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College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Lorna Wilson-Morgan

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2015

Abstract

The Influence of School Leadership Practices on Classroom Management, School Environment, and Academic Underperformance

by

Lorna Novlette Wilson Morgan

MSc, Florida International University, 2006

BSc, University of Technology, 2000

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Walden University

February 2015

Abstract

School leadership requires the collaborative efforts of principals, teachers, parents, students, and other community members to achieve academic success. The purpose of this correlational study was to examine the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance in Jamaica. The research was based upon distributive leadership theory. The School Leadership, Environment, Classroom Management Assessment Questionnaire (SLECMAQ) was developed for this study and was used to collect the data. Prior to data collection, a pilot study was conducted with 12 experts to evaluate the reliability and validity of the SLECMAQ. A total of 148 complete responses were collected from principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others. Pearson's correlation coefficient and linear regressions were used to determine possible correlations between the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. The results indicated significant, positive relationships between the independent variable perceived school leadership practices of principals and teachers and the dependent variables perceived classroom management and perceived academic performance. A significant, positive relationship was also found between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment. The findings will contribute to a positive social change by supporting policies to implement leadership frameworks at underperforming primary schools and thus improving the quality of education in Jamaica.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my deceased mother. The values, love, care, and respect that you taught me are the hallmarks of my life. Those values helped me to realize the importance of education. You showed all of your children the benefits of a good education. The Christian values that you taught me are of paramount importance to me. To my husband, Michael, I want to thank you for assisting me to achieve this milestone. To my daughter, StaceyAnn, thank you for sharing with me pertinent information to contour this study; please continue to help to shape the lives of those whom you teach. I thank God for giving you to me. To my father, thank you for your prayers, support, and trust in me, all of which motivated me each day on this journey. To my niece, Dr. Stephanie Cato, who has been a source of inspiration and encouragement and who served as the quality controller of my work, thank you. To my devoted sisters and friends, you were an inspiration by keeping me focused and reminding me to be a trailblazer. You helped to make my journey bearable. To those who have taken up the challenge of studying, I promise that I will be there for you. I could not have done it without all of you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

School leadership, classroom management, and academic performance are the priorities of primary education in Jamaica. In Jamaica, primary schools record a 97% enrollment rate annually (Carlson, 2002; National Education Inspectorate [NEI], 2012; UNESCO, 2010). In Jamaica, education is considered a public responsibility, so failing performance worries everyone (Dunkley, 2010; Virtue, 2010). The minister of education, in taking steps to improve the education sector, especially schools that have been assessed as underperforming, stated that "education is not an issue of partisan divisiveness, there must be a working consensus on education which will surpass the life of any political administration" (as cited in Linton, 2012, p. 2). This revelation led the minister and the Jamaican Ministry of Education (JMoE) to act on the NEI's (2012) report highlighting leadership and management, teaching support, student attainment and progress, and personal and social development as five factors contributing to students' academic underperformance. Changing the dilemma facing some primary schools requires the involvement of school leaders that will influence classroom management, the school environment, and the academic performance of students. Leadership can have a compelling impact on students' learning success and teachers' morale.

Background of the Study

Concerns exist about the influence of school leadership practices on academic performance at the primary level. The Grade 6 Achievement Test (GSAT) results from 2009 showed a gradual decline in performance at the local and national levels (JMoE,

2012). In an attempt to improve the Jamaican school system, the NEI assessed school performance in 2010, 2011, and 2012 in the areas of school leadership practices, classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. Data from the NEI (2012) showed ongoing declines in academic performance in several areas: (a) leadership and management (35% unsatisfactory); (b) teaching support (54% of primary schools were unsatisfactory); (c) student attainment in numeracy and literacy (79% unsatisfactory at the primary level); (d) student progress (53% unsatisfactory at the primary level); (e) personal and social development (77% unsatisfactory at the primary level); (f) schools made good use of human and material resources (classroom management; 84% unsatisfactory at the primary level); (g) curriculum and enhancement programs (81% unsatisfactory at the primary level); and (h) safety, security, health, and well-being (environment; 44% unsatisfactory in performance). However, for this study school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers); classroom management; school environment; and academic performance were the variables examined.

I reviewed school leadership within Jamaica's education system at the primary level to determine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. I reviewed studies on leadership and school leadership practices by such researchers as Avolio and Bass (1991); Clawson (2006); Collins (2001); Covey (1991); Drucker (1996, 2008); Kotter (2008); Kouzes and Posner (2007); Leithwood (1994); Spillane (2005, 2006, 2008); Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001, 2004);

and Sergiovanni (2005a, 2005b). To investigate the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers), I conducted survey research using a dual-media format to collect the data. Dual-media surveys allow researchers to collect data through multiple channels, such as e-surveys and mail surveys (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008).

School leaders can facilitate the development of students' educational competence to face challenges. Farr (2011) asserted that when school leadership is strategically examined, factors such as classroom management; school environment (i.e., internal and external to the school); and academic performance emerge. School leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) can change the academic trajectory of a school. Danielson (2010) emphasized that change itself comes from the collective efforts of teachers, schools, and communities. The school is an organization of learning and knowledge development within the community. School performance centers on academic achievement, and teachers are the core component of such achievement. School leadership assists in managing and shaping the flow of cultural information to support students' academic progress. School leaders who are action oriented and response centered can help teachers to be role models who embody values and success in teaching and learning (Farr, 2011; Spillane, 2005; Townsend, 2010).

School leadership and management is one factor contributing to students' academic underperformance. To decrease students' academic underperformance, Danielson (2010) and Farr (2011) asserted that school leaders must be effective, self-confident, resilient, and committed to excellence. Effective school leadership is critical in

promoting positive relationships between teachers and students. Farr deemed that "great teaching is leadership" (p. 30) that combines the applicability and capability of leadership principles employed in the transfer of knowledge. When school staff members use their knowledge and skills, they facilitate dialogue, communication, coordination, and collaboration across the school community.

School leadership requires knowledge, preparation, training, and continued professional development to facilitate the interactive participation of students. Farr (2011) identified six leadership strategies that have proven successful in increasing students' academic performance: setting big goals, getting students invested in their learning, planning purposefully, making adjustments as necessary, improving, and working tirelessly. Stumbo and McWalters (2010) also noted that effective leadership facilitates the emergence of manageable and sustainable effort when teachers and principals work with students to help them to achieve academic success. An effective school system that supports the positive actions of leaders and teachers can help to decrease students' poor academic performance.

School leadership entails guidance, support, and behaviors essential to change overall performance of a school. Yukl (2002) asserted that leadership is an evolving and influential process that leads to the achievement of a desired purpose. Leadership involves inspiring and supporting others to achieve a vision based upon clear personal and professional values. Schools should offer all children a foundation for learning, educational achievement, and development of their social skills. Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (2002) discussed the importance of accountability and standards in school

leaders who work toward a vision of education that combines the societal, system administration, and environmental influences on leadership. Such leadership should be geared toward improved teachers' skills, knowledge, and ability. Leaders' competence and efficacy play a role in the quality of the school environment and its impact on student learning. Therefore, maintaining student learning is a priority requiring that school leaders respond positively to changes in the management and development of teaching methods, classroom organization and management, and delivery of the curriculum.

Education in Jamaica

Jamaica is focused on educating the population through access and availability of schools. Evans (2009) noted that education in Jamaica was established for three classes of children, namely, "black [*sic*] children of ex-slaves, middle-class children of the white [*sic*], and the brown [*sic*] privileged class" (p. 10). Previously, missionaries and the religions they represented managed education for the rest of the population. Various religious denominations (i.e., Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, and Seventh Day Adventist) relied on the government for support, and the government was dependent on these churches to provide the people with an education (Evans, 2009). Over time, the need for education has increased in Jamaica, so to globally, education has been placed at the core of Jamaica's development agenda (Virtue, 2010). Schools require leadership with a degree of influence and tangible qualities to raise awareness of academic performance to move education toward the vision of the development agenda.

Education is the foundation of Vision 2030: Jamaica National Development Plan (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009) and the Jamaica National Education Strategic Plan

2008-2013 (JMoE, 2012). Understanding how school leaders can influence classroom management, the school environment, and academic underperformance will strengthen this foundation. Any lapses or deficiencies in educational performance will inhibit the country's growth and attainment of education standards (Evans, 2009; Hall, 2011; Kentish, 2008; Miller, 2006).

Government of Jamaica's Strategy for Education

The policies of the JMoE (1999, 2007, 2009) have emphasized the importance of the leadership, management, and overall performance of schools. Education is the foundation of Jamaica's development plan, and the JMoE continues to assess school performance to ensure that universal primary education is achieved. The schools need leaders who can motivate teachers to work toward improving the literacy and numeracy standards at the primary level. Gill (2011) suggested that middle-ground leadership, an ideal balance between taking others' perspectives into account while emphasizing work requirements, can help to ease the tension between the influence over people and the nature of tasks. What is needed is a middle-ground type of leadership to strengthen Jamaica's education system so that every child has access to learning and fulfill the JMoE's online mission statement that every child can learn and every child must learn.

On this point, the Jamaica National Education Strategic Plan 2008-2013 (JMoE, 2012) outlined the education target for 2015, which is aligned with the millennium development goals (MDG) of literacy and numeracy for all school-age children. Similarly, Vision 2030 (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009) described the national plan for excellent education and training:

> Under Vision 2030, our country will develop an education and training system that produces well-rounded and qualified individuals who will be empowered to learn for life, able to function as creative and productive individuals in all spheres of our society and be competitive in a global context. (pp. 57-58)

Jamaica's corporate strategic plan on education is aligned with the growth and development of the population through the formulation of Vision 2030. Education becomes the competitive edge when academic performance is accomplished at all levels.

The NEI (2012) assessed 135 schools between September 2010 and March 2011 and identified underperformance in leadership and management; teaching support; student achievement in English and mathematics; personal and social development; appropriate use of human and material resources; curriculum and enhancement programs; and safety, security, health, and well-being as factors inhibiting academic performance. These factors also are affecting the educational development to achieve the country's Vision 2030 plans. Primary education is considered the foundation of children's development, commencing at the age of 6 years. Once students are enrolled in school, they participate in the following evaluations during their primary education: the Grade 1 Individual Learning Profile, the Grade 3 Diagnostic Test, and the Grade 4 Literacy and Numeracy Test.

The Grade 4 Literacy and Numeracy Test is administered annually. Unsuccessful students retake the test in December of the same year. Although students are permitted to move to Grade 5, each student must achieve proficiency at the Grade 4 level. Once a student has exhausted all chances of achieving proficiency, principals, teachers, and the

JMoE implement the A-STEP Program, which prepares children for technical skill development. Achieving Grade 4 proficiency confirms mastery of literacy and numeracy skills in preparation for the transition to secondary education.

To gain admission to high school, students in Grade 6 are permitted to sit for the GSAT. However, the NEI (2012) indicated that primary education is the level that is affected the most by academic underperformance. The NEI identified school leadership, classroom management, and poor academic performance in literacy and numeracy as three major factors hindering Jamaica's goal of having all school-age children achieve literacy and numeracy skills by 2015, the end of the MDG cycle. Overall, the NEI found that the leadership in some schools assessed as underperforming has been ineffective and that new and effective strategies are needed to improve these schools. The leadership and management team must be consistent in their management of classroom instructions, lesson development, and leadership qualities to gain the cooperation of teaching staff in creating instructional plans that will transform a school's performance.

School Leadership

Leadership in Jamaica's education system demands people-centered skills. It also requires school leaders who follow a transformational style of leadership to empower and involve teachers in an effort to improve students' academic achievement. I highlighted the need for change in some areas of the school system to meet standards and performance that will help the country to compete in the global market. School leaders in developed countries such as the United States and England that have adopted a

distributed leadership style have helped schools to achieve significant turnarounds in students' academic performance (Harris & Chapman, 2002).

School leadership is important in the delivery of teaching, which has shifted in the 21st century from higher expectations to a changing role of more accountability for educational outcomes (Mulford, 2003). Leithwood et al. (2002) contended that effective leadership is a key component in empowering students as well as improving classroom management and the performance of teachers and, ultimately, students. School leadership is moving toward a shared partnership, that is, a distributed type of leadership (Spillane, 2005). School leadership nurtures the capacity of teachers to combine teaching and learning, interpersonal skills, and mentoring so that they can serve as the foundation to improve academic performance.

Leadership in schools was highlighted in the context of its contribution to teaching, learning, and the creation of an appropriate environment for learning. Mulford (2003) commented that the most consistent finding about school leadership is that the "authority to lead need not be located in the person of the leader but can be dispersed within the school between and among people" (p. 2). Leadership does not reside in just one person; instead, it is embedded in the entire school community, whose members provide support for the leadership to make changes to the system to improve students' academic performance. In the context of this study, the distributed leadership framework involves an approach to leadership that includes interactions between people and their situations as well as the enhancement of skills in school leadership and instruction

(Spillane, 2006). Implementation of the distributed leadership framework necessitates a shift in leadership practices to support the full inclusion of teaching staff.

Distributed leadership also necessitates shared accountability and responsibility to improve instruction and learning as well as identify the factors contributing to learning inability and underperformance. In Jamaica and many other developing countries, issues such as a lack of parental guidance, poor attendance, adolescent pregnancy, poor societal mentorship, inadequate living and school environments, health issues, inequality in schools, and domestic abuse affect not only students' learning but also leaders' efforts to influence academic performance (Boncana & Crow, 2008; Gullickson, 2010; Hader, 2011; K. T. James, Mann, & Creasy, 2007; Miller, 2006; Townsend, 2010).

Effective school leadership is essential to students' academic achievement (Townsend, 2010). School leaders must have excellent core knowledge, recognize effective instructional strategies, and understand content pedagogy and classroom management so that they can influence students' lives in positive ways (Farr, 2011). School leadership, classroom management, and the delivery of instruction are the most important factors in student learning. Teachers need initial and continuing professional development to have a positive impact on student learning (Colasacco, 2011; Marino, 2007). Similarly, Stewart (2011) asserted that regular professional development can facilitate the emergence of leaders within the school system. Leaders who emerge from within the ranks of teachers make schools places where teachers learn, students achieve, and leadership is distributed to advance management and leadership responsibilities (Bush, 2005; Farr, 2011; Spillane, 2005, 2006).

Problem Statement

School leadership must provide an environment that motivates teachers to improve the ways in which they deliver instruction, which can empower students and help them to improve their academic performance (Leithwood, 1994). To evaluate and analyze school leadership, I examined available data on government policies, programs, and plans implemented to improve school leadership, classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. I synthesized and analyzed information gathered from such researchers as Bailey (2003); Brown-Blake (2007); Bryan (2004); Dunkley (2010); Evans (2006); Francis (2008); Hall (2011); Hamilton (2010); Henry (2008, 2012); Jackson (2008); JMoE, (2012); Jamaica Information Service ([JIS], 2008, 2009); Miller (1990); NEI (2012); and Virtue (2010, 2013). Over the last 20 years, Jamaica's education system has evolved, and some positive changes have occurred. However, leadership and classroom management styles have remained stagnant and have been identified as contributing to the underperformance of students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to determine whether school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) influence classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance at the primary school level in Jamaica. School leadership, especially at the primary level, lacks quality, will, zeal, and effectiveness in some schools (Virtue, 2013). The JMoE has mandated the National College for Educational Leadership (NCEL) to manage the professional development of school leaders in coordination and collaboration with the University of

the West Indies following 3 successive years of NEI negative assessments of academic performance. Studies on school leadership education, learning, and instruction have been extensively researched (K. T. James et al., 2007; Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999a, 1999b, 2006, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2002; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Miller, 1990; Saito & Sato, 2012; Sergiovanni, 2005a, 2005b; Spillane, 2005, 2006, 2008; Spillane et al., 2001, 2004). Researchers have focused on the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance in primary schools was unavailable.

I used the social activity (Bolden, 2011) and social system (Bandura, 1977; Parsons, 1991) theories, along with the distributed leadership framework (Spillane, 2005) view of the school environment as a social system, as the theoretical framework. The social activity theory contains tenets of distributed leadership to balance the relationship in school activities and performance. The social system theory serves as a building block and has a dynamic interplay with distributed leadership in managing individual relationship in organization. For this study, the distributed leadership theory was the main framework used. These systems posit that all children can learn and succeed; they also support continuous improvement in the school system. The social system influences the results to be achieved, the direction to be pursued, and the various priorities to be recognized within the school system. The school and environment systems contribute to the performance of teachers and leadership to achieve satisfactory academic performance.

I examined archival data from the NEI's (2012) assessment of school performance to understand and evaluate the extent of academic underperformance. I used

a survey, the School Leadership, Environment, Classroom Management Assessment Questionnaire (SLECMAQ; see Appendix) to investigate the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance at the primary school level in Jamaica. To achieve this purpose, I examined the independent and dependent variables (IV and DVs) described in the hypotheses.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Three research questions (RQs) and three hypotheses guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools?

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools.

H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools.

The IV in Hypothesis 1 was perceived school leadership practices, and the DV was perceived classroom management.

2. What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools?

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools.

H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership and perceived school environment in underperforming schools.

The IV in Hypothesis 2 was perceived school leadership practices, and the DV was perceived school environment.

3. How do perceived school leadership practices influence academic underperformance in underperforming schools?

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and academic underperformance in underperforming schools.

H_{a3}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and academic underperformance in underperforming schools.

The IV for Hypothesis 3 was perceived school leadership practices, and the DV was academic underperformance at underperforming schools.

Theoretical Framework

I used the social activity (Bolden, 2011) and social system (Bandura, 1977; Parsons, 1991) theories, along with the distributed leadership framework (Spillane, 2005) view of the school environment as a social system, as the theoretical framework. For this study, the distributed leadership theory was the main framework used. The theories are used to describe leadership as a practice of leading and managing teaching and learning involving multiple people collaborating and coordinating with a degree of interdependence (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Spillane (2005) commented that distributive leadership requires three elements, namely, leaders, followers, and situation, with each having a shared responsibility in meeting a desired goal. Spillane described distributed leadership as a diagnostic and analytical tool that applies and uses various artifacts to focus on collective attention and core tasks. Teaching and learning is critical

to a school performance. The implementation of distributed leadership provides school leadership with opportunity to coordinate teaching and learning methodology to make changes where schools are underperforming.

Underperformance in school requires coordination and collaboration between school leaders and teachers to develop initiatives and programs to facilitate learning. Harris and Spillane (2008) asserted that the distributed leadership theory "serves as both a diagnostic and a design tool that offers a lens on leadership practices within school and between schools" (p. 33). Furthermore, distributed leadership requires that the activities of school leaders who are willing to explore the organizational practices, routines, and tools that will enhance instructional development and delivery be examined (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). Applying distributed leadership as a diagnostic tool will help school leaders to assess areas of the school system requiring immediate improvement, such as teachers' classroom practices, lesson plans, teaching methods, and accountability. I selected the distributed leadership theory as the framework for improving school performance because it can facilitate the implementation of leadership practices that transform the functions and responsibilities of teachers and school leaders (Boncana & Crow, 2008; Burgess, 2011; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Spillane, 2005, 2006; Spillane et al., 2001; Wright, 2008).

School leadership requires commitment, experience, understanding, and planning to achieve improved performance. Spillane (2005) argued that leadership involves all members of the school community, not just principals and vice principals. School leadership can shape a learning environment that is productive and meaningful to

teachers and students (Spillane et al., 2001, 2004). Spillane et al. (2001) asserted that school leadership occurs in many ways and is centered on the interactions between and among people "depending on the particular leadership task, school leaders' knowledge and expertise may be best explored at the group or collective level rather than at the individual leaders level" (p. 25). Spillane et al. (2004) wrote about school leadership as an integrative and interactive process between leaders and followers. Spillane et al. (2004) asserted that distributed perspective is used as a diagnostic tool to understand "how school leaders define, present, and carry out their tasks" (p. 15) in order to distinguish leadership from management in schools. Management in school tends to focus on functionality and policy, whereas leadership seek to inspire and nurture the capacity to combine teaching and learning, interpersonal skills, and mentoring so that they can serve as the foundation to improve academic performance.

The school system requires leaders who are able to manage the school system to influence students' academic performance. Spillane (2006) and Wright (2008) viewed distributed leadership as incorporating cognitive and distributed perspectives. Spillane, along with Harris and Spillane (2008), asserted that the concept of distributed leadership focuses on leadership interactions with people, situations, and the manner in which leadership is shared by leaders and followers. The framework is used to explore leadership practices, methods to improve instructional techniques, and leadership responsibilities that acknowledge the work of all individuals in the school system to improve students' academic performance (Spillane, 2006).

I examined research supporting the influences of leadership practices (Bandura, 1977; Bolden, 2011; Bush, 2005; Clawson, 2006; Kotter, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Parsons, 1991). Clawson (2006) posited that the study and assessment of leadership based upon levels ranging from Level 1 to Level 3 indicate that a differential in leadership practices exists. Clawson suggested that Level 1 depicts visible behavior; Level 2 depicts conscious thought; and Level 3 depicts the values, assumptions, beliefs, and expectations (VABEs) that leaders hold of themselves and others. Clawson described the ways in which each level provides key factors (e.g., risk taking, new ideas, thinking, and beliefs) related to various leadership practices and behaviors at the organizational, work group, and individual levels.

People and organizations are seeking leaders who can clarify the direction of organizations. Clawson's (2006) levels of leadership and the tenets of distributed leadership not only resonate with leadership practices but also describe the changes required by school leaders to improve students' academic performance. Regarding the application of distributed leadership, Kouzes and Posner (2007) contributed to the theoretical framework by identifying five practices and 10 commitments of exemplary leadership that epitomize building values, systems, skills, and critical thinking to develop broader ways to manage work performance. Leadership, in theory, is a relationship as well as a developmental process that can foster collaboration, build trust, and promote inclusion. Distributed leadership is aligned with the social activity theory. Bolden (2011) suggested that the social activity theory also should include tenets of distributed leadership and posited that social activity theory and distributed leadership strategies

provide a foundation for the implementation of strategies in schools that support the academic performance of students and increased cooperation between principals and teachers.

