouth because I said, "I met this situation and when I first came here I asked concerning the situation, how it can be helped and nobody shared... I said, "You know the saying 'Uneasy is the head that wears the crown'". I said, "I am in charge here and should the MOE or anybody else comes, they would be coming to me and not to anybody else here, so I have to make that decision" (Ms Figaro).

Buffering staff

In her political role, Ms Figaro also acted as a buffer for teachers and a mediator in dealing with issues brought by parents.

> ... before it was more like "hush your mouth" to the staff and "you listen to the parents" because I'm thinking that [former principals] were afraid that [parents] will go running to the ministry to complain. … So I think more than ever, now, [teachers] are more represented and ... [Ms Figaro] will listen ... and say, "I highly doubt that the teacher would do this but let me speak to both of you" - that kind of thing - instead of setting off on staff. She represents us in that way… (Penny, teacher).

On occasion the principal also had cause to make log entries of issues with staff but did not use progressive disciplining, such as issuing warning letters.

School member responses to Ms Figaro's leadership

At Community Pride, school members were generally receptive of Ms Figaro's leadership. Therefore, support was a major school member response, followed by reasoning. However, disapproval/displeasure, confrontation, astonishment, wounding/defamation, and disregard were relatively minor responses to Ms Figaro's leadership, being less common. The responses discussed here were mainly from teachers.

Support

Teachers at Community Pride demonstrated their support in a number of ways, including compliance as captured in the following comment:

> … every single one of [the teachers] came and signed their form and I am saying it's so amazing… I thought it would have been hard because … for 31 of them to come and it was not a problem for them – Thank God. … [T]o me, at that point in time, it said "You have the support of the staff'. Because who leaving their Christmas holiday to come because you didn't do [staff appraisals] on time (Ms Figaro).

Teachers' willingness to try the house system proposed by the principal to help with student dispositions also demonstrated their support, seeing that

their previous attempt at such a system had failed. Teachers also welcomed Ms Figaro's attempts at enhancing the quality of the learning experience, particularly through clinical supervision, and were generally willing to accept her advice for improved pedagogy.

> So they have reintroduced clinical supervision ... where they'll come and listen to you teach. You know all of that helps to shape and form us and this is what we are asking for… (Beverly, key staff).

On the principal's decision to disband the PTA executive, teachers also lent their support by agreeing to meet with parents in a different way. Parents too supported the decision.

> In the absence of the PTA, there is a very strong support of the principal-parent meeting. ... when she called the following meeting the parents were there. ... I think they accepted her decision and they stuck by her for the decision she made. I think she got more than the backing of the parents. She got the backing of the board and the people of the whole community (Helen, key staff).

Some parents too were said to lend their support by offering assistance to the principal and getting involved in school activities. Teachers also assisted and offered advice in response to Ms Figaro's openness concerning a lack of knowledge in some respects.

> If she cannot handle something, you would know, she would tell you and the teachers would rush to her assistance or offer advice (Helen, key staff).

Teachers also participated in extra-curricular activities and took on extra responsibilities.

> … whatever occasions we have the teachers would support. If they can't come on the day [of the event], they would do what they can before to assist. ... We had a teacher before who would not take part in anything, but for our achievement day [this year], she came and she actually delivered the vote of thanks. So [Ms Figaro] has support for most things (Beatrice, key staff).

However, taking on the extra responsibility at PTA meetings met with teachers' initial resistance before support increased.

> ... at every PTA meeting, teachers have something to prepare to share. At first there was a bit of a pulling and tugging, but now we have more than half the staff attending, but each section is represented at least (Ms Figaro).

Amongst students, support was most evident in their compliance. An increased number of students wearing full uniform and reduced numbers being late to school had been recognised. Additionally, junior and infant students generally complied with Ms Figaro's positive disciplining more readily than senior students.

> [The students] try not to be in the principal's office to tarnish their names with her. If you like a person you try to live up to their expectations. ... now after they say, "Okay [Ms Figaro]" and they walk out [of the principal's office], ... they know that they can't be there another time because they are trying to redeem themselves so they will not come back to the office in that way. They would be like, Ms Figaro said not to do that again and I won't do it because I want her to smile with me today. I believe it works with some of the older children too… (Penny, teacher).

Reasoning

In response to decisions made by Ms Figaro, school members sometimes tried reasoning with her. For instance, regarding infant intake, one teacher presented her reasons why she thought the recommendations of teachers should be highly considered. Parents wanting their children assigned to a different class than that the principal assigned, met with her to persuade her. While a group of standard 5 students wishing that a certain vendor not be dismissed asked for an audience of the principal to present their case. The following excerpt captures the students' reasoning.

> ... [a class-size of standard 5 students] asked for an audience with the principal; those who were more outgoing. … they wrote their letters and they came to the office, presented their letters – one was typewritten – and it stated all their points as to why they think that I should [not dismiss a particular vendor]. It was very, very professional… [W]e talked and they still didn't understand but they had their say… (Ms Figaro).

Disapproval

Again with respect to the conflict involving the PTA executive, the PTA president was sorely displeased at Ms Figaro's actions and decision to disband the executive. Also, teachers showed their displeasure, for instance, when the principal installed the checklist / monitor board to record who had completed their weekly records and evaluations of lessons.

> Well when [Ms Figaro] came, in terms of Record and Evaluation, they put up this thing on the board. You would see a tick by those [teachers] who brought in. … It didn't last very long. I commented about it in front of both of them. … I didn't really like that and a number of other persons as well (Beatrice, key staff).

Confrontation

Teachers were confrontational toward the principal either in one-to-one encounters or, as in one incident, by forming coalitions that involved the teachers' union.

> [O]nce I made a log entry the teacher wasn't too pleased with it. … She didn't want to sign it because she thought that it implicated her. She came in with the TTUTA rep (Ms Figaro).

More frequent though were teachers confronting Ms Figaro about what seemed to be her inability to deal with a teacher who was regularly absent and late to school.

> … [the teacher's poor attendance] makes the other teachers kind of [upset] because imagine you are coming here every day, you [are] trying to work hard and this one person is 'neither here nor there' … At every [staff] meeting I am confronted with teachers' displeasure [over the situation] (Ms Figaro).

Astonishment/disbelief

Teachers and parents responded in shock when, for instance, Ms Figaro took the decision to disband the PTA executive. All the teacher interviewees reported their astonishment at her taking such an unorthodox action that appeared to be uncharacteristic of Ms Figaro.

> You see even though she is nice and sweet, she is still firm. … For example when the uproar started and she gave [the PTA executive]

> three meetings to quiet down and it was still a brawlish uproar, she dismantled it … and she more or less shocked the parents, even us [teachers]. Where did that come from? (Helen, key staff).

Teachers were also astonished when Ms Figaro confronted them about their defaming her.

> … every so often when … I have cause to be a little more assertive, it shocks people… … if [teachers] thought that I would have accepted [the defamation] because my nature looks like I am too soft, they were surprised. … One thing I said to a teacher in one of the meetings was, "Miss, I don't want you to ever take my meekness for weakness" and that surprised them too (Ms Figaro).

Wounding/Defamation

In the midst of conflict involving the PTA executive (CI 1, Appendix C2), Ms Figaro was subjected to defamation of character by the executive president, who cast her as gullible among other misnomers.

> I never confronted [the PTA executive president]. … We chatted cordially but eventually I was framed as being; she made it seem as though I am wimpy and that I was being manipulated by the NPTA president and the VP and; that the NPTA president was speaking for me (Ms Figaro).

Defamation was also the response of teachers upon the principal's decision to dismiss vendors from the school due to safety concerns (CI 5, Appendix 2). Ms Figaro was cast as unfair and unkind – descriptions she had not thought would ever be associated to her.

Disregard

Disregard was a response of some senior students to Ms Figaro's disciplining. They showed indifference and sometimes "[took] it as a joke" (Keisha, student).

> She talks and talks; she doesn't beat. ... and you does be like you're in Mars. ... When we were in the office she told the girl that if she saw her bullying another child that she would deal with her severely and she made us shake hands. The only thing we did after we came out of the office was laugh. We found it like funny, hilarious (Fayanne, student).

IMPACT OF CASE 2 ON COMMUNITY PRIDE AND MS FIGARO:

Here, the impact of the interplay between the leadership of Ms Figaro and the Community Pride's culture is presented. Cultural changes at the school were positive and were identified in: (1) organisational structure, (2) quality of the learning environment, (3) student disposition, (4) relationships, and (5) teacher commitment. Figure 6-2 shows a direct association between those changes and Ms Figaro's improvement foci. However, a look at National Tests across three years reveals an overall decline in student academic performance. Having had an emotionally-taxing experience, Ms Figaro learnt critical lessons especially in relation to the principalship as a job. These are further discussed.

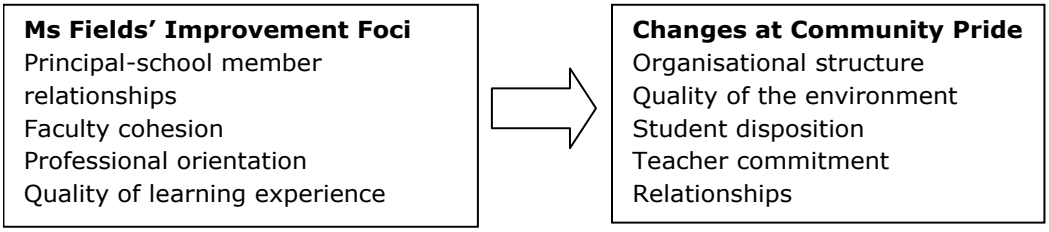


Figure 6-2 – Cultural impact at Community Pride compared to Ms Figaro's improvement foci

Cultural changes at Community Pride

Organisational Structure

A look at questionnaire findings shows that most teachers (n = 19) recognised a change in school management, with 11 of these recognising the change as an improvement. Three teacher interviewees recognised the potential of the new, more manageable structure to handling infant registration, citing reduction of class sizes as fewer forms were distributed and, a reduction in disruptions to school activities that this process customarily caused. Also, the principal's practice of developing a more

collaborative culture had impacted the social structures, such as communication, according to four interviewees.

> We discuss more things and we have more information filtering down to the other classes… So, we have more of a connection where they carry the information smoothly [and] we have better documentation in the office (Penny, teacher).

Additionally, her ability to garner the support of school and community members impacted on the level of finances the school had been able to raise, more than doubling profits made from other ventures in the past, according to two interviewees.

Quality of the learning experience and environment

Ms Figaro's vision and mission for holistic development realised an enhancement in the quality of the learning experience. Students now enjoyed and participated in Sports and Physical Education – an improvement reported by five of the 12 teachers recognising a change in this respect. Regarding the learning environment, school members, according to 3 teacher interviewees and all the student interviewees, recognised that Ms Figaro had actively implemented plans that were already in the making upon her appointment, such as the refurbishment of the school library and the creation of the school garden. All teacher interviewees and half the teachers on questionnaires (n = 13) also noted the principal's success in bringing order to the school environment, particularly the office, which was in dire need of re-organisation. Almost as many (n = 11) also noticed a significant improvement in the climate of the school due to the principal's leadership approach.

> … in the way [Ms Figaro] started to relate to the teachers…, she really made teachers feel comfortable and made us feel as though school was a comfortable, welcoming place to be (Sheila, key staff).

Of these teachers, 5 regarded it to be an improvement. However, due to Ms Figaro's dismissal of unsafe vendors, school members now had to cope with the one unsatisfactory cafeteria at the school or make alternative

arrangements for refreshments, according to Ms Figaro and all the student interviewees.

Student disposition

A significant impact of the interplay appears to be on students' disposition. While the principal's approach to disciplining had been reported as having little or no impact on the senior students of the school, teachers expected that in time the effect on them would be manifested, according to four teacher interviewees.

> ... standard five girls who want to be rude and who feel that they are big, you would see them coming, still looking to have a conversation with [Ms Figaro] – not that they have totally changed their behaviour – but they make a connection with her. And you know once that kind of connection is made eventually the time will come when they too will start to change. They'll start to reflect on what they are doing (Sheila, key staff).

However, generally, positive impact was seen in students' attitudes to school and adherence to school rules. The number of students being tardy had reduced and more students were wearing full uniform, according to the four teacher interviewees. The impact on younger students' disposition was more noticeable, according to one teacher interviewee. Of the 9 teachers observing a change in student discipline on their questionnaires, a third of these said it was an improvement; however, the 6 standard 5 student interviewees reported not-so-positive impacts to the principal's approach to student disciplining. They lamented that students had become more indifferent and more disobedient to school rules and were more inclined to expose teachers for issuing corporal punishment. They also reported that Ms Figaro's talking caused no observable improvement in students' behaviour, such as bullying.

> It's kinda unfair to the person who was bullied. We're not getting justice; the bully is not getting punished and she would come back and do the same thing. You know, if you go to [the VP] with that, she will punish the bully (Leah, student).

Teacher commitment

On observing the actions of the new principal, which included her re-organisation of the office environment; allocating a personal space for the vice principal, who didn't have one under past principals and; appreciating teachers, one young teacher who had expressed her demotivation and feelings of estrangement from the staff under a former principal told of her increased commitment to the school.

> ... the VP is getting her personal space. It starts from there. When I saw that, I was so impressed. When, [Ms Figaro] said welcome back teachers, I wanted to faint in that [re-organised] office because I was so shocked.... it's the little things that count, simple things like that can change the way a person feels about what they do and who they are, it's simple. When I saw that, I said, "Right, let me go teach". I got a burst of energy, "let's go!" (Penny, teacher).

Additionally, through the principal's efforts, there had been a slight improvement on the part of the chronically absent teacher to be present and punctual at school as reported by two interviewees. Nine teachers on questionnaires noted a change in teachers' attendance, with four assessing it as an improvement.

Relationships

The principal's attempts at inclusivity enhanced the relationship she had with a self-estranged teacher although, according to the principal, additional time was needed to solidify the teacher's trust in her. Ten teachers on questionnaires confirmed changed relationships among teachers, with half of these (n = 5) regarding the changes as improvements.

While not evidenced, Ms Figaro's attention to CPD likely improved the relationships between more experienced and less experienced teachers as they learn together and, in turn, strengthened staff's collective efficacy and organisational commitment (Parker, Hannah and Topping, 2006, cited

by Leithwood and Beatty, 2008). Such improvements, according to the researchers, will also likely redound to increased student achievement.

Changes in student academic performance

Over the 3 years, 2012 to 2014, Community Pride's mean student performance in Mathematics and Language Arts National Tests (NT) remained consistently higher than both the district and national means (figure 6-3); however, as a school, its performance had generally declined in 2014 compared to the earlier years.

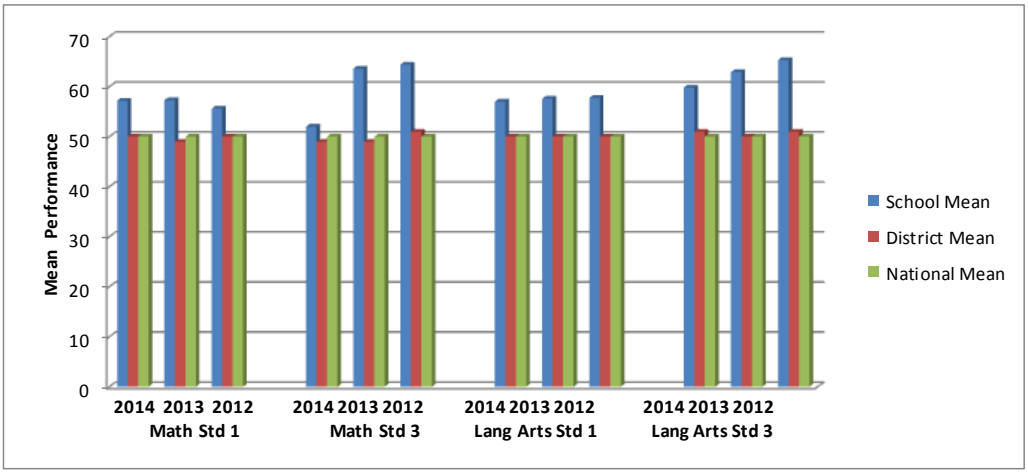


Figure 6-3 – Community Pride's NT performance over 3 years

This overall decline was reflected in the school's API (see table 6-2), resulting in Community Pride losing its status as an 'excelling' school and being reclassified as a 'mostly effective school', for which the range of scores is 241-400. Interestingly, on questionnaires, most of the teacher respondents (n = 21) had observed no change in students' academic performance and of the 4 teachers reporting to have seen a change, 3 of these counted it as an improvement, possibly including or referring to students' performance on teacher-made assessments.

Year	2012	2013	2014
API	428	392	352

Table 6-2 – Community Pride's API over 3 years

Ms Figaro's emotions and lessons

Ms Figaro's emotional challenges

Ms Figaro's critical incidents were generally challenges or dilemmas put before her and the emotions aroused from these incidents were mixed. While Ms Figaro admitted to generally feeling satisfied working with staff at the school, she mentioned feeling surprised, challenged, hurt, discomforted, annoyed, fatigued and angry during her encounters with Community Pride's culture and in response to school member responses.

A number of happenings surprised Ms Figaro, but she was most *amazed* at the clamour among parents and teachers over infant registration to Community Pride.

> Three o'clock in the morning, there was a parent sitting in his car outside waiting until they started giving out [infant registration] forms. ... I don't know if they were bothering [the security officer] so she gave out the numbers, not the form. At eight o'clock, she gave out the forms. That was my first time of seeing that kind of thing. ... If you had seen how many people! ... she actually had to push me through the back gate and through the parents to bring me in (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro also related feeling *challenged* to find solutions to the issues that she faced – solutions to simplifying the infant admission process at the school, encouraging inclusivity, improving the attendance of the chronically absent teacher and empowering students.

> ... every so often [the VP] and I, we are chatting about, how we can make a difference. I am asking other principals what they do, how they do it. But I don't think they have the challenge of having so many people [wanting to register] (Ms Figaro).

> When I saw the children coming to me [concerning her dismissal of vendors]... surprisingly I felt these are children to empower to

> move; they are the future leaders and they are doing the right thing... (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro's determination to improve the attendance of the teacher who was often absent capitulated into *annoyance* and *fatigue* at not seeing a change in the chronically absent teachers' attendance after all her efforts.

> I thought I would have been able to make a difference. In the beginning I was saying, "I must make a difference in this. This is one thing I want to change." And still I haven't given up but at the same time I, you get weary and when you see boldness on top all that… and always, there is always some nice long sad story (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro also experienced *hurt* by, for example, the PTA executive president's defamation of her character.

> I felt hurt because this same lady [executive president] was the first lady who met me. She met me the very first day and told me about the school and she sent a letter welcoming me to the school and things like that and afterwards when I saw the behavior it was like hurtful (Ms Figaro).

According to Ms Figaro, the entire conflict involving the PTA executive caused her some *discomfort*, not wanting to be associated with it.

> It was a bitter taste in my mouth for a long time because I kept saying… this was the first time that I was hearing anything like this happening and especially at my school. I never want any kind of confrontation, bacchanal [and] fracas (Ms Figaro).

Although Ms Figaro did not get angry easily, in the face of staff's defamation on her dismissal of school vendors, for instance, she did get angry and voiced her anger in order to set relational boundaries with school members.

> I think that was the first time that people heard my mouth ... I said, you know the saying "Uneasy is the head that wears the crown". I said, "I am in charge here ..." it was one voice I heard making this big thing and sometimes it's only one voice it takes. But that is the voice that you have to silence one time... many people would probably say that [I am] very quiet and cool and I can be taken advantage of but I have had to draw the line sometimes (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro's lessons

Ms Figaro's lessons about the job were revelatory for her, being new in post. With respect to addressing dilemmas, Ms Figaro concluded that it was **sometimes very difficult to make decisions**, but had learned to do so by selecting the path of least debilitating consequences/outcomes. Such a path was guided by a need for acting in accordance with her vision and determined by weighing the likely outcomes of decisions and examining her own motives in making decisions.

> The one thing I learnt is that sometimes it's very difficult to make decisions and you always have to look at the reasons, the outcomes and why I am doing it. And if you were to take the fact that you may be hurting people; look to see who you are hurting more (Ms Figaro).

Ms Figaro had also surmised that **the principal's power/influence is limited** with respect to dealing with recalcitrant staff, referring to her dealings with the absentee teacher at the school.

> … it showed me how little power the principal has. Because I find as a principal I should be able to say – because why must I have someone here who is getting paid – paid every month – and probably the same amount as and even more than some teachers who working so hard and you are not here for more than half of the time. So, my hands are tied (Ms Figaro).

She had, consequently, gained a better appreciation of the reasons behind her former principal's actions now that she was in the position. She had also come to realise the extent to which the **principalship affected her personal life**, cutting into the time she would have spent with family and friends prior to the appointment.

> ... when you are a principal you really have no holiday of your own. You cannot make plans with your holiday because … if they are working on the school, I have to be around. ... [the first holiday] I came very early and stayed late; this time I was able to do something at home or go somewhere and then come here, so I learned how to manoeuvre my time. But sometimes I wanted to go for the day and I could not (Ms Figaro).

With respect to school change, Ms Figaro came to realise that it takes time and is more likely with the involvement of teachers. The change she hoped for in the school's approach to student disciplining, for instance, was slow in coming. However, she had come to appreciate the wisdom in involving teachers in the infant admissions process and had decided, consequently:

> … to get more people on board in the whole aspect of selection and everything so we [principal and VP] wouldn't be the only ones [doing them].

From her encounters with school culture, Ms Figaro also recognised that she needed to alter her relational approach with school members, especially teachers.

> I have a better outlook of the persons and their personalities that I am dealing with; so now I know, I don't treat everybody the same way ... Before, with all, I would be gentle. I tried to be calm, and tried to be professionally cool. But there are some people here with whom you have to use harsher methods and I have had to resort to that at times.

A need to sometimes exercise "tough love" for the greater benefit of the school, ignoring at times the dissatisfaction of school members was identified by Ms Figaro in regard to addressing staff issues and dilemmas, such as 'Unsafe vending' (CI 5, Appendix C2).

> I have to exercise tough love because [one of the vendors] and I went along [well] and I have not seen her after… I know that she was hurt. … [W]hen she was leaving, I went to her and said, "I really don't want to make this decision but I have to..." (Ms Figaro).

Pre-explanation summary of case 2

Case 2 has shown that despite staff's initial wariness upon Ms Figaro's appointment, teachers, and thus the moving culture of Community Pride, eventually responded in support of her predominantly transformational leadership approach. As a consequence of this generally positive leadership-school culture interaction school processes, such as learning opportunities for school members, were positively impacted but

student performance had declined. Also, Ms Figaro related experiencing emotional challenges that informed mainly her thinking about the principalship as a job. Explaining this case is next.

UNDERSTANDING CASE 2: EXPLANATIONS

Having presented the two phases of the interplay between Ms Figaro's leadership and Community Pride's moving culture and their impact on this new principal and the school, this section is dedicated to explaining the overall pleasant nature of the interplay of this case. Five explanations are proffered.

Explanation 1: School change at Community Pride was influenced by, but not limited to, Ms Figaro's school improvement foci.

Clear associations were observed between Ms Figaro's cultural awareness, her school improvement foci and the sub-dimensions in which change occurred. For instance, her intention to improve the nature of the principal-school member relationships that existed prior to her appointment was a direct consequence of her recognition of same, which resulted in positive strides in this respect. The same can be said about the other culture dimensions which formed her school improvement foci, such as the quality of the learning environment and the professional orientation of teachers.

Yet, school change went beyond the limits of Ms Figaro's focus. Her inclination for transformational leadership behaviours allowed attention to be paid to even those sub-dimensions of Community Pride's culture of which Ms Figaro seemed unaware. For instance, encouraging the participation and input of all members of staff at staff meeting addressed the devaluing of the knowledge of younger/inexperienced members of staff by more senior teachers. Her focus on teaching and

learning also attended to the weaknesses in teachers' pedagogy, of which she had little knowledge initially. However, while these and other effectiveness processes were impacted positively, Community Pride's performance on national tests had declined.

It may be that this decline was symptomatic of 'growing pains' associated with, for examples, the changes in student disciplining; adjustments in teachers' pedagogy and; curriculum enrichment through sport participation, resulting in the reduction of teaching time, all introduced by Ms Figaro. Since these changes in themselves are ultimately beneficial to student achievement (e.g. Day et al., 2011; Maden, 2001), it may be that as these changes become institutionalised, Community Pride may again experience improved academic performance.

<u>Explanation 2:</u> Ms Figaro's propensity to transformational leadership practices was most influenced by her openness, need for harmony, her professional values and collaborative role conception; but informed by vicarious experiences of the principalship.

Ms Figaro's openness, a personal quality, as well as her need for harmony, one of her motivational attributes, appeared to be most influential to her leadership, being associated to most of her practices and strategies. See table 6-3. Ms Figaro's openness in influence, for instance, was observed in her support for teacher leadership and her trust building with staff; while her strong need for harmony was expressed in actions, such as building a collaborative culture with and among staff and disbanding the PTA executive though it defied her non-confrontational disposition.

TRAITS/ATTRIBUTES/ DISPOSITIONS		CONFIRMING PRACTICES/STRATEGIES
Cognitive Ability	**Analytical**	• addressing staff issues & dilemmas: gathering/presenting evidence **(M)**
Personal Quality	**Open/sincere**	• encouraging teacher leadership **(D)** • creating collaborative culture **(R)** • building collaborative structures **(R)** • developing trust **(R)** • dealing with staff issues **(M)** • using interpersonal skills in challenging situations **(P)**
	Humble	• asking for advice **(R)** • listening to school members **(R)**
	Self-consistent	• setting high standards of school functioning **(S)** • modelling values and practices, e.g. positive student disciplining **(D)** • building collaborative culture **(R)** • checklist system (contradictory) **(M)*** • managing personal response **(P)**
	Straightforward	• addressing staff issues: principal-teacher meetings **(M)** • confronting teachers **(P)**
Motivation	**Need for achievement**	• setting high standards **(S)** • developing people: all **(D)** • using personal network **(R)** • providing instructional support **(M)**
	Need for harmony	• articulated in personal vision **(S)** • building productive relations with parents; developing trusting relationships **(R)** • creating collaborative culture: joint work; collegiality; asking for advice respecting; teachers' knowledge & experience **(R)** • creating structures for collaboration **(R)** • disbanding the PTA executive **(T)** • using interpersonal skills to defuse situations **(P)**
Social Appraisal Skills	**Willingness to listen**	• individualised support **(D)** • developing trusting relationships: listening to school members **(R)** • creating collaborative cultures: asking for advice; joint work; respecting teachers' knowledge & experience **(R)**
	Approachable	• developing trusting relationships: open-door policy; care & appreciation **(R)**
	Trustworthy	• individualised support: e.g. counselling **(D)** • developing trusting relationships **(R)** • making log entries on staff [policy-dictated practice] (contradictory) **(P)***
	Firm but considerate & caring	• individualised support: counselling, providing information, demonstrating love **(D)** • care & appreciation of staff & students **(R)** • addressing staff issues & student discipline **(M)**
Disposition	**Mild-tempered or non-confrontational**	• disbanding PTA executive; confronting teachers (contradictory) **(T)*** • addressing staff issues **(M)** • interpersonal skills to address situations: managing personal response **(P)**

S – Setting directions; D – Developing people; R – Redesigning the organisation; T – Transactional; M- Management; P – Political

Table 6-3 – Ms Figaro's attributes as associated to her leadership

Table 6-4 shows the associations between Ms Figaro's values and her leadership practices and strategies, with the most influential values highlighted. Evidently, her professional values sat at the core of her leadership – a finding noted among successful principals (e.g. Day, 2003),

assisting in reducing the complexities of dilemmas, thereby allowing the emergence of 'value-compatible solutions' (Mumford et al., 1993, cited by

Ms Fields' Values		Confirming Practices/Strategies
Basic Human Values	**Love**	• individualised support: counselling; demonstrating love **(D)** • developing trusting relationships: demonstrating support & care for students; appreciating staff **(R)**
General Moral values	**Inclusion**	• creating collaborative cultures: respecting teachers' knowledge & experience **(R)** • building structures to foster collaboration **(R)** • disbanding the PTA executive (contradictory)* **(P)**
Professional Values	**High academic achievement**	• setting high standards of school functioning **(S)** • focus on teaching & learning: providing instructional support; clinical supervision; identifying professional development needs **(M)** • monitoring school activity **(M)**
	School & students' best interest	• vision of students as "polished young ladies" and holistically developed; no corporal punishment **(S)** • CPD and support for teachers **(D)** • support & care for students; listening to them **(R)** • redesigning the organisation: all **(R)** • enhancing learning opportunities **(M)** • ordering the environment **(M)** • creating/enhancing management structures **(M)** • monitoring school activity **(M)** • buffering students **(P)**
	Professional development of teachers	• intellectual stimulation: involving teachers in management tasks & presentations to the PTA; CPD; coaching/mentoring **(D)** • modelling **(D)** • building collaborative structures: joint-work **(R)** • building structures for collaboration: teacher leadership; new committees **(R)** • focus on teaching & learning: clinical supervision; identifying development needs **(M)**
	Participation of stakeholders	• facilitating professional learning & parent education - external agents **(D)** • building relations with parents, students & community **(R)** • using personal network **(R)**
	School's environment and image	• vision for school **(S)** • bringing order to school environment **(M)** • disbanding PTA executive **(P)**
Professional Beliefs	**Children can be disciplined in alternative ways to corporal punishment**	• vision for no corporal punishment **(S)** • organising collaborative workshop on positive disciplining **(D)** • modelling positive disciplining **(D)** • setting up a committee to develop a discipline matrix **(R)** • persuading teachers to use alternative methods **(P)**
Social Values	**peaceful, harmonious relationships: teamwork; shared decision making & input of all**	• vision for school harmony **(S)** • developing trusting relationships **(R)** • building collaborative cultures: joint-work with VP & SBM; collegiality; respecting staff's knowledge & experiences; asking for advice **(R)** • building structures for collaboration: new committees; teacher leadership **(R)** • displaying teamwork poster **(R)**interpersonal skills to address issues: effective communication; openness; managing personal response **(P)**

S – Setting directions; D – Developing people; R – Redesigning the organisation; T – Transactional; M- Management; P – Political

Table 6-4 – Ms Figaro's values as associated to her leadership

Warwas, 2015, p. 314). Values for the best interest of the school and students was most apparent in Ms Figaro's focus on teaching and learning, while a value for the professional development of teachers extended to her development of staff and redesigning the organisation. Ms Figaro's value for harmonious relationships strongly influenced her redesigning the organisation, particularly with respect to building a collaborative culture among teachers.