The school is an organization of learning and knowledge development requiring the coordination, collaboration, and support of principals and teachers. Bush (2005) wrote about the use of participative, or distributed, leadership that has been adopted in countries such as the United States, England, Scotland, and Ireland. The successes that were recorded showed improvements in academic performance and highlighted the importance not only of the leadership approach to current and emerging situations but also the critical need to develop effective and responsive school leaders. Bush discussed the importance of school leaders cooperating with teachers, school boards, and parents if schools are to be places where teachers learn, students achieve, and leadership is distributed widely. The structure of educational institutions highlights the need for leadership at the management, instructional, and community levels. Leaders should invest in teachers and students, work to change negative attitudes within schools, and seek to build social communities that motivate teachers and students to achieve higher academic performance (Bush, 2005). To improve students' academic performance, schools need to refocus attention on school leaders at all levels of the school organization.

The school system requires leaders who are able to manage the school system to influence students' academic performance. McGill and Beaty (2001), who emphasized that action learning is a development tool to enhance performance, commented:

> Action learning is a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by colleagues, with an intention of getting things done. Through action learning, individual learn with and from each other by working on real problems and reflecting on their own experiences. (p. 21)

School leaders are the foundation of school success. Leaders must be able to direct the energies of teachers, students, and parents to achieve educational outcomes.

School leaders' actions require behaviors and characteristics that can challenge teachers and students to achieve a high level of performance. McGill and Beaty (2001) compared the action learning cycle with the experiential learning cycle by highlighting four important points: (a) observing and reflecting on the consequences of actions in situations, (b) forming or reforming the understanding of situations resulting from experience, (c) planning actions to influence situations based upon newly formed or reformed understanding, and (d) acting or trying out plans in situations. They concluded that learning is a continuous process that combines work experience with learning and professional development. They asserted that learning always takes place within a social context, "with the learner acting as a social construct, and that learning should be regarded as a social phenomenon as well as an individualistic one" (p. 174). Leaders develop through action learning, which focuses on individual and organizational progress.

School leaders need continuous skill development to realize their full potential and ensure school improvement. Kotter (2008) contended that the development of leaders and organizations occurs simultaneously. Demonstrating competence and ability, treating

people with respect, asking questions, listening attentively to responses, and allowing people to internalize what has been transmitted can lead to better performance by leaders and organizations. Kotter offered some simple strategies that school leaders can develop as priorities for daily interactions to assist in strengthening academic performance and organizational leadership: Leaders should develop creative methods of data collection, use data to inform and enhance knowledge, listen, respect others' opinions, share information, and respond positively to criticism. These strategies engage people from other organizations to solicit their honest opinions about issues and facilitate change. These strategies can support behavioral change that is visible, determined, self-confident, blame free, passionate, and competent. Because of differences in organizational climates and political environments, implementing such strategies is not always possible. Change requires leaders who can disarm, quiet, and reduce cynicism.

Leaders are coaches and mentors for others. Kotter (2008) asserted that leaders must demonstrate the right attitude to decrease negative actions and posited that the right attitude demonstrates an "urgent patience" (p. 118). Kotter remarked that organizations could control behavior in one of two main ways, namely, formally by maintaining structures, processes, systems, and rules, and informally by using peer influences, leaders' attention, and organizational cultures. However, leaders need to use both ways to obtain measurable results while seizing opportunities to enhance performance and success.

School leadership is a demanding job that requires leaders to make decisions that can result in significant changes in schools, especially schools that are facing poor

academic performance. Spillane et al. (2001) explained and analyzed the role of school leadership in the context of school leaders, followers, and situations. Spillane's (2005) framework provided the groundwork for the examination of leadership, with a particular focus on the most effective type of leadership in schools. I examined leadership and assessed Spillane et al.'s exploration and description of distributed leadership as an analytical tool to gauge the influence of school leadership on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance.

Spillane (2005, 2006) emphasized that distributed leadership is constructed on the interactions of multiple leaders, followers, and their situations as reliable elements of leadership practices and ways of thinking about leadership and practical methods for school leaders to improve school performance. Distributed leadership strategies have been linked to rapid success in improving school performance through responsive leadership approaches and supportive interactions with followers. The use of distributive leadership strategies should help school leaders to develop the skills and confidence necessary to share responsibilities and be willing to learn from others to achieve optimum academic performance.

Social System Theory and Schools

In Jamaica, education is an economic benefit and is socially important in ensuring that students are achieving academic standards. Parsons (1991) stated that the social system theory comprises the processes of interactions between actors and the structure of relations between actors. The social system requires a complete "conformity" with standards and actions that motivate the actors within the system (Parsons, 1991, p. 10).

Parsons also noted that the social system has important functionality within a school, especially in regard to the roles and attitudes of the actors. The social system is an interactive network of social relationships, such as the relationships in the school setting that enhance learning. Bandura (1977) stated that children learn by example and internalize the positive social behaviors of the individuals who influence their social development based upon the rewards or acknowledgment that they receive when they exhibit positive prosocial behaviors. The skills of prosocial behavior should start at home and be reinforced in the learning environment. However, the enhancement of prosocial behaviors requires collaboration from all stakeholders in the home and school environments.

Schools are social system where behaviors are shaped and nurtured. Dewey (1919/2001a) identified the school as a social function where education is developed, nurtured, and sustained as a necessity. The school enables social functioning and a directional path for growth. The school is a social entity where principals establish a formal structure; build organizational and working relationships; and motivate others based upon a foundation of trust, honesty, and respect. To support the school as a social system, Dewey (1919/2001b) discussed the importance of dualism, the ability of the mind to absorb, acquire, possess, and reproduce information based upon the development of teaching methods and the sharing or transference of knowledge between students and teachers.

When schools act as social systems, interactions between principals and teachers need to happen to develop and frame the priority of making learning a coordinated and

collaborative strategy. Distributed leadership influences this engagement, effort, innovation, and organizational commitment of the teaching staff (Saiti, 2009). Similarly, Saito and Sato (2012) contended that learning should be collaborative and focus not only on children's cognitive development but also on their social and ethical growth. The social system supports interactions within the school system, where leaders, academic staff, and the environment become a supersystem that can influence and improve students' academic performance.

Schools Leadership as a Distributed Strategy

School leadership requires the collaborative efforts of principals, teachers, parents, students, and other community members. Spillane (2005) asserted that leadership is responsible for providing teachers with such support tools and structures as students' assessment data, teachers' evaluations, and grade meetings. Barnard (1938) emphasized the importance of competence, moral integrity, rational stewardship, professionalism, and a system approach for leading and managing successfully. Leadership must communicate organizational goals to gain acceptance and cooperation from stakeholders at all levels. To improve the academic achievement of students at underperforming schools, leaders need a vision that will facilitate change in performance routines, structures, and functions such as classroom management.

To date, there has been no substantive research on the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance in Jamaica's schools, despite annual assessments and statistics on school performance. The NEI (2012) identified school leadership and administrative

management as factors contributing to academic underperformance, which has placed school leadership in a quandary. The JMoE (2012) is working to improve school leaders' skills, knowledge, and coordination and collaboration with stakeholders to reduce students' underperformance. Applying leadership that will influence teaching staff entails giving consideration to each teacher's job skills, people skills, and ability to delivery instruction efficaciously.

It was my intention to recommend use of the distributed leadership framework as one way to improve academic performance in underperforming schools. The literature on distributed leadership has shown the benefits of distributed leadership in the United States, England, Scotland, and Ireland (Boncana & Crow, 2008; Burgess, 2011; Harris, 2004; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Spillane, 2005, 2006, 2008; Spillane et al., 2001; Wright, 2008). These aforementioned researchers concluded that to create optimal learning conditions, principals must accept that their influence on student learning is channeled through teachers, thus necessitating the need for shared leadership.

Leaders' influence can change a whole community. Spillane and Diamond (2007) confirmed that schools need collaborative, collective, and coordinated approaches to improve students' academic performance. The education system in Jamaica is the most effective way to alleviate poverty, build social equality, and change the lives of ordinary citizens in positive ways. Education is a mechanism of social mobility that can facilitate growth and development that can positively influence the gaining of knowledge and skills. As one way to alleviate poverty, leadership in Jamaica's schools should exert an influence on teachers and teaching practices to improve students' academic performance.

In addition, the environment that comprises the community, that is, churches, community and youth groups, and businesses, should collaborate with the schools to embrace Jamaica's development strategy (Dunkley, 2010; Virtue, 2010).

To inspire change in the delivery of education, school leadership needs to create a community of workers (i.e., principals and teachers) who can build the foundation of shared leadership that will ensure students' academic success. Jamaica's education system has been evolving in an effort to improve the quality of education and prepare individuals for governance and social change (Dewey, 1916/1966). Schools can serve as agents of social change by bridging cultural barriers and forging development structures and standards. They must focus on the promotion of continuous learning; change; group support; social, community, and cultural activities; and the development of cognitive and practical skills. School performance is critical for many social reasons, so principals and teachers, as the main contributors, must be held accountable for the performance of students and schools. Therefore, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration must happen among principals, teachers, parents, and school board members to reduce academic underperformance.

Nature of the Study

I developed and used the School Leadership, Environment, Classroom Management Assessment Questionnaire (SLECMAQ) to collect information from the participants about the perceived influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. I first conducted a pilot study to test the reliability and validity of the

SLECMAQ. One hundred and sixty-five surveys were distributed electronically through the Survey Methods web portal, and another 165 were hand delivered mail to schools without Internet access to primary school principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, class teachers, special education teachers, and others in the parishes Kingston and St. Andrew. One hundred and seventy-three stakeholders participated in this study, and 148 completed the SLECMAQ in full. I also collected data from the NEI's (2012) report to develop the IV and DVs. The JMoE (2012) report indicated an annual percentage below 50% in numeracy at the local and national levels, and although a marginal increase in literacy from 2009 to 2012 was recorded, academic underperformance was still occurring in some schools. The continued decline in student performance was the foundation for this study and led to the development of the survey, which was appropriate for use in this study (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008).

Despite conducting extensive search on and reviews of several existing survey instruments on school leadership, I could not find a precise instrument that could answer the RQs. I conceptualized the SLECMAQ by focusing on the variables in the RQs, purpose, objectives, and hypotheses to develop the questions. McNabb (2008) stated that "hypotheses tell what to look for and what to test" and present "simply statements or predictions that explain or suggest some conclusion, event or thing" (p. 182). Principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, class teachers, special education teachers, and others from primary schools in Kingston and St Andrew comprised the target population for this study. I formulated the statements and questions in the survey from the RQs and content (i.e., literature/theoretical framework) that connected with the purpose and nature of this

study. I used the survey to measure knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral change. I specifically developed the SLECMAQ to examine the influence of perceived school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance in primary schools and determine the ways in which these variables can affect students' academic performance and the schools' overall performance assessment. The IV was perceived school leadership practices; the DVs were perceived classroom management, perceived school environment, and academic performance. A detailed discussion of the methodology is included in Chapter 3.

Definitions of Terms

Classroom management: Maintenance of order in the classroom to facilitate students' academic achievement, students' behavior, and teachers' preparedness to promote learning in an organized environment (Spillane et al., 2001).

Collaborative leadership: Multiple leaders working together at the same time and place on an issue (Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Collective leadership: Occurs when the work of leaders is performed separately but is interdependent (e.g., an assistant principal making a number of visits to classrooms or giving formative evaluations, or a principal making formal visits and giving summative evaluations; Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Coordinated leadership: Leadership routines carried out in sequence, for example, using data from standardized assessments to influence instruction. A series of steps is required, such as from the initial administering of the tests to analyzing results or presenting information in an appropriate format for discussion at faculty meetings

(Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Distributed leadership: A balance of leadership among multiple individuals within an organization that involves responsibility undertaken by school leaders to coordinate and gain support from the academic staff and administrators within a specific school environment (Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane et al., 2001).

Educated: A linkage within a wider system where there is much more awareness of the different facets and dimension of a problem (Farr, 2011).

Followers: People within a school system who are motivated by the influence of the leadership in enhancing knowledge and shaping their behavior (Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Learning: The development of new knowledge, skills, or attitudes as an individual interacts with information and the environment. It is a change in behavior from what was communicated through a structured process of delivery (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2012).

School environment: The external and internal physical environment that fosters learning and maintains the discipline procedures, safety, and security of the school (Leithwood, 1994).

School leadership: The process of enlisting and guiding the talent and energies of teachers, pupils, and parents to achieve common educational goals (Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Teacher: The person who instructs and sees that work is done by students to increase knowledge (*Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary*, 2010).

Teaching: A combination of art and science, in which science is the psychological component of teaching, and art is the creative component (Farr, 2011; Killen, 2006).

Underperforming: Occurs when expectations are not met, such as when literacy and numeracy performance is below the standard established by the JMoE (as cited in NEI, 2012).

Research Design

I conducted this quantitative, correlational study to examine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. Conducting a survey is an efficient way to collect data (Creswell, 2003). I administered the survey to participants working in the 12 targeted primary schools in the Jamaican parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew.

I used a simple linear regression analysis to examine and evaluate the variables and determine the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. Conducting simple linear regression analysis facilitated "exceedingly flexible data analytic procedures" (Cohen, 1988, p. 407). Simple linear regression analysis requires only one IV to describe the relationship to the DVs (McNabb, 2008). This relationship can be stated in correlational terms to make predictions (Babbie, 2007). Simple regression analysis can be used to state or predict the strength of the relationship between the two variables (McNabb, 2008).

I used ordinal data, which are regarded as categorical data, in this study. Simple linear regression analysis was helpful because it allowed me to test the relationship

between the IV and the DVs to investigate the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The quantitative data required the use of numerical measurements to rank order the responses and assist in recognizing the numbers descriptively (McNabb, 2008). Standard statistical methods of descriptive statistics included calculations of the frequency distributions, means, standard deviations, and regression and correlational coefficients to analyze the data to make specific conclusion.

I developed the SLECMAQ specifically to assess the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on the factors affecting student performance. The four sections of the survey have 76 items, including five descriptive demographic questions. I used the SLECMAQ to collect data from principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others.

I conducted a pilot test of the SLECMAQ that involved a test-retest process (McNabb, 2008). I administered the pilot test to 12 experts who were not part of the target population to test the validity of the design and questions of the survey instrument. I reviewed the responses to the pilot test to identify any problems understanding or answering the questions and then remove words, phrases, and any other ambiguity or confusion in the SLECMAQ (McNabb, 2008).

The reliability of the instrument was tested after obtaining approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board to conduct the study (IRB approval # 04-22-14-0137215). The pilot test was available as an e-survey on the SurveyMethods web portal. The 15 volunteers received an e-mail with the informed consent procedures as the cover

page. They had to "Click agree" to indicate that they agreed and were 20 years of age or older before accessing the questionnaire. These 15 professionals had previously volunteered to participate in the survey test as the sample test-retest group (not including the 12 experts).

On the first day, I sent the survey to 15 participants in the sample test-retest group, not including the 12 experts, to test the reliability of the survey. The revised instrument was sent back to the same sample test-retest group. In Week 3, I returned the revised questionnaire to the same sample test-retest group to test the consistency of the responses to assess the reliability of the SLECMAQ. The retest was conducted to evaluate the consistency of the responses and the clarity of the questions; remove unclear phrases; and delete, replace, or revise ambiguous questions (McNabb, 2008).

Creswell (2003) remarked, "This testing is important to establish the content validity of an instrument and to improve questions format and scales" (p. 150). Conducting a pilot test helped to identify any ambiguities in the survey. A pilot survey allows researchers to test instruments like surveys for validity and reliability, particularly if the instruments have not been used in prior studies (Creswell, 2003; McNabb, 2008).

The reliability of the pretest was related to the number of measurement errors. Because the 15 participants on the pretest identified none, the measurement error was zero, and reliability was 1 (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). The reliability and validity of a survey measure the consistency of responses to the same questions. Trochim and Donnelly (2008) noted that Cronbach's alpha is the most common form of consistency. I used Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability of the instrument. The reliability

coefficient of any survey instrument must be greater than a Cronbach's alpha acceptable reliability coefficient of .70. Cronbach's alpha seeks to obtain a value of zero to 1 to achieve reliability and validity in a survey instrument (Cohen, 1988).

I captured data from the SLECMAQ electronically using the SurveyMethods web portal, which I used exclusively for this study to make the SLECMAQ accessible to participants with access to the Internet. I administered the survey as an e-survey and as a hand-delivered survey. I collated the data from the web portal in Excel format and inputted the data from the hand-delivered survey manually. I loaded the data from the Excel sheet into SPSS v.22.0 for analysis and confirmation of the validity and reliability of the instrument. I did not use these data in the full study data collection and analysis protocols.

For the full study data analysis, I used simple linear regression to describe and report the relationship of the variables. Simple linear regression is best suited for use in studies where one variable is use to predict the score of the other variable (IV and DV or criterion and predictor variable) in each question (McNabb, 2008), as was the case in this study. The survey included items about leadership and school leadership, classroom management, school environment, and academic performance in schools, as well as demographic questions about gender, age, position, years of employment as a teacher and grade level, and educational level achieved.

I analyzed the collected data using a regression analysis formula: "Y" represented the IV, and "X" represented the DVs. Descriptive statistics helped me to describe the data simply by calculating the frequency distribution, mean; standard deviations, regression,

and correlational coefficients to analyze the data to make specific conclusions (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008) about the influence of school leadership practices on improved academic performance.

Assumptions

Researchers have shown that leadership, which plays a pivotal role in business and academic institutions, requires constant improvement (Clawson, 2006; Kotter, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Mulford, 2003). Leadership in schools involves all members of the school community (Mulford, 2003), so collaboration among all of the stakeholders (i.e., principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, and special education teachers) is necessary to improve students' academic performance. Spillane and Diamond (2007) contended that without school leadership, the core work of the school, namely, teaching and learning, cannot occur. The school is an organization of learning and knowledge development. Teaching and learning are two strategies employed in a school system to improve knowledge. Teachers embody the values of teaching and learning, interpersonal skills, and mentoring to improve students' academic performance.

Because school leaders sometimes feel that they are the sole proprietors in the school community, I assumed that they had adopted hierarchical structures that inhibited dialogue, collaboration, and the development of leaders among the academic staff. I also assumed that parents' lack of awareness of the performance standard required at the primary level for the successful transition of their children to the secondary level accounted for the lack of support and interest in their children's education. I assumed that the participants would complete the questionnaire in a timely fashion and provide honest

and open responses. I assumed that the parents understood that academic performance in and by the schools is important to them. Finally, I assumed that the principals might not have been willing to accept that leadership is vital to the performance of a school, which could have resulted in their nonparticipation.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study encompassed urban primary schools in the parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew; 12 of these schools, which have been classified as having unsatisfactory academic performance, participated in the study. At the time of the study, these two parishes accounted for more than 1,000 teachers at the primary level. The sample comprised 165 participants, inclusive of principals and vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others, from the 12 underperforming primary schools in Kingston and St. Andrew. No other schools within the parishes were directly involved, but they might consider participating in future studies in the event that the JMoE finds the results of this study favorable.

Limitations

All research projects carry limitations, but they do not necessarily hinder the research; rather, the limitations identify shortcomings in the sample size, population, time, and participation, among others. This study had several limitations. First, the lack of Internet access in some schools meant that I had to hand deliver and administer the survey in person. Second, grade coordinators and special education teachers were not present in all 12 schools under study in Kingston and St. Andrew. Third, on most occasions, school board members did not work within areas where the schools were

located, which posed a problem in having them participate in the study. Fourth, school board members, retirees, and parents were grouped as the other participants in the study, and some of them were reluctant to participate. I focused on 12 primary schools that had recorded unsatisfactory performance, so the participants' responses were relevant only to those schools. I anticipated that the findings would have a positive influence on school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. I will use the results to enhance and implement improvement strategies adopted from distributed leadership to improve academic performance at the primary level.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is that it helped me to determine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. Leadership at the primary level must support strategies and practices that enhance learning and teaching. In Jamaica, there has been a gap in research on the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance (Bailey, 2003; Figueroa, 2010; Garvey Clarke, 2011; Harris, 2002; JMoE, Youth and Culture, 2004; Knight & Rapley, 2007). Although one strategic objective of the JMoE, Youth and Culture (2004) has emphasized "securing teaching and learning opportunities that will optimize access, equity and relevance throughout the education system" (p. 2), it has not clearly defined leadership, classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. Insights from the study might lead to a new leadership role for

school principals and teachers; the development of new teaching techniques; and recommendations for the implementation of distributed leadership to improve school management, culture, vision, and performance.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance is important to promote high student achievement. Based upon the Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009), education has become one of the core national objectives. Because Jamaica's development plan focuses on education, the vision and goals for maintaining educational standards, and continued assessments of school performance, understanding the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance is vital to sustain academic performance.

Summary

I conducted this quantitative, correlational study to examine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance at the primary level. In this chapter, the importance of school leadership practices, classroom management, school environment, and academic performance was discussed. Effective school leadership is essential to improve students' learning and performance. Included in Chapter 2 is a review of literature to synthesize and support the theoretical framework of the study. Included in Chapter 3 is an explanation of the methods and research design that

I used to conduct the study. I also discuss the rationale, RQs and corresponding hypotheses, reliability and validity, target population and sample, and instrumentation. In Chapter 4, I present the results of the pilot study and the survey. Included in Chapter 5 is a discussion of the findings, limitations, recommendations, lessons learned, and implications for social change and future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The need for education has increased the demand for more effective school leadership and the higher academic performance of students. Stewart (2011) noted that countries are trying to improve education and that some have excelled through the use of a "wide array of purposeful strategies" (p. 17). Mulford (2003) asserted that the most consistent finding over more than 2 decades of research on effective school leadership "is that authority to lead need not be located in the person of the leader, but can be dispersed within the school between and among people" (p. 2), confirming that leadership exists in the context of the school community rather than one person. In practice, the school community serves as a support tool for school leadership as it endeavors to improve the performance gap among students.

The concept of leadership influences has taken on various indicators in developing empirical evidence towards the improvement of student learning. Cuban (1988) stated that leadership has the ability and capacity to motivate and generate actions to achieve defined goals. Leadership in educational institutions requires a broad understanding of cultural, environmental, and behavioral traits (Evans, 2006; Miller, 1990, 1994; Stromquist, 2002). Leadership demands open-mindedness, charisma, poise, respect for diversity, and confidence. Effective leadership centers on how individuals are managed in an environment of change (Argyris, 1990; Clawson, 2006; Kotter, 2008; Olson & Eoyang, 2001).

Leadership empowers, motivates, directs, stimulates, and guides people toward organizational goals (Clawson, 2006; Kotter, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Leadership in organizations, businesses, or educational institutions demands a remodeling of strategy to be more inclusive, with a tendency toward partnership and teamwork (Argyris, 1990; Clawson, 2006; Spillane, 2005). Kotter (1990) asserted that unlike management, leadership is called upon to meet the growing challenge of uncertainty. Kotter contended that effective leadership must have a vision to motivate people to accomplish tasks that often challenge the status quo and forge new ways of completing tasks. The use of knowledge and skills of school staff, dispositions, relationship, interactions, cultures, policies, standards of operations, and access to support in the home are contributory variables to encourage student learning.

Literature Search

I conducted the literature review to examine various leadership styles and their historical development in the management of schools. I selected books, journal articles, and, newspaper on leadership practices, school leadership, classroom management, and performance in schools for review. The literature review allowed me to collect information related to multiple models, methods, and styles of leadership (Allport, 1957; Argyris, 1990; Avolio & Bass, 1991; Covey, 1991; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Using these models, I conducted a detailed review of the strategies of distributed leadership. That model and its strategies were the focus of the study. I also reviewed the context of collaboration at the organizational level to effect continuous change and improvement in school performance. This review was necessary to identify the type of leadership that

could facilitate strategic and significant change in school performance. To develop the study, the following databases and keywords were searched: ProQuest (*school leadership*, *school improvement*, *leadership*, *distributive leadership*, *types of leadership*); Business and Academic Central (*academic, learning*, *performance*, *leadership*, *school environment*, *classroom management*); Jamaica's Ministry of Education, Jamaica Information Service, Jamaica Observer and Gleaner Company (*school reform*, *shared leadership*, *influences*, *school leadership*, *school performance*, *collaboration*, *principals' responsibility*, *structures*, *policies*, *school improvement*); Sage Journal(*distributive leadership*, *leadership*, *academic performance*, *learning*, *knowledge development*, *leadership development*), and others.

Leadership

Distributed leadership enables organizational leaders to persuade employees to work in collaborative and supportive ways by giving employees the confidence to achieve organizational objectives. Theorists such as Argyris (1990), Avolio and Bass (1991); Burns (1978); Clawson (2006); Kotter (1996, 2008); Kouzes and Posner (2007); Spillane (2005, 2006, 2008); and Spillane et al. (2001) have discussed the importance of transformational, transactional, institutional, adaptive, shared, and distributed leadership styles in enhancing the performance of employees. These theorists aligned organizational leadership with performance, thus providing me with a foundation to provide examples of and highlight the benefits of distributed leadership in the Jamaican school system.

Leadership competence and influence impact students' learning success. Burns (1978) stated that transformational leaders rise above their followers' self-interests for the

good of the team and increase followers' low level of needs to achieve individual levels of self-actualization. Bass and Bass (2008) suggested that transformational and transactional leadership styles correlate in the attributes of charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, despite clear distinctions in their definitions. Although these attributes overlap, transformational leadership's effectiveness lies in creating and sharing knowledge individually and in groups, whereas transactional leadership focuses on exploiting knowledge within organizations.

Current leadership practices and influences should enhance and support dialogue between leaders and teaching staff as well as coordination and collaboration efforts across the school community. Argyris (1990) contended that leadership entails being responsible for implementing effective communication that motivates and increases performance. Kotter (2008) noted that leadership requires perception, decision making, and risk taking. With these trajectories, it is important to focus on the influence of current leadership practices on organizational performance (Clawson, 2006; Kotter, 2008; Spillane, 2006). Understanding the historical perspectives, practices, and methods of school leadership, classroom management, and school environment will facilitate the development of an improvement plan for schools dealing with academic underperformance.

Significance of Leadership

Strong leaders develop guidelines and directives to influence and motivate people (Drucker, 1996, 2008). Bass (1985a, 1985b) described the essential characteristics of leaders as providing motivation and stimulating intellectual curiosity. Leadership must be

open, supportive, and friendly to influence the performance of employees. The most important leadership qualities involve being passionate, making or being the difference in one's chosen profession, and managing challenges. Leaders must have clear goals, objectives, and a sense of direction for organizations. They must be able to foster and support new thinking among employees through persuasive visionary skills. Leaders also support knowledge dissemination and encourage staff improvement to inspire performance.

Leaders should enable the development of skills and competence**.** Drucker (2008) emphasized that leadership also entails the ability and attitude to increase employees' morale. However, the significance of leadership is not fully understood without referring to earlier works. For example, McGregor (1960) argued that the traditional command-and-control style of leadership is no longer appropriate in the workplace. Using his Theory X, McGregor contended that leaders assume that employees (a) are lazy and need to be told what to do and (b) only want what they can get from the organization. However, McGregor also argued in Theory Y that if managers want optimal effort from employees, they must believe that employees are creative, inventive, and ingenious when given the opportunity to make decisions because they respect and honor the trust and responsibility that the leaders have placed in them.

Leadership entails moral practices and examples, effectiveness, and the promotion of collaboration and teamwork among followers to raise their awareness and to motivate higher performance (Kotter, 1990). Daft (2010) asserted that the concept of leadership has changed since the Industrial Revolution and that contemporary leadership requires

the skills to deal with conflict, unpredictability, and overall performance. Daft contended that the emphasis has shifted to the attitudes, social interactions, and influences of leaders on individuals as well as groups. Leadership exemplifies two-way communication between leaders and followers. Daft emphasized the importance of this interaction by referring to it as "post heroic" (p. 476), meaning that leaders must develop the humility to engage others in decision making and strategy development to create a shared ownership. Humility in leadership is a natural catalyst for the interactions and motivation needed toward achieving performance. Virtue (2010) asserted that the current Jamaican education system values the input of all stakeholders in improving and enhancing the standards of education in order to reduce academic underperformance.

Theoretical Construct of Leadership

School leadership should possess tenets of leadership to motivate and enhance commitment and performance. Allport (1957), Avolio and Bass (1991, 1995), and Bass (1998) discussed the strategies supported by transformational, transactional, valued-based, full-range, laissez-faire, and shared leadership styles to motivate employees and help them to achieve the highest performance standards. They affirmed that effective leaders are driven by knowledge, facilitation, humility, innovation, and the power to influence others. Allport argued that the theoretical construct of leadership is affected by the cultures of individuals in the form of cognitive, emotional and genetic events, behavioral paradigms, and environmental effects that function as interacting determinants.

Student learning is a priority requiring that school leaders respond positively to changes in the management and development of teaching methods, classroom organization and management, and delivery of the curriculum. Allport (1957) described appropriate functioning as future oriented, proactive, and psychological. People with psychologically mature personalities are characterized by proactive behaviors, which assume that people not only react to external stimuli but also are capable of acting on their environments in new and innovative ways and causing their environments to react (Allport, 1957). Avolio and Bass's (1991, 1995) full-range leadership theory emphasizes that transactional leadership is passive and requires avoidance when necessary. The full-range leadership theory incorporates situational variables in presenting a position to establish transformational leadership, which motivates, encourages, and stimulate followers.

Leadership is regarded as a critical factor to initiate and implement transformational strategies in organizations. Avolio and Bass (1991) as well as Bass (1998), although having different perspectives about leadership, worked together to illustrate valuable benefits of the full-range leadership model. Bass and Avolio (1990) related that loss of control as well as abdication exists in laissez-faire leadership. These elements represent a deficiency in this type of leadership because they force workers to make all of the organizational decisions (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Bass (1998) suggested that this management-by-exception leadership style is inactive, ineffective, and unproductive, even though it involves monitoring a vast number of people.

Emerging Paradigms of Leadership

Leadership and the role of leaders are changing to achieve higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency. Allport (1957), Bass (1998), and Bass and Avolio (1990) explored the effectiveness of transformational leadership in organizations in creating and sharing knowledge in small groups and at individual levels to support leadership's vision. Similarly, Harris and Chapman (2002) contended that effective leadership focuses on people and their willingness to promote collaboration in the workplace. The focus is on the ability to create sustainable relationships, develop values and morale, and support the emergence of leaders to forge organizational changes. Harris and Chapman noted, "Effective leaders are able to combine a moral purpose with a willingness to be collaborative and to promote collaboration amongst colleagues, whether through teamwork, or extending the boundaries of participation in leadership and decision-making" (p. 2). The school system requires leaders who can manage the school system to influence students' academic performance.

School leaders are at the core of school growth and performance. Evans (2006) described effective leadership as a willingness to accept responsibility and accountability, and a commitment to support open and honest relationships to motivate others to work together for the common goal of the organization. Effective leadership requires knowledge of and experience in what works, confidence and flexibility, respect, trust, and empathy to enhance performance. Harris and Chapman (2002) viewed effective school leadership as key to improving the performance of teaching staff. School leaders should be able to apply leadership styles that align their values and moral purposes with the

personal value systems of staff members. Effective school leadership develops all areas of the school as a learning community. Harris and Chapman maintained that effective leadership in schools facing challenging circumstances must be people oriented, empowering, resilient, and flexible toward change and development strategies.

To build on the effectiveness of school leaders, Kivipold and Vadi (2008) argued that institutional leadership must promote the transfer of knowledge among staff, students, and parents to improve academic performance. The researchers suggested that institutional leadership report, monitor, and evaluate performance to influence the quality of teaching and learning. Pasternack, Williams, and Anderson (2001) affirmed that institutional leadership is an asset that can drive school performance toward the achievement of academic excellence. Effective school leaders play a key role in establishing performance and standards.

As one way to improve performance and standards, Clawson (2006) discussed the diamond model to emphasize the relationship among leaders, tasks, followers, and organizations to show how the elements relevant to each stakeholder are important in creating a paradigm shift in performance. This paradigm shift can occur among leaders, staff, and the work environment to achieve the desired performance outcome. The diamond model acts as a coordinated framework for leaders to design courses of action, create tasks for managing change, and influence strategic thinking by others in the quest for improved performance. The diamond model can help to determine leadership needs within and beyond the boundaries of the organization at the performance level (Clawson, 2006; Gullickson, 2010).

Leaders need to understand what their leadership responsibilities are within organizations or institutions to achieve success. Leaders need to know their limitations, abilities, and capabilities within the environment; identify the needs of organizations and employees; and set target levels for strategic change and improved performance. Clawson (2006) asserted that in evaluating the requirements of leadership, attention needs to be paid to leaders' needs, capacities, and effectiveness in increasing knowledge and learning. Similarly, Kotter (1996) asserted that leaders need to develop new strategies to enhance the management of change and performance.

Argyris (1990) discussed leadership strategies applicable and adaptive to making differences in the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of teaching is evident in the content of the lessons; the instructional methods; and the student outcomes resulting from the efforts of school leaders who work with teachers in supportive, demanding, and reasonable ways (Colasacco, 2011). Clawson (2006) asserted that a paradigm shift that changes management control to shared control could revolutionize organizational development through performance built on commitment. Change occurs when leaders are committed to improving performance, communicating organizational goals, and influencing changes in attitudes and behavior through leadership practices.

Historical Path of Leadership

The historical path of leadership has shaped the role of current leadership's adoption and implementation of strategies to improve performance (Allport, 1957; Argyris, 1990; Bass &Avolio, 1990). Ongoing research has shown how leadership influences performance and vision within organizations. Leadership types and

characteristics have helped leadership practices in organizations and educational institutions to change (Allport, 1957; Argyris, 1990; Bass &Avolio, 1990; Spillane, 2005). Over the years, several leadership styles and types have emerged, including transformational leadership (Bass, 1985b; Burns, 1978); transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1990); valued-based leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2007); instructional leadership (Leithwood, 1994); Level 3 leadership (Clawson, 2006); and distributed leadership (Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane, 2005, 2006, 2008). Following are assessments of these leadership styles to identify the quality and type of leadership that would best suit Jamaica's schools to improve the academic performance of students at underperforming schools.

Transformational Leadership

Leaders are charged with identifying needs and making changes that can lead to positive results. Burns (1978) contended that transformational leadership resonates with organizations that take an active and flexible approach to improving performance, especially in schools. According to Burns, having the ability to think quickly means taking swift action when making changes. Transformation is based upon leaders and their impact on followers. Transformational leadership supports the individuals involved in improvement efforts. Bragg (2008) emphasized the importance of transformational leadership in assessing the effectiveness of leadership in school and capacity building in teaching. Bragg asserted that people need to develop moral and authentic forms of transformational leadership to motivate, stimulate, and influence the contributions of others to organizational performance.

Leadership requires being open and honest in interactions to build trust and self-confidence in people. Bass (1985b) asserted that transformational leadership engages people to work cooperatively toward the desired outcomes. Bass's comment supported Burns's (1978) analysis emphasizing the level of interactions necessary between leaders and followers. Burns argued that transformational leadership requires a vision that inspires followers to reach beyond their self-interests and work as a team to achieve organizational objectives and performance outcomes. Bragg (2008) asserted that transformational leaders help followers to achieve a higher level of performance. School leaders need to develop transformational qualities in an effort to improve teaching and learning in their institutions.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leaders often focus on what appeals to their own self-interest to gain group performance. Avolio and Bass (1991) as well as Bass and Avolio (1990) stated that transactional leaders use contingent reinforcement to encourage their followers to perform. They noted that followers are roused to action by leaders' promises; incentives; and/or intimidation (i.e., punitive action or punishment). This type of engagement is regarded as active management by exception, which involves observing the performances of followers and correcting mistakes when they occur. Leaders who engage in passive management by exception wait passively for followers' mistakes to come to their attention, and they maintain the status quo by demanding adherence to organizational rules. Transactional leaders appeal to followers by presenting a responsive approach to situations in which their personal self-interests are the center of performance. Employees

who identify with leaders' encouragement and enthusiasm are motivated to meet the goals, objectives, and overall purposes of the organization. Transactional leaders inspire employees by offering incentives, promises, and rewards, as well as by threatening intimation and punishment.

Transactional and transformational leaders communicate with employees on an individual basis, although transactional leaders use direct inducement to enhance work and growth opportunities. Transformational and transactional leadership styles complement each other, although transactional leaders' relationship with followers relies heavily on personal gains. However, to distinguish between transactional and transformational leadership styles, Bass and Avolio (1990) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to evaluate and differentiate the leadership behaviors.

Transactional and transformational leadership styles are best suited for different organization issues. Burns (1978) distinguished between transactional and transformational leadership. Burns viewed transactional leadership as a process of exchange between leaders and followers. Transactional leaders provide the desired outcomes or benefits to followers in exchange for achieving the leaders' goals and desires. Transactional leadership practices help leaders to clarify roles and responsibilities, identify and reward performance, and generally favor management rather than leadership to accomplish short-term tasks. On the other hand, transformational leaders seek to satisfy the higher needs of individuals while engaging everyone else to achieve the organization's goals. Principals who are involved in classroom management

need to adopt transformational practices to encourage teaching staff to achieve the goals of the school.

Value-Based Leadership

Valued-based leadership seeks to uphold the values of reliability, accountability, fairness, honesty, and commitment of team members. Kraemer (2011) stated that value-based leadership is "a personal journey of self-knowledge and commitment to do the right thing…to do the best you can" (p. 17). Kouzes and Posner (2007) described transformational and valued-based leadership as interrelational. They asserted that value-based leadership focuses on interactions that increase individual motivation and morality. Kouzes and Posner presented their five practices of exemplary leadership: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. They maintained that this type of leadership promotes inclusion, integrity, and genuineness to enhance trust among people; recognizes the contributions of teams; and appreciates and recognizes individual work.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) stated that leaders are pioneers who venture into unknown territory; search for opportunities to innovate, grow, and improve; experiment; and take risks. Leadership also entails learning by doing, adapting to conditions, and learning from errors and failures. Kraemer (2011) noted that value-based leadership involves lifelong discipline relative to individual development and learning. Kraemer presented four principles on which valued-based leadership is focused: self-reflection, whole life balance, true self-confidence, and genuine humility. Value-based leadership encompasses personal values and tools for personal assessment.

Value-based leadership empowers and enhances the instructional development of teaching materials, delivery, and learning. Kennedy (2010) suggested that school leaders embrace and develop sustainable and influential principles at all levels of the school community. Combining principles with daily interactions contributes to building competence in others. Kennedy summarized the core of value-based leadership as values that sustain the organization's principles. Value-based leaders help others to use values as a representation of the organizational principles driving performance.

Value-based leadership contributes to sharing knowledge and practices that influence the development of instructional strategies and address the challenges of safety and security in the school environment. Principals and teachers are accountable for instruction and performance, but parents and school board members inspire performance. Often, school inspectors are excluded as responsible partners, but their annual assessment reports on performance do not include clear strategies for improvement, thus making them accountable for school and student performance.

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership resides with the principal to effectively manage resources and staff. Leithwood (1994) discussed the development and importance of instructional leadership in school management and supervision. Instructional leadership accentuates the behavioral traits of teachers that influence students' performance. Loeb, Elfers, and Plecki (2010) asserted that school leaders must have or develop the competence to become knowledgeable in instructional strategies and effective methods of content

delivery. They noted that the supervision of teachers should be viewed as instructional leadership's efforts to improve classroom management.

The principal serves as the team leader who assesses and evaluates improvements in instruction and the quality of student learning. Leithwood (1994) and Loeb et al. (2010) contended that school leadership comprises not only formal authority but also expert knowledge of instruction, teaching, management, and safety within schools. Supervising teaching staff and managing schools require knowledge, application, and the development of methods in instructional leadership to enhance commitment, morale, and motivation. Instructional leadership entails being responsible for developing teachers' capabilities and paying attention to administrative matters such as budgeting, building maintenance, and school nutritional programs. This level of administrative support allows principals to focus their energy and time on academic performance.

Leithwood (1994) noted that a major concern of instructional leadership is to maintain momentum in the quality of instruction, staff morale, and motivation. Instructional leadership seeks to establish a level of commitment that reflects the values, beliefs, and influences of the teaching staff on the development of realistic and simple instructional techniques to improve learning. Instructional leadership builds relationships between core teaching staff and parent-teacher associations. Spillane et al. (2000) discussed the effectiveness of instructional leaders and stated that even though principals have full responsibility for the overall functioning of schools, teachers are critical to the development and delivery of instruction.

Types and Levels of Leadership

Leaders must be able to adapt their leadership styles to fit different situations. King (2002) highlighted the importance of instructional leadership beyond the scope of principals to assess the type and levels of leadership that can influence teachers' performance. Lowe (1998) asserted that identifying leadership types is necessary to know which type facilitates positive interactions. Lowe described four fundamental types of leaders:

1. Type I leaders shine within the organization. Their delivery and output are exemplary. They accomplish set targets and value change. They remain engaged and respect others, allowing them to experience shared values.
2. Type II leaders fail to meet targets, lack values and commitment, and generally never feel that they "belong" within the organization.
3. Type III leaders are very complicated. Their performance is never on target. However, they have shared values and good relationships with other people.
4. Type IV leaders focus on achieving short-term tasks using coercion and limited levels of motivation. They are not capable of achieving long-term growth and productivity because of their lack of respect for members of the team. This type of behavior can be oppressive to employees, hinder productivity, and withhold the transfer of knowledge that can build a learning organization.

Regardless of the leadership styles that they follow, leaders need to engage in collaboration with others. Leaders are moving away from traditional roles to engaging

with others to support improvement and performance to shape organizations as places of learning. Clawson (2006) suggested that when leaders ignore the contributions of others, they are underestimating individual capabilities and capacities to influence others. Clawson asserted that leadership has three dimensions associated with human behavior:

1. Level 1: The visible behavior displayed when people are assessed as would-be leaders to influence others. Leading at this level does not provide support or encourage employees' performance. Leadership focuses on rewards, not individuals and their resulting behaviors.
2. Level 2: This level of human behavior manifests only when individuals reveal what they are thinking or experiencing. When potential leaders ignore what others think, they limit their ability to influence others. Effective leaders need to exert influence.
3. Level 3: This level combines the individual hierarchy of priorities or needs and the "should" and "ought" of individual lives. It relates to Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs. Clawson (2006) identified this level of leadership as VABEs, indicating individual strengths and weaknesses. Level 3 leadership has some features of Argyris's (1990) theory in action, which focuses on individual relationships, leadership effectiveness, and management within an organization. Clawson recommended that leaders seek to influence people to think and behave at Level 3. At this level, the long-term benefits accrued are commitment, high-quality work and performance, satisfaction for leaders and followers, and maintenance of the organization's long-term growth. Clawson

accentuated the changing context of leadership, organizational change, and changes in society that shape the economic and political landscape.