Why Ms Figaro led in the way she did is further explained by her role conception and sources of efficacy.

Role conception

Ms Figaro conceptualised her role as principal in two related ways: a *fine tuner* and *collaborator*. She shared:

> … there is still need for a little fine tuning and that is the little extra that I need to add. … I am not here to make no big drastic change; I am here to support and I am here to carry on and I am here to try and see what we can do to make [the school] better.
>
> I am here to listen to [teachers] and I know that I have plenty of experience to give to them to help them through their cases; whether it is of a personal nature or something to do work-wise or work-related, I am here and I also see them sharing their experience with me... [M]ost things that I do – I make sure [the VP] gets involved in it ...; that's how I think administration should be.

As a fine tuner and collaborator, it was evident that Ms Figaro recognised that the school's success prior to her appointment was made possible by the efforts of school members and the school's existing capacity for improvement; but understood that sustaining school success required capacity enhancement and enlargement and the input of all stakeholders. Her fine tuning was evident in, for instance, her attempts to improve organisational capacity, as in the infant registration process and; personal and professional capacities by institutionalising CPD, for example. As collaborator, Ms Figaro consistently worked at building a collaborative

culture and structures, thereby encouraging staff cohesion and increasing collective organisational commitment.

Sources of self-efficacy

Although Ms Figaro was duly qualified in Educational Leadership at the degree level, she attributes her leadership know-how to more non-professional and informal training experiences, such as faith-based leadership training, which especially has prepared her to head the all-female staff at Community Pride.

> My spiritual background also impacted my leadership training. … At my church, we are about creating leaders – women lead women and men lead men. We meet in groups. I have my sphere of women. … When I came here… at my first staff meeting as I sat, it was as if the Lord said, "This is it, you are leading women". Because it is a school of women, there are no men here. I even mentioned it to them about my church and that we are about women trying to empower other women… (Ms Figaro).

Observing and working with the principals of her former schools and dialoguing with close colleagues who were principals allowed Ms Figaro opportunities to appreciate their various leadership approaches, learning from the impacts of these.

> From [practicing and retired principals] I have had the informal learning for the principalship. Each person's style was different which I think contributed to my ability to observe quietly and sometimes question the impact these styles had on the various persons under their leadership and even on the institutions which they managed (Ms Figaro).

Such learning, therefore, enabled Ms Figaro to lead in a way that demonstrated her value for the best interest of the school and students. Apart from these valuable vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1977), Ms Figaro benefited from those from her former school, where in the capacity of vice-principal she achieved success though her own actions or observed strategies that worked, as alluded to in the following comment:

> … have the house system in place. That is one I know will work because it worked at my old school (Ms Figaro).

<u>Explanation 3</u>: While there existed a high degree of compatibility between Ms Figaro's professional values and those expressed in teachers' professional orientation, there was low compatibility with her social and moral values.

In essence, the challenge for Ms Figaro was in developing a more egalitarian culture among teachers and more harmonious teacher-student, student-student and principal-teacher relationships. This low compatibility of social values (see figure 6-4) explains teachers' initial distrust of

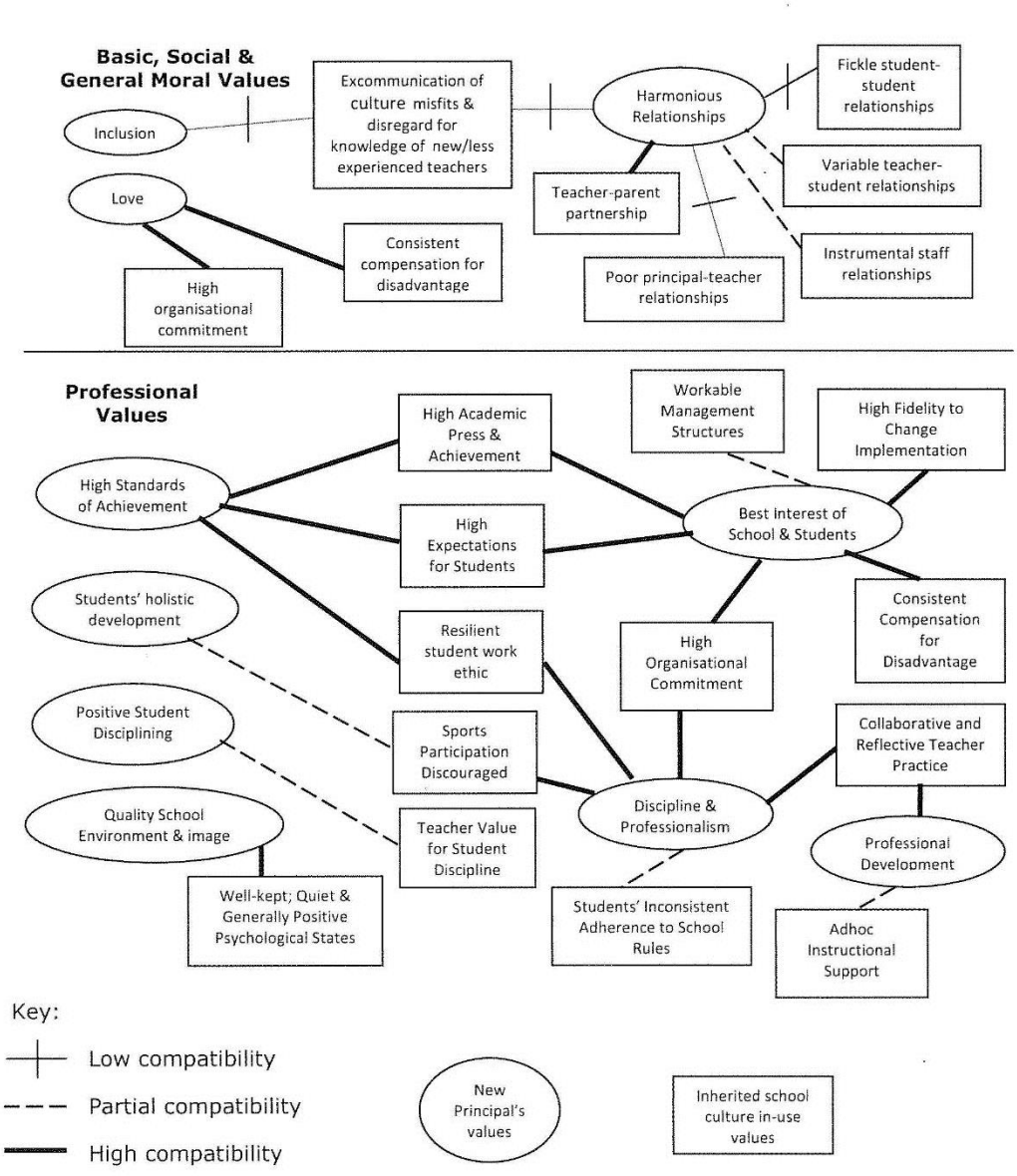


Figure 6-4 – Case 2 values compatibility

Ms Figaro and senior students' disregard for her disciplining. The legacy of former principals who acted as lead disciplinarians and whose relationships with staff were lacking most likely contributed to this low compatibility of social values. However, the high compatibility of professional values (see figure 6-4), being the common ground for communication between Ms Figaro and school members of Community Pride, facilitated trust development and staff's eventual support of Ms Figaro's leadership.

<u>Explanation 4:</u> School members' overall positive response to Ms Figaro's leadership was as a result of their developing trust

For school members at Community Pride, trust development was facilitated by two factors: 1) Ms Figaro's personal attributes, and 2) the presence of a VP. Teachers, in particular, appreciated Ms Figaro's open, respectful and collaborative manner when interacting with them, while students, especially, the younger ones, were described as being in awe of her and not wanting to disappoint her. Ms Figaro's personal attributes strongly influenced her largely collaborative and supportive leadership approach, to which school members most commonly responded in support. This evidence underscores the importance of new principals' personal attributes to trust building in the development of relationships with school members. Ms Figaro's boundary setting also likely contributed to the development of trusting relationships with staff. It seems that at Community Pride, the underlying belief that newcomers must prove themselves had been put into action regarding Ms Figaro; thus, the more she proved herself as competent to lead staff, was the more school members' confidence in her leadership grew and the more they appeared to be supportive of her leadership.

The presence of a VP without class teaching commitments also enabled the gradual development of trust between Ms Figaro and school members. The VP acted as a go-between in the interim, reducing any initial anxieties experienced upon the appointment of the new principal.

> … I think that the change was not too dramatic for [the staff] simply because I was there still; so that they were accustomed to me and how I would approach things … Ms Figaro and I had some time – she came and took up duties during the July-August vacation – so I was working along with her even before school reopened. So, by the time school reopened, miss and I had already started working together and started to understand each other … (Sheila, key staff).

The VP, knowing the culture of Community Pride, also acted as a sound board to Ms Figaro's reculturing ideas and decisions, enabling their refinement before presentation to staff and before being put into action. Thus, most of Ms Figaro's interventions were received positively by school members, having been tailored in consideration of Community Pride's culture.

<u>Explanation 5:</u> School members' responses to Ms Figaro's leadership served two main purposes: 1) to demonstrate confidence in principal leadership and 2) to influence/force.

School members' support served to demonstrate confidence in their new principal's leadership. However, most of the other responses: reasoning, defamation, withdrawal and confrontation functioned to not only show displeasure but also to influence or force the principal's hand in a desired direction. At times school members succeeded in doing just that, for instance the teacher monitor board was subsequently removed upon teachers' expressions of displeasure.

Besides an intention to show displeasure, another minor purpose was conservation/protection. In order to preserve the way things are, school members disregarded the principal's interventions. The most

notable example of this is in relation to the principal's no corporal punishment bid – one of the few areas where there existed low compatibility of values.

OVERVIEW

This case serves as an example of a productive interaction between the new principal, Ms Figaro, and her inherited school culture at Community Pride. It confirms the largely positive effect that an emphasis on transformational leadership can have on school members' responses and school change reported in the literature. It also highlights the importance of the new principal's role in relationship development through trust building and setting relational parameters that garner school member support. Evidence of the associations that exist among new principals' personal attributes, values, cultural awareness, role conception and leadership practices is also demonstrated by this case.

7. 'LEARNING THE ROPES': CASE 3

This chapter draws attention to the transitional interaction between Mr Remmy's leadership and the strolling culture of Riverside. Mr Remmy's position in the interaction was one of 'learning the ropes'. He admitted:

> I would be the first to say that I am evolving. I didn't come in here with a master plan. I do not have a master plan, you know you have ideas about how to go, but I am still feeling my way around. … I am very green and I make no apologies so I will learn (Mr Remmy).

Teachers appreciated Mr Remmy's condition.

> … [Mr Remmy] is new in terms of running a school for the first time and he tries to portray that also because we are all not perfect ... (Stacy, key staff).

The chapter, therefore, focusses on Mr Remmy's learning-mode leadership practices and the generally accommodative responses of school members to his leadership. Understandings of these, together with evidence of the generally limited outcomes of the interaction are brought together towards explaining this case's leadership-school culture interplay. Mr Remmy is now introduced.

MR REMMY: NEW PRINCIPAL OF RIVERSIDE

Mr Remmy was appointed to the post of principal of Riverside in mid-April, 2012, the start of the 3rd term in the respective academic year. At 38 years old, this is his first appointment to the post of principal for which he possessed the required qualification – a Bachelor of Education degree with a specialization in Educational Administration. Before acquiring this appointment, Mr Remmy acted as principal at his former school for two months but had been a Vice Principal for two years. Mr Remmy is actually a celebrated product of Riverside, being the first student from the school to pass for the most prestigious boys' college in

the nation. Teachers who knew him back then recall the jubilance of the community on hearing his success. After this achievement, Mr Remmy remained a member of the Riverside community for most of his life, only relocating recently.

Personal attributes

Mr Remmy's self-professed attributes, as discussed here, were consistently acknowledged by all interviewees. All of the teacher interviewees, however, alluded to additional attributes, some of which they considered to be flaws in his personality. These are also discussed.

Cognitive ability

Analytical

Mr Remmy analyzed situations from an informed, multi-perspectival position and weighed solution options before making decisions.

> As an administrator you are going to have to make unpopular decisions but I want to be informed and I want to make sure that I am making the right decision, … I don't want to just jump to something; I want to look at it from all angles and see what is the best solution for this problem… I don't want to wait too long either (Mr Remmy).

Creative thinker

Mr Remmy was also viewed by staff as creative in his thinking about school improvement.

> He has lots of ideas to bring the school to the next level in terms of sports and development of the curriculum and getting the students and the teachers working in the way they should (Lynette, teacher).

> He is coming with great ideas (Mala, teacher).

Personal quality

Resolute but gentlemanly

He was resolute regarding a number of aspects of schooling, especially student disciplining. Mr Remmy eschewed the abrasiveness practised by some members of staff.

> I am not a loud person, I don't like to scream, it's not healthy, I do not advocate it … you are not going to get me shouting and

> barking you down. You will not hear my voice in the road … the loudness and the raucousness that is not me (Mr Remmy).

While school members considered him to be a "gentle man" (Lynette, teacher) and "not loud and rough" (Sandra, key staff) in their personal interactions with him, his resolve, however was viewed by staff as strong-headedness and an unwillingness to accept their advice and/or opinions.

> … you are hearing from some teachers that he is not listening. I think because he is anxious to get things done so he takes on too many things to be done at the same time. … it could be strong will or wanting to do it his way… if there is a passion for something he really wants to do, he will get it done. … sometimes he is a little strong-headed again it comes with youth and being a man (Lydia, key staff).

> He said that he is not a dictator and that we all have to work together but the bottom line is he ends up making decisions no matter what. ... he does ask your opinion but in the end he does his own thing (Sandra, key staff).

Spontaneous and closed

Mr Remmy described himself as *forthwith* or displaying immediacy and spontaneity in his handling of matters.

> I am very forthwith in the way I operate. … I haven't had any fixed dates in the past [for PTA meetings]. I would look at the agenda and go for it. So that is one of the things that I want to start to do have fixed dates … we would say we have to do this but you don't really specify a [target] date and then other things come and you push back … (Mr Remmy).

This same personality characteristic, however, was interpreted by teachers as him being *disorganised* – an attribute they had associated with his lack of 'openness in control'. He tried to manage activities on his own and neglected involving teachers through delegation for instance.

> I think when he gets everybody involved he will get things faster and then he will not look like he is disorganised because he looks like he is disorganised because he is trying to do everything (Rita, teacher)

Although Mr Remmy invited and allowed openness from his staff, he was also considered closed in information.

> [Mr Remmy] is holding on to the material [information] so people were scrambling as to where to go ... (Lydia, key staff).

Motivation

Devoted and energetic

Mr Remmy's devotion as principal was demonstrated in his dedication of long hours and high energy levels as he engaged in school business.

> I feel really energetic about what I do and very passionate; I leave here on average about 5pm on a daily basis ... (Mr Remmy).

> He is not a sit-in-the-office principal (Keith, key staff).

Achievement-oriented and determined

Mr Remmy was determined to achieve school goals, especially the improvement of the academic performance of those students who were underperforming.

> I really want to see improvements. … I am going to be here for quite some time so I want to see things improve. … even with the whole issue of student performance, I look at results and there are too many Rs [R = needing remediation]. I now have to make sure that something is done and that is one of the things that really has my attention right now improving student performance because right now we are under the 300 API and that is bothersome (Mr Remmy).

> … if we want to get something done, I am going to get it done. Sometimes if I have to roll up my sleeves and do it I will get it done... (Mr Remmy).

His strong need for achievement, which endured despite the challenges he faced, was apparent to staff too.

> …he has that drive; you know when you now start a job, you have that drive in you and when you settle in, you kind of lose it; I don't see that in him because he has had so many obstacles in his way, but he has kept going, going, going and he has this positive way about him that something will work, we will achieve (Lynette, teacher).

Social appraisal skills

Approachable and personable

Despite the indictment staff laid against Mr Remmy as not listening to them, staff members and students did recognise that they could approach him and found that he was personable.

> I wanted to present myself as someone that I will listen, I am human ... (Mr Remmy).

> … nearly everybody here is older than [Mr Remmy], more senior to him or even more qualified but he is very cool. He is approachable, down-to-earth. … you can talk to him, you can share an idea (Keith, key staff).

> [Mr Remmy] is nice, he is pleasant, he likes people, he likes children (Lynette, teacher).

Trustworthy

Staff felt that they could trust Mr Remmy who treated matters discussed with them as confidential.

> … if you have a problem or something and you meet with him what is said between you two stays there; it doesn't circulate and make the rounds. So I think that he has earned their trust and respect in a short space of time (Keith, key staff).

Considerate

Teachers had also found that Mr Remmy exercised consideration in the way he treated others. He was fair and sought not to offend, embarrass or disrespect anyone.

> I think he is a very fair person… (Rita, teacher)

> … he is for the teachers. … all that he is trying to do is for teachers; He is very sensitive to making sure that he doesn't offend anyone; if he needs to speak to you, he would pull you aside; he wouldn't embarrass you (Keith, key staff).

He was especially considerate of students.

> The last [acting] principal, Lydia, she never used to listen to you, when you get in trouble she doesn't listen. Mr Remmy listens to us (Kurt, student).

Disposition

Risk-taker

Staff recognised that Mr Remmy was willing to try out his ideas for school improvement even if they appeared uncertain.

> Rather than [doing] nothing, he is trying and maybe it didn't work but he is still trying something (Rita, teacher).

Serious about fundraising

Mr Remmy was active in raising needed funds for resources and infrastructure for the school.

> He's serious about fundraising and we just had our major fundraiser and he said that he is going to put that money to partition the classrooms and set us up really very nice (Rita, teacher).

Values and beliefs

Again, a high degree of consistency was observed in interviewees' identification of Mr Remmy's values. A basic human value espoused by Mr Remmy was **respect**. He was respectful and expected that school members maintained respect for each other and for him in their exchanges.

> I will allow a certain amount of fluidity [in discussions] but there are certain parameters that you do not cross … and it pertains to respect and that sort of thing (Mr Remmy).

Mr Remmy also valued **role/moral responsibility**, not appreciating to have to constantly monitor staff's performance of their duties.

> The thing that I value is responsibility. We all have a responsibility ... I can't be looking over your shoulder... (Mr Remmy).

He also held to a number of professional values and beliefs – one of which was a value for **discipline/professionalism**.

> I value being regular so I am regular and I value being punctual so I am punctual … Dealing with indiscipline is important, you don't deal with indiscipline, it festers and then you have a real problem so you have to deal with indiscipline (Mr Remmy).

> He wants children to do the right thing and he wants the teachers to do the right thing and the same way he stresses on honesty is the same thing that he wants for the children. He wants them to be disciplined and I think he wants the same from the teachers (Lynette, teacher).

However, in disciplining students, he did not subscribe to the use of abrasive means, as noted earlier, and corporal punishment.

> I don't see the raising of my voice being necessary as part of the whole disciplinary procedure. … I mean your voice will raise yes, but the screaming and the voice may be raised to some extent to show that you are upset and something is wrong… I do not appreciate teachers shouting at the children … because sometimes that's all they are exposed to at home so they come here expecting [different] but you project the same thing. It doesn't augur well for their development (Mr Remmy).

Students' holistic development was highly valued by Mr Remmy as was the **best interest of students and the school**.

> I am here for the betterment of the school. … my vision for Riverside is to have it as an institution that is facilitating the holistic development of children not just in academia but to give them a wide experiential base, be it in sporting and values … (Mr Remmy).

> He is all for the children … I think that he loves the children (Rita, teacher).

He also held a high value for **professional development**.

> Within the classroom … there is always room for improvement because as I say every term is professional development. As teachers, you never stop learning (Mr Remmy).

> He is interested in people being educated; it's not just children but also teachers, educationally … (Lynette, teacher).

Staff attested to this value for the development of staff and students, recognising that Mr Remmy held to **high standards of performance**.

> … he wants to do this and he wants to do that and he wants to do it well. (Keith, key staff).

> [Mr Remmy] wants everything to go smoothly always, which is being kinda unrealistic really because life doesn't work like that (Lynette, teacher).

Mr Remmy also placed great importance on the **image of the school** and its environment, believing that *a* **conducive environment enhances performance**.

> I don't want my school to be in the media with a negative image although probably we would have gotten stuff faster (Mr Remmy).

> ... this is my thing: you come to work and if you want to be here, you get more out of them; you come and you don't want to be here for whatever reason it makes things upsetting for everybody. ... I am looking at the physical environment, wanting to make it a little bit more palatable and a little more accommodating and a little more pleasant to the eye. I think that's important... once [staff and students] want to be here I believe you will get better results (Mr Remmy).

He also believed that **money raised by the school was primarily for school improvement**.

> … the thinking is we don't raise money to boast that we have $50,000.00 in the bank, no. The philosophy is ... we raise funds with

> the intention of improving our human condition, so we want to build our partitions then we are going to use our funds to make our lives better here (Mr Remmy).

A social/political value held to by Mr Remmy was a value for **harmonious relationships** characterised by *teamwork*, *shared decision-making* and the *input of all involved.*

> I am willing to work collaboratively and co-operatively and not be someone who is just, you know, speaking down condescending to you because I am the principal. … we work together, we are a team. … I like shared decision making so as far as possible I try not to make decisions by myself, I try as much as possible to involve at least others (Mr Remmy).

He was particularly concerned about cohesion among and with staff.

> I have the staff at heart that is what I try to carry over in my daily dealings. Of course there is the balancing, but I want a togetherness that's what I strive for (Mr Remmy).

Mr Remmy also believed in **second chances**, according to one teacher.

> He believes that people can always have new starts you know to wipe the slate clean and start again … (Lynette, teacher).

Mr Remmy, like Mr Quincy and Ms Figaro, possessed several traits/attributes found to be associated with successful principalship as reported by for e.g. Day and Leithwood (2007a) and Day et al. (2011). He was analytical and creative in his thinking, humble and a risk-taker. He also demonstrated a degree of motivation consistent with that exhibited by successful principals. However, his spontaneity and lack of openness are attributes otherwise associated with leadership ineffectiveness, as noted by Zacarro et al. (2004). Mr Remmy's professional values were especially consistent with those of successful principals as well. Mr Remmy's leadership as informed by his personal attributes and values are now discussed, framed within the two phases of leadership-school culture interaction.

PHASE 1: INHERITING

At Riverside, staff had expected that one of the two teachers who had applied for the position of principal would have succeeded; but were generally accepting of, though surprised at, Mr Remmy's appointment.

> … we were trying to figure out who was coming … the day when the supervisor came [to install the new principal] and I saw him I was in a kind of shock because, you know, you mean they appoint people that young but I was happy because it's someone I know and he is a real person (Lynette, teacher).

> ... the general line is, "Ooh, you're the principal, … but sir you're so young!" and I mean … I'm 37, going to be 38 – I'm not that young but I get that a lot. "I was expecting somebody older" … (Mr Remmy).

There was also some consensus among staff that Riverside needed an external principal appointee.

> … I think that it is better that he came than for somebody from here to have gotten the post. We needed a view from the outside. Riverside has its own culture. I came and I met it but if our new principal had come out from this culture I am not too sure that it would have been healthy for us and the school (Lynette, teacher).

> Sandra is next in line… and she was very much appalled that I got the post of acting principal and she didn't so it brought some tension … So [if I was appointed principal] I would have had to work with her and I don't think that it would have been best [for the school] because when the supervisor came in to appoint him… she walked off. … She didn't speak to him for a while (Lydia, key staff).

As mentioned in the previous comment, Mr Remmy was faced with the disappointment of staff members who had also applied for the post that he held.

> … when I just came some teachers would have been going through a period of disappointment because the school was up for advertisement you know for the post of principal, not being interviewed or not getting through with that interview (Mr Remmy).

The disappointment of the two or three teachers was especially acute since they were not interviewed for the post, which is against selection policy. One of these teachers eventually came to accept him, realizing he shared her vision for the school.

> I did apply but I didn't get called for the interview … I decided not to make anything about it; [although], I was asked to query it. I didn't mind [not getting the post], I prayed about it a lot and … one of my things was that I wanted Riverside to be a beacon. … When he [the new principal] came in, he mentioned about Riverside becoming a beacon; so, then I accepted it … I think it's a positive [because] we have had women for a long time, 4 principals, including myself were female. So a man, I think it's good (Lydia, key staff).

However, one teacher who considered herself more experienced and qualified than the newly appointed Mr Remmy, remained disheartened and blamed the TSC.

> I was very very disheartened with how Mr Remmy came to us. … In terms of qualifications I am more qualified than Mr Remmy and I have more experience than Mr Remmy. … Now, I have nothing against him personally but I have something against the system. What was the reason? 'Oh they had to do things fast and furious and we had no admin experience'. … We had the experience, not the title associated with it; so, now, I am just so disheartened… I told him to his face that we didn't have interviews (Sandra, key staff).

Mr Remmy recognized the need to assure these teachers and others of his leadership and eventually adopted a 'take charge' stance, likely in response to the unwelcoming reception to which he was subjected.

> … [the transition] was easy … I let them know that I care about them. … I had to show [teachers] that I am not coming in here with an approach that is condescending. I come in with an approach that is open. … however certain things were done. At my very first staff meeting I shared with them the legal aspects in terms of roles and responsibilities, I gave them a copy of their roles and responsibilities and my roles and responsibilities as principal and we went through some of the main ones. So if and when I have to do something know that I am well within my rights if you don't already know (Mr Remmy).