Similarly, Collins (2001) offered a 5-point pyramid of leader's attributes affirming that leaders' exceptional performance is based upon personal humility and professional will. Collins asserted that good-to-great leaders are self-effacing, quiet, reserved, and even shy. The levels do not provide a gradual migration; instead, they demonstrate an assessment of what each leader possesses. Collins summarized organizational leadership in the following statement:

1. Level 1 leaders are highly capable individual that make contributions to organization as a result of talent, knowledge skills and good work habits;
2. Level 2 leaders are contributing team members that coordinate individual capabilities towards the success of the team and organizational objectives;
3. Level 3 leaders are competent managers that are skilled at effectively and efficiently achieving workflow with people and resources to realize the organization objectives;
4. Level 4 leaders are effective leaders with a deep sense of commitment and vision to increase performance;
5. Level 5 leaders are executives who possess and demonstrate a blend of humility and professional will above and beyond expectation. (p. 20)

Collins (2001) asserted:

Level 5 leaders create a climate for truth with four basic practices; lead with questions, not answers; engage in dialogue and debate, not coercion; conduct

autopsies, without blame; and build red flag mechanism to convert information into one that cannot be ignored. (p. 88)

Kouzes and Posner (2007) emphasized that leadership encourages and motivates organizational success. Leadership is a developmental process that comes naturally with energy, motivation, and a desire to lead. Leadership is demonstrated through behavior, ultimately providing a voice for leaders and followers to build mutual respect and confidence. Kouzes and Posner recommended five exemplary practices that leaders can adopt to empower organizational development:

1. "Model the way-sets example to inspire others to follow, living by what one say and do. Leaders are expected to demonstrate behavior that is exemplary to gain understanding of principles and ideas" (pp. 15-16).
2. "Inspire shared vision-leaders who can discern the vision, turn their dream into actions through concise communication for others to comprehend and act. Leaders inspire commitment, dreams, hopes, aspirations, and vision" (pp. 16-18).
3. "Challenge the process-leaders who are willing to seek for opportunities to innovate, grow and improve and challenge the status quo to venture into the unknown. Always searching for opportunities to learn, and learn from mistakes and failures" (pp. 18-20).
4. "Enable others to act-leaders who seek true results from other. Success comes with teamwork where trust relationship competence, confidence, collaboration

and accountability enable others. Have a spirit on inclusion, strengthen capacity, and build trust in team to achieve successful output" (pp. 20-21).

5. "Encourage the heart-leaders demonstrate genuine care for others. Recognized contribution of others, value people, show appreciation and link reward with performance" (pp. 21-23).

Clawson (2006), Collins (2001), Kouzes and Posner (2007), and Lowe (1998) identified and categorized leaders according to their ability to position organizations above their competitors. Lowe asserted that successful leaders know what is expected; have an unlimited capacity to improve anything; prevent others who would hinder, obstruct, or destroy teams from achieving organizational change; and value people's contributions. Values serves as a guide to action, and leaders need to be able to detect or discern where conflict is present as well as develop strategic approaches to address individual values, morality, and ethics to effect sustainable change (Clawson, 2006; Collins, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Leaders who show intellectual competence and can persuade and lead others toward achieving organizational goals and objectives tend to have high performance ratings. When leaders have clear values, they establish a role, find their voice, and communicate their goals to followers.

Distributed Leadership

Discourse on distributed, or shared, leadership has evolved over the decades from being a popular idea to a theory and practice. Distributed leadership has been researched extensively in the United States, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and it has been linked to

rapid success in improving school performance through responsive leadership approaches and supportive interactions with followers (Harris & Spillane, 2008).

Spillane (2006) stated that a substantive definition of distributed leadership is needed to understand and apply this type of leadership. He provided his interpretation of distributed leadership as the collaborative interaction of multiple individual at different levels in the school:

> A distributed perspective offers an alternative way of thinking about leadership in schools by foregrounding leadership practice and by suggesting that leadership is constructed in the interactions between leaders, followers and their situations. Distributed leadership offers a framework for thinking about leadership differently. It enables us to think about a familiar phenomenon in new ways that come closer to approximating leadership on the ground than many of the conventional popular recipes for school leadership. (p. 26)

Distributed leadership represents an egalitarian balance of leadership among multiple individuals, not simply administrators, within organizations. Distributed leadership has been viewed as a new skill for school leaders. Spillane's (2006) theory of distributed leadership expanded beyond individualism and leadership to focus on leaders, emergent or in position, what leaders know and do, and how leaders think and act in situations.

Spillane (2006) recognized and accepted that leadership roles are performed by multiple individuals, formally and informally, thus requiring a distribution process. Spillane and Diamond (2007) asserted that "people in formally designated positions and

those without such designations can and do take responsibility for leading and managing in the schoolhouse" (p. 7). Spillane used distributed cognition and activity theory as the foundation of his extensive study of leadership practices, and identified the social context of leadership as an integral component. Spillane et al. (2001) stated that "the tasks, actors, actions and interactions of school leadership as they unfold together in the daily life of the school" (p. 23) are contributing factors to the implementation of distributed leadership in schools. Leadership, they argued, exemplifies collective and social interactions of people and followers.

Spillane et al. (2001) conducted research on distributed leadership and recommended that leadership focus on character; interactions; and leaders' work actions, goals, and behaviors. Distributed leadership defines a collaborative type of school management, which entails a lateral decision-making structure. Spillane (2006) discussed distributed leadership in the contextual framework of a product of interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situations centered on knowledge and skill. Spillane believed that distributed leadership should be seen as a powerful support tool in any organization. In schools, it should include the entire teaching staff, boards, and parents.

Spillane (2006) asserted, "Leadership practice connects with instructional practice and teaching and learning a central concern" (pp. 90-91) to illustrate the interactions necessary in distributed leadership. Wright (2008) commented that distributed leadership presents a shared social influence built on people's leadership skills and levels of expertise. To achieve effectiveness, Wright contended that leading, teaching, managing, along with student learning, are key areas of evaluation in assessing school improvement.

Spillane (2006) accentuated the considerable practices and influences of distributed leadership in schools seeking to maintain or advance performance. Spillane noted that an interaction exists, along with a level of interdependence, among people working together to achieve a common purpose. Spillane et al. (2001) stated, "The interdependence of the individual and the environment shows how human activity as distributed in the interactive web of actors, artifacts and the situation is the appropriate unit of analysis for studying practice" (p. 23). Organizational routines, artifacts, and tools are part of the process linking the interactions of multiple leaders to their situations based upon needs of the schools.

Distributive leadership presents a support mechanism for organizational improvement and transformation. The outcome is that distributed leadership and the level of interdependence needed in schools involves the principals, teachers, the students they teach, school boards, parents, and the environment to achieve learning and performance levels. Spillane (2006) emphasized the importance of learning by identifying three coleadership practices necessary for schools as "collaborative, collective and coordinated practices of leadership" (p. 8) that can improve performance.

Harris and Spillane (2008) asserted that all schools have leadership managed in a hierarchical structure, with the principal assuming the lead role and taking all responsibility for performance. Leading and managing in any academic or business organization demands a distribution of values, vision, competence, and concern for the well-being of those assuming leadership roles. Distributed leadership includes practices

that interact with multiple leaders' performance that supports working separately with a degree of interdependence to achieve change.

Wright (2008) suggested that implementation of distributed leadership necessitates understanding the merits and limitations associated with distributed leadership practices. While lauding the efforts and efficiency of distributed leadership, Wright noted that Spillane (2006) recognized the "communal and relational aspect of leadership" (p. 5) that uses dialogue and individual leadership skills to bring people together for a common purpose; however, distributed leadership also maintains that followers are available to assume leadership roles.

Spillane (2006) suggested that improving learning in schools requires collaboration among the strategic players. As a result, Spillane emphasized that leadership is part of the vision of improving teaching and learning:

> A distributed perspective is not a recipe or a blueprint for practice; it is a framework for focusing diagnostic work and a guide to help us design for improving practice. It is about practice and improvement. We must engage with the practice of leading and managing teaching and learning. Improving practice involves the twin processes of diagnosis and design. A distributed perspective provides a framework for diagnosis and design work. School staffs are key agents in this work. (p. 39)

Similarly, Bolden (2011) reported that the social activity theory contains tenets of distributed leadership. He asserted that social activity theory and distributed leadership provide a solid foundation for the implementation of distributed leadership strategies in

schools. However, as stated by Wright (2008), distributed leadership can be affected by poor implementation because of the position and authority of the person responsible. Therefore, school leadership requires fundamental changes to influence the quality of interactions between teachers and school boards.

Leaders influence followers and shape their practice. Effective leadership is necessary for the major work of the school, that is, teaching and learning, to proceed. The influence of distributive leadership practices can be developed by applying three key elements: leaders, followers, and enabling situations. These elements are at the core of distributed leadership practices that can be used to reduce the hierarchical structures in schools that often hinder coordination and performance (Spillane, 2005). The distributed leadership perspective is a framework that can be used to focus on teaching, student learning, and plans for improvement.

Effect of Leadership on Organizational Performance

The historical perspective of leadership indicates that leadership undergoes various phases of development. The theoretical framework of the current study focused on the influences of school leadership practices to enhance effectiveness in performance and academic achievement. In particular, Argyris (1990) asserted that organizational leaders must communicate zeal, hopefulness, and excitement. Argyris argued that the core of effective leadership is to help employees to develop relationships with each other and to teach them how to deal with and resolve differences constructively and creatively. Leaders clarify responsibilities and actions, share new information with followers to

influence and encourage performance, collect information from followers, and use it to plan improvement strategies.

Argyris (1990) stated that leadership success is diverse and linked to the quality of organizational management, that is, how the organization relates to and manages the dynamics of groups, how it manages learning, and how it uses communication to enhance and develop the quality of supervision in the classroom and the school to influence performance. Harris and Chapman (2002) argued that effectiveness heightens expectations and the engagement of students and teachers in the school to maintain its reputation as a learning organization. Gullickson (2010) acknowledged the importance of supervision, noting that leaders need to get a sense of where commitment lies and where supervision is necessary.

Effectiveness in leadership includes the development of a collaborative culture that involves school staff and the school community (i.e., parents and the school environment). Leaders need good listening skills and must remain open to positive and negative feedback so that they can make sound strategic decisions. Leaders' skills, knowledge, and experiences influence change in the environment.

Argyris (1990) asserted that organizational management groups should create an environment where employees are knowledgeable of the goals of the organization and share supervision and communication to understand the performance required to gain a competitive advantage. Peurach and Marx (2010) believed that performance in the classroom requires leadership and effective management to sustain performance standards. Educational institutions tends to progress with change at a slower pace.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) examined the values associated with high performance standards, caring attitudes about people, and a sense of uniqueness and pride in solidifying leadership. Argyris (1990) argued that management groups are internally obligated to adhere to practices that make it impractical for them to transform or amend what they essentially believe should be modified or changed because they view leadership as a burdensome task in effecting organizational transformational change. Managers are more focused on what has to be done, whereas leaders seek to establish new ways to facilitate change.

Argyris (1990) summarized that leadership often is affected by several factors:

1. Societal established principles which are very important , however, are never in line with those of the organization;
2. Behavioral traits expected and often displayed in people working together for the common good, often does not "fit" with the desire of the organization;
3. Methods and ways of developing protective procedures within groups and organizations eliminate collaborations in designing such procedures;
4. Organization and groups management of unhealthy schedules and deadlines lack transparency and contributes to poor performance;
5. Distortion in the value system, different value for different people;
6. Lack of dialogue and healthy discussion on procedures adopted and being implemented. Allowing for opened communication on procedures;
7. Lack of management of problems promotes disunity among team members and degenerated into poor performance. (p. 78)

R. James and Rottman (2007) commented that transformational educational leadership is at the center of students' learning and general academic performance. When used effectively, it can improve individuals' attitudes, responses, and actions, as well as communication to or with others or members of the team. Kouzes and Posner (2007) supported building collaboration to create a climate of trust and facilitate relationships to achieve and sustain performance. Stoll and Fink (1996) expounded on invitational leadership to illustrate how leaders perform in schools. They asserted that "leadership is about communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom leaders interact in order to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of enhanced educational experiences for pupils" (p. 109). Stoll and Fink argued that over the years, leaders have become more efficient at managing problems associated with followers by adhering to the belief that empowering people can improve group norms, performance output, and organizational vision. When leadership motivation and empowerment are nonexistence, the results can be indecisiveness and the inability to exert effort and energy, which inhibits learning to sustain effectiveness and efficiency in school improvement.

K. T. James et al. (2007) asserted that learning and sharing in educational institutions require that everyone collaborate, share, and support leadership practices to achieve the desired outcomes. Argyris (1990) contended that shaping or developing behaviors is a key factor in enhancing performance, clarifying purpose, and exploring ways to use the abilities of people that often are hindered by managerial control.

Significance of School Leadership

Hallinger and Heck (1999) asserted that principals are the most influential and powerful people within the school system. They wield the power to influence, clarify, and articulate the purposes and goals of their schools. School leaders influence action to achieve desired or established outcomes.

Copeland (2003) asserted that leadership

> Is a set of functions or qualities shared across a much broader segment of the school community that encompasses administrators, teachers and other professionals and community members both internal and external to the school. Such an approach imposes the need for school communities to create and sustain broadly distributed leadership systems, processes and capacities. (p. 376)

Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), as well as Leithwood et al. (2010), identified four categories of leadership practices: setting directions, developing people skills, redesigning the organization, and managing instructional programs. Leithwood et al. contended that leadership influences students' ability to learn through the four-path model: rational, emotional, organizational, and family. They suggested that the path is populated with variables that leaders can select to improve student learning. School leadership requires commitment, experience, understanding, and planning to achieve improved academic performance of students.

School leaders' behaviors must contribute to and support the development of learning communities. Therefore, school leadership should be geared toward improved teaching skills, knowledge, and ability (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Leaders' efficacy is

an important link in the quality of the school environment and its impact on student learning. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) emphasized that maintaining student learning is a priority requiring that school leaders respond positively to changes in the management and development of teaching methods, classroom organization and management, and delivery of the curriculum. Leithwood (2006) also suggested that teachers have an impact on classroom management and student learning.

Hallinger and Heck (1999) noted:

> Leaders in all sectors to articulate their vision, set clear goals for their organizations, and create a sense of shared mission. Our review supports the belief that formulating the school's purposes represents an important leadership function, and mission building is the strongest and most consistent avenue of influence school leader's use to influence student achievement. (p. 179)

Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) asserted that leaders have a significant impact on teaching and learning. School leadership is an integral part of the school culture. To improve learning in schools, school leadership is considered critical and should focus on improving students' academic performance. School leadership must promote student participation without discrimination or inequity. Teachers learn and students achieve through effective classroom management and subject delivery; therefore, school leaders should encourage and enhance teachers' level of motivation individually and collectively in regard to teaching efficacy; job satisfaction; organizational engagement; and trust in colleagues, parents, and students.

Leadership and Classroom Management

Lieberman and Miller (2005) asserted that leadership in the classroom must become a daily routine. Classroom management is based upon a commitment by teachers to student learning and participation, as well as teachers' management of instructional activities. Effective classroom management requires teachers to have superior organizational skills, engagement, acceptance of differences, and a willingness to share effective techniques.

Lieberman and Miller (2005) further suggested that schools must adapt to economic change to educate students for the future. Globalization has become the focus of government and public life. For any country to gain a competitive edge in the global marketplace, school leadership must recognize this need by placing greater emphasis on instructional techniques that help students to think critically, evaluate information, and share knowledge.

Jackson (2008) commented that to build a sustainable classroom environment, government agencies and other authorities must devise strategies to recruit, train, and support novice and experienced teachers in the classroom. It is in building capacity that new leaders will emerge to transform schools. Jackson stated that transforming schools should involve all stakeholders. A form of mentorship that involves teachers mentoring other teachers, parents mentoring students, and students mentoring students will increase the participants' self-esteem and academic performance. To assess the effectiveness of school leadership, programs implemented to improve schools and classroom management, as stated by Jackson, require a change from within to improve the

performance of students. Sergiovanni (2005a) asserted that teachers and students need a common understanding of goals, vision, and commitment to enhance learning.

Schools need leadership with the skills, experience, and integrity to influence learning and classroom management. School leaders require the specific virtues of hope, truth, piety, and civility. School leaders should strengthen the capacity of their academic staff to build relational trust and a willingness to share leadership. Sharing responsibilities contributes to building appropriate school cultures, improving learning, and increasing problem-solving capabilities to improve the school community.

Now well into the 2nd decade of the 21st century, organizations are making rapid changes, often through technological development and innovations, that are altering modes of communication, travel, education, nutrition, energy use, data transfer, and so on. With the application of technology, more effective classroom management can enhance leadership practices and improve learning through the collaboration of teachers, principals, and administrators (Boyd, 2012; Clawson, 2006; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2005a). Leadership has the capacity and capability to "redesign organizational systems to support others/followers and make it easier to release their potential contribution and how the work system can be reorganized to realize worker's [*sic*] potential" (Clawson, 2006, p. 129).

Leadership and School Community

The school is a social community. Sergiovanni (2005a) commented that social communities like schools share similar values, beliefs, and cultural norms. Kotter (2008) argued that when implementing change, leaders often have emerged to accelerate and

support such change with a sense of urgency. The school community supports a trusting relationship among teachers, students, and school administrators that supports community building. Relational trust becomes part of a school's development when loyalty and commitment influence the creation of a learning environment (Sergiovanni, 2005a). As a community, the school requires loyalty, commitment, trust, and affection. Leaders' understanding and knowledge of the school community promotes relationships and creates harmony. Thus, the school community becomes a center where knowledge, skills, ability, and leadership coexist to ensure academic excellence.

Boyd (2012) commented that school leaders need to assume the roles of caretakers, teachers and students, workers, managers, role models, and instructors in their efforts to build a strong school community. In recognition of this need, educators, students, parents and civil society, and others should demand cooperation and participation in developing and sustaining the school community, which influences and impacts performance and standards. Sergiovanni (2005b) pointed out that school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) impact the school community and student achievement. School leadership requires a collaborative effort among educators, parents, students, principals, and community members to influence students' learning in positive ways.

Distributed Nature of Leadership

The emergence of distributed leadership over the decades has highlighted the increased influence of school leaders. Spillane (2005) asserted that school leadership determines the interactions between leaders and followers. Distributed leadership

illustrates levels of interaction by leaders, followers, or situation. It requires the involvement of multiple leaders, not only those in formal leadership positions (Spillane, 2005). Boncana and Crow (2008), along with Harris and Spillane (2008), noted that distributed leadership defines collaborative school management. The effectiveness of distributed leadership on school management is supported by three power differentials: normative, representational, and empirical. Effective use of these power differentials in schools will help the changing context of leadership and organizational change to align with changes in society that will shape the economic and political landscape (Clawson, 2006; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Stromquist, 2002). These powers will strengthen the school community, physical infrastructure, content, and management.

However, Mayrowetz (2008) contended that distributed leadership has provided school leaders with different ways to support teaching and learning. To build a learning community, the framework emphasizes a collective approach to leadership: Principals set the formal structures in schools, but all activities in the school focus on enhancing students' educational experiences. Effective school leaders play a key role in setting up these systems. School leaders must raise and maintain standards in schools to secure and encourage teachers' involvement and commitment. Empowering teachers allows them to operate effectively based upon the nature and quality of leadership in the school setting.

Mayrowetz (2008) suggested that the effectiveness of distributed leadership is reflected in changes in leadership practices, students' academic performance, and relationships with academic staff. Using a distributed approach, school leaders can take a collective approach to improve performance, structure instructional work, and monitor

classroom management and activities within the school environment (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999a, 1999b; Timperley, 2005). Leithwood and Jantzi (1999b) and Timperley (2005) suggested that distributed leadership pivots on the interactions between multiple leaders and followers. Distributed leadership is similar to transformational leadership in that both forge partnerships in school systems and enhance the management techniques essential to improving school performance.

Spillane et al. (2001) highlighted the importance and effectiveness of leadership to facilitate the sharing between teachers and school leaders of knowledge of the curriculum, instructional strategies, and administration. They developed a framework to differentiate the ways in which leaders can manage the various situations in schools that influence students' academic performance. School leadership, as characterized by Boncana and Crow (2008), has to be viewed beyond the role of principals and vice principals.

Chan (2007) described leadership as a conglomerate that is moving from the realms of the solo decision maker to the challenge of leading using different approaches. School leaders need to adopt a team-based approach and expectations in a rapidly changing school environment (Spillane, 2005). Boncana and Crow (2008), Harris and Spillane (2008), and Spillane (2005) recorded a spectrum of successes for distributed leadership and change in school performance in England and the United States. The implementation, development, and expansion of the framework in schools have improved student performance and educational standards.

Wright (2008) asserted that distributed leadership has evolved over the decades from a popular idea to a theory with strategies for performance and instructional techniques in schools. Wright noted that a cognitive perspective should be adopted to illustrate this leadership strategy as a diagnostic tool to assist school leaders and followers. Harris and Spillane (2008) affirmed that all schools are managed as hierarchical structures that often prohibit the development of a shared understanding of achieving the goal of improved academic performance.

Organization Effectiveness

Kotter (1996) asserted that in the process of leading, leaders must be cognizant of obstacles that can hinder effective change. Kotter contended that obstacles can occur as the result of cultural clashes, bureaucratic barriers, parochial politics, low levels of trust, lack of teamwork, arrogant attitudes, lack of leadership at the middle management level, fear of the unknown, and inability to exert a positive influence over people. Kotter emphasized that leadership's credibility and commitment to change happen by sharing problems, creating opportunities by actions, and developing a sense of trust among followers. Each organization demands good decision-making processes and effective communication at all levels.

Kotter (1996) recommended the use of an eight-step strategic process to address and improve the quality of leadership and facilitate change:

1. Establish a sense of urgency - leaders examine the potential crisis, discussed action and opportunities to resolve it;

2. Create a guiding coalition - leaders empower their team to be proactive to situation while maintaining unity;
3. Develop a vision and strategy - leaders possesses the vision and strategies to direct organizational change;
4. Communicate the change vision - leaders as an effective communicator. Constantly reminding team members of the vision, strategies and behavior expected;
5. Empower broad-based action - leaders identifying and reducing the resistance to change. Develop and provide opportunity for other to communicate their ideas and make decisions;
6. Generate short- term wins - leaders plan and implement short-term strategies , record and acknowledge successes;
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change - leaders identify, promote, and retain employees who can accelerate change;
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture - leaders who encourage and support performance, identify and promote succession. (p. 21)

Bennis (1997) stated that leaders should have a clear vision of the goal of every step in realizing change. Effective leaders will align employees with the organizational vision by empowering them. Kotter (1996) commented that effective leaders alter organizational structures to meet changing circumstances, define the organization's future, align people's vision, and inspire people to overcome challenges.

Drucker (1996) believed that leaders must be visionaries. Kotter (1996) identified four characteristics that change agents should pay attention to, namely, position power, expertise, credibility, and leadership, to harness the team spirit and create a mind-set supporting change. Effecting change requires time to bind a team together. Selingo and Carlson (2006) addressed handling and managing leadership and management inadequacies. People, they emphasized, need to enter the organization, identify leadership talent from the onset, and strategize to provide opportunities that allow others to accept challenges. These actions come through having a vision, and leaders need to be visionaries.

Leadership Vision in Organizations

In the global environment, people and organizations are seeking leaders who can clarify the directions of the organizations and coordinate the steps to make their visions effective. Kouzes and Posner (2007) asserted that one quality of effective leadership is to have a vision of the future. Leaders with such a vision show that realistic and clear possibilities exist and that they can implement the actions necessary to motivate and demonstrate flexibility. When visions are communicated clearly by leaders, they heighten the commitment of employees while also being cognizant of the interests and dedication of others.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) affirmed that attention needs to be paid to how the vision is communicated, how it is understood, and how it will be carried out if school leadership is to be successful. They asserted that “the principal should work with others to implant the vision in the structures and processes of the school, something that calls for

the technical and human skills of policy-making and planning" (p. 115). Openness in communication requires the use of available facts in developing strategies to create learning organizations. Lowe (1998) emphasized the benefit of good communication, and Kouzes and Posner (2007) argued that leadership allows for inclusion, genuineness, recognition of the contributions of teams, and the expression of appreciation for people's work.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) stated that leadership is a relationship that inspires others to lead supported by a deep sense of commitment. They defined commitment in the following ways:

1. Clarifying values by finding one's voice and affirming shared ideals;
2. Setting the example by aligning actions with shared values;
3. Envisioning the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities;
4. Enlisting others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations;
5. Searching for opportunities by seizing the initiative and looking outward for innovative ways to improve;
6. Experimenting and taking risks by constantly generating small wins and learning experience;
7. Fostering collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships;
8. Strengthening others by increasing self-determination and developing competence;
9. Recognizing contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence;
10. Celebrating the values and victories by creating a spirit of community. (p. 26)

Effective leadership involves the acceptance and management of unclear principles that affect the intended outcomes, and supports productivity in order to remain at the top of the competition or as a positive model. Olson and Eoyang (2001) contended that when managing change, leaders should not accept change as incremental, but should accept more pragmatic and fundamental change that addresses the culture of learning and sharing. R. James and Rottman (2007) emphasized that leaders can create ideas and universal approaches, motivate, empower, and support team members to work effectively to accomplish goals and targets. However, productivity, which remains the foundation of successful organizations, comes from skilled leaders who challenge, empower, excite, and reward their team members by engaging them to chart the organization's future. Achieving productivity is not solely the responsibility of leaders; rather, it must involve all stakeholders.

Emphasis on School Leaders

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2008) noted that school leaders could make a difference to school and student performance if they had the autonomy to make important decisions. However, unless they have "the capacity, motivation and support to make use of their autonomy to engage in practices that improve learning, leadership may have little influence on school outcomes" (OECD, 2008, p. 64). The OECD identified four leadership responsibilities to improve learning outcomes:

1. Supporting, evaluating and developing teacher quality;

2. Supporting goal-setting, assessment and accountability (including the use of data to improve practice);
3. Enhancing strategic financial and human resource management which includes enhancing financial skills and involving leaders in recruiting their teachers;
4. Adopting a systemic approach to leadership policy and practice by encouraging collaboration with partners external to the school and by distributing leadership responsibilities. (p. 66)

The OECD further stated that "there is increasing evidence that within each individual school, school leaders can contribute to improved student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur" (p. 19). Achieving education for all is a key goal of the MDG, targeted to improve the quality of education by 2015.

Lowe (1998) contended that leaders must exert self-confidence and be able to influence followers to seize the opportunity to be productive and creative. School leadership should help followers to develop self-confidence that supports sharing ideas and taking ownership of their teaching and learning. Use of such strategies as teamwork, implementation of a vision, understanding of the value of people, motivation, listening, effective communication, and service as agents of change contributes to improving skills and independence in leadership to enhance performance. Mayrowetz (2008) asserted that distributed leadership indicates an interdependence among leaders, followers, and

situations. Ongoing learning for teachers and students, a sense of community, a climate of trust, and recognition of individual contributions are key features that drive performance.

Olson and Eoyang (2001) identified three significant components of leadership that are necessary when faced with challenges: capacity of the system to absorb change, history of the change process in the system, and pace of change in the environment. Their discussion revolved around the complex adaptive system (CAS), which emphasizes the need of leaders to convey a purpose, know the boundaries, and identify areas where instability is prevalent. They confirmed that "a CAS must balance similarity and differences" (p. 111) so that leaders can share their vision with others in order to be successful, motivate new followers, and reinforce the commitment of followers.

Olson and Eoyang (2001) contended that positive changes made possible through motivation are sustainable and supported by followers. Successful leaders know that change to create an environment where people learn from each other to influence performance and promote a learning organization starts with them. The outcomes will be adaptive, consistent, and sustainable performance, despite environmental pressure. Leaders need three skills to make the transition to a CAS and work toward resolving negative perceptions that hinder performance. Olson and Eoyang identified these skills as perception of reality (i.e., what is there); propensity to act and see the results of the action; and build relationships to form a mental model and attitudes for effectiveness. The development of strong leadership skills is based upon the ability to value and care for followers, communicate the vision, motivate and inspire, and act as a catalyst for change using collaboration and coordination with departmental heads and teachers to build

cohesiveness in schools (Evans, 2009; K. T. James et al., 2007; Spillane, 2005). As an innovative approach, the CAS can be combined with other approaches to help school leaders to improve learning and support relationships between and among all stakeholders in the school community (K. T. James et al., 2007; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000; Townsend, 2010).

Actions to Reduce Underperformance

Fast-paced global changes are challenging the ability of countries to create school systems that can meet the needs of the students of the future. Lieberman and Miller (2005) asserted that schools must adapt to economic change to create an environment within which students can learn to think critically, evaluate information, and share knowledge. Leadership's influences and practices must be understood by followers to build the interactions required in a positive school environment. Spillane and Diamond (2007) asserted that to create positive school environment, leadership practices need to focus on improved student performance in main subject areas.

The JMoE initiative to decrease illiteracy commenced in 2004 following an assessment of performance at the primary and secondary levels. The JMoE, while aiming for 100% mastery in literacy and numeracy at all levels by 2015, set a goal of 85%. This initiative has raised the literacy and numeracy standards and performance levels of students in primary school in Jamaica. The impact has been demonstrated in the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) results, which have shown that Jamaican students are trailing their counterparts on other Caribbean islands. The CXC results forced the government to focus on education at the primary level.

Lieberman and Miller (2005) noted that test scores do not easily measure learning. The universal access to education that has been gained in Jamaica since independence has been maintained, making primary education accessible to all; however, quality and underperformance have challenged some schools. To build sustainable classroom management and learning strategies, government agencies and other authorities of schools must recruit, train, and support new and old teachers in the classroom.

In Jamaica, 52,000 to 55,000 students are registered annually to take the GSAT. Literacy and numeracy mastery skills, as illustrated in the results of the GSAT, have been unsatisfactory, which heralded the need for immediate action. The JMoE is determined to ensure that literacy and numeracy mastery skills are achieved, so it is holding students at the primary level for another year to develop their literacy and numeracy competence. In 2012, 3,500 students were deferred, and 4,500 were barred from taking the GSAT because they were unable to master the GSAT standards (Henry, 2012). The government has proclaimed that students at the primary level should exhibit mastery to participate in the GSAT for entry into the country's 170 secondary schools.

Summary

I conducted this literature review to explore the concept of leadership and its connection to school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, teaching, and learning. I analyzed, synthesized, and summarized relevant literature to discuss past and current leadership types, roles, and applicability to school systems. The literature provided an understanding of leadership practices that can

influence school leadership, classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance at the primary level.

Organizations, especially schools, need leadership, because schools are where personal development begins. Leadership is needed to guide productive growth, which involves shared responsibility, a diligent work ethic, determination, persistence, consistency, and a commitment to increase academic performance. School leaders need to share their visions through collaborative, collective, and coordinated practices. School leadership was highlighted in the context of its contribution to teaching, learning, and the creation of an appropriate environment for learning. The framework of distributed leadership has emerged in other countries with similar performance issues as a strategy for implementation in underperforming schools. Chapter 3 explains the RQs, research design, target population and sample, data collection and analysis procedures, and instrumentation.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the methodology that I used to examine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. I used a quantitative method with a descriptive approach for this study. McNabb (2008) stated that a quantitative study can be "exploratory, descriptive, or casual" (p. 111). A quantitative method can facilitate the gathering of numeric information about the sample (Creswell, 2009). I analyzed the data using simple linear regression to predict the value of the DVs, given the value of the IV. McNabb asserted that simple regression analysis can be linear or nonlinear. A simple linear regression is a reliable process that uses only one IV to describe the relationship between the IV and the DVs using a straight line.

Leadership strategies supporting the distributed leadership framework as an approach that can improve academic performance have been examined and synthesized. I conducted a survey with 148 participants to obtain their perspectives of the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. This correlational study allowed me to identify any relationship of one or more variables to another (McNabb, 2008). I used a quantitative approach to address the RQs and simple linear regression to analyze the variables and determine whether any relationships existed between or among them. In this chapter, I describe the research design, target population

and sample, data collection and analysis processes, survey, and reliability and validity of the instrumentation.

Research Design

I used a descriptive research design to answer the RQs and test the hypotheses. A descriptive research design helps a researcher to describe "an event or define a set of attitudes, opinions, or behaviors and careful mapping out of circumstance, situation, set of events to describe what has happened" (McNabb, 2008, p. 97). A survey approach is considered appropriate when seeking information from a large sample (Babbie, 2007). Surveys have become a significant tool for collecting data to answer questions related to social, economic, political, and health issues (Fink, 2009) and to describe correlations between and among variables (Creswell, 2003). Fink (2009) asserted that surveys require choosing a method of inquiry that will provide researchers with accurate and precise data. Surveys allow researchers to choose the types of questions that will generate responses that fulfill the intent of the study. Fink also noted that "a well-designed, easy-to-use survey always contribute to reliability and validity" (p. 8). Although reliability and validity have different meanings, both are combined in evaluating the credibility of a research instrument. The consistency and accuracy of the questionnaire will mean more reliable and valid results.

I used closed-ended questions to obtain numeric data from the respondents (Creswell, 2009). I administered the survey online and also in person to some schools did not have Internet access. To reduce any limitations in this regard, I hand delivered the SLECMAQ to primary schools in the two parishes under study that did not have access to

the Internet. The survey included items on leadership practices, school environment, and academic performance. The survey entailed an element of a descriptive, cross-sectional approach in describing school leadership practices in underperforming schools in Kingston and St. Andrew, two parishes in Jamaica.

A survey is assessed as a good method for this study. Beatty (2003) stated that if survey questions are to generate valid data, the respondents need to understand the information required and the format in which the data will be collected. Using a quantitative method allowed me to collect numeric data about the sample (Creswell, 2003). The survey had to be written in simple, clear, and concise text to ensure ease of understanding. Nelder (2011) noted that quantitative methods such as surveys have become a common tool in management decision making. Allowing for a more objective decision-making based on evaluation of amassed data and concluding results.

Quantitative method enables a good collation of numeric information about the sample. Creswell (2009) suggested that quantitative researchers use random sampling, which means that each individual in the target population has an equal chance to be selected for inclusion in the study sample. Random sampling ensures that the participants can give adequate responses that are representative of the target population. Bansal and Corley (2012) stated that quantitative research requires careful preparation and planning. Quantitative methods are flexible and help researchers to understand the cause and effect of possible relationships between and among the variables (Creswell, 2009). I considered a quantitative approach the best method to answer the RQs. Creswell asserted that a quantitative approach such as a survey or an experiment allows a researcher to test a

theory or a hypothesis. A theory explains how and why the variables are related, and it acts as a bridge between or among the variables to be used. Quantitative methods facilitate the use of questionnaires or structured interviews to collect data that can answer the RQs (Creswell, 2009).

I used a self-administered questionnaire, the SLECMAQ, to collect the data. Some data were collected electronically; other data were collected from hand-delivered and administered surveys. Data collection also involved a review of archival data from the NEI's (2012) evaluation of primary schools to highlight the continued decline in school performance annually, as stated later in this chapter.

I selected a quantitative approach to obtain and analyze numeric data to determine the contribution of the IV and DVs in alleviating the academic underperformance at the primary level in Jamaica's schools (Creswell, 2009). Using a quantitative approach such as a survey allows researchers to collate numeric data for analysis. Quantitative methods facilitate the collection of numeric information so that inferences can be drawn (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Quantitative and qualitative studies have been conducted to assess and analyze school leadership; factors affecting students' ability to learn; investigate school attendance; review the PATH program strategy to reduce the dropout rate and nonattendance; and study the responsibilities of principals as well as the input of school boards, principals, and teachers into training and development in Jamaica by Alleyne (1988); Bailey (2004); Brown-Blake (2007); Bryan (2004); Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CaPRI, 2009); Douglas (2007); Francis (2008); Graham (2008); Henry (2008); Jackson (2008); JIS (2008, 2009); JMoE (1999, 2009); Luton (2010); Milner (1995); and

the Planning Institute of Jamaica (2006). However, research into the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance has not provided substantive results.

A quantitative method is best understood through the factors or variables that influence the outcome (Creswell, 2009; Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). I used a quantitative measurement to address the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance to determine the relationship between the IV and the DVs (Mackie, 2007; Perkins, 2001; Samples, 2010; Seales, 1997; Tatum, 2009). The survey was cross-sectional, and I collected the data only once. I considered a survey approach appropriate to generate responses based upon the attitudes, knowledge, and opinions of the participants (Chapman, 2009; Creswell, 2009). The research design was correlational, which enabled me to identify any relationships between or among the variables. Correlational research facilitates investigations into the extent to which variations in one variable are connected to variations in one or more other variables (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

The application of closed-ended questions facilitated the compilation of data describing school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. It also helped me to determine the effect and intensity of the IV on the DVs. I used an ordinal scale to rank the responses in logical sequences of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, to measure the

variables identified in the study to determine positively or negatively the relationships between or among the variables (Agresti, 2010; Babbie, 2007).

In this study, I presented a statistical analysis of the collected data in a quantitative description (McNabb, 2008). I simplified the data using frequency distribution, measure of central tendency (mean), variability (standard deviation), average response, correlations, and simple linear regression analysis to report the relationship of the variables. I analyzed the correlations between the IV of perceived school leadership practices, and the DVs of perceived classroom management, perceived school environment, and academic underperformance to determine the strength of the relationship, if any (McNabb, 2008), from the data collected via the SLECMAQ.

I used a 5-point Likert scale to construct the responses to the survey items, which ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). A Likert scale is one of the most popular and reliable ways to measure attitude or behavior (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). A Likert scale is used in social research by applying numeric values to standardized responses to enable statistical analyses based upon the strength of each response (Babbie, 2007). I used descriptive statistics in the analysis of the data to assess average responses to determine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Three RQs and three hypotheses guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools?

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools.

H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools.

The IV in Hypothesis 1 was perceived school leadership practices, and the DV was perceived classroom management.

2. What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools?

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools.

H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership and perceived school environment in underperforming schools.

The IV in Hypothesis 2 was perceived school leadership practices, and the DV was perceived school environment.

3. How do perceived school leadership practices influence academic underperformance in underperforming schools?

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and academic underperformance in underperforming schools.

H_{a3}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and academic underperformance in underperforming schools.

The IV for Hypothesis 3 was perceived school leadership practices, and the DV was academic underperformance at underperforming schools.

Target Population and Study Sample

I chose a random sample of participants who were representative of the target population to reduce sampling error (McNabb, 2008). At the time of the study, there were 58 primary schools (i.e., Grades 1-6); 28 all-age schools (i.e., students attend up to Grade 9; and a combination of 18 primary and junior high schools (Grades 1-6 and then continue to Grades 7-9) in the parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew (NEI, 2012). High schools and technical schools were not included in this study.

To achieve a realistic sample size, I used the online sample size calculation. Given a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval (CI) of six for a population of 1,646, the sample had to comprise 165 or more participants to be representative of the target population. I collected data from 173 principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others from 12 primary schools in the two parishes (see Table 1). I analyzed data from 148 usable surveys. The CI for a sample of 165 was approximately 7.25 using a probability sample.

Table 1

Average No. of Primary School Teachers in Kingston and St. Andrew

Targeted areas	No. of male teachers	No. of female teachers	Total
Kingston	47	384	431
St. Andrew	134	1,081	1,215
			1,646

Source. Jamaica Education Statistics, 2010

I selected the participants randomly from the list of schools provided by the JMoE (2012) as showing unsatisfactory performance. Of the schools inspected, 50.4% were assessed as underperforming, and 49.6% were assessed as performing. The report highlighted that primary schools required better performance in leadership, classroom management, and school environment to improve academic performance at the national level (see Table 2).

Table 2

Primary Schools in Kingston and St. Andrew Classified as Performing Below National Standards

Targeted areas	Type of school	Classification
Kingston	Primary and junior high	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
St. Andrew	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary and junior high	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary and junior high	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Unsatisfactory
	Primary	Need immediate support

Source. NEI (2012)

I hand delivered the survey in sealed envelopes with the informed consent letter as the cover page to principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others who did not have access to the Internet to provide them with information about the survey and the study. I expected the participants to complete the SLECMAQ to determine the correlations between and among the variables. The NEI of the JMoE and Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB approval #04-22-14-0137215) gave me their approval to conduct the study.

Pilot Testing

I conducted a pilot study to assess the reliability and validity of the SLECMAQ. I asked 12 experts in the field of education to review the SLECMAQ. Four experts had doctoral degrees in education, gender and development studies, applied management, and decision sciences, respectively; all were lecturers at different universities. Two experts were principals with master's degrees in education. One expert was a police officer who has a master's degree and was a member of a school board. Three experts were classroom teachers with master's or bachelor's degrees in education who also were parents. One expert was a staff member from the JMoE at the decision-making level, and the last expert was a retired principal. The pilot test was conducted over 3 weeks and involved a test-retest collection period. I sent an e-mail with the attached SLECMAQ to the experts, along with an explanation of the purpose of the pilot study, their involvement, and a period to review the survey. Their responses tested the validity of the survey questions.

Czaja and Blair (2005) remarked that pretesting is an effective way to determine the reliability and validity of an instrument, and they suggested that researchers should ensure that pilot tests and retests be conducted with small groups of individuals who are representative of the sample. Herrman and Nandakumar (2012) concluded that conducting pilot testing that entails tests and retests ensures the readability, understanding, timing, and accuracy of the survey items. Pilot testing allows researchers to make changes in wording, standardize the structure of the items in the survey, and remove repetitive and unnecessary words in the survey. Pilot testing enables researchers to make additions to or reword survey items to improve the participants' comprehension.

I sent the revised survey to 15 people in the sample test-retest group, not including the 12 experts, to test its reliability. After 2 weeks, I readministered the survey to the same group of respondents (i.e., the retest) to check the comprehension and consistency of the survey items to ensure reliability. I analyzed the data from the pilot study for reliability by calculating Cronbach's alpha, a measure of an instrument's reliability. Any Cronbach's alpha value equal to or greater than 0.70 is indicative of a reliable instrument; a value equal to or greater than 0.80 is considered highly reliable (Cohen, 1988).

Reliability and Validity

Before I could collect any data, I needed to ensure the reliability and validity of the survey. Reliability and validity were important in evaluating the SLECMAQ's credibility as well as the results. Babbie (2007) defined reliability as "a quality of measurement that consistently yields the same results using repetitive measures" (p. 143) in quantifying what is to be measured. Reliability requires accuracy, consistency, stability, and credibility to enhance confidence in testing the instrument. Babbie asserted that reliability "does not ensure accuracy" (p. 143) unless a survey undergoes a test-retest method. In this study, the test-retest method involved making adjustments in the first instance and conducting a second test of the instrument to assess whether the same results were obtained.

The quality of a study is important to ensure valid conclusions. Trochim and Donnelly (2008) defined validity as "the best available approximation to the truth of a given proposition, inference, or conclusion" (p. 20). Validity accurately reflects the

intended concept under consideration (Babbie, 2007). The SLECMAQ, a survey that I developed for the study, was evaluated for reliability and validity because it has not been tested previously. As mentioned earlier, I invited 15 participants to participate in the pilot testing of the SLECMAQ for reliability. The reliability of the SLECMAQ or any other instrument is determined by the level of consistency in producing the same responses when used again for the same purpose (McNabb, 2008). To achieve reliability, the SLECMAQ was pilot tested.

Instrumentation and Materials

Various forms of surveys (i.e., telephone, web-based, and service delivery surveys) have been and remain prominent data collection tools (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007). Babbie (2007) suggested that the researchers of descriptive studies use questionnaires to gather information. I developed an original instrument, the SLECMAQ, to gain insight into the participants' perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) in the 12 schools that were the focus of this investigation. As mentioned previously, the survey items were answered using a 5-point Likert scale of responses (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007) that facilitated calculation of the average scores from respondents who answered each item (Babbie, 2007). I used descriptive statistics to analyze the data in relation to average responses, frequencies, correlations, means, standard deviations, and simple linear regressions.

As mentioned previously, a pretest of the SLECMAQ helped to determine the clarity of the survey items and their appropriateness to answer the RQs (Babbie, 2007;

McNabb, 2008). A pretest helped me to identify response rates and discard unnecessary questions. The pretest process was achieved within a 3-week period.

Data Collection

I used the SLECMAQ to collect the data. The participants completed the questionnaire using one of two processes. I sent a hyperlink to participants with Internet access to answer the survey online. Participants had to confirm that they were 20 years of age or older and were participating in the study as volunteers by clicking "Agree" before they could access the survey. Participants had access to the survey for 7 weeks.

Participants without Internet access completed the hand-delivered survey over 7 weeks. These respondents received the survey in a sealed envelope with a self-addressed envelope. I made provisions to collect the completed survey through mailboxes provided (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). After 3 weeks, I sent a reminder to those participants who had not yet completed the survey through either method. The response rate was low, so I had to allot 4 more weeks for the participants to complete the questionnaire. I provided all participants with a copy of the consent letter, which formed the cover page that outlined the objective and purpose of the study, degree of confidentiality, and ethical guidelines. Completing the survey signified the participants' willingness to participate in the study. Individuals who are considered part of the protected population (i.e., elderly cohort, pregnant women, people who are economically disadvantaged, and individuals in crisis) did not participate in this study.