However, he also embraced the opportunity to assure the ST of his willingness to work with her.

> I didn't just assume everything because I know, for example, I can call my senior teacher. She ran the show before I came so I wouldn't just come and take over; come on, no. So I had to let her know it's 'we' not 'me'. … it's our school not my school (Mr Remmy).

Culture awareness and inheritance

Mr Remmy seemed to have adopted an intuitive orientation (Harvey, 1991) to reading his inherited school culture. While he observed school members' actions and studied school performance data, he mainly

relied on his own pre-knowledge of Riverside which he obtained while attending the school as a child and living in the school's immediate community. Regardless, in comparison to school members' school culture descriptions, Mr Remmy's awareness of Riverside's culture was broad.

Riverside is most appropriately labeled as a 'strolling' school (Stoll & Fink, 1996), which was neither effective nor ineffective because of the norms, values and beliefs to which it subscribed. On questionnaires, just over half the staff (n = 6) believed that their school's culture was homogeneous; however, the evidence suggests that some differentiation existed particularly with respect to staff's professional orientation. Additionally, almost two thirds (n = 7) said that teachers were sometimes protective of their school's culture which was supported by interview data particularly evidencing teachers' responses to their new principal, Mr Remmy, and is discussed later. The content of Riverside's culture follows, presented, as were the two schools preceding, using this study's school culture conceptual framework and juxtaposed against Mr Remmy's cultural awareness. Table 7-1 summarizes the school's strolling culture.

Mr Remmy recognised that Riverside had several needs, on which he commented. All of the following comments were made by Mr Remmy unless otherwise stated.

Professional orientation

Although Mr Remmy made no mention of the irregular instructional support available to teachers, he was aware of their non-collaborative planning for instruction and their complacent attitudes towards school change and CPD.

> … the whole idea of professional development has to come from a point where it's not prescriptive but it must come from, 'Aye this is my need'… they think we all went to college, we all have our degree so then we know; but we don't really know… You are seeing a sense of autonomy… I did not see evidence of [collaborative planning]; probably at one level, the second year level…

School culture Dimensions and Indicators	Riverside's Strolling Culture
Professional Orientation	
• Organisational commitment	inconsistent
• Collective efficacy beliefs	changeable
• Expectations for students	variable
• Teacher stress vs. satisfaction	high stress
• Fidelity to change implementation	low
• Teacher practice	autonomous
• Staff relationships	familial with cliques
• Teacher-parent relationships	weak
• Instructional support & mentoring	irregular
Organisational Structure	
• Principal leadership	unsupportive
• Principal-teacher relationships	poor; discordant
• Management structures	weak; defunct
• Social structures	average
Quality of the Learning Experience & Environment	
• Pedagogy	some modern approaches
• Curriculum	uncoordinated; enriched
• Academic press	teacher-specific
• Addressing futility	inadequate/inconsistent support
• Approach to student indiscipline	usually shaming & corporal punishment
• Recognising achievement	teacher-specific
• Compensation for disadvantage	inconsistent
• Environment	inadequate; noisy
Student Orientation	
• Attitudes to school	sometimes positive
• Adherence to school rules, routines	sometimes
• Work ethic	inconsistent
• Teacher-student relationships	variable
• Student-student relationships	fickle

Table 7-1 – Summary of Riverside's culture

Staff demonstrated a predilection for autonomous teacher practice.

> … what I have been saying for quite a while is that we need to work in unison because at least like for the infant department for second year we work with the same scheme, we work with the same test. The rest of the school has not been that way… Teachers need to work together rather than one person doing their own thing in their own classroom. We have tried but it is up to the teachers too to decide that they want to work together because at second year we have decided that we want to work together (Stacy, key staff).

Consequently, pedagogic dialogue was reported as largely absent; although, all the teacher questionnaire respondents reported that staff consulted their colleagues on especially difficult situations. Moreover, interviews revealed that while there existed no mentoring or induction programme for new staff, instructional support, such as team teaching and

development work of teacher leaders, was practiced though irregularly; and likely contributed to teachers' effectiveness.

> … teachers are there for one another and when one is a little [weak or tired] we step in and sometimes team teach but that was a couple of years ago. [The ST] and I were in the first year together so sometimes … we would open the partition and we would do the lessons. So, we would tend to coach (Mala, teacher).

> [For Divali], I got the teachers to dress up in Indian wear. We did get the support from the staff; they came in with their classes [to view the Divali display] and used that as a lesson (Mala, teacher).

Evidently, purposeful collaboration to plan and execute school projects and non-academic activities, such as a Christmas bazaar, was normative.

> We aren't perfect… If you need help, once you are on the staff, like there is a project going on everybody comes together and works for the betterment of the school (Keith, key staff).

Mr Remmy also recognised the generally good camaraderie amongst teachers; although, there existed for some time discord between some members of staff.

> I would say that staff relationships are cordial and co-operative… you come into a situation and this one had a problem with that one … Now I have seen worse. It was not really the worst kind of situation. [But] I know that there was real chaos taking place in front of children on assembly before.

In the school's recent history there existed strong tensions and unpleasantness, such as defamation and harassment, in the relationships among staff, which were incited and made public by teachers who have since left the school. Such unpleasantness has been found to exist in less successful schools (Reynolds, 2010). Nonetheless, staff consistently described their relationships as familial.

> ... the staff, we may have our pulling and tugging, but more or less it is good; it is homely, it's like a family because I know a lot of people who have left here and have regretted leaving here (Keith, key staff).

Teachers' relationships with parents, however, were noted by Mr Remmy as weak. Teachers at Riverside seemed to pursue the usual channels toward maintaining a home-school link, such as with PTA

meetings, parent-teacher conferences to update parents on student progress and inviting support for school activities. However, the manner in which these were done appeared to be at the discretion of teachers rather than accommodative to parents. For instance, PTA meetings were held at 1pm when most parents were at work because many of the staff lived out of the area.

> ... PTA meetings were held during the day … so that accounted for, in part or to a great extent, the poor attendance [of parents] … There were some reasons and reasons were put forward mainly because people by and large lived far, many teachers lived out of the area. ... another reason was, I didn't know how interested administration was with that sort of thing or how important they saw PTA to be … (Mr Remmy).

The teacher-parent relationship was further hampered by teachers' decisions to terminate the home-school link with parents they considered to be "a waste of time".

> ... sometimes [communicating with parents] works and sometimes it's just a waste of time. Some parents when I send for them it's often the first time I'm seeing them and I am saying in my mind that it doesn't make sense that I send back for you because it is just one excuse after the other so I just don't bother and I try to manage as best as I can … (Catherine, key staff).

This finding is consistent with that of Howley et al. (2006) who explain that families of poor students are usually viewed as incompetent participants in schooling and so are generally excluded. More common, though, was the often wilful absence of parents, according to all the teacher interviewees.

> When I have meetings it's never 100% turnout and it's always the ones you want to see are the ones you don't see and who don't visit. I get my times to see them when ok they have to sign up for the SEA, that's the only time you would see everybody. Even report books ... Sometimes the books remain here until the next term and I am talking about the July/August. ... down to notes that are sent home – I am not talking about bad notes; I am talking about general letters – they are not given … (Sandra, key staff).

Incidentally, the highest level of parental support was observed at the infant level and from a few committed parents, according to interview data.

> We have a couple of hardworking parents because they are the ones we see. These are the ones we can call on. Normally we find that the infants' parents are more enthusiastic because they just came in but afterwards it's like [they can't be bothered]. But we have a couple of parents we can call on like for march past and sports (Keith, key staff).

Mr Remmy seemed to have a surface understanding of teachers' dispositions, particularly pertaining to their changeable individual and collective self-efficacy beliefs and high stress levels. Their collective organisational commitment, for instance, was inconsistent with half the staff, at best, said to demonstrate high levels of commitment to students through their passion, investment of extra time and focus on students' wellbeing and achievement as noted by Crosswell (2006, cited by Day & Gu, 2010). Riverside teacher interviewees said:

> … we have a group of teachers who put out 100% and more for the school, so they are selfless. They push in terms of work and fundraisers and whatever the school has to do they put out (Stacy, key staff).

> I guess some [teachers] use it as a stepping stone, teaching that is, so yes they are here but… are just passing through, waiting and then you hear they are gone. They're whole hearts are not into the school (Catherine, key staff).

The teachers at the Standard four and five levels also committed highly to preparing students for the SEA, providing, for example, after-school lessons. However, overall, while staff's attendance was regular; with respect to their punctuality, it was variable and, at times, unscrupulous.

> I look at the clock when I cross the gate and whatever it says that's what I put in the book. ... but there are teachers that don't do that because they don't want their late minutes to count. ... one particular teacher does it regularly; there are others who would do it but most times they are here early but per chance if they do come late they'll do it too (Lynette, teacher).

Additionally, interviews revealed that burnout or high levels of teacher stress affected staff's commitment. Teachers were said to stress over

students' discipline, low literacy levels and poor attitudes towards learning as well as fellow teachers' low commitment – findings consistent with those of Byrne (1991) and Leithwood et al. (1996) both cited by Leithwood and Beatty (2008).

> … if we all push a little more ... it's tiring though. The discipline part is tiring … [teachers] do what they are supposed to do… but that extra? [No] (Lydia, key staff).

> … I expect [students] to do their best which is not what the students are doing... [Teaching is] too much stress and it's getting worse and worse and as I always say, I don't mind dull children but have a different attitude but their attitudes stink (Sandra, key staff).

> [The students I have now] have no foundation to build on and it is frustrating to me… I have maybe 10 of them that can't read – nothing, not even vowel sounds – and it is pretty frustrating to try to pick up the slack from somebody else... (Catherine, key staff).

Consequently, low collective responsibility of students was observed among teachers at Riverside, particularly with respect to monitoring students. It was apparent that staff held to the belief that each teacher was responsible for his or her class only.

> … we keep saying that everybody must come on board if we are to get the kind of changes we want; it cannot be left to one individual or the senior people; everybody. I can't do it with my class alone, which is something that some people may want to do… Even at lunchtime, yes I know that it is my lunch time but I am still monitoring [the students] because once I am on the compound I have to monitor you. The younger teachers now they move away. Nobody is [in the infant department] because they've gone here, they've gone there (Lydia, key staff).

Incidentally, teachers who were named as more highly committed had managed to find ways to de-stress, having recognised the debilitating effects of the named stressors.

> The [senior] teachers are not bad ... Perhaps it's the years and they're fed up. … self-reflection is very important… I tell myself that it cannot be every day that the children get you upset because then it means that something is not right (Rita, teacher).

> [Student disciplining] is sometimes hard because there are times when I get burnt out … I was becoming a person I didn't like; I was getting angry and frustrated. … So I took a step. I said I'm spending long times on the road let me get some audio books, put them in and learn while I'm driving. … [teachers] do become frustrated… (Mala, teacher).

Moreover, teachers' collective efficacy beliefs were changeable over time, being directly related to and influenced by students' attitudes, behaviour and performance.

> Some days you feel like you are being paid under false pretences because the children aren't learning and then there are days like "yes, they learn something" (Keith, key staff).

> I am told "Don't beat up yourself; that is just how it is; that's how the system is; some will go through and some will not and look at where they come from." ... and these are teachers who have been here for years. ... They've probably come to that realisation that that is just how it is despite what you do (Rita, teacher).

This finding is consistent with that of OECD TALIS (2014) and; Goddard, Hoy and Woolfolk Hoy (2004), who reviewed a number of studies investigating perceptions of collective efficacy in both school and non-school contexts.

Incidentally, staff at Riverside, generally attributed most negative performance outcomes to the students and their families and not to their effectiveness as teachers – findings consistent with that of De Lisle (2011), Dyson (2004, cited by Levin, 2006) and Reynolds (2010) of less successful SfCC.

> There is nothing different we could do because there are a couple of families we know that aren't academically inclined at all. We don't know if it is hereditary or if it is social or what and then we have children who do very well also because we have our [names a string of prestigious secondary schools that students have passed for in years gone by] but the majority of them are not at that level (Keith, key staff).

It was evident from all the teacher interviewees that most teachers believed their students' abilities and behaviour to be 'in deficit' and their parents as under-valuing education.

> ... we get the dregs. We get a lot of children that their parents are not that interested in their education. ... I find that the responsibility of the parent, the parents' involvement in the education of the child, the discipline of the children from home: these are lacking. ... I think here you would get teachers believing that a lot of what we have here more than half would end up in the former junior secondaries because again

> the type of children we have … it is not like we have the cream of the crop (Catherine, key staff).

Mr Remmy did recognise the existence of low expectations for students that were linked to their socio-economic state.

> There is a prevailing belief that our children aren't cream of the crop. Without a doubt, there is that belief and I met that here ... [You see it in school members'] expectations! There are some realities that we have … a lot of children here coming in with real, real problems like poverty... So, the belief is that we get second best children. Now it's not everyone's individual [belief] but it's there. You hear it often enough even from those who are more positive…

One interviewee did, however, demonstrate a lack of confidence in the junior department of the school as affecting students' academic performance.

> … when you get [students] like after they have been with a teacher, you wonder, "what really went on?"… What I have noticed in my years of teaching seniors [is that] mental [and] dictation are not being done in that junior department. When I started mental in Standard 4 and standard 4 has a mental Maths competition. The children didn't know what mental is. … Dictation: I happen to have a standard 2 next to me, I listen sometimes and I hear nothing about dictation going on (Sandra, key staff).

With respect to teachers' attitudes towards professional change and growth, it was consistently reported that staff generally preferred informal feedback over clinical supervision by a principal. Additionally, teachers' transfer of learning from professional development sessions was questionable, according to four interviewees, including three key members of staff.

> … we have professional development workshops, it is internal and you would think that it would [transfer into the classroom]. … You don't really know if what you have said from the workshops that you have attended if it is really being used. So, some say at the end of the day you not getting fired and still getting your [salary] increment (Sandra, key staff).

Organisational structure

With respect to the organisational structure of Riverside, Mr Remmy recognised that social and management structures had become

defunct and that those existing were weak, as indicated by the following comment:

> The house system was somewhat dead… It would have had stuff on paper, but the fact was that nothing was happening.

Interview data support the finding of a less than adequate management structure at Riverside. Office administration, for instance, which would scaffold management structures, was lacking; however, the major shortcoming for Riverside with respect to defunct management structures and ineffective improvement efforts was infidelity of implementation (Slavin, 1996, cited by Potter et al., 2002), as the following comment indicates.

> One of our problems is continuity. ... personalities are different, so some may be on board and they keep going [along with plans] but some may get tired and say well I don't have to do that and have to be motivated all the time. … we would start with the discipline and everybody would be hot and sweaty about what we would do and how they must walk and then it would just stop. We would talk about oh we would insist that the children have their books covered. One or two teachers may do it and then after a while nobody doing it (Lydia, key staff).

However, he had less awareness of the poor principal-teacher relationships that existed prior to his appointment, which interviews revealed were discordant, distrusting and characterised by teacher non-compliance and conflict, resulting in court arbitration and mediator intervention at the school.

> … it was bad, it was really bad [disagreements between the principal and some teachers]… it was like walking on eggshells … so, for the staff it wasn't a nice time… because it went to court and then you had mediators coming in to try to curtail … (Catherine, key staff).

Although the nature of the relationship had become more palatable upon the retirement or transfer of those involved and teachers, according to almost all of the teacher interviewees (n = 7), had begun to view themselves as compliant to principals, one teacher made the observation that non-compliance had continued.

> … we ourselves are doing wrong things in relation to your job and in relation to your profession and because I think I can get away with it I will continue to do it and that is what's going on. … [Not adhering to a principal's requests] hasn't changed (Lynette, teacher).

Former principals' half-hearted support of teacher leadership work that promoted cultural celebrations that differed from their religious beliefs also contributed to the discord between teachers and principals. Four interviewees mentioned this.

> … this school has been plagued with all small church principles … [With] past principals sometimes those things [Divali, Eid celebrations] get neglected … (Sandra, key staff).

Nonetheless, former principals consulted with the two most senior members of staff – a proxy SBM team – before disseminating information, but did little to encourage a collaborative culture with other school members.

> All the other principals whenever they did anything would call [the ST] and myself and we would discuss certain things before it is said [to other school members] (Sandra, key staff).

> … that is what we had before – a kind of lecturing kind of thing [to parents at PTA meetings] (Lydia, key staff).

Teachers were generally of the opinion that their school's vision and plans for improvement were not shared by all at Riverside; however, attempts at staff cohesion were promoted through Christmas luncheons and the like.

Quality of the learning experience and environment

With respect to the quality of the learning experience and environment at Riverside, Mr Remmy recognised teachers' predominantly traditional modes of instruction, the absence of differentiation and irregular and inadequate attention to remediation for helping students with special learning needs.

> … there is room for improvement in terms of how [teachers] operate in the classroom. The whole idea of differentiated instruction and not

> using the expository – talking, talking, talking – [is foreign to them]. … Teaching is taking place but I am not seeing evidence that sufficient remediation is taking place with those who need it...

There was evidence of some attempts at incorporating more modern approaches, such as the use of technology; however, these were hindered by teachers' limited technical know-how and the poor quality of the learning environment.

> Some [teachers] do [use technology and modern pedagogies]. I think though a lot of people are still feeling out (Lydia, key staff).

> The school environment needs to change a little: the physical infrastructure. I find we are lacking there really, really badly… When I just came I would use the computer room often. I would bring my laptop… but the computers in the computer room they move very slowly so it is very frustrating to use those. … Since I've been here, I have never used the library because I cannot follow that library: it doesn't look like a library that is one... I use information from off the internet so I don't need what they have … And then they have to clean it for you to use so I never wanted [my students] to use it for a library (Rita, teacher).

Interviewees' descriptions did confirm inconsistent and inadequate learning support for underperforming students, as the following suggest:

> … there are teachers who whether they have to stay back lunchtimes, you know, some of them give lessons sometimes … (Stacy, key staff).

> Since I came here – and I wasn't the only teacher saying it – I kept saying that we need a reading programme for the school. I've been here for seven years going on eight; yet, we still need a reading programme. It comes up [in staff meetings] but, as quickly as it comes up, it dies down … and, after the meeting, back to business as usual (Lynette, teacher).

Additional evidence pointed to below-class-level teaching and limited programme coherence (Stoll and Fink, 1996) due to teacher autonomy and staffing issues.

> ... the Standard 3 I have now when they were in standard 2 the teacher they had … did nothing but practically complain for two, three years and the children suffered; so… now you find that they have no foundation to build on … So, I find myself having to go back and then can't complete [the syllabus] (Catherine, key staff).

> What used to happen before is that one teacher was using one [Reading] programme while another teacher is using another programme and then the children go to second year infants [year 1]

> and that teacher was using another different programme… [Also] … the children didn't use to go up as a class so from first year to second year we mix the children; from second year to standard one we mix them; so imagine, each teacher using a different programme plus we are mixing the children. We have stopped that. Thank goodness! We stopped that a little before [Mr Remmy] came (Stacy, key staff).

Teachers did expose students to a number of extra-curricular activities that enhanced the learning experience – evidence that point to school members' value for holistic student development. They also tried to address student academic futility by utilising a number of measures that were also often used to discipline students and emphasised negative rather than positive reinforcement, including: in-class suspension, exclusion from class until uncompleted work was done and informing parents.

> … I punish them: make them stay in lunch times to get [work] done; if it's too [often] then I would ask the parents to come in and I would talk to them … as they've stopped the corporal punishment; so, writing lines or keep them in for part of their break times and lunchtimes. Sometimes I would make them stand and fold their arms and close their eyes for a 5 minutes or so to get some quiet and order (Catherine, key staff).

> They are afraid that [the teacher] would shout at them and shame them in front of the class [if you ask for help]. She doesn't beat, just embarrass (Anna, student).

Additionally, but more common, was teachers' ill-speaking that was associated to their generally low expectations for students, which was contradictory to the school's stated mission which touted the development of positive self-esteem in students (School brochure, p. 2). Most (n =6) of the teacher interviewees and the student focus group mentioned this.

> The way that [teachers] speak to them, I think the children sometimes feel a little de-motivated… Sometimes I recognise when I do that and I tell myself that that probably hurt and I come back and I say, "Listen, miss was wrong. I should not have said that". But then there are teachers who just talk and that's how they approach the child… [saying], "You will go nowhere; you will not reach anywhere; you will be nothing...". And that is said over and over (Rita, teacher).

Generally low expectations for students of low SES were also found to be a feature of ineffective schools (Stringfield, 1993, cited by Stoll and Fink, 1996). At Riverside, corporal punishment was also used to discipline students despite the MOE's position on its use. The evidence indicates an underlying belief that students needed to be hit or embarrassed to be disciplined.

> It's a bad thing to say and people say ok we've been to college and we've been to [university] and they say corporal punishment ain't working – it worked on me! And that you are perpetuating the cycle of violence and that you are not teaching the children – all of that is lie. … I does bust they tail. I probably pitch marbles with [the student's] mother or father, so when I bust your tail ... I will call your parents to tell them why I bust your tail because I ain't mad, it must be for a reason … The majority unless that skin start to sting and burn them, they wouldn't learn (Keith, key staff).

However, some teachers, whose expectations of students were higher, tried to motivate students to excel and raise their aspirations – a practice observed in effective low SES schools (e.g. James et al., 2006).

> I would start almost every day with a 'Chicken soup for the soul' story about overcoming hardship… because I want things for [the students]; I want to see them tap into the potential they have; … But we don't do the talks as we ought to. … I try to break it down simply [to the infants], "You need to learn your work; I need you bright. Don't you want to go to second year and be bright?..." and then they would work; they would work. … [Y]ou would see me and a few others, "this is not how you should behave; you have potential; stop it" (Mala, teacher).

These few teachers were also said to recognise student achievement in tangible ways, such as with stickers and motivational star charts. Attending to students' basic needs was also inconsistent with a few teachers occasionally purchasing meals and other items for needy students or assisting their families.

While teachers' generally unsociable approach to interacting with students and disciplining them was of obvious concern to Mr Remmy, as was the poor quality of the learning environment, he did not mention the teacher-specific academic rigor or disruptions to teaching time affecting

the quality of the learning experience at Riverside. The many extra-curricular activities in which the school was engaged were often prioritised above academic teaching and learning, according to almost three-quarters (n = 8) of teacher questionnaire respondents. This "lack of academic focus" (Reynolds, 2010, p. 148) was confirmed by all the teacher interviews.

> … too many things take place that curtail academic learning ... It's never a smooth flow for anything; something sacrifices … Now that might be every school but I find that every time we have something outside, a function, or a dress-up day… the school seems to sound like it is in chaos and mayhem. … You see, everybody gets carried away and I think there is less focus; we don't remain focussed (Sandra, key staff).

Consequently, there was a loss of teaching time. Many disruptions caused by, for example, lengthy morning assemblies and noisy classes were also observed by the researcher and mentioned by half the teacher interviewees.

> … the assembly goes too long in the morning … sometimes [the principal or teacher in charge] go on and on and on. And that is every day. … I find that disturbing and a little unsettling especially when [students] have to come inside and then they have to go for the breakfast and distribute the breakfast … sometimes you have to go [to the principal's office] and sometimes you have to do this [and that] and it's a bit too much sometimes and it takes away a lot of class time (Stacy, key staff).
>
> I just find sometimes I can't hear myself. I will be teaching and it's just noise … (Sandra, key staff).
>
> The infant classes were extremely noisy; the teachers had to speak to the children quite often. … The noise level across the school is very high (Field notes – 21.01.2013)

Riverside, then, shared the feature of a noisy climate found by Reynolds (2010) to be present in underperforming SfCC.

For class teaching, individual teachers determined the academic rigor within their rooms and this was observed to be generally higher at standards four and five, where students were in preparation for the SEA: revising, combing through practise booklets, attending extra lessons and

working through break periods. While it was felt that the staff worked hard, there seemed to be a general consensus that they should 'push' more or demonstrate a higher academic press.

> … if [teachers] all push a little more we would get [better results] … it's tiring though... They push but ... that extra of pulling that child aside and giving that extra? [No.] And the thing is that some of the children like the disruptive ones, they are the ones that you need to pull close to you and it is hard sometimes. You know you are tired and stressed out and you don't have the time (Lydia, key staff).

The above comment highlights a relationship between variable academic press and the teacher stress that was evident and, in turn, links these to a lack of academic support for students needing same.

Student orientation

Having said very little about student orientation, Mr Remmy seemed to have little knowledge about students' variable work ethic apart from assumptions made from examining their academic performance. According to six teacher interviewees, an inability to get settled, stay on task and a tendency to produce the bare minimum of work explained many students' poor work ethic and performance.

> [If a teacher is absent] do not put work on a board and say [do it]... our children are not going to do that. They are not disciplined enough to do that... The children must have somebody monitoring them… (Lydia, key staff).

> I find year after year it's getting worse and worse in the attitude department. … they are downright lazy and because they don't have that push at home… These children are not self-disciplined; they are not independent learners… If I give homework, that is all that is done; no extra… (Sandra, key staff).

Resonating in the above comments is staff's value for student discipline. Consequently, students' work was described as generally being at average level because few students benefitted from home support and many had reading difficulties; but others worked extremely well.

> The children's work is average; average ability because the work only happens in school. The work is not at home. I have no back up at

> home, so I don't have anybody to supervise me, I can do what I want; nobody to make sure I do my homework or revise so only when I am in school, I'm going to do the work. They work in school; they try (Catherine, key staff).

Incidentally, just over a third (n = 7) of student questionnaire respondents said that students' work was most times of a high quality, while another eight students said this was sometimes the case, possibly indicating a mismatch between teachers' and students' perceptions of standards of work output.

Teacher interviewees also agreed that students' work ethic was affected by their dispositions. At Riverside, the majority (n = 17) of student questionnaire respondents said that students' attitudes towards school were sometimes positive. For the standard 5 (year 6) interviewees, in particular, feelings of apathy were expressed concerning academic press.

> … when we get a test paper and you do it sometimes there [is] one set of other work [the teacher] does give us to do and sometimes, I doesn't feel to do it (Chevron, student; all agreed).

Additionally, teacher interview data suggest that the aspirations or motivations of many students, particularly senior students, were low.

> … those children have no sense of purpose at all. … the children don't really have any big set of expectations. ... its pie in the sky. They want to go to [prestigious secondary schools] but they are doing nothing at that level for you to say yes, I think she can do it. ... I tell them [what is required to excel academically] all the time but from the student's perspective... they are like what is miss talking about now; like she gone crazy again... until the [SEA] results come out… (Sandra, key staff).

> ... [students] don't see education as anything important; they see daily life as something important, getting by today for today. They don't look to the future and they don't think of themselves as achieving anything positive... (Rita, teacher).

However, more than half (n = 12) of the student respondents said that most times students took pride in their school. Consistent interview data show that students liked that some of their teachers were "not strict" and

enjoyed the opportunities they had to talk and laugh with their friends. However, their relationships with some teachers were strained, affected not only by teachers' derogatory comments – as earlier mentioned – but also by some students', mainly senior boys, disregard.

> [Riverside] has a wonderful bunch of children. It is only a handful that is disruptive … Some of the culture in the boys they are from very violent, very abusive homes, don't care-ish. Many of them don't have father figures and they are accustomed to hearing women so we become nags. So even if I shout at them, it's like "alright miss, right" (Lydia, key staff).

On questionnaires, the proportion of staff and students (almost half) having said that students were most times respectful and obedient to teachers was equal to that who said 'sometimes', pointing to the variable nature of the teacher-student relationship; since, with other teachers, relationships were more pleasant and mutually respectful.

> … with some teachers you can see that yes they respect the students too; they would not like talk down to them; if they make a mistake, they tell the students sorry … I can't say what happens in the classroom in general but outside the classroom you may see a bit of it from some teachers (Stacy, key staff).