Data Analysis

I collected data from principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others from 12 schools assessed by the NEI (2012) as having poor academic performance. I entered the data into SPSS v.22.0 for analysis. I generated descriptive statistics for all variables, and I used simple linear regression analysis to report the results (McNabb, 2008). By analyzing several variables, I was able to explain variations in the DVs to report the relationship and draw conclusions.

The results of the NEI (2012) assessment provided valuable input that allowed me to describe the variables. From September 2010 to March 2011, 135 schools were inspected, eight key areas were evaluated, and deficiencies were identified at the primary level. These deficiencies were leadership and management (35% of primary schools were unsatisfactory); teaching support (54% were unsatisfactory); student attainment in numeracy and literacy (79% unsatisfactory at the primary level); student progress (53% at the primary level); personal and social development (77% unsatisfactory at the primary level); schools made good use of human and material resources (classroom management; 84 % unsatisfactory at the primary level); curriculum and enhancement programs (81% unsatisfactory at the primary level); and safety, security, health and well-being (environment; 44% unsatisfactory in performance; NEI, 2012; see Table 3).

Table 3

Summary of NEI Assessment in 135 Primary Schools

Cons. No.	Assessment	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Needs immediate support	% rated unsatisfactory
1	Leadership and management	25%	36%	35%	4%	
2	Teaching support	13%	45%	40%	2%	44%
3	Student attainment	11% above national average	19% at national average	63%	7%	79%
4	Student progress	9%	36%	53%	2%	Progress in English better than in mathematics
5	Personal and social development	31%	47%	22%		77%
6	Schools made good use of human and material resources	24%	40%	36%		84%
7	Curriculum and enhancement programs	31%	42%	26%	1%	81%
8	Safety, security, health, and well-being	22%	44%	33%	1%	

Source. NEI (2012)

Table 4 is a summary of student performance nationally in numeracy at the primary level over 4 years. Table 5 shows the average performance in literacy at the primary level from 2009 to 2012 as well as the gradual increase in performance and mastery at the public and national levels.

Table 4

Annual % Results of General Mastery Achievements in Numeracy 2009-2012

Year	Public level	National level
2009	42%	45%
2010	38%	41%
2011	46%	49%
2012	51%	54%

Source. JMoE (2012)

Table 5

Annual % Results of Student Mastery at Grade 4 Literacy Test 2009-2012

Year	Public level	National level
2009	67%	70%
2010	65%	67%
2011	69%	71%
2012	72%	74%

Source. JMoE (2012)

I used descriptive statistics and simple linear regression to analyze the data. Simple linear regression analysis involves the presence of one IV and shows any relationships between or among the DVs (McNabb, 2008). Simple linear regression analysis is a valuable way to make predictions between the criterion and predictor variables (Babbie, 2007). In Hypothesis 1, I used a simple linear regression to analyze the relationship between perceived school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers; IV) and classroom management (DV). For Hypotheses 2 and 3, I used the same linear regression analysis to determine the relationship between perceived school leadership practices (IV) and perceived school environment (DV), and perceived school leadership practices (IV) and academic underperformance (DV). I collected the data from the SLECMAQ and inputted them into Microsoft Excel.

Simple linear regression analysis allowed me to analyze the relationship between the IV and the DVs. Simple linear regression analysis was ideal for this study because of its effectiveness with SPSS in producing regression statistic results beneficial to the study. SPSS generated quantitative data for testing the hypotheses using standard statistical methods of descriptive statistics, correlations, means, standard deviations, relevant charts, and regression analysis. According to McNabb (2008), the correlation

"will measure the strength and direction of the relationship between any two pairs of interval or ratio-scale variables" (p. 236). Thus, the correlational coefficient represented the value among the variables, standard error, least square statistic, and confidence intervals to answer the main RQ.

Design of the Variables

I used simple linear regression analysis to examine relationships between and among the variables in the study because of its ability to predict and show relationships between one IV and one or more DVs (McNabb, 2008). In RQ1, the IV of perceived school leadership practices and the DV of perceived classroom management determined and predicted the relationship between the variables. I used the simple linear regression models

$Y_1 = b_0 + b_1 * X_1$ (Hypothesis 1), $Y_2 = b_0 + b_2 * X_2$ (Hypothesis 2), and

$Y_3 = b_0 + b_3 * X_3$ (Hypothesis 3)

to determine the relationship between and among the variables in this study, where b_0 was the constant and b_1 was the coefficient for the IV (X_1). A measurement of +1.0 with nominal value indicated a strong positive relationship, whereas a measurement of -1 indicated a strong negative relationship (McNabb, 2008). I used the survey items in Section 1 to determine the strength of the relationship of the variables.

In RQ2, I used the IV of perceived school leadership practices and the DV of perceived school environment to determine whether a positive or a negative relationship existed between the variables. I used the survey items in Section 2 to measure and predict

the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment.

In RQ3, I measured the IV of perceived school leadership practices and the DV of academic underperformance to determine the relationship and statistical significance of the influence of school leadership practices on academic performance as being representative of the total population using the measure of significance or level of confidence. I used the survey items in Section 4 to measure the effect of school leadership on academic performance.

Protection of Participants' Rights

It was my responsibility to maintain and ensure the privacy of the participants and the confidentiality of their survey responses. I informed the participants about the nature and purpose of the research; that their participation was voluntary and was not the result of force, duress, or coercion; and that they had the right to ask me any questions about the study or any procedures involved. The ethical principles governing the use of all materials were referenced, and the appropriate acknowledgments were made. I also maintain the ethical principles applicable to the methodology, analysis, findings, security of the data, and dissemination of the results. Destruction of all collected data will occur 5 years after completion of the study.

I sent the consent form as the cover page of the survey to the participants via e-mail to inform them that their participation was voluntary, they could withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussions, and they did not have to divulge any personal information that could have identified them. I hand delivered the same informed

consent along with the survey to the primary schools in Kingston and St. Andrew that did not have access to the Internet. The informed consent page stipulated that participation in the study was voluntary and would not influence any relationship with the JMoE or its respective schools.

Summary

Included in Chapter 3 were descriptions of the methodology, RQs and hypotheses, research design, target population and sample, processes to ensure reliability and validity, data collection and analysis procedures, and instrumentation and materials. It also included a rationale for the selection of the variables and an explanation of the ways in which I protected the participants' rights. I present the results in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the findings, a discussion of the results and the implications for social change; and recommendations for action and future research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The quality of leadership in schools influences student learning and enhances all areas of schools improvement. School leadership is intertwined in the management, communication, and support provided to followers. Improving the performance of school leadership at the primary school level will elevate students' academic performance. I used my researcher-developed SLECMAQ and other statistical procedures to examine the relationship between the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. Data were collected from respondents who had worked at, are working at, or are associated with 12 primary schools in the parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew in Jamaica.

I conducted a pilot study to determine the reliability of the SLECMAQ. Included in this chapter is information about the purpose of the study, the demographic profile of the sample and the target population, an explanation of the survey as well as the data collection and analysis processes, and the rationale for using a different methodology in the study. I also include an interpretation of the findings and a conclusion.

Purpose of the Study

School leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) might often digress from the goals and objectives of the schools and the JMoE to achieve academic success. The results of this study will provide information that could be used to improve school leadership practices in primary schools evaluated as underperforming toward the

development of an improvement plan to enhance academic performance. I sought to determine the influence of school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. To fully understand the factors, I used a correlational research method to examine the variables.

Tools, Data Collection, and Analysis

The SLECMAQ was delivered electronically to 165 principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, class teachers, special education teachers, and others with access to the internet. Another 165 copies of the survey were hand delivered to principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, class teachers, special education teachers, and others without access to the Internet in Kingston and St. Andrew. Thus, I disseminated 330 surveys in total. All of these participants were employed at or were associated with the 12 primary schools in this study. I collected data using these methods to provide anonymity to the participants.

An overall total of 173 responses were collected from the primary pool of 330 surveys distributed to principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others. Of the 173 respondents, 25 respondents failed to complete the survey, so 148 (86%) completed surveys were used in the statistical analysis. The final sample represented 45% of the initially contacted respondents, and 9% of the population of approximately 1,646 individuals.

The study was guided by three RQs and hypotheses:

1. What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools?

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools.

H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools.

2. What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools?

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools.

H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership and perceived school environment in underperforming schools.

3. How do perceived school leadership practices influence academic underperformance in underperforming schools?

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and academic underperformance in underperforming schools.

H_{a3}: There is a significant relationship between perceived school leadership practices and academic underperformance in underperforming schools.

Pilot Study Test Pretest

In general, pilot testing entails test and retest to ensure the readability, understanding, timing, and accuracy of the survey items (Herrman & Nandakumar, 2012). One way to increase the reliability is to conduct a pilot study to help the researcher to identify and amend any discrepancies that can improve the survey items (Yin, 2009). Conducting the pilot testing of the survey on a sample with attributes that represent those

of the intended population (Singleton & straits, 2009) increases the validity, reliability and usability of the instrument. A pilot test helps to identify flaws, limitations, or other weaknesses in the survey (Fink, 2009). Czaja and Blair (2005) posited that pretesting is an effective method to determine the reliability and validity of an instrument, and they recommend that researchers ensure that pilot tests are conducted with a small group of individuals who are representative of the sample. Thus, a pilot study can be used to assess an instrument's reliability.

Two important aspects of the pilot study conducted for this study were a peer review and a test study. A valid experiment generates results showing what is to be expected from the testing of the hypotheses. The questionnaire has to be tested to determine whether the survey generates the result expected (Fink, 2009). Reliability requires accuracy, consistency, stability, and credibility to enhance confidence in testing the instrument. In the pilot study, 15 participants took part in the study. These 15 professionals who had previously volunteered to participate in the survey test were invited via e-mail to complete the survey (the test) in April 2014. All surveys were returned completed without any changes recommended or questions omitted. There were no changes recommended.

Peer reviews are used to initiate validity of a survey instrument and are necessary as the survey items represents distinction for the content and logical validity (Fink, 2009). A peer review to evaluate the face and content validity of the SLECMAQ was completed by 12 subject matter experts to determine whether the questions were clearly articulated and to assess whether they measured what they were intended to measure. The subject

matter experts had knowledge of school leadership practices, classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. The objective of the peer review was to answer the following questions:

1. Are the questions appropriate to the target audience?
2. Are the questions easy to understand?
3. Are the instructions clear and easy to follow?
4. Are any of the survey items intrusive, invasive, potentially embarrassing, or of a sensitive nature?
5. Are there any other recommended change or comments?

All of the subject matter experts concurred that the survey was valid and the questions did not require any significant changes, apart from grammatical and typographical corrections. Therefore, the field trail verified that the survey met face and content validity.

The results of the survey test were imported into SPSS v.22.0 for analysis. The expected outcome of the test showed significant difference (high and low correlation) in the result. Eight female (53%) and seven male (47%) participants were in the survey test. The majority of participants were in the age group of 33 to 36 years (4, 27%) or 55 to 60 years (3, 20%). In the demographic data for occupation, six (40%) of participants were classroom teachers; three (20%) were vice principals; with principals, special education teachers, and others rounded off at 2 (13%). None of the participants had a doctoral degree, but most of them had at least a master's degree (6, 40%). The majority of the participants had been employed for more than 20 years (5, 33%).

Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency were conducted on the scales constructed for the pilot sample. Cronbach's alpha provides a mean correlation between each pair of items and the number of items in a scale (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2006). The alpha values were interpreted using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2010), where (a) > .9 *Excellent*, (b) > .8 *Good*, (c) > .7 *Acceptable*, (d) > .6 *Questionable*, (e) > .5 *Poor*, and (f) < .5 *Unacceptable*.

Results for perceptions of school leadership practices (principals), perceptions of classroom management, and perceptions of school environment indicated acceptable reliability, as well as results for perceptions of academic performance. However, results for perceptions of school leadership practices (teachers) indicated unacceptable reliability. As such, this scale was examined for misleading questions on any constituent items. None of the survey items pertaining to perceptions of school leadership practices (teachers) was deemed misleading or unclear, and no improvements could be determined. For this reason, this variable was examined with scrutiny in the following analyses. Cronbach's alpha for the different scales is illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6

Cronbach's Alpha for Scales From Pilot Testing

Scale	No. of Items	α	*M*	*SD*
Perceptions of school leadership (principals)	14	.78	3.89	0.45
Perceptions of school leadership (teachers)	10	.25	3.84	0.31
Perceptions of classroom management	12	.78	3.81	0.53
Perceptions of school environment	13	.76	3.80	0.46
Perceptions of academic performance	18	.67	3.77	0.38

The results of the field trial and test assessment indicated that this instrument was a reliable and valid assessment tool. Given that no changes to the survey were

recommended by experts other than grammatical items and no issues were found during the pilot test, no further actions were taken regarding the pilot test. Results confirmed that the instrument was an appropriate tool to measure the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance.

Demographic Statistics

The SLECMAQ assessed the demographic variables of age, gender, level of education, position held, and number of years employed. I collected the data over 7 weeks. Of the 173 participants who responded to the survey, 148 (86%) completed it. Nearly equal proportions were received through online surveys (70, 47%) and by hand-delivered mail (78, 53%). Most of the participants were women (114, 77%); 34 (23%) were men (see Table 7), indicating a predominance of female teachers at the primary level.

Table 7

Frequency and % by Gender

Gender of participants	*n*	%
Male	34	23
Female	114	77
Total	148	100

Age distribution data indicated that majority of participants (31, 21%) were between the ages of 33 and 36 years; the fewest numbers of participants were between the ages of 18 and 24 years (8, 5%) and over 65 years (5, 3%; see Table 8).

Table 8

Frequency and % by Age Group

Age range of participants	*n*	%
18 - 24	8	5
25 - 30	13	9
33 - 36	31	21
37 - 42	27	18
43 - 48	23	16
49 - 54	20	14
55 - 60	21	14
Over 65	5	3
Total	148	100

The analysis of the educational level showed that most participants had a bachelor's degree with teacher training (76, 51%); 32 (22%) had a master's degree; 20 (14%) had a diploma in teacher training; 11 (7%) had a bachelor's degree without teacher training; six (4%) had a doctoral degree; and three (2%) had a teacher's certificate (see Table 9).

Table 9

Frequency and % by Level of Education

Education	*n*	%
Teacher's certificate	3	2
Diploma in training	20	14
Bachelor's degree (Graduate w/ teacher training)	76	51
Bachelor's degree (Graduate w/o teacher training)	11	7
Master's degree	32	22
Doctoral degree	6	4
Total	148	100

The most common positions held by the participants were classroom teachers (85, 57%); senior teachers (27, 18%); vice principals (6, 4%); principals (5, 3%); and special education teachers (5, 3%). Others, inclusive of retired teachers, parents, or school board members, accounted for 20 (14 %) of the respondents (see Table 10).

Table 10

Frequency and % of Positions

Jobs of participants	*n*	%
Principals	5	3
Vice principal	6	4
Senior teacher	27	18
Class teacher	85	57
Special education teacher	5	3
Others	20	14
Total	148	100

As shown in Table 11, 34 (23%) participants had been employed between 11 and 15 years, 33 (22%) had been engaged in teaching/education between 6 and 10 years, 30 (20%) had been employed for more than 20 years; 18 (12%) had been employed for 1 to 5 years, and 20 (14%) had been employed 16 to 20 years. Seven (5%) were retired, and six (4%) reported employment for 1 year or less.

Table 11

Frequency and % of Years in Education

No. of years employed	*n*	%
0 - 1 years	6	4
1 - 5 years	18	12
6 - 10 years	33	22
11 - 15 years	34	23
16 - 20 years	20	14
Over 20 years	30	20
Retired	7	5
Total	148	100

Next, I assessed the internal consistency of the five variables for the sample. The alpha values were interpreted using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2010). Results for perceptions of school leadership practices (principals) and perceptions of school environment indicated good reliability (0.80-0.88; see Table 12). Results for perceptions of school leadership practices (teachers) and perceptions of academic

Performance indicated acceptable reliability (0.72-0.78). Results for perceptions of classroom management indicated questionable reliability (0.67). Although the Cronbach's alpha of .67 was very close to acceptable reliability, results pertinent to the classroom management variable should be evaluated with caution.

Table 12

Cronbach's Alpha for Perceptions From the Sample

Perceptions	No. of Items	α	*M*	*SD*
Perceptions of school leadership (principals)	14	.88	3.89	0.58
Perceptions of school leadership (teachers)	10	.78	3.98	0.50
Perceptions of classroom management	12	.67	3.73	0.44
Perceptions of school environment	13	.80	3.82	0.52
Perceptions of academic performance	18	.72	3.81	0.40

N = 148

The results regarding perception of school leadership practices (i.e., principals and teachers); classroom management; school environment; and academic performance showed a moderate to high reliability in the data collected from the sample.

Interpretations of the Findings

I collected the data from the hand-delivered mail and web-based surveys. I collected the mail surveys and downloaded the web-based data into Microsoft Excel and then uploaded and coded them into SPSS v.22.0. I determined that the variable of perception of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) positively influenced academic performance by calculating the means of Survey Items 7 to 31 for the 148 participants. I determined that the variable of perceptions of classroom management was positively influenced by school leadership practices by calculating the means of Survey Items 32 to 43. I determined that the variable of perceptions of school environment was positively influenced by school leadership practices by calculating the

means of Survey Items 44 to 56. I used Survey Items 57 to 75 to show that the variable of academic performance was positively influenced by school leadership practices.

Results of the analyses indicated that each variable of interest was influenced by the perceptions of the participants regarding the leadership practices of teachers and principals. In each analysis, regression results indicated a significant model at the $p < .001$ level and suggested that a relationship between the IV and the DVs was not due to random chance alone with 99.9% certainty. In addition, the perceptions of principals and teachers' school leadership practices were found to be significant predictors of the participants' perceptions of classroom management, school environment, and academic performance (see Table 13). Teachers were statistically different from principals (teacher at 3.99 and principals at 3.89).

Table 13

Summary of Statistical Results

RQ	Analysis	Outcome	Conclusion
What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools?	Regression IVs: Perception of school leadership (principals) Perception of school leadership (teachers) DV: Perceived classroom management	$F(5, 142) = 15.97$ $p < .001$	There is a significant relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices and perceived classroom management. Reject null hypothesis.
What is the relationship between perceived school leadership practices and perceived school environment in underperforming schools?	Regression IVs: Perception of school leadership (principals) Perception of school leadership (teachers) DV: Perceived school environment	$F(5, 142) = 34.51$ $p < .001$	There is a significant relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices and perceived school environment. Reject null hypothesis.
How do perceived school leadership practices influence academic underperformance in underperforming schools?	Regression IVs: Perception of school leadership (principals) Perception of school leadership (teachers) DV: Perceived academic performance	$F(5, 142) = 16.78$ $p < .001$	There is a significant relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices and perceived academic performance. Reject null hypothesis.
Ancillary analysis on differences in perceptions of school leadership practices for teachers versus principals.	Dependent sample *t* test. Variables: Perception of school leadership (principals) perception of school leadership (teachers)	$t(163) = 2.31$ $p = .022$	Perceptions of teachers' school leadership practices were statistically different from perceptions of principals' school leadership practices. Participants perceived principals as having significantly higher leadership scores.

Hypotheses Testing and Assumptions

The RQs were assessed using hypotheses testing. A multiple linear regression approach of the data for the IV and DVs was taken in testing the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

To determine the effect of perceptions of school leadership practices on perceptions of classroom management, I conducted a multiple linear regression on the

data. The IVs were perceptions of school leadership practices of principals and perceptions of school leadership practices of teachers, and the DV was perceptions of classroom management. The control variables were gender, education, and years employed.

Before conducting the analysis, I assessed the assumptions of multiple linear regression (i.e., normality, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity). Normality assumes that the scores are normally distributed about the regression line. After inputting the variables, the normal probability-probability (P-P) plot showed a relatively normal distribution about the regression line. Homoscedasticity is interpreted through standardized prediction versus a standardized residual regression scatterplot. The presence of a rectangular distribution, one with no recognizable pattern, indicated the presence of homoscedasticity. The absence of multicollinearity assumes that predictor variables are not too related and can be assessed using variance inflation factors (VIF). VIF values over 10 suggest the presence of multicollinearity (Stevens, 2009).

None of the IVs showed any signs of multicollinearity, with the highest VIF being 1.69. Results of the regression suggested that the IVs of perceptions of school leadership practices of principals and of teachers significantly predicted the DV of perceived classroom management, $F(5, 142) = 15.97$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .36$. The R^2 value suggested that 36% of the variability in perceived classroom management could have been explained by the perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers).

Further examination of the IVs indicated that both were significant predictors of perceived classroom management. The unstandardized beta values suggested that as perceptions of principal leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of classroom management scores increased by 0.25 units. Similarly, as perceptions of teacher leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of classroom management scores increased by 0.42 units. Results of the multiple linear regression are presented in Table 14, and partial plots are presented to display linear relationships in Figures 1 and 2.