> [A named teacher] is the best [b]ecause she is nice and kind. She doesn't interfere and she is very respectful … she does like talk with you... (Mark, student).

With respect to adherence to school rules, on questionnaires almost two-thirds (n = 7) of the staff and more than half (n = 11) of the students at Riverside were generally of the opinion that students sometimes obeyed school rules. Observation and student interviews revealed supporting evidence.

> Sometimes [the students listen to the prefects]; like if you threaten to take them to the principal, they would listen. I'm a prefect … my experience is that those children real harden [very disobedient] (Chevron, student).

Mr Remmy also had some awareness of the fickle nature of student-student relationships especially existing at the upper primary

level, being characterised by fighting, cursing and name-calling. Interview data were consistent.

> Everything is to fight or [the students] curse each other. … They do not like each other. ... they call each other names: fat and nasty and these kinds of words. ... I don't like [her]; I don't like [him] and that is normal. And they are telling me, "Well, miss, that is how we does talk" (Rita, teacher).

However, student questionnaire data contradict this finding, showing that students belonging to different groups were sometimes friendly, according to almost half (n = 9) of the student respondents, or most times friendly, according to seven others. It points to the existence of a student culture, where ill-speaking was normative and viewed as a display of *friendliness* as was pointed out to Rita above – "Well, miss, that is how we does talk".

With his broad understanding of Riverside's strolling school culture, Mr Remmy began to intervene as is discussed next.

PHASE 2: BUILDING AND SHAPING

In pursuit of his vision to reshape the strolling culture of Riverside, Mr Remmy mainly utilized managerial leadership followed by political leadership; although the data confirm Mr Remmy's use of all four types of leadership as discussed in chapter 2. His visioning and school improvement foci are discussed first, followed by his key leadership practices and strategies and school members' often supportive response to his leadership. His critical incidents which formed the main source of data for this discussion are summarized in below.

CI 1 – The Flood

At the beginning of the second term after Mr Remmy's appointment the infant department of the school was flooded out. There was mud and debris everywhere; on the walls, cupboards and floors. Everything was destroyed, including furniture and resources. The damage was so much that teachers and students could not occupy the infant classrooms.

CI 2 – School Cleaning

The school day started with school members realizing that the furniture was not wiped down after the school had been sprayed for mosquitoes the previous Friday. The principal had called the school cleaners about this situation, informing them of the actions required to prepare the classes after the spraying. However, the cleaner responsible for the cleaning of the upper floor claims that he did clean. This is a recurring incident with this cleaner.

CI 3 – Principal's office a hub

Soon after occupying the principal's office, Mr Remmy realized that the space was a hub of activity for school members. First thing on morning, teachers enter to sign the teachers' register and would often stand there chatting before assembly – they had no staffroom. Following assembly, the interruptions would start: persons would come in to use the phone or photocopying machine or to have a conference with a parent or to obtain teaching resources and documents or to talk to the principal or wash a cup at the sink that is in the office. Persons would at times also use his chair. A member of the office staff was observed having breakfast at the principal's desk. Although he had offered an open-door policy to school members, Mr Remmy also realized that persons would just enter regardless of what he was doing or with whom he was in conference.

CI 4 – Milo Games Preparation

For the preparation of Milo Games, Mr Remmy invited a past teacher of the school to train students. Mr Remmy asked teachers to allow the gentleman the time to prepare the students; however, practice sessions began running for longer than the stipulated duration as the time drew closer to the games and especially when Mr Remmy was absent. This caused no small stir among staff, some of whom already had a sour relationship with the gentleman originating from when he worked at the school.

CI 5 – Tardiness Checks

A particular teacher who was often tardy would sign the teachers' register, putting an earlier time than she actually arrived. Although other teachers did the same, they were generally punctual at school. This teacher was also often irregular at school. However, another teacher who would be late at times had begun taking tabs or monitoring the particular teacher's signing in the register and noted the actual times the teacher did arrive. Recognising the discrepancy, she became frustrated at having to account for her minutes late while the teacher did not. However, in raising the issue at a staff briefing, a heated argument ensued between her and the other teacher that disrupted the briefing.

CI 6 – Parental Involvement

The school has a student population of just over 200, yet the number of parents attending PTA meetings was extremely low, averaging at 20. Mr Remmy noticed, too, that the meetings were scheduled for 1pm on a week day when few parents could attend. Mr Remmy wanted more parents involved.

CI 7 – Teacher Mistreatment

At Riverside, there is a teacher who is very efficient in her professional duties, such as record keeping and meeting deadlines. She is also known for her competence in class management; however, this same teacher, according to parents' complaints, demotivates and interferes with the positive development of students' self-esteem and worth with her abrasiveness and derogatory comments. However, she is one of the few teachers at the school who is willing to teach the upper primary students (UK years 5 and 6) who are preparing for the high-stakes secondary entrance examination. This teacher is also a senior teacher who had applied for the post Mr Remmy now holds and is unhappy at his appointment. This

situation poses a dilemma for Mr Remmy who needs to decide on teacher placement for the upcoming academic year.

Mr Remmy's school improvement foci and vision

Through his leadership, Mr Remmy mainly focussed on students' dispositions, the school's management structures, the quality of the learning environment and his relationship with teachers. These were evident in his personal vision for the school, the creation of which was one of his first endeavours. This vision, he blended with the existing one of the school as alluded to in the following excerpt:

> I would like our school to produce citizens who are morally sound and able to function effectively in society. … the school's vision is one that is around the same thinking because we all see worth in having children who have values; so, the same sort of thinking came out: you don't want to have a child who is intelligent and yet low on morals (Mr Remmy).

Visioning and direction setting

Mr Remmy's hope to see Riverside as a first choice school was shared with staff.

> … at the beginning he said that his vision of the school was to see Riverside as a beacon… [H]e is seeing our school being the best school in the [district] and improving the ethos, the culture, the atmosphere of the school itself (Stacy, key staff).

He engaged staff in collaborative school-evaluation towards the identification of school problems and the development of a new school mission.

> … we looked at our weaknesses to see what was preventing the school from moving forward; what are the areas that needed to be improved. Then we went on to what can be done or what solutions could be put forward to improve the school's journey onwards. … We looked especially at [student] discipline (Lydia, key staff).

Teachers were, therefore, clear about Mr Remmy's plans for improvement. Mr Remmy also encouraged their commitment to change implementation – a task orientation; although, he faltered in this respect as discussed later.

> I am trying to inculcate the fact that we need to get the job done (Mr Remmy).

Setting high expectations

However, Mr Remmy, from early on, promoted core values and high expectations for their achievement with the aim of encouraging the fulfilment of his vision for the school.

> [Teachers] expect [the students] to be a little lower on the ladder so that's something we *should* be aiming to change, the standards set. ... It must start with your belief system, us believing that these children can become top performing children if you look after them right and then your belief will then inform your actions in terms of what you need to do. ... So I met a belief system where ... Riverside is not first, we are not top of the mountain. ... That is something that we are trying to change (Mr Remmy).

> ... firstly when he started the key word that he used was discipline, he was trying to instil that as a value in the students themselves … and respect... (Stacy, key staff).

Mr Remmy's reculturing practices

Mr Remmy's leadership practices and strategies are summarized in figure 7-1.

Management

Enhancing the physical environment

One of the first deliberate and extensive changes made by Mr Remmy was enhancing the physical environment of the school in order to optimize teaching and learning through increasing staff satisfaction. To this end, Mr Remmy had school buildings painted and special rooms, such as the principal's office, library and computer room reorganised, cleaned, refurbished and technologically upgraded.

> I try to make things a little more comfortable for [staff]. I'm starting with that. That is why the management is taking up so much of my time. For example these fans, I purchased these fans because the classrooms were hot... I went and got extra computers and I got the internet and we have a wireless connection... So I have been liaising with the ministry … because I need that room to be functional. So you want differentiated instruction get them in there and have a lesson using the technology … (Mr Remmy).

He also almost single-handedly remodelled a classroom to create a communal space for staff.

> We had no staff room, nowhere to interact, to call a staff meeting so I moved the big board table from downstairs, which was very cluttered, I moved that upstairs and converted a classroom into a staffroom [which is now air-conditioned]. So, I looked at the plant, the environment, if it is not conducive to learning, we need to be comfortable (Mr Remmy).

However, he was careful not to violate 'the sacred' artefacts of the school.

> … generally it was full of clutter, the whole school. Now, if I were to clean that would take time and I would just throw away but as a man that may not be the best way, you don't want to throw away things that people want to keep. … you see you have to do things in such away, you have to look in the bags, sort, ask questions... (Mr Remmy).

Transformational Aggregate:

1) Setting directions
- Blends personal vision with school vision
- Encourages school self-evaluation
- Sets high performance expectations

2) Helping/ developing people
- Individualised support: advice
- Engages teachers in self-reflection on practice
- Reaffirms desired values & norms
- Models values

3) Redesigning the organisation
- Creates collaborative culture: allowing teachers a voice; seeks consensus; speaking in 'we' terms; engaging staff in collaborative planning for instruction
- Builds collaborative structures: teacher teams & committees
- (Re)establishes new culture symbols: principal's office, respect among school members
- Withholds support of undesirable norms: Carnival jump-up, abrasiveness to students
- Builds relations with parents & community
- Uses personal network

4) Transactional & Management Aggregate:
- Enhances school environment
- Active management-by-exception
- Responds to infrastructural challenges
- Monitors school activity (lacking): walk-abouts; hesitant delegation; administrative overload
- Attends to student behaviour
- Creates/enhances management structures: prefect system, freeze bell, house system
- Focus on teaching and learning: provides instructional support; recognising academic achievement; addressing literacy problem; implementing standardized whole-school formative assessment; reviewing teachers' plans
- Addresses staff issues: staff meetings; one-to-one discussions

5) Political Leadership
- Facing up to conflict among staff
- Using interpersonal skills to defuse conflict
- Pre-empts issues/avoids contentions with staff
- Ignores staff's counter-advice
- Makes log entries of school-related issues

Figure 7-1 – Mr Remmy's leadership practices and strategies

Responding to infrastructural challenges

Part of Mr Remmy's management involved responding to challenges, such as a flooding out of the infant department (Appendix C3: CI1), a school cleaning problem (CI 2) and a plumbing issue. To overcome such challenges, Mr Remmy got personally involved, used his personal network and sought teachers' input and co-operation.

> I was supervising the [students] downstairs while the teachers were upstairs doing what the cleaner should have done. … I came I met a cleaning problem with the cleaners. … I have had several meetings with them (Mr Remmy).

> When there was the flood, the infant area was totally washed out. [Mr Remmy] went around to different hardwares because he couldn't wait on the [MOE]. He got the partition built. He got things from the area, people donated. He physically went and visited these people to try begging for us... He came and brought his brothers to paint up the rooms to get them up and running and then the things for the infant department (Rita, teacher).

Monitoring school activities

Mr Remmy recognised that he needed to monitor school activities in order to maintain an academic focus and reduce disruptions to learning. He utilised strategies such as school walk-abouts and enquiring after student supervision.

> … he is always concerned about when it is bank time and teachers have to take bank time. He always shows concern to find out if you've left work for the children and that kind of thing (Lynette, teacher).

> Mr Remmy does actually pass around and watch what is happening (Mark, student).

Beyond his assigning administrative and clerical responsibilities to the SCO, Mr Remmy seemed hesitant to delegate responsibilities to teachers, including his restructured SBM team.

> Generally, how I do things is I deal with my senior people... Now I have a lot to do... I don't have to do everything myself, although sometimes I do try to with the physical aspects but I try to delegate to some extent… I try to give people responsibility, I try as much as possible... (Mr Remmy).

He tried to directly oversee all school activities, at times withholding information from staff and neglecting to inform them of changes he had made.

> [Mr Remmy] needs to let certain people handle things … but like if he decides to delegate responsibility, you know he should let the people handle that responsibility. Yes he delegates but sometimes he gets so involved and sometimes we have to wait until he gets consensus again or he gets more information or whatever to get things done (Stacy, key staff).

> ... he kind of likes to do things on his own. Not that he doesn't want people to help him but like if you volunteer, he will accept you; but he doesn't really ask, which is a bad thing (Rita, teacher).

> ... we had a visitor, yesterday. Now, we couldn't get the [computer room] open because [Mr Remmy, who was absent] had the key, so she had to go from class to class. I didn't know that she was supposed to be coming this week. I didn't even know anything about some ambassador programme, which concentrates on the 4s and 5s. Normally these things used to be told to us, to [the ST] and me and at least to the teacher that it concerns. ... but nothing was meted down... so much on his plate... (Sandra, key staff).

Consequently, he was often unable to efficiently monitor the school's activities due to, for instance, pre-occupation with administrative workload and attending to out-of-school business, resulting in unattended school business and unwanted consequences.

> [Mr Remmy] is not doing clinical supervision and monitoring classes, which he needs to get on board because that is a must. You see the clinical supervision and the monitoring of classes would prevent what happened yesterday. … if it was a supervisor that had walked in here, [he] would have no excuse [for] a class being unattended to and children running outside and a child getting injured (Lydia, key staff).

> … we came up with a reading committee [to address the school's literacy problem] and we were supposed to meet with the principal but on the day … he was doing stuff and we never got to do it (Stacy, key staff).

> He doesn't always have the time to do what he is supposed to do ... (Lynette, teacher).

Attending to student behaviour

One aspect of management that was particularly important to Mr Remmy was attending to student behaviour for which he created

management structures, which involved senior students and focussed on assembly and lunchtime routines.

> The prefect system, I tried to revamp that somewhat because we wanted to give the children responsibility at lunch times because at lunch times there was no monitoring … one way I sort of addressed that was to empower the students (Mr Remmy).

> [Mr Remmy] is trying the lunch time bell where [students] freeze... and then the other [bell] is when they are supposed to walk quietly and orderly to their lines. ... he is doing this to try to manage their disorderly conduct... (Catherine, key staff).

He also utilised interpersonal means that included extending leniency and encouraging improved behaviour.

> … there is a boy in my class who uses all the obscene language … I heard [Mr Remmy] talk to the child and he told him you are going to make an effort now to behave and to change your behaviour and I am wiping your slate clean so you have a fresh start (Lynette, teacher).

> [Mr Remmy] kind of had a soft spot for [students in my class] ... when I correct them they would run to him to get him to be on their side and he was actually doing that he was actually on their side … (Rita, teacher).

However, realising students' general disregard to his somewhat gentle approach to disciplining, Mr Remmy changed to a sterner approach.

> Now, Mr Remmy would raise his voice. At the beginning he didn't raise his voice; he didn't tell them anything. He would just be very, very, very nice and he has realised that is not working. … now he will correct them and say, "Ok, this is enough". He has seen for himself how the children are. He has experienced it (Rita, teacher).

Focusing on teaching and learning

Apart from providing instructional support in the form of teaching resources, Mr Remmy focussed on teaching and learning through addressing teachers' autonomous planning for instruction and implementing standardized, whole-school formative assessment towards monitoring student progress and improving students' testwiseness.

> [Mr Remmy] is trying to improve curriculum [implementation]... [For] Math and Language Arts, he is having monthly tests throughout the school at the same time to see how well students are improving... so, that has started since he has come (Sandra, teacher).

> ... in terms of assessment, one paper would be done by [classes at the same level]. ...[The monthly tests] must mirror National Test so the children can gain the experience and make them more ready so you are more accustomed to doing a monthly test under those conditions so when the national tests come back, it is not a new thing so you are charged by it because you are accustomed to it (Mr Remmy).

In conjunction, he sought to develop high expectations through a system of recognising academic achievement.

> ... in terms of expectations for the children, well we have that board there as an honour roll, so [students] know that their names will be listed there. He always [publicly praises] the children, in fact from the whole school, the ones that excel from each class, highest mark and that sort of thing. So in that way the expectation is getting them to want to aspire to that (Sandra, key staff).

Mr Remmy had also begun discussions with teachers about addressing the school's literacy problem and had made use of staff's expertise.

> ... the literacy committee was revamped and the intention is to use the informal Reading Inventory (IRI) to test all of these children and determine their independent and instructional reading levels. That has to be done with the intention of re-mediating their problems ... the actual timeline has to be worked out... [but] I took it seriously because it is literacy, it is a challenge so I decided that's something that's going to happen (Mr Remmy).

> ... [a teacher] is doing her masters now and a lot of it has to do with reading, so [Mr Remmy] dealt a lot with her because she was supposed to handle the reading inventory (Lynette, teacher).

He also regularly reviewed teachers' lesson plans and evaluation, though he did not always return their books in a timely fashion.

> [Mr Remmy] is monitoring: checking on the classes, making sure that you do your record and evaluation and looking at your scheme of work to know what you are supposed to be doing. He mentioned that he wants to start looking at the children's books to monitor... (Catherine, key staff).

While Mr Remmy addressed staff issues, such as school attendance, through general staff meetings or one-to-one meetings, upholding confidentiality, when faced with teachers' actual or potential unsupportive actions he used management-by exception or political leadership.

Management-by-exception

Active management by exception was used by Mr Remmy to ensure goal realisation. He simply excluded unsupportive individuals and factions, resigning to work with those school members he considered supportive.

> ... only a few was carrying it. But you see you come into a situation and this one had a problem with this one and you just try to make sure that the job gets done (Mr Remmy; CI 4: Milo Games Preparation).

> I am number 3, [Lydia] is number 2 but [Mr Remmy] doesn't treat me like that. All the other principals whenever they did anything would call Lydia and myself and we would discuss certain things before it is [publicized]. ... with past principals I have done a lot of the administrative work for them but now it is much, much less ... (Sandra, key staff).

Political Leadership

Facing up to conflict

To address actual and potential conflict, Mr Remmy faced up to them, demonstrating understanding of individuals' perspectives and feelings but insisting that the inappropriate behaviour stopped.

> It was a charged environment somewhat; so, my first challenge was to sort of break that… Well first you have to talk about it... I had to quell the nonsense [the argument between two teachers at a staff meeting] and I made it very clear [that] we are adults and how we deal with problems is critical and you can deal with something and not blow your top... You can deal with a problem however bothersome, however critical and not almost come to blows… I virtually had to go between them because it almost came to blows (Mr Remmy; CI 5: Tardiness Checks).

> … we had to talk about [the respect for the principal's office], you see some people I don t know if they don't know or they're just not cognisant or they just don't care in some instances, but talking about it and hearing the views of different people was important so I used the staff meeting to actually highlight that (Mr Remmy; CI 3: Principal's Office a Hub).

Mr Remmy also used his interpersonal skills to not only defuse conflict but to encourage staff compliance.

> … he also tries to exhibit a lot of self-control… He tries to handle situations when he is calm and not fly off the handle. ... so, when others might be fussing, he tries to be as calm as possible and he will tell others to calm down (Stacy, key staff).

Depending on the gravity of a situation, especially those that were staff-related, Mr Remmy also made log entries as mandated by the MOE.

Pre-empting issues/avoidance

Pre-emption or avoidance was used by Mr Remmy in order to eschew staff contending or disagreeing with him, in particular.

> He is like, 'I don't really want to get in to anybody's bad books' and he doesn't really want to have to discipline anyone by way of [warning] letter and what not. I think he tries to avoid that kind of thing so he would try to talk and try to reason (Catherine, key staff).

However, on discovering that staff disagreed with a given suggestion following a test for receptivity, Mr Remmy ignored the advice of staff in order to further his own goals for the school or to try out his ideas.

> [Mr Remmy] would ask and bring forth suggestions [but] I think if he wants to do [something] he would do it even though we say no. ... when I brought up [the idea of using oil instead of water paint on the walls of the flooded-out classrooms] some others agreed with me but he went ahead and did what he had to do anyway (Catherine, key staff).

> He would come and ask you [individually] "What do you think about this"? Although sometimes I think that he already has in his mind what he is going to do. He does that with other teachers as well (Rita, teacher).

Redesigning the organisation

Building collaborative culture

Mr Remmy, through his verbal expressions, conscientiously worked at developing a sense of collective responsibility needed for building a collaborative school culture.

> It's us. It's our school not my school; so, I am very particular with the words I use even when I am speaking to [school members]: "It's our", "What are we going to do?", "What do we need to do?". I try to use the 'we' approach and not the 'me' or 'my' approach. Because even if I come with my vision and you don't share the vision, we have a problem. We have to have a common vision (Mr Remmy).

He also invited staff's openness, encouraged shared-decision making and weighed teachers' suggestions in order to take the best course of action. Where teachers were affected by taken decisions, Mr Remmy also

entertained their sentiments, demonstrating consideration but relayed that final decisions were his to make.

> The way I operate is I try to listen, I don't take decisions - I mean if we're in an emergency, I'd take decisions - but I try to take decisions based on feedback from everyone... and then I make the best decision possible. … I let them know: if the decision affects you per se please feel free to let me know and we will look at it because I don't like the idea of something is bothering you to the extent, and you don't let me know, and then that festers and creates a problem… but the final buck must stop with me or else what will we have! (Mr Remmy).

Besides the co-creation of the school's development plan, Mr Remmy also encouraged collaborative planning for instruction and assessment needed for programme coherence. Teachers had been encouraged to engage in pedagogic dialogue.

> One of the first things … we were successful in doing was getting teachers to come together to produce a common scheme of work and I have those lodged in the office for every level. So for first year [infants], common scheme; 2nd years, common scheme and in order to do that you have to come together and talk so you are getting people talking, you get people coming together to produce something (Mr Remmy).

Structures for effective collaboration were also created or improved and included repurposed committees to address school problems, and the SBM team, which had been expanded to include the experienced teachers on staff.

> ... we sort of revamped committees with the thinking that we don't need too many committees, but looking at the critical ones. ... The SBM team includes [the ST, the HOD and Sandra and Catherine]. Depending on the decision I would involve the union representative as well... (Mr Remmy).

> ... we came up with a number of committees. … [One is] a reading committee [because] we are trying to improve literacy throughout the school especially (Stacy, key staff).

Mr Remmy also intended to set up structures within the PTA to improve its functioning.

> … we didn't have the [PTA] structure of the president and, the executive. ... So that is the next juncture to actually establish the structure because as it is it's me and the few interested people (Mr Remmy).

(Re)establishing culture symbols

An important aspect of Mr Remmy's redesigning of the organisation was erecting or re-establishing culture symbols that communicated the values and norms he promoted. The principal's office as an important status symbol to which certain behaviours were associated was one such symbol.

> The office was the centre of everything ... so people would just come in. ... I didn't want to just come and say "Nobody in my office". I didn't try to do that but it is being done gradually and I am bringing people around to know, 'No, this is the office and a certain decorum is required'... That's me. It may not be the best way, but that is the way that I choose (Mr Remmy).

Values of mutual respect in school-member relationships and discipline, in particular were insisted on by Mr Remmy. Charts placed about the school also communicated and encouraged these values. However, Mr Remmy also tried to change existing values and norms to which he did not subscribe, as indicated by the following extracts.

> This year we are having nothing [for Carnival] and he actually came out and said, "Well teachers, I don't do anything with Carnival you know". And he put an [aerobic] burn out on that Wednesday. ... that's what you are doing for the carnival? (Sandra, key staff).

> At the beginning [Mr Remmy] didn't raise his voice; he didn't tell the students anything he would just be very very very nice … He has had meetings to kinda tell [teachers] to not be so demotivating [to the students]… (Rita, teacher).

Building productive relations with parents

Apart from inviting the support of parents and the community and working with them when the school faced infrastructural challenges, such productive relations were initiated and maintained by Mr Remmy, particularly through the PTA.

> I decided that if we wanted to see a direct improvement in attendance we would have to put this thing in the evening … just being accommodating to the parents and the PTA … and we maintained that ... apart from changing the [meeting] times, ... [I] let parents know what [we] are going to be doing and let them be a part of it. ... [I] let them know what is happening in the school, what are some of the

> things that [we] are trying and want to bring about [and] what [we] have done (Mr Remmy).

PTA meetings served as an important means to encourage the support of parents and enlighten them of the school's plans for development and its activities.

Helping/developing people

Enhancing teacher orientation

In order to enhance teacher quality, Mr Remmy began by engaging staff in self-reflection on their professional orientation, especially their dispositions and practice.

> You ask yourself, 'Okay are we satisfied with our current state of affairs?' And you ask them to get a sense of introspection and, in a sense, ... [the visioning] process would have meant that you have to do some self-reflection and see what do I need to do different or how do I operate differently (Mr Remmy).

He also reminded staff of desired/expected behaviours at the staff level, but mostly on a one-on-one basis, appreciating individuals' different change orientations.

> From time to time you may have to remind people of certain behaviours as the case may be but it's more or less on an individual basis ... reminding them that we have to model the behaviour of what we expect from the children (Mr Remmy).

> [Mr Remmy] believes in giving [teachers] a chance to change and he also recognises that change takes time and for some it would be quicker than for others. ... and he is willing to give them probably as much time as they want (Lynette, teacher).

He also provided individualized support to staff in the form of advice that reaffirmed desirable values and behaviours.

Modelling desired behaviours

Mr Remmy modelled the behaviours he expected of school members, demonstrating the values to which he held, such as respect and organisational commitment.

> I value being regular so I am regular [to school]... I do not blame, so I will take the responsibility. ... I do not appreciate teachers shouting

> at the children so I speak with a certain tone... whatever I try to get from the teachers, I try my best to do it, I model it (Mr Remmy).
>
> He sets the example of doing what he is supposed to do like sometimes if the teacher who is scheduled for assembly is not here he will do it; he will take it on so he is leading from the front (Lynette, teacher).

Having discussed Mr Remmy's leadership practices, school members' responses to his leadership are discussed next.

School member responses to Mr Remmy's leadership

At Riverside, school members most commonly responded in support of Mr Remmy's leadership. They also accommodated him, showed disregard and, at times, reasoned with or confronted him. Staff's withdrawal was relatively uncommon and often the action of an individual, suggesting they were not culturally normative. Captured through this case, too, was the changeability of school members' responses.

Support

Staff at Riverside demonstrated their support in a number of ways. They took on extra responsibility in the planning and execution of co- and extra-curricular activities and in difficult circumstances as indicated by the following:

> The teachers plus the cleaner who came for downstairs, we worked together and we prepared the [classrooms]. … I know the law, we all know the law, given the fact that if you come into an environment and it is not safe, you have all right to leave; but they did not go that way… everyone helped (Mr Remmy; CI 2: School Cleaning).
>
> He came back again and insisted that every child be in a club – again great idea, get them into the things that they like… We called on teachers' strengths. We spent a day or more putting everybody into clubs, we came here and there was no electricity, he was not there, the children were not here. We were supposed to leave at 10, I left at 11. Some of the staff stayed back [assigning] children to clubs… (Mala, teacher).

They also generally complied with Mr Remmy's requests.

> … we just work along with him we don't really take him to task… We may not always agree with what he says or what he wants but we work together with him (Catherine, key staff).

Their support was also registered in their approval, participation and appreciation of changes, such as the staff room and the student rewards system, introduced by Mr Remmy. The ST, in particular, responded to Mr Remmy's invitation of joint-working positively. She assisted and demonstrated readiness to give advice should he ask, but allowed him space to develop professionally.

> I will give him my advice but I will not tell him what to do … I don't want to keep saying no don't do that because I don't think it's right and because he is a man too; men don't like to be told. So some things he will have to learn on his own. I will guide you, I will help you and tell you certain things and if he asks, oh yes… (Lydia, key staff).

Parents supported Mr Remmy by making material and financial contributions and through their assistance and participation in school activities. Notable was their increased participation at PTA meetings.

> … the [parents'] attendance skyrocketed to 60 something and we filled out 2 [classrooms]… We have support in so much as and I keep referring back to the frolic …, where when we asked for stuff, I still have toys and [drinks] and stuff left over; so the contribution was so overwhelming then (Mr Remmy)

> The parents respect him. … We have a better turn out at the PTA (Lydia, key staff).

Students' support was hinged to an appreciation of Mr Remmy's more respectful and considerate manner towards them and was demonstrated in their initial enthusiasm at participating in his student-focused interventions; although much of the enthusiasm, especially for the prefect system, had waned, giving way to half-hearted participation.

> At the start [students were aspiring to be prefects]; now, I don't think so … the enthusiasm this term has lessened. [The prefects] don't even want to go and stand with the infants and that sort of thing (Sandra, key staff).

> [Students] are actually looking forward to [being rewarded for academic achievement]. My children especially, they want to get their certificates (Rita, teacher).

> We are excited about the house system and receiving points (Anna, student).

Accommodation

A form of qualified support, staff's accommodation was evident in response to Mr Remmy's shortcomings in recognition that he was a novice at principalship. In response to his forgetfulness, occasional inaction and abandonment of plans, staff continued to believe in his leadership and found ways to improve or compensate for such weaknesses.

> He is new on staff so we give him the benefit of the doubt that he is new and now getting his feet wet (Mala, teacher).

> … [Mr Remmy] forgets. He writes [stuff] down but when you go to his desk, it's like where is the piece of paper. We gave him a diary for Christmas and it has a lock. … He is new and he is young to the whole thing and he is trying… He just needs some organisational skills and he needs somebody to tell him ok you have a meeting at 1pm and you need to do this and remember to do this… [Teachers] were trying to fill [that] space but we couldn't because we have our classes… we'll see how it goes because he is still fresh and new (Rita, teacher).

Staff also accommodated principal interventions which they did not fully support, as indicated in the following excerpt.

> One of the changes is this freeze bell nonsense that is wasting time … We are not too crazy about it but we are giving it that level of time to operate (Keith, key staff).

However, they manipulated their participation in unpopular interventions.

> You say that you are giving the children balls at lunch time. This has been an issue here for a number of years. … because [the balls] could go over unto the [motor] highway, which is what [teachers] don't want. [Mr Remmy] is giving the boys balls, so we take them back (Mala, teacher).

> I had my eyes on the clique and I realised there was a pattern… the bell is supposed to be rung at 20 past 12… Another bell … at 12:25 and that's the freeze bell. That was the arrangement. … I didn't hear anybody saying that they didn't agree… But this week that didn't happen… In fact the first bell probably went a little after 12:30. … perhaps it is being said, 'I'm going to ring it now, why should I shorten my lunch time' because I realised that every day the first bell is going at a certain time… So it's, 'I'm doing what you say to do but when I want to do it. I am not shortening my lunch time' (Lynette, teacher).

Disregard

Some of Mr Remmy's interventions and requests were outright disregarded. In response to Mr Remmy asking staff to improve their

interactions with students, which may have been an affront to their teacher identities, staff disregarded; while, his efforts to improve their attendance affected short-term compliance.

> [Mr Remmy] has had meetings to kinda tell [teachers] to not be so demotivating but ... he is still coming across to them as too soft. So it is kinda like going through one ear and coming out the next (Rita, teacher).

> [Late coming and signing incorrect arrival time] continues. … like the teacher who constantly puts the wrong time in the [teachers' register] at one point in time she was really making an effort to get to school earlier (Lynette, teacher).

Students too had displayed short-term compliance, which changed to disobedience, in response to Mr Remmy's relatively gentle chastening.

> At the beginning he didn't raise his voice; he didn't tell them anything he would just be very very very nice... Every lunchtime we would have a fight. We're talking about the first few months he was here. [Students] were just running wild and everything was just going out of hand (Rita, teacher).

> It is the same repeat offenders that are coming with the same offences…. My way may not be his way but [Mr Remmy's] outcome is not helping no matter how much you want to be their friend… I am seeing talk, talk, talk, talk, talk and yes for a day the child might be better… but the same behaviour pattern will continue... (Sandra, key staff).

However, all interviewees recognised that when Mr Remmy changed to using a sterner approach to disciplining students, they obeyed as indicated by the following extract.

> Now [Mr Remmy] is more aggressive, which is what he needs to be… show[ing] them, 'Hey listen you have to listen to me'. … and the boys are responding to it (Lydia, key staff).

Reasoning then confrontation

Additionally, when teachers disapproved of Mr Remmy's decisions or actions, they tried to reason with him.

> … we have been trying to get [Mr Remmy] to understand that he needs to take one thing at a time. When you achieve that, maybe you can improve and assign one thing to someone and then tackle two so you get into the groove (Lydia, key staff).

> Ok, no [Carnival] jump up. After the roving tent, I think a few teachers approached him because I mean we have the DJ and

> everything to play one or two calypsoes just for the children to jump, he said, "No" (Mala, teacher).

However, when reasoning appeared to be ineffective, staff confronted him or was preparing to do so, as the following show:

> For the house system, [Mr Remmy] wanted to shift the staff for I have no idea what reason and then the other blue house teachers also [stood] up, saying that they are not moving because we work well together… he eventually listened to [the HOD] who is also in blue house and insisted that she wasn't moving (Mala, teacher).

> … [Mr Remmy] bought these [metal-blade] fans even though we said not to and they are just here [unused]. But when you do things like this you are wasting the funds. You come now and paint the whole infant department [with water paint]. We're telling you no … You cannot use water paint with the infants… when the funds are finished [he] cannot demand the staff because that is when they would stand up against [him] (Lydia, key staff).

The staff was also planning to confront Mr Remmy at staff meetings about the lunchtime freeze bell.

Withdrawal

Mr Remmy had also experienced staff's withdrawal, which appeared to be a precondition to their confrontation. When displeased at a decision or action by Mr Remmy teachers mainly withdrew emotionally as the following indicate:

> ... he lost a lot of points with me at the last staff meeting with the carnival issue. ... carnival is one of our major festivals. So whether you like it or you don't like it, it has to be taught… So for me that really turned me off that this is the first year since 22 years I'm here that we [are] not having anything for carnival (Sandra, key staff).

> You are supposed to do things in an order. [He] started with second year, … skipped my class and… jumped to the other class to paint. … "Don't worry sir…": that is how I just ride it off. … It gets me a little angry. Painting started in January and we are coming to the end of February. I listen [to his excuses] but I would vent with my friends [in the staffroom]. I will not vent with him (Mala, teacher; CI 1: The Flood).

One teacher's withdrawal had become acute in response to Mr Remmy excommunicating her and commenting on her relationship with students. She was considering transferring out of Riverside where she had taught for over 20 years.

IMPACT OF CASE 3 ON RIVERSIDE AND MR REMMY

Having explored the two phases of the interplay between Mr Remmy's leadership and Riverside's strolling culture, I now discuss the impact of this interplay on the school and its new principal. Although two interviewees said that they couldn't think of any impact made by the principal's interventions, the cultural changes identified at Riverside were positive though few. They have been grouped into four areas: 1) quality of the learning environment, 2) home-school link, 3) teacher disposition and, 4) teacher practice. Figure 7-2 shows a direct association between those changes and Mr Remmy's school improvement foci. Riverside's academic performance had fluctuated over the years under Mr Remmy's leadership, while Mr Remmy had an experience characterised by self-adjustment, both emotionally and professionally. These are further discussed.

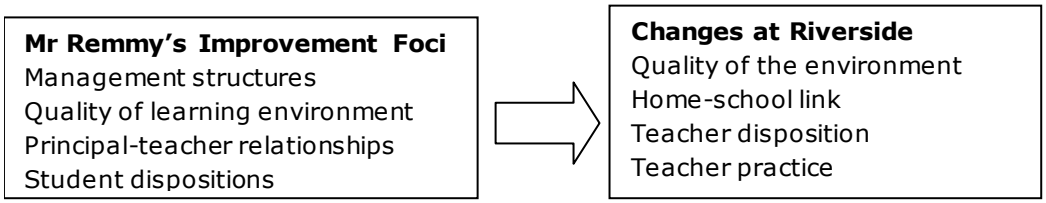


Figure 7-2 – Cultural impact at Riverside compared to Mr Remmy's improvement foci

Cultural changes at Riverside

Improved learning environment

Roughly half of the teacher questionnaire respondents (n = 6) agree that the learning environment had improved. This is the area that most participants recognised a change. Moreover, the protocol for the office had been established, according to Mr Remmy, resulting in less

interruptions and staff and students showing more respect for the office. Less than half of the teacher questionnaire respondents (n = 5) also reported a change in school climate, with two of these saying it had improved. One interviewee reported, however, that there was a noticeable deterioration in school climate during the months leading up to the bazaar.

Improved home-school link

As a result of Mr Remmy's building productive relations with parents and the community, the school had seen a direct improvement in parental involvement, according to about a third of the teacher respondents (n = 4). Also pointed out by Mr Remmy and three teacher interviewees was an improvement in the quality of school events, as a consequence, which brought increased funds to the school.

> [The Christmas bazaar] was a major development that was very successful compared to what transpired before (Mr Remmy).

Teacher disposition: small but important improvement

While the principal said that he noticed some effort to arrive earlier on the part of the teacher who is often tardy, 2 teacher interviewees felt that there had been no change. They also believe that the conflict between the teachers involved in the tardiness checks incident (CI 5) had not dissipated, although they continued to participate in staff meeting discussions and support school events. There seemed to be an increase in teacher satisfaction on the creation of the staff room, according to researcher observation and the comments of Mr Remmy and two teacher interviewees.

> … there is less rushing off at lunch times because ... sometimes you want to cool your head a little bit because that is the nature of the job so they can go to the staffroom and relax and you go back and assume your duties after lunch (Mr Remmy).

Increased teacher satisfaction can counter-balance teacher stress and is critical to teachers' commitment (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008).

Developing teacher practice

While Mr Remmy said that he envisions increased pedagogic dialogue and reduced loss of teaching time as outcomes from teachers' collaborative planning of schemes of work and monthly tests, no evidence of this had been found. It is likely that the collaboration ends on the production of the common scheme and the creation of monthly tests as teachers do not regularly meet thereafter to monitor class progress, according to two interviewees. However, there was some improvement in teachers' record keeping as a result of Mr Remmy's monitoring. Teachers were submitting their record and evaluation books in a more timely fashion, according to two interviewees.

Fluctuating student academic performance

An examination of Riverside's student performance in Mathematics and Language Arts National Tests (NT) (see figure 7-3) revealed that over the 3 years, 2012 to 2014, that the mean performance of students in standards 1 and 3 (years 2 and 4) was generally lower than both the district and national means except in standard 3 Mathematics 2014 where the performance was almost on par with the national mean, being greater than the district mean.

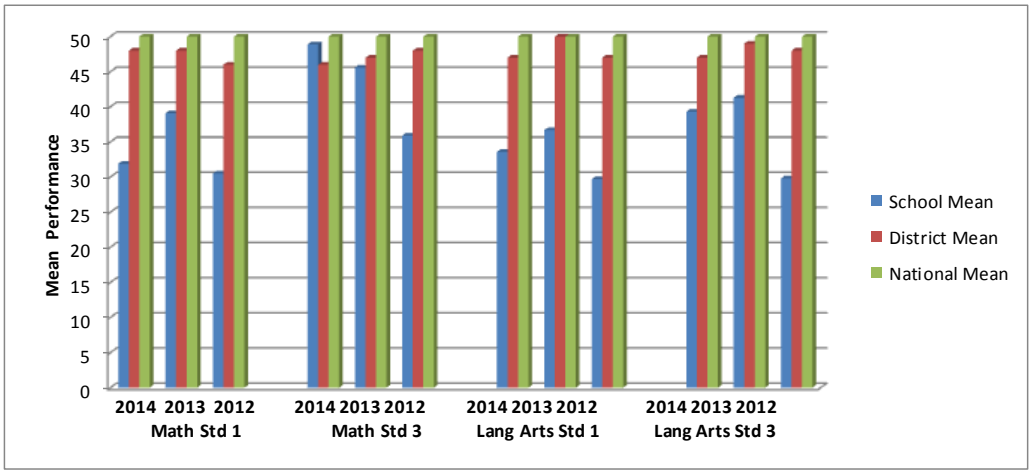


Figure 7-3 – Riverside's NT performance over 3 years

As a school, however, performance fluctuated markedly, however Riverside retained its 'mostly effective' classification though sliding dangerously close to the 'under academic watch' category of schools, for which the API range begins at 240. According to table 7-2, Riverside's API in 2012 was 246 and, in 2014, 245; having slid from a score of 278 in 2013.

Year	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
API	246	278	245

Table 7-2 – Riverside's API over 3 years

Mr Remmy's emotions and lessons

Mr Remmy's emotional monitoring

Mr Remmy seemed to regulate the emotional effect that incidents with his inherited school culture had on him. Consequently, he responded more positively than might be expected, being accepting and understanding as opposed to feeling disrespected, for instance. The following comments indicate this.

> I don't want to say that I felt disrespected I just felt that okay this is a problem that needs to be addressed... (Mr Remmy; CI 3: Principal's office a hub).

> I thought they would have come to blows – that's how bad... I thought that they did not have to reach to that level but I understood somewhat one individual's frustration in that it happened for so long and nobody really addressed it (Mr Remmy; CI 5: Tardiness Checks).

Notwithstanding, his interactions with staff, especially, afforded him opportunities for gratitude, such as when teachers complied with difficult requests.

> I had to ask teachers to step out of their normal calling to assist and the decision was collectively taken that yes we would go that way, for which I was very grateful because in a lot of places that wouldn't have been done as simple like that. You know, OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Act]! (Mr Remmy; CI 2: School Cleaning).

Yet, Mr Remmy was not immune to feeling anger when derailed from his plans. His anger prompted his adoption of political strategies to address some incidents, as indicated by the following comment related to CI 2 – School Cleaning.

> [I felt] upset because this is Monday and as I said I came here with a number of other things to do and your whole day is set back. Look how much teaching time has been lost over a routine activity; so I mean I am upset ... So I had to put down my foot... I needed to take it to another level, which is to write. When [he] sees the letter then [he] will understand (Mr Remmy).

Mr Remmy's Lessons

Mr Remmy had decidedly realised that the **post of vice-principal is different from that of principal**, which is a more strategic leadership role. He related:

> ... sometimes I have to pull back because coming out from my last school where I was vice principal and where I had my hand in everything, you have to say you can't do everything (Mr Remmy).

This lesson flags up the concern about whether experience as vice-principal or deputy-head adequately prepares one for principalship (Kerry, 2005).

While Mr Remmy recognised **the importance of close school monitoring** for smooth running of school activities, he did not demonstrate awareness that he could delegate some of this responsibility but continued to take it fully upon himself. This is indicated by the following:

> I had to actually deal with that and accept that it was my fault I needed to make sure that [the marching instructors] coming in would stick to the time that we afforded them … … right now I am not very efficient, that's the bottom line. I need to be more

> efficient regardless of whatever the circumstances; ... and certain things need to get done (Mr Remmy).

He also expressed **difficulty in treating with dilemmas**.

> … you have to listen to people's points of view, so let people know that they have a voice. I try my best to do that but I am not always successful and because no matter what you do you can never please everybody. One may always be upset and disgruntled… As an administrator you are going to have to make unpopular decisions (Mr Remmy).

While Mr Remmy appreciated that school change took time and effort, his most valuable lesson was **the importance of involving teachers** through openness on his part, delegation and distributing leadership, in order that change initiatives were effectively implemented and sustained. For instance, following the poor preparation for Milo Games – CI 4, Mr Remmy realised:

> [I needed to] discuss things in an open forum with everyone and let's predetermine how things are going to get done… the collective input and responsibility. … So in future… we will plan for the event so who is going to be doing what and who will handle what because that wasn't done and that's why we had the problem (Mr Remmy).

Having encountered problems with his spontaneity and disorganisation, Mr Remmy had come to appreciate **the importance of action planning beyond having a vision**, which involves for example creating timelines and prioritising.

> ... one of the things is … planning and putting time frames and action plans – that is important because once you get in here if you are not really to the point and just with the sway and running, the whole day would pass and you get nothing done; the school could run you. … I need to be more efficient regardless ... I think prioritising is important so I am starting to do that and putting a plan in place and sticking to the plan... (Mr Remmy).

While this is a critical lesson (Fullan, 2001b), Mr Remmy may well need to balance it by recognising when there is need for flexibility as observed amongst successful principals (e.g. Leithwood and Day, 2007a).

Having reflected on his interactions with school members, particularly staff, Mr Remmy learned that while his personality predisposed

him to being considerate, there were times that he needed to be more direct in addressing staff issues, resolving them sooner rather than later - the metaphoric 'nipping in the bud', rather than avoiding issues as he did at times. He related:

> I am more on the understanding side but I am learning that there are incidences where I have to be more direct and forthright and say, ok that's where it stops ... What I have learnt is that I can't leave things for too long; sometimes you have to address them sooner (Mr Remmy).

For working with staff, too, Mr Remmy also recognised a need to study the personalities of those with whom he worked for the development of better relationships.

> As an administrator you need to be a personologist; know the personalities of the people you're dealing with. It took me a while; I didn't get that overnight... but… the majority, I think, have come around at least to what I am privy to but there may be the one or the two who may still have their little apprehension but at the end of the day we have to work together… (Mr Remmy).

Pre-explanation summary of Case 3

Case 3 has thus far shown that although Mr Remmy utilized the four types of leadership, he prioritized managerial leadership, focusing on teaching and learning and enhancing the physical and behavioural conditions at the school. He was also keen on redesigning the organization, but also adopted political leadership strategies in working with Riverside's strolling school culture. Staff in particular generally responded to his leadership in qualified support that appeared to be waning. As a consequence of this transitional leadership-school culture interplay, the school experienced improvements in some school processes, such as teacher collaborative culture and school conditions, but saw fluctuations in student academic performance. Mr Remmy, who appeared to manage his emotions well, had benefitted from lessons especially pertaining to the principalship and school change.

UNDERSTANDING CASE 3: EXPLANATIONS

Having presented the two phases of the interplay between Mr Remmy's leadership and Riverside's strolling culture and their impact on this new principal and the school, this section is dedicated to explaining the overall transitional nature of the interplay of this case. Six explanations are proffered.

<u>Explanation 1</u>: School change at Riverside was influenced by Mr Remmy's school improvement foci but limited by his leadership shortcomings.

Clear associations were observed between Mr Remmy's cultural awareness, his school improvement foci and the sub-dimensions in which change occurred. For instance, his primary intent to improve the weak and defunct management structures and inadequate learning environment translated into a strong predilection to managerial leadership, which realized direct, positive returns in these areas, especially the quality of the learning environment and school members' satisfaction in turn. Consequently, those cultural dimensions of which Mr Remmy was unaware or had little knowledge were generally overlooked, such as teacher-specific academic rigor and inconsistent compensation for student disadvantage.

Moreover, his unwillingness to engage staff particularly when they disagreed with him or were likely to do so hindered the development of the collaborative culture he hoped to create. More critical though was his tendency to withhold information and hesitancy in delegating and distributing leadership responsibilities, both of which also prevented true collaboration with staff but additionally contributed to school ineffectiveness as represented by Riverside's declining National Test performance. Roberts (1992) also reported on new principals' reluctance to distribute leadership for reasons including a lack of trust in school

members. Yet, for successful principals, distributing leadership is a way of demonstrating trust that also assists in establishing their own trustworthiness (Day et al., 2011).

<u>Explanation 2</u>: Mr Remmy's propensity to managerial leadership was strongly influenced by his resolve, achievement-oriented determination and professional values; while spontaneity and closed-ness mostly influenced his political leadership.

Among the personal attributes and values associated to Mr Remmy's leadership, certain ones appeared to be most influential to his dominant leadership approaches. These are highlighted in tables 7-3 and 7-4. Table 7-3 shows, for instance, how influential Mr Remmy's personal qualities were to his overall leadership, especially his resolve, spontaneity and closed-ness. However, while his spontaneity dominated his managerial leadership along with his achievement-orientation, it was his resolve and closed-ness that influenced political strategies such as avoiding contentions with staff and ignoring advice that ran counter to his ideas for school development. Mr Remmy's risk-taking also appeared to be key to his managerial leadership (see table 7-3).

Table 7-4, alternatively, shows that Mr Remmy's professional values, especially values for discipline, professionalism and the best interest of the school and students, were core to his leadership practices and strategies. Other values, such as values for second chances and role responsibility also influenced his managerial leadership, particularly with respect to addressing staff and student conduct.

Mainly, Mr Remmy's managerial leadership was informed by 'vicarious experiences' and 'performance accomplishments' (Bandura, 1977) attained at his former school while he was VP, as the following indicate:

… at my last school it was most things like troubled parents who came into the school vex, so I'll come calm and calm them down so that was experiential (Mr Remmy).

TRAITS / ATTRIBUTES / DISPOSITIONS		CONFIRMING PRACTICES / STRATEGIES
Cognitive Ability	**Analytical**	• addressing staff issues**(M)** • responding to infrastructural challenges **(M)** • pre-empting contentions with staff **(P)**
	Creative	• focusing on teaching and learning **(M)**
Personal Qualities	**Humble**	• admitting personal ineffectiveness **(M)**
	Resolute	• modelling values **(D)** • withholding support of undesirable norms **(R)** • creating collaborative culture: inviting teachers' openness **(R)** • attending to student behaviour **(M)** • enhancing school environment **(M)** • responding to infrastructural challenges **(M)**
		• lack in monitoring school activity (contradictory) **(M)** • avoiding contentions (contradictory) **(P)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice (contradictory) **(P)**
	Gentlemanly	• addressing staff issues **(R, M, P)** • attending to student behaviour **(M)**
	Spontaneous & Closed	• withholding support of undesirable norms **(R)** • creating collaborative culture: meeting with staff & parents • monitoring school activity **(M)** • responding to infrastructural challenges **(M)** • avoiding contentions **(P)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice **(P)**
Motivation	**Devoted & Energetic**	• involving his personal network **(R)** • personal involvement in enhancing school environment **(M)**
	Achievement-oriented & Determined	• encouraging school self-evaluation **(S)** • creating high performance expectations **(S)** • engaging teachers in self-reflection **(D)** • attending to student behaviour **(M)** • monitoring school activity: walk-abouts **(M)** • focusing on teaching and learning: all **(M)**
Social Appraisal Skills	**Approachable & Personable**	• building relations with parents, students & community **(R)** • using interpersonal skills to defuse conflict **(P)** • avoiding contentions (contradictory) **(P)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice (contradictory) **(P)**
	Trustworthy & Considerate	• addressing staff issues one-on-one **(M)** • attending to student behaviour: extending leniency **(M)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice (contradictory) **(P)** • hesitant delegation (contradictory) **(P)**
Disposition	**Risk-taker**	• enhancing the school environment **(M)** • creating management structures **(M)** • focusing on teaching and learning **(M)**
	Fund-raiser	• using personal network **(R)** • enhancing school environment **(M)**

S – Setting directions; **D** – Developing people; **R** – Redesigning the organisation;

T – Transactional; **M** - Management; **P** – Political

Table 7-3 – Mr Remmy's attributes as associated to his leadership

Mr Remmy's Values		Confirming Practices/Strategies
Basic Human Values	**Respect**	• allowing teachers a voice **(R)** • encouraging respect among school members **(R)** • eschewing abrasiveness to students **(R, M)** • building relations with parents **(R)** • addressing staff issues: one-on-one **(M)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice (contradictory) **(P)**
General Moral values	**Role/moral responsibility**	• using active management-by-exception **(T)** • monitoring school activity: walk-abouts; administrative overload **(M)** • reviewing teachers' plans **(M)**
Professional Values	**Discipline & Professionalism**	• engaging teachers in self-reflection on practice **(D)** • modelling values: discipline **(D)** • encouraging collaborative planning for instruction **(R)** • creating collaborative structures **(R)** • attending to student behaviour **(M)** • addressing staff issues **(M)** • monitoring school activity **(M)** • creating/enhancing management structures **(M)** • reviewing teachers' plans **(M)** • confronting conflict among staff **(P)**
	High standards of performance	• setting high performance expectations **(S)** • focus on teaching & learning: providing instructional support; recognising academic achievement; addressing literacy problem **(M)** • monitoring school activity **(M)**
	School & students' best interest (holistic development)	• encouraging school self-evaluation **(S)** • setting high performance expectations **(S)** • eschewing abrasiveness to students **(R, M)** • building relations with parents & community **(R)** • using personal network **(R)** • enhancing the environment **(M)** • creating/enhancing management structures **(M)** • focusing on teaching and learning: all
		• monitoring school activity – lacking (contradictory) **(M)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice **(P)**
	Professional development of teachers	• engaging teachers in self-reflection on practice **(D)** • modelling values **(D)** • encouraging collaborative planning for instruction **(R)** • building structures for collaboration: committees **(R)** • hesitant delegation (contradictory) **(M)**
	School's environment and image	• vision for school **(S)** • enhancing the environment **(M)**
Professional Beliefs	**Conducive environment enhances performance**	• enhancing the environment **(M)**
	Children can be disciplined in alternative ways to corporal punishment	• attends to student behaviour: positive disciplining **(M)**
	Money raised is for school improvement	• enhancing school environment **(M)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice regarding use of school funds **(P)**
Social Values	**Harmonious relationships: teamwork; shared decision making & input of all**	• building collaborative cultures: speaking in 'we' terms; allowing teachers a voice **(R)** • building structures for collaboration: teacher teams & committees **(R)** • interpersonal skills to defuse conflict **(P)** • avoiding contentions with staff **(P)** • ignoring staff's counter-advice (contradictory) **(P)**
	Second chances	• addressing staff issues **(M)** • attending to student behaviour: extending leniency **(M)**

S – Setting directions; D – Developing people; R – Redesigning the organisation; T – Transactional; M- Management; P – Political

Table 7-4 – Mr Remmy's values as associated to his leadership

All the teacher interviewees corroborated this but raised concerns about the effectiveness of those borrowed strategies and others that they felt were sometimes culturally incompatible.

> …he has tried some of the things that he came with from his previous school … Some things are good but sometimes don't work because not everything would work for one school as another (Sandra, key staff).

> I understand that you are a young principal and you are coming with these great ideas and that is great; you want to move the school on – that's great! Take it in little baby steps, in consideration of the culture of the school because I am telling you I have heard from other teachers and parents that they were very disappointed this Carnival that the children did not at least have a jump up (Mala, teacher).

Mr Remmy did, however, make a couple of references to his professional preparation that informed his leadership practice.

> Again you have to look at situations if you have a situation where you have to meet demands, you adopt the situational perspective (Mr Remmy; CI 2: School Cleaning).

> [Whole-school monthly assessment] wasn't existing and from your learning from [principal preparation] and so on, the need for feedback to know where the children are at; so, yes I saw the need for it (Mr Remmy).

<u>Explanation 3</u>: Mr Remmy seemed to be in the process of deciding on a role conception to which he could adhere.

Despite his sources of self-efficacy, Mr Remmy's conception of his role was ambiguous. He presented himself as *a collaborator who had the final say.*

> I am not coming thinking that I am the fountain of knowledge, thinking I am the authority on anything. ... I see myself as a team player ... and I am willing to work collaboratively and co-operatively … I try to let [teachers] know and say let's be open but the final buck must stop with me or else what will we have? (Mr Remmy).

While he recognised that he was ultimately responsible to the MOE for Riverside, it seemed as though he struggled to fully embrace and practice that which he may have learnt from his formal principal preparation

regarding true collaboration with school members. Therefore, although he knew he had to encourage the development of a collaborative culture, evidenced by his repurposing and restructuring the SBM team and other collaboration and management structures; yet he tried to get things done and manage the school almost single-handedly, failing to progressively involve staff. Additionally, while he invited staff's openness, he remained closed in various respects, including sharing leadership responsibilities and ignoring the staff's advice on school matters as earlier evidenced. The following also support these:

> … this, "I am not a dictator and I don't want it to be autocratic", it ends there because it ends up being his way (Sandra, key staff).
>
> … he is trying to include everybody because he keeps saying I want my staff to have a say but you know you're saying it but you are not maintaining what you say (Lydia, key staff).

Mr Remmy's lack of clarity of his role as principal is a possible explanation for his managerial and political leadership strategies. It may well be that he is more inclined to autocracy rather than collaboration.