Table 14

Multiple Linear Regression of Perceptions of School Leadership (Principals) and Perceptions of School Leadership (Teachers) on Perceived Classroom Management

Source	*B*	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*
Perceptions of school leadership (principals)	0.19	0.07	.25	2.88	.005
Perceptions of school leadership (teachers)	0.37	0.07	.42	5.02	< .001

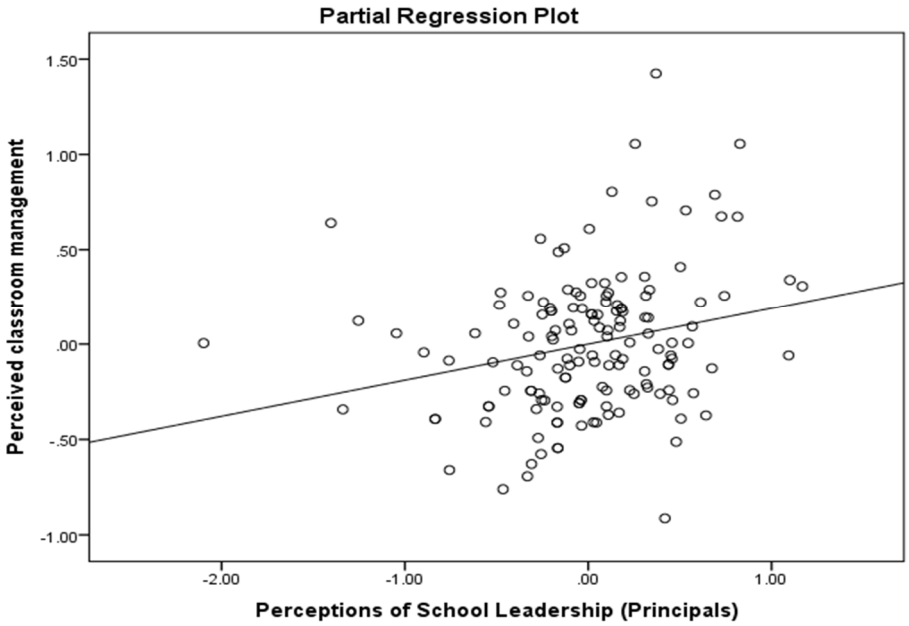

Figure 1. P-P plot of relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices (principals) and perceived classroom management.

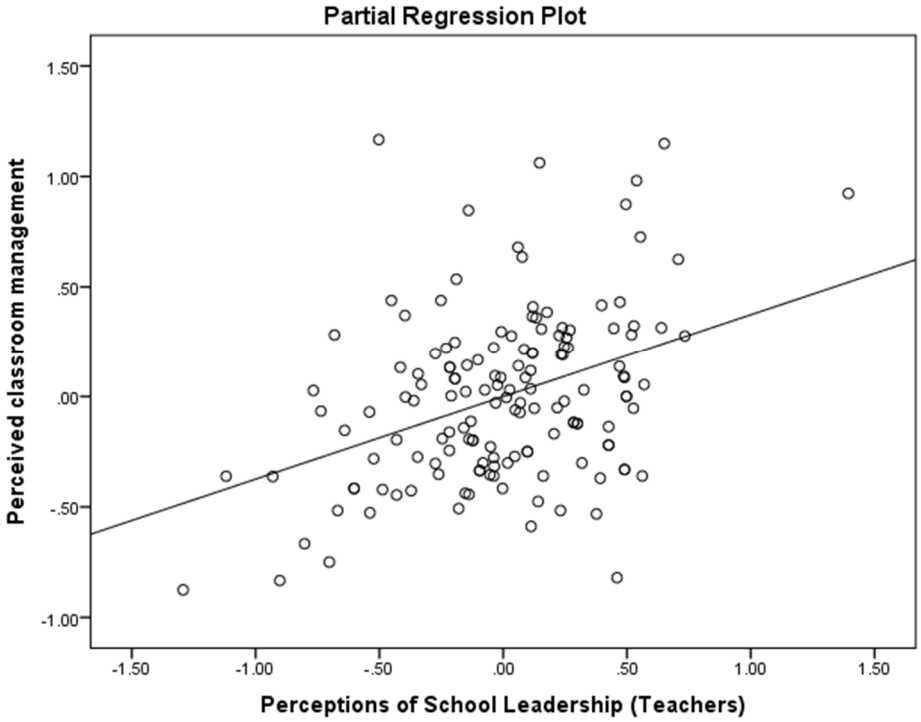

Figure 2. P-P plot of relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices (teachers) and perceived classroom management.

Hypothesis 2

To determine the effect of perceptions of school leadership practices on perceptions of school environment, I conducted a multiple linear regression on the data. In the multiple linear regression, the IVs were perceptions of school leadership practices of principals and perceptions of school leadership practices of teachers, and the DV was perceptions of school environment. The control variables were gender, education, and years employed.

Before conducting the analysis, I assessed the assumptions of multiple linear regression (i.e., normality, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity). Results of the regression suggested that the IVs of perceptions of school leadership practices of

principals and perceptions of school leadership practices of teachers significantly predicted the DV of perceived school environment, $F(5, 142) = 34.51$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .55$). The R^2 value suggested that 55% of the variability in perceived school environment could have been explained by perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers).

Further examination of the IVs indicated that both were significant predictors of perceived classroom management. The unstandardized beta values suggested that as perceptions of principals' leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of school environment scores increased by 0.48 units. Similarly, as perceptions of teachers' leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of school environment scores increased by 0.38 units. Results for the multiple linear regression are presented in Table 15, and partial plots displaying linear relationships in Figures 3 and 4.

Table 15

Multiple Linear Regression of Perceptions of School Leadership Practices (Principals) and Perceptions of School Leadership Practices (Teachers) on Perceived School Environment

Source	*B*	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*
Perceptions of school leadership (principals)	0.42	0.06	.48	6.60	< .001
Perceptions of school leadership (teachers)	0.38	0.07	.37	5.22	< .001

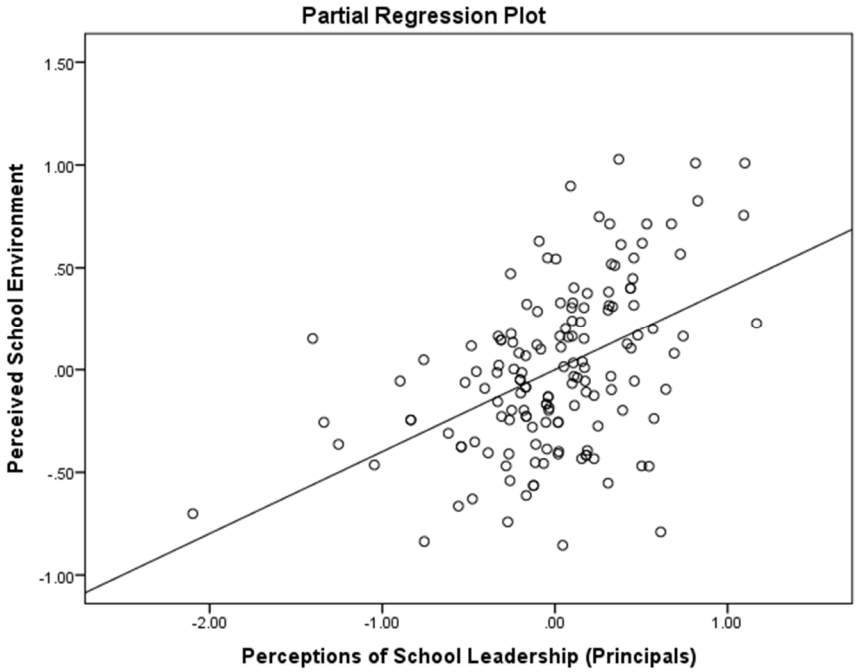

Figure 3. P-P plot of relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices (principals) and perceived school environment.

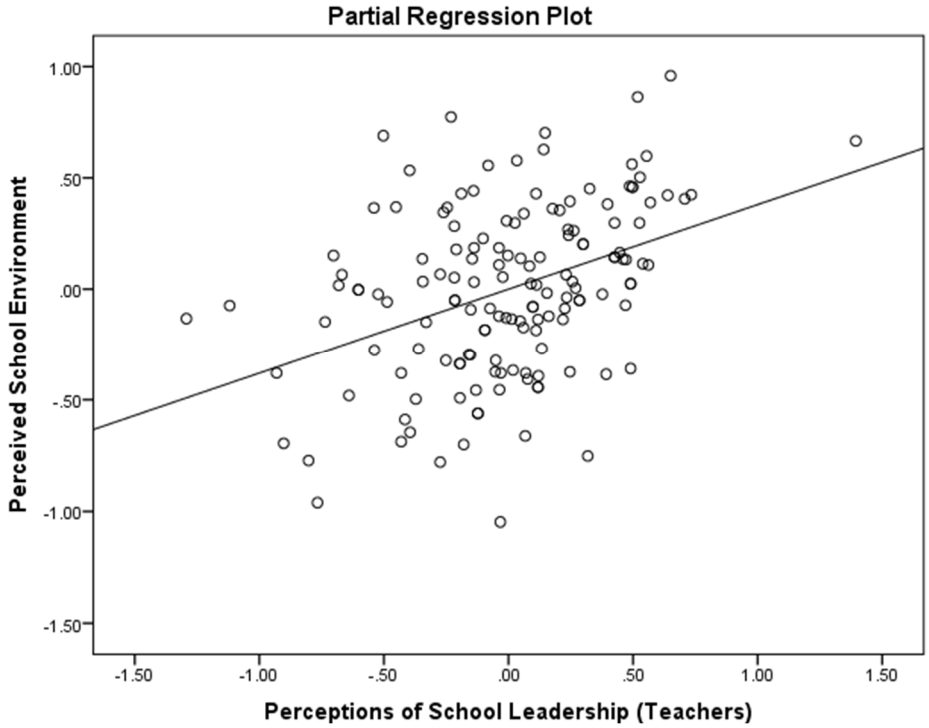

Figure 4. P-P plot of relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices (teachers) and perceived school environment.

Hypothesis 3

To determine the effect of perceptions of school leadership on perceptions of academic performance, I conducted a multiple linear regression on the data. In the multiple linear regression, the IVs were perceptions of school leadership practices of principals and perceptions of school leadership practices of teachers, and the DV was perceptions of academic performance. The control variables were gender, education, and years employed.

Before conducting the analysis, I assessed the assumptions of multiple linear regression (i.e., normality, homoscedasticity and absence of multicollinearity). Results of the regression suggested that the IVs of perceptions of school leadership practices of principals and perceptions of school leadership practices of teachers significantly predicted the DV of perceived academic performance, $F(5, 142) = 16.78$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .37$. The R^2 value suggested that 37% of the variability in perceived academic performance could have been explained by perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers).

Further examination of the IVs indicated that both were significant predictors of perceived academic performance. The unstandardized beta values suggested that as perceptions of principals' leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of academic performance increased by 0.20 units. Similarly, as perceptions of teachers' leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of academic performance increased by 0.29 units. Results for the multiple linear regression are in Table 16, and partial plots are presented to display linear relationships in Figures 5 and 6.

Table 16

Multiple Linear Regression of Perceptions of School Leadership Practices (Principals) and Perceptions of School Leadership Practices (Teachers) on Perceived Academic Performance

Source	*B*	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*
Perceptions of school leadership (principals)	0.20	0.06	.29	3.42	.001
Perceptions of school leadership (teachers)	0.29	0.07	.36	4.37	< .001

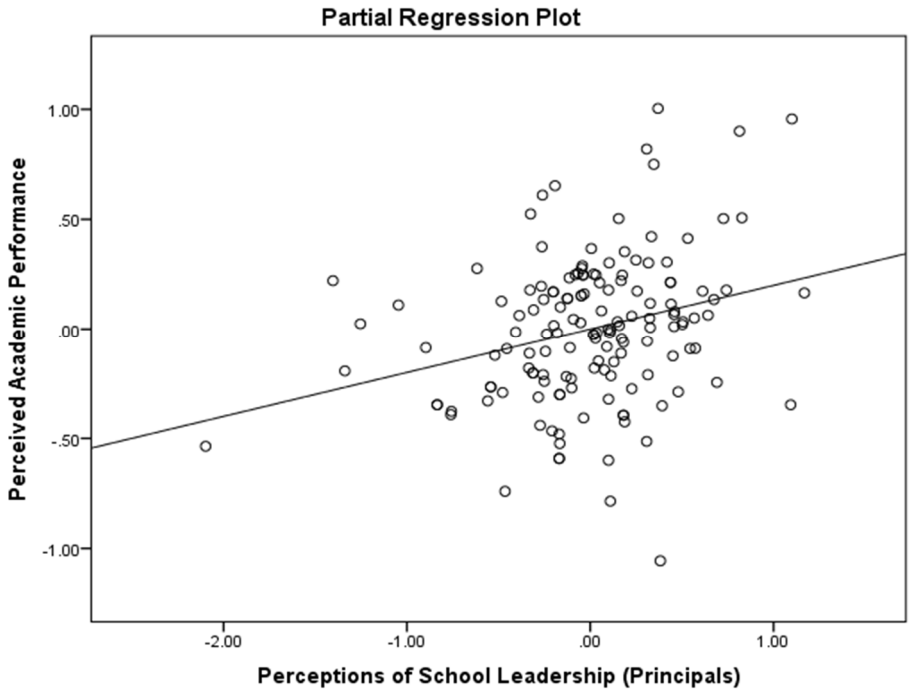

Figure 5. P-P plot of relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices (principals) and perceived academic performance.

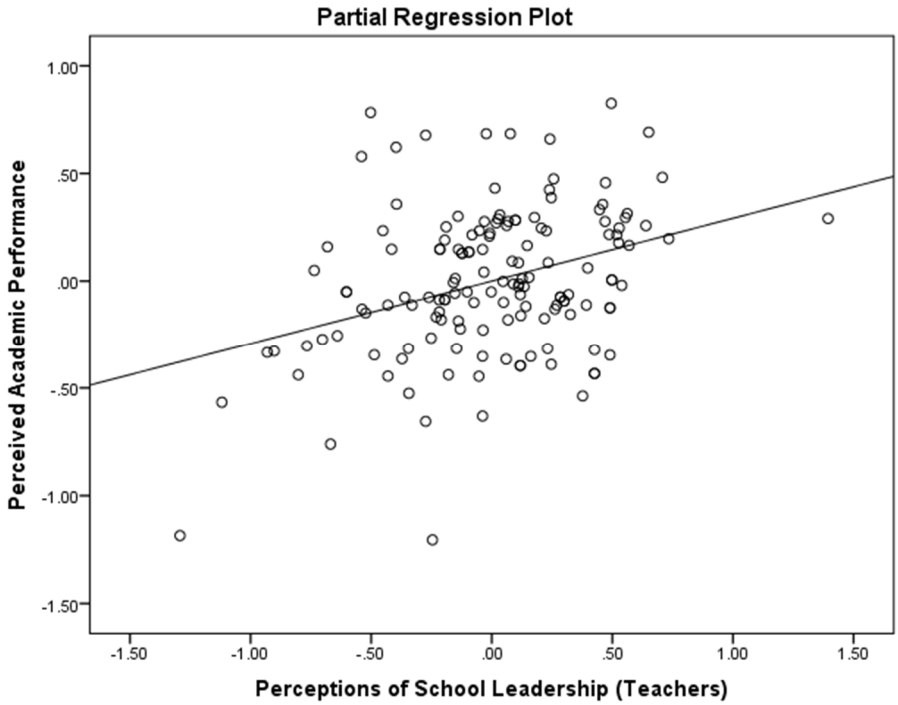

Figure 6. P-P plot of relationship between perceptions of school leadership practices (teachers) and perceived academic performance.

Ancillary Analysis

To compare perceptions of school leadership practices of principals and perceptions of school leadership practices of teachers, I conducted a paired-sample *t* test. Researchers use this test to determine whether there is a significant difference between the average values of the same measurement under two different conditions. I examined the assumption and condition of the paired-sample *t* test prior to analysis. For a paired-sample *t* test to be conducted appropriately, the DVs should be normally distributed (Pallant, 2010). I examined the assumption of normality using a Kolmogorov Smirnov (KS) test (Howell, 2010). The result of the KS test were significant for perceptions of school leadership practices of principals ($p < .001$) and perceptions of school leadership

practices of teachers (p = .001), indicating that the assumption of normality was violated for both variables. However, the paired-sample t is robust against the assumption of normality if at least 30 participants are available for the analysis (Pallant, 2010).

Results of the paired-sample t test indicated a significant difference, $t(147) = -2.31$, p = .022, between perceptions of teachers' leadership practices and perceptions of principals' leadership practices. Average perception scores of principals' leadership practices were 3.89 (SD = 0.58), and average perception scores of teachers' leadership practices were 3.99 (SD = 0.50). According to Cohen's d, the difference in these perceptions was small but significant (Stevens, 2009). Results for the paired-sample t test are presented in Table 17, and a visual interpretation is presented in Figure 7.

Table 17

Paired-Sample t *Test for Perceptions of School Leadership for Principals and Teachers*

Model	Principals		Teachers				
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*(163)	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Perceptions of school leadership	3.89	0.58	3.99	0.50	-2.31	.022	0.18

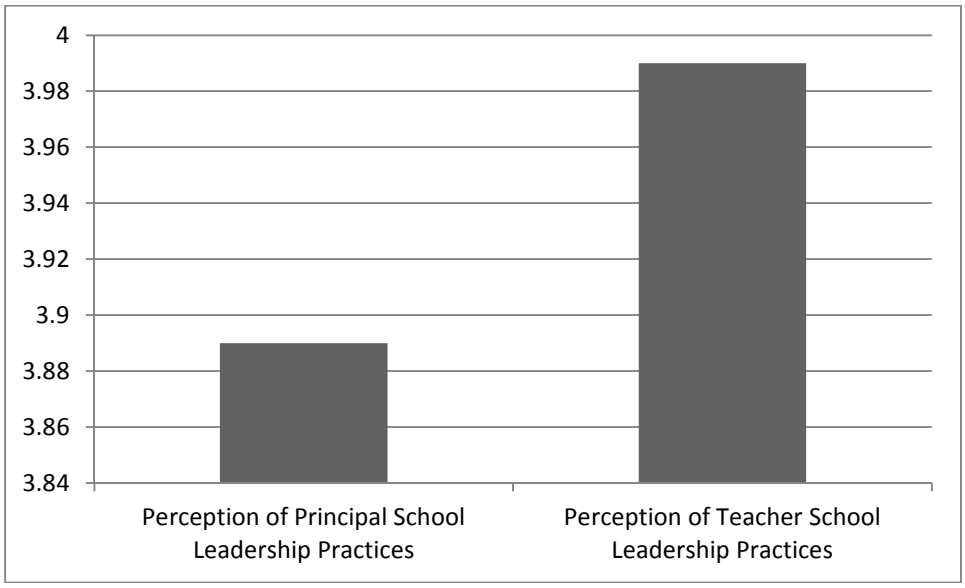

Figure 7. Perceptions of leadership practices of teachers and principals.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 included a discussion of the results of the analysis of data on the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. I also presented the results of an ancillary analysis conducted to determine whether the perceptions of teachers' school leadership practices were greatly different from the perceived leadership practices of principals. These analyses were used to provide insight into the ways that the participants' views of school leadership, as exemplified by either teachers or principals, related to their views about classroom management, the school environment, and students' academic performance.

Results indicated that the ways in which the school leadership practices of principals and teachers were perceived were statistically linked to perceptions of classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. Each of these

associations was highly significant and indicated a strong positive relationship. Participants believed that teachers and principals who exhibited school leadership practices had a positive influence on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance.

During the ancillary analysis, I assessed the participants' responses to determine whether their perceptions of teachers' school leadership practices were greatly different from their perceptions of principals' school leadership practices. Results of this analysis showed that perceptions of teachers' school leadership practices were statistically different from the perceptions of principals' school leadership practices, although participants perceived that principals had higher leadership scores. In addition, the results showed that the principals' school leadership practices positively influenced classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. Thus, principals' leadership practices should influence changes by collaborating and coordinating with teachers on classroom management, the school environment to reduce academic underperformance. In Chapter 5, I interpret the findings and discuss the limitations of the study, lessons learned, and implications for social change. I also offer recommendations for action and future research.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Introduction

Effective school leadership is the result of a manageable and sustainable effort that emerges when teachers and principals work with students to help them to achieve academic success. An effective school system that supports the positive actions of principals and teachers can help to decrease students' poor academic performance through a distributed approach to classroom management, school environment, and academic performance (Boncana & Crow, 2008; Gullickson, 2010; Hader, 2011; K. T. James et al., 2007; Leithwood et al., 2002; Miller, 2006; Mulford, 2003; Spillane, 2005; Stumbo & McWalters, 2010; Townsend, 2010). School leadership supports the educational goals and objectives of schools (Bush, 2005; Colasacco, 2011; Farr, 2011; Marino, 2007; Spillane, 2005, 2006; Stewart, 2011). Researchers have stressed leadership as the base to enhance learning, understanding, inclusion, performance, participation in managing educational change, and organization of leadership role in schools (Boyd, 2012; Clawson, 2006; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi 2006; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2005a).

The sample comprised 148 principals, vice principals, grade coordinators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and others at the primary level from 12 primary schools in the parishes of Kingston and St Andrew in Jamaica. The focus of this study was to determine the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance, and to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the IVs

and the DVs. I developed the SLECMAQ to measure the IVs and DVs. This chapter includes an interpretation of the findings; discussions of the limitations, lessons learned, and implications for social change; recommendations for action and future research; and the conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

Three RQs were used to guide this study. I developed the SLECMAQ to test the three hypotheses. The first RQ concerned the perceived perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) and perceived classroom management in underperforming schools. The statistical findings showed a variability of 36% between perceptions of perceived school leadership practices and perception perceived classroom management in underperforming schools. The IV of perceived school leadership practices and the DV of perceived classroom management indicated a significant and strong relationship, $r = 15.97$, $p < .001$. The results proved a relationship indicating that as perceptions of school leadership practices increased by 1 unit, perceptions of classroom management increased by 0.25 units.

The results were consistent with the literature review. Previous researchers had posited that leadership in the classroom and classroom management must be based upon a commitment by principals and teachers to student learning that requires superior organizational skills, engagement, acceptance of differences, and a willingness to share effective instructional techniques (Boyd, 2012; Clawson, 2006; Copeland, 2003; Hallinger &Heck, 1999; Jackson, 2008; Leithwood, 2006; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2005a). The results also supported the

theoretical framework of Bandura (1977), Bolden (2011), Parsons (1991), and Spillane (2005) that the tasks, actors, actions, and interactions of school leadership as they unfold in the daily life of the school improve school performance through responsive leadership approaches and supportive interactions with followers.