This ambiguity regarding his role appeared to also be impaired by role inefficiency. Instead of thinking and acting strategically, Mr Remmy, by his own admission, tried to micro-manage, functioning more like a vice-principal of Riverside than its principal. Although he had fashioned a vision for the school, Mr Remmy did not have an action plan that would inform his decision-making and make clear priority actions for attention and so appeared to be disorganized. This partially explains staff's consequential questioning of Mr Remmy's leadership effectiveness. Such questioning may, in turn, deteriorate into non-support if Mr Remmy's professional development does not foster observable school improvement.

<u>Explanation 4</u>: Generally there existed a low degree of compatibility between Mr Remmy's social values and those expressed in Riverside's school member relationships but partial compatibility on professional values.

One plausible reason for staff's disregard in response to Mr Remmy's attempts to encourage the development of interpersonal relations between and among school members is low compatibility of social values. School members did not in practice value harmonious relationships and respect for others as much as did Mr Remmy (See figure 7-4). Hence, there was no observable improvement in the relationships among students and between teachers and parents or teachers and students. The home training of many of the boys, in particular, with respect to ideas of masculinity was said to be the main factor causing them to devalue Mr Remmy's interaction with them.

However, staff responded more readily to initiatives to improve student discipline and teaching and learning because these were professional values to which they also ascribed, as shown in figure 7-4. Yet, high compatibility in these respects did not guarantee school members' support since the type of strategy used to bring about improvement may not meet their approval as was Mr Remmy's approach to disciplining students. In this respect, Mr Remmy was expected as lead disciplinarian to be not gentle but stern and a role model to the boys of Riverside.

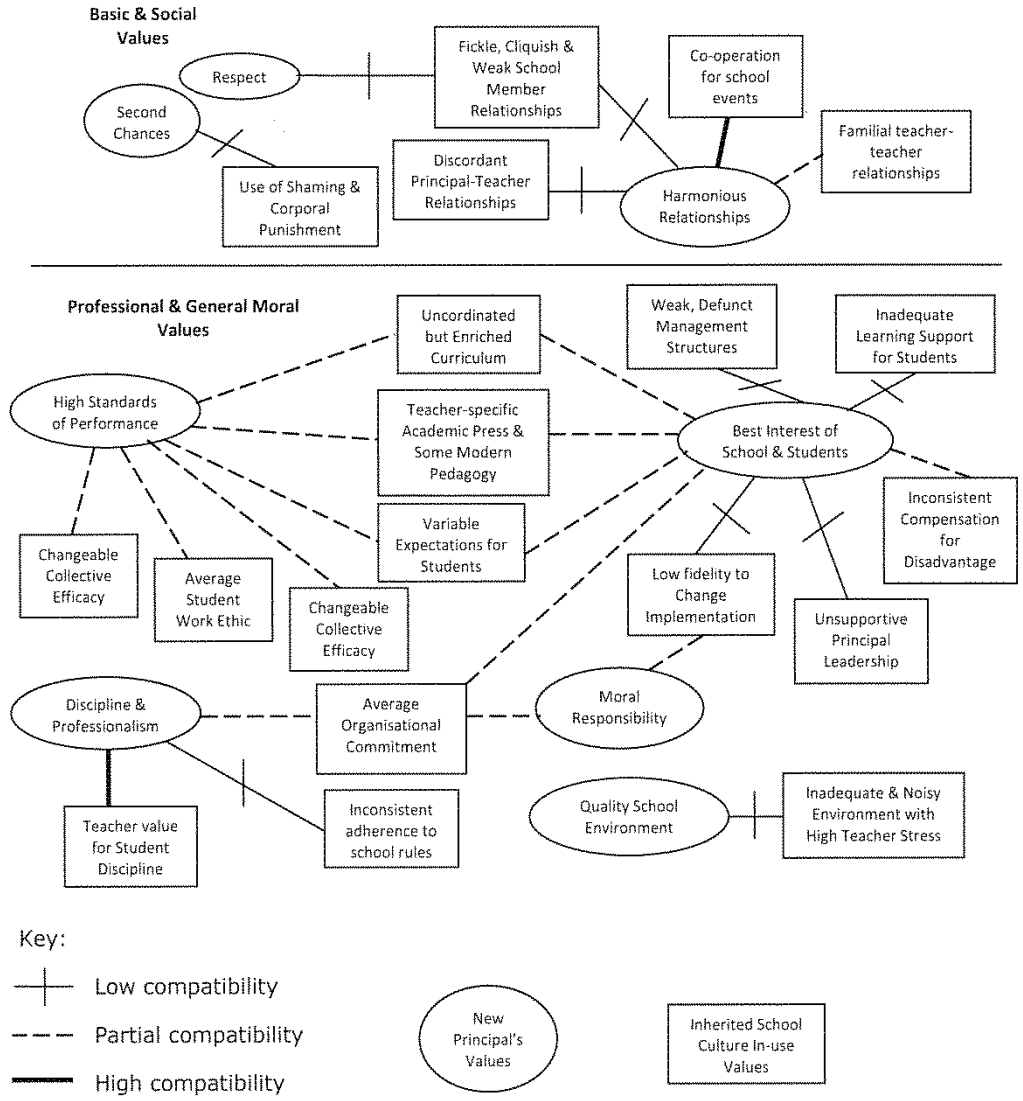


Figure 7-4 – Case 3 values compatibility

<u>Explanation 5:</u> School member's support of Mr Remmy's leadership was provisional.

Mr Remmy's initiation of trust-building behaviours, such as his approachableness, involving students and parents in the life of the school and collaborative vision creation facilitated school members' trust development and thus their support of Mr Remmy's leadership. While school members demonstrated an initial disposition to compliance and enthusiasm in response to Mr Remmy's energy, determination and

creative ideas for school improvement, these changed to accommodation or acquiescence, a form of qualified support. For teachers, in particular, accommodation was for two main reasons: 1) to assist Mr Remmy who they felt was trying but was disorganized and needed administrative support and 2) because he had made it apparent that he was relatively inexperienced, new to principalship and in learning-mode. Thus, school members', especially teachers, full and qualified support of Mr Remmy's leadership was for two reasons: to demonstrate trust in his leadership and to help the newcomer.

As time progressed, however, teachers' support appeared to be waning as their trust in Mr Remmy began to erode. Mr Remmy ignoring their advice and allowing teachers' efforts to be wasted, the non-implementation of some plans and the discontinuance of others caused staff to resort to reasoning, passive resistance and eventually to confrontation. Staff responded in these ways when they had strong doubts about the success of a leadership initiative or were unclear about the purpose of an intervention. Staff members had begun to question Mr Remmy's effectiveness as principal as the following indicate:

> Even now I am not satisfied. I mean there are promises but they are just promises from administration but he is new… He would say that he is trying to change something, but it is still yet to be seen (Rita, teacher).

Teachers did not feel that Mr Remmy seriously considered their suggestions in decisions and needed to see, on his part, a more systematic approach to school change and tangible improvements beyond physical enhancements. It appeared that Mr Remmy's accommodation period was expiring. Hence, their reasoning, withdrawal and confrontation were intended to influence Mr Remmy's decisions and actions and to show their sometime disapproval.

<u>Explanation 6</u>: System mandates and inadequacies contributed to this case's inefficient interaction.

At Riverside, staff was finding it difficult to honour the 'no corporal punishment' mandate despite Mr Remmy's encouragement and modelling in this respect. They were not convinced of its effectiveness with their students, especially since alternative provisions were lacking.

> ... we import all the theories from abroad and we seek to implement them wholesale without the infrastructure, without the basic you know nurses aid, this aid, counsellors without that. Ok. No corporal punishment – Ok but what to put in place? ... don't tell me that we must find ways and means and strategies to deal with the children. At the end of the day you hit (Keith, key staff).

Mandatory attendance by new principals and key staff to training workshops following government-initiated reforms also affected Riverside's functioning and the implementation of school-level reforms.

> … we had some days in mind [for professional development] but because of how the last term past off… [the introduction of Continuous has disturbed the calendar of events tremendously. Even last week, I was called out for three days, just like that and it's only in my instance, I got the text the morning after nine when I had to be somewhere so for three days I wasn't here. CAC affected a lot of things, teachers were called out for training so that affected that (Mr Remmy).

However, the most incapacitating systemic factor in Mr Remmy's leadership efforts was insufficient personnel at the school. As was evidenced at Memorial Park, insufficient teaching staff and a lack of teaching assistants made meeting for collaboration difficult, resulting in the frequent postponement of some meetings or, when staff did meet, classes were left unsupervised which in turn caused an increase in problematic situations involving students. Mr Remmy's struggle with administrative workload and effective school monitoring was partly because there was no clerical assistance at one time and when an office assistant was appointed, the assistance was temporary and lacking.

> [Mr Remmy] was out of a secretary. That was another problem because he was doing office work… He needs that support staff like the administrative support, not [teachers]… He has a lot of good ideas, but executing them is the problem because he doesn't have that help – that is his problem (Rita, teacher).

OVERVIEW

This case has shown how the ambitious leadership of Mr Remmy, the new principal of Riverside attracted only provisional support from especially the teaching staff at the school, resulting in changes with negligible school impact but important lessons for the new school leader. This case has been labelled 'learning the ropes' to reflect the overall disposition of Mr Remmy as he interacted with his inherited school culture. This interplay is best described as transitional as school members too, particularly teachers, adapted their responses to Mr Remmy's leadership in accordance with their changing levels of trust in him. Additionally, the case interaction was also affected by external factors, such as students' backgrounds and the policy mandates and inadequacies of the T&T primary education system.

8. EXPLAINING NEW PRINCIPALS' ENCOUNTERS WITH SCHOOL CULTURE

This chapter presents a revised research framework of the leadership-school culture interplay. It also makes several claims about the nature and impact of leadership-school culture interactions, which have been derived from the cross-analysis of the explanations on the case interactions that formed this study. These claims have been compared to existing literature and associated implications are discussed.

THE LEADERSHIP-SCHOOL CULTURE INTERPLAY: A FRAMEWORK

The study's findings suggest that the leadership-school culture interplay can manifest in qualitatively different ways. This finding is best displayed as a framework of the new principal leadership–school culture interplay (see figure 8-1), which, using the study's findings, was enhanced from the one presented in chapter 2 (p. 54). The framework captures to some extent the complexity of the interplay, showing that the degree of stability between new principals and their inherited school cultures may depend on the absence or presence of a number of personal, cultural and contextual factors; their nature or degree of positivity and; the extent of their influence on other factors. The manifestation of the interplay also depends on the nature and influence of the actions of the various members within the school, especially those of the new principal. The framework shows that schools, and thus the interplay between leadership and school culture, are not impervious to external factors, such as policy dictates, especially in highly centralized education systems as existing in T&T.

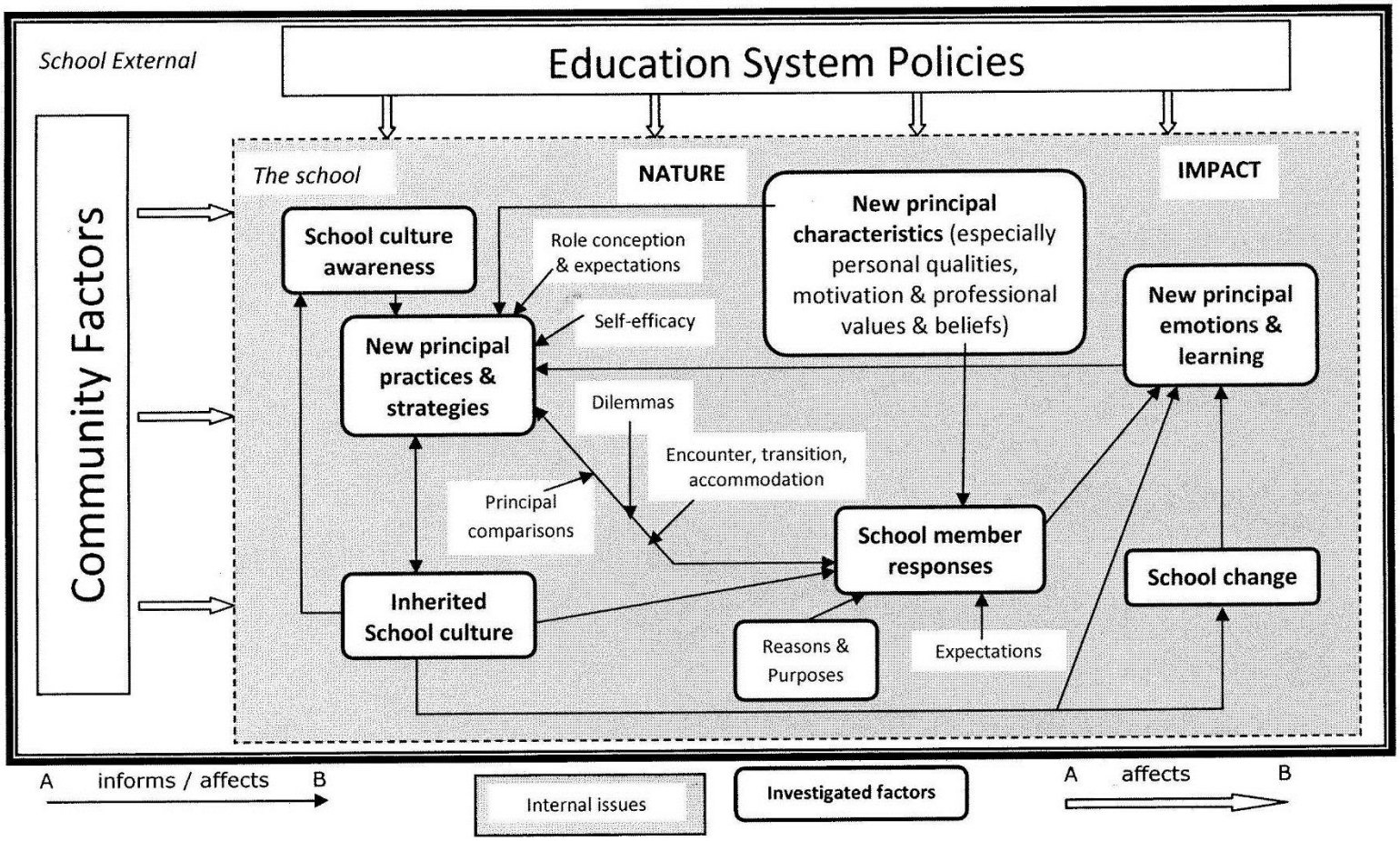


Figure 8-1 – Framework of the leadership-school culture interplay

CLAIMS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LEADERSHIP-SCHOOL CULTURE INTERPLAY

Synthesis of the findings and explanations of this study's individual cases facilitated the postulation of eight claims, which contribute in unique ways to understanding the leadership-school culture interplay. Though specific to this study, these claims may be relatable to similar cases elsewhere. The eight claims are made here and discussed along with associated key implications. Claims one to six concern the nature of the leadership-school culture interplay, while tentative claims seven and eight refer to the impact of the interplay.

CLAIM 1: There are two phases of new principal leadership-school culture interaction: (1) Inheriting; and (2) Building and shaping.

In the inheriting phase, new principals:

- became faced with school members' feelings regarding their appointments, while school members weighed their previous knowledge about the appointee against reality as they grew to know him or her;
- attempted to move staff beyond their reservations about the succession towards gaining acceptance and support, to which school members responded in various ways;
- encountered and sought to learn about the various aspects of their inherited school cultures; and
- were the objects of comparison with usually former principals of their respective schools by school members.

In the building and shaping phase, new principals:

- were afforded by school members an accommodation or trial-and-error period in which to make school changes;

- began to make changes; but, depending on the responses of school members to their leadership, continued with or made adjustments to their initial strategies;
- experienced school members' support and/or attempts at influencing their leadership.

These phases, 'inheriting' and 'building and shaping' are quite similar to stage 1 (entry and encounter) and stage 2 (taking hold), respectively, identified by Weindling (1999) in his model of the stages of transition through headship, which this study used as the initial premise to define the new principal. However, where the current study names the two phases in reference to new principal-school culture interactions, Weindling refers his stages to only principal development when in his descriptions of the stages he inadvertently incorporates some school member responses, for instance in explaining the 'honeymoon period' (p. 24 herein).

The various inheritance situations in which new principals can find themselves imply a need for supervisors or principal mentors to be on hand at schools to facilitate the transition between new principals and teaching staffs, especially where there are teachers who may feel disenfranchised upon the arrival of the incumbent. Simply installing the incumbent may be inadequate. Teachers may require assistance in dealing with such feelings especially in school cultures already characterized by negative psychological states, such as teacher stress. To ignore these undermines the effect they have on teachers' performance, organisational commitment and staff relationships – all of which are critical to school effectiveness and improvement. Notwithstanding, new principals are well-positioned to facilitate the transition, by first acknowledging teachers' feelings and initiating trust-building behaviours, for which aspirant principals may need to be trained.

Another implication of this claim particularly concerns phase 2 – building and shaping. As new principals begin to reculture and restructure their schools, the need for them to truly engage their staffs in collaboration and demonstrate trustworthiness and a willingness to trust is critical to sustain staff's initial positive trust dispositions, develop principal-teacher relationships and garner support for their leadership. Such leadership strategies as distributing leadership responsibilities, involving staff in important school decisions and creating conditions for trust development and collaboration enabled, as evidenced in this study and consistent elsewhere (e.g. Day et al., 2011; Northfield, 2011), improved organizational commitment on the part of teachers and the enhancement of teaching and learning processes. The evidence presented in this study indicates that it is more difficult for some new principals than others to trust their staffs in these ways.

CLAIM 2: New principals draw from the same set of leadership practices to reculture their schools but are disposed to particular types and strategies depending on their professional judgments.

All three of the new principals in this study practised, to varying degrees and in an integrative way, the four types of leadership reviewed in chapter two: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, managerial leadership and political leadership. According to this study's findings, there appears to be direct (positive and negative) relationships between leadership and school and classroom processes and outcomes as well as indirect associations with student academic outcomes. These findings are consistent with research on leadership effects (e.g. Day et al., 2011; Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Transformational leadership, over the other types of leadership, as evidenced in the current study, positively influenced principal-teacher relationships, teacher commitment and satisfaction, as found by Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), Leithwood and Sun

(2012) and Robinson et al. (2008) for example. Transformational leadership was also evidenced as encouraging changed teacher practices, consistent with the findings of Leithwood et al., 2004, cited by Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005). Yet, there was no evidence in this study to support a positive association between transformational leadership and student academic outcomes. Also observed was the positive relationship between instructional leadership – described within this study as a focus on teaching and learning, subsumed within managerial leadership – and school and classroom processes, such as school conditions, home-school link, quality of the learning experience and developing teacher practice. The new principals' managerial leadership realised positive impacts especially on school conditions, such as school environment and climate, and on intermediate student outcomes, such as student behaviour and attendance. However, a predilection for this approach to school leadership hindered the development of a teacher collaborative culture, leadership distribution and, possibly, the realisation of positive student outcomes. The evidence presented here on transactional leadership, while limited, indicates an inconclusive general association with teachers' satisfaction and organisational commitment dependent on the type of strategy used. Rewarding commitment was positively associated; while excommunicating non-supporters as demonstrable in active or passive management-by-exception impacted negatively on the commitment and satisfaction of affected teachers. A dominant political leadership approach, however, seemed to negatively affect principal-teacher relationships, teacher collaborative culture and possibly contributed to hindering positive student academic outcomes.

This evidence also points to the need for principals' professional judgment in selecting appropriate approaches to meet the specific needs of their schools. The professional judgments of the new principals' in this

study differed, being influenced to varying degrees not only by their individual awareness of school culture but also by: 1) common sources of self-efficacy; 2) a few personal attributes and values; and 3) significantly different role conceptions. Thus, the new principals emphasised one or two types of leadership behaviours over the others depending on what felt right to them. Experience as vice-principal or acting principal was mentioned by all three new principals as a source of their self-efficacy and ideas for school development. It seems that these new principals saw vice-principalship as preparation for principalship – the implications of which may be counterproductive to effective school leadership as was realised by two of the new principals (Ms Figaro and Mr Remmy) in this study. This notion signals one to call for a reconceptualization of principal leadership in T&T primary schools or at least a clear demarcation of the significant differences between the roles of principal and vice principal. Unless there is a deliberate effort at succession planning that engages a vice-principal in the work of principals, it may be erroneous to suggest that experience as vice-principal, which may lack a strategic perspective, is adequate preparation for principalship even if the individual fills-in during the principal's absence (Garrett, 1999; Simkins, Close & Smith, 2009, Weindling & Dimmock, 2006).

Another concern about new principals' borrowing ideas from their former schools is that new notions of solving what may appear as 'old' problems might be stifled or not considered and causes one to question the effectiveness of principal preparation. In this study, only one of the three new principals mentioned aspects of his formal leadership training as informing his professional judgment and only fleetingly. A possible reason for this may be inadequate use by preparation programme implementers of research findings on successful leadership practice and strategies. If so, this is a shame, seeing that there is much evidence on 'what works'

across national contexts with respect to school leadership (e.g. National College, 2010; Matthews et al., 2014).

New principals' professional judgment also seemed to be influenced by their personal attributes and values, many of which were found to be present amongst successful school principals. However, only a few attributes and values seemed most influential to the new principals' interventions and reactions to school member responses in particular, thereby translating into various degrees of leadership and school effectiveness. This finding supports Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins' (2008) claim that a small handful of personal traits explains a high proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness among school leaders. Among the new principals in this study, personal qualities, such as openness, were evidenced as contributing to more effective leadership and positive school member responses than did frankness, spontaneity and closed-ness. Each new principal's professional judgment was also influenced by a small set of motivations, including a need for student achievement and, in one case, a need for harmony among school members. Professional values also played an important influencing role in the new principals' professional judgment. Such values were also found to be core to the leadership and decision-making of more experienced and successful school heads (e.g. Gold et al., 2003; Leithwood & Day, 2007a).

Yet the new principals' differing role conceptions appeared to be the critical factor to their professional judgments, framing the selection of their leadership strategies and defining the way they viewed school members in relation to their position and thus their expectations of them. As indicated by the evidence in the current study, it is possible for new principals to have flawed role conceptions that hinder the development of productive principal-teacher relationships, especially, and ultimately positive and sustainable school change.

Claim two, therefore, provides empirical credence to the concerns of the TSC in T&T about principal candidates' personal attributes and principal-school fit as discussed at the beginning of this thesis. Since new principals' professional judgments are so critical to the nature of the leadership-school culture interplay and the degree of their school's improvement, it is critical that recruiters exercise sound judgment and perception in identifying whether or not candidates possess the appropriate previous experience, personal qualities, professional values and role conceptions that meet the requirements of a given school culture context and that can usher in school improvement. Beyond appropriate professional qualifications, these characteristics make a difference between success and failure (Day & Leithwood, 2007, cited by Day & Johansson, 2008).

<u>CLAIM 3:</u> New principals may adjust their leadership approaches in response to school members' responses to their leadership.

While this study's findings are consistent with that of the literature on the mediated effects of leadership on school and student outcomes (discussed earlier), where school culture is often a mediator, the evidence here also point to the moderating effect of school culture on new principals' leadership. The evidence herein shows that school member responses across the three cases served five purposes: 1) to support or demonstrate confidence in the new principal's leadership, 2) to assist the newcomer, 3) to show disapproval for an action or decision by the new principal, 4) to conserve/protect school culture, and 5) to influence the leadership of the new principal. It is the third, fourth and fifth purposes, that often prompted the three new principals of this study to adjust their leadership strategies in order to win school member support, achieve school goals, keep the peace or force compliance.

Consistent with the literature (e.g. Noonan & Goldman, 1995; Osterman et al., 1993), all three new principals in the current study adjusted their initial leadership approaches. However, what was different was that they did not entirely relinquish these initial approaches – transformational and managerial leadership – but added to their repertoire political strategies, giving a hint at the strength of influence of school cultures that new principals faced.

The strength of school culture influence was evidenced in school member responses, such as sabotaging school activities, withdrawing support, disregarding new principals' requests and reasoning with or confronting the new principal. If such actions are normative expressions of the culture of public primary schools serving disadvantaged communities in T&T then this may be one plausible explanation for the unsustained and negligible school improvement and the perpetuation of the various debilitating issues noted by the MOE (Strategic Plan 2011-2015) as existent in such schools across the nation. It seems that school members need to be made aware of boundaries on acceptable or professional conduct and of consequences for infringement. New principals may also need to be more willing to enforce the latter when necessary; however, not without firstly analysing the reasons for school members' negative responses to their leadership towards resolving identified problems.

<u>CLAIM 4:</u> School members' trust is both a precondition to their support of new principal leadership and a consequence of new principals' trust-building behaviours.

Despite the nature of the interaction between principal leadership and school culture, where there exist full, qualified or even minimal support of the new principal's leadership is an indication of the presence of trust. The evidence provided by this study is consistent with findings

reported in the literature (e.g. Day et al., 2011; Harris & Day, 2003) concerning the positive outcomes when principals establish themselves as trustworthy and demonstrate trust in school members, especially teachers. Additionally, the debilitating outcomes that occur in the absence of principals' trust in school members, particularly teachers, as was seen with Mr Remmy is also testimony to the importance of trust to relationship development and creation of collaborative school cultures necessary for school improvement. Also, in response to new principals' trust-building behaviours, school members responded with support as their trust in their new principals' leadership developed.

However, evidence here also demonstrates the developmental nature of trust (Lewicki et al., 2006). On a new principal's appointment teachers in particular demonstrated either high initial trust, as at Memorial Park and Riverside, or distrust as seen at Community Pride; however, these initial states changed as time passed. High initial trust was maintained in some instances, but deteriorated to low trust at Riverside and distrust at Memorial Park, resulting in reduced support for the leadership of these new principals; while initial distrust at Community Pride blossomed to high trust, expressed in increased support as a result of Ms Figaro's transformational leadership and commitment to openness and collaboration.

This claim is good news for school members and principals alike who may despair over high levels of distrust or low levels of trust upon a new principal's appointment. They can rest assured in the knowledge that trust can grow, though not without effort on the part of the new principal first and foremost.

<u>CLAIM 5:</u> System mandates and inadequacies can frustrate the effective development of the leadership-school culture interplay.

Evidenced in this study was the hindering effect that a need for more personnel at a school can have on the nature of the leadership-school culture interaction, particularly with respect to building collaborative cultures and implementing programmes to address school problems. Mandates, such as new principals' attendance at training workshops during school hours, have similar hindering effects. Research evidence on successful SfCC (e.g. Maden, 2001) points to the benefits of widespread use of adults other than teachers in supporting the work of these schools. However, since unlike in the UK and US it is not the purview of school principals in T&T to recruit and select staff for their schools but that of the TSC, a call to supplement the teaching workforce need be appropriated to them in light of the evidence. While there is evidence that this has begun in the nation's schools with the temporary placement of OJT teachers' assistants and SCOs; for sustained school improvement and success, this endeavour must be adopted in earnest with the more permanent appointment of suitably qualified, capable and committed support staff to schools and/or the willingness of schools to embrace parent volunteers and retired teachers to assist in the work of the school. Community Pride's assistance from stakeholders and its partnering with parents have lightened the load somewhat on teachers and demonstrate the possibilities when more persons are involved in educating the children of the poor. The implication, however, of such an increase in personnel at the school is that teachers will now need to take on a supervisory or coordinating role in addition to their usual duties.

Additionally, SBM as a main strategy for improving schools (ICE National Report, 2008) will likely remain unfulfilled in schools where there is no one besides the principal without class teaching commitments on the

SBM team. The evidence presented at Community Pride shows the benefits to SBM and the interaction between new principal leadership and school culture when a VP is present.

<u>CLAIM 6</u>: The degree of compatibility of values between new principals and their inherited school cultures is a major influencing factor to the nature of their interaction and ultimately the degree of school change and improvement.

It seems, according to the evidence of this study (e.g. case 2), that where there is more alignment between the values of the new principal and the school's culture, the nature of the interplay is more productive towards school change. However, one cannot assume that full compatibility is possible, necessary or even sufficient to sustain school members' support of their new principals' leadership as evidenced by the reasons behind school members' responses to their new principals' leadership, such as disapproval of new principals' practices. However, low compatibility of values between the new principal and his/her inherited culture can cause, as was seen in cases 1 and 3, the emergence of distrust among school members and their consequential negative responses to the new principal's leadership. The result would likely be a rather unstable principal-school member interaction. Yet, while not evidenced in this study, high compatibility of questionable values may also translate into school crisis rather than improvement.

<u>CLAIM 7</u>: The degree of improvement realised at a school serving a disadvantaged community to which a new principal has been appointed is critically dependent on: a) the new principal's depth and breadth of school culture awareness; b) the degree and nature of his/her responsiveness to school cultural context; and c) the nature of school members' responses to their new principals' leadership.

Researchers agree on the qualified differences between principalship in schools serving disadvantaged communities and that observed in more advantageous contexts. The evidence presented here registers the various potential school effectiveness outcomes that can occur due to the new principals' degree of cultural awareness and the nature of their responsiveness to their particular school contexts – a finding consistent with that of Deal and Peterson (1990) and Day et al. (2010). Principals who achieve success are extremely sensitive to their schools' contexts and use the information they gather to inform their leadership strategy use (Day et al., 2010). Moreover, since the nature of school member responses is highly dependent on, but not necessarily complementary to, the leadership of the new principal as revealed by this study (e.g. case 1) and Eshbach and Henderson (2010), for instance, who noted teachers' disengaged behaviours to new principals' transformational leadership, the need for new principals to be keenly aware of the context and culture of their schools and their influence especially on the latter cannot be overemphasised.

Claim 7 points to the importance of specific principal preparation for leading schools in disadvantaged contexts and for diagnosing school culture that would equip aspirant principals with not only leadership knowledge but develop their professional judgments. Preparation programmes that include work-shadowing of other school principals, mentoring by experienced principals or school-based training may be most useful in these respects (Higham, Hopkins & Ahtaridou, 2007). Other experience-based opportunities, such as reflection on critical incidents like those collected from the new principal participants of this study, may also be beneficial to aspirant principals.

<u>CLAIM 8:</u> Negative critical incidents are the main source of new principals' emotional tensions and on-the-job learning.

While not all the interactions that the new principals had with their inherited school cultures were negative, those they deemed critical to their development generally were. According to the evidence, these critical incidents often affected their emotions negatively. Common to all three of the new principals was anger – a finding consistent with that of Beatty (2005). A key implication in this respect, therefore, is a need for incumbents to the principalship who can manage their emotions and reactions to particularly negative school member responses to their leadership. Nonetheless, new principals may need support and forums (safe spaces) to release and renew themselves to prevent their leadership from being tainted by their negative emotions (Beatty, 2005; Earley et al., 2011).

The negative critical incidents experienced by the three new principals also offered opportunities for them to: a) question their assumptions about being principal and leading school change and, b) learn important lessons about themselves as new principals; thus functioning as the 'wounding experiences' described by Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski (2004). A common lesson concerned treating with dilemmas. The new principals in this study had learnt to accept that some of their decisions would leave some individual or group unhappy. They could not please everyone; their professional values often took precedence. The evidence presented on new principals' lessons about school change implies a need for attention on school change processes and management during principal preparation. The new principals in this study learnt through their critical incidents that school change requires time; effort; the involvement and 'buy in' of stakeholders, especially teachers; and the importance of

action planning – all of which are seen as basic assumptions to a successful approach to school change (Fullan, 2001b).

However, the lessons new principals take away from their encounters with school culture may not always be positive, accurate or complete ones. Reference is made to Mr Quincy's decision to lower his initial trust disposition towards a member of the SBM team, his ST; and Mr Remmy's intention to abandon flexibility in favour of creating and sticking to action plans. Clearly, on-the-job learning, while beneficial, is inadequate CPD for new principals. Guidance and advice from district office school supervisors and mentors, for instance, may supplement (Higham et al., 2007).

OVERVIEW

Although acknowledging the small sample sizes on which supporting data are based, this chapter has presented a potential research framework and several claims about the nature and impact of the leadership-school culture interplay. These were derived from findings and explanations presented on the three case interactions discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7. A number of implications have been discussed, including a few for school improvement, TSC recruitment and selection of new principals in T&T, principal preparation, CPD and leadership practice. The following chapter concludes the thesis.

9. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has sought to understand what it is like for new principals when, appointed to a new school, they try to reshape their inherited school cultures and lead school change. This leadership-school culture interaction was conceptualized as relational leadership, that is, two-way influencing. I have investigated the leadership-school culture interplay by using an explanatory multiple case-study approach, in which a critical incident technique was the main method of data collection. The study focused on four research activities: (a) diagnosing the cultures of three schools of different 'effectiveness' states, representing high, average and low achievement; (b) investigating what the new principals of these schools did to reculture their schools and how and why they did them; (c) probing how, why and for what purpose school members (teachers, students and parents) respond to the new principals' leadership; and (d) enquiring after the consequences of the leadership-school culture interaction on the new principals' emotions and learning and on the school.

This chapter revisits the research questions that guided this study, stating briefly the responses to them by highlighting the main findings. It also discusses the contribution made to knowledge and notes areas for future research. The chapter ends with personal reflections on the doctoral process.

ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The empirical study of this thesis has clarified its two main research questions:

1. What is the nature of the interplay between the leadership of new principals and the cultures of schools facing challenging circumstances?
2. How does the nature of this interplay impact on new principals and their schools?

Findings to research question 1 reveal the complex nature of the interplay, which involves a number of internal and external factors to the school. Internal factors include: a) those related to the new principal's professional judgment, such as role conception, personal attributes and values, sources of self-efficacy beliefs; b) those related to school member responses to the new principal's leadership, such as their reasons and purposes; and c) those related to the interplay, such as dilemmas and situations surrounding the new principal's encounter with his/her inherited school culture. External factors to the school include community factors, such as ideas of masculinity, which pre-position students to respond in particular ways to disciplining, and MOE policies. The absence or presence of any of these factors, their nature or degree of positivity and the extent of their influence on other factors act as pre-conditions to the degree of relational stability at a given school. Thus, the interplay between a new principal's leadership and his/her inherited school culture may be highly unstable, transitional, productive or progressive, for examples.

Six evidence-based claims were made to explain the nature of the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture and two additional ones concern the impact of the interplay. The eight claims are reiterated here.

Six claims about the nature of the leadership-school culture interplay:

Claim 1: There are two phases of new principal leadership-school culture interaction: (1) Inheriting; and (2) Building and shaping.

Claim 2: New principals draw from the same set of leadership practices to reculture their schools but are disposed to particular types and strategies depending on their professional judgments.

Claim 3: New principals may adjust their leadership approaches in response to school members' responses to their leadership.

Claim 4: School members' trust is both a precondition to their support of new principal leadership and a consequence of new principals' trust-building behaviours.

Claim 5: System mandates and inadequacies can frustrate the effective development of the leadership-school culture interplay.

Claim 6: The degree of compatibility of values between new principals and their inherited school cultures is a major influencing factor to the nature of their interaction and ultimately the degree of school change and improvement.

Two additional claims concern the impact of the leadership-school culture interplay:

Claim 7: The degree of improvement realised at a school serving a disadvantaged community to which a new principal has been appointed is critically dependent on: (a) the new principal's depth and breadth of school culture awareness; (b) the degree and nature of his/her responsiveness to school cultural context; and (c) the nature of school members' responses to their new principals' leadership.

Claim 8: Negative critical incidents are the main source of new principals' emotional tensions and on-the-job learning.

These eight claims indicate important implications for school improvement, recruitment and selection of new principals, principal preparation, novice principals' CPD and, leadership practice.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This empirical study, which focusses on the interactions of newly appointed leaders with school culture, is an original contribution to various literatures of knowledge. Conducted in schools facing challenging circumstances in the nation of T&T, this work first contributes to the international literatures on leadership, schools facing challenging circumstances and school culture by adding knowledge created in a developing Caribbean country.

For T&T, especially, where there is a dearth of research literature on school leadership and school culture, this study contributes in these respects but more specifically to the concerns of the TSC and the MOE on principal-school fit, the leadership of new principals and primary school improvement. The implications of the findings of this study may be of particular interest to policy makers and principal preparation programme developers.

This study also provides a more complete picture than other studies to date of the nature and impact of relational leadership through: a) a strong claim about values compatibility between new principals and their inherited school cultures; b) findings on school members' responses to the leadership of new principals, which show their conservative and influencing purposes; and c) how these responses may influence the leadership of new principals. Few studies have done so and those that have are limited in presenting evidence of the moderating/influencing effect of school culture/climate on principal leadership (e.g. Eshbach and Henderson, 2010); while others are dated (e.g. Dinham et al., 1995; MacMillan, 1996), making this work a new contribution. This qualitative study provides a rich, in-depth understanding of the leadership-school culture interplay.

Unlike existing literature on new principals that pay significant attention to their on-the-job challenges, this study goes further by contributing to our understanding of the professional judgments of new principals. There is little written about the professional judgment of school principals and even less on that of new principals. This study contributed in this way by identifying the ways in which new principals' leadership are informed and/or influenced by combinations of personal histories, attributes and values, role conception, self-efficacy and the cultural contexts of their schools. These factors form a possible analytical framework for investigating school principals' professional judgment. This work also extends the discourse on new principals by focusing on the resultant emotional impact of the professional challenges on the new principal and his/her on-the-job learning. It has also provided evidence of the impact of the new principals' judgments on school culture and student performance across three years, thereby providing supporting and new evidence that links leadership to school change; thus contributing to knowledge in these ways.

While generalizations from this study cannot be realistically made due to small sample sizes, there are at least three strengths of this study. First, in this study an attempt to distinguish between the context, culture and performances of schools was made in order to generate qualitatively different manifestations of the leadership-school culture interplay. This was achieved through selecting schools with different cultures, having different levels of student performance on national tests but all serving disadvantaged communities.

Secondly, the use of a CIT, which focused on specific incidents deemed critical by the new principals and not the researcher, was especially useful to the generation of the rich data on the professional judgments of new principals, school member responses to their leadership,

the reasons and purposes of those responses and on the emotions and lessons of the novice principal.

The third strength of this study is the nuanced understanding of school change that emerged from the initial diagnosing of school culture prior to the arrival of new principals, which were then juxtaposed to the new principals' cultural awareness and school improvement foci and school members' accounts of change. This enabled me to gauge the degree of potential and actual change realized in relation to the new principals' interventions and school members' degree of support. Many quantitative studies neglect to do this type of qualitative benchmarking, opting rather to focus on pre-tests and post-tests or student performance data at time zero to then compare same at a later date rather than seeking to understand how and why school change occurs or does not occur in different ways.

AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Considering the gaps identified in existing knowledge and the limitations and contributions of this study, I suggest five areas for future research – three of which are specific to T&T. They are: 1) leadership-school culture interplay; 2) principals' professional judgments; 3) successful leadership in T&T; 4) principal preparation in T&T; and 5) T&T primary schools' culture.

1) Future research can focus on longitudinal investigations of the interplay between leadership (not necessarily that of new principals) and school culture, involving many more case study schools. It would be informative and interesting to see how the nature of the interplay compares across schools of similar effectiveness states, e.g. only high performing schools, or in more

advantageous school contexts or across different country contexts. The model presented in the previous chapter may be of use in these investigations.

2) A greater emphasis on school leaders' personal attributes, values, sources of self-efficacy and role conceptions as associated with their leadership behaviours and interactions is also needed towards better understanding their professional judgments. These need not be investigated all together; although to separate them is to make simple an inherently complex phenomenon.
3) Another important area for investigation, in light of this study's findings, is successful leadership in T&T. Such investigations would focus on what successful leadership looks like and what leadership practices and strategies do successful principals regard as important for school improvement and sustaining success. Research in this area can provide context-specific evidence of what works in school leadership that would be useful for preparing aspirant principals. Such research can also be used in making international comparisons on successful school leadership, thereby contributing to current discourses.
4) The implications for principal preparation as discussed in this thesis signal a need for investigations into new principals' perceptions of the effectiveness of principal preparation programmes. These perceptions can be contrasted to those of programme implementers and the objectives of developers.
5) This study's findings on school cultures hinted at a number of generic cultural features of public primary schools in T&T, including discordant relationships between and among school member groups and the widespread use of negative reinforcement, including corporal punishment, to address academic futility and student

indiscipline. It is worth investigating to what extent this may be 'true' through dedicated diagnoses of the school cultures of public primary schools in T&T. The questionnaires used in this study may be adjusted for such a purpose. The findings from such an investigation may be useful for the development of a school culture continuum or spectrum, which may better represent school culture types than, say, dichotomous conceptions and, which I think, is sorely needed.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE DOCTORAL PROCESS

The doctoral process is quite unlike the pursuit of degrees at the Bachelor and Masters levels in its ability to challenge the emotional and mental capacities, organizational skills, time management and personal relationships of the student. Constant feelings of self-doubt rack the soul: "What have I gotten myself into? Am I making a contribution to knowledge?". Yet, simultaneously, the doctorate has the potential to bring fulfillment, liberating the willing learner to explore almost unencumbered – time being the restrainer – the joys of increasing knowledge and understanding, developing new skills, making new associates, and tasting new experiences (conferences), thereby renewing the mind!

But again, one is plagued by feelings of 'impostorhood', provoked into unwise comparisons between self and the student further ahead on the journey or the astute senior academic who impresses with his/her extensive knowledge. My own contributions caused fear that I would be made out to be an imposter whose knowledge or understanding of my field or my study is inadequate. And oh the joys of being taken along the peaks and troughs of 'aha' moments and cognitive dissonance, which I came to learn is a normal part of the process as is the need to keep self-

motivation high. There is also little respite from thinking about the thesis' content and structure. It became my practice to keep a little book to jot down any brainwaves that occurred while walking, bathing or even sleeping.

During this process, it was my passion for learning, desire to contribute to school improvement in my own country, commitment to seeing a brighter future for my family and loathing of failure to complete that prevented me from returning home without the desired doctoral qualification. As I look at the final thesis, I am amazed at the development through which both I and the thesis have gone. I am truly grateful for the opportunity I have had to study at this level at the University of Nottingham.

END NOTES

1. Social capital "is most frequently defined in terms of the groups, networks, norms, and trust that people have available to them for productive purposes" (The World Bank, Grootaert, et al., 2004, p. 3, cited by Mulford, 2007).

2. "Cultural capital can exist in three forms: a) in the *embodied* state, i.e. in the form of long lasting dispositions of the mind and body; b) in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) …; and c) in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification … as …seen in the case of educational qualifications" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47). Bourdieu (1986) asserts that both social and cultural forms of capital have their root in economical capital (wealth). Children attain cultural capital from their parents and use it almost as currency to trade for academic success. While cultural capital usually consists of high-status cultural signals, such as behaviours, tastes, and attitudes, it may also be used for social and cultural exclusion.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A1 – MOE APPROVAL

(17)

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING DIVISION
CHEPSTOW HOUSE, 56 FREDERICK STREET, PORT-OF-SPAIN
TEL/FAX: 625-0806

October 30th, 2012

Approved
Harrilal Seecharan
2/11/2012

Mr. Harrilal Seecharan
Chief Education Officer
Ministry of Education
Alexandra Street,
St. Clair.

Request to Conduct Research at Schools

In accordance with the Policy on the Provision of Supplemented Education Programmes/and Activities and the Conducting of Research by External Providers, **Ms. Rinnelle Lee-Piggott** has submitted her research proposal for review and approval. The research outline submitted has met the basic application format for proposals as laid out in the above policy.

Ms. Lee-Piggott is pursing a Doctor of Philosophy in Education at the University of Nottingham, Nottingham UK. Her research project is entitled **"New principals and school cultures: the nature of the interplay (a study of high poverty primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago)."**

Ms. Lee-Piggott's underlying reason for developing her study is to determine the nature of the interplay between the leadership of new principals and the cultures of schools serving disadvantaged communities and ascertain how the nature of this interplay affects school effectiveness and school improvement.

Ms. Lee-Piggott has identified the following schools to conduct her research: [redacted] and [redacted] I am requesting that approval be granted to Ms. Lee-Piggott to conduct her research at the schools identified.

Yours Respectfully,

Baptiste Simmons

Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons,
Director,
Educational Planning Division.
Ministry of Education.

APPENDIX A2 – PRINCIPAL INFORMATION/CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

Allow me to extend my gratitude to you for willingly accepting to not only participate in, but to be the subject of my investigation. The title of the research project is '**New Principals & School Culture: The Nature of the Interplay'.** The aim of the investigation is to gain an understanding of the nature of the two-way interaction between a new principal and his/her inherited school culture. For this purpose, a case study approach has been adopted. The hope is that, together, we can produce a rich description of what it means to be a beginning principal of a school serving a socio-economically disadvantaged community. The findings of the case study will be reported in the form of a thesis, which will be submitted for the award of a Doctor of Philosophy in Education degree.

The study will be conducted over a period of 1-2 months and will comprise of intermittent school visits, the nature and dates of which will be pre-arranged with you. As a participant you will be required to:

- complete a biographical/contextual data form;
- participate in a number of interviews towards the creation of experience narratives;
- agree to be shadowed by me;
- allow me to work with teachers, students and parents; and
- provide access to appropriate settings in order to conduct the study.

You will be allowed to review transcripts of the interviews and/or my interpretations of interview and observation data, which allows you opportunity to agree or disagree with my interpretation of what was said and, if so desired, rephrase or retract statements. Moreover, due to the nature of the study, I imagine that you may require feedback on its progress and outcomes. I am willing to provide such feedback while ensuring the confidence and anonymity of other research participants. I am also committed to ensuring that the daily activities of the school are not unduly interrupted by my presence there and that all relevant ethical principles, such as data protection, are upheld. You can appreciate, however, that my supervisors, Professor Christopher Day and Associate Professor Dr Qing Gu, and other examiners internal and external to the University of Nottingham will have access to any data generated and the final thesis.

I recognise that your participation is completely voluntary, therefore the time of commencement of any part of the investigation is completely negotiable between you and me. Should you decide at any point to withdraw from the study, however, you will not be prejudiced in any way but I do hope that you will continue to the end. I look forward to working with you and telling your story of the beginning principalship.

With warm wishes,
Rinnelle Lee-Piggott (Student Researcher).
University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK.

– –

Please read the following and sign to indicate your consent to participating in this study.

- I have read the **Participant Information** and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage without the threat of prejudice.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, identity will remain anonymous and my personal views will remain confidential.
- I understand that I will be digitally recorded during the interview and that information regarding my professional experience will be used for the purposes of the study.
- I understand that data will be stored electronically on portable memory sticks and that both hard and electronic copies of transcripts will be kept. These will be accessible to the researcher, the supervisors and the university's examiners without restrictions.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisors if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.
- I agree to participate in the outlined study

Signed…… (research participant)

Print name…… **Date**……

Contact details:

Researcher: Rinnelle Lee-Piggott; 011 44 757 0012271; ralpiggott_00@yahoo.com
Supervisors: Associate Professor Dr. Qing Gu; qing.du@nottingham.ac.uk
Professor Christopher Day; christopher.day@nottingham.ac.uk
School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator: educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

APPENDIX B1 – CRITICAL INCIDENT TECHNIQUE

Thinking about the critical incident

Instructions:

1. Think about a critical incident/period, starting from your appointment as principal to now, in which you encountered the existing culture of the school. This critical incident must be one that you consider to be significant or meaningful to your development and practice as principal.
2. Briefly describe the critical incident and note the estimated time about when it occurred during your tenure as principal, e.g. Sept of first yr.
3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 until you can remember no more critical incidents.
4. Later, you will be provided with an opportunity to talk about the critical incidents that you have identified.

Talking about the critical incidents

- Describe each critical incident that you have identified.
- Consider:
    1. What did you do well?
    2. What would you have done differently if you had the chance? Why?
    3. What were the circumstances leading up to the incident?
    4. How did you feel about the incident? Why? Were any of your core values confirmed or challenged?
    5. What were the short term/long term outcomes or consequences of the incident for the school?
    6. What were the consequences for you/ your leadership of the school?
    7. What were the main lessons that you learnt?

NEW PRINCIPAL

APPENDIX B2 – BIOGRAPHICAL/SCHOOL CONTEXT DATA FORM

The researcher again extends thanks to you for participating in this study. In order to know you better, please complete the following as detailed as possible. You are reminded that any information for which you feel uncomfortable revealing can be omitted.
To complete this form simply type responses into the boxes provided. In this way, you can extend the length of the boxes as you see fit. Alternatively, you can print the form and handwrite your responses.

1. **List your professional qualifications**

2. **Briefly outline your training in leadership and/or administration** (workshops, short courses, academic modules, etc.)

3. **Provide brief details of any informal learning you have had of the principalship.**

4. **Provide brief details of your teaching background** (no. of years as a teacher, at what type of schools, positions you've held, activities for which you were responsible or were involved)

5. **How did you become interested in the post of principal?**

6. **Give a brief description of the school context at which you are principal** (type of school, location, school's surrounding community, number and description of student/staff populations, organizational structure, staff relationships, school culture, academic performance, most recognized school achievements)

7. Date of appointment as principal to present school _____
dd / mm / yyyy

8. Is this your first appointment as principal? Yes ☐ No ☐

9. Sex: M ☐ F ☐

10. Age: ☐ years (If you are uncomfortable expressing your age, alternatively select an age category below)

☐ 35 – 40 yrs ☐ 41 – 45 yrs ☐ 46 – 50 yrs

☐ 51 – 55 yrs ☐ 56 – 60 yrs

Thank You!

APPENDIX B3 – TEACHER SCHOOL CULTURE-LEADERSHIP

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire should take you no more than fifteen minutes. The following statements refer to your school. As you read, if you think the statement is *true most of the time, then circle "YES"*. If you think the statement is *true sometimes, then circle the "S"*. If, however, you think the statement is *false most of the time, then circle "NO"*. Remember:

Yes = Mostly True **S = Sometimes** **No = Mostly False**

Section 1 – Professional Orientation

1. Teachers are proud to work at this school.
2. Beginning/new teachers are effectively mentored by experienced teachers.
3. Teachers here are committed to developing themselves professionally in order to improve teaching and learning.
4. Teachers use pupils' performance data to inform/improve their teaching.
5. Teachers use findings from research to inform/improve their teaching.
6. The progress of new projects is effectively and carefully monitored.
7. We evaluate and discuss, as a staff, the outcomes of school activities.
8. There is active and constructive participation at staff meetings.
9. Teachers routinely plan schemes of work and/or lessons together.
10. Collaborations with other teachers at this school have helped in providing better learning experiences for my students.
11. Colleagues acknowledge my efforts and hard work.
12. Teachers are unified in their commitment to accomplish the school's vision.
13. Teachers welcome formal (clinical supervision) observations and feedback about their teaching.
14. Teachers welcome informal observations and feedback about their teaching.
15. Teachers consult others for advice in dealing with especially difficult situations.
16. Using creative ways to improve student learning is highly valued at this school.
17. Staff development is focused on classroom teaching.
18. Teachers' treatment of visitors (MOE officials, businessmen, parents, etc.) to the school is always professional.

19. We involve parents as much as possible in all that happens at our school.

Section 2 – Organisational Structure

20. Everyone (teachers, students and parents) here operates from a clear understanding of the school's vision.
21. Teachers are provided with adequate resources (time, assistance, materials) to meaningfully plan for instruction.
22. I personally believe in the plan the school has for improving student achievement.
23. At our school, we have written procedures and/or policies that inform every aspect of the way our school runs.
24. School policies, rules and procedures are adhered to by school members.
25. Teachers are given opportunities to lead school projects and/or events.
26. School reforms are usually well implemented and made a part of our school's day-to-day life.

Section 3 – Quality of the Learning Experience & Environment

27. Teachers here believe that all students can achieve/learn despite their students' social/economic disadvantage.
28. Our staff works at providing support (academic or otherwise) to meet the needs of our students.
29. Student academic learning takes priority over all other goals/activities.
30. Teachers at our school give extra effort to pupils who are underperforming.
31. Teachers ensure classroom environments that are conducive to student learning.
32. Teachers generally treat students respectfully and fairly.

Section 4 – Student Orientation

33. Students' attitudes towards school are positive.
34. Students display great enthusiasm for class activities, even when a topic is challenging.

35. Students generally obey school rules, routines and procedures.
36. Students generally take great pride in attending their school.
37. Students can talk to teachers about personal things.
38. Students are generally respectful and obedient to teachers.
39. Students are allowed a say in decisions that concern them.
40. There is very little bullying.

Section 5 – School Culture Strength and Homogeneity

41. The culture of our school is shared by most school members.
42. New comers are deliberately inducted into our school culture.
43. School members actively protect our school's culture.
44. Attempts to change the way we think and do things at our school are welcomed.
45. School members who think or act differently from what our school's culture expects are made to align themselves.
46. School members who think or act differently from what our school's culture expects are alienated.

Section 6 – Interplay of Principal Leadership and School Culture

47. My principal takes time to understand what we, as a staff, value and how we do things.
48. My principal's actions take into consideration our school's culture.
49. Decisions made by the principal are supported by teachers, parents and students alike.
50. The way we think and operate as a school (staff and students) often overrides the efforts of our new principal.
51. My principal has come to value the things our school members have always valued.
52. My principal's approach to reshaping our school's culture is needed for the improvement/enhanced effectiveness of our school.
53. With the passage of time there has been an improvement in the working relationship between the principal and school members.
54. School members play a major part in influencing the leadership of the principal.
55. School members resist the leadership of the principal.

56. Since the arrival of the school's new principal, the school has seen changes in: (Tick as many as are appropriate and put an asterisk next to those changes that are improvements.)

- ☐ school's physical outlook
- ☐ school's public image
- ☐ pupil attendance (punctuality/regularity)
- ☐ teacher attendance (punctuality/regularity)
- ☐ tone of the school
- ☐ student discipline
- ☐ school management
- ☐ staff meetings
- ☐ student academic performance
- ☐ student participation/performance in extra-curricular activities
- ☐ relationships among staff
- ☐ relationships among students
- ☐ teacher-student relationships
- ☐ teaching and learning
- ☐ parental involvement

Other(s):_____

_____

Thank You!

APPENDIX B4 – STUDENT SCHOOL CULTURE-LEADERSHIP

QUESTIONNAIRE

Here are some things said about your school. As you read, if you think the statement is *true most of the time, then circle "YES"*. If you think the statement is *true sometimes, then circle the "S"*. If, however, you think the statement is *false most of the time, then circle "NO"*. Remember:

YES = Mostly True **S = Sometimes** **NO = Mostly False**

Section 1 – Student Orientation

1. Students hardly ever miss school or cut classes.
2. I know how I am supposed to behave at school
3. Students are very interested in learning during class activities.
4. Students remain focused on given tasks until they are finished.
5. Students feel that they can learn even when a topic is challenging.
6. Students produce high quality work in and out of the classroom.
7. Students generally obey school rules, routines and procedures.
8. Students hardly ever get into physical fights.
9. Students generally take great pride in attending their school.
10. There are very little verbal insults used at people.
11. I can talk to my teachers about personal things.
12. Students are generally respectful and obedient to teachers.
13. Students are allowed a say in decisions that concern them.
14. Students generally treat each other with respect and fairness.
15. Students belonging to different groups are friendly.
16. I am taught to listen and respect the views of others.
17. There is very little bullying.