The multiple linear regression techniques used were associated with three assumptions: normality, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity (Stevens, 2009). Because the participants were anonymous and had no contact with each other, they could not influence each other's responses, making the three assumptions valid. The normality assumptions using the KS test were significant for perceptions of school leadership practices for principals ($p < .001$) and for perceptions of school leadership practices for teachers ($p = .001$), indicating that the relationship was significant, positive, and moderately strong. The leadership practices of principals and teachers had a positive influence on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance. Further analysis of the scatter plot showed that the perceptions of school leadership practices (principals) and perception of school leadership practices (teachers) indicated a proportional positive relationship.

Based upon the results in Chapter 4, the statistical findings illustrated a significant relationship between the variables. The $R^2 = .36$ value indicated that the relationship was significant and positive. The results were similar to those of Parsons (1991), who developed the social system theory, and Spillane (2005), who developed the distributed leadership framework, indicating that leadership influences are significant to school success. According to Parsons as well as Spillane, school leadership is a key component

in empowering students and improving classroom management, along with the performance of teachers and, ultimately, students.

I used the multiple linear regression in assessing and evaluating RQ2. The assumption of independence of observation provided a valid assumption that the participants had no influences on each other's responses. The analysis for normality was valid and showed that the perceptions of school leadership significantly influenced perceived school environment. The $R^2 = .55$ showed that the data point of the school environment had high variability and could be explained that as perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) increased, a gradual increase in perceptions of school environment occurred.

The results showed the importance of the influence of school leadership on school system and the perception that school leadership practices can reduce students' underperformance. This result confirmed Copeland's (2003) statement that "school leadership is a set of qualities shared across a much broader segment of the school community that encompasses administrators, teachers and other professionals and community members both internal and external to the school" (p. 376). Developing the capacity of school leadership means that school communities must create and sustain broadly distributed leadership practices, systems, processes, and capacities.

RQ3 asked whether perceived school leadership practices influenced academic performance in underperforming schools. The statistical findings indicated a significant relationship between the IV of perceptions of school leadership practices and the DV of perceived academic performance. The results showed a significant, positive, and

moderately strong relationship between school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) and improved academic performance in underperforming schools. The results suggested that school leadership practices are influential factors in students' ability to learn through personal commitment, experience, understanding, and planning with teachers (Leithwood et al., 2010).

Based upon the result that a significant relationship existed among school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers); classroom management; school environment; and academic performance, I conducted an ancillary analysis. The perceptions of principals' school leadership practices and teachers' school leadership practices were different. The role of the principal was perceived as highly influential in classroom management and its layout, working within the constraints of the school environment to coordinate and collaborate with stakeholders in the school community to proactively plan and maintain a learning environment that could influence improved academic performance.

Based upon the analysis of the data, the findings are consistent with the data gleaned from the literature review. The results suggested that there was a significant relationship indicating that school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) positively influenced classroom management, school environment, and academic performance to facilitate improvements in students' academic underperformance. The research need identified by the JMoE (2012) was addressed to some extent in this study.

The results further showed the significant impact of teachers' school leadership practices and the perception that teachers could share leadership responsibilities. The results also suggested that teachers' school leadership practices had a higher value of perceived perceptions to confirm the importance and expectations held of teachers. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) stated that leaders have a significant impact on teaching and the academic performance of students. The findings support Leithwood and Jantzi (1999a, 1999b) and Spillane et al. (2001), both of whom stated that school leaders can take a coordinated and collective approach to improve performance, structure instructional work, and monitor classroom management activities and the school environment. The results indicated the importance of the influence of school leadership on the sharing of knowledge on curriculum, instructional strategies, and administration by teachers in support of the performance of their schools.

Also emerging from the study was a higher mean value for teachers' school leadership practices than for principals. The results highlighted a change in perceptions about school leadership, management, school environment, and academic performance that indicated that the participants considered the practices of principals and teachers as both being responsibility for the academic performance of schools and, subsequently, students. The paired-sample *t* test showed that the perceptions of the school leadership practices of teachers were significantly higher than those of principals. This new insight was different from the recommendations in the NEI (2012) report, which held principals accountable for schools' underperformance.

The results confirmed that teachers can play a key role in planning and decision making to transform schools into learning communities. I recommend that the NEI (2012) redefine the role of school leadership by making policy changes that broaden the responsibilities and performance in schools to include teachers so that they can work with principals to achieve a common goal to improve underperformance. Sharing responsibilities will help to build the appropriate school cultures, improve learning, and increase problem-solving capabilities to improve the school community (Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Mayrowetz, 2008). School administrators could engage in policy reviews and development to place more emphasis on instructional techniques that will help students to think critically, evaluate information, and share knowledge.

The results also showed the strong influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) to facilitate and motivate the performance not only of schools but also students. School leadership practices can influence the ways in which teachers can work with principals to promote learning engage in interactions and teamwork, and raise their expectations and goals for achieving academic performance. Mayrowetz (2008) reiterated the importance of coordination, effective communication, and continuous learning for teachers and students to develop a sense of community, a climate of trust, and recognition of individual contributions to improve the performance of schools and students. The results showed a positive, significant, and strong relationship between the IVs and DVs.

The perceptions of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) confirmed the influence of each variable on the others. In this study, the

perceptions of teachers' school leadership practices were different from those of principals, but the perceptions held before this study were that principals are responsible for overall performances in all areas of the school system. The results showed that even though principals and teachers should be held jointly accountable for school leadership practices, teachers should be held to a higher degree of accountability for student performance. I rejected the null hypotheses because the IV and DV indicated that a significant relationship existed.

Limitations and Lesson Learned

There were limitations at each stage of this study. One of the challenges was to encourage participants to complete the survey. After circulating 330 surveys, I received 173 surveys, 25 of which were incomplete. Therefore, I used 148 completed surveys to obtain usable data and conduct the analysis. One challenge was that not all 12 schools selected by the JMoE to participate in the study had reliable access to the Internet and reliability of the postal service could not be guaranteed; therefore, I hand delivered the survey to some schools, whereas other schools could access the survey via the SurveyMethods website. Another challenge was in securing mailboxes at the schools where the surveys were hand delivered and scheduling times with these schools to collect the completed surveys. After the 3 weeks of initial data collection, two 2-week extensions had to occur to obtain 148 completed surveys. Designing the SLECMAQ was another difficult task because available instruments were not compatible with the topic under investigation. In addition, having the instrument authenticated was challenging because of the responses needed to validate and test the reliability of the instrument. In addition to

these challenges, I had to expand the multiple linear regression methods to include a paired-sample *t* test, unstandardized beta values, and VIF.

One of the lessons that I learned during this quantitative study was the need to exercise patience and tolerance. I had to learn to believe that situations would be resolved with time, I had to be positive and have an open mind when challenges loomed that could have curtailed the study, and I had to find ways to manage and balance work demands and study requirements. Finally, I had to learn how to be diligent and steadfast in the quest to complete this study.

Implications for Social Change

I designed this study to support positive social change in school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) in primary schools in the parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew in Jamaica to improve students' academic performance. The results indicated that school leadership practices of principals and teachers had a positive influence on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance.

The results indicated that the perceptions of principals' school leadership practices were different from those of teachers in regard to their ability to share decision making. As noted by Harris and Spillane (2007), leading and managing in any academic institution require leaders who are willing to share their values, vision, competence, and influence with teachers and students to improve academic performance. Principals and teachers can support change by sharing responsibilities through interactions to improve school performance.

I envisioned that the result of the study would expand current understanding of the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. The results showed a positive relationship between the variables and highlighted the influence of the leadership practices of principals and teachers in the school system, especially at the primary level. The results indicated that (a) principals could influence change in the ways that schools are managed, classroom are configured, and school environment is developed to enhance students' learning, and (b) teachers have more influence on students' academic performance and have the capability to help underperforming schools to improve.

Recommendations for Action

Results of this study can be of value to the JMoE, NEI, school boards, principals, and teachers, all of whom strive to implement improvement plans to reduce underperformance at the primary level. The main stakeholders who need to focus on the results are the NEI, principals, and teachers. The NEI's (2012) strategy to develop school leaders currently focuses on principals, but to develop a collaborative learning community, teachers also must be included. The inclusion of teachers in the accountability framework for academic performance should influence policy review on the management of schools.

Based upon the results, principals at the primary level must review their own professional actions to determine what needs to be done to change the perception of a lack of leadership in some primary schools. This lack of leadership was viewed as

contributing to underperformance. Principals also must share responsibility with teachers to better manage schools and improve students' academic achievement.

In addition, school leadership practices can include style and management; communication; collaboration; and partnerships with teachers, parents, and community that can reduce any deficiencies in school performance. School leadership can be proactive, neutral, or reactive in confronting and dealing with unexpected change. Leading with confidence to distribute roles provides a sense of purpose, trust, knowledge, experience and understanding of staff capacity to meet demands and final outcomes. School leadership practices can be accomplished to adapt to and apply the system of management responsibility. The JMoE (2012) and the NEI (2012) might wish to develop exclusive leadership and team-building training programs or workshops for principals and teachers at schools classified as underperforming that will enhanced their motivation and performance. Creating learning communities means that school leaders will have to collaborate; use training and workshops for discussions and to exchange information on successful strategies; and adopt the best practices to improve the input, output, and outcome of students.

The school leadership bridge in Figure 8 shows that principals and teachers have a common interest in classroom management, the school environment, and academic performance. The school leadership bridge can facilitate policy developments that improve these three areas through the sharing of leadership practices between principals and teachers. The school leadership bridge highlights the need for attention to policies, strategies, and initiatives to coordinate leadership practices so that the skills, knowledge,

ability, values, and beliefs of principals and teachers can help schools to achieve explicit goals.

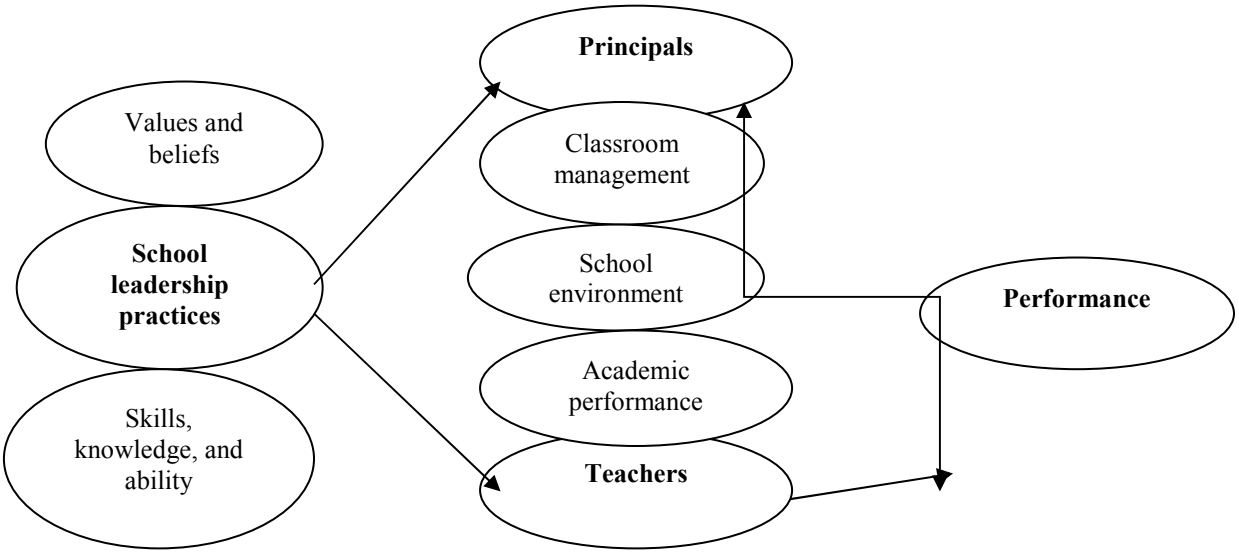

Figure 8. School leadership practices bridge flowchart.

The effectiveness of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) through the provision of supportive instruction, tutoring, and peer support can influence the development of children at the primary level. I recommend adoption of the distributed leadership model as a strategy for underperforming primary schools, preferably selecting one as a pilot for implementation. School principals can then assess and evaluate their performance; coordinate with teachers to devise action plans and time lines to improve the overall performance of students and schools; and implement in-service training, workshops, seminars, and other methods to impart the tenets of distributed leadership. Following training sessions, leaders might wish to conduct evaluations to identify areas of need in their school community requiring organizing,

discuss and share strength and weaknesses with teachers, and create opportunities for recommendations from teachers to focus on the changes needed for sustained improved performance.

Recommendation for Future Research

I considered a quantitative survey design appropriate for this investigation of the influences of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic underperformance. The findings present a strong foundation for future studies that could compare schools by parish or by urban area versus rural area. This study can be replicated in other primary schools in Kingston and St. Andrew that were not included to identify possible differences or similarities based upon new data on school leadership practices for principals and teachers. This replication could support the current findings.

As I concluded this study, several questions arose that might generate new research and additional RQs. The literature review demonstrated that school leadership practices(i.e., those of principals and teachers) are vital to schools' academic performance (i.e., setting directions, developing people skills, redesigning the school organization, and managing instructional programs; (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2010; Spillane, 2005, 2006, 2008). Any of these tasks that can influence and enhance school leadership practices could be potential areas of research that could bridge the gap in schools underperformance. Some guiding questions for further research are as follow:

1. What level of school leadership practices exist in primary school in rural areas?

2. How do urban school leadership practices compare with rural schools?
3. What result would a national study on school leadership practices on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance reveal?
4. Would principals and teachers accept the school leadership bridge as a structure to support performance?

It might be interesting to conduct research on performing and underperforming primary schools and then compare and contrast the findings to determine whether school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) influence classroom management, school environment, and academic performance in these two types of schools. Other researchers could examine primary schools outside of Jamaica and compare the findings with those of primary schools in Kingston and St. Andrew.

Conclusion

School leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) can have a positive influence on output from teachers and students. I compared the perceptions of the school leadership practices of teachers and principals, with teachers' school leadership practices having a higher mean value. Respondents' perceptions affirmed that principals had significantly higher leadership scores. Principals who realize the importance of their influence on the classroom and school environment should demonstrate values to and beliefs in their teaching staff to enhance academic performance.

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of school leadership practices (i.e., those of principals and teachers) on classroom management, school environment, and academic performance to reduce underperformance. The results supported assertions made in the literature that school leadership practices influence classroom management, school environment and academic performance (Clawson, 2006; Copeland, 2003; Harris & Spillane, 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi 2006; Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Spillane, 2005, 2006, 2008).

The literature review indicated that school leadership practices are considered effective and the most important factors in the school organization to influence performance improvement (Bolden, 2011; James & Rottman, 2007; Knight & Rapley, 2007; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Spillane, 2005; Stoll & Fink, 1996). This research showed that all 148 respondents had positive perceptions of school leadership practices. It is impossible for principals alone to effect substantial improvement in schools; it takes vision, team effort, values to inspire commitment, share challenges to transform academic underperformance because education in Jamaica remained highly stratified and unbalanced. For the distributed leadership model to be effective, principals throughout the Jamaican education system need to reassess the hierarchal structure that inhibits the sharing of responsibility to coordinate and collaborate on practices with teachers so that they (i.e., principals and teachers) can contribute to students' academic achievement and improve the overall performance of schools.

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Appendix: SLECMAQ

1. **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. **Highest Educational Level Achieved:**

☐ Teacher's Certificate
☐ Diploma in Teaching
☐ Bachelor's Degree (Graduate with Teacher Training)
☐ Bachelor's Degree (Graduate without Teacher Training)
☐ Masters Degree
☐ Doctoral Degree

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3. **Age Group:** ☐ 18-24 yrs ☐ 25-30 yrs ☐ 31-36 yrs ☐ 37-42 yrs ☐ 43-48 yrs ☐ 49-54 yrs ☐ 55-60 yrs ☐ Over 60 yrs, but below 65 yrs

4. **Position:**

Principals ☐
Vice Principal ☐
Senior Teacher ☐
Class Teacher ☐
Special Education Teacher ☐
Other (please specify) _____

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5. **Years of employment in Primary School**: ☐ <1 yr ☐ 1-5 yrs ☐ 6- 10 yrs ☐ 11-15 yrs ☐16-20 yrs ☐ Over 20 yrs. ☐ Retired

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	Please mark (X) to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
		1	2	3	4	5
1	**Perceptions of School Leadership Practices- (Principals)**					
	The principal empowers teachers to work with all students to gain academic excellence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principals encourages sharing of ideas on instructions to improve teachers' method of instruction and delivery.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal encourages teachers to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	coordinate, collaborate and cooperate with each other.					
	The principal shares information and advice on classroom practice with teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal in my school encourages and supports teachers' development and continuous learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal seeks to promote parent involvement in school's activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal supports and works directly with teachers who are challenged by teaching method and delivery.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal actively monitors student performance in literacy and numeracy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal holds quarterly meetings to discuss literacy/language art and numeracy/mathematics instructions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal communicates the standards for literacy and numeracy and resources available to assist teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal examines and reviews students test result with respective teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal clearly communicates the vision of the school to teaching staff.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal in my school monitors and evaluates instructions and the quality of reading/language art each quarter.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal monitors and knows what is happening in my classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Perceptions of School Leadership Practices-(Teachers)					
	Teachers are given autonomy to decide on teaching methods.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers seek to promote parent involvement in school's activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are supported in assigning students to work together.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are encouraged to coordinates on books and material used in classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Regular meetings are held with teachers to discuss literacy/language art and numeracy/mathematics instructions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are evaluated on criteria related to school improvement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers in my school coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate with each other.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers monitor and evaluate student performance in literacy and numeracy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers in my school, clearly understand the standards for literacy and numeracy for the school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are empowered to work with all	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	students to gain academic excellence					
2.	**Perceived Classroom Management**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
	Teachers keenly monitor students' academic progress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers have the ability to make classroom management decisions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers take responsibility for academic performance in my school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are given the freedom to choose what lesson to teach.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are allowed to use their own teaching methods at my school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers monitor and supervise conduct and behavior in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are given the freedom to choose what homework to assign to students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Classroom management decisions are made by school leaders, not the teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are required to use the same standardized homework assignments as all the other grade teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Students are evaluated using the criteria provided by the school and the ministry of education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Principals ensure that teachers prepare lesson plans directly related to the curriculum and instructions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers include the individual need of students in planning lessons and assessing teaching methods.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	**Perceived School Environment**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
	Supervision given by the ministry of education supports the goal of the school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal gives frank and honest information on resources available for teaching.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal ensures that assistance and support are provided for each teacher to share ideas and work together to improve school performance and education outcomes outcome.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal provides an environment in which teachers contributions to enhance teaching and learning are valued and respected.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal provides an environment in which teachers are encouraged to implement what they have learned to improve instructional goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal encourages the creation of a sense of community in the school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	The principal seeks to promote community involvement in school's activity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal provides a school environment which enables teachers to work creatively with limited resources in the school system to enhance student learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal clearly communicates his/her vision, mission, goals, expectations, and education targets for the school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The school has an open communication policy that allows teachers to provide feedback to the principal regarding student performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The parents of students in my school show keen interest in students' performance.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The size of my class affects my ability for consistent individual attention to student achievement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The principal includes parents as an important element of the school and classroom management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	**Perceived Academic Performance**	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
	Teachers set performance standards for students' academic achievement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Principals and teachers in this school take responsibility for overall academic performance of students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers work with all students to achieve academic excellence in my school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers are recognized and praised for their work in support of students and school's improvement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	All teachers monitor and track student academic progress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers assist students to work together to complete assignments.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers in my school set high expectations for academic work of students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers support each other to achieve academic performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The school performance score provided by the JMoE is important to the academic staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers in my school know the school's performance score.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers encouraged and support students to work hard in all subject areas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Students absenteeism is monitored and followed up by teachers in my school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Teachers encourage parental involvement in student learning in my school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Some students in my school are perceived to underperform academically.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	My school was included in the list of underperforming schools in 2012.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Test scores for students in my school were below average.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Improvement goals are set in my school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Extra classes and lessons are organized in my school to assist in addressing individual students' needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	The following questions relate to the JMoE	**Poor**	**Fair**	**Average**	**Good**	**Exceed**
	performance scores for individual schools.	**0-20**	**21-40**	**41-60**	**61-80**	**81-100**
	If you know the academic performance score(s) for your school, please mark the range in which your school falls	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Your school's score in numeracy/mathematics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Your school's score in literacy/English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Curriculum Vitae

Lorna Novlette Wilson Morgan

EDUCATION

- 2006 Master's Degree in Management/Human Resources, Florida International University
- 2003 Postgraduate Diploma in Education and Training, Vocational Training & Development Institute, Jamaica
- 2001 Certificate in Voice and Speech Development for Radio and Television, Creative Production Training Centre, Jamaica
- 2000 Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Resources Management, University of Technology, Jamaica

EXPERIENCE

- 2000-2003 Project Programme Leader - Jamaica Constabulary Reform and Modernisation Programme
- 2003-2004 Administrative Officer Corporate Strategy Coordination Unit of the Commissioner office.
- 2004-2006 Divisional Commander for Corporate Planning Research and Development Division of the JCF.
- 2003-2006/2005-2006 Lecturer/Teacher in management, ethics and customer service at the Police Training School and Staff College and at Mico University
- 2006-2008 International Police with UN Mission in Liberia
- Field Security Coordination Officer with UN Department of Safety and Security
- 2008- 2010 (Afghanistan). Responsible to develop security plan, security risk assessment in the area of responsibility, security briefing, and advice to the head of mission on security issues and mitigation measures. Develop country evacuation; conduct training, simulation exercises to enhance UN staff awareness and knowledge. Liaise and coordinate with local and international security personnel in the country.

- 2010-2014 Security Adviser (Thailand). Responsible for conduct security risk assessment and analysis of security trend to inform the development of country security plan, security risk assessment, mass casualty/medical evacuation, and relocation/evacuation for Thailand.

- 2014-Present Operations officer Responsible for development of security plans with emphasis on contingency planning, reflecting security information and trend of threats developed.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Society for Human Resource Management

Awards

1990 Medal of Honour for Meritorious Service, Jamaican Government