Section 2 – Quality of the Learning Experience & Environment

18. I am given opportunities to learn how to express my opinions.

19. Besides textbooks, we use other resources during class activities.
20. There are set consequences in place to deal with indiscipline.
21. There are few distractions and disruptions to class activities.
22. I am sometimes provided with opportunities to do things I like.
23. I sometimes get to work in groups with my classmates.
24. We get lots of work done in a school day.
25. What we learn is related to real life.
26. Class work sometimes challenges my thinking.
27. My school offers interesting extra-curricular activities.
28. Teachers at this school believe that students can do well.
29. Teachers encourage and help students to reach their potentials.
30. High achievement of students is recognized.
31. My school ensures that the needs of individual students are met.
32. Teachers treat students respectfully and fairly.
33. I enjoy learning at school.

Section 3 – Professional Orientation

34. My teachers are welcoming to visitors at our school.
35. My teachers always have school work planned for us to do.
36. My teachers get along well with each other.
37. Teachers and students at this school have positive relationships.
38. My teachers care deeply about their students and teaching.

Section 4 – Organisational Structure

39. Teachers in my school agree on school rules and procedures.

40. All teachers get involved in running school activities and events.
41. All teachers seem to know about things concerning our school.
42. Different teachers are ‘in charge’ of different school activities.
43. Our school has set ways for how things should happen here.
44. Parents and community members often help out at our school.

Section 5 – Interplay of Principal Leadership and School Culture

45. My teachers work well with our new principal.
46. My principal has made some needed changes at my school.
47. The principal is often seen in places like corridors and classrooms.
48. Everyone welcomes the changes made by the principal.
49. My principal’s approach to running the school is working well.

Thank You!

APPENDIX B5 – NEW PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following questions are designed to elicit your perceptions about your interactions with the culture of the school. Please answer as honestly and completely as you can.

For use in round 1 (principal interview 1)

1. How do you view this school/the students and their parents/the community/the teachers/ your role as principal in relation to the school?
2. (a) What is your vision for the school
   (b) How is this personal vision similar to or different from the school's vision?
3. How do you project those values that you think need to be symbolised in the behaviours of school members? Can you give an example?
4. (a) How have you tried to learn about the school's culture?
   (b) What has facilitated this learning?
   (c) What has made this learning difficult?
5. (a) What were your initial impressions about the culture of this school upon taking up
   the appointment?
   (b) How have your impressions changed, if at all? And why?
6. What aspects of the existing culture, in your opinion, works well in terms of the school's effectiveness? And why?
   Probes: indicators of effectiveness
7. (a) What aspects of the existing culture need/needed changing? And why?

For use in round 4

1. How have you tried to help school members deal with the transition from the previous leadership to yours? How have they helped you with the same?
2. In what ways has the culture of the school function to support/influence/contest your leadership? Can you give an example?
3. When and how did you address those aspects of the school culture that needed changing? Why did you use those approaches? Can you give an example?
   Probe: seen it work elsewhere for someone else; applied it yourself before

4. How did staff/students/parents respond to your interventions? Why do you think they responded as they did?
5. (a) Where your interventions were met with resistance, how did you diffuse or manage these? And why did you choose those means?
   (b) From what knowledge/experience base do you draw in order to intervene?
6. How do you exercise power/influence to encourage staff/students/parents to function/act in desired ways? Has this use of influence/power changed over the time you've been here?
7. (a) How would you describe the nature of your interaction with the culture of the school over your tenure?
   (b) What impact has there been on the way the school operates and on the school's outcomes?
   Probes: E.g. attendance, teaching and learning processes, staff & student relationships, satisfaction, attitudes, behaviour, self-esteem; pupil academic performance; For all teachers and students?; When did this change occur and for how long?
   (c) What changes would you have liked to see?
   (d) What hinders this realisation?

APPENDIX B6 – TEACHERS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULES 1 & 2

The following questions are designed to encourage discussion about the existing culture of your school and how it was created and/or influenced. Please answer as honestly and completely as you can.

1. What does your school stand for?

   Probes: (a) For what is the school most renowned?

   (b) What events are given prime importance? Why?

   (c) What expectations are held for school members?

   (d) How are these expectations enforced?

   (e) What usually forms a source of conflict here? Why? How is it handled?

2. What aspects of the existing culture, in your opinion, works well? How do you know?

   Probes: professional orientation of teachers, organisational structure, quality of learning environment/experience, student orientation

3. What aspects need improving? How do you know?

4. How did your school come to be the way it is?

   (a) How has the history of your school influenced the way it is now?

   Probes: length of school's existence; start up situation/issues; person(s) having major influence on the direction of the school (What were their values, goals for the school?)

   (b) How do the characteristics of the teachers (past and present) influence the culture of the school?

   Probes: number on staff, qualifications, length of teaching experience; number of years at school; specialist skills; dispositions

   (c) How do the characteristics of the pupils (past and present) and their families influence the existing culture of the school?

   Probes: background; SES; dispositions to school

   (d) In what ways does the school's immediate community contribute or not to the shape of the school's culture?

5. How would you like your school to be?

The following questions are designed to elicit your perceptions about the interactions between your principal and the culture of the school. Please answer as honestly and completely as you can.

1. What values/beliefs with regards to schooling does your principal portray?
2. How does he/she project those values and beliefs to school members?
3. How are these values/beliefs similar to or different from what the school has been known to esteem?
4. What has it been like for your school working with your new principal? How has this work relationship changed over time?
5. (a) How has he/she tried to learn about the school's culture?
   (b) What has facilitated this learning?
   (c) What has made this learning difficult?
6. How would you describe your principal's approach to leadership? What is unique about his/her approach?
7. In what ways do you think the school's culture supports the principal's leadership? Please provide examples.
8. (a) When and how has your principal addressed aspects of the school's culture that needed changing?
   (b) How did staff/students/parents respond to his/her interventions? Why do you think they responded as they did?
9. Where the principal's interventions were met with resistance, how did he/she diffuse or manage these?
10. How does your principal exercise power/influence to encourage staff/students/parents to function/act in desired ways? How has his/her use of influence/power changed over the time he/she has been here?
11. To what extent does the school's culture influence/contest the principal's leadership? And, in what ways?

APPENDIX B7 – STUDENTS' FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following questions are designed to encourage discussion about the existing culture of your school and how it was created and/or influenced. Please answer as honestly and completely as you can.

1. What does your school stand for?

   Probes: (a) For what is your school most known?

   (b) What events are most important? Why?

   (b) What is expected of teachers? How does your school ensure that teachers do what is expected?

   (c) What is expected of students? How does your school ensure that students do what is expected?

   (d) What usually causes conflict/problems here? Why? How is it handled?

2. Tell me what it's like to attend your school?

   Probes: during class time; class work and activities (what is taught/learnt and how); relationships with teachers and other pupils; during lunch time and recess; support for learning; test time; extra-curricular activities; parental involvement

3. What do you like/do not like about your school?
4. How did your school come to be the way it is?

   Probes: principals, teachers, students, community

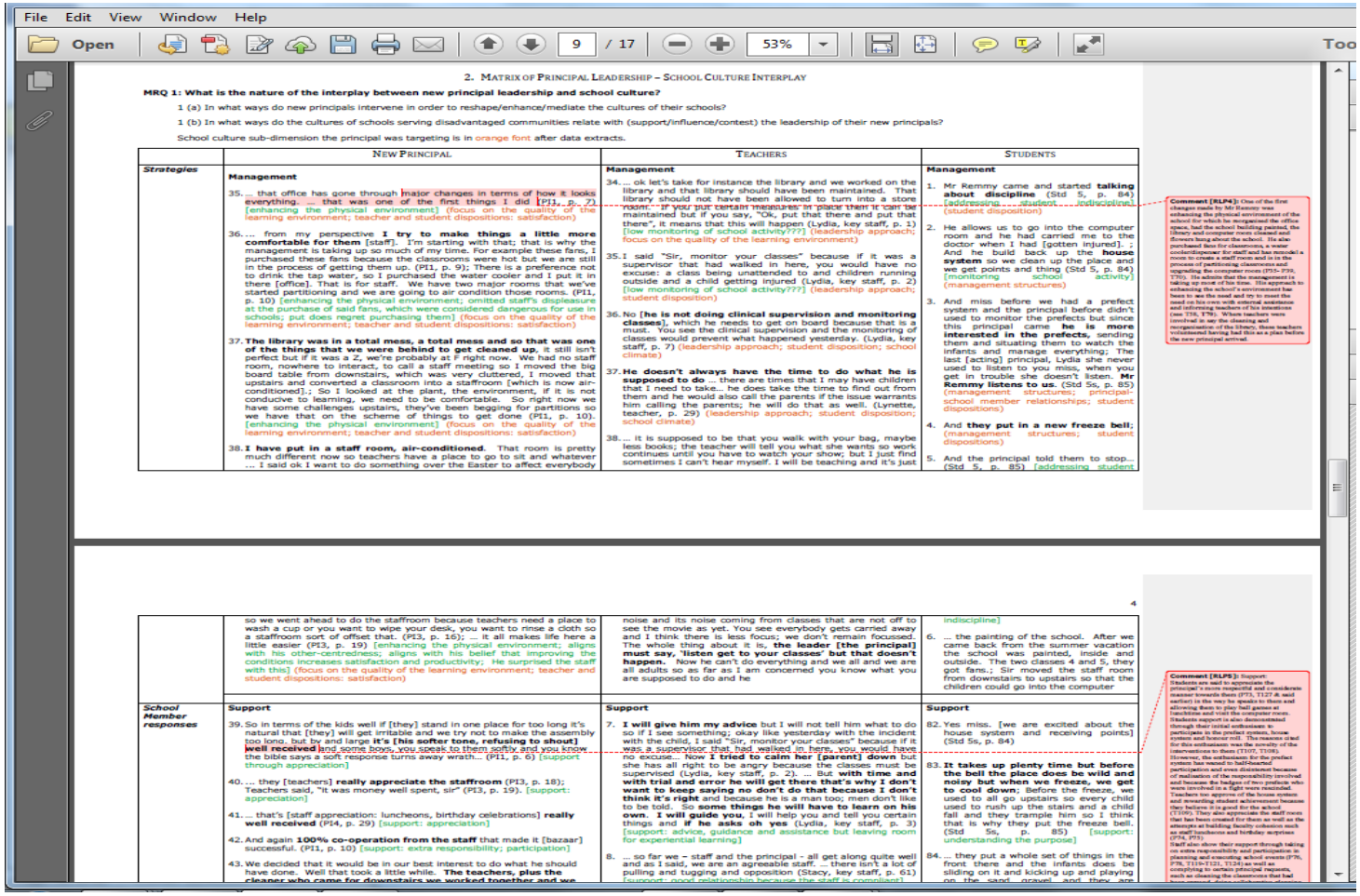
5. How would you like your school to be?
6. What do you think prevents this from happening?
7. (a) What changes have you noticed at your school since your new principal took over? Probes: (school outcomes & processes) – in school, with-in class, outside of class, interactions with other schools

   (b) How do you feel about these changes

APPENDIX B8 – SHADOW OBSERVATION THEMES

- New Principal's leadership
    - personal values (how communicated; with whom)
    - orientation (sense of awareness of; importance placed on) to school culture and how it changes over time
    - learning about the school's culture (source of learning, how, help/hindrances)
    - use of personal/positional power and influence in daily situations
    - use of leadership strategies/practices
    - daily activities and time spent on these
    - principals' intervention strategies in reshaping/enhancing school culture (when, how, why)
    - principal's attributes
- Interaction between principal & school culture
    - the power of school culture in action (its effect/influence on, support of & opposition to the principal's leadership; school members' responses to reculturing)
    - values aligned/clashing
    - problems arising / micropolitics
    - impact on school effectiveness and/or improvement)

APPENDIX C1 – SAMPLE OF DATA MATRICES



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2. MATRIX OF PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP – SCHOOL CULTURE INTERPLAY

MRQ 1: What is the nature of the interplay between new principal leadership and school culture?

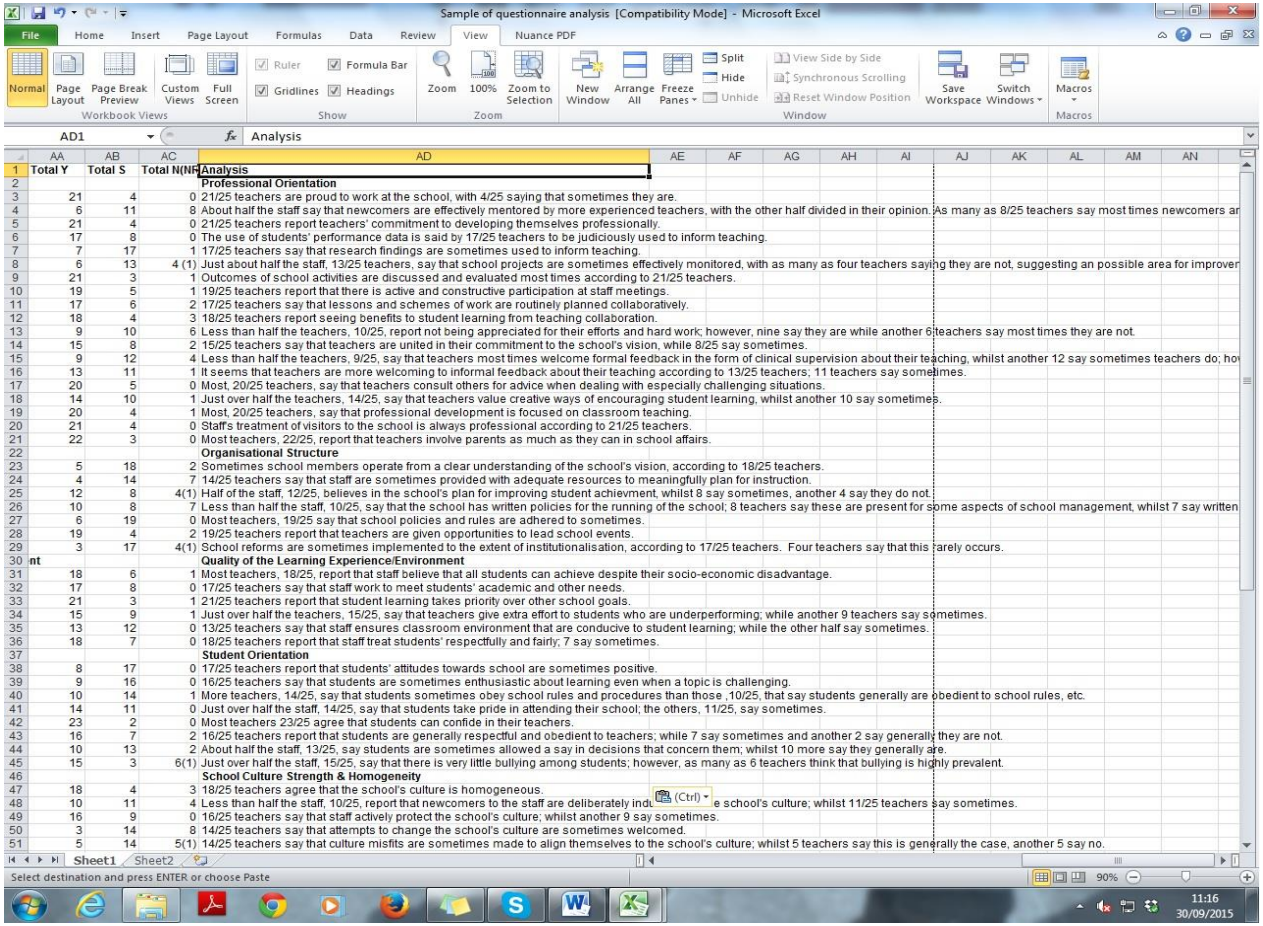
1 (a) In what ways do new principals intervene in order to reshape/enhance/mediate the cultures of their schools?

1 (b) In what ways do the cultures of schools serving disadvantaged communities relate with (support/influence/contest) the leadership of their new principals?

School culture sub-dimension the principal was targeting is in orange font after data extracts.

	NEW PRINCIPAL	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
Strategies	**Management** 35. … that office has gone through major changes in terms of how it looks everything. … that was one of the first things I did [PI1, p. 7) [enhancing the physical environment] (focus on the quality of the learning environment; teacher and student dispositions: satisfaction) 36. … from my perspective **I try to make things a little more comfortable for them** [staff]. I'm starting with that; that is why the management is taking up so much of my time. For example these fans, I purchased these fans because the classrooms were hot but we are still in the process of getting them up. (PI1, p. 9); There is a preference not to drink the tap water, so I purchased the water cooler and I put it in there [office]. That is for staff. We have two major rooms that we've started partitioning and we are going to air condition those rooms. (PI1, p. 10) (enhancing the physical environment; omitted staff's displeasure at the purchase of said fans, which were considered dangerous for use in schools; put does regret purchasing them) (focus on the quality of the learning environment; teacher and student dispositions: satisfaction) 37. **The library was in a total mess, a total mess and so that was one of the things that we were behind to get cleaned up**, it still isn't perfect but if it was a Z, we're probably at F right now. We had no staff room, nowhere to interact, to call a staff meeting so I moved the big board table from downstairs, which was very cluttered, I moved that upstairs and converted a classroom into a staffroom [which is now air-conditioned].; So I looked at the plant, the environment, if it is not conducive to learning, we need to be comfortable. So right now we have some challenges upstairs, they've been begging for partitions so we have that on the scheme of things to get done (PI1, p. 10). [enhancing the physical environment] (focus on the quality of the learning environment; teacher and student dispositions: satisfaction) 38. **I have put in a staff room, air-conditioned**. That room is pretty much different now so teachers have a place to go to sit and whatever … I said ok I want to do something over the Easter to affect everybody	**Management** 34. … ok let's take for instance the library and we worked on the library and that library should have been maintained. That library should not have been allowed to turn into a store room. If you put certain measures in place then it can be maintained but if you say, "Ok, put that there and put that there", it means that this will happen (Lydia, key staff, p. 1) [low monitoring of school activity???] (leadership approach; focus on the quality of the learning environment) 35. I said "Sir, monitor your classes" because if it was a supervisor that had walked in here, you would have no excuse: a class being unattended to and children running outside and a child getting injured (Lydia, key staff, p. 2) [low monitoring of school activity???] (leadership approach; student disposition) 36. No **[he is not doing clinical supervision and monitoring classes]**, which he needs to get on board because that is a must. You see the clinical supervision and the monitoring of classes would prevent what happened yesterday. (Lydia, key staff, p. 7) (leadership approach; student disposition; school climate) 37. **He doesn't always have the time to do what he is supposed to do** … there are times that I may have children that I need to take… he does take the time to find out from them and he would also call the parents if the issue warrants him calling the parents; he will do that as well. (Lynette, teacher, p. 29) (leadership approach; student disposition; school climate) 38. … It is supposed to be that you walk with your bag, maybe less books; the teacher will tell you what she wants so work continues until you have to watch your show; but I just find sometimes I can't hear myself. I will be teaching and it's just	**Management** 1. Mr Remmy came and started **talking about discipline** (Std 5, p. 84) [addressing student indiscipline] (student disposition) 2. He allows us to go into the computer room and he had carried me to the doctor when I had [gotten injured]. ; And he build back up the **house system** so we clean up the place and we get points and thing (Std 5, p. 84) [monitoring school activity] (management structures) 3. And miss before we had a prefect system and the principal before didn't used to monitor the prefects but since this principal came **he is more interested in the prefects,** sending them and situating them to watch the infants and manage everything; The last [acting] principal, Lydia she never used to listen to you miss, when you get in trouble she doesn't listen. **Mr Remmy listens to us**. (Std 5s, p. 85) (management structures; principal-school member relationships; student dispositions) 4. And **they put in a new freeze bell**; (management structures; student dispositions) 5. And the principal told them to stop… (Std 5, p. 85) [addressing student indiscipline] 6. … the painting of the school. After we came back from the summer vacation the school was painted, inside and outside. The two classes 4 and 5, they got fans.; Sir moved the staff room from downstairs to upstairs so that the children could go into the computer
	so we went ahead to do the staffroom because teachers need a place to wash a cup or you want to wipe your desk, you want to rinse a cloth so a staffroom sort of offset that. (PI3, p. 16); … it all makes life here a little easier (PI3, p. 19) [enhancing the physical environment; aligns with his other-centredness; aligns with his belief that improving the conditions increases satisfaction and productivity; He surprised the staff with this] (focus on the quality of the learning environment; teacher and student dispositions: satisfaction)	noise and its noise coming from classes that are not off to see the movie as yet. You see everybody gets carried away and I think there is less focus; we don't remain focussed. The whole thing about it is, **the leader [the principal] must say, 'listen get to your classes' but that doesn't happen.** Now he can't do everything and we all and we are all adults so as far as I am concerned you know what you are supposed to do and he	
School Member responses	**Support** 39. So in terms of the kids well if [they] stand in one place for too long it's natural that [they] will get irritable and we try not to make the assembly too long, but by and large **it's [his softer tone, refusing to shout] well received** and some boys, you speak to them softly and you know the bible says a soft response turns away wrath… (PI1, p. 6) [support through appreciation] 40. … they [teachers] **really appreciate the staffroom** (PI3, p. 18); Teachers said, "it was money well spent, sir" (PI3, p. 19). [support: appreciation] 41. … that's [staff appreciation: luncheons, birthday celebrations] **really well received** (PI4, p. 29) [support: appreciation] 42. And again **100% co-operation from the staff** that made it [bazaar] successful. (PI1, p. 10) [support: extra responsibility; participation] 43. We decided that it would be in our best interest to do what he should have done. Well that took a little while. **The teachers, plus the cleaner who came for downstairs we worked together and we**	**Support** 7. **I will give him my advice** but I will not tell him what to do so if I see something; okay like yesterday with the incident with the child, I said "Sir, monitor your classes" because if it was a supervisor that had walked in here, you would have no excuse… Now **I tried to calm her [parent] down** but she has all right to be angry because the classes must be supervised (Lydia, key staff, p. 2). … But **with time and with trial and error he will get there that's why I don't want to keep saying no don't do that because I don't think it's right** and because he is a man too; men don't like to be told. So **some things he will have to learn on his own. I will guide you**, I will help you and tell you certain things and **if he asks oh yes** (Lydia, key staff, p. 3) [support: advice, guidance and assistance but leaving room for experiential learning] 8. … so far we – staff and the principal - all get along quite well and as I said, we are an agreeable staff. … there isn't a lot of pulling and tugging and opposition (Stacy, key staff, p. 61) [support: good relationship because the staff is compliant]	**Support** 82. Yes miss. [we are excited about the house system and receiving points] (Std 5s, p. 84) 83. **It takes up plenty time but before the bell the place does be wild and noisy but when we freeze, we get to cool down**; Before the freeze, we used to all go upstairs so every child used to rush up the stairs and a child fall and they trample him so I think that is why they put the freeze bell. (Std 5s, p. 85) [support: understanding the purpose] 84. … they put a whole set of things in the front there and the infants does be sliding on it and kicking up and playing on the sand, gravel and they are

APPENDIX C2 – SAMPLE OF QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS



Sample of questionnaire analysis [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Excel

Total Y	Total S	Total N(NR)	Analysis
			Professional Orientation
21	4	0	21/25 teachers are proud to work at the school, with 4/25 saying that sometimes they are.
6	11	8	About half the staff say that newcomers are effectively mentored by more experienced teachers, with the other half divided in their opinion. As many as 8/25 teachers say most times newcomers ar
21	4	0	21/25 teachers report teachers' commitment to developing themselves professionally.
17	8	0	The use of students' performance data is said by 17/25 teachers to be judiciously used to inform teaching.
7	17	1	17/25 teachers say that research findings are sometimes used to inform teaching.
6	13	4 (1)	Just about half the staff, 13/25 teachers, say that school projects are sometimes effectively monitored, with as many as four teachers saying they are not, suggesting an possible area for improver
21	3	1	Outcomes of school activities are discussed and evaluated most times according to 21/25 teachers.
19	5	1	19/25 teachers report that there is active and constructive participation at staff meetings.
17	6	2	17/25 teachers say that lessons and schemes of work are routinely planned collaboratively.
18	4	3	18/25 teachers report seeing benefits to student learning from teaching collaboration.
9	10	6	Less than half the teachers, 10/25, report not being appreciated for their efforts and hard work; however, nine say they are while another 6 teachers say most times they are not.
15	8	2	15/25 teachers say that teachers are united in their commitment to the school's vision, while 8/25 say sometimes.
9	12	4	Less than half the teachers, 9/25, say that teachers most times welcome formal feedback in the form of clinical supervision about their teaching, whilst another 12 say sometimes teachers do; ho
13	11	1	It seems that teachers are more welcoming to informal feedback about their teaching according to 13/25 teachers; 11 teachers say sometimes.
20	5	0	Most, 20/25 teachers, say that teachers consult others for advice when dealing with especially challenging situations.
14	10	1	Just over half the teachers, 14/25, say that teachers value creative ways of encouraging student learning, whilst another 10 say sometimes.
20	4	1	Most, 20/25 teachers, say that professional development is focused on classroom teaching.
21	4	0	Staff's treatment of visitors to the school is always professional according to 21/25 teachers.
22	3	0	Most teachers, 22/25, report that teachers involve parents as much as they can in school affairs.
			Organisational Structure
5	18	2	Sometimes school members operate from a clear understanding of the school's vision, according to 18/25 teachers.
4	14	7	14/25 teachers say that staff are sometimes provided with adequate resources to meaningfully plan for instruction.
12	8	4(1)	Half of the staff, 12/25, believes in the school's plan for improving student achievment, whilst 8 say sometimes, another 4 say they do not.
10	8	7	Less than half the staff, 10/25, say that the school has written policies for the running of the school; 8 teachers say these are present for some aspects of school management, whilst 7 say written
6	19	0	Most teachers, 19/25 say that school policies and rules are adhered to sometimes.
19	4	2	19/25 teachers report that teachers are given opportunities to lead school events.
3	17	4(1)	School reforms are sometimes implemented to the extent of institutionalisation, according to 17/25 teachers. Four teachers say that this rarely occurs.
nt			**Quality of the Learning Experience/Environment**
18	6	1	Most teachers, 18/25, report that staff believe that all students can achieve despite their socio-economic disadvantage.
17	8	0	17/25 teachers say that staff work to meet students' academic and other needs.
21	3	1	21/25 teachers report that student learning takes priority over other school goals.
15	9	1	Just over half the teachers, 15/25, say that teachers give extra effort to students who are underperforming; while another 9 teachers say sometimes.
13	12	0	13/25 teachers say that staff ensures classroom environment that are conducive to student learning; while the other half say sometimes.
18	7	0	18/25 teachers report that staff treat students' respectfully and fairly; 7 say sometimes.
			Student Orientation
8	17	0	17/25 teachers report that students' attitudes towards school are sometimes positive.
9	16	0	16/25 teachers say that students are sometimes enthusiastic about learning even when a topic is challenging.
10	14	1	More teachers, 14/25, say that students sometimes obey school rules and procedures than those ,10/25, that say students generally are obedient to school rules, etc.
14	11	0	Just over half the staff, 14/25, say that students take pride in attending their school; the others, 11/25, say sometimes.
23	2	0	Most teachers 23/25 agree that students can confide in their teachers.
16	7	2	16/25 teachers report that students are generally respectful and obedient to teachers; while 7 say sometimes and another 2 say generally they are not.
10	13	2	About half the staff, 13/25, say students are sometimes allowed a say in decisions that concern them; whilst 10 more say they generally are.
15	3	6(1)	Just over half the staff, 15/25, say that there is very little bullying among students; however, as many as 6 teachers think that bullying is highly prevalent.
			School Culture Strength & Homogeneity
18	4	3	18/25 teachers agree that the school's culture is homogeneous.
10	11	4	Less than half the staff, 10/25, report that newcomers to the staff are deliberately ind[illegible]e school's culture; whilst 11/25 teachers say sometimes.
16	9	0	16/25 teachers say that staff actively protect the school's culture; whilst another 9 say sometimes.
3	14	8	14/25 teachers say that attempts to change the school's culture are sometimes welcomed.
5	14	5(1)	14/25 teachers say that culture misfits are sometimes made to align themselves to the school's culture; whilst 5 teachers say this is generally the case, another 5 say no.